

Berkshire Family Historian

the quarterly journal of the Berkshire Family History Society

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Family names appearing in this issue:

excluding living people, authors of sources and members' interests

Addams 25	Dewe 27	Palmer 30
Barnes 19	Elborough 13	Payne 25
Barret 20	Evans 34	Pryor 20
Bason 22	Foster 20	Ratings 14
Berkeley 16+	Heathrington 34	Rouse 22
Bestley 22	Holliday 27	Selby 34
Binney 24+	Hutt 22	Smith 29
Birchall 25	Jeffries 21+	Snosswell 20+
Bradshaw 22	Knight 34	Thomas 21
Caudwell 26	Lediard 34	Vaughan 29
Clark 20	Little 34	Walpole 17
Coakes 20	Lousley 26	Webb 22
Cox 13	Mapson 22	Weigall 35
Craven 16+	Martin 20	Wentworth 12
Deacon 20	Meakin 25	Whiteing 19+

Chairman's corner

Derek Trinder
<chairman@berksfhs.org.uk>



New look, new initiatives and new blood

You will see that your society magazine has a new look this month. If not quite in 1947 fashion (it is longer and fuller certainly) it marks a series of developments that should benefit all members in the months ahead. By the time you read these pages, new CD publications will be on sale, extending the range of transcribed and checked Berkshire records available to all family historians.

For your society to continue to meet members' needs, one more thing is required: new blood to join the team. Members like you must come forward and help to implement ideas, and to realise opportunities that will enhance the benefits your society brings to its members. Members like you – who have knowledge, skills and motivation enough to get a job done. Members like you – who bring application and commitment to deliver to time. Members like you – who are unselfish enough to take on a task for altruistic reasons. And in the age of the PC and

the internet, this call is not directed simply to those with GU, OX, RG and SL postcodes. You can join the team and undertake many key tasks from anywhere in the world.

Giving is a two-way thing. Research tells us that most people get something from giving. The benefits are intangible – enjoyment, satisfaction, a warm glow – as well as tangible: providing something for others in future, whether for your family, your fellow

family historians, or even for you.

Ask yourself these questions:

- *What could I give as a team member?*
- *Which of my skills and experiences would be useful?*
- *Where would my commitment make a difference?*

Society achievement comes from team effort. So, get in touch with me or with one of the Executive Committee members, and tell us what sort of team player you are.

Websites and internet family history

When did you last visit <www.berksfhs.org.uk>? Your society website is the first place to go for the latest society news. If you have not seen it for a while, you may be surprised at how much new and updated content is there.

The internet may not have changed underlying principles of researching family history effectively, but it has altered dramatically the way in which you conduct some of your research. The internet delivers not only your society website to your PC, but many other useful sites too. It brings access to growing numbers of indexes, transcriptions, (and, in some cases, document images) of historic records, as online publishers like Findmypast add new datasets to their collections.

A new four-page centrefold in this magazine lists some useful websites that should interest most family historians. The listing may even direct you to a few that you have not used before. As the days start to shorten and your family history research supplants those summer pastimes, why not explore some of these websites and bookmark those that could be helpful in your research?

Renewals – on time, or well overdue?

The new membership year started two months ago on 1 July. More than half of your fellow members had renewed by the end of June. Since then, many more renewals have arrived and, provided that you renewed before the mailing date, you will find your new membership card enclosed with your magazine.

If you are one of those few who have still to renew, act quickly – preferably today.

Otherwise, your membership will finish at the end of September. A final reminder form with your *Historian* means that your renewal was still outstanding on the magazine mailing date. Your membership is valued, so please renew now – using the website, in person, or by posting your form and payment – and see that you continue to enjoy all the benefits of membership.

The AGM at Reading

Thank you to all who came from in and out of county to Tilehurst on 30 June to attend the society AGM, hosted by Reading branch. After the elections at the meeting, we welcome three new trustees to the Executive Committee – Judith Mitchell, Penny Stokes (editor of the *Historian*) and Vanessa Chappell (Vale Branch chairman). You will find the meeting fully reported on another page.

Berkshire Burial Index

David Wright

The parishes and periods which have been added to the Berkshire Burial Index since the position reported in the June 2011 issue of the *Berkshire Family Historian* are set out below.

Abingdon St Helen 1696-97 (BTs), 1763-64 (BTs), 1808-09 (BTs) and 1819-27 (BTs)
 Abingdon St Nicholas 1615-24 (BTs) and 1692 - 1703 (BTs)
 Appleton St Laurence 1683 - 1710
 Clewer St Andrew 1949-60
 Crowmarsh Gifford St Mary Magdalene 1831 - 1992
 Finchampstead St James 1653-82 and 1709-24
 Great Coxwell St Giles 1654 - 1727, 1750-73 and 1788-91
 Newbury Shaw Cemetery 1946-48, 1959-63 and 1970-72
 Reading Henley Road (Caversham) Cemetery 1954-56, 1963-64 and 1966-67
 Reading St Mary 1608-32
 Sonning St Andrew 1621-43
 Stubbings St James the Less 1949-93
 Wallingford St Leonard 1679-99 (BTs) and 1742 - 1812
 West Challow St Laurence 1608-35 (BTs) and 1669-89 (BTs)

These will be included in the next update of the CD, which we expect to issue towards the end of 2011. Including these most recent additions, the new index now contains more than 755,000 entries (compared with the 721,000 on the 9th edition CD). Details of the services for researching burials in the Berkshire Burial Index are given on pages 32-34.

AGM report

The 36th annual general meeting of the Berkshire Family History Society was held at 7.30pm Thursday 30 June, and was hosted by the society's Reading Branch at Tilehurst.

Minutes of the 35th AGM were circulated and accepted.

The chairman's report reviewed the year's progress, noting these key achievements:

- a growing membership, reversing the slight decline of the last four years;
- the excellence and popularity of the society's new website, online shop and hosting of the Berkshire pages on GENUKI;
- attendance of 2,500 people at 60 branch meetings over the course of the year;
- more than 50 outreach activities organised by branch members;
- society representation at seven major events, including *WDYTIA?Live*, the Bracknell Family History Fair and the Ascot Golden Age Fair;
- raising the society's profile in the national FH press and on BBC Radio Berkshire;
- publication of the ninth edition of Berkshire Burials, and the first edition of Berkshire Marriages on CD, with more to come.

On the debit side the chairman noted slow progress in securing collective resolution of the local issues relating to online publication of data derived from parish records, the apparent reluctance of Berkshire-based members to use and support the society's Research Centre in Reading and the decline of public attendance at traditional family history events. He also noted the Executive Committee's decision to withdraw for 2011 from membership of the Federation of Family History Societies, and to review the position at year-end.

The report also detailed 11 separate ways in which the society fulfils its obligation as a registered charity to deliver public benefit. These span branch meetings and outreach work, the society's publications, the website and online discussion list, Research Centre services, co-operation with Berkshire Record Office and project work.

The chairman concluded by thanking all those current volunteers, estimated to be more than 150, who contribute to the success of the society.

The treasurer's report showed that costs have been cut, and income has grown a little, albeit to some extent from non-recurring items. Membership fees have been raised this year (for the first time in three years) to safeguard the society's financial future. A major consideration in the society's forward planning concerns provision for costs which may arise from the expiration of the society's lease on Yeomanry House in 2012. A summary of the figures presented is shown in the table alongside.

Following these two reports the society's president, Sir William Benyon, was re-elected, as were the vice-presidents Dr Peter Durrant and Chad Hanna. Elections to the Executive Committees are detailed on the facing page.

After a short break the 80 or so members and visitors who attended the meeting sat back to enjoy an illuminating talk by Mark Stevens, senior archivist of the Berkshire Record Office, on Victorian Fair Mile, Berkshire's county asylum.

<i>Review of financial performance income and expenditure for year ending 30 April 2011</i>		
	2011	2010
total income	£46,006	£40,765
total expenditure	£41,138	£42,980
surplus/ (deficit)	£4,868	(£2,216)
total funds brought forward	£49,554	£51,769
total funds carried forward	£54,422	£49,554

Your Executive Committee for 2011-12

Society officers

Chairman: Derek Trinder
Vice-chairman: Mike Dabbs
Secretary: Valerie Storie
Treasurer: Gordon Spencer

Branch representatives

Bracknell and Wokingham: David Wooldridge
Computer: Gillian Stevens
Newbury: Ian Ward
Reading: Margaret Crook

Vale of White Horse: [Vanessa Chappell](#)
Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead:
 Mike Booth

Other members

[Judith Mitchell](#)

(Research Centre subcommittee)

[Penny Stokes](#)

(editor, Berkshire Family Historian)

Brian Wilcock

(webteam and Projects and Publications subcommittee)

Names in blue are new members.

Research Centre news

Jean Herbert

[Library](#)

The new online library catalogue can now be consulted on <www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Library/libraryv2.html>. The library contains over 7,000 items, only 20 per cent of which are Berkshire related. Most of the material covers other English counties, Wales, Scotland, Ireland, North America and the Antipodes. You can search by entering a specific keyword, or you can browse the holdings by county/country. If you find anything of interest, and want to know more, email <researchcentre@berksfhs.org.uk> and ask your question.

[Recent additions include:](#)

- Berkshire Royal Berkshire Regiment 1st volunteer battalion nominal roll 1892
- Leckhampstead, Marcham, Wokingham Union deaths 1866 - 1925
- Hampshire parish registers of Kingsclere and Boldre
- Buckinghamshire SE Division public and beer houses of 1872
- Eton Town and College poll tax

[HOD opening](#)

The Research Centre will be open to visitors and members for the four Heritage Open Days 8-11 September: Thursday, Friday, Saturday 10-4pm, Sunday 11-4pm.

Margaret Young



The society was deeply saddened to learn of the death of Margaret Young on 7 August 2011 after a short illness. Margaret was until very recently a trustee, and the society's projects co-ordinator. In accordance with her wishes and those of her family, no further tribute will be published.

AROUND THE BRANCHES

Reading Branch

<reading@berksfhs.org.uk>
Margaret Crook

Reading Branch hosted the society's annual general meeting, which was followed by Mark Stevens, who gave us an illuminating talk about Fair Mile Hospital and the Victorian way of treating those considered to be mentally incapable.

Members are continuing to hold outreach sessions at Mortimer Library, usually on the Tuesday before the last Thursday in the month. In June we had some more newcomers, including a couple who had read about it in the *Berkshire Family Historian*, and had come from Poole to attend. We had six people in July: two from previous afternoons and four new people, including two who were in the process of joining the society as new members.

We are always delighted to see non-members as well as new, to offer whatever help and advice that we can.

The 2011-12 committee for the branch is:

Margaret Crook (chair)
Richard Croker (treasurer)
Vicki Chesterman (meetings secretary)
Marion Dabbs (secretary)
Mary Macmillan
Tony Farmer
Rosemary Whitehead

Vale of White Horse Branch

<vale@berksfhs.org.uk>
Vanessa Chappell

At our general meeting in April the following committee members were elected:

Vanessa Chappell (chairperson)
Jo Lent (secretary)
Margaret McAlpin (treasurer)
Sue Matthews (programme secretary)
Gordon Radburn, Sarah Matthews and Simon Burbidge.

A small group of branch members enjoyed a guided walking tour of Oxford's industrial buildings with Liz Woolley in May. She took us off the main streets of Oxford, showing us the locations of many light industries. We were told about the brewing, milling, cloth-weaving and book-binding industries that developed, as well as the underwear factory and Frank Cooper's marmalade factory. The walk was about three miles long, and included a very pleasant section along the towpath of the River Thames, once the site of the gas works.

Back in our usual venue in June, we had a captivating talk by Simon Townley about the work of the Oxfordshire *Victoria County History*. Despite down-pours the meeting was well attended.

The branch is continuing with family history surgeries in Abingdon and Wantage libraries. On Saturday 17 June we were in Abingdon for a very busy morning, with 12 people booked and two drop-ins. Stella Wentworth, the new senior librarian responsible for local and family history at Oxford Central Library and the branches, came along to introduce herself and help out. Four people from the library sessions came along to our branch meeting later in the month.

The branch will be taking part in Abingdon's "Fun in the Park" on Sunday 11 September as part of Heritage Open Day events.

Newbury Branch

<newbury@berksfhs.org.uk> Nick Prince

The new committee for 2011-12 is the same as the old committee. New members would be welcomed, to ensure we don't get stuck in the mud.

May's talk was given by Ros Clow, chair of Friends of Newtown Road Cemetery History Group, on *Bringing a Victorian cemetery to life*. The June meeting featured Louise Taylor talking on *Fostering and adoption 1850 - 1930*. A useful handout was provided, and one person travelled from Eastleigh in Hampshire to attend.

The summer will be spent seeking to develop outreach opportunities in the autumn with Hungerford, Lambourn and Newbury all in the frame. Details are still being worked out, and more information is expected to be distributed to branch members in August.

Ideas for speakers in 2012 should be sent to any of the committee, as we will be looking at the 2012 programme in September, and hope to have it arranged by mid-October.

Bracknell and Wokingham Branch

bracknell@berksfhs.org.uk> David Wooldridge

At our May meeting John Neal put Charles Dickens' life in the context of Victorian London society and buildings, illustrating then and now with a series of slides. This was a literary history talk rather than a family history topic, but it was well received by our members. In June Mark Bayley spoke on *Breaking down brick walls*, using <www.the genealogist.co.uk>. This was, of course, a commercial presentation, at which discounted subscriptions were offered to members signing up on the night, and this was taken up by several people.

Once again we plan to have a stand at the Ascot Golden Age event at the Ascot Racecourse on 24 August, when we shall aim to repeat last year's success.

We have been making presentations at the end of introductory family history courses at Sandhurst and Bracknell Open Learning Centre with some success, attracting interest.

Drop-in sessions have not been well attended at Bracknell nor at Wokingham recently, and we are looking at ways to improve promotion.

Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead Branch

<windsor@berksfhs.org.uk>
Mike Booth

Officers and committee members for the branch remain unchanged, except that Alan Gardener has stepped down. Thus I remain chairman and nominated to the Exec, Valerie Storie is secretary and programme secretary, Helen Conchar is treasurer, Olwen Mundy is librarian and the following also serve on the committee: Pauline Hodges, Ken Houghton and Judith Mitchell.

All Saints Church, Windsor, held an open day on 11 June, and amongst the exhibits were original marriage and burial registers for New Windsor parish dating back to 1813. These had been arranged by and collected from the BRO by one of our members, Michael Bailey. Visitors were interested to see records of people they knew and also the diversity of burials, from the workhouse up to the prominent Bedborough family.

A family history drop-in clinic was held at Datchet Library on 14 June in conjunction with the Royal Borough. We had five visitors, mostly novices, none of whom were members. All had interesting queries that kept us busy demonstrating how to tackle FH and find the ancestors, as well as debunking one or two myths. We also managed to get two photos of the event in the local rag. One of the visitors came to our next meeting in Windsor and joined the society.

AROUND THE BRANCHES

cont'd

Computer Branch

<computerbranch@berksfhs.org.uk>
Gillian Stevens

A talk on crew lists by Tony Wright in May attracted 32 members and two visitors. Tony advised us that merchant seaman were very likely to appear in a range of documents known as crew lists, which can provide a wealth of information: what sailors ate and earned; where they lived and went; how much money they sent home and to whom; and job descriptions. However the documents are filed by ship and year the voyage ended, plus there is an issue with location. Tony gave useful information about the records and likely places to find them.

In June we were hoping to continue with photographing the memorials in Woodley St John burial ground, but unfortunately it rained, so we arranged an alternative indoor meeting for 18 members and one visitor in the Oakwood Centre. Brian Edwards told us about the various ways we can and should back up our computers, and Rebecca Day showed us a number of tips for using Microsoft Word. Both talks were originally going to last for 10 minutes, but Brian and Rebecca successfully lengthened their talks to half an hour each, with plenty of audience interaction.

Successful sessions continue to be held each month at Woodley Library.

NOW ON SALE

Speenhamland parish
register CD

Shop £5, UK £5.92, airmail £8.50

coming soon

Wargrave parish registers
and Ascot MIs



What do you put back into family history?

Berkshire Family History Society needs more helpers for a wide variety of tasks, many of which require no specialist knowledge or skills. Nor do you necessarily have to live within reach of Reading – many of the tasks can be done at home. You don't have to commit vast amounts of time – your society will find a use for whatever time you are prepared to offer. And your motives don't even have to be purely altruistic! Volunteering is meant to be rewarding for the volunteer too. It could get you out of the house, meeting new people, developing new skills.

Please give some serious thought to helping to keep your society the flourishing success that it has traditionally been. Contact Derek Trinder on <chairman@berksfhs.org.uk> to ask – with no obligation – about what you might be able to do.

Dates for your diary

*asterisked events = Berkshire FHS will participate

Thu 8-Sun 11 Sept	Heritage Open Days	all over Berkshire	< www.heritageopendays.org.uk/directory/county/Berkshire >
10.00-16.00 Sun 25 Sept	Hampshire Genealogical Soc Open Day*	Horndean Technology College, PO8 9PQ	< www.hgs-online.org.uk/openday2011.pdf >
10.00-16.00 Sat 1 Oct	Oxfordshire FHS Open Day*	Marlborough School, Woodstock OX20 1XP	< www.ofhs.org.uk/OpenDay.html >
09.00-17.00 Sat 1 Oct	Celebrating the census conference	TNA Kew TW9 4DU	< www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/events/census-conference.htm >
10.00-16.30 Sat 5 Nov	West Surrey FHS Open Day*	Woking Leisure Centre, GU22 9BA	< www.wsfhs.org/OpenDay.htm >
13.00 Thu 6 Oct	Berks FHS/BRO talk on VCH	BRO, 9 Coley Ave, Reading RG1 6AF	book thru < computerbranch@berksfhs.org.uk >
14.00-16.00 Mon 10 Oct	Berkshire Record Office introductory visit	BRO, 9 Coley Ave, Reading RG1 6AF	book on 0118 9375132 or < arch@reading.gov.uk >
18.00-20.00 Tue 11 Oct	Berks FHS help evening at BRO*	BRO, 9 Coley Ave, Reading RG1 6AF	booking not needed
10.00-17.00 Sun 29 Jan	Bracknell Family History Fair*	Bracknell Sport and Leisure Centre, RG12 9SE	< www.familyhistoryfairs.org/datoloc.html >
14.00-16.00 Mon 30 Jan	Berkshire Record Office introductory visit	BRO, 9 Coley Ave, Reading RG1 6AF	book on 0118 9375132 or < arch@reading.gov.uk >
Sat 24-Sun 26 Feb	<i>WhoDoYouThinkYouAre? Live*</i>	Olympia, London SW1	< www.whodoyouthinkyouarelive.co.uk >

Birth Briefs are five-generation ancestral charts submitted by members of the society. They contain the names and vital records (birth or christening, marriage and death or burial) of the member and up to 30 ancestors. All members are encouraged to submit and update their birth briefs, which can be very useful to other family researchers.

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A form for compiling your birth brief can be downloaded from <www.berksfhs.org.uk/birthbriefs>, where you can also search the Birth Briefs Index, currently standing at 31,441 names, or you can order a search by post for £2.

If you have an interest in a name on a Birth Brief you can order a copy by post (on paper, or as a digital file in either PAF Pedigree or GEDCOM) for £2. See full details on the website or in your Members' Handbook.

Orders for searches or copies of briefs should be posted to

*Alan Brooker
6 Meadow Way
Old Windsor
Berks SL4 2NX*

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N E W S I N B R I E F

The newly created Oxford History Centre at St Luke's Church, Cowley opened in July, combining resources from the Oxfordshire Record Office, Oxfordshire Studies and Oxfordshire Health Archives. A new local and family history facility has also opened on the top floor of the Central Library, Westgate, Oxford. This collection comprises popular Oxfordshire Studies resources which were available in duplicate, electronic or microform copies.

Hampshire Archives Trust is raising funds to help purchase an album of 1846 photographs of Wellow so that it can be preserved in Hampshire Record Office for future generations of local historians.

The British Library and Google are to digitise 250,000 books from the period 1700 - 1870 from the library's collections. In coming years this project will deliver content free through Google Books <<http://books.google.co.uk>> and the British Library's website <www.bl.uk>.

It has long been known that family history details can help to predict individual disease risk. A article in the *Guardian* of 19 July 2011

publicised an American website which guides you through the process of creating a family health history, which you can then study for patterns of illness and show to your GP if you have concerns. <<https://familyhistory.hhs.gov/fhhweb/familyHistory/start.action>>

Findmypast has been rolling out a new feature which will mark your search results with a little blue star against any records that you have already looked at. At present the feature is based on searches going back to the end of 2010, and is limited to the most recent few hundred. This coverage will expand, and Findmypast will also introduce a dedicated "Saved Records" area, where you can see everything you've viewed – an instant overview of all the research you've been doing recently. The feature will also allow you to add basic notes that you can use later.

The Centre for Bucks Studies is now offering a new service: a copy of parish or non-parochial register entries for baptism, marriage or burial. To request a copy supply the details of name, parish, event and date. The charge is £5. More details on <<http://apps2.buckscc.gov.uk/eCommerce/process/product/ProductDetailedDescription.aspx>>.

productDetailedDescription.aspx>.

Brightsolid and UKTV are to launch a 10-part, one-hour series connecting members of the public to famous moments in history using Findmypast's resources. Lion Television is to produce the show, and it will be shown on Yesterday.

Cadet and staff registers of the Sandhurst Collection can now be searched on <<http://archive.sandhurstcollection.org.uk/>>. The archive contains details for almost every officer cadet who attended the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich and Royal Military College, Sandhurst. The staff registers record servants, professors and military staff at these institutions. The Woolwich Cadet Registers span 1790-93, 1799 - 1805 and 1820 - 1939. Those for Sandhurst cover 1800 - 1964. Both sets record name, age, date of entry, commissioning date and corps or regiment joined. Occasionally they may give examination results, information about the father or, in the case of RMA Woolwich, sometimes the school. The subsequent career of the cadet is usually not covered. Basic search results are free, but more details are pay-to-view.

Berkshire Record Office

Additions to the archives

Windsor

Records of the Windsor Borough surveyor 1850 - 1966 (WI/S), include plans of many important public buildings, including:

- buildings at the cemetery 1856 - 1902
- alterations to the Guildhall 1874 - 1957
- the police station 1903-08
- the Theatre Royal 1909-10
- Clewer Mead swimming pool 1951-62
- the modernisation of Combermere Barracks 1953-54
- the sewage works at Old Windsor 1914-56.

There are also plans for schools, some major housing developments, and road improvement and sewerage schemes.

Business records

Plenty's of Newbury, 1746 - 1997, (D/EX1739, 1771, 2097): this firm was famous for its lifeboats, marine steam engines, and latterly, pumps. The archive is particularly strong for the period from the 1880s to the 1980s.

Taylor's printing firm, founded in Slough in the 1930s, before moving to Maidenhead in the 1950s (D/EX2012): their work ranged from toothpaste cartons to Readers' Digest Condensed Books and Enid Blyton book jackets.

Country life

A small collection of papers of the Wentworth family (D/EX2191) includes farming records for Wiltshire in the early 1850s and Uffington in the 1960s and 1970s.

Women's Institute scrapbook compiled by Shaw-cum-Donnington WI in 1965 (D/EX2190)

The Berkshire branch of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England records for 1930-67 (D/EX2189).

The BRO regularly holds introductory sessions for new users. The coming dates are: 10 October 2011; 30 January 2012; 16 April 2012; and 9 July 2012, all at 2 p.m. To book your place, telephone 0118 9375132 or email <arch@reading.gov.uk>.

Alternatively, you may choose to take advantage of experts from the Berkshire Family History Society, who are on hand at special open evenings at the Berkshire Record Office. The next is from 6 to 8 pm on 11 October. They will help beginners to family history get started or, for more experienced researchers, suggest new approaches to breaking down those dreaded brick walls. No need to book; just turn up.

ONLINE DISCUSSION LIST: did you know that...

- Any member may join the online Discussion List, where information and problems are shared daily
- Topics range widely, and they are not confined to Berkshire
- Virtually every question posted receives several responses
- To join, just send an email message with your name, membership number, postcode and a brief request to be subscribed, to <listowner@berksfhs.org.uk>

Are you making the most of...? *The National Archives website* ?



The National Archives (TNA) exists to preserve and, in time, make available government documentation stretching back over 1,000 years. The internet has transformed this function, opening the archives to home users, allowing them to search and browse the collection, and to view original documents. TNA facilitates this by teaching the public how to search, find and understand the material in its collections.

The website at <www.nationalarchives.gov.uk> should be on every family historian's favourites list, and should be visited regularly because it is a unique and steadily expanding resource. It is easy to search and navigate.

Click the *Education* tab, for example. Here is much aimed at schoolchildren, which you may choose to bypass (or not if, perhaps, you didn't pay attention to history lessons at school, but now wish you had) but on no account overlook the podcasts section, where a selection of talks by professional historians includes such topics as *Tudor documents*, *The Victorians and the poor*, *500 years of prison* and *World War One diaries*, as well as specific task-related help for family historians. Download and listen at your leisure on your computer, iPod or iPad.

The next tab is *Records*, which takes you to the catalogue of 11 million documents, which you can search by place, personal name and occupation. This section covers resources beyond TNA, linking to Ancestry, Findmypast, the GRO and other sites as appropriate.

Also in this area is *Understanding the archives*, which offers free tutorials in, for

example, palaeography and Latin, which you can take at your own pace.

The last tab of *Shop online* takes you to the Documents Online section. At present the main content here for family historians consists of military lists and wills, but several other categories, such as poor law union and work-house records will surely grow with time.

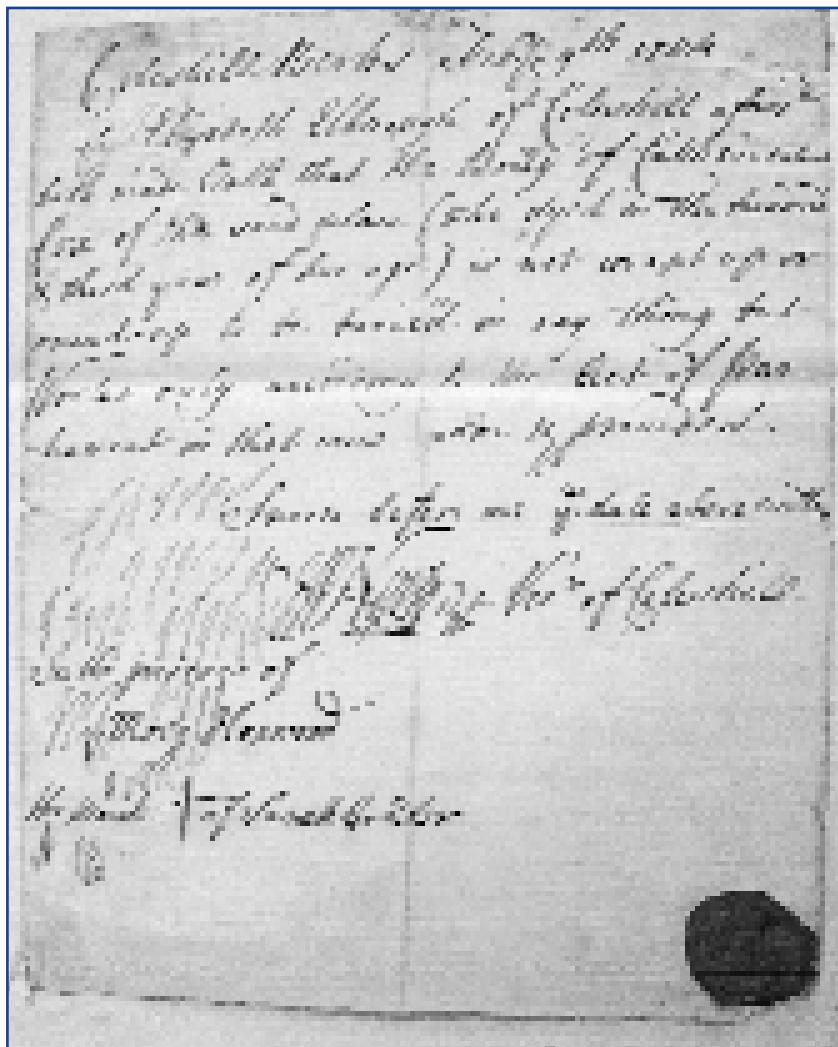
Images too can be browsed in this area. The TNA collection spans entertainment, crime, piracy, slavery and politics, among other topics. Many of the images are of manuscript documents.

Copies of documents, including images, can be ordered online, as of course can copies of TNA's own publications and more than 100 family history titles from the *Bookshop*.

If you choose to register with the site there are additional advantages. You can:

- personalise your searches
- access your own webpage, MyPage, where you can save searches and book-mark favourite pages
- manage your account details
- join the mailing list.

There is however a major drawback to the TNA website, which is the strong possibility that your attention will be diverted from the task in hand into alluring byways. Sixties Britain is now online: remember the Denning Report, Mary Whitehouse, Ronan Point, Mary Quant, Aberfan and miniskirts (on which, apparently, the prime minister needed briefing)? We may no longer have *The News of the World*, but all human life is certainly there at Kew.



Buried in wool

*Dennis Pratley,
a member of Gloucestershire
and Oxfordshire FHSs,
has sent in this Berkshire
affidavit in the hope that it
may link with a Berkshire
FHS member's family*

In the 1600s, during the reign of Charles II, the woollen manufacturers of Britain were facing strong competition from European linen. To assist the woollen industry Acts known as the Burial in Woollen Acts (1660-80) were passed. They stated that: *No corpse of any person (except plague victims) shall be buried in any shirt, shift, sheet or shroud or anything whatsoever made or mingled with flax, hemp, silk, hair, gold or silver other than what shall be made of pure wool only.* A coffin could also only be lined in pure wool.

Furthermore, an affidavit had to be sworn before a JP, usually by a relative of the deceased or some other credible person, confirming that the body had been buried in a shroud of pure wool only. A signed statement of the oath was also required. There was a penalty of £5 if it was found that other materials had been used. The Act stayed in force until 1814, but was usually ignored after 1770.

Whilst looking through burial records, particularly of the 1700s, researchers will often note the entry "Aff.Re'd" or simply "A" after the deceased's name, confirming that an affidavit had been sworn. Many poor families could not afford woollen shrouds, so the deceased was buried naked, and in the register it was recorded "naked" or "P" indicating that the family was poor.

About two years ago, at Gloucestershire's Archives, I was looking through a register of marriages from 1755 and found, stuck on the inside of the back cover, a written affidavit statement by Elizabeth Elborough of Coleshill. The deceased was Catherine Cox.

With permission I took a photograph of the affidavit, which was six inches by seven and a half inches. It is possible that members of Berks FHS may recognise the names mentioned.



Wargrave

Local History Society

*Peter Delaney
introduces the society
which he helped to found,
and of which
he is now the secretary*

In 1975 the then vicar of Wargrave, the Rev John Ratings, instituted a biennial village festival. The aim was to draw together all sections of the village community in a variety of activities, sporting and cultural. At the village festival of 1981 a small exhibition was arranged of historic photographs of the village, principally organised by the late Derek Bird. Derek, who (like his parents before him) had been born and lived in the village, was interested in its history, and it became apparent that there were enough other people who shared that interest to consider organising a society to promote the local history of the village and its surroundings.

About 30 people attended a meeting on 12 November 1981, and it was agreed to form the Wargrave Local History Society, with Derek Bird as chairman and Peter Delaney as deputy chairman. The declared objectives of the society were "the study and discussion of, and research into, history in general and the local area in particular." It was thought that the group would invite guest speakers, investigate every aspect of Wargrave's history, such as studies of old houses, and that history tours of Wargrave might be arranged. It was also suggested that "all that had ever been published on local history" be collected. The initial annual subscriptions were set at £1, with 50p for children and OAPs.

The first of the regular programme of meetings took place the following January, when several of the older residents shared their memories of the village in times past, followed

in February by the Rev John Ratings talking about the eccentricities of the vicars of Wargrave. The local Scout troop and wartime Wargrave were other topics in that first year, and the first Wargrave history walk took place in July 1982. The committee list of that time lists seven people – two still of school age – and telephone numbers were Wargrave four-digit ones!

Sadly, Derek died in 1985 at the age of 38, so Peter Delaney took over as chairman. The society has continued to offer a programme of monthly meetings, on the second Tuesday of each month (apart from July, a visit to a place of interest, and August, when few societies meet in the village) and covers a range of topics, some parochial, but others with a wider base. The membership is now about 75, with typically 40 or so attending each meeting. The committee now consists of nine members, Peter Halman being the current chairman, and Peter Delaney the secretary. The president, from our founding to the present, is Lord Remnant, who takes an active interest in the society's work. Sadly, the committee no longer includes any school-age members, whilst subscription rates have risen to £9 for individuals, £12 for a family, and £8 for concessions.

Apart from its series of regular meetings, the society has an archive of photographs, maps, documents and other items relating to the parish of Wargrave. The society collection, for example, includes a set of the parish magazine from the first issue of 1861 to the 1886, and an almost complete run from 1950

Berkshire societies

Berkshire societies

to the present, whilst there is a full set of the *Wargrave News*, a village newspaper first published in October 1978 (and still distributed to all homes in the parish). Various minute and account books for village organisations are held by the society, and there is a range of photographs of aspects of the village, either donated or loaned for copies to be made. Several important collections of material have been added to the archive, most notably the postcard collection begun by Derek Bird, and continued by his late mother, and the personal photograph albums of Harriette Cooke Smith, the village's principal benefactor in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, with pictures from the early 1870s to the 1900s. Much of this has been donated to the society, and is kept in our archives store, at the very top of the building that also houses the village library (but is not available on open access).

Members have recorded the inscriptions in St Mary's graveyard, and it is planned eventually to make this available through both the society and the Berkshire Family History Society. We also have a database of the basic information contained in the parish registers from *circa* 1750 onwards, to help answer the many enquiries received by those researching their family history. Occasionally these enquiries are sent by post, but mostly via an enquiry link from the society's website on <www.wargravehistory.org.uk>. This also includes reports on the society monthly meetings.

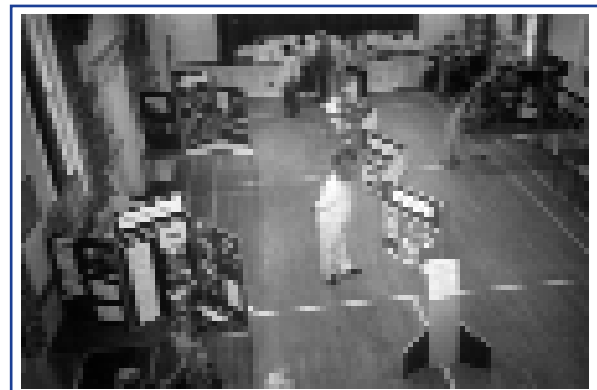
In 1986 the society published *The book of Wargrave*, a hardback of history and reminiscences by the people of Wargrave. Such was the success of this that a reprint had to be ordered within a month, and a further, softback, reprint in 1999. As further information became available, a complementary volume, *The second book of Wargrave*, was published in 1998. More recently, in order to share some of the fascinating images in our archival collections, *The illustrated book of Wargrave*, a hardback collection of historical

Wargrave at a glance

<i>location:</i>	where the river Loddon joins the Thames in east Berkshire
<i>size:</i>	2,887 acres (VCH, 1923)
<i>population:</i>	3,910
<i>church:</i>	St Mary's



Above is a scene from the Wargrave village festival of 2011. Below, two views of a historical exhibition held in the village hall in 2001.



images of the village, was published in 2011. The society also publishes a booklet titled *Historic Wargrave walks*, enabling residents and visitors to discover some of our village history; it is also the basis of the walks that still are a popular event at the village festival every two years.

After 30 years of using the Hannen Room in Wargrave, from September 2011 the regular monthly meetings will move to be held at the Pavilion, Recreation Road, Wargrave. Visitors are welcome to join us (for a small charge).

berkshire eccentrics no 4

The beautiful Lady Craven

Penny Stokes

Elizabeth Berkeley, later to become Lady Craven, Margravine of Anspach and Princess Berkeley, was nearly a neonatal casualty; her mother, disappointed at having produced a sickly girl, had the swaddled infant cast to one side on a chair, where she was very nearly sat upon by a visiting aunt.

Elizabeth survived this and an unloving childhood to fall in love at 16 with William Craven, 12 years her senior and heir presumptive to his uncle's barony and vast Berkshire estates. According to her memoirs he "fell most violently in love" with her, subsequently declaring that if he could not be her husband he must either live abroad or die.

Neither proved necessary; it was a suitable match. Indeed, William's three childless uncles were most anxious to see the Craven dynasty secured, although the Berkeleys were a little less keen. Lavish settlements were made in 1767 upon the young couple, who took up residence at Ashdown House, near Lambourn. Elizabeth Craven noted that her husband's "attachment increased daily", and babies began to arrive in annual succession.

The uncles died in turn, making William the sixth Baron Craven of Hamstead Marshall, owner of three country houses in west Berkshire (Hamstead Lodge, Benham Place, also known as Benham Valence, and Ashdown House) amongst others elsewhere. But Lord Craven was rarely content to stay in one place for long. "Life was one continual ramble," complained the ever-pregnant Elizabeth as her husband pursued the traditional Craven sports of cockfighting, racing and foxhunting, preferring these to patronage of the fine arts, which she favoured, although she was also a

regular racegoer and even raced horses under her own name – a bold stance for ladies of the time.

It becomes hard to separate truth from propaganda in the marital conflict which developed. Lord Craven's rampant infidelities became common gossip, not least his acquisition of a mistress who had been left at the Crown Inn in Reading by her former protector, a colonel, in order to settle his bill in whatever manner she could. Lady Craven professed blameless chastity, although the press of the time openly linked her with the French ambassador.

Abandoned by her husband in 1782, after having borne him six surviving children, Elizabeth was allowed custody only of the youngest, four-year-old Richard Keppel, with whom she embarked on a prolonged European tour, taking in Venice, Vienna, Cracow, Warsaw, St Petersburg, Moscow, Constantinople and Athens. She mixed with kings, queens and empresses. A keen-eyed observer of international affairs and cultural difference, she recorded her experiences and opinions in detail.

She also conducted an unremitting propaganda war against her husband, still living at Benham Place. Each vilified the other in letters designed to feed the rumour mill of Georgian high society. There were disputes about money, jewellery and houses. She claimed that he prevented the older children from writing to her as had been agreed. Above all she feared that she might lose custody of Keppel, such that when she later despatched him to school at Harrow it was under a false name.

Lady Craven cherished a formidable self-



regard and an unshakeable conviction that she was loved and revered by one and all; phrases such as “me, so universal a favourite!” suggest self-esteem bordering on egomania. However she also had courage, energy, style and education. She wrote poetry, plays and memoirs, and socialised with the literati of the day, including Horace Walpole and Dr Johnson.

From 1786 onwards Elizabeth settled at the court of the Margrave of Anspach, a German princeling. Forthwith she reorganised his household, patronising his sickly wife, and edging out his mistress, a French actress whom she claimed always had “three lovers at a time constantly in her train: one whom she deceived; one whom she received *a la dérobée*; and one who lived on sighs.” This was a mite hypocritical; few believed that Elizabeth’s relationship with the Margrave was as chaste as she proclaimed.

When by an extraordinary coincidence both the Margravine and Lord Craven died in 1791 their surviving spouses married within six

weeks. “Weeds on Saturday, satin and vestal trim on Sunday, and in that vestal trim married the Margrave on Monday,” wrote Walpole archly, and his was not the only unfavourable opinion of such hasty nuptials. When the newly-wed couple came to London they were not received at court. Queen Charlotte took a dim view of marital irregularity, and she refused to recognise Elizabeth’s German title of Princess Berkeley. Predictably this rebuff earned them the favour of the Prince of Wales, whom Elizabeth (unlike his unfortunate wife) found charming and well-mannered.

The Anspachs alternated between Brandenburgh House in Hammersmith and Benham Place just west of Newbury, the house which Elizabeth as Lady Craven had rebuilt with her husband after a disastrous fire in 1772. Here she indulged her lifelong passion for the theatre, writing, directing and performing in plays which, according to the waspish Walpole, were “all praise of spousy and her dear sweet self.” Nonetheless, her contribution

to the theatre, detailed in *A catalogue of strolling companies*, was considerable. Her many literary works include an imaginary conversation between the river Kennet and "the Navigation" (the newly opened Kennet and Avon Canal), which leaves the reader in no doubt as to the havoc it wrought upon the Benham landscape. For a few years she played a prominent role in Newbury society and the Berkshire Yeomanry.

When the Margrave died at Benham in 1806 Elizabeth took on the role of grieving widow with dramatic relish, organising a funeral of rare extravagance, and hiring Canova, a sculptor whose clients included popes and heads of state, to create a monument. It can be seen in Speen church today.

Life alone at Benham became disagreeable. Elizabeth contested some disadvantageous provisions in her late husband's will, and argued with her neighbours. In 1811 she set off again into Europe, paying characteristically scant attention to the risks of travelling abroad before the conclusion of the French wars. She secured an audience with Napoleon and Josephine to obtain safe conduct as a German citizen. Her ultimate destination was Naples, where Keppel awaited her. She reported that the King of Naples yielded instantly to her dazzling charm, and gave her two acres on which she did her best to recreate Brandenburgh House. Here she whiled away her remaining years gardening and writing her memoirs. In 1828 she died, and was buried in the English cemetery in Naples.

Elizabeth Berkeley lives on not only in print but on canvas; the late eighteenth century was a rich period of English portraiture, and as a famously beautiful woman she was painted by several leading artists of the day, including Gainsborough, Reynolds, Romney and Angelica Kauffman, although she professed dissatisfaction with all the results. One of her legacies to this day is Craven Cottage: the home of Fulham football club was originally a thatched house which Lady

The Margravine of Anspach, painted by Ozias Humphrey



Craven built with a lottery win in 1780. The present-day (ninth) Lord Craven is her direct descendant.

She is remembered too in Germany, in the town which now spells itself Ansbach, but with less affection. For these citizens Lady Craven was the selfish Englishwoman who alienated their last Margrave, and bullied him into selling his principality.

Sources

A M Broadley and L Melville *The beautiful Lady Craven* 2 vols (Bodley, 1914)

Charles Pigott *The Jockey Club: a sketch of the manners of the age* 2nd ed (1792-93)

Paul Ranger *Catalogue of strolling companies: ongoing theatre in Newbury* (Newbury District Museum, 1990)

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Two perspectives on disease, and how it afflicted small communities in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: first, Sue Burnay shows how the overseers' accounts can illuminate the unadorned facts of the burials register.

When searching parish registers for your family history, have you ever come across an unusual increase in the number of burials in your parish? You probably thought of some sort of local epidemic, but had no other information to go on.

One such spike in burial figures cropped up in the parish registers of East Ilsley in the mid-eighteenth century. In 1753 there were 27 burials recorded,¹ compared with the usual number of between six and 12 – an enormous increase for such a small village. As is often the case at that time, the registers record only the name of the deceased, with no other information.

It was only when I started looking at the accounts books for the overseers of the poor² that it became clear there had been an epidemic of smallpox in that year.

The first mention of smallpox in the accounts occurs in April 1753, when the costs of Joseph Whiteing's illness are listed. For the rest of 1753 and into the first half of 1754 the accounts continue to list details of smallpox-related expenditure for many different people in the village. It's clear that this was a major epidemic, with at least seven poor families being mentioned.

Of course, the poor were not the only people affected. Many other burials in that year were also likely to be due to the epidemic, and may even have included that of the rector, Rev Joseph Barnes, although at 79 years of age it may have been the strain of visiting the sick and carrying out so many burial services that finished him.

Identifying which of the burials relate to smallpox deaths among those not mentioned in the overseers' accounts is not so easy. The total of smallpox deaths for 1753 is estimated

Smallpox an epidemic in East Ilsley in 1753

to be about 20 of the 27 burials, making the assumption that the deaths of elderly residents, infants and mothers shortly after childbirth are probably from other causes. This implies that probably 50 to 60 people in the village were infected during the year, a major drain on the resources of a small community.

Joseph Whiteing and his family survived, but others mentioned in the accounts did not. The mortality rate for smallpox in the eighteenth century was typically 20 to 60 per cent of those infected, rising to 80 per cent for children. Although the disease is highly contagious it does require close contact with the victim to be transmitted, so quarantine was really the only option for a community. For poor families in cramped accommodation this was a major problem, since victims could be contagious for up to five weeks.

So how did the epidemic affect the village? From the overseers' accounts books it's clear that the financial cost was high. Take, as an example, Joseph Whiteing, the first person mentioned in the accounts. Over a period of three months, from April to June 1753, the accounts list the cost of supporting Joseph and his family during his illness coming to a total of £9-6s-11d (see list overleaf). There were then further expenses of £1-7s-11¼d in October 1753 for his daughter's illness. This was at a time when the normal monthly total

for the overseers would have been less than £4, supporting perhaps a dozen families. The bills included nursing for Joseph, provided by Widow Clark (who presumably had already survived smallpox) as well as bills from local shopkeepers, such as the Snosswells (sometimes spelt Snoswell), for food and other living essentials. It's quite likely that the family was quarantined during Joseph's illness to reduce the risk of spreading the disease.

April 22nd 1753

The expense of Joseph Whiteing in the Smallpox	£1-7-9½
Paid for maintaining Joseph Whiteings Wife & family	£0-5-0

May 20th 1753

Paid for maintaining Joseph Whiteing in the Smallpox to James Martin	£1-9-4
Paid William Deacon a bill for things delivered to Joseph Whiteing in the Smallpox	£0-11-6¼
Expenses Joseph Whiteing in the smallpox paid for maintaining him	£0-13-4
Paid for maintaining his family	£0-17-0
Paid Henry Pryor for Waiting on Joseph Whiteing with Smallpox	£0-6-0
Paid the Widow Clark for nursing Joseph Whiteing in the Small Pox five weeks	£2-10-0

June 17th 1753

Expenses Joseph Whiteing in the Smallpox Paid William Deacon and James Martin	£0-14-11¼
Maintaining his family	£0-12-6

Oct 7th 1753

Paid Mrs Snosswell a Bill for Joseph Whiteings Daughter during the Smallpox	£0-6-2
Paid William Deacon a Bill for Joseph Whiteings Daughter	£0-16-6¼
Ditto Jane Foster waiting on Whiteings child	£0-5-3

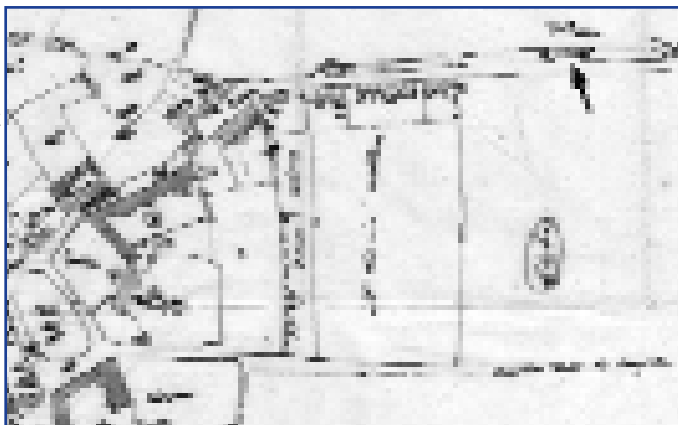
Over the period April 1753 to July 1754 a total of £45 was spent by the overseers in support of poor families affected by smallpox. This represents about the same amount as was normally spent in total on poor relief in a year, supporting poor widows and orphans in the village.

The financial cost is only one aspect of the effect on the community. For some families, the epidemic meant the loss of several family members. Joseph Whiteing was lucky – both he and his daughter survived. Other families were not so lucky. The Snosswell family lost four family members in that year. They ran one of the shops in the village and were reasonably well off – Elizabeth Snosswell who died in April 1753 left £12 in specific bequests to her four sons in her will.³ Her son Thomas, who died in August 1753, left 6s a week to his brother Richard from the time of Elizabeth's illness to

Thomas's death as recompense for Richard's looking after the family during the smallpox, at the expense of his own business. Two other Snosswells also died in the early part of 1753, but this may well have been from other causes. John Barret and his daughter Mary, aged five, both died in the epidemic. James and Mary Coakes lost both their son John, aged 16, and daughter Mary, aged nine.

So what happened in the longer

Location of "the Lodge" (arrowed) - part of the map of East Ilsley⁴



term in East Ilsley? Smallpox continued to crop up intermittently, as mentioned in the overseers' accounts, but there were no major epidemics for the rest of the eighteenth century. This may have been due to the overseers providing premises where smallpox victims could be quarantined away from their families and most of the village. In 1755, the first mention is made of somewhere called "the Lodge", whose upkeep appears in the accounts periodically over the next decades. Although it's not specifically stated, this may have been the quarantine house. In the early part of the nineteenth century a map and terrier of the village compiled by the Rev Thomas⁴ lists two cottages on the eastern edge of the village as being the Lodge. By 1831 these cottages were definitely owned by the parish, but by then they appear to be no longer in use as quarantine premises.

Sources

1. Parish register transcripts, St. Mary's Church, East Ilsley, Berks FHS (CD)
2. East Ilsley is relatively unusual in Berkshire in that a full set of detailed overseers' accounts have survived for the whole period between 1744 and 1796 (BRO reference D/P 74/12/3). The detail in these accounts is a fantastic resource for family historians, since it covers the poorest end of village society, who otherwise would leave few records apart from their births, deaths and marriages. These account books are currently being transcribed by East Ilsley Local History Society, who aim to make them available on CD in the near future.
3. Transcripts of the wills are found in *In the name of God, Amen – transcripts of 190 East Ilsley wills* by Eric Saxton, CD published by East Ilsley Local History Society
4. The map of the village identifying the Lodge is in the booklet *A drunken worthless creature – notes on parishioners, 1831* by Kay Sanderson, published by the East Ilsley Local History Society.

Dr Sue Burnay has written a number of books on East Ilsley: *Historical walks in East Ilsley*; *More historical walks around East Ilsley*; *Time, gentlemen please* (300+ years of pubs and brewing in East and West Ilsley); and *East Ilsley in the 1830s, an interactive map and terrier listing* on CD, written jointly with Nigel Wardell.

A Kingston Bagpuize family tragedy in 1849

This article is reproduced with permission from www.kingston-bagpuize.com.

I suppose that when I started to investigate my ancestors, I had some idea that times were hard for many of them, but the events of one year in the family history made it very clear just how desperately hard life could be for the poor and underprivileged.

The story first started to unfold when I obtained the parish records for Kingston Bagpuize, and found that eight members of the Jeffries family were recorded as having been buried in 1849, seven of them in the space of about 10 weeks. Because the deaths took place after the start of civil registration in 1837 I was able to obtain the death certificates from the General Registration Office. Had the deaths happened before 1837 the cause of the deaths would have remained an intriguing mystery. The certificates revealed that the seven deaths which occurred close together resulted from typhus fever, and the eighth, a two week old girl, from *spina bifida*.

The writer of this article, Alan Jeffries, would be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to comment, and recommends that readers interested in Kingston Bagpuize should visit www.kingston-bagpuize.com and www.longworth-district-history-society.org.uk. His email address is alan@lakedale.free-serve.co.uk.

Name	Date	Age	Relationship	Cause
Henry	9 Mar	c73	my ggg-grandfather	typhus fever
Ann (née Belcher)	28 Jan	70	Henry's wife	typhus fever
William	30 Mar	43	Henry's 3rd son	typhus fever
Moses	27 Jan	31	Henry's 7th son	typhus fever
Mary Ann	5 Apr	18	dau of Henry's 2nd son, John, and his wife, Charlotte	typhus fever
Albert	8 Feb	14	son of Henry's 2nd son, John, and his wife, Charlotte	typhus fever
Eliza	27 Feb	7	dau of Henry's 2nd son, John, and his wife, Charlotte	typhus fever
Mary	4 Sep	2 wks	dau of Henry's 4th son, Jonathan, and his wife, Elizabeth	<i>spina bifida</i>

It seems likely that they contracted the most virulent of the forms of typhus, epidemic typhus (*rickettsia prowazekii*), which is spread by the human body louse (*pediculus humanus corporis*). This suggests that quite a few of the family were living in close proximity and in poor hygiene.

However, despite the name of the disease, the parish burial records do not suggest that there was an epidemic of typhus fever in the village. There were seven burials in 1848, 15 in 1849 (including the eight Jeffries) and 10 in 1850.

Because lice move around slowly, and because the disease is not spread by air or water, it is perhaps understandable that it was confined, but it does raise some interesting questions. Would the local doctor, John Barrett, have insisted on the family being isolated? What precautions would have been taken by those looking after the affected people and those dealing with the corpses? Would the clothes and bedding of the deceased have been burnt? Were there any special requirements for the burial?

The deaths were a tragedy for all concerned, of course, but I would just like to look at it from the viewpoint of Charlotte. Poor Charlotte had already lost one child in 1841 and her husband, John, in 1844. Then in the space of about 10 weeks in 1849 she lost three more children, both John's grandparents, and two brothers-in-law, followed about five months later by a niece. In 1881, at about 70 years of age, she was still working as an agricultural labourer. She probably died in 1887.

Finally, I should like to pay tribute to the five women listed below, whom the death certificates name as the informants and as having been present at death. I suspect that they would have looked after the family members in the time from the contraction of the disease to death, even though there must have been some risk to themselves. The family members, whom they looked after, are shown in brackets after their names.

Mary Mapson, of Kingston Bagpuize (Henry and William). She was the wife of John, an agricultural labourer. They had at least six children.

Harriet Bradshaw, of Kingston Bagpuize (Ann). She is probably the Hart. Bradshaw in the 1851 census in KB, described as a pauper agricultural labourer and a widow, aged 65

Ann Rouse, of Draycott Moor (Moses)

Martha Bestley, of Kingston Bagpuize (Mary Ann)

Jane Hutt (Albert and Eliza). She is living in Draycott Moor in 1851 with her husband, Thomas, and their family. Both are described as farm labourers.

Technical details of typhus can be seen on <www.patient.co.uk/showdoc/40000452/>.

Almshouses

Newbury's heritage of charity housing

In 2010 St Bartholomew's School in Newbury moved into new premises. Clearances prior to the move brought several interesting items to light, including two rough minute books of charities dating from 1837-41.

Judith Thomas (1291), the school's librarian, has extracted from them some details which illuminate the entry conditions and benefits of almshouse accommodation, not to mention an unseemly dispute in the matter of catering for the inhabitants' spiritual needs.

The question of Newbury charities is a vexed and complicated one, and I'm greatly indebted to Vera Garlick's booklet, *Newbury charities and gifts*, published by the author in 1972, for useful background and for clearing up some of the problems of locating Newbury's almshouses. This is a confusing topic, with the houses sometimes named as "the ten last built" or as "on the Cheese Fair". Some almshouses have had additions and alterations at later dates. The 1841 census was not very useful in pinpointing exact locations. The Newburynet website was useful, particularly its aerial photograph and map of the site of the "new" (in 1837) St Bartholomew's almshouses, which were destroyed by a bomb in the Second World War.

The Borough of Newbury in the years 1837-41 seems to have been concerned with the following

almshouses (there were other charities with their own almshouses which were administered quite separately):

- the old St Bartholomew's almshouses (known as King John's almshouses) in Argyle Road. Still in existence.
- the new St Bartholomew's almshouses (in Fair Close, Bartholomew Street, also sometimes known as the Cheese Fair). Built in 1813, they were bombed in 1943. Fairclose Day Centre now stands on the site.
- Raymond's almshouses
 - a) Lower: also situated in Bartholomew Street, but at a right angle to both the road and to the then St Bartholomew's almshouses in Fair Close. Still in existence.
 - b) Upper: in Argyle Road, on the opposite side from the old St Bartholomew's almshouses, and close to the site of the Litten. Still in existence.
- St Mary's Hill, in Cheap Street. Six almshouses for six "old maids". There is a photo of the St Mary's

St Bartholomew's Hospital. The tower is dated 1698, but the adjoining almshouses are 80 years older.



Upper Raymond's almshouses



Almshouses in Cheap Street on the newburynet website, but the caption states the buildings pictured were not built until 1864, and were demolished in the early 1970s to make way for Mill Reef House. Vera Garlick, however, doesn't mention that there were any new buildings in 1864, just that the inhabitants were moved out in 1967.

All the almshouses derived their income from rents coming from specific properties bequeathed to the various charities.

The conditions for becoming an almsman or woman

The charity trustees were much occupied during 1837-41 with standardising the qualifications for residence across these four sets of almshouses. The qualifications for entry to Raymond's almshouses had at first differed, and a list of the inhabitants and their origins was produced in January 1838. Eventually a form of declaration was produced for each candidate for Raymond's almshouses, who was to answer the following questions.

- 1) *What is your age?*
- 2) *Were you born in the parish of Newbury?*
- 3) *Are you at this time a parishioner of Newbury?*
- 4) *Have you at any time been assessed to and paid the Poor Rate in the parish of Newbury?*
- 5) *How long did you contribute to the Poor Rate?*
- 6) *Have you at any time received relief of the parish? And if so, for what period?*
- 7) *Have you followed any, and if any, what, occupation in the town of Newbury?*

Any person obtaining an almshouse through any false statement would on discovery be ejected and rendered ineligible to receive thereafter relief from the funds of Raymond's Charity. Where there were two candidates, the rector of Newbury would select one.

The entitlements

Having been elected, how would the new almsman or woman benefit? The details for each separate set of buildings varied slightly, but those pertaining to the St Bartholomew's almshouses are laid out in another book found at the time of the move, the 1849 St Bartholomew's Hospital, Newbury Free Grammar School Foundation book. This has also been transferred to Berkshire Record Office.

The almshouses were to be maintained and kept in repair and insured from damage to fire, and the residents' entitlements listed in this book were as follows:

- The inmates of the almshouses were to have the following benefit out of the hospital revenues: each inmate 5s per week for subsistence; 25s a year for clothing; 63s a year for fuel; and a gratuity of 13s 4d on St Thomas' Day (21st December – a sort of Christmas bonus).
- The inmates of the old almshouses in King John's Court were to receive 10s each per annum in lieu of gardens enjoyed by the other almspeople in the Fair Close Court. Clearly the almspeople were expected to cultivate their gardens for food, and those without gardens were at a disadvantage.
- At the Court of Pie-Powder, when King John granted a fair to the hospital, a bun and a pint of ale were to be given to them by the person who holds the fair booth for the sale of liquors and beer in the fair.
- A nurse was employed until June 1840.
- A clergyman with a stipend of £26 per annum was to be appointed to read prayers twice a week in the Ancient Room, or chapel, to the almspeople.

The Great Prayer Reading Dispute 1838-39

This requirement for prayers to be read to the inmates had resulted in 1838 in a rather intriguing dispute between the charity trustees and the rector of Newbury. It wasn't until May 1841 that the stipend mentioned above came into force. In the rough minute books of 1838 it seems that the rector of Newbury, Dr Binney,

was sternly reminded that he was required by deed made by the founder of Raymond's Charity to read prayers to the almspeople in Raymond's almshouses. At that time the salary was £5 per annum.

The charity trustees arranged for the archway in the Raymond's almshouses in Fair Close to be filled up for the purpose of prayers being read there, and at the same time appointed another clergyman, the Rev J A D Meakin, to read prayers in the Litten Chapel to the St Bartholomew's almspeople for one year at a salary of £10 per annum.

Meanwhile the rector of Newbury requested payment of money from the Kendrick Charity for providing early service at the church (this was the separate Kendrick Early Morning Prayer Charity), but it was minuted that he would receive the money only when the service had actually been performed according to Kendrick's will.

There was obviously something deeply unpopular about performing these prayers. The Rev J A D Meakin declined to accept the trustees' offer. They then gratefully accepted the offer of the Rev Joseph Birchall to read prayers to the St Bartholomew's almspeople during his stay in Newbury.

Dr Binney, however, was not going to give up the chance of adding to his stipend without a fight. On 7 March 1839 the Proctor of St Bartholomew's Charity reported on what seems to have been an unseemly scuffle over access to the Litten Chapel. Dr Binney had made the unilateral decision that it was also his prerogative to read prayers to the St Bartholomew's almshouse occupants, and was aghast at the Proctor's response that the trustees had appointed someone else, and that he (the Proctor) "would not be justified in admitting any other person to perform that duty in the chapel". Consequently Dr Binney was not able to gain admission to the Litten. The trustees backed the Proctor fully in his actions, adding ominously "that he [the Proctor] should be fully indemnified from any consequences". The case was to be referred to a Doctor of Civil Law as to "the exclusive right claimed by the rector to

make such an appointment", and the keys of the Litten Chapel were to be delivered to one of the charity trustees. However the Proctor, George Payne, was obviously completely unnerved by his encounter with an irate rector, and resigned.

To cut a long story short, the Doctor of Civil Law in London found in favour of the charity trustees, but there was still trouble finding a clergyman to read the prayers for the St Bartholomew's almspeople. Even at £10 per annum the next appointed vicar resigned after less than three months, and the vicar appointed to succeed him only lasted three weeks. By 19th August 1838 it was resolved that the appointment "be suspended for the present".

Even in 1840 the trustees still felt obliged to have minuted on 10 June that they had "*from time immemorial exercised exclusive right of appointment of Reader and they see no reason to give up such right, particularly as they are sanctioned thereof by the opinion of Dr Addams. The trustees submit that this charity has heretofore paid only an annual sum of £10 for reading prayers and a proper person has always been found willing to perform the duty.*"

But only a year later the trustees had to raise the salary to £26 per annum. Vera Garlick reports in her book that the Kendrick Morning Prayer Charity had as its object the maintenance of divine service to be said in the parish church "every morning of the week at six of the clock." If the similar provision for the Raymond's and St Bartholomew's almspeople was also to be carried out at such an early hour, then no wonder it was so unpopular with those whose duty it was to provide these rites. The almspeople too may well have been devoutly thankful that no-one could be found to perform these prayers on a regular basis.

Sources:

V F M Garlick *Newbury charities and gifts* (author, 1972)

The signed and dated official minute books covering those dates are already in the Berkshire Record Office, so the rough minutes were not required.

The December issue will carry Part II of this article, which will cover living conditions and a list of known occupants.

“Sweet delightful village of Drayton in Berkshire, famous for old maids”

A song composed by Elizabeth Caudwell (1819-88)

*Nicky
Stepney
(2783)*

My paternal great-great-grandmother, Elizabeth Caudwell, was born in 1819 in the village of Drayton, near Abingdon in Berkshire, to parents William Caudwell¹ and Hannah Lousley² of Drayton Manor of the same village. Elizabeth was baptised on 9 April 1819³ in the village church of St Peter's. She was the twelfth child and fifth daughter of a staggering total of 15 children born to William and Hannah during the period 1804-29 (although four of these children did not survive infancy).

I like to think that Elizabeth had a wonderful childhood surrounded by all her brothers and sisters at the manor house. She certainly would not have been short of company, and the house must have been filled with the sound of childish laughter over many years. In 2009 I was fortunate enough to visit the house where Elizabeth grew up, and I was able to see for myself where she would have slept and eaten her meals with her family. I also saw the beautiful garden in which she would have played; it was a wonderful experience to walk the same paths she would have once taken. Whilst I was visiting Drayton Manor (still in the ownership of a branch of the Caudwell family), the owner gave me a document that had been found amongst other old papers in various cupboards and drawers. Written upon the paper I was given was a song that Elizabeth had composed on the 29 December 1836, when she was just 17 years old and still unmarried. The song had been composed in honour of the “sweet delightful village of Drayton in Berkshire, famous for old maids”⁴. I found it really amusing, and it gave me real insight into my great-great-grandmother's character. Instead of coming across as a simpering, love-struck young girl, she appears to have been very independent even at such a tender age, and her forthright opinions about marriage are expressed very well in the words of the song.

***I heard a fine story one cold winter's night
To tell my acquaintance it is my delight.
A gentleman said there are twenty old maids
In the village of Drayton and only four blades***

***He said we were ugly and wanted to marry,
But no one would have us unless we could carry
A very large fortune and be very rich
Before we'd be sold we would die in a ditch.***

***I'm sure some are pretty and some very clever,
We're happy as doves when we're together.
We don't want to marry, we sigh for no man
And to live as we are, is a very good plan.***

***But if either should like to alter their station
When married they'd find it a strange alteration.
To be tied to a man all the days of their life
They'd wish in their hearts they'd ne'r entered the strife.***

Elizabeth Holliday née Caudwell



***But I'll live single and do as I can
And I'll not be ordered about by a man
I'll laugh and I'll dance, I'll talk and I'll sing
And I'll have fun while times on the wing***

***I must play a few years before I am twenty
If my elders want sweethearts they may have plenty
There are numbers to have as you all plainly see
But I don't care a gin what the world thinks of me***

***All our faults, Mr Dewe's, I hope you will shun,
And look at home first to correct all your own.
I doubt you are handsome, genteel and polite
To ridicule people it is your delight.***

***I know I am ugly, but that I don't care
I hope Drayton ladies won't get a scare
And if we live single we have plenty to keep us
The sooner the better "poor soul" when you leave us***

Nicky Stepney's website can be found on
<www.familiespast2present.co.uk>
and she can be contacted on
<nickystepney@hotmail.co.uk>



*John Holliday
(1815 - 1900) whom
the poet married in
1844*

Elizabeth had signed her name at the end of the song and inscribed it with the note *Written by Happy, Contented, Fortunate, Independent, Well-disposed Old Maids, Elizabeth Caudwell, Drayton Farm, made a song but that's no harm and Frances Caudwell, Drayton Farm, made the tune, old maids to charm, 29th December 1836.*

I'm not entirely sure who the Frances Caudwell is that Elizabeth refers to, as I have not found a sibling of hers with that name except a brother Francis, and I am sure he was not the other old maid she was referring to!

Elizabeth did not live out the sentiments of her song however, as when she was 25 years old she went on to marry my great-great-grandfather John Holliday⁶ on 25 July 1844⁷ at the same church in which she was baptised. John Holliday was a farmer and landowner from the nearby village of East Hagbourne, and she soon settled down as a farmer's wife in the village. Elizabeth and John went on to have five children of their own, including my great-grandfather Francis Holliday.⁸ Elizabeth lived out the rest of her life in East Hagbourne, and died on 23 October 1888⁹ when she was 69 years old. She is buried in the Holliday tomb in the churchyard of St Andrew's in the village.

References

1. William Caudwell of Drayton Manor (1779 - 1854)
2. Hannah Lousley of the village of Blewbury (1782 - 1849)
3. Baptism of Elizabeth Caudwell in Drayton parish records held at the Berkshire Record Office, Reading
4. Song written by Elizabeth Caudwell in 1836, and found at Drayton Manor House, near Abingdon, Berkshire in the mid-twentieth century
5. Several Dewe families lived in the Berkshire villages of Sutton Courtenay and Hampstead Norreys in the nineteenth century.
6. John Holliday, farmer and landowner in East Hagbourne (1815 - 1900)
7. GRO marriage certificate of John Holliday and Elizabeth Caudwell 25th July 1844, Drayton, Berkshire (Abingdon vol 6 p201)
8. Francis Holliday (1862 - 1937)
9. GRO death certificate of Elizabeth Holliday (formerly Caudwell) 23 October 1888, East Hagbourne, Berkshire (Wallingford vol 2c p191)

Gleanings *from exchange magazines*

Tony Wright

Copies of these articles (paper or electronic) can be supplied on request. For paper send your request with a SAE (min 11 x 22 cm) and two loose stamps to Exchange Magazines, Berks FHS, Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 7TJ. For electronic copies apply to <gleanings@berksfhs.org.uk>. Please supply both the issue date of the Historian and full details of the title and source of the Gleaning. Copyright law requires that photocopies of articles in journals may only be made for the purpose of private study or non-commercial research. Only one article from any one issue can be supplied. All digital copies must be printed off and deleted.

Twentieth-century resources

Problems of researching twentieth-century lives
Origins (Buckinghamshire FHS) Jun 2011, p20-26

The labouring classes

Dorset FHS (13), vol 24, June 2011, p108-09

How do I trace my Glamorgan army ancestors?

Regimental museums in Wales and regimental tree showing how the modern Royal Welsh was formed
Glamorgan FHS Journal (61), Jun 2011, p46-49

Adoption: birth & adoption family searching

Journal of the Bristol & Avon FHS (3), no 144, Jun 2011, p54-55

Computers and genealogy: top websites

Hertfordshire names, Fife FHS and London street name changes
Australian Family Tree Connections (65), May 2011, p41

The Four Courts Fire of 1922

Destruction of records in the Dublin fire of 1922 plus researching Irish ancestors
Ancestral Searcher (Heraldry & Genealogy Society of Canberra Inc) (66), vol 3, Mar 2011, p34-39

Parish Register Transcription Society

Online access to the records of the PRT Society
The Islonian (Isle of Axholme FHS) (28), vol 16, Jan 2011, p19-21

Using local newspapers in family history research

How to use them and what you may find
Doncaster Ancestor (Doncaster & District FHS) (50A), vol 2, Spring 2011, p22-25

How to research railway ancestors

Four step to finding that railway ancestor
Doncaster Ancestor (Doncaster & District FHS) (50A), vol 21, Summer 2011, p17

Christchurch National School

Extracts from school log books 1863 - 1921
Dorset FHS (13), vol 24, Jun 2011, p110-12

English prisoners of war of the French First Empire

Service Historique de la Defense, Paris, archives
Genealogists' Magazine (Society of Genealogists) (76), vol 30, Mar 2011, p153-60

The Folkestone Lieutenancy Papers

1803 schedules of men, guides, millers, bakers, waggoners, ships
Kentish Connection (Folkestone & District FHS) (22), vol 24, Jun 2011, p112-15

An unlawful marriage

"He shall prick that annual blister, marriage with deceased wife's sister": changes to the Table of Kindred and Affinity – who can marry whom
Hel Achau (Clwyd FHS) (59), Jun 2011, p38-39

Births marriages and deaths recorded 200 years ago in the Hereford Journal from January to March 1811

Herefordiensis (Herefordshire FHS) (17), vol XI, Apr 2011, p151-54

Burials in the cemetery of Lincolnshire County Asylum, Bracebridge Heath

What records do, and don't, exist
Journal of the Lincolnshire FHS (27), vol 22, May 2011, p59

Cornish mining families in west Cork: the baptismal register for the Berehaven Copper Mines, Allihies, Co Cork, Ireland
130 baptisms during 1842-78
Cornwall FHS (9), Mar 2011, p7-10

Was your ancestor in the Bristol Riots? Part 2
List of killed or wounded rioters from 1831
Journal of the Bristol & Avon FHS (3), Jun 2011, p32-34

RMC Sandhurst
Baptisms at the Royal Memorial Chapel, Sandhurst
Root & Branch (West Surrey FHS) (46), vol 38, Jun 2011, p35-37

Extending the research: two Essex war memorials
Beyond the easily accessible sources
Essex Family Historian (Essex Society for Family History) (14), Jun 2011, p53-55

The Anglo-Boer War part 4: ephemera and resources for the family historian
Identifying and understanding ephemera associated with the war
Shropshire FHS (41), vol 32, Mar 2011, p43-46

The price of coal!
19 April 1888: explosion at St Helen's Colliery, Workington kills 30
Cumbria FHS (10A), Feb 2011, p24-26

The Anglo-Boer War part 5: literature and internet resources for the family historian
Shropshire FHS (41), vol 32, Jun 2011, p77-79

Mr Pepys and his money
Worried about a Dutch invasion, Samuel Pepys buries his gold. Later, can he remember where?
Roots in the Forest (Waltham Forest FHS) (14A), Mar 2011, p6-12

Recollections of Hamsterley Colliery 1898 - 1915
Life above and below ground
Northumberland & Durham FHS Journal (37), vol 36, Summer 2011, p20-26

Mid-nineteenth-century Harlington from public records
Harlington residents as seen by newspaper correspondents Bo-Peep and Paul Pry
West Middlesex FHS Journal (34), vol 29, Jun 2011, p6-11

The British War Graves Commission
Sarah Ann Smith and her fight to have the fallen returned home
Yorkshire Family Historian (50), vol 37, Mar 2011, p20-28

A sheltered life!
Memories of life in London during WW2
The Cedar Log (Richmond-Tweed FHS Inc) (67), Mar 2011, p11-15

West Cumberland Postal Directory
Author has two copies of the directory, both with the same set of pages missing!
Cumbria FHS (10A), Feb 2011, p29-30

Lincolnshire cunning-folk
Précis of a dissertation titled *The role of cunning-folk after the Witchcraft Act of 1736, and how they responded to the pressures of social and economic change*
Journal of the Lincolnshire FHS (27), vol 22, May 2011, p69-73

Builth's Jane Austen: Hilda Vaughan (1892 - 1985)
Cronicle Powys (Powys FHS) (60), Aug 2010, p12-14

Members' contributions: the British Steel Collection (Part 1)
Saving the collection and making public access possible
Cleveland FHS (8), vol 11, Apr 2011, p39-42

Our cover picture: the Arbor Tree in Aston-on-Clun, Hopesay
The tradition of "dressing the Arbor tree"
Shropshire FHS (41), vol 32, Mar 2011, p3-4

Tracing Cardiff Irish ancestry
Glamorgan FHS Journal (61), Jun 2011, p16-20

Bookends

Jean Debney

Prices quoted are for:

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b) mail order purchase within UK, including p&p by second class post unless stated otherwise

c) mail order purchase from overseas, including p&p airmail.

Please note that from our online bookshop at <www.berksfhs.org.uk/shop>, you can pay by credit card, and you can make possible savings on p&p if you are buying more than one item.

BERKSHIRE LOCAL HISTORY

History of Bradfield in Berkshire from Roman villa to World War II

Dorcas Ward (author, 2011)

A5, flexiback, 256pp, indexed

ISBN 978-0-9567804-0-9

Shop £12.50, UK £13.73, airmail £17.87

This is a well written and very readable history of what has been considered a typically rural village of Berkshire. Bradfield is located in the Downs, eight miles west of Reading. The chapters are in chronological order with marginal dates to assist you in identifying where you are in time, and a detailed contents list with many sub-headings to help you find items of interest. Footnotes and endnotes identify the sources used, and three appendices record the walk taken by the 1851 census enumerator (with a map), the Poor Law Union Workhouse and a table of the farms and farmsteads mentioned in the records, their location and date.

Leckhampstead village yesterday and today: a journey through the ages

Elizabeth Vera Setchell

A5, flexiback, 290pp, illustrated

ISBN 978-0-9567034-0-8

Shop £15.00, UK £17.48, airmail £21.48

Leckhampstead is a small downland village in West Berkshire, north west of Newbury. The author, now in her 80s, has lived in the area since 1936. This places her in a unique position to write this history, which is based on memories, both oral and written, together with documents and photographs given and loaned to the author over the years. She has also been responsible for at least two exhibitions and a talk.

The contents are listed numerically by page number, and include the church, events, farms and cottages, several local families and a great many other related topics. It is illustrated by maps and black-and-white and coloured photographs, some of the "then and now" variety. At the end is a list of family surnames found over 100 times in the records, but with no page numbers to locate any references in the text. Otherwise this is another village history which is recommended to all those interested in the parish and country life in Berkshire.

"This is our school": Reading British School 1811 - 2011

Daphne Barnes-Phillips (Corridor Press, 2011)

A5, flexiback, 208pp

ISBN 978-1-897715-12-3

Shop £9.95, UK £12.43, airmail £16.43

This book was written to celebrate the bicentenary of the British School in Southampton Street, Reading, from 1809, and its successors, the George Palmer* School, Basingstoke Road, from 1907 and Northumberland Avenue from 2004.

Illustrated with drawings, plans and photographs, there are also numerous text boxes with dated lists of teachers, pupils and important dates. Much of the text is written in the first person to simulate the school's history as related by people who were important in its progress. This publication will be welcomed by former pupils and staff, as well as by those interested in the development of schools and education for so many children in Reading by the nonconformist churches.

* George Palmer was a founder of Huntley and Palmers Biscuit Factory.

BERKSHIRE FINDING AIDS

*Parish registers of Bisham, Berks:
baptisms, marriages and burials
1560 - 1812*

(Anguline Research Archives) Boxed CD
Shop £8.00, UK £8.92, airmail £11.50

Bisham lies opposite Marlow on the north bank of the Thames in Buckinghamshire. The river forms the parish boundary on the north and west, and the parishes of Cookham, White Waltham and Hurley are to the east and south. Bisham originally had two detached hamlets, Stubbings and Temple, including the mill and the lock. After the dissolution of the monasteries the manor fell into the hands of the Hoby family and then, in the late eighteenth century, to the Vansittarts, who still held it in the late nineteenth century.

The original publication was privately printed by the Parish Register Society in 1898. This digital PDF copy can be viewed on any computer using Adobe Acrobat Reader. The registers are indexed by name and place, and include a list of vicars from 1312 to 1848 (the latter vicar was still alive in 1898). The original registers up to 1991 are in the Berkshire Record Office, reference D/P 91/1.

*National Telephone Company
subscribers, Thames Valley District,
Issue 4, May 1894*

(Goosecroft Publications, 2011)
A5, facsimile, flexiback, 28pp
Shop £2.00, UK £2.92, airmail £4.15

The telephone came to Great Britain in 1879. Two years later the National Telephone Company was formed, and lasted for 20 years before it was taken over by the Post Office. By 1894 the NTC had about 279 lines in Reading, 32 in Maidenhead, six in Marlow and four each in Slough and Windsor. Public call rooms were available for public use in each town (eight in Reading) at 1d (0.5p) for three minutes.

This small but fascinating booklet lists some prominent local residents/citizens and those tradesmen who realised the potential importance of the telephone to their social life and businesses. Addresses are brief, but additional information could be found from local trade directories.

The introduction is full of interesting detail of costs and service availability, as well as instructions on how to use the early telephones. Calls went via the exchange, and were available 24 hours every day except Sunday. Trunk calls by a common line to other towns were limited to three minutes. For subscribers with a trunk pass they cost between 3d (1.5p) up to 25 miles, 3s (15p) for 200 miles, and double for non-subscribers. This is an important source of information about your ancestors in the late nineteenth century.

FAMILY HISTORY – BIOGRAPHY

Searching for Grace

Carol Henderson and Heather Tovey
(the authors, 2010) 301pp
ISBN 9-781877-577017

This is the true account of a woman's search for her birth-mother which, together with her only daughter, she tried to answer. Born illegitimately in London, Heather was brought up by an elderly governess whom she called Mummy. Unknowingly, she actually met her real mother, a very beautiful and wealthy woman, several times during her childhood, but the truth was always denied her. Later, she emigrated to New Zealand with her husband and, together with their only daughter, Carol, they set out to discover the truth.

This is a detective story with a difference: the clues are gradually revealed, and the suspense keeps you glued right up to the last pages, when Berkshire comes into the picture. It is illustrated with many photographs and facsimile documents and, among four appendices, there is a chronology of the many events referred to in the text. Recommended.

Berkshire FHS Research Centre



where

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Tuesdays*: 10.00 to 16.00 and 19.00 to 21.30

Wednesdays and Thursdays: 10.00 to 16.00

4th Saturday each month from March: 11.00 to 16.00

2nd Sunday each month (inc 8 Jan 12): 11.00 to 16.00

(excluding bank holiday weekends) The Research Centre opens early, ie from 18.00 to 21.30, in conjunction with the Open Evenings (from 18.00 to 20.00) hosted and run by society volunteers at the Berkshire Record Office.

*On most Tuesday evenings, knowledgeable helpers are available to answer your computing linked queries.

who

Admission to the centre is free for society members.

Non-members pay a £2 temporary membership fee per visit (offset against the membership fee should the visitor join the society at that visit).

Volunteer helpers are on hand to give advice and guidance.

what

Ground floor: reception area, seven PCs with internet access (see opposite page), bookshop, refreshment facilities and cloakrooms

First floor: library (see opposite page), fiche readers, magazine archive

Introductory tours of the centre are available – see <www.berksfhs.org.uk> for details.

how

Society volunteers will explain anything you need to know about the centre's resources, but you do your own research at the centre. If you wish, you can print pages or photocopy them for a nominal additional charge.

Computer suite

Findmypast

census records for England and Wales 1841 to 1911
the most complete online index of BMDs (1837 to 2006)
millions of parish baptism, marriage and burial records
military, migration and other specialist datasets

Ancestry Library Edition

datasets from Europe, North America and Australia as well as UK material, including a growing number of parish and other records for the Greater London area (not Westminster)

Provided that a PC is available, you can access Findmypast and/or Ancestry for a nominal charge of £1 per hour or part hour. All PCs are internet-linked so that other family history websites can be searched or consulted at any time.

CDs

Four PCs contain pre-loaded CD data on Berkshire and many other English counties including:
Berkshire Burial Index 9th ed
Berkshire Marriages
Berkshire trade directories
National Burial Index 3rd ed
Berkshire Name Search is a master index of Berkshire names drawn from a range of databases including censuses, marriage and burial indexes, strays and miscellaneous datasets.

Library

The library contains over 7,000 items, about 20 per cent of which are Berkshire-related; the rest cover UK, Irish and international material. The library catalogue can be searched at the centre and online at <www.berksfhs.org.uk/librarycatalogue>.

CDs of Berkshire data including MIs, overseers' papers, militia lists, trade directories

Local history and genealogy books for Berkshire and for other English counties, Wales, Scotland, Ireland and some other countries

National index of parish registers: volumes covering most English counties

Directories: biographical, trade, professional, military, clerical and school

General reference books on all aspects of family history

Published family histories/pedigrees and a large number of donated hand-written documents

Microfiche records including IGI (International Genealogical Index) 1988 for Great Britain, parish registers, census index and MI data for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Surrey and other counties

Berkshire Family Historian: 36 volumes from 1975 to the present day

Exchange magazine archive: back copies of journals of around 50 other family history societies

Can't get to the Research Centre?

The society offers a postal/online search service of Berkshire names, based on

- Berkshire censuses and indexes for 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881
- Berkshire Burial Index
- Berkshire Marriages
- Berkshire Miscellaneous Index
- Berkshire Strays Index

All you need is a surname (or a number of surnames) to access information, the extent of which will vary with the individual database. Your search of the master index will show you the total of entries of that surname in each individual database. You can then request the full details available. You can ask for a search either online or by post. The charges are:

- £2 per surname to search the master index. You will be advised of how many entries there are for that surname in each database. Please note that this search will not give you information from the indexed records.
- £2 per surname per database. With this search you will receive full details for up to a maximum of 25 entries. Should there be more than 25 entries, we will let you know the extra cost.
- £5 per surname to search all databases currently available. You will receive full details for up to a maximum of 25 entries per database. Again, we will let you know the extra cost if there are more than 25 entries.

Note that for online applications a 50p transaction fee will be added to the total as a contribution to the fees that the bank charges the society for the online payment service. You can contact <berksnamesearch@berksfhs.org.uk> if you have any queries or if you would like an estimate of likely cost for the searches that you need.

You can also apply by post. Postal search charges are the same as those for online searches excluding the 50p transaction fee. For a postal search you must enclose an A4 self-addressed envelope (large) with stamps (or IRC) to cover return postal costs. An alternative is to supply an email address so that results can be sent to you by email. If you don't have an email address please supply a UK phone number. Please send your request for a postal search to:

Berkshire Name Search
Berkshire FHS Research Centre
Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading
RG1 7TJ, United Kingdom

Is this you?

The following item appeared in the *Berkshire Family Historian* of December 2000:

A legal document dated 25th March, 1864, concerning a notice to quit some tenancies in Market Place has just come into my possession. It involves Peregrine Lediard, linen draper of Reading, Thomas Selby Little and Thomas Evans, who were agents and solicitors for Peregrine Lediard. The notice takes the form of a letter sent to Thomas Evans of Chepstow. The area of the tenancy is described in some detail, and clearly refers to properties on the eastern side of Market Place. Tenants mentioned include Sarah Knight and George Heathrington.

A descendant of George Heathrington, now living in Melbourne, Australia, would very much like to have a copy of the document. The record of the original person who in 2000 supplied the editor with this information is no longer available, but if that contributor still has the document, and is willing to help Mr Hetherington, please contact Shirley Manson on <berkshirename search@berksfhs.org.uk>.

Have you
renewed your
subscription?
If not, do it now!

Postscript to *Mother missing*

This article by Carol Henderson, published in the last issue, prompted Ruth Timbrell (1285) to look out the papers she had accumulated regarding the Weigall family, and here she adds a postscript to the story.



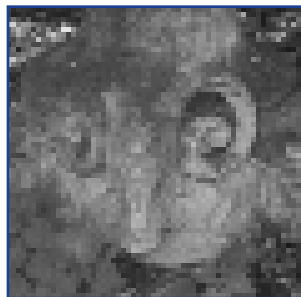
remains of Weigall memorial, June 2011

Following a telephone call from Meg Goswell (430) in 1999, and our subsequent conversations in 2000, Meg told me she had been approached by someone in New Zealand (but Meg cannot now remember who it was), and she asked me what I knew of the Weigall family and Englemere House. I told her that on one of the society's monumental inscription evenings, when we

were recording the graves in Priory Road Cemetery, Ascot, I had alerted members to the fact that underneath the brambles and nettles in the farthest corner was the Weigall grave.

After we cleared the site the devastation became apparent. I knew our local blacksmith Mr Rudd had tended the garden, and I put Meg in touch with Mr Rudd's daughter, who described the memorial garden as having paving, roses, lavender, a sundial and a seat. The gates to the garden were never locked, and local people visiting the cemetery were allowed to sit and rest in the garden.

Sir Archibald Weigall obtained permission from the Lord Bishop of Oxford to erect a wrought iron screen with stone pillars in the south east corner of the Priory Road Cemetery, enclosing 42 feet by 24 feet, and he provided an endowment fund of £825 for maintenance, and £75 for the



Rams' heads were on top of the columns

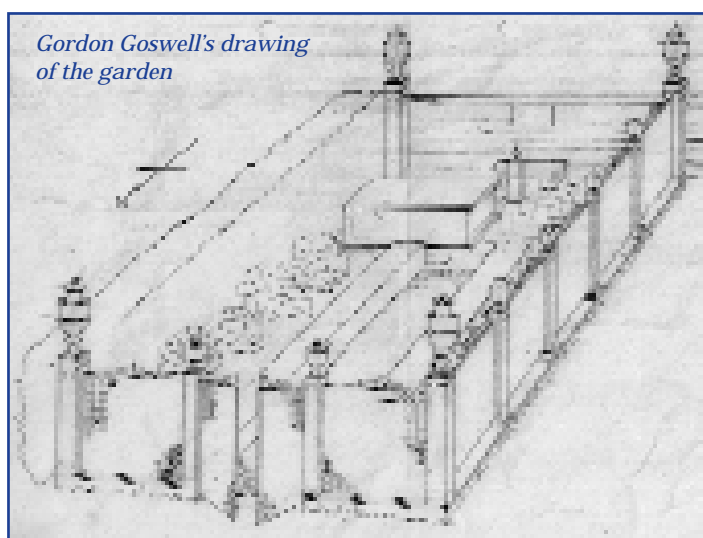
loss of grave spaces. This endowment was under seal dated 16th August 1951. The wall round the memorial garden was interspersed with beautiful wrought ironwork purchased from the Great Exhibition of 1851. Lady Grace Emily Weigall died in 1950, followed in 1952 by Sir Archibald, who was also interred in this beautiful, peaceful garden.

Over the years the wrought iron rusted and was scattered through the cemetery. It got caught in mowers, and lay rusting in the long grass. The seat and sundial disappeared, as did the plants. Gradually the brambles took over. A few years ago the cemetery was extensively vandalised, but it was reopened and rededicated about two or three years ago. It is kept reasonably well now.

My own grandparents are buried in the cemetery, and several great aunts and uncles. A few months ago there was an interment and, where family graves exist, burials still take place. Meg's husband Gordon was a draughtsman, and he produced an artist's impression of the memorial garden from the descriptions we collected. Meg has kindly consented to this being reproduced (below).

I was very friendly with a girl at school whose father was head gardener for Sir Archibald. As children we were allowed to gather some of the fallen fruit (I have never seen or tasted pears like these). Some we encouraged to fall – well, they would have done so anyway – and these were the ones that tasted best.

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Gordon Goswell's drawing of the garden

*members' interests**members' interests*

Members' interests

Bob Plumridge

Members submitting their interests in the last quarter:

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The members' interests section on the society's website has now been updated, and includes 9,500 name interests. <www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Members-Name-Interests> Please click on the member number at the start of the line to find out how to contact the member.

7244	ANDREWS	Hogsthorpe	LIN	1800s
7237	BUTCHER	All	BRK	1700-1850
7237	BUTCHER	Wallingford	BRK	1700-1850
7244	BUXTON	Horncastle	LIN	1700s & 1800s
7244	CANNON	Tottenham	LND	1700-1800s
7207	CHURCHER	Hambledon		1780-1900
7237	COOPER	All	BRK	1700-1900
7237	COOPER	Reading	BRK	1700-1900
7244	FOSTER	Pimlico	LND	1800s
7244	FROGGATT	Cromford	DBY	1800s
7244	HARRIS	Lowick	NTH	1800s
7244	HEMERY	St Helier	JSY	17-1800s
7244	HERBERT	Bedford	BDF	1700-1800s
4308	HORNE	All	BRK	1680+
4308	HORNE	All	BRK	1760+
4308	HORNE	East Garston	BRK	1730+
7244	KANDICH	Elgin	MOR	pre 1700s
7244	KYNOCK	Elgin	MOR	pre 1700s
4308	MARSHALL	Chieveley	BRK	1740
4308	MASCAL	Chieveley	BRK	1740
7220	NEAREY	Reading	BRK	1892-1940
7220	NEWMAN	Reading	BRK	1900-1920
7244	PEARCE	Ecchinswell	BRK	1700s
7220	STOREY	Reading	BRK	1860-1940
7237	STROUD	Wallingford	BRK	PRE 1800
7237	STROUD	All	BRK	PRE 1800
7244	TODD	Bray	BRK	1800s
4308	WALTER	Hurstbourne Tarrant	BRK	1770+
7207	WELLS	Australia		1800-1920
7207	WELLS	All	BRK	1540-1700
7207	WELLS	East Tisted		1700-1900
7207	WELLS	Brighton		1800-1900
7207	WELLS	New Forest		1800-1920