

Berkshire Family Historian

the quarterly journal of the Berkshire Family History Society

Contents

December 2013

vol 37

News

From the editor	3
www.berksfhs.org.uk Members' Area	4
Projects and publications update	5
Around the branches	6
Events	8
A race against time <i>by Brian Wilcock</i>	10
John Gurnett's Newsround	12
The view from next door <i>by Mark Stevens</i>	13

Features

The Seymour family of Poughley Rivers, part two <i>by Tim Seymour</i>	14
Reasons to be truthful: lies, damned lies and certificates <i>by Penny Stokes</i>	16
Parson's piece: the Rev John Sloper (1797 - 1877) of West Woodhay	18
Hannah Mary Grace Starr (1885 - 1966) <i>by John Starr</i>	19
Christmas quiz	20
Thomas Pibworth (1830 - 1874) and the Independent Order of Good Templars <i>by Jane Barrett</i>	22
Livelihoods on the line at H & P <i>by Keith Jerrome</i>	24
Heraldry: some common (but wrong) beliefs <i>by Tim Powys-Lybbe</i>	27

Regulars

Bookends <i>by Grace Gillions and Tony Roberts</i>	29
Your pictures, your stories, your queries	32
Dates for your diary	32
Berkshire FHS Research Centre	34
Members' surname interests <i>by Bob Plumridge</i>	36

Family names appearing in this issue: excluding living people, authors of sources and members' interests

Addington 8	Coker 15	Hart-Davis 26	Patey 22	Starr 19
Beaver 10	Cornwall 12	Harvey 33	Pibworth 22+	Thorne 25
Bishop 19	Cottrell 18	Haynes 33	Pretty 24	Tillett 26
Bowley 26	Dean 24	Hodgson 25	Purton 22	Trower 11
Brown 10	Despard 26	Isaacs 24	Quelch 25	Urch 33
Bunney 5	Dixon 25	Johnson 22	Rose 22	Vansittart Neale 13
Bunyon 5	Elborough 5	Livesey 22	Rummage 12	Walpole 18
Carter 5	Gallagher 16	Malins 22	Ryall 24	William 12
Chapman 12	Garrick 18	Mason 24	Sacret 24	Williams 23
Chichester 23	Grayson 26	Merriman 5	Seymour 14+	Woodhead 12
Chips 12	Greenwood 5	Mitford 8	Sloper 18	
Cibber 18	Handel 18	Oliver 16	St Maur 15	

New society publications

Wokingham St Paul Monumental Inscriptions 1864 - 2012 CD

Transcriptions and photographs of the extant memorials together with a detailed plan of the churchyard. Fully indexed and searchable by either surname or by position on plan. Shop price £10.00, UK £11.50, airmail £14.30.

Members' Handbook 4th edition 2013

52 pages of detail about your society: Research Centre facilities and hours; membership privileges; potted county history; map of Berkshire parishes; general FH resources; useful addresses and websites. Shop price £2.00, UK £3.50, Europe £4.00, RoW £5.00.

**For ordering details go to <www.berksfhs.org.uk/shop>
or see *Publications list in centrefold***

For details of the forthcoming editions of *Berkshire baptisms, marriages and burials* see page 5

The editor welcomes contributions to the *Berkshire Family Historian*

Has your family research taken an interesting turn?

Have you come across a mystery, or something just plain quirky?

Do you have an area of IT or research expertise that might helpfully be shared with other researchers?

If so please consider turning it into a written contribution for the benefit of all.

Details of deadlines and how to submit material to the *Historian* can be found on
<www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Journal-general/could-you-write-for-the-historian>.

* *Elegant though this image is, text supplied digitally is, sadly, much more likely to reach the published page*



BERKSHIRE and LONDON

*(all of England & Wales
for 19th and 20th centuries)*

**Experienced and affordable researcher. I am a member of the Society of Genealogists. No task too small.
Please contact me for more information – the initial consultation is free.**

**Rob Dickinson BSc.
Chestnut Tree Genealogy
9, Leighton Road, Ealing,
London, W13 9EL**

**Email:
info@chestnut-tree-genealogy.co.uk**

from the editor

18 OCTOBER 2014

Mark it in your diary now

Few people can be unaware that next year is the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, and that the 2014 calendar will be peppered with themed events, publications and projects. The Berkshire Family History Society is joining this stream of commemoration with its own day-conference in October, preliminary details of which are in the leaflet enclosed with this magazine.

Our conference is entitled ***The early twentieth century: conflict and change***. It will set the war into a wider canvas, encompassing the first 30 or so years of the twentieth century, and thereby including a broad sweep of social change which affected the lives of ordinary people. In addition to the military events which defined the era, our speakers will talk on education, suffrage, healthcare, migration, poverty, domestic servants, costume and adoption, mostly with some emphasis on family history research.

A series of organised excursions is linked to the conference, and these will run throughout the year. These trips and the conference itself will be open to members and non-members. Expect more information in the New Year,

when booking will open. Meanwhile, mark 18 October in your 2014 diary, and keep checking <www.berksfhs.org.uk> for updates on the plans. Click on *Conference 2014* on the yellow side-bar.

DOUBLE DISTINCTION FOR SOCIETY MEMBER

Debbie Kennett, who is a member of the society, and who has occasionally written for this magazine, has recently been appointed an honorary research associate in the Department of Human Genetics, Evolution and Environment at University College, London, in recognition of her work in “countering some of the inaccurate and sensationalist genetics stories that have appeared in the press, while at the same time clarifying the legitimate genealogical applications of DNA testing.” Recent examples of “sensationalist genetics stories” debunked by Debbie have included the heritability of red hair and IQ, and Prince William’s supposed Indian ancestry.

In addition to her recognition by University College, Debbie was also awarded a silver medal in the Rockstar Genealogists poll on John D Reid’s blog <<http://anglo-celtic-connections.blogspot.co.uk>> (ahead of Else Churchill and Dick Eastman, who tied for bronze) in September. Read

Debbie’s blog on <<http://cruwys.blogspot.co.uk>> and follow her on Twitter @DebbieKennett.

IN THIS ISSUE

Delivery of up-to-the-minute news is no easy task for a quarterly magazine, given the multiplicity of more instant formats, but the *Historian* still aims to include from the wider world of family history a few reports that you may have missed. In this vein the editor welcomes John Gurnett’s *Newsround* on page 12. John edited this magazine for many years, and since his retirement in 2005 he’s continued to supply us regularly with enlightening contributions.

Elsewhere in these pages you’ll find the written-up fruits of several members’ research, possibly the last *Parson’s piece* (unless anyone can come up with some more eccentric vicars), a plea from Brian Wilcock to join him in the graveyard (definitely above ground) and a Christmas quiz to tax your brain cells. Don’t complain that it’s too hard; it’s meant to be difficult. If you knew all the answers you wouldn’t have to go to the website, which is the object of the exercise.

Happy Christmas.

Penny Stokes (2961)

www.berksfhs.org.uk

Members' Area

what's in it for you?

The society's website has an area reserved solely for members, and it is constantly being expanded with useful resources. To date it contains:

Berkshire Family Historian: archived issues going back to 1975;

Gazetteer of nearly 1,000 old-Berkshire place names, detailing each parish context, OS grid reference, nearest town, and a direct link to the relevant Google map;

Berkshire parishes map divided into the 12 areas corresponding to the principal Poor Law unions set up in Berkshire in 1834: Abingdon; Bradfield; Cookham; Easthampstead; Faringdon; Hungerford; Newbury; Reading; Wallingford; Wantage; Windsor; and Wokingham. These unions also correspond to the registration districts used at the start of civil registration in July 1837 and for the early census. Hover over a union on the map and you will see a larger-scale map of the union showing its parishes. Hover over an individual parish to go to the parish description;

Berkshire surnames, indexing the surnames included in the society's CDs of *Berkshire marriages*, *Berkshire burials* and the *Berkshire probate index*; the index will be updated with *Berkshire baptisms* and new editions of *Marriages* and *Burials* in due course;

Berkshire data, which offers *Snare's directory of Reading 1842* in full, and sample data from society publications: *Berkshire maps*; *An historical atlas of Berkshire*; *Berkshire probate index*; *Berkshire overseers' papers*; *Berkshire trade directories*;

Weblists: Between September 2011 and September 2013 nine lists of special-subject websites were published with the *Berkshire Family Historian*. These are being updated and uploaded to the Members' Area. To date the first three are available: 1. General; 2. Ireland, Wales and Scotland, plus map collections; and 3. London. More will follow soon;

Meetings summaries: catch up on the talks that you missed at branch meetings;

And more coming soon: new material is constantly being prepared and posted, such as the extracts from early issues of *The Reading Mercury* and *Oxford Gazette* described opposite, and an index of men joining the Reading Borough Police Force 1865 - 1903, containing over 350 names and their parish of origin.

Remember, these resources are your benefits, exclusively, as a member of the society, but to access them you will need to register on site. The process is simple, and needs to be done only once.



UPDATE Projects and publications

UPDATE

The months have whizzed past since I wrote my last update – a sure sign that things have been busy.

Thank you everyone who responded to my plea for volunteers with database expertise. I'm pleased to say that we have been able to move forward a number of projects which had temporarily stalled, but we still need more help with website expertise.

Berkshire marriages third edition is now in its production stage. If it isn't in the shop by the time you read this, it soon should be. Good progress is being made with the next editions of *Berkshire baptisms* and *Berkshire burials*, although their publication remains some time off yet. There are also several more parish and MI CDs in production stages: Kintbury, Peasemore and Binfield are currently being transcribed. If you have family interests in these parishes and would like to get involved please do contact me via the projects mailbox.

One of our aims for some time has been to make more data available for free in the Members' Area of the website. Two volunteers began transcribing Berkshire-relevant excerpts from *The Reading and Oxford Gazette* earlier this year, and the fruits of their labours will be updated to the Members' Area as they are completed. Our thanks go to Glennis Wade and Jill Hutchinson for their continuing hard work, and to Colin Liebenrood, who is converting the data into indexed and searchable PDFs. Several other sources are being prepared for sharing in the Members' Area, so keep an eye on the website for further launches, and do register for the Members' Area if you haven't yet done so. The link is on the front page of our website.

Newspaper extracts make fascinating reading, and they can be a real find for family historians. Here are a few excerpts of some of the entries.

Jan 22 1798. On Tuesday night or early the next morning about 30 fowls were stolen from the out house belonging to Mr John Greenwood of Long Wittenham and on making search the same, with many other articles of stolen property, were found in the house of James Carter of Long Wittenham, labourer, a notorious offender who has since

absconded. Whoever will apprehend the said James Carter and deliver him to the constable of Long Wittenham or secure him so that he may be brought to justice shall receive a reward of 5 guineas. The said James Carter is supposed to be in the neighbourhood of South Stoke, Oxon or East Hagbourne. He is a native of East Hagbourne, about 48 years old, goes splay footed, has a thin face, hooked nose, dark hair. Had on when he went away a new smock frock very much plaited in the back, a light coloured coat and a very bad pair of shoes. Has long been a terror to the neighbourhood.

June 4 1798. Whereas on Thurs 31st May James Bunney otherwise Bunyon escaped from the constable of the Parish of Clewer as he was conveying him to Reading goal. The said James Bunney otherwise Bunyon is charged on the oath of W Wallace of New Windsor with having stolen an ewe lamb the property of the Honourable W Harcourt of the Parish of Clewer aforesaid. He is about five feet two inches high, stout made, has a very long nose and chin, brown hair so thin on the crown as to be almost bald, has no teeth, rather of a fresh complexion and goes rather round shouldered. Had on an old striped woolen coat and a lopped hat. Whoever will give information of the said James Bunney otherwise Bunyon to William Elborough, constable of the Parish of Clewer so that he may be apprehended and brought to justice shall receive 5 guineas reward of William Elborough aforesaid.

Aug 20 1798. Stolen from Newbury on Sunday 5th or Monday 6th Aug a yellow and white spaniel dog (mostly yellow) short head, long ears, short legs and rather long in the back. Whoever will give any information to John Merriman so that he may be had again shall receive ½ guinea reward. Supposed to be stolen by the Irish Recruits that marched from Newbury the Monday morning above mentioned.

Finally, the conference team have been hard at work finalising plans for next year's events. Check out the flyer in this quarter's *Historian*, and don't miss the launch in January.

Catherine Sampson (6979)
Projects co-ordinator

Around the branches

Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead Branch

<windsor@berksfhs.org.uk>

Ken Houghton

The subject for our July meeting was writing up your family history, presented by Barry Jerome, a member of the Berkshire FHS who has also written for the *Historian*. He explained how to divide your work into chapters and sections, and to collate information by person with added photos, certificates and news items to create a series of books. He also added a timeline to show where world events coincided with family events. We were shown examples of his work, some of which was a co-production with other members of his family, together with a slide show. There was emphasis on keeping the appearance consistent and the format friendly for printing, web viewing and CD storage. The evening was kept jovial with questions and answers throughout the talk. If you ever thought about how to bring your family tree to life, there are certainly some ideas here for you to consider.

Dr Colin Chapman was our speaker in September, taking the subject genealogy from early British censuses from 1086 to 1841. Censuses before 1841 took many forms, and were compiled variously by the monarchy, friendly societies and the established church. Their purposes were to raise money, assess loyalties and military availability, and to confirm tenancies. We were treated to a wealth of information from this popular speaker, whose books were in demand at the end of the meeting, in particular *Pre-1841 censuses and population listings in the British Isles*.

Our regular drop-in clinic at Slough Library, on the second Wednesday of the month continues to see a steady flow of people coming and going throughout the

afternoon, and occasionally into the evening. A drop-in clinic takes place at Ascot Durning Library on the 13 November.

Newbury Branch

<newbury@berksfhs.org.uk>

Nick Prince

Mark Stevens' September talk on Broadmoor concentrated on the Victorian era, from which one can quote details freely: the stories regarding patients are unlikely to offend. Mark had many stories gleaned from the archive: escapes, the law on insanity, types of crimes and reasons, which he recounted for just under an hour, and then took questions.

In October Audrey Collins of TNA was due to talk on a celebrated case of will forgeries from the 1840s, but she was delayed by traffic and got lost, and most of the audience had left by the time she arrived. Visitors were offered a refund on their donations, but one is nonetheless considering membership. Audrey will return to talk to us in the New Year. In November we will have an illustrated talk on old Newbury.

2014 will open with a January meeting entitled *Researchers' tales*, furnished by members. In the summer we hope to arrange a trip to the Kennet Valley at War museum at Littlecote. This commemorates the presence in West Berkshire of the US 101st Airborne Division, which used Littlecote (now a Warner hotel) as its HQ. This will be underpinned by an evening meeting talk on the Screaming Eagles, as the division was known.

Another successful outreach took place at Lambourn Library in October, and a Newbury session is fixed for November.

Enquiries are being made about the long-awaited re-opening of the West Berkshire Museum, originally scheduled for April 2014, but it is now thought unlikely to meet that date.

Bracknell and Wokingham Branch

<bracknell@berksfhs.org.uk>

Fiona Ranger

In July Eve McLaughlin's talk was entitled *Bow Street Runners, Peelers and PC Plod*. Her theme began with crime in the medieval ages, which had an early form of neighbourhood watch. The "Charlies" and the Royal Thief Taker were all forms of deterrent to the general public, but all were open to bribery. Not until Henry Fielding, who was an honest magistrate, did reform begin. Bow Street Runners and the Bow Street Horse Patrol, who dealt with highwaymen, were covered. Sir Robert Peel introduced the blue of the police uniform to distinguish the force from the army.

After the summer break we were highly entertained in September by Neil Tague, whose talk was entitled *The real Dad's army*. We really lived the period, as Neil was dressed in uniform and brought with him a selection of military artefacts. His father was a member of the Home Guard, and Neil has been always fascinated with this period. He led us through the creation of the force in 1940 (because the government believed we were going to be invaded by the Germans) through to when it was stood down in 1942. Much of the kit and weaponry issued dated back to the First World War.

For the Heritage Open Days weekend we had stands at South Hill Park House, Bracknell, and also at St John's Church, Crowthorne, and visitors were interested to know more about the society and how to trace their families.

During the summer our new MI project at St Sebastian's Church at Wokingham Without began. There has been interest from members as well as from other local organisations to help with the transcriptions.

Our second phase of beginners' talks, *Your ancestors revealed*, scheduled for Wokingham and Crowthorne, proved disappointing, the

first being cancelled and the second poorly attended. However, Fiona Ranger is to give a talk about the society at the AGM of the Good Neighbours of Crowthorne on 26 November.

Vale of the White Horse Branch

<vale@berksfhs.org.uk>

Vanessa Chappell

Vale Branch took part in Abingdon's Heritage Weekend in September. With a change in the weather we wrapped up to keep warm and manned a stall in the market place, where we had an enjoyable morning talking to people who were interested in discovering more about their family history in the Abingdon area. However, by lunchtime the weather had got the better of us and we called it a day.

Our speaker in September was Bill King, who came to talk about the British Resistance Organisation Auxiliary Units of the Second World War. These were highly secret forces which were trained at Coleshill House, on the Oxfordshire-Wiltshire border, for the purposes of resisting any eventual occupation of the UK by Nazi Germany. Bill has contributed to books and television programmes on the subject, and he had some fascinating information regarding the recruits and the training process. The talk was much longer than usual, but no-one was in a hurry to leave, with many questions and discussion taking place afterwards.

At our October meeting Debbie Kennett encouraged us to use social networking to help with family history research.

We had an outreach event at Faringdon Library on 19 October and, although arranged at the last minute, several people pre-booked. Our next two library events will be at Wantage on 2 November and Abingdon on 16 November. We will be discussing the future of these sessions at our next committee meeting, as numbers have declined this year.

Around the branches continued

Reading Branch

<reading@berksfhs.org.uk>

Graham Vockins

Nineteen Reading branch members took to the streets in high summer on a walking tour of Reading, led by Joy Pibworth. They started at St Mary's, the minster church of the town, and immediately were introduced to a plaque on the side wall that none had noticed before, despite walking past it many times. It commemorates the death of a Dutch prisoner from the Napoleonic Wars, one of seven to die in Reading. From there the walk proceeded to the bottom of Castle Hill, down past the Oracle, over the Kennet and up Southampton Street, picking up historic details along the way. St Giles Church was named after the patron saint of beggars, such churches usually being on the outskirts of the town where beggars predominated. The walkers then cut through to London Street, and discovered the Friends (Quakers) meeting house, inside which they were shown by one of the Elders, and in the graveyard at the back were found graves of the Palmer family (of Huntley and Palmers). London Street had property owned by the Mitfords and Reading MP Dr Addington. Jackson's Corner boasts one of Reading's oldest surviving shops, albeit not for much longer. The route turned down Kings Road, left into St Laurence and, approaching the gateway which leads to the Forbury Gardens, the walkers discovered a blue plaque commemorating the school which Jane Austen attended. We dispersed back to our homes full of things that we had never known about our town.

Events

The society operates a busy programme of events, thanks to a team currently co-ordinated by Margaret Crook and Gillian Stevens. Within the last six months Berkshire FHS has had stands at open days run by: Buckinghamshire FHS and Church of Latter-Day Saints in July; Hampshire Genealogical Society on 29 September; Oxfordshire FHS on 5 October (pictured below); and West Surrey FHS on 26 October. This activity helps to keep the society in the public eye, recruits new members (sometimes by first luring them into the Research Centre with a free day voucher)



and makes money for the society: at the Buckinghamshire day, for example, £413 was made on the sale of books and CDs.

The society will be taking part in the Bracknell Family History Fair on 26 January 2014, followed by *WhoDoYouThinkYouAre?Live* at Olympia from 20 to 22 February. These are two of the most important events in the society's calendar, calling for intensive volunteer effort (but, as can be seen from the smiling faces below, at *WDYTYA* 2013, it is clearly enjoyable).



In addition, all six branches undertake local outreach activities, ranging from family history advice sessions in libraries (Windsor, Wokingham, Bracknell, Crowthorne, Thatcham, Lambourn, Abingdon and Faringdon, to name but some) to running stalls at such diverse events as the Museum of English Rural Life summer fete, Abingdon's country fair days and the Ascot Retirement Fair.

If you are looking for an activity to get you out of the house, and working with a congenial team, not to mention helping family historians, this could be just the job for you. Contact <events@berksfhs.org.uk> or your local branch (see Contacts inside the front cover).

I SPY BRIGHT PINK BUNTING, IT MUST BE HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Every year on four days in September, buildings of every age, style and function throughout England throw open their doors. It is a once-a-year chance to discover architectural treasures and enjoy a wide range of free tours, events and activities that bring history and culture to life.

The Berkshire FHS Research Centre was open for visitors for all four days of the Heritage Open Days weekend, from 12 to 15 September. Nearly 90 visitors came. As well as using the library stock and subscription data on computers, visitors were offered tea, coffee and home-made cake. Many of them were pleased that we were able to help with their research for their county of interest rather than just the county of Berkshire, making true our promise to help all family historians living in Berkshire and not just those with Berkshire ancestors.

Gillian Stevens

A race against time

Brian Wilcock (4205)

who co-ordinates the society's MI

transcription projects, launches the new CD for Wokingham St Paul, and describes the physical effort and painstaking detective work that combine to produce such accurate and detailed records for family historians

Commercial organisations are digitising thousands of records and making them available online on a pay-per-view or subscription basis, and the source for this material is generally a local archive, where the original documents are conserved and stored in appropriate conditions. There is, however, much data in churchyards or cemeteries where the original record is exposed to the unkind elements, and in some cases it is rapidly deteriorating.

However, as these are relatively small datasets and cannot be easily digitised, commercial providers are less interested in pursuing them.



Monuments in marble or granite often last well, but many others are in a parlous state and, if not recorded soon, may be lost forever, as shown on this example, where the stone has a hole all the way through it.

On others the surface has delaminated to such an extent that one dares not touch it for fear of total disintegration. Some have been totally overwhelmed by trees or hedges (see below), although these can sometimes provide some protection for the valuable inscription.



Many inscriptions reveal details such as parents, children, siblings, aunts, servants, or even working relationships. A real classic is the listed Beaver monument at Wokingham, shown below, which identifies 57 persons (49 of them named); it presents a version of the history of the Beaver family, and it is detailed with a possible family tree on the Berkshire Family History Society CD publication *Monumental Inscriptions, Wokingham All Saints, 1520 - 2006*.



Few will be quite so detailed, but many will have significant family history material. A possibly more realistic example of the detail sometimes found is shown by plot W0210 at Wokingham St Paul:

"In the fourth watch of the night / Jesus came unto them."/ In loving memory of / WILLIAM TOWERS BROWN aged 28 / And of / GUNHILDA MARY his wife aged 22 / married Jan 20 1887, lost in the wreck / of the SS Victoria off Dieppe / early in the morning of April 13 1887 / "In thy presence is fulness / of joy" / The sea gave them up / within a few hours of each other / on the evening of May 20, / and the morning of the next day, / and they were laid to rest here / May 25 1887 //

Volunteers from the Berkshire Family History Society are currently working on several sites within the ancient county, and the latest completed project is from the above-mentioned parish of Wokingham St Paul. The whole churchyard has been surveyed, bushes cut back or removed, undergrowth cleared, some monuments dug out to uncover inscriptions, and then photographed. For a few plot entries old photos found in the parish office have been used, with permission and our thanks.

The first person buried after the church was consecrated on 1864 was Colonel Trower, who died on 1 August 1864, aged 42 (a plaque for him can be found on the church wall at Wokingham All Saints), and his burial in plot E0420 was followed by interments in the west area.

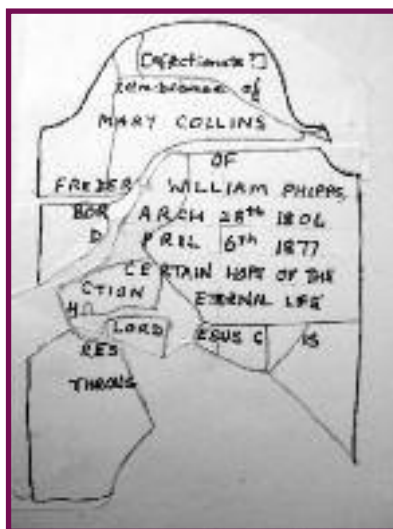
Some monuments, particularly wooden crosses, have been found to have “moved”. It proved useful to probe the ground, which located a number of buried or broken headstones, some of which fitted together; these were recorded, photographed and reburied where found, as illustrated below.



The CD publication *Monumental Inscriptions, Wokingham St Paul, 1864 - 2012* is now available from the Berkshire Family History Society shop. It features almost 2,600 names with colour photos of every extant monument in the church and churchyard (in many cases several images are available), with an interactive set of plans to plot level and additional description of the church and churchyard.

Many practical skills are needed to complete these surveys, not just recording and photography. Data processing and CD creation skills were identified in the September 2013 *Historian*, but volunteers are also needed to organise site visits, do local research, “gardening”, reading old or partly weathered scripts, indexing and checking (onsite and at home on PC). People who live close by and who are willing to visit for checking and updating are very valuable.

If you would be interested in joining in or finding out more about current projects, please visit our website at <www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/projects> or email us at <projects@berksfhs.org.uk>.



John Gurnett's newsround

recent snippets, collected by the former editor of this magazine

Manchester bomb archive

Online maps revealing bomb damage to the city during the Second World War may be found by searching at the Manchester bomb archive at <<http://tinyurl.com/qjvg9qp>> (this is a short URL for a rather longer one on the University of Manchester website.)

Manchester is not the only city to digitise the Blitz. London too has mapped the location of every German bomb that landed in London during the eight-month Blitz. <www.bomb-sight.org/#15/51.5050/-0.0900> enables you to zoom in on every street and borough to find out what kind of bomb was dropped, when and where.

Essex registers

Essex Record Office has placed many parish registers online at <www.essex.gov.uk/Libraries-Archives/RecordOffice/Pages/RecordOffice.aspx>. Search on the individual parish, event and time period. The virtual image of the register will appear, as the registers have not been transcribed.

Subscriptions start at £5, but some registers are free.

Surrey

More than 2.5 million Surrey registers are now available online on Ancestry UK, providing details of baptisms, marriages and burials back to the sixteenth century. All the registers have been transcribed.

Findmypast.co.uk

Findmypast has included new Kent baptisms, banns,

marriages and burials to its parish record collection. The latest includes Maidstone, Sittingbourne, Ashford, Rochester and 131 smaller parishes dating from 1538 to 2006.

Newspapers online

Those who use *The Times* digital archive from 1785 to 2006 may like to know of many more titles from 1660 in the Gale NewsVault: as well as *The Times* there are the Burney Collection, the *Financial Times* historical archive, nineteenth-century US newspapers and many more. A free trial is available from <gale.cengage.co.uk/product-highlights/general-reference/gale-historical-news-papers/gale-newsvault.aspx>.

Surnames

The Guild of One-Name Studies has revealed that many traditional British surnames are becoming extinct. Names such as Chips, Rummage and Woodbead have completely vanished. Another study comparing data from the 1901 census with modern records has found that William was the 374th most common family name at the turn of the twentieth century, while now it has declined to 12,500th.

Deceased online

Records of Manor Park Cemetery in East London, a total of almost half a million, are now available online at <www.deceasedonline.com>. One of the most famous memorials is that of a 16-year-

old boy, John Travers Cornwall, who was awarded a Victoria Cross for his gallantry at the Battle of Jutland during the First World War. Another memorial is for Annie Chapman, Jack the Ripper's second victim.

British slave links

A database revealing the names of men and women involved in slave ownership during the early years of the nineteenth century is now online. It involves part of a project entitled *Legacies of British slave-ownership* and contains records regarding the £20 million paid out to owners in the 1830s. To search go to <www.ucl.ac.uk/lbs>.

Imperial War Museum

Sound recordings held by the museum are now available online. The collection contains rare interviews with veterans, capturing everyday life in the trenches and memories of major offensives like the Battle of the Somme. The archive also contains a wealth of material from the Second World War, including stirring speeches from generals and politicians. To listen to the recordings search on <www.iwm.org.uk/collections/search>.

Wills online

More than 400 years of Oxfordshire and Chester wills, from 1546 to 1940, are now online at <www.origins.net> (which can be accessed at the society's Research Centre for £1 per hour).



The view from next door

Mark Stevens

**of the Berkshire Record Office
ponders on the meaning of Downton**

This autumn we have a little display at the Record Office about Bisham Abbey, now the National Sports Centre, but once upon a time the home of the Vansittart Neale family. We've subtitled it *Downton Abbey for real?*, which seems timely, as the fictional thing (or should that be the real thing?) is back on the telly.

Downton is hugely successful, quite staggeringly so. There have been plenty of similar series over the years, and of course the BBC tried to relaunch *Upstairs, downstairs* recently, but the Downton zeitgeist is something else entirely.

I'm not really best placed to answer why this might be so. Even though I have had lunch opposite Hugh Bonneville in the Garrick Club – don't even begin to ask – my only real knowledge of Downton is sitting through a Christmas episode with family a while ago.

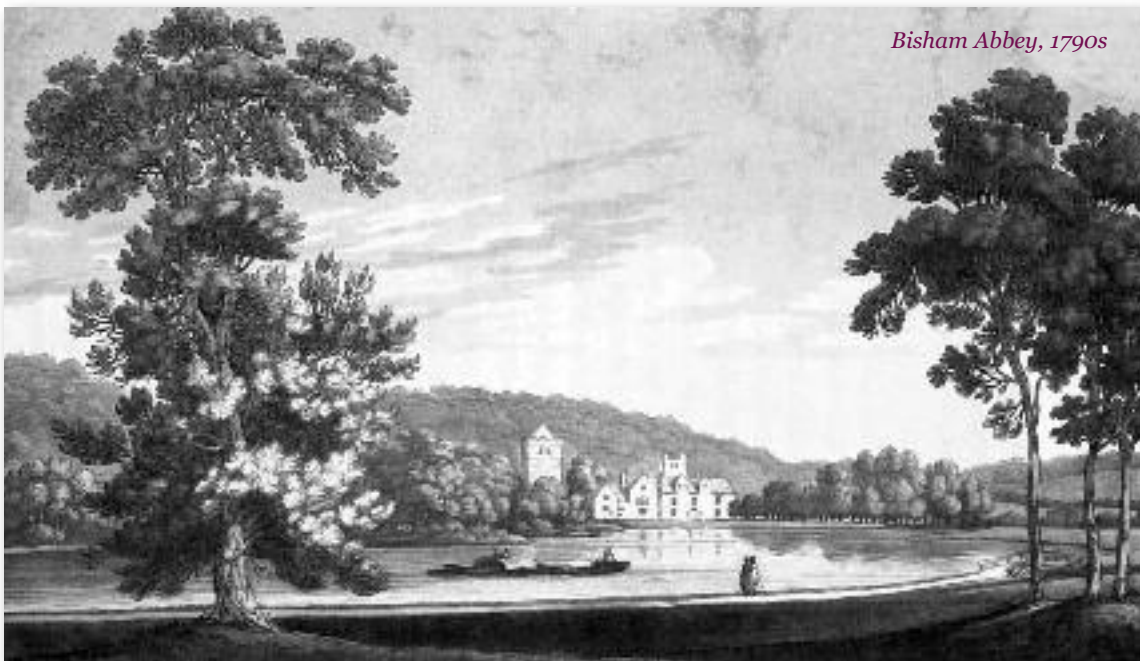
I could see why it was successful: plenty of sympathetic characters, a nicely constructed story arc, not too much dialogue and some mild peril; but at the same time that seems to me to describe virtually all modern takes on historical drama. There must be more to it than that, surely?

If you take a look at Downton fansites – oh yes, they exist – one of the recurring themes seems to be a

yearning for what is perceived to be a simpler time. There was no social media, no comparison websites, no hedge funds (though the current downturn is credited with turning people towards Downton's glamour), but there was also the certainty of your standing in life. It was easy to work out who were your betters.

So, was it really like that? Well, if you are a fan then you can come into the record office and see the Bisham take on its fictional rival. There may be fewer dazzling costumes but the life was similar. Above stairs, the Vansittart Neales worried about their parenting skills and suffered tragedies at public schools, while below stairs there was an almost constant struggle to keep the house going as a viable concern. Eventually, of course, the family was forced to give up, and what was their private home began to provide a public benefit.

The other public benefit is that the family's papers found their way into the Berkshire Record Office. This means that the evidence from their time at Bisham is preserved, and it is evidence like this that will inform the Downton Abbeys of the future. I wonder how the next generation will interpret it for television?



Bisham Abbey, 1790s

The Seymour family of Poughley Rivers, East Garston Part two

The *Berkshire Family Historian* of September 2012 carried an article about the Seymour family subtitled *Dirty deeds in the Lambourn Valley*, outlining Tim Seymour's discovery of his lineage back to the seventeenth century, when his forebears occupied a property called Poughley Rivers near East Garston, the subject of a wonderfully salacious Chancery court case. Tim Seymour (7154) now continues the story.

I am a strictly amateur family historian, and my interest in the subject has arisen only as I approach retirement. I had unearthed some of our family history in my father's papers, and had had a bit of fun discovering the Chancery Court records in The National Archives, but I was advised that it becomes much more difficult and time-consuming as one gets to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when court records changed to Latin, and fewer records have survived. However, it

did occur to me that just possibly someone else might have done some research on the Seymours of Poughley Rivers.

After all, the Seymour name is quite famous. Henry VIII married Jane Seymour, pictured here, and she was one of the Seymours of nearby Wolf Hall. The link with a property, Poughley Rivers, might provide a means to trace more of our direct forebears.

My September 2012 article carried a request for anyone who knew anything about the Seymours of Poughley Rivers to get in touch, and I was astonished to get a reply within days of publication, from Jean Hodges from Winchester (also a member of the Berkshire FHS) who also has Seymour ancestors who lived at Poughley Rivers. Jean is an avid genealogist who has identified over 1,000 of her ancestors and their families, direct and



collateral, from genealogical records. These include about 400 wills, including all those of her Seymour ancestors back to a John Seymour who died in 1569. Using all this information on her Seymour forebears, she has established that she is descended directly from a Thomas Seymour (1598 - 1669), Manciple of Corpus Christi College in Oxford. This Thomas was a brother of my direct forebear, John Seymour (1600-56), one of the occupants of the Poughley Rivers property in the seventeenth century. Jean's Thomas and our John were two of the 13 children of wealthy yeoman farmer John Seymour (1560 - 1640), also of Poughley Rivers. So from that generation, back into the more distant past, Jean and I have common Seymour ancestors.

Jean sent me the relevant parts of her family tree (sixteenth and seventeenth century Seymours) with copies of many wills and much other material. This dovetailed neatly with, and much expanded, the little I knew of the four generations of John Seymours who lived at Poughley Rivers between c1550 and 1650, and who immediately preceded the last Seymour in the records inherited from my father.

Jean also directed me to an extraordinary book called *Seymour dawn*, meticulously researched and written by a retired civil servant, Robin Forbes Patterson. This book is a detailed account of the origins and medieval history of the Seymour family. My first surprise was that the book contains a chapter on the Seymours of Poughley Rivers, as well as a chapter on the ancestors of Jane Seymour.

Included amongst these ancestors are Sir John Seymour (1424-63) of Wolf Hall and his wife Elizabeth Coker (1433-72), the great-grandparents of Queen Jane. Forbes Patterson's researches reveal that Sir John and Elizabeth were also the grandparents of John Seymour (1500-69), who was the first of our branch of the Seymour family to occupy Poughley Rivers. Other tidbits reveal that this John may also have been a clockmaker, with his business based in nearby Wantage, and that one of the clocks he is thought to have made survives in the church tower in East Hendred, and is a great attraction for today's clockerati.

Forbes Patterson's researches go, of course, much further. The chapter on Jane Seymour's ancestors

details her family descent (via Sir John and Elizabeth) through 15 generations back to one Wido de St Maur, who arrived in Britain with William the Conqueror in 1066. St Maur is the Norman version of the Seymour name.

So there we have it. Forbes Patterson's wonderfully researched medieval Seymours, together with Jean Hodges' records of the Poughley Rivers Seymours in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and our family records left to me by my father, all dovetail neatly to provide a continuous record of our direct line of descent through 28 generations. These start with Wido de St Maur in 1066 and proceed via Roger de St Maur of Penhow Castle in

Monmouthshire in the fourteenth century, the Wolf Hall Seymours in the fifteenth century, the Poughley Rivers Seymours in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, right down to my first granddaughter, Kezia, born on 12 August 2013. All this has enabled me to assemble from, I believe, pretty reliable records, my direct Seymour forebears for the last 1,000 years.

My own contribution to all this has, of course, been minimal and tracing my family ancestry has really been a succession of fortuitous events. However, I am surprised how much I have enjoyed the journey, making me conscious of my roots, having been raised, unanchored, in colonial South Africa. For this

Poughley lies in the south of the parish of East Garston. In medieval times it was principally known as the site of a priory of Augustinian Canons, dissolved under Henry VIII. The proceeds of its dissolution went to fund Cardinal Wolsey's new college at Oxford, Christ Church, and the site became Poughley Farm.

I am grateful to others: my father, who kept the family records despite lack of interest from his family; Jean Hodges, who generously shared her extensive, detailed and well organised family records; Robin Forbes Patterson, who I am sure intended that people like me should read and enjoy his wonderfully researched and well written book on medieval Seymours; and of course the *Berkshire Family Historian*, which oiled the wheels of my research by publishing my first article about the "dirty deeds" of my seventeenth-century ancestors in the Lambourn Valley.

Birth briefs: 12,424 current entries
Members' interests: 8,427 surnames currently registered

Are yours included in these figures? it is your privilege as a society member to add your details to these compilations, which can lead to helpful contacts.

Visit www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Search-Services/Birth-Briefs and www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Search-Services/Members-Surname-Interests for details

Reasons to be truthful

Lies, damned lies and certificates

Jeremy Paxman once famously said, of interviewing politicians, that his default assumption is “Why is this person lying to me?” Registrars too are not fools, but they have always had to struggle against powerful forces of ignorance, and illiteracy, not to mention fear of personal, social or official censure.

BIRTH CERTIFICATES

More often than not the mother is the informant, and there is rarely any reason to lie or be mistaken about a baby’s place of birth, sex or its mother’s identity. The date, however, can sometimes be dubious. Birth registration operated a six-week deadline, and those who failed to keep within it could be fined. It could be easier to post-date the birth by a week or two. (This is less likely to happen today, because the informant’s details are checked against hospital records.)

The combination of accent and illiteracy might not make life easy for a registrar; one such in Shropshire in 1842 recorded my great-great-grandmother’s maiden name as Oliver on her daughter’s birth certificate; the true name was in fact Gallagher, but Mary Gallagher was Irish, and probably had an impenetrable accent. The parents’ illiteracy allowed the mistake to go uncorrected, but I eventually traced it through baptismal records, which were accurate: unlike the registrar, the Catholic priest would have known the family and been familiar with the accent.

Paternity is taken on trust, of course, unless the mother is unmarried, in which case the father column would traditionally have been left blank. DNA testing is beginning to shine a light into this area, not simply by finding broken links in Y-chromosome lines; as DNA

We like to think that birth, marriage and death certificates are the ultimate primary source, truthful beyond question. Would that this were so. Penny Stokes (2961) has found no shortage of BMD misinformation in her own family

databases increase, it can very occasionally be possible to find putative matches with other surnames in the birth parish.

Today, new paternity issues are raised, with the increasing use of donor eggs and semen. In the case of the latter, present practice records the mother’s husband as the father, even when it is acknowledged by both parties that biologically he is not. Some would regard this as the falsification of an important historical record; others would say that debate is needed to redefine parenthood in wider terms than mere genetics.

MARRIAGE CERTIFICATES

Marriage comes freighted with social anxiety, which can lead either party to bend the truth, most often about ages or parental occupations. Where one celebrant is significantly older, it may be necessary to maintain a fiction already believed by the younger partner, and so the registrar must also be deceived. My 43-year-old grandfather knocked three years off his age, perhaps to edge closer to his 25-year-old bride, to whom he had perhaps been economical with the truth. (She may have had cause to wonder, later, when he retired at the apparent age of 62 on full pension.)

Another reason for lying about age is of course the law on consent, which since 1754 has required minors to have parental permission.

Where there is a disparity in social class the father of the lower-status celebrant may

upgrade his occupation for the certificate: the aglab becomes a farmer, the journeyman a master. This is even more likely to happen if father is conveniently dead. One of my great-grandfathers appeared on his son's marriage certificate as a gentleman, which no doubt impressed the bride's family. As he had died 15 years earlier and 60 miles away, nobody was likely to discover that he had in fact been a college porter.

Absent or embarrassing fathers may be prematurely killed off by their offspring entering matrimony; better to say dad is dead than that he deserted the family 20 years ago, or is in prison. Alternatively, another name might be given: not the feckless biological father, but perhaps a more reliable stepfather figure to whom loyalty might be stronger.

Bigamists had the most to hide, and are least likely to come clean about their personal details. They are prone to describe themselves as widow(er)s, which of course their prospective spouses probably believed them to be. Prior to 1857 divorce required an Act of Parliament, far beyond the reach of ordinary people.

DEATH CERTIFICATES

Misinformation regarding age on a death certificate is more likely to come from ignorance than deliberate falsification, especially when there was no close family member to advise the registrar. How old was she? Goodness, I'm not at all sure, but I think she was about 80. So 80 she will be on her death certificate. In the same way, many

people died under the names by which their neighbours knew them rather than the names by which they were registered a lifetime earlier. For this reason today's registrars insist, where at all possible, on an informant from the family rather than from the house next door.

Addresses may be smoothed if the nature of the premises is likely to jar with family sensitivities; another of my great-grandfathers died at what appears to be a numbered suburban house, giving no indication that it was the pub which he had been running for over a decade. Workhouse and mental hospital addresses are often recorded similarly to save face.

The deceased's occupation will of course be that which he was practising most recently, and will not necessarily tally with what appears on certificates or censuses earlier in life. Women were usually regarded as "unoccupied" no matter what their life's work had been.

Certification of death by a medical practitioner was normal from soon after the beginning of registration, but medical knowledge was far from perfect, and deaths were attributed to causes which would not pass muster today, a popular choice being "a visitation of God", which suggests an simple assumption that your time was up. Babies were occasionally thought to have died from teething. Some causes of death posed delicate problems in polite society. Families would not like the idea of death from syphilis or cirrhosis of the liver going on record, and suicide is even less welcome, so a sympathetic family doctor would find another form of words.

BUYING COPY CERTIFICATES

Always buy from <www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates>, the official site, which will charge you £9.25 per copy, or from the local register office (£10 plus p&p). ***Have nothing to do with the clutch of seemingly "official" sites which pop up in a Google search, and which do no more than add a premium to this price for the pleasure of ordering your copy for you.***

And be aware that mistakes happen, even with modern copies: I had to send back to the GRO a death certificate which located the Darent Valley in Yorkshire rather than in Kent.

Parson's piece

*portraying some of
Berkshire's more
colourful
clergymen*

Rev John Sloper (1798 - 1877) of West Woodhay

West Woodhay lies in the south-west corner of Berkshire, and is one of the county's smaller parishes. With a population that has rarely topped three figures, it nonetheless has a large and elegant manor house, thought to be the work of Inigo Jones. In 1714 the manor, this house and the advowson of St Lawrence's Church came into the hands of the Sloper family, and in the mid-eighteenth century it was famously occupied by William Sloper MP, who cohabited there for many years with the celebrated soprano Susannah Cibber. Although shunned by prim local gentry, the unmarried couple's ménage attracted musical and artistic luminaries of the day such as Handel, Horace Walpole and David Garrick.

The house regained "respectability" under William's son Robert, later to be Sir Robert Sloper, KCB, CinC of India and pillar of the establishment. In the 1820s he appointed his son, the Rev John Sloper, first as curate and later as rector of West Woodhay. The new curate obtained permission from the diocese to dispense with the glebe cottage that went with this post, in order to live with his father in the manor house, which would have been well staffed and considerably more comfortable.

In 1839 he married Georgiana Clementina Cottrell, the daughter of a Barnet clergyman, and in due course they produced a son, Gerard Orby Sloper, and several daughters.

In *Ancient and modern*, a booklet published to commemorate West Woodhay and its adjoining parishes in 2000, it is claimed that the Rev John Sloper used his shotgun to drive his congregation into church. In 1829 (motivated perhaps by the same means) 27 of the 70 parishioners elected to be confirmed, but they proved to be woefully ignorant of basic Christian doctrine. One, when asked who Jesus Christ was, replied: "Why, please your honour, I canna rightly say."

A year later the Swing Riots reached West Woodhay, and the rector demonstrated his forthright character by – initially at least – throwing the protesting labourers out of his house. Later, it seems that he conceded, to the extent of giving them £6.

The family appears to have travelled; they are not to be found in the 1851 census, and Georgiana died in Florence in 1854. The rector survived her by nearly a quarter of a century, dying at West Woodhay in 1877. His son, Gerard Orby Sloper, sold the house and manor to the Cole family three years later.

The family name of Orby continued to be handed down through the family. One of John Sloper's descendants is Sir Terence Orby Conran.

St Lawrence, West Woodhay



Hannah Mary Grace Starr (1885 - 1966)

*As a respite from tracing direct forebears,
family historians are sometimes side-
tracked into researching the lives of
distant childless relatives*

John Starr (6358)

*used the census to trace the rise of a
cousin whose path he may have
unwittingly crossed, from
tram driver's daughter to
Queen Anne's School, Caversham*

Hannah was born in 1885 in Linton, Cambridgeshire, to Henry and Grace Starr; Henry was my great-grandfather John Starr's nephew.

The census for 1871 gives Hannah's father, Henry, as the nine-year-old illegitimate son of Mary Ann Starr (his twin Sarah had died in 1875, aged three). In 1881 Henry, aged 19, is a stableman, and living as a boarder at 31 Brewer Street, in Soho. Grace Bishop, his wife-to-be, is parlour maid to three spinster sisters at 4 Nottingham Place, near Regent's Park. There is a seven-year age difference.

By 1891 Henry, 29, and 36-year-old Grace are living south of the river Thames at 27 Castle Buildings, adjacent to Henry's uncles John and William, so no doubt my great-grandfather, John and his brother William, both draymen, were instrumental in getting Henry appointed as a drayman and accommodation in the Stag Brewery flats. The census records Henry Starr, 29, drayman; Grace, 36, his wife; Hannah Mary, his five-year-old daughter; and James, his three-year-old son.

By 1901 Henry is a tram driver, living at 12 Fullerton Road, Wandsworth, with Grace and two sons, James 12 and Frank four, but Hannah is not present. She appears in the 1901 census as a 15-year-old pupil at Queen Anne's School, Caversham. She was the recipient of a bursary from the Grey Coat Hospital Foundation, Westminster, where she and her brothers were born.

In 1907 Hannah is recorded as joining the London Savings Bank Department (Post Office), and the 1911 census has the family living at 51 Tonsley Place, Wandsworth: Henry, at 49, a traverser* man on the tramway; Grace, now 56; Hannah, at 25 a post office clerk; James, 22, a telegraphist; and Frank, 14, a school laboratory assistant.

Soon after, in 1915, Henry died, aged 53. Hannah never married; perhaps she had returned to nurse him?

Hannah died on 27 January 1966 at 9 Victoria Road, Bognor. The death certificate cites the address as Ingleby Lodge, 24 Upper Bognor Road, now a residential home. It would seem that Hannah was in the Victoria Road Residential Home in her latter months.

The death certificate gives Hannah's occupation as civil servant, retired. Why in Bognor, though? A clue here is that Frank, her brother and the registrar's informant, lived nearby at 10 Ancton Way, Middleton-on-Sea. The 1911 census has him, aged 22, as a school laboratory assistant, so perhaps he became a teacher in the Bognor area? After her father's death it may be assumed that Hannah moved to be near her brother and family. Their mother died in 1942 in Surrey. Brother Frank died in 1977 in West Sussex, aged 80, while James saw First World War service, dying in 1967 in Greater London, aged 78.

No doubt Hannah's experience at Queen Anne's School lifted her from the surely more mundane life likely to have been her fate as a Wandsworth tram driver's daughter.

An uncanny thought: in 1946, 51 and 52 I went to Bognor on family holidays. Hannah would have been about 65. Perhaps we passed each other many times as we promenaded on the way to the beach, the pier or Hotham Park, close to Ingleby Lodge.

**The traverser was an electrically operated table that allowed a tram to be moved laterally from the tramway onto another line or into a shed.*

Christmas


No prizes (so please don't send in any entries) but answers can be found on the website, in the Members' Area, * of course

BERKSHIRE

- 1 When Berkshire County Council ceased to exist in 1989, which six unitary authorities replaced it?
- 2 Which was Berkshire's county town before Reading took over its status in the nineteenth century?
- 3 On which Berkshire village was Mary Russell Mitford's book of 1824, *Our village*, based?
- 4 For which three industries did Reading become famous in the nineteenth century?
- 5 In old Berkshire dialect, what was a dumbledore?
- 6 Which Berkshire village church was (allegedly) burned down by suffragettes in 1914?
- 7 Which Poor Law union included the parishes of Bucklebury, Burghfield, Padworth, Tilehurst and Wokefield?
- 8 Identify the (single word) Berkshire parish names from the following anagrams:
 - i) hi dead name
 - ii) obese hot stork
 - iii) begun apron
 - iv) moral bun
 - v) sigh bless eel
 - vi) fungi font
 - vii) snug hill inn

YOUR SOCIETY

- 9 How many branches does the society have?
- 10 Who can join the society's online discussion list?
- 11 Which of the following subscription services can be used for £1 an hour at the Research Centre?
 - Origins
 - British Newspaper Archive
 - Findmypast
 - Ancestry worldwide



quiz

- 12 How many people enjoy the benefits of Berkshire FHS membership?
- 13 How often is the *Berkshire Family Historian* published, and how can you see back copies without leaving your desk?
- 14 How can you trace other family historians who are researching the same surnames that you are interested in?
- 15 How many CDs of Berkshire data have been published by the society:
25, 35, more than 50?
- 16 How can members who live way beyond Berkshire make use of the society's databases?

FAMILY HISTORY RESEARCH

- 17 How much does a birth certificate cost from the GRO?
- 18 In what year did GRO birth indexes start to include the mother's maiden name:
1900, 1911 or 1918?
- 19 Where would you expect to find the records of Berkshire Quarter Sessions?
- 20 Which census was the first to ask for each person's relationship to the head of the household?
- 21 What changed in the practice of probate in 1858?
- 22 Tozers, combers, kempsters, owlers, scribblers and back washers were all occupations in the same industry. What was it?
- 24 What medical practice was compulsory in England and Wales from 1853 until 1948, giving rise to the creation of registers which can be useful to family historians?

* ***Not yet registered to access the Members' Area?***

All society members are entitled to register, and it's easy. Go to www.berksfhs.org.uk and follow the simple instructions on the yellow side-bar. You will then have privileged access to all sorts of goodies (see page 4) **including the answers to this quiz** (which will be posted for three months).

Thomas Pibworth (1830 – 1874) and the Independent Order of Good Templars

Jane Barrett (5612)

**traces a Victorian ancestor who
embraced the new doctrine of temperance**



Thomas Pibworth, who was my paternal great-great-grandfather, was born in Enborne in 1830 and baptised at St Michael's and All Angels Church on 26 September of that year. The rector at the time was the Rev Charles Johnson (see September 2013 *Historian*).

On 11 October 1851, aged 21, Thomas married Anne Rose, the daughter of James Rose, the transportee documented in the *Historian* of March 2008, and they had a total of eight children born between 1852 and 1865. One daughter, Mary Jane, tragically drowned in a washing pan at the age of two in 1858. His other children all survived into adulthood.

Thomas was born into an agricultural family, and was himself variously described in the censuses as an ag lab (1851), linseed oil maker (1861) and farm labourer (1871). He was also a lay preacher at the Wash Water non-conformist chapel, which had been founded in 1832 by James Patey, according to Annie Martin his granddaughter, who wrote a history of her family some 30 to 50 years ago. However, what makes his life slightly more interesting is his prominent role in the local Independent Order of Good Templars from its inception.

The temperance movement had been developing in England and America in the early 1800s due to the damaging societal effects of alcohol.

In the UK the Beer Bill was passed in 1830, which allowed free sale of beer, possibly in an attempt to reduce the sales of hard spirits. This led to more drunkenness in public places, so temperance became an attractive movement.

One day in 1832 one Joseph Livesey made a conscious decision that he wouldn't drink any

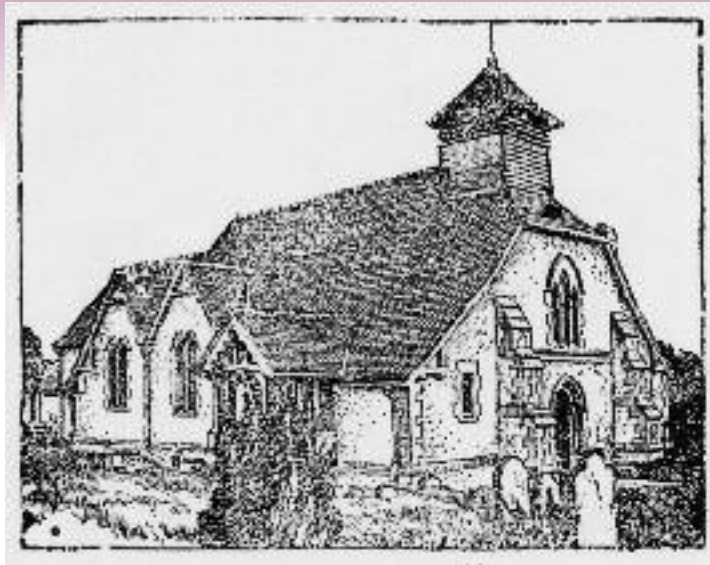
more alcohol. To make it a solemn vow he and seven fellow workmen signed a pledge to that effect, and thus the temperance movement began. This act prompted many like-minded men to follow suit, and by the year 1835 the British Association for the Promotion of Temperance was formed.

Joseph Malins (1844 - 1926), a British temperance activist, was born at 7 Askew Place, Worcester on 21 October 1844. He emigrated to the USA with his wife and found work as a painter of railway wagons. When he returned to England he brought back the Independent Order of Good Templars (IOGT), a temperance organisation he had joined in the USA. The first English lodge was called Columbia No 1, in Morton's Chapel, Cregoe Street, Birmingham, founded on 8 September 1868.

In 1859 the Good Templars had established their position concerning their stand on the temperance movement with six pledges:

- 1st: *Total abstinence from all intoxicating liquors as a beverage;*
- 2nd: *No licence in any form or under any circumstances for the sale of such liquors to be used as a beverage.*
- 3rd: *The absolute prohibition of the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicating liquors for such purposes, prohibition by the will of the people, expressed in due form of law with the penalties described for a crime of such enormity.*
- 4th: *The creation of a healthy public opinion upon the subject by active dissemination of truth in all the modes known to an enlightened philanthropy.*
- 5th: *The election of good, honest men to administer the laws.*
- 6th: *Persistence in efforts to save individuals and communities from so direful a scourge against all forms of opposition and difficulty until our success is complete and universal.*

Enborne Church c1900



The lodges spread rapidly across England, and the Newbury lodge was started in 1871. It was reported in 1875 in *The Reading Mercury* that the first seeds of temperance were sown in 1837 so it had been a slow progression. By 1872 *The Reading Mercury* reported that there were “upward of 700 lodges in the Kingdom” and 14 months previously there had been no more than 60. The Order was religiously led, with Bible readings and prayers forming a large part of the meetings. A large rally of Templary was held in Newbury in April 1874, with 400 people present at the tea, and toasts were taken proudly in pure water.

Again *The Reading Mercury* reported that in 1873 there were 1,843 lodges in England, and by 1874 this had risen to 3,719. It was estimated that there were over 450,000 members in the UK by 1874. Both men and women could belong. In the Berkshire district there were 32 lodges, two of which were in Newbury (number 478 was formed on 16 December 1871, and number 2,741 on 25 April 1873). Berkshire membership totalled 3,200 at that time.

Thomas Pibworth became a founder member of the Newbury lodge.

When he died of pneumonia on 5 June 1874, he was buried at Enborne Church three days later by the Rev Mr Chichester. His funeral expenses were paid by private subscriptions from members of the lodge, as reported in *The Newbury Weekly News* of that week. His was the first funeral of the Newbury lodge and, according to the report, in addition to local parishioners, a score of members

attended wearing the regalia of the order, to which were attached crepe rosettes. The rector also made a substantial donation towards his funeral, which indicated the esteem in which Thomas was held. Given that he died at the relatively early age of 43, and was only an agricultural labourer by trade, it seems that he was a very valued member of the local community.

His widow Ann lived for a further 25 years, dying at the age of 74 of heart failure.

Both Thomas and Ann Pibworth were buried in Enborne churchyard, but I have been unable to locate their graves. Their daughter Sarah (1858 - 1944) went on to marry Albert Purton, and the family continued to worship in the Wash Water chapel until the split from the Independent Methodists in the late 1940s, when the congregation moved to a Nissen hut on land next to the railway at Wash Water, donated by Mr Williams. The chapel finally closed in the 1970s.

The Independent Order of Templars still exists today as the International Order of Good Templars in over 40 countries, and although there is less emphasis on alcohol its members still fight for causes they believe in. There were quoted to be over 700,000 members worldwide in 1979, but the overall influence of this organisation has waned in recent times.

One hundred years ago an industrial dispute at Huntley & Palmers in Reading may have been a cause lost as far as the workers were concerned, but it led to a surge in union strength.

**Keith Jerrome (6950)
has researched the details**

Livelihoods on the line at H&P

The Victimisation at Huntley & Palmers: A Fight for Life and Liberty

A handbill with this title, distributed by Reading Trades and Labour Council in December 1911, began:

Fellow Citizens

This is Christmastide, the time of peace and goodwill to all men! Yet this very season is the time chosen by this rapacious firm to strike a ruthless blow at scores of their workers, a blow causing tears, anxieties and sorrows to many families and fear of desolation in their homes.

The low wages and conditions of employment of their workers have long been a byword, a scandal to this town and a disgrace to this country. Like an octopus this heartlessly unscrupulous company has for too long strangled and crushed out the manhood and womanhood of their victims, robbed them and their children too of joy and happiness, robbed them even of decent food and clothing, robbed them of real life and liberty itself.

A brief statement from the company¹ replied:

Our annual shortening of hands at the end of exceptionally heavy Christmas trade involved the majority of extra hands taken on for Christmas. Other dismissals concerned those upon whose loyalty our company felt they could not place reliance. Loyalty is essential and we will not retain any persons who do not satisfy in this respect.

A protest meeting at the Marxian Hall (Bridge Street, headquarters of the Social Democratic Party) heard Ben Russell, Trades Council treasurer, stating that the fight had commenced, but that there was no hope of doing anything without unity. Of the 50 to 60 men and women present some had 20 to 40 years' service at H&P, but they were fearful of giving their names whilst "this tyrannical and unscrupulous firm had the means of life in their hands."

Russell stated there was the nucleus of a union² in the factory. In fact there were two. Women had been recruited into the National Federation of Women Workers (NFWW), being unable to join the National Union of Gas and General Labourers (NUGGL), the men's union. NFWW representatives Mrs J Sacret, Miss K Mason and Miss Dean had approached five or six ladies in influential positions in the factory, and found them "boiling over with rage at the shameful conduct of H&P". Their best chance was to stand shoulder to shoulder. NUGGL regional organiser Mr W Ryall interviewed the H&P manager, Mr H Pretty, and was informed that the board was meeting at that time, and that it would send in writing any communication which it desired to make. The unions set out to spread the message, seeking a meeting with Sir Rufus Isaacs, Attorney-General and MP for Reading, who made it clear that the right of workers to combine to protect their legitimate interests had his wholehearted support.³

Ryall announced that he would recommend to the union executive that they should adopt

drastic measures unless the victimised men were reinstated. (At the public meetings there were shouts of “and women!”) As well as seeking Parliamentary action from Sir Rufus, the union’s general secretary, Will Thorne MP, remarked that in the wake of publicity about the way that it treated employees, the company was donating money to colleges, temperance societies and public institutions. Thorne intended to raise in the House the H&P role in large government contracts, and seek under the Trades Board Act an industry minimum wage.

Mass meetings were taking place daily in the Butts (attended by over 1,000 people) and at the cemetery gates. At a factory gate meeting on Friday 19 December W H Dixon from Ruskin College and the Lancashire weavers claimed “Reading workers are 50 years behind on under £1 per week”. Fred Hodgson (a tailor’s cutter and Social Democratic Federation activist, described by Lorenzo Quelch as “one of the best platform men in Reading”⁴) was alerted to an “official spy” taking notes: “the dirty work of a gang of tyrants”. The union announced that dockers might be asked not to handle H&P goods for shipment.

The Bishop of Oxford sent the NFWW a cheque for £3 and contributed an article entitled *The living wage*, and Sir Rufus gave £10 to relieve hardship. Following collections and donations the NUGGL was able to pay 10 shillings per week, and the NFWW five shillings, to their victimised members. Isaacs complained that he had been unable to make a proper judgment because he had only got the men’s side of the case. The employer’s response of 29 December 1911 was addressed thus:

Reply of the Workmen’s Committee appointed at the Mass Meeting of Huntley and Palmers Ltd Employees To the Shameless and lying statements circulated in the Town

About 1,200 men and women assembled in the North Breakfast Room passed unanimously the following resolution:

That this meeting of employees of Messrs Huntley and Palmers Ltd hereby records its profound indignation at the shameless mis-statements which are being circulated concerning our esteemed and highly respected employers with regard to the conditions of



labour at this factory. That we take this opportunity of expressing our sympathy with, and our confidence in, the Directors of the Company.

Alongside the verbatim account of the mass meeting the company published the reply of the Workmen's Committee. On the issue of victimisation the committee stated they "had made searching enquiry into this charge and we are satisfied it is untrue". On wages the committee said:

We have no hesitation in saying that the average wages paid in the factory will bear more than favourable comparison with the average wages paid for similar labour elsewhere. Our directors assert [male employees]... averaged more than 23 shillings per week for the past 12 months.

A L Bowley, a lecturer at University College, surveyed employment conditions in Reading in the autumn of 1912 and concluded:

Reading has an unusually high proportion of unskilled workers on low wages. Hence more than one person in every four of the working class and nearly one in five of all families in Reading are living in primary poverty. This group comprises nearly half the school-children and 45 per cent of children under school age."

Bowley stated that poverty was "not intermittent but permanent, not accidental or due to exceptional misfortune but a regular feature."⁵

On 11 January in the town hall, a meeting presided over by the Rev Mr Hart-Davis heard Labour leaders Victor Grayson, Ben Tillett, Mrs Despard and the Countess of Warwick among others⁶ claiming that the company was worth £2.4 million, and the income of the partners £60,000 per annum. Two members of the firm gave £200,000 to a university "for the benefit of the middle class". Rev Hart-Davis generated an avalanche of angry correspondence.

During the mass meetings the NUGGL announced increases in hundreds of members. By June 1912 the number was 1,056, rising by June 1915 to 1,523, including 114 women, the NFWW having merged with the NUGGL. There appears to be no evidence that the "victimised workers" were ever reinstated or re-employed.

1 *Reading Standard* 16.12.1911

2 GMB, the successor to NUGGL, on the recent closure of the Kings Road office, deposited the Reading Branch Contribution Book (Sept. 1911 - June 1915) in Berkshire Record Office. The branch was re-opened in September 1911 with 1,523 members by 1915. In October 1913 NFWW merged with NUGGL and a Women's Section was formed, under secretary Miss H Box.

3 *Reading Standard* 23.11.1911

4 Quelch, Lorenzo *Old-fashioned socialist* (1992)

5 Bowley A L and Burnett-Hurst, A R *Livelihood and poverty* (1915)

6 *Reading Standard* 13.1.1912



Illustrated London News 1882 engraving of the H&P factory, commemorating the visit of the Prince of Wales

Heraldry: some common (but wrong) beliefs

Coats of arms are unique graphical person identifiers, belonging to one person only (like a passport number).

The trouble is that this is not quite true. And other confusions have developed.

Coats of arms are not unique. You can have the same arms for totally different people living in separate countries. In most countries there is no body of people dealing with heraldry, so citizens can do what they like. Nor are coats of arms unique within a sovereign's realm: a Scotsman and an Englishman can have the same arms, but because they have separate heraldry administrations, there is no account of what is used in another country. Furthermore, there are many different people in England who have the same recognised arms as other totally different people. Finally, in England and Wales, the same arms are born by different members of the same family.

The tradition dies hard that heraldry was a unique identifier. It started in the second quarter of the twelfth century, that is, around 1125-50, and the idea spread rapidly across Europe. It is not clear why it was so popular then, but the following may have played their part: first, the need to identify people in battle; second, the need to identify people and teams in tournaments (similarly to football strips these days); third, the need to allow illiterate landowners to make their mark on documents. All these causes have died away, but it is still fun to have unique identifiers of families.

Something else that has been wrongly claimed is that coats of arms were unique identifiers of names.

Most of us have at one time or another received a commercial leaflet offering a coat of arms in our family names. What is the true basis of such claims?

Tim Powys-Lybbe (7001)

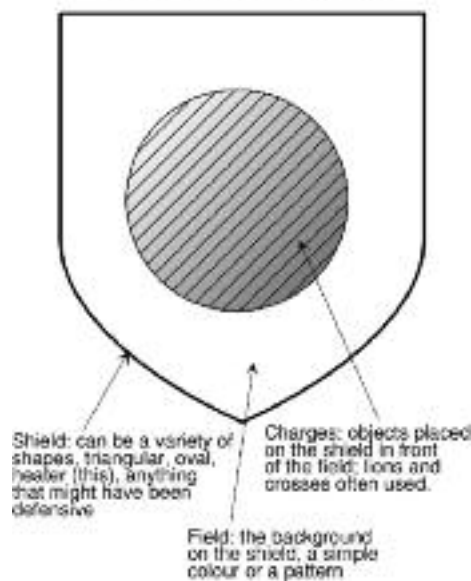
explodes some of the popular myths about heraldry

A number of firms make a fair revenue by claiming that some coat of arms is yours, because it was designed for a family with the same name as yours. What they do not tell the buyer is that there are eight pages of arms of different Smiths in Burke's Armory, and a further four pages for the old spelling of Smyth. Most of these are different coats of arms, with a modicum of duplications for members of the same families.

Heraldry used to have some regulation in most countries, mostly to deal with the problem of people copying the arms of others and partly to restrict the issue of arms. A few of these regulatory bodies have survived, notably in England with Wales and separately in Scotland. Canada and Ireland also have regulatory bodies, as do Spain, South Africa and Kenya, though not all with significant prominence. Within the British Isles the custom has developed of referring to the Law and Science of Heraldry. Some hot air has been expended on the "Law" of heraldry, trying to put the fear of God into anyone who tries to use arms outside the control of the heralds. And regrettably this is another misconception: certainly in England there is no law about regulating the use of arms, not even after an important case in 1954, which sought to establish that the English heralds still had use of a Court of Chivalry. The fact of the matter is that there is no law or court which will judge on any heraldic matter or transgression, and certainly no penalties either. Scotland is slightly different, with apparently greater powers given to the Lyon King of Arms, but I suspect these would not get very far if any prosecutions were attempted.

Nevertheless there remains a need to attempt to preserve the uniqueness of new arms, and the regulatory bodies serve a clear need in handling this. In England and Wales regulation is done by the College of Arms, and in Scotland by the Court of the Lord Lyon. Even in the USA, which clearly has no restriction of arms, there are a few, competing and unofficial, regulatory bodies that assist people in designing and recording unique coats of arms.

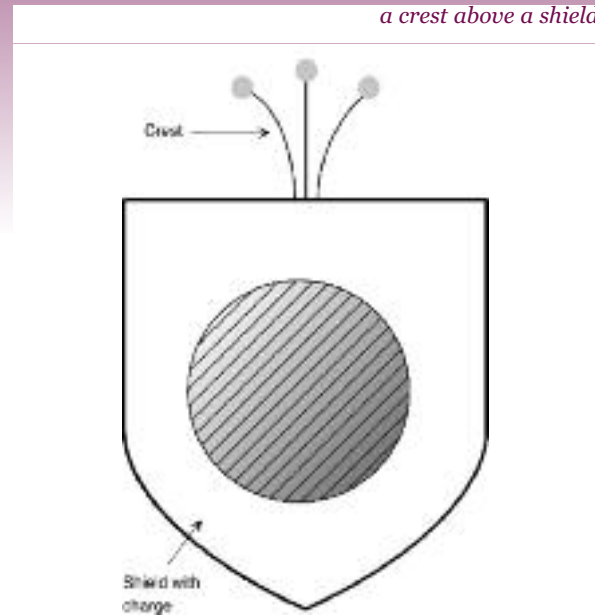
a simple coat of arms



I have heard it said that coats of arms are inherited by the eldest son only. This may be true in Scotland, but in England and Wales they are inherited equally by all sons. In Scotland there is a clear requirement in the regulating Act of Parliament that difference marks be added to separately identify each son after the eldest. Each son may pass his arms onto his children. Now we must admit that heraldry is sexist. While daughters may indeed use their father's coat of arms, they do not pass this on to their children; the children of a daughter bear their father's arms, if any. On the other hand, women may have their own arms, and the College of Arms will design and grant arms specifically for a woman; they have done this for centuries.

A crest is not a coat of arms. The arms are the core image whose design is inherited down male

a crest above a shield



lines. The crest is a later invention and the word comes from the crest of a bird, which is some decoration found on their heads. The crest in heraldry is also some decoration work on the head, or rather above the helmet which lies above the shield of arms. The advantage of crests in heraldry is that they are small and can easily be stamped on cutlery and be recognisable. Antique dealers get themselves thoroughly confused by this.

The story is that coats of arms are expensive. Yes, that is quite true, at least in England where the College of Arms will charge the thick end of £5,000 for your own grant of arms. Scotland is a lot cheaper at £1,500-odd for the core shield only. But cheapest of all is to do it yourself; there is even an internet site devoted to helping you, free of charge: <<http://amateurheralds.org>>. Note that I do not include the so-called mall vendors who do not understand the rule about unique designs, at least for a family.

Is heraldry archaic? Yes, it is old, having started around 1125. Its original purposes, identification in jousting, possibly in war and for seals on documents have all vanished. What remains is a charming artistic skill, which may require some exertion to get the hang of, but is visually very pleasing as a result. And if you generate your own arms, then you will know that this emblem can be handed down through your children for generations to come.

Book ends

Compiled by Grace Gillions and Tony Roberts



Prices quoted are for:

- a) direct sales from the bookshop at the Research Centre
- b) mail order purchase within UK, including p&p by second class post
- 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 may be able to make savings on p&p if you are buying more than one item.

LOCAL HISTORY

Village voices: memories of Sonning and Sonning Eye

Eds Judy Baldwin, Mary Chapman, Lesley Green and Annabella Marks (Sonning and Sonning Eye Society, 2012) 250mm x 190mm, perfect bound, 162pp
Shop £ 11.99, UK £15.70, airmail £24.02

This book is a compilation of photographs and the oral memories of village folk (in this article the village of Sonning and hamlet of Sonning Eye are taken as one village). The text is principally verbatim extracts from the recordings made from interviews with around 80 individuals, supported by some 140 photographs, which depict the homes, businesses, schools, community life, events and individuals of the village, and provide a reference frame for the recorded memories. Inevitably the book is centred mainly on the early and middle years of the twentieth century – the youthful period of many of its contributors – but does include memories of more recent events such as the 1976 drought, the Queen's Silver Jubilee and the Millennium.

The book is divided into 10 chapters, starting with the physical aspects of the village: the homes and businesses that gave it its structure. It then continues with the everyday life of the village described through its schools, community, events, agricultural life and the village fire brigade. There is also a chapter describing the impact of the Second World War on Sonning. The last two chapters follow two of the best known features of the village: the mill and the river Thames.

One interesting feature of the village is that one part (Sonning) is in Berkshire and the other part (Sonning Eye) is in Oxfordshire. This division led to anomalies, such as that village children could be

schooled either in Berkshire or Oxfordshire, depending on which side of the river they resided.

The book is well presented. Each chapter begins with a brief introduction to the topic, and sets the context before leading into the oral memories. One particular touch that I liked was the gallery of contributor photographs at the end of the book, which gives a more intimate feel to the book than would a simple list of names.

Overall this is a very readable and enjoyable book, and it will be of considerable interest to present and future local historians. Even though it focuses on one particular village, I found the book fascinating in that it gives an evocative and authentic voice to village life of the period in general, and as such can be recommended to all historians.

Tony Roberts

PRACTICAL FAMILY HISTORY

My ancestor was an apprentice

Stuart A Raymond (Society of Genealogists Enterprises Ltd, 2010), A5 perfect bound, 122pp
Shop £8.99, UK £ 10.22, airmail £13.25

This volume in the popular *My Ancestor ...* series is written by well-known genealogy author Stuart Raymond. Here he looks at the long-established institution of apprenticeship, and how it is more than likely that we all have apprentices somewhere in our family histories. His confidence in this assertion is amply demonstrated in this book, showing the importance of apprenticeships to social cohesion, as well as to industry, from the middle ages to the nineteenth century.

The book is in three parts: the first deals with the history of apprenticeships, the second with sources of apprentice information, and the third consists of extensive appendices.

Bookends continued

The history of apprenticeships takes up the first three chapters of the book and conducts the reader through the social demography of apprentices and their masters, and how this contributed to the control of society. The author describes how approaches to apprenticeship varied from the sons (and daughters) of the gentry, through those of the tradesmen and middle class, to the children of the poor and paupers. The first two of these classes considered apprenticeship to be a step to a respectable and prosperous career, but for the poor, apprenticeships were more for the control of the unruly young and reduction of their burden on the parish, with no particular attention to economic needs other than achieving the cheapest indentures available. In the latter case a few lucky individuals (“the deserving poor”) might secure sponsorship from charitable institutions.

The second part of the book, in 15 short chapters, concentrates on sources of apprentice information. This ranges from indentures and freedom registration at boroughs and guilds, through churchwarden and overseers accounts, inland revenue and charity records, court examinations and proceedings to some less obvious sources such as wills, poll books and parliamentary papers. In each of these chapters the author explains how apprentices can be identified, in some cases by attaining a status that could only be gained through apprenticeship.

The last part of the book comprises the indexes and references. Included here are 17 pages of sources containing apprentice information, and some 230 text references. At the end there are two indexes: one of place names, and the other of subjects and names, which make finding appropriate references easy for the reader.

This book is well laid out and easily digestible. The breadth of the association of early modern lives with apprenticeship makes

this both an invaluable guide to all family historians, and essential to most in their research, and it is thoroughly recommended to our members.

Tony Roberts

Granny was a brothel keeper: 50 family history traps

Kate Broad and Toni Neobard (Family History Partnership, 2013), paperback, A5, 133pp
Shop £8.99, UK £10.22, airmail £14.36

Here are a few scenarios that might seem familiar: you have always understood that your great-grandfather on your mother’s side was a wealthy shipowner from Scotland; eager to find out if you are in line for an inheritance, you look into it and discover that it was actually your father’s great-uncle, and he was a shipping clerk from Wales.

You leap with joy when, after hours of searching, you dig up the one document that cracks open a long-standing mystery, only to realise that you actually had it in your file all along.

You are stuck on one branch of the family for months, until you work out that the census taker had misspelled the surname.

The last two of those, at least, should strike a chord. What researcher hasn’t fallen into one or both of those pits? And who would not have welcomed a cheerful, friendly and non-judgmental expert to offer a way out of the holes or, better still, a safe path around them?

This is the aim of a new book from the Family History Partnership. *Granny was a brothel keeper*, co-authored by Kate Broad and Toni Neobard, is sub-titled *50 family history traps*, and it gives sensible advice on how to deal with everything they have got wrong in their combined 45 years of experience. Stumped by an illegitimate birth, anyone? Did you forget to back up a record, or to note where you found it? Are you beating your head

against the brick walls of missing baptisms or unrecorded deaths? It's all covered.

Perhaps there might be one or two extremely skilled — or extremely lucky — researchers who will shake their heads over this book thinking: "That never happened to me". Most ordinary mortals, however, will hear bells ringing in every chapter: "That's exactly the problem I had with great-uncle Charlie!" or "Now I understand why that census entry didn't make sense!"

With their light-hearted style incorporating personal tips, true stories and laugh-out-loud examples, the authors have produced something that we all need when developing a new skill: a book of genuinely useful advice that reassures us we are not stupid when we make basic errors; everyone else will have been there and done it. Keep this little volume handy and you may not do it again.

Oh, and do leave room on your shelf for the follow-up book, *Grandad was a dwarf strangler*.

Grace Gillions

Manorial records

Denis Stuart (Phillimore & Co, 2010), paperback, 190mm x 250mm, 120pp
Shop £14.99, UK £17.47, airmail £21.47

A major stumbling block when trying to take family history research back beyond the seventeenth century is that documents are so difficult to read. The handwriting is unfamiliar, spellings are not what we are used to, and there are so many strange terms and references that researchers often give up at this point.

The more determined will enrol on a palaeography course to learn the difference between court hand and secretary hand, but there will still be the archaic phrases to master — not to mention the Latin — before medieval records can be persuaded to give up their secrets. This book could be the key.

Denis Stuart is a former senior lecturer in history at Keele University's department of adult and continuing education. He founded a summer school for students of Latin and palaeography, and he has written previously on the use of Latin in local and family history research. With such a pedigree, it is hardly surprising that he should take an academic approach to his subject, so do not expect an easy ride; this is a serious book for serious students.

Readers are warned from the outset that even though the book includes a helpful dictionary and some grammatical examples, a basic knowledge of Latin is assumed as an absolute minimum. Even so, Stuart says, it might sometimes be necessary to consult a professional scholar for assistance. Students will need to familiarise themselves with medieval legal procedures, to become fluent in the language of frankpledges and essoins, affeerers and amercements. Painstaking practice will be required, and to this end examples are given at every stage, with exercises in translation and transcription.

By way of introducing the esoteric vocabulary associated with his subject, Stuart's book becomes a fascinating account of official dealings between lord and tenant from the thirteenth to the eighteenth century. He describes the different roles and duties of those in authority regarding the routines, failings and misdemeanours that might have brought a medieval ancestor before the manorial court. While declaring that the first chapter of his book should provide "a sufficient introduction for the beginner", Stuart makes it clear that he is writing for specialists. To make best use of this book, he suggests, the reader will need access to numerous other reference works, a classical Latin education and a thorough general knowledge of the topic. To these requirements, add dedication, perseverance and a lot of time; the reward could be the uncovering of a whole new chapter in your history.

Grace Gillions

Your pictures, your stories, your queries

keep sending them in to
<editor@berksfhs.org.uk>

If you have an interesting photo or perhaps one with a mystery attached to it, do please send it in to the Historian with the story behind it. If your story or caption invites readers to respond, it will be assumed that you are happy to have your contact details published.



from **Vic Blackman** (7445)
<vic.blackman@care4free.net>

These images are scans of two photographs that I recently found while sorting out items that belonged to my mother. Needless to say I don't recognise anyone in the photographs, and there's no indication as to where or when they were taken, or who the photographer was.

My mother was born, and lived all her life, in Reading, so there's a high probability that the weddings were in Reading, so maybe someone will recognise someone in these photographs.



Dates for your diary * denotes Berkshire FHS participation

10.00-17.00 26 Jan	Bracknell Family History Fair*	Sport & Leisure Centre Bagshot Rd (A322) Bracknell RG12 9SE	<www.familyhistoryfairs.org>
Thu 20 - Sat 22 Feb 20 Feb 10.00-18.30 21 Feb 09.30-17.30 22 Feb 09.30-16.30	WhoDoYouThinkYouAre?Live*	Olympia London SW1	<www.whodoyouthinkyouarelive.com>
13.30 Sat 22 Mar	Federation of Family History Societies AGM and GM	The National Archives Kew TW9 4DU	<www.ffhs.org.uk/events/meetings>
11.00-16.00 Sat 29 Mar	Society of Genealogists free open day	SoG	book on <events@sog.org.uk>

from **Barbara Swiatek** (1749)
<swiatek07@btinternet.com>

This is a plea for help with an ancestor who seems to have appeared from nowhere. I will start with a family story: the Haynes family were somehow connected to the Urch family, probably through illegitimacy. I do not know if the liaison was between a Miss Haynes and Mr Urch or Miss Urch and Mr Haynes.

Tracing the family in London, I found that Thomas Haynes was born in Bristol in about 1812, but there is no trace of a baptism of a Thomas Haynes between 1810 and 1820. I looked in the census of Bristol for 1851 and, to my surprise, Miss Fortune Haynes and Miss Helen Haynes were living as nieces of Thomas Urch. They were also there in 1851. I checked the registers for baptisms of these girls: they were baptised as adults in 1839. Fortune and another sister Jane were baptised as children of Thomas and Elizabeth Haynes. He was a sailor. Helen was baptised in a different church, in the same year, but only Elizabeth was named as parent. In some other documents the putative father of Helen was Thomas Urch.

When Thomas Urch died in 1856 he left £1,000 to Jane, Fortune and Thomas Haynes, and life interest in property to Helen. She died the following year, and the property went to Ann Harvey, the sister of Thomas Urch.

I know that this Thomas Haynes is my ancestor, because in the 1861 census his son, another Thomas, is living with Jane, and when Jane died, the death was registered by Thomas Haynes, who lived in London. The problem also arises that Jane died intestate, and the letters of administration stated that she was a spinster and a bastard. So the baptism of Jane was under false pretences.

My problem is: was Elizabeth Haynes a single woman, or was she married to Thomas Haynes, who did not recognise her children? Also, the children were all born before civil registration, and not baptised until adults, but why was Thomas Haynes never baptised? On his marriage certificate he claimed that his father was Thomas Haynes, an accountant.

The Thomas Urch mentioned was a wine merchant in Bristol, so I wonder if the Haynes family had lived in Portugal, from where Thomas Urch imported sherry, port and brandy.

Has anyone any idea where I could look for clues?

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>

Berkshire FHS Research Centre

what's in it for you?



**Yeomanry House,
131 Castle Hill
Reading
Berkshire RG1 7TJ
0118 950 9553**

<researchcentre@berksfhs.org.uk>

- 15 minutes' walk from the centre of Reading
- free car parking right outside
- next door to the Berkshire Record Office
- in the same building as the Reading Register Office

Admission 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).

Opening hours are:

Tuesdays*: 10.00 to 16.00 and 19.00 to 21.30

Wednesdays and Thursdays: 10.00 to 16.00

2nd Sunday each month: 11.00 to 16.00 (excluding bank holiday weekends)

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

Closed for the Christmas period 20 December 2013 to 6 January 2014 inclusive.

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.

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 burials

Berkshire marriages

Berkshire miscellaneous index

Berkshire probate

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

Ground floor: reception area, computer suite with **seven PCs** with internet access, **bookshop**, refreshment facilities and cloakrooms

First floor: **library** (see below), fiche readers, magazine archive

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

Computer suite

Findmypast
Ancestry worldwide, with family trees
Origins
British Newspaper Archive

Provided that a PC is available, these subscriptions can be used 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 baptisms
- Berkshire burials
- Berkshire marriages
- Berkshire probate
- Berkshire trade directories
- National burial index 3rd ed

Berkshire Name Search is a master index of Berkshire names from 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: 37 volumes from 1975 to the present day

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 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** at the address top left.

Members' interests

directory maintained by Bob Plumridge
<memsec@berksfhs.org.uk>

You may update your surname interests at any time via
<www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Members-Surname-Interests>.

When contacting a member by post please always enclose an sae.

Members submitting their interests:

- 7141 Mr H BLISSETT 20 Nevill Way, Loughton IG10 3BG
<harbarlights@hotmail.com>
- 7566 Mrs P READING 2 Maytree Close, Halwill Junction, Beaworthy EX21 5TQ
<readingmaytree1@gmail.com>
- 7599 Mr D RUSHTON 1 Old Market Street, Thetford IP24 2EQ
<dnlrshtn421@hotmail.co.uk>

7141	BARKER	Leeds	YKS	pre 1900
7141	BARKER	Wolverhampton	STS	post 1900
7141	BARKER	Laindon	ESS	pre 1900
7141	BLISSETT	London	LND	post 1850
7141	BLISSETT	Wantage	BRK	pre 1750
7141	DOBSON	Wolverhampton	STS	post 1900
7141	DOBSON	Leeds	YKS	pre 1900
7141	DOBSON	Laindon	ESS	pre 1900
7566	FEREBEE	East Garston	BRK	1780+
7566	FEREBEE	Uffington	BRK	1780+
7599	GARNETT Rose	Alton	HAM	1877-1937
7141	HORLOCK	Gloucester	GLS	pre 1900
7566	KEMP	Cookham	BRK	1800+
7566	KEMP Edward	Windsor	BRK	1870+
7566	MAYNARD	Hurley	BRK	1800+
7141	NICHOLS	London	LND	pre 1900
7599	RUSHDON Agnes	Reading	BRK	1878+
7599	RUSHDON Elizabeth	Wokingham	BRK	1812+
7599	RUSHDON Elizabeth	Wokingham	BRK	1767-1837
7599	RUSHDON Emily	Wokingham	BRK	1849+
7599	RUSHDON Mary	Wokingham	BRK	1841-1919
7599	RUSHTON Benjamin	Alton	STS	-1756
7599	RUSHTON Joseph	Alton	STS	1756-1835
7599	RUSHTON Joseph	Wokingham	BRK	1756-1835
7599	RUSHTON Joseph	Wokingham	BRK	1841-1901
7599	RUSHTON Joseph	Wokingham	BRK	1791-1866
7566	SKEATS	Applecross	HAM	1780+
7566	YARDLEY	Windsor	BRK	1800+