

# Berkshire Family Historian

*the quarterly journal of the Berkshire Family History Society*

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March 2014

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## Family names appearing in this issue:

*excluding living people, authors of sources and members' interests*

Alexander 24	Collie 24	Garvie 25	Henderson 24	Pearson 18	Shutler 18
Allen 16	Cowell-Townshend 16	Giles 16, 17	Herbert 17	Plenty 12	Sinclair 25
Alleyne 17	Cox 16	Golagher 33	Jones 17	Prickett 33	Smith 16
Allnatt 16	Curnock 16	Golichar 33	Knott 33	Quarterman 18	Smith 24
Ayres 22	Dance 33	Golighar 33	Lock 22	Ravenor 18	Somerset 18
Bance 16	Davies 16	Gollagher 33	Mathews 17	Reyley 27	Stevens 18
Buckingham 16	Davis 17	Gollighar 33	Milne 24	Robinson 18	Swinley 18
Burgess 16	Dempster 25	Gologhar 33	Mortimer 17	Rowe 27	Tanner 18
Caie 24	Edwards 17	Griffin 17	Mowat 24	Rowley 27	Warren 18
Caithness 24	Evers 17	Hadland 21+	Myddelton 17	Salway 18	Wilde 18
Cannon 16	Fraser 25	Hallen 17	Nash 17	Savage 18	Wyllie 18
Chislett 16	Gallagher 33	Harding 19+	Officer 24	Sealey 21	
Christie 25	Gardiner 33	Harris 17	Patterson 17	Sharp 18	
Collette 18		Hartley 27	Payze 17, 18	Shipley 16, 18	

# Notice of Annual General Meeting and election of officers and trustees

In accordance with the society's constitution, notice is given that the 39th Annual General Meeting of the Berkshire Family History Society will be held on Friday 20 June 2014 at 7.30pm, before the Bracknell and Wokingham Branch meeting at the Priestwood Community Centre, Priestwood Court Road, Bracknell RG42 1TU. See [www.streetmap.co.uk](http://www.streetmap.co.uk). There is free parking at the community centre.

The meeting chairman to be nominated by those trustees present.

The main business of the meeting will be to receive a brief report from the secretary on the past year's activities, to receive from the treasurer the independently examined accounts for the year ending 30 April 2014 for acceptance and approval, and to elect for the year 2014-15 the society's president\*, vice-presidents, officers and trustees. It is not currently anticipated that there will be any other major business to transact.

Officers and trustees form the society's Executive Committee. Of its current membership, Derek Trinder will retire under the five-year rule. The committee will be seeking to fill this vacancy and a number of others, as well as restoring trustee numbers to their permitted maximum.\*\* Without its full complement of trustees the society may be unable to continue to provide all existing services.

If you would like to nominate a member to the Executive, please let the secretary know, in writing, by Friday 6 June 2014. Nomination forms may be obtained from the Research Centre, the secretary, at branch meetings or downloaded from the website at [www.berksfhs.org.uk](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk). Please ensure that the person you nominate is prepared to sit on the Executive Committee and be a trustee of the charity. All nominations should be seconded. Information about being a trustee of a charity and what it entails can be found on the Charity Commission website at [www.charity-commission.gov.uk](http://www.charity-commission.gov.uk) (publication CC3).

***Certain people are not able to be a trustee:***

- *Persons under the age of 18;*
- *Anyone convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty unless the conviction is spent;*
- *Anyone who is an undischarged bankrupt;*
- *Anyone who has been removed from the trusteeship of a charity;*
- *Anyone who is disqualified from being a company director;*
- *Any other person described in sections 178 to 180 of the Charities Act 2011.*

The AGM will be followed by Peter Christian talking about online resources for researching professions and occupations.

\*Members attending the 2013 AGM gave unanimous support to a resolution that the incoming Executive Committee be granted authority to appoint a society president, such power to expire at the conclusion of the next Annual General Meeting of the society after the passing of this resolution (unless previously renewed, amended or revoked in a general meeting) and on the understanding that any president so appointed should be nominated for re-election by society members at the Annual General Meeting in 2014 in the normal way. At the date of the publication of this notice the committee has not made such an appointment.

\*\* Derek Trinder retires under the five-year rule, and Penny Stokes, Ian Ward (Newbury Branch representative) and Vanessa Chappell (Vale of the White Horse Branch representative) have indicated their wish to step down.

## **Directions to Priestwood Community Centre from A329 (M)**

*(Distances are approximate)*

**At interchange of A329 (M) with A329 to Wokingham and B3408 to Bracknell, take the slip road to the roundabout beneath the motorway and then the exit to the B3408 signed to Binfield/Bracknell.**

**0.5 miles, at traffic signals continue forward on the B3408 (London Road)**

**0.3 miles, at traffic signals continue forward onto London Road - B3408**

**0.3 miles, at Popeswood roundabout take the 3rd exit onto London Road - B3408 signposted Bracknell**

**0.2 miles, at roundabout take the 2nd exit onto Wokingham Road - B3408 signposted Bracknell**

**0.5 miles, turn left onto Stoney Road**

**0.1 miles, turn left onto Windmill Road**

**100 yards, turn right onto Priestwood Court Road**

**40 yards, turn right into Priestwood Community Centre. The centre is straight ahead past St Andrew's Church.**

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## **from the editor**

I have a copy of my great-uncle's birth certificate, issued on 10 May 1916. Why might he have wanted it then? He was quite a well-known actor, and like many of his profession, he was in the habit of lopping 10 years off his age. Thus in 1916 he was widely believed to be 34 rather than his true age of 44, and it was perhaps a matter of urgency to come clean in order to avoid conscription. So he was no hero, I'm afraid, although the third Conscription Act of 1918 embraced men up to the age of 51 so, right at the end of the war, he joined the newly formed Royal Air Force for a few months. I doubt they taught him to fly anything more dangerous than a desk, but he must have given the family a dashing account of his service, because my (then seven-year-old) father was inspired to follow a lifetime career in the Royal Air Force.

Most of us have ancestors who participated rather more actively in the First World

War, and the current centenary commemorations have prompted many more records to appear online. This issue of the *Historian* concentrates on those who did not return: the men of Berkshire whose names are on church and civic memorials up and down the county. It has been something of an eye-opener to discover the breadth and depth of enthusiasm that has been generated by the centenary, and the astonishing work that is being carried out to revive the memory of names on these memorials up and down the county.

This issue of the magazine may be dominated by wartime subjects, but there is also some light relief in Grace Gillions' revelations of skittish Scots (as solemnly documented by the kirk), and a late-Victorian medical charlatan who franchised his highly successful false identity out to 23 clones. Lastly, there are 10 fairly cynical commandments for family historians.

Your March 2014 *Historian* also contains a four-page pull-out supplement detailing the society's one-day conference in October, entitled ***The early twentieth-century: conflict and change***. If you had unwisely discarded the other two separate inserts enclosed with your magazine, you may well find yourself scurrying to retrieve them from the bin, because these contain vital booking forms for this conference and its associated programme of visits. Demand for places is expected to exceed capacity, and those who delay may find themselves disappointed. So read all about the conference, marvel at the range of topics and the quality of speakers that have been assembled for this remarkable event, not to mention the dazzling choice of trips out and about – and then act fast to secure your place.

***Penny Stokes (2961)***



# UPDATE

## Projects and publications

You may have noted in my last couple of updates that we've been struggling to produce parish and county-wide CDs for some months now, due to a lack of suitable volunteers. Thank you to those who responded to my request for help in September's *Historian*. I'm pleased to be able to say that we had a good level of response, and three volunteers are now actively working, each on producing a CD for the society: John Pearce on *Berkshire marriages* 3rd edition; Brian Edwards on Fawley St Mary parish register CD; and Nick Walker on Brimpton St Peter parish register CD. We hope to be able to start CDs with several other volunteers in the not-too-distant future.

With more people "owning" a project, we are able to take on more, and spread the work more thinly. Please don't be shy in coming forward if you have website or technical skills.

Transcribing is ongoing for *Berkshire burials* 12th edition and *Berkshire baptisms* 3rd edition. We're also planning a number of individual and cluster-parish CDs. Checking is

underway for parish registers transcriptions for Binfield, Peasemore and Kintbury, and for a cluster CD covering Purley, Sulham and Tidmarsh. At the same time we're tackling some of the poorest quality registers to read, such as the early registers for White Waltham St Mary and Newbury St Nicolas. Several people have requested Wallingford baptism and marriage transcriptions in recent months, and I'm pleased to say that we've started to tackle these. The first registers should be included in the next edition of *Berkshire baptisms*.

Brian Wilcock's eloquent article in December's *Historian* described the pleasures of recording monumental inscriptions and also the pressing need to act quickly to rescue this endangered source of family history. When the weather improves Brian and his volunteers will be back out in the churchyards, so if you'd like to help with any of our indoor or outdoor projects over the coming months, please do contact us via the projects email address.

**Catherine Sampson (6979)**  
**Projects co-ordinator**

## Events

The society will have had a stand at Bracknell Family History Fair in late January, as it always does, and it has also arranged speakers (at the last-minute request of the fair's organiser). At the time of writing this fair has yet to take place, so no report is available.

The next big show is *WhoDoYouThinkYouAre?Live* at Olympia on 20, 21 and 22 February. By the time this takes place this magazine should be in the post to you so again, no report is possible in this issue.

Participation in fairs and the open days of neighbouring FHS requires significant volunteer effort, and is often undertaken by the nearest branch. Gloucestershire FHS Open Day comes up on 31 May, Buckinghamshire FHS Open Day is due in July and Oxfordshire on 4 October. Hampshire's Open Day is scheduled for the weekend before the conference in October. Plans for the society's participation await volunteers.

# Around the branches

## **Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead Branch**

<[windsor@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:windsor@berksfhs.org.uk)>

*Ken Houghton*

Elias Kupfermann presented an illustrated talk with the title *Vanished Windsor* at our October meeting. Elias writes a regular column for the *Slough Observer* on a variety of historical subjects, and he can be found at [www.elias-kupfermann.com](http://www.elias-kupfermann.com). The evening's subject was of particular interest to Windsor branch members, detailing the changing face of the town with drawings, paintings and photographs. We saw the old buildings and street names replaced over the centuries, some several times, and listened to stories and anecdotes of notable features and people of the town. Much of Elias's references could be found in his book of the same title, and he was also able to show recently acquired photos that are not in it. He was assisted by Dr Brigitte Mitchell, who gave us additional information throughout the evening.

A drop-in clinic was arranged at Ascot Durning Library on 13 November. Despite our and the library's efforts to publicise the event we attracted only two visitors. In contrast, our Slough Library drop-in is more successful. As a monthly event it attracts a regular group of people. On this occasion we were mentioned in the local paper, thanks to Slough Library.

Our November meeting saw the return of Tom Doig with a talk on the subject *Farming with steam: occupations, social history, customs*. Tom has a background in engineering, and the emphasis here was on the development of steam power within the farming community.

## **Bracknell and Wokingham Branch**

<[bracknell@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:bracknell@berksfhs.org.uk)>

*Fiona Ranger*

In November Trevor Ottlewski guided us through the history of houses from the Stone Age to modern days in a talk entitled *The homes of our ancestors*. His talk was well illustrated and contained much local information.

Our Christmas party in December saw us celebrate 150 years of the London Underground. We teased people with quizzes, games and other oddities, and thanks are due to the committee, who spent many hours organising the entertainment.

***Bracknell and Wokingham Branch is organising trips to The National Archives in April and to the Weald and Downland Museum in August, as part of the conference visits programme.***

His style of presentation was humorous, with anecdotes mixed in, giving the origin of terms such as threshold: collected leftover crops from farmers' fields would be threshed on the doorstep, hence the term threshold as the doorway to the home.

He described how the growing use of steam power was a trial and error process, with some imaginative ideas to solve problems: some that did not work and others that did. Additional snippets of information included mention of a dog used to take a note back to the workshop asking for an engine spare part. The use of steam was a dangerous occupation, and this was highlighted with slides showing the aftermath of explosions and brake failures. This was a talk that described the environment of our farming ancestors, rather than sources for ancestry research.

***Windsor Branch is organising a trip to St George's Chapel and its archives in June, as part of the year-long programme of visits associated with the society's conference in October.***

***Details of this and other visits are on the booking form enclosed with this magazine. The form can also be downloaded from***

***[www.berksfhs.org.uk/conference](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk/conference).***

# Around the branches continued

## **Vale of the White Horse Branch**

<vale@berksfhs.org.uk>

*Vanessa Chappell*

At our October branch meeting Debbie Kennett gave a talk on social networking sites such as Facebook, Google+, LinkedIn, Friends Reunited and Twitter, and their use in researching family history. Although social networking is not everyone's cup of tea, those of our members who use the sites found it interesting, and it provided an opportunity to see some sites which they perhaps had not previously thought about using. However, I am not sure if Debbie managed to convert any of our non-social networking members.

We had a talk in November from a local man about his grandfather. Peter Preston had a vast amount of personal memorabilia which enabled him to find out about his grandfather, his political beliefs and the work he had done to improve the local community. Peter, who is not a professional speaker, was clearly passionate about his grandfather.

For our Christmas members' meeting we held a quiz. This is becoming an annual event. The questions were compiled by Simon Burbidge, a committee member, who did his best to keep order and help out those of us who were struggling to find the answers to some of the questions. We also were very pleased to welcome Catherine Sampson, the society's project co-ordinator, to our meeting. She gave a presentation about the extensive work the society is currently doing in preparing data for publication on CD, and she also spoke about the 2014 conference. Seasonal refreshments were served.

We have a fabulous programme of talks arranged at Vale Branch for 2014, many of which complement the society's conference later in the year. We start in January with a talk by Shaun Morley about the Oxfordshire friendly societies, and in February there will be talk about Victorian divorce by Simon Burbidge.

***Vale Branch is organising a visit to RAF Halton to see the Trenchard Museum in August, as part of the conference visits programme.***

## **Reading Branch**

<reading@berksfhs.org.uk>

*Graham Vockins*

In November our speaker was Maurice Clarke, founding chair of the Heir Hunters Association, who gave a talk on the subject of tracing beneficiaries to estates of people who had died intestate, ie, without making a will. Maurice outlined the reasons for creating the association, and detailed its membership, which consists mainly of smaller companies or groups of individuals. They use the Bona Vacante list produced by the Treasury, in competition with the larger, well known firms whom we see on the television series *Heir hunters*. Rates of commission charged by the latter can be 40 per cent of the value, while HHA members generally operate within 20 to 25 per cent range. Codes of conduct to prevent unscrupulous practice have been drawn up for HHA members to follow, but there is no regulation of the industry. Members of the association also act in matters of letters of administration. The talk gave members an insight into tracing living relatives, which is the reverse of what we normally do, and those present were presented with a fascinating look at the role of the HHA.

At our December meeting we enjoyed a quiz researched and presented by Vicki Chesterman. The subjects included family history, famous places and people in Reading. It was accompanied by a slide presentation, and demonstrated Vicki's wide knowledge of family history and the town of Reading. After the quiz members were treated to mulled juice and mince pies by Rosemary Whitehead.

***Reading Branch is organising a visit to Brock Barracks in Reading in July, and to the Milestones Museum of Living History in September, as part of the conference visits programme.***

### **Newbury Branch**

<[newbury@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:newbury@berksfhs.org.uk)>

*Nick Prince*

*Newbury then and now* was the subject of a talk given by Dr Nick Young to the Newbury Branch in November. His talk was illustrated with historical pictures and his own more recent photographs of the same locations, which included Donnington Castle, Shaw House, the old toll house on Oxford Road, the Clock House, the Jack Hotel and Newbury Bridge. Some popular myths about Newbury history were debunked in his journey from north to south.

Our December meeting featured a quiz evening with Secret Santa, and in January we heard some researchers' tales from members.

### **Computer Branch**

<[computerbranch@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:computerbranch@berksfhs.org.uk)>

*Gillian Stevens*

The Computer Branch members enjoyed a lively question and answer session with hot non-alcoholic mulled wine and warm mince pies at their November meeting. No meeting was held in December.

***The Computer Branch is organising trips to Nuffield Place in May, and to the English Heritage Archive at Swindon in July, as part of the conference visits programme.***

## **We want more help in the Research Centre**

We need more volunteers to join the team and help with the day-to-day management of the centre's facilities. The skills we need are managerial, administrative and technical, so there is something for everyone, and we don't expect one person to take on all these tasks. These are our particular current needs:

- Overall management of the Research Centre.
- Income recording, compilation of statistics.
- Co-ordination of the assistants' roster - ideal for a team of two people.
- Induction of new assistants into the centre's resources and systems.
- Mail handling.
- Office supplies: ordering stationery, basic computer supplies, tea and coffee.
- Maintenance of the computer services, eg, preloading CDs on the computers, keeping software up to date (applications and anti-virus), making back-ups.
- Printer, fiche and film readers, and scanner: simple maintenance management.
- Security systems: responsibility for the safe, the burglar alarm system, CCTV, the entry phone system, the swipe card system and keypad access on various internal doors.
- A librarian is needed to manage the printed resources and subscriptions to websites.
- Assistants for the bookshop and mail order business are required.
- Responsibility for organising general building maintenance.

In many cases these are overseeing roles, because professional help is hired when necessary. Training will be given, and the society pays out-of-pocket expenses (other than travel to and from the RC).

**If you live near Reading and think you could offer some of your spare time in one of these roles, please take a look at [www.berksfhs.org.uk/jobs](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk/jobs) where you'll find more information, and then contact [secretary@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@berksfhs.org.uk) to discuss things further.**

# The Friends of the National Archives

**Dr Tony Wakeford**  
*vice-chairman of the Friends*

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the foundation of The Friends of The National Archives (TNA). The Friends are a charitable and voluntary organisation dedicated to supporting the role played by TNA in the preservation, conservation and utilisation of the nation's records. The Friends were set up in 1988, at the then Public Record Office, in Chancery Lane in central London, and launched at a conference celebrating 150 years of the archives. Now based at TNA in Kew, our objectives are to educate the public in the knowledge of public and other records, and to promote and assist the work of TNA.

We provide vital assistance to numerous projects, enabling records of all kinds to be conserved, preserved, catalogued, indexed, and made accessible. With over 160 kilometres of shelving, you can imagine the amount of work involved. We help in other ways too by funding

projects, undertaking book reviews for the shop and helping with some public duties. We part-fund conferences and seminars at TNA, and provide financial support for staff at external events. TNA is a remarkable place with so much diversity in the support we can give.

Indexing projects are a central part of our voluntary work. Some work from home; others, specialising in military records, are based at TNA. Since our first project, the index to the Prerogative Court of Canterbury wills and administrations, our volunteers have provided access to many thousands of records. These include documents in Chancery proceedings, Admiralty papers, War Office records and the vast collection of photographs submitted to Stationers' Hall prior to 1912 in order to claim copyright. We also recently helped to organise the First World War diaries ready for digitisation.

We organise and host events at TNA and arrange special members' tours to venues of historical interest and importance. Our members receive a magazine three times a year with interesting articles based upon the records at TNA by staff and members alike, all sharing their passion for history – there are nearly 1,000 years on which to draw in the eclectic collections. Our members also enjoy a 20 per cent discount for paying events at Kew, in the bookshop and online sales too.

It is fair to say that our relationship with TNA is unique; it is the only government department to have a Friends organisation. The more Friends there are, the more we can do to help safeguard the nation's records for future generations and make them more accessible today. Please visit us at <http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/get-involved/friends>







# The view from next door

**Mark Stevens**

**of the Berkshire Record Office  
braces himself for the centenary**

By the time you read this, the chances are that you will already be knee-deep in the First World War centenary. Barring something unexpected, it promises to be the main historical event of 2014. Many books will be published, words spoken and special supplements issued. The BBC is digging in for its own four-year anniversary marathon – an echo itself of Western Front trench warfare – beginning with Jeremy Paxman's heavyweight book and series.

As I write there are a couple of things that feel immediately apparent about this from my position as someone with a professional interest in history. One is that we are all shortly to feel bombarded by First World War commemorations, no matter how worthwhile and important they may be. Two is that with so much national emphasis on the subject, those of us with local stories are going to have to focus on niche areas of history if we want anyone to listen to our own First World War thing.

The Berkshire Family History Society is already alert to this fact. By focusing on domestic upheaval during the early twentieth century, its October conference is bound to be more social history than military. It will provide a complementary narrative on the war years that plots changes at home.

At the BRO we have also started to research home front material, intent on painting a picture of Berkshire during the war, rather than of the war itself. Various stories are already emerging: the support for Belgian refugees in Maidenhead and Reading; the disruption in all towns caused by billeting troops; police preparations for German invasion in Wokingham. More will undoubtedly follow.

There will be people who criticise the First World War commemorations and then seek to

criticise history as nostalgia and navel-gazing: we'd like to be ready to suggest that good history seeks to do more than provide a roll-call of the dead.

It is probably important to state that the BRO will continue to remember other periods of history too. We already have plans to put on a show of medieval seals (an often neglected form of art) during the spring, and also to mark the closure of Reading Gaol with a display a little later in the year.

Inevitably, though, it is going to be a year of remembrance; a year for contemplating the vast rows of crosses that have been thrown in clumps across the Flanders fields. The scale of suffering at the front during the First World War never dulls, and it is a mercy that such vast horrors do not come around too often.

Besides, if history were to be solely about the living then it would offer precious little mystery. And it is the mystery that may well inspire many people to research their own families or communities. This is good news for family history societies and record offices everywhere, as we can continue to do what we have always done: help.

In the longer term, it will be interesting to see whether the centenary causes a shift in how we view the war. This might well be the point at which the war ceases to be an influence on Britain's modern identity and is cut adrift into the grey fog of memory instead, like the Crimean War or Napoleonic Wars before it. We rarely honour the glorious dead from those conflicts now or talk about the social changes that they ushered in. They are resolutely part of the past.



# At the going down of the sun and in the morning, *We will remember them*

The poet who wrote these lines to honour the dead of the First World War was Laurence Binyon, whose ashes were scattered in the Berkshire churchyard of Aldworth.

The writer Arthur Mee coined the phrase “thankful villages” for those which lost no soldiers in the First World War. He counted 32 of them, a figure which was later revised upwards to 52.

None of Berkshire’s villages was spared in this way, and thus there are memorials to the fallen in every community of the old county. They were erected in churches, churchyards, civic centres, schools, places of work such as factories, hospitals, banks, post offices and private estates. In structure they range through plaques, triptychs, lych gates, crosses, stained glass and obelisks, not forgetting the individual Commonwealth war graves in many churchyards, and rolls of honour which named survivors as well as the fallen.

Some of these memorials later fell into neglect and were even removed and lost; elsewhere on these pages is an account of one such memorial now restored. Other memorials, such as at Sulhamstead Bannister and Christ Church, Kintbury, have survived the demolition of the churches to which they were originally attached.

The centenary of the outbreak of the First World War has prompted much activity in bringing these memorials to higher public recognition, and there are numerous projects afoot, not merely to transcribe their names, but also to research their lives and backgrounds.

## **WHAT IS BERKSHIRE FHS DOING**

### *and could you help?*

The society has already collected names from all Anglican church war memorials and village and town monuments in the 1990s. (Some of these now have additional names from recent conflicts, all of which the project aims to include.) Many memorials in nonconformist churches, schools and places of work are still to be located and transcribed.

Photos of memorials are also being collected, and many can be seen on [www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Table/Information-about-Berkshire/Images-of-War-Memorials](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Table/Information-about-Berkshire/Images-of-War-Memorials).

More are needed: one view of the memorial in its environmental context, and others (as many as needed) to show the inscribed names legibly. See the list of memorials yet to be photographed for the society on [www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/images/stories/pdf\\_images/WM\\_GridReferences.pdf](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/images/stories/pdf_images/WM_GridReferences.pdf).

Enquiries about helping with the society’s war memorials project should be sent to Brian Wilcock at [thorn73v@gmail.com](mailto:thorn73v@gmail.com).



## LOCAL PROJECTS

All over the county groups of historians (family and local) and other enthusiasts are embarking on projects to bring their communities' First World War fatalities to greater public attention. Objectives vary; in some cases it is a matter of finding a long-lost plaque; in others the memorial still stands, but is in need of physical refurbishment. Transcription and indexing of the names is the next obvious step, closely followed by a desire to research the lives behind them. Below are described a few of these projects, large and small, some completed and others still getting off the ground.

One of the largest is that of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM), described here by the project leader, Paul Temple:

The **Windsor and Maidenhead** project came about after a conversation overheard between a young child and his mother standing at the Maidenhead memorial. The child asked what the statue was for and why there were names on it. The mother's reply was: "I don't know, it's old, so who cares who they are?" This prompted the start of the project in March 2013, not only to commemorate the centenary of the First World War but also as an opportunity to educate younger generations.

The official title of the project is *For King and Country: the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead during the First World War*, and its aim is to gather information on all of the RBWM's war memorials, including those that have been lost. At present 103 First World War memorials (crosses of sacrifice, tablets, boards, church windows and fittings, memorial halls) and another 86 at Eton College have been identified.

The backgrounds of the names on these memorials will be researched to form the basis of a searchable database and inter-active map.

The map will locate each memorial, and the last known location at which each casualty lived, allowing people to visualise the impact of the war on communities by seeing the numbers of casualties from a street or parish.

The Home Front, especially the industrial and voluntary sectors, is also being explored. The RBWM hosted many auxiliary hospitals staffed by the Red Cross and Voluntary Aid Detachments, many of whom came from Canada. Hitherto, little has been known of their stories.

The project partners are the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Maidenhead Heritage Centre, Berkshire Family History Society, Berkshire Yeomanry Museum, The Rifles Museum, Windsor, RBWM Museum and RBWM Heritage and Arts Services. Fifty local volunteers are aiding the research, which began in November 2013, and is estimated to complete in late 2015, although information will still be gathered up until November 2018.

A website and database will be created, freely available to all. Verified information about casualties will be passed to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to update their records. Database information will be used in static and travelling exhibitions and by local drama groups. Information display boards may be put up at several memorials. After the commemorations the RBWM Museum will maintain the database.

The RBWM will also have two Victoria Cross commemorative paving stones: one for Lt-Colonel Harry Greenwood VC, DSO and Bar, MC; and another for Captain Thomas Tannant Pryce VC, whose family have requested that his stone should be laid in Maidenhead and not in Holland, his place of birth. Capt Pryce lived in Maidenhead and is recorded on the Maidenhead memorial.

<http://east-ilsley.com/warmemorial> lists the names on the war memorial in St Mary's Church, **East Ilsley**, and their stories. The

information is also published in book form, as *Names familiar to all: the stories of the East Ilsley war memorial* (Sigma Books), available from Berkshire FHS Bookshop. Royalties from sales go to the Royal British Legion and the East Ilsley Local History Society, whose members carried out the project.

Three members of the **Kintbury** Family History Group, led by Merle Manson (a member of Berkshire Family History Society), are involved with the Kintbury WWI war memorial project, which started two years ago when a member of the Kintbury British Legion mentioned to one of the group members that, although they read out the names of the casualties on the war memorial every Remembrance Sunday, no-one had any idea who they were.

Fifty of the 53 named on the memorial, pictured left, have now been identified and researched.



*Memorial at St Mary's, Kintbury*

Hopes of funding for publication from Greenham Common Trust were dashed, but there is hope of help from Kintbury Volunteers and the parish council. Work is also in hand to put this work on a website.

**Hamstead Marshall** is a small village with a small memorial inside St Mary's Church. It bears just six names, two of them brothers. The project to research their histories was initiated last year by a local resident with no previous experience of family history. Jamie Gladstone was warned that the task could become addictive, and he has found this to be true.

Except for the brothers, they all joined different regiments, and all are buried or remembered in different cemeteries in France. Jamie Gladstone has identified the family backgrounds of each casualty, and is now tracing the the relevant war diaries in the various regimental archives, from which he hopes to find out more about the actions in which each soldier died. Ultimately he hopes to visit the cemeteries and memorials in France.

He intends to have the job done by August for the anniversary of the outbreak of the war, and make the information available in St Mary's Church, pictured below.



Whilst Alison Jackson was researching the war memorial in Earley St Peter's churchyard for a university course, she discovered that there had been a war memorial to boys lost in the

First World War in the adjacent **Earley St Peter's Church of England Primary School**. As both her children were at the school, she was intrigued to find out more, but despite extensive searching, the memorial couldn't be found.

Appeals in the school newsletter and parish magazines resulted in finding a very grainy photo in the *Reading Standard* of the original unveiling of the memorial, followed by further detailed reports in the *Reading Mercury*, *Oxford Gazette* and *Newbury Herald* of the events of 14 February 1921, the same day as the separate memorial was unveiled in the adjacent churchyard.

The school memorial commemorated 40 old boys. From a photo Alison tied in the names to those on the newspaper report and, with help from the Berkshire Family History Society, is continuing to research their all-too-brief lives.

Despite requests in local newspapers and an appeal on Reading 107 radio, the original

memorial couldn't be found. With the 90th anniversary looming, she decided to replace the lost memorial with an identical one. After a huge fundraising campaign and very generous donations from the local Co-operative Funeralcare and the school's Parents' Association, the money (just over £2,000) was raised to commission a replacement panel in oak. In July 2011 this replacement memorial, pictured right, was unveiled by the Rt Hon John Redwood MP, just as his predecessor Col Wilson MP had unveiled the original 90 years earlier. The memorial now stands proudly in the school hall.



## WHAT OTHER INFORMATION IS ONLINE?

[www.ukniwm.org.uk](http://www.ukniwm.org.uk) is the Imperial War Museum's War Memorials Archive, aka UK National Inventory of War Memorials. Berkshire coverage is at present limited to 448 names.

[www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk](http://www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk) is titled War Memorials Online, and is jointly run by the War Memorials Trust and English Heritage.

[www.roll-of-honour.com](http://www.roll-of-honour.com) is the national roll of honour website, which comes under the wing of the MoD and the British Legion.

[www.berkswm.org](http://www.berkswm.org) is the site of Berkshire War Memorials, and aims to provide an inventory for the county, organised first by district and then by parish/town. Contributors are asked to submit pictures, details of the men listed, names of contacts who are researching the memorial, who is responsible for the memorial, details of booklets or leaflets, and a report on the current state of the memorial. The site is reticent about its authorship, but John Chapman's name is mentioned for contact, and at the bottom a copyright claim by Berkshire Archaeological Society is just discernible.

[www.memorialtranscripts.co.uk/Compressed/berkshire\\_ww1](http://www.memorialtranscripts.co.uk/Compressed/berkshire_ww1) appears to be one individual's ambitious project to catalogue the names on all UK WWI memorials, giving regiment, date, rank number, and action. Several hundred Berkshire names have been submitted, but information is not complete.

<http://westberkshirwarmemorials.org.uk> was created and is maintained by Phil Wood, listing several hundred West Berkshire memorials (of all wars), both multiple and individual, with links to transcripts and photographs. The biographies of 82 names are posted, together with details of ongoing research in to 32 "headaches", ie, names for which an exact identification has yet to be made.

# Getting a war memorial research project off the ground

**Memorials were erected in most towns and villages from as early as 1916. The names they bore were familiar to the crowd that gathered for the unveiling or at remembrance services in the following years. A century later, relatives with such personal memory are ever-decreasing in number, and the soldiers are simply forgotten. *Phil Wood* thinks they deserve better and encourages you to use the skills learnt in researching your own family history to delve into the lives behind the names on your local memorial, and to make the results available to all.**

## THE MEMORIAL

While it is the names that are usually of most interest to the researcher, don't neglect the memorial itself. Tell its story: how the money was raised, any debate or squabble over its location or design, who designed it and who carved, painted or built it. Most of this can be found in the local paper. If you are very lucky you may find records of a local war memorial committee.

A local paper article on the unveiling and dedication ceremony will often include a list of the names commemorated – very useful if you are researching an old sandstone memorial with now-illegible names. Reported names may even vary from those on the memorial – in which case don't be surprised, and don't presume that the memorial is right. Mistakes did occur.

## IDENTIFICATION

The aim is to identify the name as a member of both the local community and the military. For the latter, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission database is invaluable. In some cases you'll find the deceased on [www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org), the CWGC website, with his next of kin's name and address. However there are considerable numbers of casualties not on the CWGC database, omitted by oversight or because they don't meet the CWGC criteria for commemoration. For example: the Newbury War Memorial has a nurse who died working for the Serbian Relief Fund (not an accredited organisation); a man who died in late 1922 (too late for the CWGC); and several who fully meet the CWGC requirements, but have been overlooked (eg, three men who died after discharge, of tuberculosis contracted on service). These last can be added to the CWGC database and their graves adopted as

war graves if satisfactory evidence can be presented. The volunteers at the *In From The Cold* project ([www.infromthecold.org](http://www.infromthecold.org)) will be happy to help with submissions.

Don't be surprised if you find a man from Australia, Canada or any other part of the Empire; many young men emigrated before the war, only to return in uniform.

The announcement columns of local papers are a great help with identification, including death announcements and In Memoriam entries from subsequent years. Papers also reported on promotions, decorations and letters, and their deaths were detailed throughout the war. Coverage relied on input from the families, and is far from comprehensive, but a story in the paper is often the best information you will find.

Most researchers looking at a memorial with more than just a few names will, during their research, come across other local casualties whose names have not been included on the memorial. This is far more commonplace than most realise. It's quite possible that as many as 20 per cent of casualties were not included. Why should this be? There are several reasons: few communities kept records of their losses, and relied on family members to submit names during the planning of the memorial; some names were deliberately excluded, notably those of executed soldiers or suicides; and some may have been excluded by the families not wanting to be associated with a memorial for one reason or another (some non-conformists would not want their boy's name in a churchyard, and some families, often inspired by bitter returning soldiers, were simply against the idea of war memorials). You may like to consider getting these names commemorated by adding them to an existing memorial or on an alternative memorial in an appropriate location.

## HOME LIFE

Next, find out as much as you can about the man's life before the war. This aspect of the research will be familiar territory to a family historian. What did his parents do? Where did he go to school? Was he involved in local organisations? What did he do for a living before he enlisted? Did he marry and have children?

Family connections to other names on the memorial bring home the magnitude of the impact of the war on families. Brothers are usually evident from the common surname, but I recommend researching the family back at least as far as the deceased's grandparents, and then back down to identify his cousins. Most memorials with any significant number of names will include a set of cousins. This work should also show up brothers-in-law, nephews and, of course, fathers and sons.

## MILITARY LIFE

To tell the story of a man's service one needs to develop some understanding of the role of the various elements of the services and their war experiences. The best single source for such background is the Great War Forum on <http://1914-1918.invisionzone.com/forums>. No matter how obscure the unit, there always seems to be someone with knowledge of it.

The first stop for researching individuals should be the Long Long Trail website, [www.1914-1918.net/soldiers/research](http://www.1914-1918.net/soldiers/research), which has explanations of the units, army structure, ranks, weapons and the immense logistical operation that supported the men at the front.

There are many sources of information on British servicemen: some are online, while others will require a trip to The National Archives. Servicemen from the Empire offer different challenges: Australian records are copious and freely available online, whereas South African records are undigitised. Online access to Canadian and New Zealand records is steadily improving. See <http://westberkshirewarmemorials.org.uk/links.php> for lots of useful links.

## PUBLISHING YOUR WORK

The aim of war memorial research should be to publish and share the stories behind the names. Traditionally this has been accomplished in print. Nowadays the internet offers a far simpler means of publication, with many added benefits to the researcher: very low cost, ease of updating if new information is uncovered, and publication does not need to wait until all the stories are researched. Many researchers enjoy developing dedicated websites, or one can add stories to the Imperial War Museum's Lives of the First World War Project.

If your research covers a memorial in West Berkshire, I'd be delighted to host your stories on my website, or to link to your website. See my Newbury research at [www.westberkshirewarmemorials.org.uk/nstories.php](http://www.westberkshirewarmemorials.org.uk/nstories.php).

However, don't write off the printed book option. Many people would still rather read on paper. Although it can be expensive, you may find a local council or business willing to sponsor such a well-meaning publication.

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# The war dead of Newbury Grammar School 1914–19

*This article is based on material gathered for a module in the 2013 summer school for new entrants to St Bartholomew's School, Newbury. With the 1914 centenary in mind, **Judith Thomas** (1291), the school's librarian, has tried to make all the boys who died in the First World War into real people, who had attended their school and known many of the local landmarks still recognisable today. She has been through the school magazine, **The Newburian**, begun in 1903, recording references to all 44 boys who died in the war and who are recorded on a bronze plaque in the reception area of the school.*

The school was so small in those days – only just over 100 boys – and, apart from the small number of those killed who had attended the school before his arrival in 1902, their headmaster, Mr Sharwood Smith, knew them well. However, he only wrote formal obituaries in the latter years of the war.

Sadly, I have found marriages for only two of them so far, and none appears to have been survived by any children.

I have discovered two omissions from the plaque. See the final two entries below. There is also one probable mistake. Giles L of the RAMC cannot be traced. See details below.

Not included are any details of military careers. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission website [www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org) will provide details of date of death, place of burial, rank, regiment and decorations.

Mr Sharwood Smith followed a policy of attributing to the war any death whilst in the services until 1919. Four former pupils actually died of natural causes.

Below I only mention the name of the father, as is the case on all the school lists. I wanted to make the point to our new Year 7 pupils that a mother in Edwardian times was extremely unlikely to follow her own career. Only one boy, Shipley, had a mother following an occupation, and she was the manageress of a local laundry, where her husband was the manager.

1. **Allen, William Harry**, born 1899, killed in action in France aged 18. Son of Harry Allen, 1911 corn salesman and dealer, 1 Holme Villas, Hambridge Road, Newbury.

2. **Allnatt, Harold Lewis**, born 1887, killed in Mesopotamia aged 27. Son of Alfred W Allnatt, 1901 retired hotel-keeper, 1 Sanclaire Villas, Queens Road, Newbury.

3. **Bance, Robert Arman**, born 1892, died in France aged 23. Father Edward A Bance, 1911 master builder, Ball Hill.

4. **Buckingham, Philip Edward**, born 1896, killed aged 21 in Belgium in an RAF flying accident three days before the armistice. 1911 father Edward Buckingham, managing director, joinery works (Elliots' in Northbrook Street), The Limes, Albert Road, Newbury.

5. **Burgess, Nathaniel Gordon**, born 1890, died at sea off Anglesey in submarine H5 aged 27. Submarine H5 was sunk by a British merchantman which mistook it for a German submarine. 1911 mother Blanche Burgess, widow, Eddystone, Priory Road, Newbury, private means. His father was Nathaniel Burgess, an Inland Revenue Officer.

6. **Cannon, Hugh Stanley**, born 1888, killed 1914 in Belgium aged 26. Son of Alfred Cannon, 1901 a papermaker from wood and rags, Sandford-on-Thames. 1911 Hugh is a brewer, living at home with his widowed mother, Egham, Surrey.

7. **Chislett, Harry John William**, born 1893, killed in action 1917 near Jerusalem aged 24. 1911 father Harry Chislett, draper and grocer, Kintbury High Street. Harry

junior is a Manchester ware-houseman in south-east London.

8. **Cowell-Townshend, Roy**, born 1898, accidentally killed aged 19 at an RAF training station in the West Midlands. 1911 father Edwin Cowell Townshend, living on own means/private means, Wilmot House, Hewelsfield, Glos. Later moved to Croft House, Hungerford.

9. **Cox, Cyril Wilson**, born 1895, killed in France aged 20. 1911 father Edward Arthur Cox, licensed victualler, The Cricketers, Newbury (Park Way, The Marsh).

10. **Curnock, George Ashwin**, born 1893, killed in action in France aged 24. 1911 father Clement Curnock, farm bailiff, Harwood Farm, Woolton Hill.

11. **Davies, Philip Edgar**, born 1888, died in Dover, Kent,





*Late nineteenth-century view of Newbury Grammar School, which amalgamated with the girls' grammar school in 1975 to become St Bartholomew's School. This building, known as Wormstall, became the sixth form centre. In recent years it has been sold for redevelopment into apartments.*

of pneumonia aged 28. 1901 father MacFarlane Davies, china and glass dealer, 63 Northbrook Street, Newbury.

**12. Davis, Alexander**

**Herbert**, born 1889, died in a military hospital in South London of a brain tumour aged 25. 1901 father Henry Davis, 37 Northbrook Street, Newbury, chemist. 1911 Alexander Davis is a bank clerk in a lodging house, 76 Cowley Road, Oxford.

**13. Edwards, Francis**

**Andrew Lloyd**, born 1893, died of wounds in France aged 23. 1911 mother Charlotte Edwards, private means, Cholsey. She was the widow of Captain Herbert Edwards, RN.

**14. Evers, Bertram**

**Saxelbye**, born 1889, killed in France aged 24. 1911 father Rev Edwin Evers, vicar of Aldborough, Yorkshire. One of Bertram's many sisters married Edward Sharwood Smith, headmaster at Newbury Grammar School. This must have been well known at the time, but came as a surprise when recently rediscovered.

**15. Giles, L** According to *The Newburian* Giles L served in the RAMC, but there is no such name on the school lists. The only L Giles who served in the RAMC on the CWGC website is Lionel Percival Giles, with no known connection to Newbury. The first list of the fallen in *The Newburian* named Giles, W H, who definitely was a former pupil, and definitely was killed in the First World War. He is also commemorated on

Newbury war memorial and in Newbury United Reformed Church. **Giles, William**

**Herbert** born 1897, died in 1919 in France aged 21. Son of James Giles 1911, bricklayer, 1 Mayfair, Arthur Road, Newbury.

**16. Griffin, Hedley**

**Saunders**, born 1897, died a prisoner-of-war in Belgium aged 20. 1911 father George Griffin, pork butcher, 2 Craven Road, Newbury.

**17. Hallen, John Vernon**,

born 1893, killed in action in France aged 24. John's family background is complicated: 1901 father John Charles Rokeby Hallen, 6 Cheap Street, Newbury, living on own means, but his mother Susannah Hallen is a cook, servant, "widow", in a boarding house in Marylebone. 1911 father and son are living at Coomesbury Farm, Boxford. No occupations. In 1917 John junior married Doris Adams at St Jude's, Peckham.

**18. Harris, Lionel Arthur**,

born 1895, died of wounds at Gallipoli, aged 20. 1911 father Ernest Harris, ironmonger dealer, St Faith's, Priory Road, Newbury.

**19. Herbert, George William**,

born c1883 Millwall, London, served in the Royal Welsh Fusiliers and was killed 20 August 1916, aged 33, in France. Commemorated on the Thiepval memorial. 1901 father David Herbert, woodworking machinist, 3 Waldegrave Place, Newbury. George is a builder's clerk, living at home. By 1911 George had married Mary

Catherine Williams in London in 1909, and was living in her parents' home in Bangor, North Wales. He was a clerk, engineering department, General Post Office.

**20. Jones, Sidney Walter**,

born 1896, died of wounds in France aged 19. 1911 mother Kate Elizabeth Jones, widow, police pension. She was the widow of PC Francis Jones.

**21. Mathews, Sidney Beach**,

born 1897, died in Jerusalem aged 20. 1911 father S J Mathews, draper and grocer, Middle Farm, Chieveley.

**22. Mortimer, Charles**

**Frederick**, born 1898, killed in action in France aged 19. 1911 father Thomas Frederick Mortimer, police constable, 3 Hampstead Terrace, Pound Street, Newbury.

**23. Myddelton, Edward**

**Geoffrey**, born 1893, killed in action in France aged 24. 1911 father Edward B Myddelton, bank manager, Wellingborough.

**24. Nash, John Oakshott**,

born 1887, died of wounds in France aged 29. 1911 father John Nash, letterpress printer, bookseller and stationer, 2 Upland Villas, Newtown Road, Newbury.

**25. Patterson, Robert**

**Arthur**, born 1896 killed in France aged 21. 1911 father Charles Sumner Patterson, medical practitioner, High Street, Lambourn.

**26. Payze, Archer Robert**,

born 1884, died of wounds in France aged 31. 1911 father Percy O Payze is a miller, Mill House, Whitchurch-on-Thames.

27. **Pearson, Kenneth Herbert**, born 1899, died of wounds in France aged 19. 1911 father Herbert Pearson, bank manager, Berrysbank, Greenham.

28. **Plenty, Edward Pellew**, born 1897, died in the Huntingdon area of complications following influenza, aged 21. 1911 father Edward Plenty, manager, builder of steam and oil engines, engineering company, Hill House, Wash Hill, Newbury.

29. **Quarterman, Percy Harold** born 1898, killed in action in Belgium aged 19. 1911 father Thomas Quarterman, police constable, Berkshire Constabulary, 4 Jubilee Terrace, Jubilee Road, Newbury.

30. **Ravenor, Herbert**, born 1872, died of wounds in France aged 44. 1891 father Richard Ravenor, plumber, Speenhamland.

31. **Ravenor, Geoffrey Paxton**, born 1893, killed in France aged 23. 1911 father Richard Ravenor, widower, plumber and decorator, Oxford Street, Newbury.

32. **Robinson, Arthur Hine**, born 1894, killed aged 20 in Belgium. 1901 father John Robinson, fruit and potato merchant, 6 Marius Road, Streatham.

33. **Salway, Douglas John**, born 1896, killed in France aged 20. 1911 father John Salway, bank clerk, Capital and Counties bank, 2 The Uplands, Newtown Road (near Madeira Place).

34. **Savage, Edward George**, born 1897, died aged 20 in Surrey of pneumonia, following measles. 1911 father Edward Savage, dentist, Mansion House Street, Newbury.

35. **Sharp, Frederick Henry**, born 1893, killed aged 22 in France. His father Henry Sharp was a farmer in Canada. Frederick lived with his aunt

Mrs Annie Alleyne, The Nook, Newtown Road, Newbury.

36. **Shiple, Arthur John**, born 1899, died of wounds in Cairo, Egypt, aged 18. 1911 father Arthur Shiple, laundry manager, Falkland House, Andover Road, Newbury.

37. **Shutler, Ralph**, born 1896, killed at Gallipoli, Turkey aged 18. 1911 father Amos Shutler, master butcher, 47 Cheap Street, Newbury.

38. **Somerset, Francis Henry**, born 1882, killed in France aged 34. 1891 father Henry Somerset, brewery manager, 26 and 27 Northbrook Street, Newbury, died in 1897 in Newbury. His mother had emigrated to Canada by 1915, then to Southern Rhodesia.

39. **Stevens, Edwin James**, born 1895, died of wounds in France aged 22. 1911 father William Stevens, woodturner, 1 Hollington Place, Green Lane, Thatcham.

40. **Swinley, Gordon Noel Balfour**, born 1890, killed in Belgium aged 24. His father was a tea planter in India.

41. **Tanner, Montague Albert**, born 1898, killed in France aged 19. 1911 father Albert G Tanner, commercial traveller in tailor's trimmings and silk trade, The Chalet, Burghclere Common, Newtown.

42. **Warren, Claude Middleton**, born 1888, died of pneumonia following Spanish influenza at Tidworth Camp, near Andover, aged 30. 1911 father John Warren, schoolmaster headteacher, Shurlock Row, Waltham St Lawrence.

43. **Wilde, Edwin Joseph**, born 1894, killed in France aged 24. 1911 father Edwin Wilde, schoolmaster, The Limes, Kintbury. Edwin junior married Ada Hannah Collette in 1918.

44. **Wyllie, Arthur George**, born 1896, died of wounds in France aged 21. 1911 father

Robert Wyllie, medical practitioner, 92 Northbrook Street, Newbury.

#### Omissions from the school memorial

Both served with the Canadian Forces and both are buried in Lijssenthoek Military Cemetery.

45. **Payze, Percy Owen**, born 1880, died in Belgium aged 36. Older brother of A R Payze (see above). There is a school photograph of both of them. Both brothers emigrated to Canada. 1911 Percy is a miller's clerk, living at home, Mill House, Whitchurch-on-Thames.

46. **Somerset, Burchall**, born 1889, died in Belgium aged 27. Younger brother of Francis Somerset (see above). Emigrated to Canada. Address whilst at school was Greenham House, Newbury.

There are many more details available for most of these former pupils. A longer version of this article will appear in a future edition of the *Old Newburians* magazine, but meanwhile you may contact me for further details of them at the school: [jthomas@stbarts.co.uk](mailto:jthomas@stbarts.co.uk)

#### Sources:

UK censuses.  
Commonwealth War Graves Commission website [www.cwgc.org](http://www.cwgc.org)  
*The Newburian* magazine.  
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# From hansom cabs to tanks

**Jane Joslin (6281)**  
**recalls her father's experiences  
of two world wars**

My father William Alfred Harding was born just as the nineteenth century was drawing to a close, into a family of hansom cab proprietor managers in London. The only pictures that I have seen of cab yards have been of galleried accommodation with families living above the stables, and it would probably have been very crowded. The smells, sights and sounds of the horses and drivers within the yard where they lived and worked must have been noisy and ever penetrating, as cabs worked day and night. Ormond Yard was almost opposite Great Ormond Street Hospital in Bloomsbury, so would have been busy all the time.

Charles Booth's descriptive map of 1889 showing the wealth and poverty of various districts in London shows the area to be at a midpoint between black, very poor and gold, very rich. On the map the yard is coloured purple. The surveyors used by Charles Booth described it as "a very large cab yard with cab workers and repairers."

Times were changing and soon there would be petrol-driven engines in taximeter cabs, and the horses would not be needed, but in the hustle and bustle of everyday life in London, my grandfather William Harding senior was slow to change. Trevor May, in his *History of the London horse cab*



writes "that by 1910 the number of motor cabs had overtaken the number of horse cabs, and in the decade 1905-14 the percentage of London's cabs drawn by the horse fell from 99.82 to 16.07. When the First World War broke out there were fewer than 1400 left". By the time of the 1911 census William Harding senior is recorded as a taximeter driver.

My father William Alfred was still at school. He had taken and passed the entrance exam to Central Foundation Boys School. This was backed up by a county scholarship which was extended in 1910, so that he was able to stay at school until 1915. A maintenance grant was provided at the rate of £15 a year.

When he left school, in 1911 he took and passed the Civil Service exam and as far as I know, joined the Civil Service, becoming a boy clerk at the Crown agents for the colonies. Later he was moved to the then new National Health and Insurance Commission.

The only story he told me of that time was that he visited widows in Acton, presumably to help assess their eligibility for a pension.

War was declared on 4 August 1914 and on 19 March 1915 William Alfred Harding enlisted. He declared his age as 21, but was actually just a month short of his 19th birthday. He was recruited into the public schools



battalion of the Middlesex Regiment and almost immediately transferred into the Royal Scots Fusiliers. They embarked for France on 17 November 1915.

Between November 1915 and 8 April 1916 there is a gap in his army record, so I can only assume he spent the winter in France in a trench. He told me once about lighting a candle and running it up and down the seams of his shirt to kill the lice. He was appointed a lance-corporal on 8 April 1916.

Judging by the date in *Tracing the battalions on the Somme* by Ray Westlake, it appears that he was part of 2nd Battalion Scots Fusiliers, who were preparing to attack Montauban.

On 1 July 1916 he was wounded in action near Albert, transferred by ship to England and admitted to Endell Street Military Hospital in London. The record is almost unreadable at this point, but it seems that he had an operation on his leg, possibly to remove a bullet and to repair an artery. When recovered sufficiently he went to convalesce and for medical assessment.

He applied for a commission in October 1917 and travelled to Wareham the following January for instruction and preparation. He seems to have been sent for medical examination at Curragh camp in Ireland in November 1917 before being admitted to the officer cadet unit. Accepted for admission in January 1918 he was attached to the 24th Officer Cadet Battalion in Winchester.

On 8 October 1918 he applied for and was granted a temporary commission in the Tank Corps, and then appears to have been discharged the same day.

He also applied for a temporary commission in the regular army, and by this time his age had caught up with him, and his correct date of birth is given on the application form. This was part of a scheme to encourage volunteers to join an army of occupation for as long as was necessary.

I think he must have spent this time with the Tank Corps, as he spoke about being a tank instructor. His experience with motor taxicab engines probably gave him knowledge of engines

that others did not have. However, I think it would have been in the record if he had gone to France with a tank.

He left the army on 11 April 1920 as 2nd lieutenant, awarded one chevron, the war star for 1914/15, the British War medal and the Victory medal. He should have had a wound stripe, and wrote to the War Office about this. It was agreed, but was not corrected in any of the records that I have.

My father was not given to much communication with his children, and the only memories I have of his speaking about the war was that he had been wounded and that he had been a tank instructor.

There was no hint of what he and his brother had been through.

After the war he went back into the Civil Service, and seems to have stayed with the National Health and Insurance Commission in all its various guises until he retired. He joined the Civil Service Operatic Society and obviously enjoyed playing some of the main roles in Gilbert and Sullivan operas. He married for the second time in 1938, and when the Second World War broke out he took his turn at fire-watching in London,

presumably on government buildings.

He also took to Dig for Victory in a big way, and as children we remember fruit trees, apples, plums and pears, runner beans and tomatoes, rhubarb, currants, raspberries and gooseberries, much of which was made either into jams or jellies. All this as well as lettuces and radishes we ate, either at meal times or, if we could get away with it, as snacks during our games in the garden. My mother used to say that if she asked my father to go up the garden for a cabbage he was there for the rest of the day.

#### References

Trevor May *The history of the London horse cab*  
Ray Westlake *Tracing the battalions on the Somme*  
Army records of William Alfred Harding

My thanks also to Chad Hanna who helped me with the names and seniority of army ranks.



# Setting up home in the austerity years

My parents met and married during the Second World War when both were in the army. My mother, Winefride Mary née Sealey, known as Terry from her confirmation name Thérèse, was born and raised in a south Warwickshire village, and joined the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) on leaving Leamington College in 1939, aged 17. My father, John Lewis Hadland from Worcester, was four years older and had worked for a few years in an architect's office in that city before joining the Royal Engineers early in the war. John and Terry met when both were posted in Ilfracombe. They married in 1941, when Terry was only 19. Being in the army, the couple did not have the opportunity to live together and within months John was posted to India, where he supervised the construction of air-fields. He did not return until his demobilisation in 1946. Thus my parents lived apart for the first five years of their marriage.

During the war, the army moved Terry Hadland to Reading, where the ATS supported the Pay Corps. After leaving the army, having nowhere else to stay, she remained in Reading, worked at a telephone exchange and lived in a bedsit. When John Hadland returned from India, and left the army with the rank of major, Reading seemed as good a place as any to live. He got a job as an architectural assistant at H & G Simonds brewery and stayed with the brewery for the rest of his working life, later becoming a district surveyor.

In 1946 John and Terry found a newly built semi-detached three-bedroom house for sale at 48 Armour Road, Tilehurst. It was built on an infill plot on the corner of Armour Road and Lower Armour Road, and the Hadlands therefore gave it the name Cornerways. The house was on former allotment land, close to a derelict forge. The first occupier had lived there only six months and had been moved to another part of the country by his

**Tony Hadland**  
*has mined a cache of household bills from the early days of his parents' marriage. In Part I of this three-part article he reveals the realities of mortgages and utilities for a modest house in Reading in the 1940s*

employer. John and Terry obtained a mortgage and moved in on 2 January 1947. They started their married life together in their own home at a time when rationing and shortages were even worse than during the war, and in the most severe winter of the century.

John Hadland kept all his invoices and receipts. The ring-binder containing those for 1947 to 1952 gives a fascinating insight into how John and Terry embarked on family life in the austerity years, how utility services were provided and what goods and services they spent their money on.

The house was mortgaged by the county borough of Reading, and at the end of August 1947 John Hadland received his first mortgage bill. It showed that the initial loan was £1,080 and requested the first instalment of £30 17s 10d. This included interest at 2¾ per cent, less tax on the interest of nine shillings in the pound. The Inland Revenue invoiced the first instalment of Income Tax Schedule A on Property in December 1947 from its offices in Somerset House, Blagrove Street, Reading.



*John Hadland in 1949 with the author in the garden of 48 Armour Road. In the background is the old Armour Road Forge, which blew down in a gale about 10 years later.*

Gas was provided by the Reading Gas Company, based in Friar Street. It had four charging rates, which depended on how far the consumer lived from the gas works. Customers in Pangbourne, for example, paid nearly 31 per cent more for their gas than those in the county borough of Reading. The company could rent you a gas cooker, gas fire or water heater, but the Hadlands did not avail themselves of these services and would have gone out of their way to avoid renting anything.

The borough of Reading supplied electricity, which was one reason why Reading Corporation Transport favoured trolleybuses: the money expended on electricity to propel the buses stayed within the council coffers. At the end of Armour Road, five minutes' walk from the house, was a trolleybus stop outside the White House pub, on the corner of Kentwood Hill and Norcot Road. There was a frequent service which took as little as 15 minutes to whisk the passenger almost silently into the centre of Reading, passing the clay pits, paddocks with cows and horses, the greyhound stadium, the Rex cinema, the Pulsometer pump factory, the Berkshire Printing Works, Battle Hospital and Brock Barracks on the way.

Water was also supplied by Reading Borough and was invoiced together with the general rate, the precursor of council tax. There was a separate water rate, based on the rateable value of the house, and no metering option was available for ordinary domestic dwellings.

Unusually for 1947, 48 Armour Road had a telephone, the service being provided by Post Office Telephones. The previous owner of the house had managed to get a phone installed because it was necessary for his work. The Hadlands were able to take the line over, the number being Tilehurst 67757. They were one of the minority of families in the road with a phone and even had the luxury of an extension in the main bedroom. Trunk calls were expensive and were connected by the operator; the typed call statement was annotated with a fountain pen to identify each long distance number called.

In June 1947 John Hadland, eagle-eyed on every penny, typed a letter to the telephone manager in Blagrove Street, Reading, requesting a list of charges, as he was unable to agree the account.

More than a month later he received a courteous and detailed reply on behalf of the manager, whose ominous surname was Fright.

A noteworthy feature of paid invoices of this era was that most bore a twopenny postage stamp indicating that excise duty had been paid. Unlike many other countries that taxed paid invoices, the UK had dual-purpose stamps that bore the words postage and revenue. Reading Borough Council overprinted the stamps with the word Reading above the king's head and Corporation below it, presumably to deter staff from pilfering the stamps.

There was no central heating in the house and precious little insulation. The main heating source was coal. Early 1947 had some of the coldest weather on record and, on moving in, the Hadlands had eight hundredweight of "best kitchen" coal delivered by C & G Ayres of Friar Street, Reading. They had further smaller deliveries of coal and coke in February, March, April and May. On 21 January, just 19 days after John and Terry moved in, the first of several severe cold spells started, and snow lay on the ground until mid-March. Road and railway travel was impeded, exacerbating the post-war fuel shortages. The Thames Valley suffered its worst overall flooding of the twentieth century.

The winter of 1947-48 was milder, and Ayres delivered coal in November and February. But fuel was rationed and Ayres wrote to say that their February delivery of seven hundredweight of house coal would complete the Hadland's quota for the year ending 30 April 1948. The local fuel overseer controlled rationing. Chimneys needed frequent sweeping and Mr K Lock of Russell Street was employed to do this, using the new vacuum process at 7s 6d a time.

There were power cuts in early 1947 and at times the BBC radio went off the air. The Hadlands purchased their first "Broadcast Receiving Licence (excluding television)", a legal requirement for radio listeners, for £1 in March 1947.

After that very severe winter, a gas fitter called at the house and inspected the Ascot gas-fired water heater. The Hadlands had not made a service call, and in July successfully protested to the Reading Gas Company at apparent double charging by the Ascot company and Reading Gas. Thereafter the

Ascot was serviced annually at a cost of £1.

The late 1940s saw the nationalisation of many industries by the new Labour government. Hence, the Hadlands' October 1949 gas bill has the The Reading Gas Company blocked out and Southern Gas Board – Central Division, Reading and District Gas Undertaking printed below in its place. Similarly, local electricity generation was wrested away from Reading Borough Council and taken over by the Southern Electricity Board. In September 1951, electricity bills bore an adhesive label warning of the unfortunate necessity of “load shedding... due to shortage of generating plant”. Details of the cuts were advised in advance via the local press.

Gas prices rose in autumn 1947 and again the following spring. A gas bill received in November 1947 warned: “Parents – teach your children road sense”. It might have been more germane to warn them about the dangers of gas in the home. The newly built 48 Armour Road incorporated such features as an unflued gas heater in the bathroom and gas taps in the kitchen, rear bedroom and living room for portable gas appliances, such as gas fires, gas

rings and gas poker. Children could easily turn on these gas taps (which had no safety cut-outs or locking devices) discharging poisonous and highly explosive town gas into the room. The only protection against these risks was to stick a Rawlplug tightly into the nozzle and strictly admonish the children not to play with the gas taps, “if you don't want to blow up the house and die”.

But teaching children road safety was plainly a matter of great national concern in 1947, because the last electricity bill of the year also implored parents to “teach your children road safety”. A year later, the message on the electricity bill was aimed at drivers: “MOTORISTS! Children mean danger. KEEP ALERT.” There were no warnings, though, about the newly installed unguarded electric wall heaters or unshuttered round-pin sockets into which a steel knitting needle could so easily be poked by an inquisitive child.

The late 1940s were a time of shortages and rationing. The Hadlands' October 1947 phone bill highlights this with the message: “Prompt payment will be much appreciated. It avoids reminders and saves manpower and paper.”

*Part II of this article will appear in the next issue of the Historian, in which Tony Hadland will remind us of the frugality which governed household expenditure on food, clothing and toys.*

## Dates for your diary

Sat 22 Mar 13.30	Federation of Family History Societies AGM and GM	The National Archives Kew TW9 4DU	< <a href="http://www.ffhs.org.uk/events/meetings">www.ffhs.org.uk/events/meetings</a> >
Sat 29 Mar 11.00-16.00	Society of Genealogists free open day	SoG	book on < <a href="mailto:events@sog.org.uk">events@sog.org.uk</a> >

# Scottish secrets

*If it's juicy ancestral gossip you're after, head for Scotland, says Grace Gillions (7431) who found any amount of hochmagandy in the Kirk Session Minutes*

***I had a marvellous time in Edinburgh this summer looking up my father's family at the National Records Office, and came away with enough material for a soap opera. Every human failing was meticulously recorded in what must surely be one of the most entertaining of genealogical resources, the Kirk Session Minutes. These invaluable records were maintained by the elders of the church, whose responsibility it was to keep their parishioners in check and to care for the morals of the community. I can only say that if my ancestors were anything to go by, this must have been pretty time-consuming.***

I knew that my great-great-grandfather, named Adam Smith (no, not that one – mine was a humble crofter) was the illegitimate son of Alexander Smith, a tailor, and Jane Milne; so it came as no surprise to find a report of their

“fornication” in the minutes of Glenbervie parish for 1809. What I hadn't expected was that within three months great-great-grandfather Alexander would be back, this time as a married man, confessing to ante-nuptial fornication with his wife, Janet Mowat. (Perhaps he was carrying on with both lassies at the same time; I can't help wondering what Janet had that Jane did not.)

Be that as it may, the record of his second appearance reads: “As this was a relapse by Mr Smith the session demanded a penalty of 10/- [roughly equivalent to £25] which he paid, and having been suitably exhorted to repentance by the ministers they were absolved.” This last bit is significant; children born as a result of fornication (a catch-all term for any illicit sexual encounter) could not be baptised until the parents had satisfied the rules, although I did find one example of a poor sickly baby who was given an emergency baptism with someone else standing as sponsor. The church set great store by repentance; some parishes were content for the guilty parties to appear before them once, others demanded their presence on three consecutive occasions, and there were numerous records of transgressors being made to sit on stools where the whole congregation could witness their shame, and even one or two instances of girls having to wear sackcloth.

Two of my great-great-aunts were up before the authorities so many times that they probably had their own stools. Other members of my family to be immortalised in the kirk minutes include their mother, Mary Collie, who had a daughter with William Henderson before my great-great-grandfather William Officer made an honest woman of her in 1843; a second set of 3 x great-grandparents, who produced Adam's future wife, Mary Caie, in 1817; and my great-grandmother, Isabella Lindsay Caithness, who had a son out of wedlock in 1872, two years before marrying Adam and Mary's youngest son Robert. Poor Isabella had to face the music alone; her partner in sin, one William Alexander, failed to appear before the elders, who were told that he had left the district, and even his parents did not know where he was. On this occasion the session decided to hold the matter over for a while, and



*Isabella Lindsay Caithness in about 1914. The three girls are the author's father's sisters: Isobel (with the bow), May (in glasses) and Nellie (seated) Smith.*





*New Register House in Princes Street, which houses the Scottish GRO and the National Records of Scotland  
Photo: Crown Copyright*

Isabella was “admonished and absolved”.

Aside from these direct ancestors I also came across the imaginative Jean Dempster who had two children by David Fraser then, when she fell pregnant a third time, attempted to lay the blame on a perfectly innocent “gentleman in ruffles” who, she claimed, rode up to her cottage with two companions. She went so far as to name all three men, and when this slanderous story failed to impress, she came up with another victim, a man called Christie, who vehemently denied carnal knowledge of the woman, and decried her as “having the reputation of a common strumpet”.

There was also John Sinclair, a married man who admitted to having fathered a child on his servant Margaret Garvie; she “flagrantly” refused to admit that she was pregnant until two midwives were called in to examine her in the school-room, and proved otherwise.

Lest it be thought that the church elders were a bunch of prurient gossip-mongers with nothing better to do than harass village sweethearts, I should mention some of the other things I learned while scrolling through these fantastic books. The Sabbath was taken very seriously: witnesses were called against one man who was seen shearing grass and sharpening his blade on a Sunday, and marrying on the Lord’s Day was “a prophanation”. Kirk sessions could deal with the carrying out of bequests, breach of promise and the purchase of staple goods like barley and beer. The church loaned out “mortcloths” for funerals – indeed, the only evidence I have for the death of one of my ancestors is an entry in a list of mortcloth expenses. In the mid-eighteenth century one new velvet cloth was available for hire to parishioners for 3s 4d, or 3s 10d to those

“without the parish”, and by 1780 the cost had gone up to 5s (6s to non-parishioners). Ministers were also required to read improving texts, such as an Act of General Assembly against Vice and Immorality (which, quite frankly, doesn’t seem to have worked...).

All of this material was gleaned from two mornings in the reading room of the archive on Princes Street, Edinburgh, and added enormously to the rich detail I had already found online. For anyone with Caledonian roots the most basic research into Scottish heritage can be satisfyingly productive, because official records tend to contain more information than their English counterparts: a typical death record, for example, will provide the names of the deceased’s spouse and parents, the mother’s maiden name, occupations for the men and often the address and relationship of the person who reported the death.

One drawback is that ScotlandsPeople, the online arm of the national archive, has a monopoly in Scottish records and doesn’t offer a subscription service, so with half my family to research I found the cost of credits did mount up. However, images of birth records up to 1913, marriages up to 1938 and deaths up to 1963 are now available on the website. I have a drawer full of printouts telling me who my ancestors were, but it was the Kirk Session Minutes which brought them to life; when I rounded off my trip with a tour of the graveyards in the long-abolished county of Kincardineshire, I was able to stand in front of their memorial stones with a sense of the real people who walked that earth so long ago.

# And the band played on...

**Penny Stokes (2961)**  
**describes a charlatan who toured Berkshire curing all ills in the 1890s**

The crowd would be lining the procession route well in advance, because the publicity machine was thorough, and they would not be disappointed, because Sequah knew how to put on a show: a brass band, a bevy of baton-twirling cheerleaders in scanty (for the 1890s) clothing, drummers, “Indian braves in full war paint” and finally Sequah himself, dressed in Buffalo Bill attire and ensconced in a gilded carriage, graciously receiving the screaming adulation to which he was well accustomed. It was not unknown for the crowd to unharness his horses and pull his carriage themselves. Thus in April 1890 he progressed to Newbury’s football ground, where he set up his pitch for three days in a circus atmosphere enhanced by hysterical expectation.

Sequah’s business was the sale of patent medicines – Prairie Flower and Indian Oil, at 2s per bottle – which throughout the country had apparently cured rheumatism, indigestion, liver complaints, dropsy, constipation and bronchitis. The first was taken internally, and the second rubbed externally as an embrocation. Between them they had produced miracle cures in scores of patients, who wrote ecstatically to their local newspapers, from Cornwall to Caithness, to say how Sequah’s medicine had enabled them to rise from their sick beds and throw away their crutches.

As a promotional prelude to the main show, Sequah extracted teeth – painlessly, it was claimed, although the band did play rather loudly whilst the patient submitted to treatment. This service was free and, if not painless, it was certainly fast (eight teeth per minute, it was alleged). Then came the more serious part of the show, in which disabled people were carried on stage for public cure. It was immensely popular entertainment for audiences rather more robust than those of today.



Sequah frequently gave interviews to journalists, in some of which he claimed to be the son of an American army surgeon, and to have spent many years among the Apache and Choctaw tribes, from whom he had gained his name and medicinal lore. He also gave many other accounts of his early life. Whatever the truth, he was a consummate publicist (the *Nineteenth-century British newspapers* website generates 104 references to his name). He secured endorsements from the medical profession (the Edinburgh public analyst was a lone voice of denunciation in 1888) and he was swift to litigate against copycats. More than once his “cured” patients turned out to be plants in the audience, but the adoring crowd could be swift to turn on any accusers, and Sequah knew exactly when to back down and reimburse complaining customers. Wherever he went Sequah ingratiated himself with the local bigwigs by giving free concerts and generous donations to charity. Mayors and councillors were as easily star-struck, it seems, as the ignorant masses.

There was, according to some reports (although not that of Newbury), a Madame Sequah, who tended to follow him at a discreet distance. She was clearly not without influence, insofar as she was said to have forbidden the application of Prairie Oil to women, because it involved indecent rubbing.

Before leaving a town such as Newbury or Reading, Sequah would strike deals with the local chemist for ongoing supplies of Prairie Flower and Indian Oil. His weekly newspaper, *The Sequah Chronicle*, kept his products in the public eye after his departure.

But who was Sequah? Some reports described him as tall, others said that he was below average height. *The Times* reported his death as having taken place in New Zealand in

1936, naming him as Charles Frederick Reyley, born in West Bromwich in 1866 (although no birth of that name was registered between 1855 and 1870, according to FreeBMD). This story gains some credence from a report in the *Norwich Evening News* (4 November 2013) about a Peter Rowley, who was writing a biography of his grandfather, Charles Rowley, better known as Sequah. However, other sources have named Sequah as William Henry Hartley from Yorkshire.

What is largely undisputed is that, as his business prospered rapidly, the original Sequah formed a limited liability company, raising £300,000 of capital. According to the Wellcome archives Hartley was the managing director of this company, so was almost certainly the original Sequah. The company went through several incarnations before final liquidation on 26 March 1909.

Prior to this, demand for Sequah up and down the country had obliged Hartley to subcontract his bogus identity to 23 agents, each of whom masqueraded as the original on his allocated territory.

One of these “franchised” Sequahs was George Hannaway Rowe of Southampton, whose territory included Berkshire. Rowe, according to his grandson’s widow, who gave an interview to the *Newbury Weekly News* in the 1990s, made millions, but lost it all in the Horatio Bottomley affair, and died in poverty.

Sequah himself (Hartley) died in 1924 (leaving just £734), but not before he was immortalised in a painting entitled “Sequah on Clapham Common”, now in the Wellcome Institute Library.

#### Sources

*Newbury Weekly News* 17 April 1890

There are many references to Sequah online, but the most comprehensive account is:

W Schupbach *Sequah: an English “American Medicine” man in 1890* which can be seen on

[www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1139542/pdf](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1139542/pdf)

SEQUAH'S PRAIRIE FLOWER,  
SEQUAH'S OIL, and  
SEQUAH'S INSTANT RELIEF.

SOLD EVERYWHERE.

SEQUAH'S WORLD-RENOWNED  
REMEDIES

*Always give satisfaction; and*  
ONCE USED they are ALWAYS USED.

SEQUAH'S REMEDIES

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PRAIRIE FLOWER, SEQUAH'S OIL, AND  
SEQUAH'S INSTANT RELIEF

*Are now universally acknowledged to be the best of all*  
HOUSEHOLD REMEDIES.

*The Chinese, Europeans, and those never were Medicines which give prompt*  
*satisfaction, or which had so large and prominent a sale,*  
FULL DIRECTIONS ACCOMPANY EACH BOTTLE.

SOLD EVERYWHERE.

SEE THAT THE NAME SEQUAH IS BLOWN IN EVERY BOTTLE.  
See that the Words Sequah, Limited, are Engraved on every Govern-  
ment Stamp over the Cork.

*Sequah, for sure – but which one?*



# The family historian's ten commandments

1. *Thou shalt have no other hobby but family history (apart from mundane diversions such as a job).*
2. *Thou shalt accept all spellings of your surname without question, with or without the final "e".*
3. *Thou shalt eagerly seek all your ancestors, and not ignore those in the local prison or lunatic asylum.*
4. *Thou shalt be delighted to find your ancestor's will, in which is mentioned at least 25 relatives, albeit none of them by name.*
5. *Thou shalt rejoice in the fact that your ancestors took the opportunity to travel, and moved at least every four years and just before each census.*
6. *Thou shalt accept that the name with which your ancestor was christened was not the name he wished to use for the rest of his life. In fact he liked to use any of three or four, usually in a different order.*
7. *Thou shalt not find your ancestor within any census whatsoever, and thou shalt accept the fact that on the night in question he must have been either adrift in a cockleshell boat in the Channel or stuck in traffic on the M25.*
8. *Thou shalt be eternally grateful to the person who, unable to read the entry in the register, kindly deciphered it themselves, rather than bother you with a photocopy.*
9. *Thou shalt not swear aloud in any record office when told that the vital evidence you require is probably on the page the clergyman's dog ate some 200 years ago.*
10. *Thou shalt never despair!*

The original authorship of this text is unknown. Many years ago it was found and submitted to the Oxfordshire FHS magazine by Carole Newbigging, whence it was picked up by Jean Debney, who passed it on to the *Berkshire Family Historian*. If anyone knows who wrote it, the editor would be pleased to know and make due acknowledgement.

# Book ends

Reviews by Ken Houghton,  
Nick Prince and Tony Roberts



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## LOCAL HISTORY

### ***Windsor through time***

Friends of the Windsor and Royal Borough Museum (Amberley Publishing, 2013),  
16 x 23 cm, perfect bound  
Shop £14.99, UK £16.22, airmail £20.36

This is a new book, published in 2013 by Amberley Publishing in their series *Through time*, and is one of more than 400 books in the series, covering towns and events throughout the whole of the British Isles. The book follows the same format as other books in the series. Each page has two images, either a photograph or an illustration. One is a view of the past whilst the other is of today. Text between the two briefly explains the changes and history of the buildings and scenery shown. Most of the photographs and illustrations are in colour, with the most recent photographs taken in 2013.

The authors, The Friends of Windsor and the Royal Borough Museum, point out that Windsor Castle is not a significant part of the book, which concentrates on the surrounding landmarks. Those who live in or have known Windsor will recognise where they are, and will have witnessed many of the changes shown.

The intervals between the first image on the page and the second vary. For example, an Imperial bus in Peascod Street in 1987 compares with the pedestrianised picture of today, and the then-and-now views of the Guildhall feature an illustration from 1770, with a photograph of today. Another view, from 1969, shows one of the last times a double-decker bus could cross the River Thames on the bridge from Windsor to Eton. In the background can be seen the last cinema,

the ABC, that Windsor enjoyed.

Many of the early photographs and illustrations shown were sourced from the royal borough collection. Other sources include the private collections of Beryl Hedges, and a host of others who gave permission to use copyright material.

The content of the book relies mainly on its historic photographs and illustrations. You would have to look elsewhere for more historical information. On first opening the book a few typographical errors were noted beneath the aerial photograph of Windsor. There is a sketch map of Windsor with no date, but showing the two railway lines and built up areas extending to Vansittart Road in the West and to Alma and Francis roads in the south. The whole theme of the book is then-and-now, but the addition of an up-to-date map alongside the sketch map would have helped to continue that theme. A useful visual reference, giving a snapshot of the changing face of Windsor.

***Ken Houghton***

### ***Newbury then and now***

Nick Young (History Press, 2013) 17 x 24 cm,  
perfect bound, 95pp  
Shop £14.99, UK £16.22, airmail £20.36

This is the second book about a west Berkshire town in a series by the History Press which “aims to create a pictorial record of every major town and city for those who are interested in local history”. Dr Young also wrote *Thatcham then and now*, which is a useful companion volume. The books are of interest to a general reader and as a starting point for a researcher. They not primarily aimed at family historians.

## Bookends continued

Starting in the north, at Donnington Castle, the reader is taken on a journey through Newbury looking at some well known and other not so well known locations. In each case a short introduction is provided to the “then” photograph, followed by what happened afterwards up to 2012, when most of the “now” photographs were taken.

The twentieth century saw much change, and the need for a photographic record of it has become very important. Much of the radical change has occurred since the 1960s, with road layouts changing and many familiar buildings lost. Yet above street level along the core roads of Northbrook Street, Market Street and Bartholomew Street much has survived.

The narrative addresses common myths that have been perpetuated, such as whether there was a tunnel connecting Shaw House and Donnington Castle, and who the real Jack of Newbury was. Dr Young acknowledges the work of other local historians for their work in expanding the knowledge of the past in west Berkshire and David Peacock in particular for the work on Jack of Newbury.

Snippets of interest are provided, such as the different meaning of “father-in-law” as stepfather in the sixteenth century, rather than the modern understanding.

The narrative also notes how much of the area has seen road names changed or moved: for example West Street was part of Bartholomew Street until 1849, when the road now with that name was created; Marsh Road, created in 1868, became Park Way in 1936. When tracing the Newbury homes of ancestors homes it is a good idea to start with this book before looking at Roy Tubb’s *Newbury road by road*.

All in all, this is a useful valuable addition to the library of anyone with an interest in the history of west Berkshire, and family historians can pick up clues about the town their ancestors lived in or visited.

**Nick Prince**

### MILITARY HISTORY

#### ***Royal Berkshire Regiment 1743 - 1914***

Martin McIntyre (Tempus Publishing, 2006)  
24 x 17 cm, perfect bound, 128pp  
Shop £12.99, UK £15.47, airmail £19.47

#### ***Royal Berkshire Regiment 1914 - 1959***

Martin McIntyre (History Press, 2012)  
24 x 17 cm, perfect bound, 128 pp  
Shop £12.99, UK £15.47, airmail £19.47

These two books are published in association with the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regimental Museum. The author is a volunteer at the museum, and is a former member of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Royal Regiment (Berkshire and Wiltshire). The museum contains in its collections many thousands of photographs and drawings that graphically trace the history of the Royal Berkshire Regiment, and it is these illustrations that form the basis of the two books. Thus the two books are not formal histories, but they tell the story of the regiment through illustrations of the regiment’s actions, postings, presentations and personnel. Nearly every page of each book contains two images.

Both books follow a similar format, in that the central three chapters deal with regimental colours, brief biographies of notable soldiers of the regiment, and with barracks life. The two chapters either side of the central part of the books look more specifically (and chronologically) at the major events in the regiment’s history. So the first two chapters of the 1743 - 1914 book take the reader through the regiment’s origins as the 49th and 66th regiments of foot, the wars of the Victorian period and the eventual formation of the Royal Berkshire Regiment in 1881 as a result of the Cardwell army reforms. The last two chapters in this first book review the Boer War period and then the subsequent period leading to 1914. The first two chapters of the 1914-59 book take the reader through the First World

War and inter-war periods, while the last two deal with the Second World War and post-war periods. The end date of 1959 marks when the Royal Berkshire Regiment (Princess Charlotte of Wales's) was amalgamated with the Wiltshire Regiment to form the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment.

I would reiterate that these books are collections of images rather than formal histories. As such there is no index to either book. Therefore, for the researcher looking for an ancestor or relative who served with the regiment, it is a matter of searching through the images of the relevant period without any guarantee of success. But what the books do, and do well, is to provide researchers with an evocative flavour of what it was like to have served with the Berkshires at various points in time, and across the world, and thus understand and put into context the lives led by their serving ancestors. For this reason these books are certainly worth considering as an adjunct to researching your Royal Berkshire regimental ancestor.

**Tony Roberts**

**Postscript:** *The subsequent history of the regiment is that the Duke of Edinburgh's Royal Regiment amalgamated with the Gloucestershire Regiment in 1994 to form the Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment. In 2007 the RGB&W, Devonshire and Dorset Light Infantry, the Light Infantry and the Royal Green Jackets merged to form The Rifles.*

## PRACTICAL FAMILY HISTORY

### **Army records for family historians**

Simon Fowler and William Spencer (Public Record Office, 1998), 25 x 19 cm, perfect bound, 154 pp  
Shop £5.00, UK £7.48, airmail £11.48

This book is the second in a series of 20 Public Record Office reader's guides that were published in the late 1990s. The information contained within gives a comprehensive guide to the most commonly used army record collections at The National Archives, but it is not just a list of available resources, as the authors are careful to provide information about the purposes for which particular records were made, their historical context, and they also provide case studies of individuals serving in periods varying from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries.

The first chapter deals with the structure of the army during its four major periods of development, and the second looks at records of the army before 1660. The next two chapters (and the longest) deal with the individuals in the army: the first discusses records relating to commissioned officers, and the second those relating to other ranks. It is within these two chapters that the six case studies of using records in connection with individual subjects appear.

The remaining 14 chapters of the book are really monographs on a variety of specific areas of army life and records. These chapters include pieces on the Royal Artillery, Royal Engineers, militia and yeomanry units, courts martial, campaign medals, the Indian Army, ancillary services, prisoners of war, colonial forces and foreign units in the British army. The book finishes with a discussion of the records pertaining to the first and second world wars, and other twentieth-century campaigns. Several useful appendices provide organisational lists and further reading matter.

Written in a very readable and clear style, this book provides the family history researcher with a sound basis for exploring and using army records, and is an excellent guide to tracing soldier ancestors from scratch.

**Tony Roberts**

# 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.

**Joan Heuvel (4145)** has a mystery photo to share  
[heuvel@btinternet.com](mailto:heuvel@btinternet.com)

The attached photo was discovered as backing to a family photo in an old frame. The family has no connection with Berkshire, but this photo was taken in Maidenhead. The photographer was Greville, of 7 High Street, Maidenhead, and there is a reference no. 3285 for ordering extra copies. Perhaps a member with Maidenhead connections may recognise this attractive couple?

**Jean Debney (205)** casts her expert eye over the evidence

*This photo is fairly typical of a late Victorian couple taken after their marriage. Both are wearing elaborate floral favours, and the bride is carefully displaying her new ring, while resting her right hand on her husband's shoulder. It is worth remembering that in the nineteenth century it was considered immoral to touch anyone of the opposite sex in public unless married.*

*Gelatin plates were introduced in 1880 and could be exposed in a camera and developed later, making it possible to take the camera to any location, but this image was probably taken in a studio and developed with most of the background faded to white, creating a vignette image.*

*Her dress creates the impression of a jacket and blouse. The insert, cuffs on her three-quarter length sleeves and the high belt are in a dark-coloured velvet. Her long skirt has a looped up apron front and the hint of a small bustle at the back. Her hair is plainly dressed with a centre parting and drawn back into a bun at the nape.*

*His lounge suit has a high-buttoned jacket with braided edge and cuffs. The bottom button has been undone, so it lies smoothly over his leg.*

*While fashion is a good way of dating old photos, the mount used is also important. In this example the original image appears to have been taken in the mid to late 1880s, but the dark mount with the photographer's name on the front dates it from the early 1900s. This, together with the vignetting (popular in the 1890s), suggests it is an Edwardian copy of an older photo, produced maybe for members of the wider family after some sort of tragedy or perhaps emigration.*

*I was unable to discover anything about the photographer, but I suggest that an email or visit to Maidenhead Library to check the name in local directories in the decade prior to c1910 may produce a result.*





**David Knott (6731)** has a bigamous ancestor who paid the legal price for her misdeed

I was interested in the article on certificates in the December issue of the *Berkshire Family Historian*, having found a bigamous marriage certificate for my great-grandmother. Mary Ann Gardiner was born illegitimate on the 13 July 1869 at 18 Warren Place, Reading, her mother Fanny also having been illegitimate.

At 16 years old Mary Ann married my great-grandfather, Edgar Knott, 21, in Reading Registry Office. Her first son was already on the way.

After 16 years of marriage and five boys, Mary Ann took Edgar to court for threatening her with a knife to the throat (see transcript) but on cross-examination she admitted to keeping the company of another man.

**DOMESTIC INFELICITY**

Edgar Knott of 44 East-street, was summoned for cruelty to his wife under the summary jurisdiction (married women) act 1870.

Mr. W. S. Morris appeared for the defendant, who pleaded not guilty.

Mrs. Mary Ann Knott, of Southampton street, said her husband was a labourer employed at the Reading waterworks. They had been married for 15 years, and had been living together at 44 East-street until a fortnight previously. She then left him on Friday, February 9<sup>th</sup>, because he took up a knife and threatened to cut her throat; she also swore at her, and told her to leave his house. He brandished the knife at her and in consequence of continued threats she was afraid of him. He had assailed some thousand times for her and had caught her by the throat and otherwise threatened her. There were four children of the marriage living, the ages ranging from 15 to 5 years. Her husband's wages were about 26s a week.

Cross-examined, she admitted that the cause of some quarrels between herself and her husband was because she had been keeping company with another man.

After the witness had been severely cross-examined the magistrates said they could not make an order, and would direct the case at that juncture without hearing any more evidence.

transcript from the Reading Mercury 3 Mar 1900

They split up, Edgar eventually joining his younger brother in the Bricklayers Arms in Bow, London.

Mary Ann took up with Frank Prickett, a lodger in the house on the 1911 census. They married in a bigamous ceremony in 1918. The certificate shows her as being a widow (my great-grandfather died only in 1922). The age difference is given as nine years, but was actually 20.

She names Jacob Dance as her father. He was actually her stepfather.

She was given a prison sentence, but I have not yet been able to find where she was tried, how long the sentence was, or where it was served. There is a story in the family that her daughters stood outside the prison begging for them to let her out.

They were eventually married in 1935, with the details now correct (certificate left).

**1918** Marriage solemnized at *St. Augustin's Church* in the District of *Reading* in the County of *Reading*

No.	Name of Bride	Name and Address of Bride	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Address of Residence of Bride	Name of Bride's Father	Name of Bride's Mother	Date of Birth of Bride
173	Frank Prickett	100, Market Place, Reading	30	Single	Labourer	100, Market Place, Reading	John Prickett	Elizabeth Prickett	1888
174	Mary Ann Knott	18, Warren Place, Reading	48	Widow	Labourer	18, Warren Place, Reading	Edgar Knott	Fanny Knott	1869

Moved to the *Registrar's Office* according to the Act in force at the time of the solemnization.

Witnesses: *J. Prickett* and *Mary Ann Knott* for the bride; *J. Cook* and *P. Cook* for the groom.

**1935** Marriage solemnized at *St. Augustin's Church* in the District of *Reading* in the County of *Reading*

No.	Name of Bride	Name and Address of Bride	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Address of Residence of Bride	Name of Bride's Father	Name of Bride's Mother	Date of Birth of Bride
160	Frank Prickett	100, Market Place, Reading	45	Single	Labourer	100, Market Place, Reading	John Prickett	Elizabeth Prickett	1890
161	Mary Ann Knott	18, Warren Place, Reading	65	Widow	Labourer	18, Warren Place, Reading	Edgar Knott	Fanny Knott	1869

Moved to the *Registrar's Office* according to the Act in force at the time of the solemnization.

Witnesses: *J. Prickett* and *Mary Ann Knott* for the bride; *A. Prickett* and *B. Prickett* for the groom.

**Paul Gallagher (6237)** responded to the article on Irish surnames in the December *Historian*:

I was particularly amused by your piece in the December issue regarding Irish pronunciations. My great-grandmother was from Ireland and married into the Gallagher line, who were also, as you might expect, from Ireland. On the 1891 census she stated she was from "Famina, Ireland". However, I was unable to locate this place on any map. I even purchased a large-scale map, but to no avail. I wrote to a number of people in Ireland, but none could help me. Then I eventually came across the birth of her sister in Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, and I realised that the census-taker had misunderstood the pronunciation of the county name! Subsequently, I had had difficulty in turning up some of my grandfather's siblings, and started to search with soundtext checked. Suddenly they all appeared, but under a myriad of spellings. Births were recorded as Gologher, Golichar, Golighar, Gollighar and Gologhar, and she obviously had a hand in notifying recorders for marriages of her children as well, Gollagher being the most common mis-spelling. So like the editor's ancestor, mine must have had an exceedingly impenetrable Irish accent. Certainly something to be aware of when searching for ancestors with an Irish connection.

# 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, Wednesdays and Thursdays: 10.00 to 16.00**

Tuesday evening opening is currently under review: see website for announcement

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

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 baptisms**
- 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.

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

## 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 5,000 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](http://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

- **£2 per surname** per database. With this search you will receive full details for up to a maximum of 25 entries. Should there be more than 25 entries, we will let you know the extra cost.
- **£5 per surname** to search all databases currently available. You will receive full details for up to a maximum of 25 entries per database. Again, we will let you know the extra cost if there are more than 25 entries.

Note that for online applications a 50p transaction fee will be added to the total as a contribution to the fees that the bank charges the society for the online payment service. You can contact [berksnamesearch@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto: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' surname interests

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

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

## Members submitting their interests:

**7250 Mrs S Martinez 8 Southfields Court, Sutton Common Rd, Sutton SM1 3JH  
maggshub2008-family@yahoo.co.uk**

**7635 Mrs J Hicks 10 Trevor Road, Hitchin SG4 9TA  
janetmhicks@hotmail.com**

<b>7635</b>	<b>BUNE</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>BRK</b>	<b>pre 1840</b>
<b>7635</b>	<b>COX</b>	<b>Andover</b>	<b>HAM</b>	<b>pre 1840</b>
<b>7250</b>	<b>LOVEGROVE</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>BRK</b>	<b>1750-1950</b>
<b>7635</b>	<b>PERRY</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>HAM</b>	<b>pre 1840</b>
<b>7635</b>	<b>PINNELL</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>BRK</b>	<b>pre 1840</b>

**Apologies to Patricia Reading, whose email was printed incorrectly in the December *Historian*. It should have read readingsmaytree1@gmail.com.**

**Are your Members' Interests up to date? If you are unsure of what you have submitted, take a look at**

**[www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Search-Services/Members-Surname-Interests](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Search-Services/Members-Surname-Interests)**

**You can revise them at any time, with additions and deletions, and you need not limit the number of names to just your grandparents.**

**Send your name interests to [memsec@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:memsec@berksfhs.org.uk), listed in the following comma-separated format:**

**Membership number, NAME Interest, Place, Chapman Code, Period**

**ie, as in the examples above, but with commas. (Regrettably, submissions in other formats cannot be included.)**

## **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](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Journal-general/could-you-write-for-the-historian)** or email **[editor@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:editor@berksfhs.org.uk)** for more information.