

'Many of the villages and towns of Berkshire and Oxfordshire are featured in the local topographical collections'



# Programme calendar 2002

## Bracknell Branch

Priestwood Community Centre, Priestwood Court Road, Bracknell,

7.15pm for 7.45pm

- 14 Dec Christmas meeting with Christmas fare
- 18 Jan *Berkshire beyond the obvious*. Trevor Ottlewski
- 15 Feb *Quiz for members with family history problems*
- 15 Mar *Bishops' transcripts and other records*. Marjorie Moore
- 19 Apr *Ephemera can be fun*. John Chapman

## Newbury Branch

St. Mary's Church Hall, Church Road, Shaw, Newbury, 7.30pm

- 9 Jan *Genealogy and the Internet*. Mrs. Y. Bunting
- 13 Feb *Manorial records*. Jean Debney
- 13 Mar *Tbc*
- 10 Apr *The Name Game*. Meryl Catty and Audrey Gillett

## Reading Branch

*The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church End Lane, Tilehurst, Thursdays 7.15 for 7.45*

- 31 Jan *Police records at the Thames Valley Police Museum*. Ken Wells
- 28 Feb *Family history data on CDROMs*. Chad Hanna
- 21 Mar *Berkshire women in the 16th and 17th century*. Joan Dils
- 25 Apr *Branch AGM followed by the parish chest, its content and officials*. Jean Debney

## White Horse Branch

Tomkins Room, Baptist Church, Ock Street, Abingdon, 7.30pm

- 7 Jan *Books you'll enjoy - a look at the social history of our ancestors*. Michael Gandy
- 11 Feb. *Tbc*
- 11 Mar *Birth and baptisms in the eighteenth century*. Tom Doig
- 8 Apr *Members' research evening - research facilities and help desk*

## Windsor Branch

Christ Church, United Reformed Church, William Street, Windsor, 7.30pm for 7.45pm

- 29 Jan *What's in the parish chest apart from parish registers*. Jean Debney
- 26 Feb *Using rate books, electoral registers and directories*. Lillian Gibbens
- 26 Mar *The spectre of the workhouse*. Major Brian Oldham
- 30 Apr *The Manor, its records and people*. Peter Park

# Berkshire Family Historian

For family historians in the Royal County of Berkshire

Volume 25 Number 2 • December 2002

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John Gurnett  
Editor

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The illustration on the front cover is of a Woodman's Cottage at Silchester from the collection at the Rural History Centre.

**Copy deadline for the March issue is  
January 6 2002**

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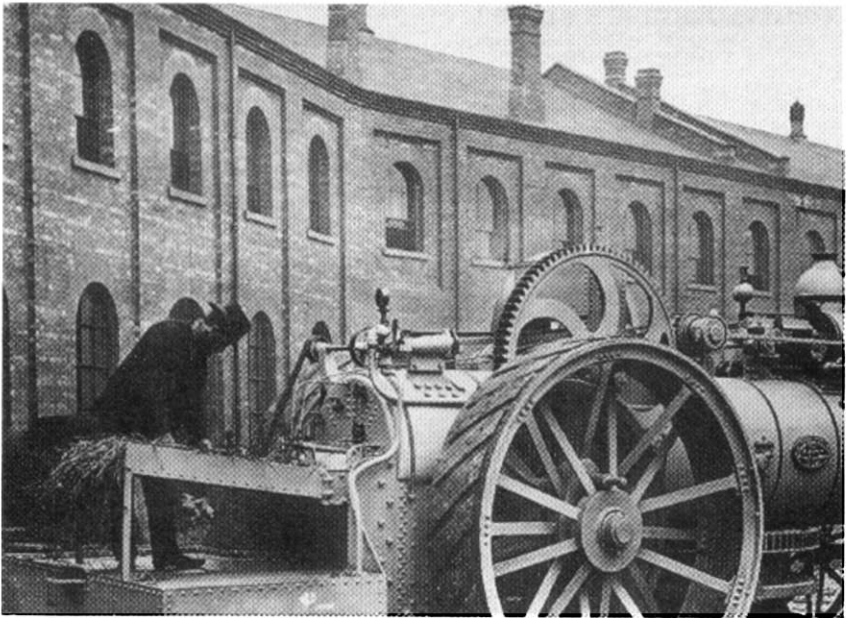
ISSN: 1468-1080

December • 2001

## Rural History Centre

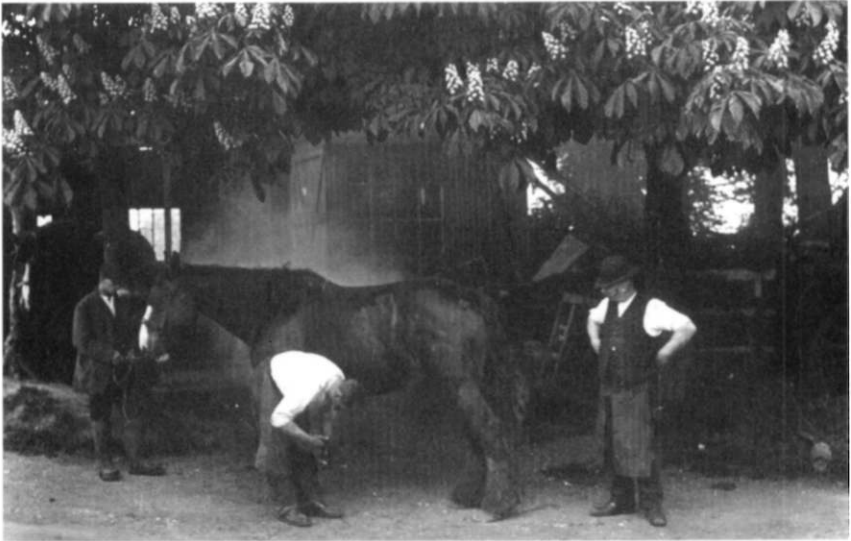
*Jonathan Brown*

The Rural History Centre at the University of Reading turns 50 this year. It was founded as the Museum of English Rural Life, born from the rapid pace of change that farming and the countryside had experienced during the Second World War, change which looked likely to continue following the passing of the Agriculture Act in 1947. Members of the University's Faculty of Agriculture were concerned enough to want to preserve something of the past, hence the museum's site at the University and in Reading. Today the Rural History Centre is a national centre for the study of the history of agriculture and the countryside. It has been recognised as such, by being awarded Designated status.



*The Victorian passion for steam power saw the introduction of ploughing machines on many of the larger farms.*

Initially, the museum built up collections of farm wagons, ploughs and other artefacts of the horse-powered age of agriculture.



*Eric Guy's photograph of the blacksmith at Stanford in the Vale in the 1930s. One that really did have a chestnut tree.*

Field studies were undertaken into country craftsmen, and the estate villages of Ardington and Lockinge, which laid the foundations for our collections of photographs.

The 1960s and 1970s saw the rapid expansion of archive collections, as first farm records, then business records were deposited, as well as large collections of photographs. Today the archive holdings are of a scale similar to many county record offices. The Rural History Centre is a specialist organisation, of course, but the range within the collections is, nevertheless, quite wide. Among the main groups of archives are the farm records - business diaries, accounts, labour books - from about a thousand farms. The business records include archives of a number of agricultural engineering companies, such as the Wantage Engineering Company and Wallis & Stevens of Basingstoke. Other firms represented include Suttons Seeds, with some documents going back to the 1830s. Another group is the organisations connected with agriculture, such as the National Agricultural & Allied Workers Union and the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution, a charity founded in Victorian times which

has enjoyed unaccustomed prominence recently as a result of its involvement in helping farmers during the foot and mouth crisis. Then there are the photographs. There are some very large collections, including the photographic library of *Farmers Weekly*. In all, there are more than 750,000 photographs. The earliest date from about 1860, but by far the majority are from the 1930s onwards.

Some of these collections contain documents that record the names of individuals. There are registers of employees included in the archives of a few of the businesses. There are registers of some of those who were assisted by the Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution in the nineteenth century. By contrast, for example, there are no membership registers for the agricultural workers' union in the same period.

These archives can further studies, broadening and deepening knowledge of the life and work of past family members. The employment registers might not survive, but we can see the type of work people might have been doing at the engineering works. We can illustrate the products from catalogues and photographs. The collections of photographs clearly offer great potential as illustrations of place and life in the countryside. Many of the villages and towns of Berkshire and Oxfordshire are featured in the local topographical collections. These include the Dann & Lewis collection, which features Reading in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; Treacher for the Twyford area, and Collier, who photographed most of Berkshire's villages. Some of these photographs date back to the 1880s, but most are from the first half of the twentieth century. Eric Guy photographed the agriculture of the Thames Valley in the 1930s and 1940s, and many of the locations are known. For those whose studies take them further afield, there may still be illustrations in our collections. Some of them have particular local strengths: the Miss Wight collection, for example, is concentrated on Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The library at the Centre also holds many valuable research tools. There are collections of publications by local history groups from all round the country. The county directories cover nearly all the country, and there are runs of journals, such as *Farmers Weekly* and *Country Life*.

## **Using the Centre**

The research collections at the Rural History Centre are open from 9.15 am to 4.45 pm, Monday - Friday. Please make an appointment with us first (address and telephone number are at the end of the article). Catalogues, lists and indexes are available, both as traditional handlists and in computer cataloguing. The computer catalogue is available on-line through our website. The on-line catalogue contains library, archive and artefact entries, and a research bibliography containing references to thousands of journal articles, books and theses. If you are only interested, say, in photographs, you can select that as a search option.

We are happy to receive enquiries by post, telephone and e-mail. Remember, though, that we cannot do your research for you. However, do not be afraid to ask anything. We can guide you then as to what is feasible, and any costs that might be involved. Please allow respectable time for replies, as we are few in number here.

## **The future for the Centre**

The Rural History Centre is on the move. The long-projected plan for a new home is progressing, although the designing, redesigning and negotiating about it seem no less protracted. However, we shall be moving to the former St Andrews student hall of residence, which will be converted to our needs. As a first step a new archive store on a nearby site will come into use later this year. We had a successful appeal to raise part of the funds for the development, and this appeal fund is still open. The Heritage Lottery Fund have now granted 'stage 1' approval for funding, and the university is committing very substantially to the funds.

We are always glad of support. You might like to join our mailing list. You might like to join our team of volunteer assistants. You might be able to help in cash or kind with our development projects. If you would like to know more, contact me at the Centre. Jonathan Brown, Rural History Centre, University of Reading, Whiteknights, Reading RG6 6AG. Telephone 0118 931 8660; fax 0118 975 1264. Email: [rhc@reading.ac.uk](mailto:rhc@reading.ac.uk)  
Website [www.ruralhistory.org](http://www.ruralhistory.org)

## Evidence or serendipity

*Lynne Smith, 4 Goodliffe Gardens, Tilehurst, Reading RG31 6FZ*

I had great difficulty attempting to verify information about my grandmother's mother. She was Ellen Cope and married Charles Peever but that was the extent of family knowledge. I was unable to trace her and her husband on the 1881 census, either on fiche, or CD-Rom. I wrote to *Practical Family History* magazine requesting help but despite much advice and trying different variations of the fairly unusual name of Peever I came up against the usual brick wall.

I found their marriage certificate, dated 1880, in the Regents Park area of London in my grandmother's effects, together with their first child's birth certificate in August 1881 but no mention of a birthplace on either of them. My heart sank at the thought of searching censuses throughout London in the hope of discovering where they were born. It could have been Camden, Paddington, or points west. I must admit I faced the prospect of never finding them and giving up the search, but I couldn't get her out of my mind. I had a photograph that my father said was a picture of Ellen with possibly her first child and she looked to me about 20 to 25 years old. So I assumed (a somewhat dangerous game in family history) that she was born about 1855. I used the Mormon Familysearch website ([www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)) and started to work on all the likely candidates. It seemed a pointless exercise, as the only clues to links with any counties outside London were Portsmouth, where my paternal family came from, an uncle who had lived in Wales and two brothers who may have gone abroad to Canada and Australia.

Then going through the Familysearch site I happened upon an Ellen Cope whose father was David (Ellen's marriage certificate named her father as David, occupation woodman) and her baptismal date the same as my own son's birthday. It wasn't much to go on but I assumed (again) I must be on the right track, as it felt right. My conviction was overwhelming. The baptism was in Preshute, Wiltshire, in the Savernake Forest area, a reasonable place for a woodman to be living and working. Wiltshire had never surfaced in any family memory; in fact my grandmother was born in Camden Town and moved to Portsmouth when her



father Charles Peever is thought to have died. Was great-grandmother a widow, or did she run off with a marine and end up in Portsmouth, or did she re-marry? I became more and more convinced that Ellen Cope was my great-grandmother on the flimsiest of evidence: her father's name and the christening on the same date as my son's birthday, not exactly substantial evidence. Foolish woman.....

I ordered the parish register for Preshute from the Mormon Family History Research Centre. It arrived within the month and with some trepidation I wound the film on to check her baptism date September 6, 1855. There was an Ellen Cope but I needed to be absolutely sure she was my ancestor and not some stray person with the same name. I continued to search and then stopped on October 2, 1881 (my birth date) and there was the baptism of her first child Charles David and parents Ellen and Charles Peever 'abode Camden Town'. I could hardly believe my luck. I would never have considered looking in Wiltshire for his baptism as his birth was registered on August 22 1881 in Regents Park, Middlesex. I had initially chosen to start with Peever precisely because it was an unusual name, but it left me with more problems than if the name had been Smith or Brown.

The moral of the tale is that I took incredible leaps in the dark but only by a combination of unusual circumstances was I led to the correct place. The only 'evidence' I had to go on was that my great-grandmother looked about 20 to 25 years old. Is this what people mean when they say beginner's luck? I think it must be, as I shall find it incredibly hard to stick to working back methodically, which I know is the best way. Now the initial euphoria has worn off I wonder if any more surprises await me as I stick to the rules. Perhaps you might let me know?

## Farm life in the nineteenth century

*Daphne Spurling*

My great grandmother, Mary Duddridge, died in Tilehurst in 1927 aged 92. She had an excellent memory and loved telling stories of her life on a farm in Somerset. An American cousin collected these stories in 1932, providing a rich source of material when I started family history 40 years later. Here is Mary's account with additional comments from my visit to the farm in 1999, over 160 years after Mary was born.

Her parents John Duddridge and Lena Thorne married in 1824 and moved to Halsway, a lovely old farmhouse a mile west of Crowcombe on the southwest slopes of the Quantock Hills, midway between Taunton and Minehead. The picturesque two-storied thatched house stood in a garden with an orchard at the back. Water came from a spring at the top of the hill, and until the late 1920s was brought into the house by a chute in the scullery from which it fell into a stone basin. The spring water is still used, but to obey modern laws it passes through a filter and is delivered through taps.

John Duddridge was honest, upright and industrious, farming his land well. He was small, a bit pompous, and had inherited a terrible temper from his mother. Lena was a sweet and gentle woman and a devoted wife, though she often suffered from her husband's hasty temper. They had two children: John born in 1832 and Mary in 1836.

Farm life was busy. There were calves to rear, cheese and butter to make, bread to bake, and sometimes beer to brew. The cider press is still in the barn but no longer used. A cheese room was furnished with racks on which to dry the cheeses. Bread was baked in a big brick oven built by the side of the open kitchen fire. Bundles of wood were placed in the oven itself and then lighted; when sufficiently heated, it was well swept out and the bread placed in it. The door was then closed very tightly to keep in the heat and, if necessary, a little clay plastered around the door. The kitchen range was still unknown. The open fire was kindled on the hearth, and chains with crooks hung on the wide chimney, on

which pots and kettles were suspended for boiling purposes, and crocks were placed on the hot ashes for roasting or baking 'crock pies'. A spit, placed on irons called 'dogs', was used for roasting joints. One of Mary's frequent duties as a child was to sit on a small stool in front of the fire and turn the spit. Pies, cakes and milk puddings could only be cooked on baking days in the bread oven after the bread was removed. The original four-foot deep inglenook fireplace dominates the old kitchen, now the dining room. The open fire has been replaced by a wood-burning stove and the bread oven is now an architectural feature with lights inside.

The family believed in education, as Mary was only five years old when sent as a boarder to Mrs Chapman at the Stogumber Chapel House, just three miles from home. Here she was taught to sew a patchwork quilt. It was the age of wonderful samplers wrought by small hands and often setting forth very pious but decidedly melancholy sentiments. The next year this school was closed and



*Stogumber Baptist chapel where Mary Dudderidge went to school as a boarder aged five years.*

Mary was sent to Mrs Sutton at the Watchet Chapel House. Mr Sutton, the Baptist minister, was a kindly man who had been a missionary in India for some years, and tried to soften his wife's heart towards her youthful pupils. Mrs Sutton was a firm believer in 'Spare the Rod and Spoil the Child' and any offender against her strict rules was punished with a cane or ruler or confined to his bedroom without food for some hours. Mary and a friend were the only girls among the several boy boarders. When the holidays came, a boy was sent with a pony to fetch Mary, and when passing through Williton, Mary, wishing to look grown-up, would whip the pony to make it canter, leaving the boy far behind.

In 1848, 12 year-old Mary went to Miss Stockman's School at Bristol, where she spent many happy years. Part of the time she was a pupil-teacher, and so allowed to go more freely than the other pupils. She had many friends in Bristol and was there during the terrible outbreak of cholera. Mary and her brother, John, were great chums and spent much time driving together to visit many relations and friends who lived on neighbouring farms. But these pleasant days came to an end. John and his father did not agree on many things and frequently quarrelled. John began to deal on his own, lost many cattle in a run of bad luck and decided to emigrate to New Zealand in 1859. Mary saw him off at Bristol. She and her mother had packed him a box filled with hand-sewn shirts and packets of needles, buttons and thread; and also rice, tapioca and cornflour, provisions for the voyage which he had in part to furnish himself. The parting was a deep grief to Lena Duddridge and mother and son never saw each other again.

John later moved to Australia where he managed sheep stations. The great disappointment of his life was that his only son, Richard, refused to become a 'squatter'. The boy had no love for the land, but went before the mast on the S.S. Carlton, the highest masted ship in the world, before or since. Richard sailed to England but was too diffident to visit his father's relatives. However, they knew of the ship's arrival, inquired at Lloyds, and located him at the Sailor's Home in London. This was the first of many visits to his Aunt Mary's home, as he later married his first cousin, Mary's daughter.

Mary, who settled down at Halsway with her parents after her schooling was completed, was a pretty girl who had her fair share

of fun and flirtation. On February 19th 1855, she became engaged to her brother's school friend Henry Shorney. They married in December 1862 when her parents moved into Culverhays Cottage and turned Halsway Farm over to them. Trying to find Culverhays Cottage in 1999, I asked for it at the Post Office in Crowcombe but the lady behind the counter was a stand-in: 'Who are you looking for?' 'Well, my great great grandparents lived there 150 years ago'. 'What a pity', she said, 'you've missed the post master, he might have known because he is about 100 himself.'

Both mothers joined the young couple at the farm in 1868 after the deaths of their husbands. Of the two grandmothers, sweet and gentle Grandma Duddridge was the favourite. Grandma Shorney had a more difficult nature. Her little weakness was medicine and she loved to dose herself with quack remedies for real or imagined ailments. Grandmothers then were very different from those of today. They covered their hair with lace caps and when invited to tea, carried circular cap baskets containing the dainty lace caps or in the case of a widow, a tulle cap with streamers. In later years, Mary Duddridge loved to tell the story of her cousin Lena Duddridge who at the time of her second marriage had lost all her hair and wore a wig. So cleverly did she manage things wearing a lace cap by day and a nightcap in bed, that it was several years before Mr Heynes discovered his wife was bald. Coming into her dressing room unexpectedly one day, he was startled to find her changing her cap and wig. 'Well, Lena,' exclaimed the mild-mannered Cornish man, 'this is a surprise!'

Life at Halsway had its dark days of anxiety interspersed with the colour and excitement of frequent visits between relatives and friends. The centre of their social life was the Baptist Chapel at Stogumber. For many generations, the Chapel was filled with Duddridges, Shorneys, Shepherds and other relatives and friends. A cousin, Laversha Duddridge, played the old organ for the chapel from around 1880 until she died in 1945. The chapel is now Stogumber Arts Centre with its own-labelled wine.

Mary and Henry had six children. The youngsters of the Shorney and Duddridge clans were very special friends. The men often went rabbiting – a day in the woods with ferrets and guns, followed by a hot supper at one of the homes and a pleasant evening around the roaring fire. It was a family joke that Arthur, the youngest child and my grandfather, chose one of these evenings for his entry into the world.

Other pleasures were a 20 mile round trip to Taunton market in a two-wheeled wagonette, or to Watchet where Mary could get a better price for her butter and eggs. No account of life at Halsway would be complete without mentioning Elizabeth Gadd, who during the week worked in the fields. On Saturday morning she helped bath the children. A big tin bath was placed in front to the hearth fire, and as each was washed and dried, Elizabeth piggybacked them so that their little feet would not get cold on the stone floor.

The final quarter of the nineteenth century was a period of great depression for farmers. The family had a real struggle farming. Since Henry became a semi-invalid, his sons had to help on the farm when very young and their education suffered. They had governesses at first; and later the boys went to Mr Huggins' school at Crowcombe. Mr Huggins taught writing magnificently, but knew little of grammar or history. He caned often and was brutal to those he disliked. Walks to school had their pleasant side. In the spring, there were primroses and birds' nests in the hedgerows. In the autumn, the boys filled their school bags with apples to munch on the way. A great calamity befell the Henry Shorneys with the occurrence of liver fluke (called coad in Somerset). Henry lost a flock of sheep three consecutive years in a row: 1879, 1880 and 1881. When son Edgar was only 12 he skinned 40 sheep in one month. These were dark days with very heavy monetary losses. The boys all worked very hard, too hard for their tender ages, as their father was in ill health and deeply depressed by the ill fortune that seemed to dog him. Fortunately Mary had a strong constitution and a very optimistic nature, both great assets in those difficult days. After 60 years in the family, their beloved Halsway was sold.

After leaving Halsway there followed 10 years of wandering as the family rented four farms in turn (one in Somerset, two in Berkshire and one just over the Oxfordshire border) before settling at Langley Hill Farm in Tilehurst around 1895. After Henry died in 1909 Mary moved between their son Edgar at Langley Hill Farm, Calcot, and daughter Kate Frazier in Tilehurst.

# The Berkshire Overseers Project

*Brian Hunt*

It is some time since I submitted a report on the progress of the Berkshire Overseers' Project but we have been held up by the delayed move of the Berkshire Record Office. 22 of the proposed 26 volumes have been completed. The remaining four volumes will comprise the 2000 or so documents from Reading St. Giles and work is already well advanced on the first of these volumes.

Until recent times the only access to the results has been by reference to the five copies of each volume I have prepared and placed in the BRO, the Society Research Centre, Reading Reference Library, the Society of Genealogists' library and another selected Berkshire Reference Library, usually in the west of the county. This has now all changed with the issue of 21 volumes produced by the Society on microfiche, providing unlimited access to members everywhere.

Over the years I have found that many people are unaware, how useful the overseers' documents can be. As well as the obvious use of removal orders and settlement certificates in locating previously unknown whereabouts of ancestors (where parish register entries have provided no possible clue), an examination before the Justices of the Peace can result in a potted life history of an individual and their family. The only surviving overseers' documents from Newbury consist of more than 400 examinations and these have been issued in Volume 26. The examinations reveal that the people involved came to Newbury from many parts of the British Isles.

While transcribing documents for Reading St. Mary in the most recent volume issued (Volume 21), I came across an interesting examination for settlement taken before Harry Austin Deane, Gent., on 9th June 1753, who was then Mayor of Reading. The person involved was a William Stretton (who signed as Stratton) who had been born in the City of Limerick, Ireland. In about 1732 he had been apprenticed for seven years to Benjamin Barrington of the Parish of St. John's Limerick, pewterer and founder. He served the full apprenticeship and afterwards rented two houses, three outhouses and garden in the Parish of St. Munchin in

Limerick, at a yearly rent of £13. He paid two years rent for the same and had not since gained any other legal settlement. The interesting development was that ‘about 1fi years ago [1751-52] he was married by one Thomas, a Roman Catholic Priest, between Marlborough and Calne in the Roman Catholic way, but not by the form established in the Common Prayer Book. The ceremony was performed in the open field near a barn’. He further stated that his wife’s name was Sarah Tarrant and that she lived at Lamborn, Berkshire. Is there somebody who has been unable to locate the marriage of Sarah Tarrant or Stretton/Stratton? Even if the couple later legalised their union in a church in Wiltshire or Berkshire it is highly unlikely that there would be any indication that the groom was a pewterer and founder from Limerick. Is there also anybody in Ireland who is wondering what happened to William Stretton or Stratton, who was born and apprenticed in Limerick in the early eighteenth century and then disappeared?

There is ample scope for our strays’ co-ordinator amongst these volumes, a task which I have made easier since I have indexed each item by personal name, placename and occupation. Just glancing at the placename index in this recent volume for Reading St. Mary I see that there are references to many places in Berkshire and 32 other counties in England and Wales, in addition to Ireland, Scotland and America. There must therefore be members of many other family history societies who might find interesting entries in the volumes.

Within Berkshire the survival of the documents varies hugely parish by parish, but the lack of any entries for somebody’s particular parish of interest does not necessarily mean that all is lost. With the removal orders and settlement certificates, there were always two parishes involved and copies were produced for each. The document of the ‘other’ parish may have survived. This means that anybody with Berkshire interests needs to search all the volumes.

The overseers’ documents also include many relating to bastardy. We all know that post-1837 birth certificates for illegitimate children rarely give a father’s name. Unless there is a very helpful vicar, the baptism registers are also of little assistance. The ancestry then has to proceed along the mother’s family line. In the bastardy examinations, orders and bonds the father’s name is revealed – which usually costs him about ‘40 shillings for the lying-in and maintenance to date, and then one shilling and sixpence weekly’. To genealogists the overseers’ volumes may



therefore open up a completely new line of interest – that of the named father.

It is not possible to forecast when the last four volumes (all for Reading St. Giles) will be issued, but now that the end is in sight it may spur our efforts to get the task completed. So the whole project, when the final combined index to all 26 volumes is completed, will have taken a little over ten years.

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## National Burial Index

The parishes and periods included in Berkshire FHS's burial file are shown below, totalling more than 128,000 entries; the periods in bold type were included in the April 2001 issue of the National Burial Index while those not in bold type have been added to Berkshire FHS's file subsequently and are being submitted for inclusion in future NBI updates. An asterisk denotes those parishes/periods which have been added since the position was last reported in the September 2001 issue of the Berkshire Family Historian.

Aldermaston St Mary the Virgin 1882 - 1992  
Ascot Heath All Saints 1865 - 1909  
Ashampstead St Clement 1607 - 1686 (BTs)\*, 1686 - 1756  
and **1757 - 1837**  
Avington **1727 - 1994**  
Barkham St James **1741 - 1812** and 1814 - 1985  
Basildon St Bartholomew **1667 - 1856** and 1871 - 1982\*  
Bearwood St Catherine 1891 - 1929\*  
Beedon St Nicholas 1681 - 1732 and **1733 - 1969**  
Beenham St Mary **1813 - 1907**  
Binfield All Saints 1884 - 1920\*  
Boxford St Andrew **1758 - 1876**  
Bracknell Holy Trinity 1851 - 1945\*  
Bradfield St Andrew 1691 - 1693 (BTs)\*, **1695 - 1754**  
and 1882 - 1952  
Bray St Michael 1813 - 1826, **1826 - 1837** and 1860 - 1874\*  
Brightwalton All Saints 1562 - 1713\* and **1805 - 1922**  
Brimpton St Peter **1756 - 1901**  
Bucklebury St Mary the Virgin **1692 - 1910**  
Burghfield St Mary **1559 - 1870**  
Catmore St Margaret **1814 - 1985**  
Caversham Hemdean Road Cemetery 1924 - 1931\*  
Chaddleworth St Andrew **1798 - 1851**  
Chieveley St Mary the Virgin **1874 - 1895**  
Cold Ash St Mark **1865 - 1947**  
Combe St Swithin **1729 - 1812**  
Compton SS Mary & Nicholas **1813 - 1901**  
Cookham Holy Trinity 1813 - 1830\*, **1830 - 1844**, 1844 - 1853\*,  
1853 - 1864 and 1864 - 1882\*

East Garston All Saints **1813 - 1876**  
 Easthampstead SS Michael & Mary Magdalene **1768 - 1812**,  
 1813 - 1873 and **1873 - 1915**  
 East Ilsley St Mary **1649 - 1868** and 1868 - 2000  
 East Shefford **1604 to 1734**, 1734 - 1773 (BTs)\*  
 and **1774 - 1917**  
 Enborne St Michael & All Angels **1726 - 1837**  
 Englefield St Mark 1813 - 1862\* and 1862 - 1935  
 Fawley St Mary **1550 - 1987**  
 Finchampstead St James 1724 - 1812  
 Frilsham St Frideswide **1711 - 1768** and 1813 - 1835 (BTs)\*  
 Greenham St Mary **1799 - 1914**  
 Hungerford Independent **1819 - 1830**  
 Hungerford St Lawrence 1700 - 1724 and **1724 - 1796**  
 Hurst St Nicholas 1585 - 1605\*, 1621 - 1623\* and 1838 - 1869\*  
 Inkpen St Michael & All Angels **1878 - 1986**  
 Kintbury St Mary 1558 - 1718, **1718 - 1761** and **1813 - 1925**  
 Lambourn St Michael & All Angels 1732 - 1766 and **1767 - 1837**  
 Maidenhead Congregational **1791 - 1837** and **1845 - 1908**  
 Maidenhead High Street Wesleyan Methodist **1858 - 1903**  
 Maidenhead New Chapel (Countess of Huntingdon) **1843 - 1858**  
 Midgham St Matthew **1638 - 1733** and **1813 - 1980**  
 Newbury Baptist Church **1773 - 1823**  
 Newbury Lower Meeting House Independent **1784 - 1837**  
 Newbury St John the Evangelist **1878 - 1900**  
 Newbury St Nicolas **1746 - 1757** and **1798 - 1890**  
 Newbury Upper Meeting House Presbyterian **1783 - 1836**  
 New Windsor St John the Baptist 1855 - 1988  
 Padworth St John the Baptist **1724 - 1837** and 1838 - 1981  
 Pangbourne Independent Chapel **1836 only**  
 Peasemore St Barnabas **1753 - 1879**  
 Purley St Mary the Virgin **1813 - 1900**  
 Reading Broad Street Independent 1787 - 1869 and 1875 - 1881  
 Reading Castle Street Congregational **1857 - 1862**  
 Reading King's Road Baptist Church **1785 - 1835**  
 Reading London Road Cemetery **1843 - 1852**  
 Reading St Giles 1680 - 1714\*  
 Reading St Laurence 1735 - 1757\*, 1757 - 1779, **1779 - 1788**,  
 1788 - 1812, 1813 - 1828, 1828 - 1840 and 1840 - 1901\*  
 Ruscombe St James the Great **1705 - 1812**  
 Shaw cum Donnington St Mary the Virgin 1647 - 1812 and  
**1813 - 1932**

Shottesbrooke St John the Baptist **1690 - 1811**  
Speen St Mary the Virgin **1750 - 1904**  
Speenhamland St Mary **1831 - 1881**  
Stratfield Mortimer St Mary 1813 - 1850 and 1850 - 1897\*  
Streatley St Mary 1679 - 1812\*  
Sulham St Nicholas **1724 - 1850**  
Sulhamstead Bannister St Michael 1813 - 1994\*  
Sunninghill St Michael & All Angels 1561 - 1602\*, 1740 - 1775\* and  
1776 - 1812  
Swallowfield All Saints 1813 - 1918 and 1918 - 1931\*  
Thatcham/Bucklebury Congregational/Independent Chapel  
**1819 - 1871**  
Thatcham St Mary **1813 - 1819**, 1820 - 1826\*, 1827 - 1839 and  
1840 - 1845\*  
Theale Holy Trinity 1832 - 1932  
Tidmarsh St Lawrence 1813 - 1999  
Tilehurst St George **1886 - 1954**  
Tilehurst St Michael 1776 - 1812\*  
Ufton Nervet St Peter **1636 - 1834**  
Wargrave St Mary 1872 - 1901\* and 1901 - 1940  
Wasing St Nicholas **1763 - 1853** and 1855 - 1990  
Welford St Gregory **1813 - 1852** and 1852 - 1900  
West Ilsley All Saints 1558 - 1812 and 1813 - 1967\*  
West Shefford St Mary 1694 - 1778 and **1779 - 1897**  
West Woodhay St Laurence **1656 - 1724** and **1813 - 1985**  
Winterbourne St James the Less **1750 - 1850**  
Wokingham All Saints 1813 - 1841\*  
Wokingham Baptist Church **1841 - 1906**  
Woodley Congregational (Woodley Chapel) **1858 - 1905**  
Woolhampton St Peter **1761 - 1926**  
Yattendon SS Peter & Paul 1813 - 1982

Details of the postal service for researching burials in the  
Berkshire parishes listed above are given on page 120.

# Letters to the Editor

## **'Lord' George Sanger**

*Edward H. Cohen, Winter Park, Florida, United States of America*

I read with great interest and enjoyment Julie Goddard's essay on 'Lord' George Sanger and his traveling circus. She probably knows that there is a reference to Sanger and, perhaps, to his lion-taming wife in the Sherlock Holmes story 'The Veiled Lodger', described as 'one of the most terrible human tragedies'.

## **Research Centre**

*Sue Hedges*

There has been some discussion in the website discussion group concerning the limited number of members who use the Research Centre. It seems that while many non-members use the facilities few members take the opportunity to visit what must be one of the best society research centres outside London in south-east England.

I would suggest that one of the main reasons is because there is absolutely no reference to its existence, address, times of opening, search facilities, mentioned in the *Berkshire Family Historian*. I have looked in the March and June 2001 editions and the only reference I can find is to the occasional Computer Surgeries and the big book sale (sale of big books or big sale of books?). Both adverts for Computer Surgeries take up a whole page, if this was reduced to half a page there would be space to include details of the normal opening times etc. of the Centre. I appreciate that details can be obtained from [www.berksfhs.org.uk](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk) but I suspect only a tiny proportion of BFHS members are on the Internet. In the circumstances I think members could be forgiven for simply not remembering that the Centre exists.

## **Wiltshire Wills project**

*Joyce Williams, Kelsey, Skeldyke Road, Kirton, Boston PE20 1LR*

I read with interest the article on the Wiltshire Wills project by Lucy Jefferis, as Margery Williams of Baydon, Wiltshire (one of the examples given) is in my late husband's family tree. Margery obviously made her codicil after William (her husband) died in November 1796 aged 90. William and Margery had seven sons and two daughters and lived at Baydon Farm, Wiltshire. William, like his father, was a churchwarden at Baydon church, and his name is inscribed on one of the bells. Gideon and his wife Joanne are buried in the Williams' family vault underneath the chancel. Also interred in the vault are William, his wife Margery and their fifth son Francis. None of their other sons are mentioned. They do seem to have all been a long-lived family as Gideon, William's father, lived to 80 and one of William's grandsons was 79 when he died. The Williams family in Baydon originally came from Lambourn in Berkshire and some of them were still there in the 1881 census, so if anyone in Berkshire is interested I have a family tree from the early seventeenth century.

Thank you for your interesting publication, instantly devoured as soon as it comes through the letter box, but a special thank you to Lucy Jefferis of the Wiltshire Record Office.

### **Wiltshire Record Office**

*Jean Nicholls, 181 Henley Road, Caversham, Reading RG4 6LH*

After the article in the last issue of the *Berkshire Family Historian* I wrote to the Trowbridge Town Councillor, Angela Milroy, who is fighting the move of the Record Office to Devizes. She wrote back to me enclosing a petition with 1400 signatures and urged all those who oppose the move to sign a petition and write to the Heritage Lottery Fund to voice their opposition. The Fund's address is 7 Holbein Place, London SW1W 8NR. Angela Milroy's address is 3 Bellefield Crescent, Trowbridge, Wiltshire BA14 8SR.

### **Members' Interests**

*Carol Jackaman, 5 Diana Close, Walsall Wood, Walsall WS9 9ES*

In the September issue of the journal one of my interests was Brownjohn which was inserted as Brown, John. Although this was

an error it did in fact help me as I was unable to find a Brownjohn death in the 1881 census, but when I looked under Brown to my delighted and unexpected surprise there he was. I am still unable to find a Brownjohn or Brown marriage for my great great grandparents but I will be forever grateful for the help given by a mistaken entry.

### **Appleford Parish Register Transcripts**

*Hugh Kearsley, Projects Officer, Oxfordshire Family History Society*

In the last edition of the Berkshire Family Historian there was an item entitled 'A hot tip from Oxfordshire'. On-line websites were mentioned for a transcript of Appleford Bishops Transcripts. This was not a transcript of the Appleford Bishops Transcripts and the web site has now been removed. The Parish Registers were originally transcribed by the late John Brookes up to 1837 and had been available on microfiche. The Parish Registers have now been re-transcribed and extended by the Oxfordshire Family History Society to cover: Baptisms, 1563 to 1984; Marriages, 1563 to 1989; and Burials, 1564 to 1988. The new transcript is now available on microfiche from both the Berkshire Family History

#### **Reading Branch monthly meetings**

In January 2002 the Reading Branch meetings will move to a new venue at the Church of Latter-day Saints, Church End Lane, Tilehurst.

Many members have no doubt used the Mormon research facilities and know exactly where to go. However, for those who have not, it is easy to find. If you turn into Honey End Lane from the A4 Bath Road, pass Prospect College and the Asda store to the top of Honey End Lane. Turn left into The Meadway and continue for about half a mile to just beyond the old Meadway School. Turn right into Church End Lane and almost immediately left into the gates of the LDS car park. We will have sign-posts to the hall. We look forward to seeing you there

**One last point: all meetings during 2002 will be on the last Thursday of the month, so our first meeting in 2002 will be on Thursday 31st January, 2002 - we hope that you can make it.**

## Book Ends

### **Parish Gate, Vol 1 Berkshire (S.E.) £14.00 (p&p paid)**

This CD-Rom contains 523 photographs of 91 parish churches in South-East Berkshire as far west as Hungerford and Yattendon. Similar CD-Roms for North Hampshire and North-West Berkshire are being prepared.

The photographic standard is excellent. Although looking dark on the monitor, the pictures print out well. A few photographs have been manipulated to remove modern artefacts, such as road signs, with both before and after versions included. The photographs are in standard JPEG format and range in size from just over 400 KB to over 2000 KB, with the majority between 1000 and 1400 KB. All the pictures can be previewed and then resized, cropped, and the brightness altered when inserted into a Word document. This manipulation would be sufficient for most family history purposes. Because of the size of the files, some actions took sufficient time for the odd cup of coffee. The website, [www.pariishgate.co.uk](http://www.pariishgate.co.uk), contains some information currently missing from the CD. Clicking on SE Berkshire gives a list of the parish churches; this is important as the coverage is not complete. Each parish has a grid reference and a map and a few parishes have a book list. Two photographs can be down-loaded as samples but detailed instructions are needed on the website for those who are not experts. At only 3p per picture, the CD seems value for money. But, the copyright rules forbid any royalty-free use other than inclusion in your own not-for-profit printed documents.

Daphne Spurling

**Early Medical Services in Berkshire and South Oxfordshire from 1750. Margaret Railton (Polmwood Publications, 1994). hdbk + royal blue dust jkt (b/w illus), 158mm by 240mm; maps inside front & back covers, illustrated, sources, index, 244pp. UK £13.50, Overseas £13.95**

This well-researched book traces the history of medical treatment for the poor against a background of social opinions and



legislation. The story is traced from the Old Poor Law in the 18th century to health care under the terms of the New Poor Law from 1834, together with the development of hospitals, dispensaries and medical societies, etc. on which the future National Health Service was built. Illustrated with photographs, sketches, facsimile documents and tables this book provides the background and suggests many sources to discover more about your ancestors and any medical care they may have received in the old county of Berkshire. JD

**The Story of a Village - Eton Wick 1217-1977 Judith Hunter (Eton Wick Local History Group, reprint 2000) B5, ppbk, gn, illustrated with sketches & maps, etc; 68pp. UK £6.25, Overseas £6.75**

Originally published in 1977, the Local History Group have now republished this fascinating account of a developing community from small beginnings in the 13th century to the late 20th. Judith Hunter always writes with historical accuracy and this substantially increases the book's value to both local and family historians. However, as with many other early historical publications, the sources used are only listed in very general terms in the original preface; and there is no index. JD

**Are you married, or do you live in Maidenhead? A Who's Who of Maidonians. Bridget Hole, (Acorn Forum, 1998) 5.7" (145mm) x 8.7" (222mm), hdbk/dust jkt with B/W illus, 316pp UK £14.95, Overseas £15.50**

After a brief description of Maidenhead, the seven chapters each open with a brief introduction followed by lists of names and brief details of Royalty, Mayors, Roll of Honour (WWI & WWII), Once upon a time, Leisure, Children's corner and In living memory. Even within the main text, the capitalised SURNAMERS are followed by the forenames. However, despite lots and lots of personal names and details - there is no index! Also, the eight photographs in the centre of the book are undated. But - if it's further information about Maidenhead folk you want then you may well discover it within these pages. JD

**Reading (Britain in Old Photographs) Collected by P G Southerton (Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1988, reprinted 2000) ppbk (cld), 6" (153mm) x 8.7" (220mm), illustrated, 160pp UK £7.99, Overseas £8.75**

A glorious collection of photographs, many not previously published, of events and people in Reading and the surrounding area. The late Peter Southerton, a former probation officer, was very interested in the history of the town in which he lived for many years and the brief captions to each picture are therefore full of fascinating detail. The collection is presented in sections labelled The birth of photography, Streets and buildings, Trade & industry, Schools & the University, Transport, Reading at war, People & events - a miscellany and The countryside around. If, like me, you missed buying your copy the first time round, now is your chance to remedy that. JD

**Windsor (Old and New) A Thousand Years - a living history (Windsor Local History Publications Group, corrected reprint Apr 2001) pprbk (cld illus) 7.4" (188mm) x 10.7" (245mm); illustrations, bibliography, index, 176pp UK £8.00, Overseas £8.50**

This book is lavishly illustrated with photographs, prints, facsimile documents and sketches, etc. and at the back is a useful appendix listing the borough mayors and ministers of the various churches and chapels in Windsor. The main text is arranged chronologically, each section was written by individual authors from this very active Local History Group. Many names are included but, sadly, there is no index. The price is a bargain because the Group obtained several grants and also included some advertising. JD

**Historical maps of World War II – Europe. Michael Swift & Michael Sharpe (1st edn 2000) PRC Publishing Ltd; hdbk, dust jkt (cld illus), 11.2" (285mm) x 10" (250mm); illustrated (coloured maps); index; 144pp UK £17.00, Overseas £17.50**

This excellent new source reference book contains over 84 coloured maps with brief notes. They relate to the Second World War in Europe and North Africa, etc. on land, in the air and at sea. All are taken from the records of several government departments held in the Public Record Office at Kew: each one is fully referenced to enable further research. I was especially interested to see the 11 maps relating to D-Day on 6 June 1944. This is an excellent reference book if you or one of your ancestors served in that war or if you are just interested in military history. JD

All the above are available from our Bookstall. Send a cheque, made payable to BFHS, to the BFHS Bookstall, Research Centre, Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 7TJ.

### **Additions to the Bookstall since the September magazine**

Surname Index to Wills and Admons. in the Berkshire Record Office (fiche) UK £5.30, Overseas £5.70

Earley St Peter's C of E School 1848-1998 UK £3.95, Overseas £4.15

Earley Days – Earley from Domesday to the present time UK £18.25, Overseas £18.75

Eton Wick – The Story of a Village 1217-1977 UK £6.25 , Overseas £6.75

## **Computer conference**

at Theale Green Community School, Theale near Reading  
on Saturday, 20th April 2002 from 9:15am (registration) to 5:15pm  
(Theale is just off the M4 about 4 miles west of Reading)

### **The Conference will feature the latest developments in computer use for family historians.**

There will be a programme of talks through the day in the main hall which will include: 'A Short Introduction to Computers and Family History', 'Trees, Charts, List and Books', 'The Internet and Family History', 'LDS Church CD-ROMs - from data to information'.

At least two Workshops are planned to include 'Publishing Family History on the Internet' and 'Beginners'.

### **There will be demonstrations of at least five leading genealogy programs.**

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Previous Conferences have been very popular so it is important to register your interest early.

The cost is £18 to include a buffet lunch or £13 for those who do not want the lunch.

For details and Booking Forms visit our web-site at [www.berksfhs.org.uk/conference2002/](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk/conference2002/) or send a stamped self-addressed envelope to Mrs Daphne Spurling, 7 Broadland Close, Calcot Park, Reading RG31 7RP (tel: 0118-942-7310).

email to: [conference2002@BerksFHS.org.uk](mailto:conference2002@BerksFHS.org.uk) to reserve your place and obtain further information

## **Computing Workshops for Family Historians**

at the Research Centre, Yeomanry House, Reading

### **Beginning to use Computers**

on Saturday 26th January 2002

How to start using your computer. Writing and filing your family correspondence. What a family history program can do for you.

### **Using the Data CDs available at the Research Centre**

on Saturday 23rd February 2002

Stuck with the 1881 census? Lost with the Vital Records? Know when your great uncle died in the Great War? Answers to these questions and many others will be explained using hands-on sessions.

### **Research using the Internet**

on Saturday 16th March 2002

- for the less experienced -

What a Family Historian can find on the Internet and how to access it. Using search engines. Includes on-line sessions on the Internet.

**Going Further with Generations** Wed, 16th Jan 2002

**Using the 1901 Census** Wed, 20th Feb 2002

**Going Further with Brothers Keeper** Wed, 20th Mar 2002

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Saturday workshops will last from 10am to 4pm

Cost: £15 for members and £18 for non-members

(Morning coffee/tea, snack lunch, afternoon tea/coffee and access to the Centre is included)

Wednesday workshops are in the evening and last from 7:30pm to 10pm

Cost: £5 for members and £7 for non-members

(Coffee/tea and access to the Centre is included)

**To book a workshop or obtain further information: contact Gillian Stevens**

Tel: 0118 947 8743 email: [workshops@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:workshops@berksfhs.org.uk)

## 1901 Census

At long last, and after a vociferous and spirited debate on the validity of paying to view the public records which until now have been free, the digital version of the 1901 census returns will be available on January 2 on the Internet. Use of the index will be free, and it will be possible to conduct a number of searches: by name, place, address, institution or vessel. Wildcards for single or multiple characters may be used and a soundex match to identify names with similar phonetics, such as Brown and Browne will also be available. However, charges will be made for viewing the digital pages of the returns. The Public Record Office has set the charges at 75pence for an image of the census page. Viewing the details of an individual will cost 50pence but viewing the details of a household will be an additional 50pence. Credit cards may be used to view the pages, but a more flexible method to pay will be the prepaid voucher scheme. The vouchers will be obtainable in units of £5, £10 and £50. Credit card payments are only valid for 48 hours but vouchers have a six-month life span. While the charges may seem high frequent visits to the Family Records Centre in London would soon cost more than the PRO fee.

The Society intends to make the prepaid vouchers available from the Bookstall in denominations of £5 and £10. If you would like to purchase any number of vouchers send a cheque, made payable to BFHS, to the BFHS Bookstall, Research Centre, Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 7TJ.

In addition the Research Centre will be holding a series of Internet evenings for members. The first will be held on Tuesday, 15th January, 2002. For full details see page 102.

One final, and exciting, prospect is that the PRO is planning to digitize the 1891 census and it will be made available on a county by county basis beginning with London. It's expected that the whole country will be completed by the end of 2002. There are also plans to do the same for the 1881 census. The images are already being scanned and they will be linked to the Federation of Family History Societies database with a possible launch at the end of 2002.

# A practical guide to using wills for family history

*David French*

Whilst parish registers are the staple fare of genealogical research, much useful information can also be gleaned from old wills, whose bequests and legacies are a rich source of references to family members, both close and not so close.

Not only do wills bring together information which otherwise often can only be found in a number of unrelated parish registers, but in contrast to the brief details in parish registers (particularly up to the end of the eighteenth century), a will usually specifies the occupation of the testator and explains the family relationship with individual beneficiaries (often divulging their place of residence as well). A will can therefore provide a textual snapshot of the testator's immediate family and relatives.

This article also draws on a case study of the parish of Barkham, near Wokingham, a small and relatively isolated agricultural parish (1,362 acres), whose population in Tudor, Stuart and Georgian times probably ranged between about 120 and 200. 92 wills of Barkham residents made between 1532 and 1857 survive. There are 24 wills from 1532-1599 (26%), 43 wills from the 1600's (47%), 20 wills from the 1700's (22%) and 5 wills from 1800-1857 (5%).<sup>1</sup>

## **Where to find old wills**

Prior to the legal reforms of 1858 obtaining probate (i.e. the formal ratification of a will to make its terms operative) was an ecclesiastical rather than a civil matter, administered by the church courts.<sup>2</sup> Tracking down old wills sometimes can be a frustrating exercise, since although there was a clear hierarchy (as explained below), there were over 300 ecclesiastical courts having probate jurisdiction, many of them small, and the inter-relationships were complex.

Before Berkshire was transferred to the Diocese of Oxford in 1836 it was in the Diocese of Salisbury, and the wills of most Berkshire testators ought to be found in the records of the following courts:

i) Until the nineteenth century the majority of Berkshire wills were proved in the Archdeaconry Court of Berkshire. In the case of Barkham, virtually all Tudor wills were proved there (96%), and in the 1600s and 1700s the proportion was 56%. Wills could only be proved in the Archdeaconry Court if the deceased's property was solely in the archdeacon's jurisdiction (see below) in Berkshire. The archdeaconry probate records are to be found at the Berkshire Record Office. It should be noted that until 1911 the parish of Caversham was in Oxfordshire and in the Archdeaconry of Oxford, whose probate records are at Oxfordshire Archives.

ii) The wills of the gentry and well-to-do yeomen farmers were usually proved in the Prerogative Court of the Archbishop of Canterbury in London (generally abbreviated to P.C.C.). In principle the P.C.C. had jurisdiction where the deceased owned property in more than one diocese or peculiar jurisdiction (see below), but in practice it did little or nothing to deter the probate business of those testators' families which sought the social prestige of a family will proved in the P.C.C.



*A Tudor deathbed scene*

From the seventeenth century an increasing proportion of the wills of Berkshire testators were proved in the P.C.C., in the case of Barkham rising from 37% in the 1600s to 60% in the first half of the nineteenth century. Use of the P.C.C. initially increased since many church courts effectively ceased functioning at the



outbreak of the Civil War (1642). Indeed the church courts were formally abolished 1653-1660 by the Long Parliament, and a civil court in London granted probate for the whole of England and Wales. After the restoration its records were absorbed by the P.C.C.

The probate business of the P.C.C. continued to increase rapidly with material progress, doubling between 1789 and 1829. Its standing was even further enhanced in 1810 when the Bank of England ruled that it would accept only P.C.C. wills.

Register copies of wills proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury may be viewed on microfilm at the Family Records Centre.

iii) In the case of testators leaving personal property in the jurisdiction of more than one archdeaconry within the Diocese of Salisbury, wills were proved in the Consistory Court of the Bishop of Sarum. In the case of Barkham, only 9% of wills from 1532 to 1857 were proved there. These records may be found at the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office in Trowbridge.

iv) A number of Berkshire parishes, however, were in 'peculiar' (special ecclesiastical jurisdictions) outside the authority of the bishop and archdeacon.

In the ancient county of Berkshire the peculiar of the Dean of Salisbury was the principal peculiar jurisdiction. It covered the parishes of Arborfield, Hurst, Ruscombe, Sandhurst, Sonning and Wokingham in east Berkshire and the parishes of Aston Upthorpe, Blewbury and Upton in north Berkshire. These records are to be found at the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office.

Hungerford, Wantage and West Ilsley were in the peculiar of the Dean and Canons of Windsor. These records are also at the Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office, except that Wantage wills 1582-1668 are to be found at Oxfordshire Archives. The wills of testators from Faringdon and Little Coxwell were proved in the court of the prebendary who held the Faringdon stall in Salisbury Cathedral, which wills are now at the Berkshire Record Office. The wills of testators from 'peculiar' parishes were not eligible to be proved in the Archdeaconry Court or the Consistory Court.

The foregoing is not a comprehensive list of church courts having some probate jurisdiction in the ancient county, and (disregarding the P.C.C.) if a testator left property in the jurisdiction of more than one court, the will would need to be

proved in some higher court outside Berkshire. A further complicating factor is that during ecclesiastical vacancies or episcopal or archiepiscopal visitations local probate jurisdiction was ‘inhibited’ (i.e. suspended) and jurisdiction temporarily exercised by a higher church court.

**Who made wills and why?**

It is impossible to say with any degree of precision what proportion of the adult population made a will by reference to burials recorded in the parish registers, since family historians will know only too well that it was not the practice to record anything other than the name of the deceased and the date of burial. Also, not all parishes are fortunate enough to have an uninterrupted run of registers from when they were first required to be kept in 1538. Parish registers did not become more informative in the case of Barkham until after 1782 when the Rev. David Davies became rector. One of his many innovations was to note the ages of the deceased in the burial register as a matter of course.<sup>3</sup>

The principal unknown factor in determining the incidence of will making by reference to burial registers is the unquantifiable rates of infant mortality, which remained high until well into the nineteenth century. Consequently there is some uncertainty about the proportion of will makers in specific communities from time to time, but working on the basis, for the sake of argument, that (say) an average of 55% of the recorded Barkham burials relates to adults produces the following indicative statistics:

	1538-99	1600-99	1700-99	1800-57
Total burials	169	331	343	202
Assumed adults (55%)	93	182	189	111
Surviving wills	24	43	20	5

Any statistics about adult will-making are further distorted, however, because married women (*femme covert*) normally could not make wills (a legal incapacity shared with slaves, traitors and heretics). Subject to limited exceptions (e.g. under a marriage settlement), women married before 1883 lacked legal capacity to own property and therefore had nothing to dispose of. With the rare exception of wills by married women with their husbands’

consent, family historians will therefore only be able to find wills made by widows and spinsters. In the case of Barkham, of the 92 wills made by local residents during 1532-1857, only nine (10%) were made by women, eight of whom were widows. There was no corresponding limitation in the case of personal representatives, however, and the majority of married testators appointed their wives as their executrix.

The occurrence of the highest rate of will making at Barkham (say 26%) during the Tudor period can be partly attributed to the requirement of late mediæval canon law that everyone of sound mind (i.e. *compos mentis*) owning personal property (e.g. goods, chattels or animals) worth more than £5 (*bona notabilia*) should make a testamentary disposition leaving at least one-tenth of his property to pious uses for the redemption of his soul.<sup>4</sup> If a person failed to do so, his soul would be damned in the eyes of the church. £5 would have represented a significant sum in Tudor times, corresponding to the value of (say) five horses or ten bullocks.

Not unsurprisingly, in an agricultural parish like Barkham, the majority of testators were either gentry or farmers (yeomen or husbandmen), and poorer inhabitants are sparsely represented. An analysis of the occupations of the 92 Barkham testators between 1532 and 1857, disregarding four testators whose occupations are not given (or cannot be inferred from inventories), shows the following:

Gentry	17%
Yeomen/husbandmen	59%
Craftsmen/tradesmen	14%

The average value of the estates of the 21 Barkham testators between 1532 and 1599 the value of whose personal estates is known (in 18 cases their probate inventories survive) was 36. 16s. Only three estates were below £12, and two of these were less than 20 shillings.

### **Analysing old wills**

To read Tudor wills, not only is it necessary to decipher strange handwriting, but the spelling is almost totally phonetic - not by reference to the standard English of today, but reflecting the

marked local accents of country folk over 450 years ago. Many wills continue to present problems of legibility until well into the eighteenth century, and even thereafter there can be some unwelcome surprises, nineteenth century clerical hand being particularly indecipherable.

Much of the beginning of a will is formulaic, however, so that anyone who perseveres in familiarising himself with the script employed for standard phrases in time will be able to decipher even the seemingly most impenetrable script. For example, the beginning of the will made by John Wilson in 1558 employed the following standard terminology: 'I John Wilson yeoman of the parish of Barkh[a]m in the countie of Berkes beyng sicke in mie body but hole in my mynde thanckes be to god make this my laste will in forme folowing ffirst I bequeth mie sowle to Almightye god to o[u]r blessed ladie And to all the Saintes in heauen and mie bodie to be buried in the church erth of god & sainte James the Apostle at Barkh[a]m'.<sup>5</sup>

Mastery of the script may not be enough, however, since in Tudor and Stuart times it was normal for scribes to make extensive use of abbreviations (e.g. w.<sup>ch</sup> for which, y.<sup>t</sup> for that), although these are largely standard. The other potential complication is that capital letters and surnames are notoriously difficult to decipher. In practice this is a problem only in the case of beneficiaries with surnames different from that of the testator, and even this can usually be resolved by carefully scrutinising the way in which the scribe has shaped his capital letters.

Finally, although consistent with the style of old legal documents the text of wills is in continuous format, this again is not usually a problem because, following the formulaic preamble of a will, each separate bequest is introduced by the word *Item*.

In the case of P.C.C. wills, which represent an increasing proportion of Berkshire wills from the 1640s onwards, handwriting is less problematic, since researchers have access not to the original wills but to microfilm copies of contemporaneous transcripts fair copied in a relatively legible standard court hand into register books.

Anyone reading Tudor probate records cannot fail to be impressed by the speed with which the whole process operated. Wills typically were made only a few days before death. Since recovery was generally unlikely, any acute illness was taken as a

signal to make one's last will and testament. Leaving the making of a will (effectively a public document because of the need for independent witnesses) to the last minute also avoided exposing the testator to the risk of family squabbles during his lifetime. Further, in Tudor times a will was invalidated not only when the testator married, but also by the birth of a child.<sup>6</sup>

Tudor and Stuart probate inventories, a high proportion of which survive in the case of the Archdeaconry Court of Berkshire, can also be a fascinating source of information. They contain

An Inventory of the goods and Chattell of Robert Williams  
Deceased of the parish of Barham this fourth of July 1698  
by us whose names are here under written

From his wearing Cloase and monoy in his pocket	4. 5. 8
Ho in the Kitchen too forty one vases of tindeous one table 3 forms and a pot and other lumber with dozes	01. 00. 06
Ho in the Chamber one bedd and other Lumber	09. 06. 06
Ho the hogge and a slitch of bacon	01. 00. 00
Ho the 2 orno Dunge ashes and a littell wood	01. 10. 00
ohn Salovert oweth robert williams for stealing of four boyes	04. 10. 00
us from kirhard Haysford Son the sum of	00. 11. 02
us from Christoxher Eiuens	01. 02. 04
us from Joano Miller	00. 18. 00
us from Henry Elements Son	00. 17. 00
us from Henry Elements Sun	00. 09. 00
us from william Collingburne	00. 11. 10
us from Wihard Soales	00. 09. 04
us from Thomas Hartman	00. 01. 10
us from the parish of barham for disburstings to the poor	02. 02. 00
- the totall sum is 15. 12. 10	
James Luckens	
Richard Haysford	

Inventory of Robert Williams, 1698, Consistory Court of Sarum, Wiltshire and Swindon Record Office.

exhaustive lists of the deceased's possessions (even itemising cutlery) room by room and in outbuildings.

The probate inventories show that even well-to-do farmers (yeomen or husbandmen) had very few material possessions, and it was normal in Tudor and Stuart wills to make detailed bequests of clothing, specific household goods, grain and animals. Pewter plates, saucers, brass pots, heifers and sheep frequently featured in bequests. In his will in 1558, William Norman left 'A kowe with A pyed [i.e. black and white] face' to his 'daughter Alis', and 'A kowe crompyll horned' [i.e. with curly horns] to his son Nicholas.<sup>7</sup>

The potential value of old wills to family historians is demonstrated by the analysis by George Sherwood in 1918 of all 4,382 wills proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury in the year 1750, which reveals that there were 40,320 individuals mentioned, an average of over nine people mentioned in every will.<sup>8</sup>

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1. Handlist of extant Barkham probate documents, B.R.O. ref. D/EX 1211/44/1/1-8.
2. Court of Probate Act 1857 (20 & 21 Victoria, cap. 77).
3. Barkham parish registers 1741-1812, B.R.O. ref. D/P 13 1/2.
4. R. Burn, *Ecclesiastical Law*, Vol. IV, London, 1775, pp. 41-56.
5. B.R.O. refs. D/A1/6 C.52 and D/A1/132/116.
6. A.J. Camp, *Wills and their whereabouts*, 4th edition 1974 (revised and extended), limited edition, London, 1975, p. xi.
7. B.R.O. ref. D/A1/101/15.
8. George Sherwood, *A List of persons named in the P.C.C. wills proved in the year 1750: Register Greenly*, London, 1918.

Further reading: *When Death do us Part*, edited by Tom Arkell, Nesta Evans and Nigel Goose; 422pp; Leopard's Head Press, Oxford 2000; *Local Population Studies*, University of Hertfordshire at Watford.

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## Research Centre News

*Ivan Dickason*

### **1901 Census**

To coincide with the launch of the digitised version of the 1901 census the Research Centre will be providing, for an experimental period, access to the Internet for members on Tuesday evenings commencing Tuesday, 15th January, 2002. These arrangements will be in place for at least three months.

There will be no charge to members for access to the Internet itself. However, members will have to pay any charges there may be for access to individual services. In the case of the 1901 Census, charges are payable to the PRO for access to the full transcripts and images of the census pages themselves. For those users who do not wish to pay by credit card, we shall have prepaid vouchers available for sale from the Bookstall. Vouchers will be available in denominations of £5 and £10. Unused credits on the vouchers can be used in subsequent sessions. The vouchers are valid for six months.

Vouchers will also be on sale at the Research Centre for use by members who have Internet access at home.

The PRO recommends that images of the actual census pages are printed on A3 size paper. A suitable printer will be available in the Research Centre for these special Internet sessions. Additional charges will be payable to the Society for such prints. Members of the Computer Steering Group and computer aware Library Assistants will be on hand for these evenings to assist those who are not used to the Internet.

Finally, for those of you who want to know more about the 1901 Census or who are nervous about how to access it, there will be a Wednesday Computer Workshop in February; see the separate advertisement in this magazine.

### **Christmas and New Year closing**

The Research Centre will not be open on Tuesday 25th, Wednesday 26th and Thursday 27th of December, 2001 or on Tuesday, 1st January, 2002. The Research Centre will re-open on Wednesday, 2nd January, 2002. Make it your New Year's



Resolution to come and do your family history at your Research Centre.

### **Library tours**

There are Library tours each month. This is the opportunity for you to see around your Research Centre and to have the contents briefly explained to you. The tours generally last about an hour and a quarter. The sessions last about two hours. For the rest of the session, you can examine in more detail any part of the library that has taken your fancy, or you may ask questions, or carry out research. Do please come along.

The dates and starting times of the Library Tours during the first few months of 2002 are:

Saturday, 19th January 2:30pm

Monday, 18th February 7:30pm

Saturday, 16th March 2:30pm

Monday, 15th April 7:30pm

### **Library Assistants**

June and I would like to make a special plea to members, both new and long term, to think about giving a few hours of your time, once or more a month, to help look after the Centre. You will find this is a great way to learn more about the library and get to know your fellow researchers. Sometimes through talking and meeting people, you learn of different ways and means to help you in your own research. If you want more information on what is expected of a Library Assistant please feel free to ring June or myself on (0118) 978 6785.

<b>Opening hours</b>	Tuesday	10 - 4pm & 7-9.30pm
	Wednesday	10 - 4pm
	Thursday	10 - 4pm & 7-9.30pm
	2nd Sunday of each month	11 - 4pm

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# Jewish genealogy

*Susan Fifer*

If you're trying to research a possible Jewish link in your family, you'll soon find out that Jewish genealogy is just like all other genealogy, only more so!

The great wave of Jewish immigrants came over to the UK in the last quarter of the 19th century. They initially congregated in the towns where they arrived, and many of them living in the East End of London. This meant that many communities lived in close proximity to family, friends, landsleit (people coming from the same village) and co-religionists. As late as my childhood in the 1950s, people lived within 'pram-pushing' distance of their mothers. This meant a closeness of family life and knowledge of cousins, great aunts and uncles that only began to lessen as subsequent generations became more prosperous and started to move out to the suburbs and beyond. With a visit to the various Jewish cemeteries as part of the yearly religious cycle (for adults at least), with barmitzvahs, weddings, Passover and Friday night family meals, there was a consciousness of an extended family and networks that all newly arrived immigrants develop for mutual support. Tapping into this wealth of family knowledge can get you off to a great start but, for every genealogist who is fortunate enough to be able to access this information, there will be another whose family organisation and memories didn't seem to conform to this pattern or who feels they started their research too late.

The two main problems that most people encounter are where their ancestors came from and whether they changed their names. Even a brief study of the history or political geography of Eastern Europe will show how often borders and administrations changed. My grandmother said she came from Austria. It was actually a region of the Austro-Hungarian empire called Galicia. Today it is in the Ukraine but, at some point in its history it was in Poland. So, many of its records are in the Polish State Archives in Warsaw while others are in Lvov (also known either now or in the past as Lwow, Lviv or Lemberg).

Probably the best thing that happened to me was learning, right from the beginning, the names of the towns where my great grandparents came from: Kalisz, Kolo, Biala Podlaska (all in Poland) and Husiatyn (Galicia). Discovering that there were microfilms of Polish Jewish birth, marriage and death records available through the Mormon Family History Centre here in England was a revelation. I used to think that all these records would have been destroyed in the turmoil of life in Eastern Europe during the last two centuries. I recognise now that bureaucrats didn't go to a lot of trouble to collect information, only to destroy it. They kept it for tax collection, for military and conscription reasons and sometimes, unfortunately, for more menacing purposes. Where records have been lost, it is more often through neglect and lack of funds and equipment to preserve archives.

The first time I saw some of these Polish records on microfilm, my elation turned to disappointment. I was initially discouraged by difficulties in understanding the narrative 'Napoleonic' format of the records, the frequently dreadful handwriting and the poor condition of some of the records filmed. I was rescued by a wonderful book on translating 19th century Polish records written by someone from the Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois. It was certainly the best investment of any that I've made in terms of genealogical books and materials. Have I mentioned, by the way, that after 1867, all the Polish records are written in Russian (Cyrillic) characters? No? Well that's another steep learning curve that I'll have to go through at some point. Contrary to popular



*The grave of Gershon son of Jacob which gave me his father's name*

mythology, name changes were not usually made at the point of entry to a country by immigration officials too lazy or ignorant to understand foreign names. Most passenger lists would have been compiled in the country of origin by people familiar with these names. Where there were rigorous immigration procedures, particularly in the USA, officials would themselves either have first hand knowledge of the language, would use interpreters or would have become familiar with the spellings of foreign names over time. The immigrants therefore often made name changes themselves. Mainly these were made to fit in to the local business and social community. In times of strong anti German feeling (for example during the First World War), it was not only Jews who changed their surnames to avoid becoming targets.

Name changes may be spelling simplifications - my own name of Fajfer changing to Fifer - or direct translations as when Grunfeld became Greenfield. Sometimes the name will just be shortened as in Green. Levy (often written as Lewy in Polish), can become Lewis. And often there is no apparent reason for the change as when someone in my mother's family changed his surname from Vogel to Lester. Thank goodness for my Klinger family who kept their name, both here and in the USA. This enabled me to get documentary evidence of my grandmother's town of origin from information about her cousins on US passenger lists, census and naturalisation documents, all of which contrasted starkly with the lack of similar evidence available in this country.

Things don't get much easier when you look at forenames. In Poland, in particular, many Jews used a variety of names for business, religious and social purposes. These too were often changed or simplified after a period in the new country. Baruch might become Barnett or Barney or Bernard. Sometimes it helps to know the meaning of the original name as when Blume became Flora. Many people changed their names for secular purposes but retained their Hebrew names for religious purposes. These names can often be found on gravestones in the Hebrew writing and they are useful because they are written in the form of patronymics and thus give you the father's name (in Hebrew at least).

It was (and often still is) customary in Ashkenazic families (those who came from Eastern Europe in contrast to the Sephardim from Spain, Portugal, North Africa and Holland) to name children after deceased grandparents. They are rarely named

after living relatives. This often enables you to pinpoint when someone died since a number of cousins born shortly after that time will all bear the name of their common grandparent. This use of naming patterns can be very helpful in tracing back different family lines, particularly when combined with the names 'inherited' from the spouse's side of the family. This is all the more important since Eastern European Jews often didn't use surnames until they were legally required to do so at the end of the eighteenth century. Working backwards from the age of his death record in 1836, I can estimate that Lewka Pfeiffer (my 4 x great grandfather) was probably born in 1748. However, even if I could find records from that period, it is unlikely that he or his family were using the Pfeiffer surname at that time. All I could hope would be that the patronymics used would be sufficiently unusual to help me in my task.

The President of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain tells how he got interested in genealogy as a young boy when he saw a family tree of the Kings and Queens of England. He asked his father why their family didn't have such a tree and, being dissatisfied with the answer, set out to rectify the matter. While there are no royal lines in Jewish genealogy (anyone who tells you that he has traced his ancestry back to King David is probably spinning you a line) the next best thing is if you are descended from a rabbi, preferably one of the famous ones. Their genealogies are well documented and there are a number of people who specialise in this field.

In some cases, you may be researching a single Jewish ancestor who 'married out' and who subsequently maintained few or no links with their family or the Jewish community. In other cases there are families who have hidden their Jewishness from their children and grandchildren. At the International Seminar on Jewish Genealogy held in London this summer, there were some very moving stories of people who had discovered Jewish roots initially through their family history research. This kind of research can be difficult but is not impossible.

The Holocaust was, and continues to be, a defining event in Jewish history and consciousness. Even for those of us who did not lose immediate family members, we know that there will be lines in our family trees which we may pick up in the research for our roots but which we know will be cut short as we try to research these lines forward into the 1930s and 1940s. For many

of us, the creation of a family tree can act as a memorial both to the known and the unknown dead. In some cases family history research has enabled Holocaust survivors to find out more about their roots and even to discover branches of their families that they didn't know existed - a wonderful blessing that can give real impact and meaning to the research activity.

Much of the support and information available to help Jewish researchers comes through various societies and on-line support groups. The American Jewish genealogical research community is particularly strong and well-organised in this respect and there are some wonderful examples of international indexing projects for Polish records, burial records and other activities to which we can all contribute. Many of these are hosted by Jewishgen on the Internet at [www.jewishgen.org](http://www.jewishgen.org) and, if you have never visited this site, I urge you to look here for both databases and a very useful series of help and information files for beginners. Here in the UK we also have an excellent website at [www.jgsgb.org/](http://www.jgsgb.org/) which will tell you about our publications, library and activities ([www.jgsgb.org/](http://www.jgsgb.org/)). Since Jewish researchers are often more widespread both in their current locations and in their research interests, the Internet has been a boon in bringing people together and helping them to share their knowledge and interests.

I am conscious that I have focused this article on the research for Jewish ancestors in Poland, the area where my own interests lie. I have not discussed research for those whose Anglo-Jewish roots go back much further than mine, sometimes to the time of Cromwell. I have also not covered those areas with which I am less familiar such as research in Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Western European countries, South Africa or even the USA. Many of these have their own Special Interest Groups (SIGs) with newsgroups on the web, newsletters and annual get-togethers at the International Seminars (to be held in Toronto next year and in Washington in 2003). We may not all be related, but we all feel like *mishpocheh* (defined in Leo Rosten's book *The Joys of Yiddish* as '...family, including relatives far, near, remote and numerous').

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 Leo Rosten, *The Joys of Yiddish*. Penguin Books, 1971, ISBN 0-14003068-9

## Help wanted

*Gaile Statkus, 15 Bannerman Court, Whitby, Ontario L1N 5M9, Canada*

So far I have been unsuccessful in tracing my grandfather's roots in England and I would appreciate any help or advice members could give me. The information I have is that William John Davis/Davies was born on May 7, 1883 – the Canadian military records show his birth date as May 7, 1881. His parents were Peter Davies and Elizabeth Brown. I believe he was born in or around Maidenhead. He emigrated to Canada in 1897, however, my search of passenger ship records arriving in Canada has been unsuccessful.

He had at least two sisters, I think their names were Agnes and Mary (they were visited by my uncles during the second World War). According to my uncle one of the husbands of a sister owned a timber yard. Family stories indicate that members of the family were amongst the Titanic survivors. William married in 1900, had 12 children and died in 1945.

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4767	BARRETT	West Challow	BRK	1800-1920	4763	CRAWFORD	Chippenhams	CAM	Pre 1900
4803	BATES	Edmonton	MDX	1750-1845	4763	CRAWFORD	Wantage	BRK	1880-1950
4746	BEARD	Shinfield	BRK	1700-2001	4684	CULLEY	Axford	WIL	1800-1950
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4752	BOOTH	Lepton	WYK	1780-1840	4731	DIX (DICKS)	Tewkesbury	GLS	1750-2001
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4731	BOOTH	Shrivenham	BRK	1800-2001	4797	DRURY	London	LND	1850-1900
4731	BOOTH	Cheltenham	GLS	1800-2001	4368	EACOTT	Any	BRK	1600-1900
4797	BRITTAIN	London	LND	1850-1900	4797	EDNEY	Wallingford	OXF	1850-1900
4744	BROOKS	Any	BRK	1750-2000	4724	EMSLEY	Any	ALL	1066-2001
4731	BROWN (Mary Ann)	Owston	LIN	1800-2001	4620	ESDELL/ESDAILE	Chelmsford	ESS	1066-2000
4700	BUTCHER	Wolverly	WOR	1800-1900	1186	EVANS	Braintree	ESS	1850-1950
4594	CAMPBELL	Rothiemurchus	INV	1750-1850	1186	EVANS	New York	USA	1800-1870
4594	CAMPBELL	Dalton	DFS	1800-1850	3618	EYLES	Lambourn	BRK	1870
4707	CARTER	Cookham	BRK	1760-1900	4620	FISHER	Stoke Poges	BKM	1066-2000
4707	CARTER	Cookham Dean	BRK	1800-1900	4773	FOLLETT	S. Petherton	SOM	1795-1900

No	Name	Place	Code	Dates	No	Name	Place	Code	Dates
4783	FORSTER	Chatham	KEN	1800-1920	4479	IVEY	Richmond	SRY	1890 on
4783	FORSTER	Teynham	KEN	1700-1710	4479	IVEY	Any	BRK	1800-1900
4797	FRANKLIN	Wallingford	OXF	1600-1900	3475	IVYHOUSE	Egham	SRY	1700-1800
4368	FURNELL	Any	OXF	1600-1900	4731	JAMES	Prestbury	GLS	1800-2001
4368	FURNELL	Any	BKM	1600-1900	4712	JANES	Reading	BRK	1700 on
4368	FURNELL	Any	BRK	1600-1900	4712	JANES	Harpden	OXF	1700 on
4620	GARDINER	Brentford	MDX	1800+	4620	JENNO/JENO	Bedfont	MDX	1066-2000
4731	GERRING	Shrivenham	BRK	1849-2001	4752	JONES	Lambourn	BKS	1750-1800
4731	GERRING	Watchfield	BRK	1849-2001	4773	JOYCE	Langley	BKM	1880-1920
4783	GIBBS	Newbury	BRK	1770-1890	4773	JOYCE	Steventon	BRK	1790-1860
4731	GLEW	Owston	LIN	1800-2001	4774	KEATES	Brightwell	BRK	1750-1800
4731	GLEW	Woodhouse	YKS	1750-2001	4684	KEECH	London	GTL	1800-1950
4731	GLEW	Handsworth	YKS	1750-2001	4684	KEECH	London	LND	1800-1950
4752	GODFREY	Egham	BKS	1780-1840	4773	KELLAWAY	Wool	DOR	1800-1850
4797	GOODALL	Wallingford	OXF	1800-1900	4783	KEMP	Winterbourne	BRK	1815-1880
4773	GRAHAM	Bisley	SRY	1890-1920	4783	KIMBER	Croydon	SRY	1790-1840
4773	GRAHAM	Kippen	STI	1700-1940	4752	LAW(U)RENCE	Any	BKS	1700-1795
4620	GRAY	Brentford	MDX	1800+	4752	LAW(U)RENCE	Lechlade	GLS	1760-1840
3475	GREENWAY	Warfield	BRK	1700-1800	4301	LEGGETT P	Oxford	OXF	1900-1960
4803	HANES	Bethnal Green	MDX	1800-1850	4774	LESTER	N. S. Moreton	BRK	1800-1900
4707	HARDING	Cokkham Dean	BRK	1800-1900	4731	LEWIS	Bristol	SOM	1840-2001
4707	HARDING	Cookham	BRK	pre 1850	4731	LEWIS	Woodhouse	YKS	1750-2001
4752	HARGAN	Camberwell	SRY	1870-2000	4731	LEWIS	Handsworth	YKS	1750-2001
4620	HATFIELD	Bedfont	MDX	18-19c	4684	LLEWELLYN	Swansea	WGM	1800-1950
4803	HAWLEY	Meopham	KEN	1800-1850	4774	LOOKER	Brightwell/Sotwell	BRK	1800-1900
4763	HEIGHTON	Fawley	BRK	1800-1900	4620	LUFFLUM	Any	Any	1066-2000
4763	HEIGHTON	Billesdon	LEI	1600-1900	4620	LUFFRUM	Any	Any	1066-2000
4833	HERRIDGE	East Ilsley	BRK	1800-1950	4684	LYFORD	Frilsham	BRK	1700-1900
4726	HOLLE	Spennymoor	DUR	1892-1898	4684	LYFORD	Bucklebury	BRK	1700-1900
4726	HOLLE	Millom	CUL	1882-1910	4752	MADELEY	Malpas	CHS	1880-2000
4803	HOPSON	Chieveley	BRK	1810-1850	4752	MADELEY	Whitchurch	SHR	1750-1840
4783	HOPSON	Newbury	BRK	1750-1880	4797	MAGSON	London	LND	1800-1900
4797	HUGHES	London	LND	1850-1900	1186	MARTIN	Dublin	DUB	1800-1850

No	Name	Place	Code	Dates
3618	MARYSON	Any	NFK	1900
4594	MOAR	Any	OKI	1800-1850
4724	MOIVE	Arbroath	SCT	1066-1811
4744	MORTON	Any	BRK	1750-1950
4744	MORTON	Daventry	NTH	1750-1850
4594	MUNDAY/MONDAY	Kingston Bagnuize	BRK	1700-1800
4594	MUNRO(E)	Rothiemurchus	INV	1770-1850
1186	NEWTON	Halstead	ESS	1700-1900
4763	NORRIS	Lockinge	BRK	1800-1920
4763	NORRIS	Hendred	BRK	1600-1920
4773	NORTHOVER	Depiford	MDX	1860-1900
4773	NORTHOVER	Wool	DOR	1800-1900
1186	ORMISTON	Carlisle	CUL	1800-1900
4620	PEACHELL	London	LND	1700+
4744	PEARCE	Teesside	CLV	1800-2000
4744	PEARCE	Swansea	WLS	1800-2000
4783	PECK	Old Buckenham	NFK	1800-1840
4684	POCOCK	Newbury	BRK	1700-1950
4767	POTTONGER	West Challow	BRK	1800-1900
4683	POVEY	Speen	BRK	1700-1900
4683	POVEY	Any	BRK	1800-1900
1186	POWELL	Pres	SHR	1700-1850
4744	POWER	Yorkshire	CLV	1800-1950
4797	PRESTON	Wallingford	OXF	1800-1900
4731	PRIGG	Bristol	SOM	1840-2001
4803	PRINCE	Winterbourne	BRK	1750-1850
4773	PROUDFOOT	Liberton	MLN	1796-1870
1186	PROUDFOOT	Newcastle	NBL	1800-1900
1186	PUGH	Loppington	SHR	1800-1900
4724	RAVENSCROFT	Reading	BRK	1600-2001
4803	RIBBINS	Kingsdown	KEN	1800-1850
4783	RIDLEY	Westerham	KEN	1820-1890
4724	RIOME	Arbroath	SCT	1066-1811
		Bethnal Green	MDX	1800-1850
		Presute	WIL	1600-1850
		Fyfield	WIL	1500-1900
		Childs Ercall	SHR	1700-1800
		Shrivenham	BRK	1800-2001
		Watchfield	BRK	1800-2001
		Any	LND	1780-1830
		Long Wittenham	BRK	pre 1900s
		Braughing	HRT	1780-1880
		Stanford in the Vale	BRK	1700-1850
		Cleckheaton	WYK	1780-1840
		Walton	SRY	1750-1800
		Clewer	BRK	pre 1875
		Pirbright	SRY	1750-1930
		Bristol	ENG	1840-2001
		Hungerford	BRK	1750-2000
		Any	BRK	1600-1900
		Sheerness	KEN	1770-1860
		Wantage	BRK	1800-1920
		Warborough	OXF	1600-1900
		Stamford	BRK	1700-1750
		Berwick upon Tweed	NBL	1750-1850
		Chaddlesworth	BRK	1600-1950
		Bucklebury	BRK	1600-2000
		Thatcham	BRK	1700-2000
		Newbury	BRK	1750-1950
		Frlsham	BRK	1850-1900
		Kintbury	BRK	1820-1900
		Basildon	BRK	1850-1900
		Walton	SRY	1750-1840
		Sulhampstead	BRK	1700-1900
		Bucklebury	BRK	1500-1960
		Redruth	CON	1600-1840

## Berkshire Family History Society Report and Accounts for the Year ending 30th April 2001

The Chairman's Annual Report was printed in the June 2001 issue of the *Berkshire Family Historian*

Trustees: Ivan Dickason, 1 Mower Close, Wokingham, Berkshire, RG40 1RZ  
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Jocie McBride, Tradewinds, 6 Wootton Road, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 1QD  
Eddie Spackman, 40 Western Elms Avenue, Reading, Berkshire RG30 2AN  
Catherine Harrington, 29 Wantage Road, Reading RG30 2SH

### Independent Examiner's Report to the Trustees of the Berkshire Family History Society

I report on the Accounts of the Society for the year ended 30th April 2001

#### Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts; you consider that the audit requirement of section 43(2) of the Charities Act 1993 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of the procedures specified in the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 43(7)(b) of the Act, whether particular matters have come to my attention.

#### Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the General Directions given by the Charity Commissioners. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the Charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

#### Independent examiner's statement

In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

- 1) which gives me cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements
  - to keep accounting records in accordance with section 41 of the Act; and
  - to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records;  
and to comply with the accounting requirements of the Act  
have not been met; or
- 2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.

E.J. Pleace FCA  
Thames Cottage  
Old Mill Lane  
Bray Berkshire SL6 2BD

**Berkshire Family History Society  
Balance Sheet as at 30 April 2001**

	£	£	30.4.00 £	30.4.00 £
<b>Liabilities</b>				
Accumulated Funds	29877		35663	
Bookstall Creditors	0		1160	
General Surplus	6104		-5787	
General Creditors	0		155	
<b>Assets</b>				
Computer and Copier Equipment		1		462
Debtors		0		0
General Account		9396		2304
Instant Savings Accounts		210		209
30 Day Account		14722		16482
Bookstall Account		3000		2983
Instant Savings BSA		672		665
Cash		100		206
Stock		7880		7880
	<u>35981</u>	<u>35981</u>	<u>31191</u>	<u>31191</u>

**Berkshire Family History Society  
Income for the Year to Date 30 April 2001**

Subscriptions	19663		16423	
Inland Revenue	2508		334	
Deposit Interest	247		308	
Advertising	862		634	
Research	6		22	
Symposia	588		477	
Donations	49		89	
Berkshire Name Index	153		223	
1851 Census	325		402	
Fiche Printer/Copier	1023		296	
Miscellaneous	390		528	
	<u>25784</u>		<u>19736</u>	
<b>Total Income &amp; Expenditure</b>				
Income	25784		19736	
Contribution from Bookstall	7723		1081	
	<u>33507</u>		<u>20817</u>	
Expenditure	27403		26604	
	<u>6104</u>		<u>-5787</u>	

Signed: I Dickason  
Chairman

J Gurnett  
Secretary

Date: August 5 2001

**Berkshire Family History Society**  
**Expenditure for Year to Date 30 April 2001**

		£
Magazine and Members' Handbook	7500	9025
Magazine Postage	4219	2866
Meeting Halls	1307	2045
Speakers	1435	1503
Symposia, Open Days and Other Events	0	305
Reference Library	189	1369
Premises Lease	7162	2689
Other Research Costs	1219	1351
Projects	816	694
Computer Costs	0	290
Computer Depreciation	461	518
Insurance & FFHS	1345	1068
Other Affiliations	21	23
Postage	440	670
Stationery	29	309
Photocopy	230	80
Telephone	260	63
Travel	592	348
Donations: Wiltshire Wills Project	0	1000
Miscellaneous	<u>178</u>	<u>388</u>
	<b><u>27403</u></b>	<b><u>26604</u></b>

**Berkshire Family History Society**  
**Bookstall Income & Expenditure Account**  
**Year to Date 30 April 2001**

		£
Income		
Sales Income	16392	9507
Opening Stock	7880	6300
Purchases	5810	7825
Fiche & Census Printing	<u>2215</u>	<u>1853</u>
	<b><u>15905</u></b>	<b><u>15978</u></b>
Closing Stock	<u>7880</u>	<u>7880</u>
Cost of Goods	<u>8025</u>	<u>8098</u>
Margin	8367	1409
Stationery	42	52
Postage	185	195
Telephone	129	14
Travel	0	6
Sales Commission	93	0
Photocopying	31	61
Miscellaneous	<u>164</u>	<u>0</u>
	<b><u>644</u></b>	<b><u>328</u></b>
Surplus	<u>7723</u>	<u>1081</u>
Contribution to General A/c	<u>7223</u>	<u>1081</u>
Profit/(loss) to Accumulated Fund	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>



**Berkshire Family History Society**  
**Notes to the Accounts**  
**Year to date 30th April 2001**

1. The Accounts are prepared in accordance with the historic cost convention
2. Fixed Assets comprise computers and copiers.

At Cost	£
1st May 2000 & 2001	<u>4723</u>
Depreciation	
1st May 2000	4261
Charge for the year	<u>461</u>
30th April 2001	<u>4722</u>
Written down value	
30th April 2000	462
30th April 2001	1

## Postal research services

The following services are available:

### Berkshire Name Index

This contains more than 100,000 names from documents, members' birth briefs and our strays index. Searches may be made with a maximum of six references photocopied onto an A4 sheet. The charge is £5 for up to five surnames with a maximum of 30 entries (five A4 sheets) per enquiry. If you are not a member there is a search fee of £1 per surname. Please send two SAEs or two IRCs if you wish an acknowledgement to the BFHS Research Centre, Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 7TJ

### 1851 Berkshire Census

Printouts can be supplied of any folio (the required references can be obtained from our published indexes) and the charge is 50pence per folio with a minimum of £1 (£1 and £2 respectively if not a member) giving two folios. The charges are £1 per search per surname (£2 if not a member) and printout charges are then as above. Send your request and search fee, together with a stamped SAE, or two IRCs to: Mr Geoff Mather, 18 Ravenswood Avenue, Crowthorne, Berkshire RG45 6AY.

### 1881 Census for England Wales and Scotland

We have a complete set of fiche for each county, and the CD-ROM which includes Scotland. The charge for an estimate of the number of prints is £2 per county searched per surname, including two sample printouts (£3 if not a member). Thereafter A4 printouts

are charged at 50pence for each additional page. Write to BFHS, c/o Mr Ivan Dickason, 1 Mower Close, Wokingham, Berkshire RG40 1RZ

### Other County Census Indexes

We hold copies of census indexes, mainly 1851, for many other counties. The charge for a search and an estimate of the cost of any printouts is £2 per county searched per surname including two sample prints (£3 if not a member). Charges thereafter will depend upon the type of A4 size copies to be made and the number of prints involved. Please write to Mr Ivan Dickason, as above.

### Berkshire Burial Index

We are contributing to the National Burial Index; so far we have 128,000 references in our own database and can now offer a limited research service to our index. For the parishes and time periods covered to date see page 76 in this magazine. The cost per surname is £1.00 for members and £2.00 for non-members for each A4 sheet. Send a cheque, made out to BFHS and a stamped self addressed envelope to David Wright, 45 Picton Way, Caversham, Reading, Berkshire RG4 8NJ.

### Monumental inscriptions

David Watkins (tel. 0118 966 1401) has offered to consult his database for the following churchyard monumental inscriptions free of charge for BFHS Members. These have not yet been put onto fiche as they have no maps. David will answer telephone enquiries only. The churchyards concerned are: Aldermaston, Avington, Compton Beauchamp, Hurst, Mortimer and Twyford.

# Useful addresses

## Chairman

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## Membership secretary L-Z

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## Email discussion group

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Reading, Berkshire RG30 2AN  
email: discussion@berksfhs.org.uk

## Burial index co-ordinator

David Wright  
45 Picton Way  
Caversham, Reading  
Berkshire RG4 8NJ

## Branch chairs

### *Bracknell*

Pauline Wales  
5 Foxglove Close  
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### *Newbury*

Wendy Maskell  
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01635 35926

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middlemarch@oldpaludians.org

### *Vale of White Horse*

Ken Marsden  
3 Wharfe Close  
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Oxon OX14 5HS

## Members' Interests

email: members-interests@berksfhs.org.uk

## Website

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

## Bookstall

email: bookstall@berksfhs.org.uk

## Other addresses

### *Berkshire Record Office*

9 Coley Avenue  
Reading  
Berkshire RG1 6AF

### *Berkshire Family History Society*

*Research Centre* Yeomanry House  
131, Castle Hill, Reading, RG1 7TJ. 0118 950  
9553

**Publishers:** The Berkshire Family History Society

Registered Charity No. 283010

**Printers:** Richfield Graphics Ltd., Richfield House, Unit 48 Paddock Road, Caversham, Reading RG4 5BY

*In the event of non-delivery please return to*

*John Gurnett, 5 Wren Close, Burghfield Common, Berkshire RG7 3PF*

# The Museum of Reading



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- Green Space environment gallery
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- Window sculpture gallery
- Atrium gallery
- Silchester annexe
- Reading: people & place
- Study space
- Box Room interactive gallery
- Silchester Gallery of Roman life
- Bayeux Tapestry replica

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Thursday late night opening 10am–7pm

Sunday 11am–4pm

Bank Holiday Monday 11am–4pm

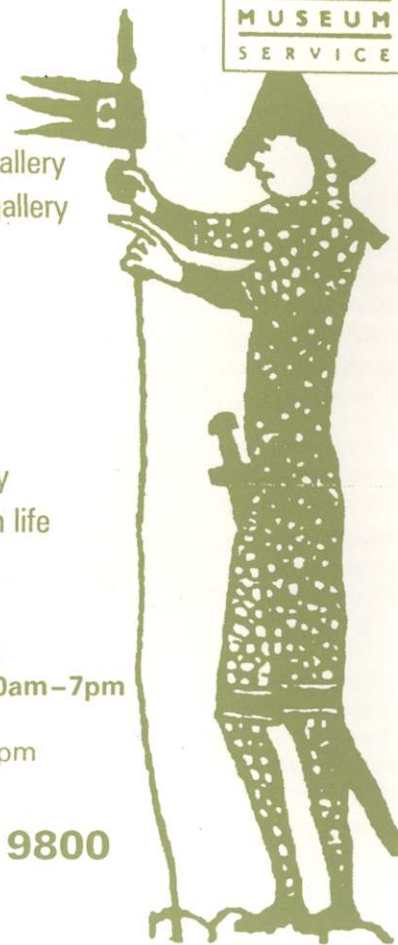
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The Museum of Reading  
Town Hall, Blagrove Street,  
Reading RG1 1QH

# The Bulletin

## A word from our chairman

As I write this homily in early September, I'm looking forward to visiting my relatives in Australia and looking back to the 'Forward to the Past' family history conference. The conference took twentieth century records as its theme – and it certainly seemed odd hearing about immigration records made as recently as 1980.

The theme of the conference was also a reminder, if any were needed, that we are part of our own family's history and that we must include some autobiographical details as we write up our own research. As a widower, I feel this very deeply, as my late wife, Lesley, left voluminous records reaching back to the 16th century, but I have to rely on my mother-in-law and my memories of conversations for details of her life before I met and married her.

I now have a camcorder, so that I can make the fullest possible record of my many cousins as I meet them during my travels, so that I, and they, can have records of our meetings and discussions. I'm enjoying learning as I go along, finding out what works and what doesn't work, and gaining in confidence as I learn.

At the conference Robert Perks talked about the National Sound Archive which gave me some pointers, and I bought a couple of booklets on oral history to help me along. And I do have some

magic 'footage' of my American cousins talking about bears carved with chain saws and quilts to build on.

So I do urge you to resolve not to forget your own history and that of your living relatives, and to keep your mind open to learning new skills and new ways of doing things. If there's something you'd like to know more about, please let us know, and perhaps we can commission articles, lectures or workshops to help you.

The conference also hosted the general meeting of the Federation of Family History Societies, a meeting that takes place twice a year where representatives of many family history societies (ours included) can share their views and the Federation can put them forward with government agencies, such as the Public Record Office. The growth of family history on the Internet and the upcoming 1901 census were hot topics at the meeting. The Federation has now been asked to look into ways to make the information transcribed by members of the many societies available online on a 'pay to view' basis. Personally, I look forward to seeing this information online, as I feel it will compare very favourably to information from other sources.

In the September *Berkshire Family Historian*, I spoke of the different needs of Berkshire family historians, who research in Berkshire, and family historians living in the Berkshire area, who research elsewhere. The other

major difference, of course, is between those who use computers for managing their family history research and those who don't. I believe the majority of active family historians now use computers, and they would rather receive information electronically, rather in booklet or fiche form. So far, we haven't published on CD-Rom, partly for security reasons, and partly because not all family historians have computers with CD drives – but then again not all family historians have fiche readers and access to fiche readers is becoming more limited. So should we enter the digital world? Let us know.

## **Chancery proceedings database**

Until recently the only index to the Chancery Court equity records was the Bernau Index in the Society of Genealogists' Library which provided an index to some of the documents, but not the full PRO class reference, only the bundle and sub-numbers.

Now a database is available online from the PRO. The equity records in Chancery contain a vast and wonderful series of documents, but they have always been difficult to access. The documents include information on manorial records, domestic, trading disputes, land purchase, apprenticeship agreements, tithes, common rights and enclosure – even drunkenness. The equity side of the Court of Chancery handled a large number of disparate disputes dealing with inheritance, land

transactions, debts and marriage settlements. Evidence took the form of statements on oath (affidavits), pleas, and examination of witnesses (depositions).

In the early seventeenth century each of the Six Clerks of Chancery began to file cases separately in their respective divisions. The records are known as the Six Clerks series. Most cases date from 1648 (although there are a few before) and end in 1722. The documents are arranged in bundles with each bundle containing several cases, each with its own number.

Over 30,000 cases have been entered and can easily be searched by piece reference, by person, place or by subject. For people there's a wealth of detail on occupations, titles and offices held by individuals. The documents reveal a wealth of detail concerning late seventeenth and early eighteenth century life.

## **Huntley and Palmers on the web**

The Museum of Reading and the University of Reading will be digitising material relating to the history of Reading's biscuit makers as a result of a grant from National Lottery fund. Reading's Rural History Centre and the Berkshire Record Office have also been awarded more than a quarter of a million pounds to digitise material about the history of farming and the enclosure maps of Berkshire. The project began in the autumn and is expected to last for two years.

## London Metropolitan Archives

From November 24 the LMA will be open for two Saturdays a month. This is an experiment to test the response to Saturday openings. The two Saturdays selected will be the second and fourth in each month, unless it is followed by a holiday. A list of major genealogical sources will also be placed on their website ([www.cityoflondon.gov.uk](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk)). The relevant page entitled 'London Generations', should enable those interested in London family history to make the most of a visit to the LMA.

## Greenham Common website

The National Lottery Fund has given £137,000 to develop a website dedicated to preserving the history of Greenham Common. Over 1,400 items of historical interest will be digitised and eventually made freely available. Video and archive film footage, including audio recordings and photographs, documents and texts will make up what will become a unique digital museum. Some of the site should be up and running towards the end of next year. So if you have material or memories of the Common get in touch with Paul Cannon or Amanda Loaring on 01635 30511.

## Northern Ireland certificates

The General Register Office for Northern Ireland has recently launched

a new website ([www.groni.gov.uk](http://www.groni.gov.uk)) where a key feature of the site is the facility to order credit card applications for birth, death, marriage and adoption certificates online.

## Old school friends

If you haven't already seen it there's a new simple-to-use website that allows you to find out what your old school and college friends are doing now. It's free and to log in you find your school, add your details and then you can make email contact with your old school friends either in this country or abroad. An example of the kind of messages exchanged range from making contact or memories like 'Mrs. Stone, a mad English teacher who fully appreciated rather bizarre artistic interpretations of poetry (e.g. floating around the classroom like a leaf!) and often had to reverse her brain (accompanied by a strange gesture)'. If you would like to try it out the website address is [www.friendsreunited.co.uk/](http://www.friendsreunited.co.uk/).

## Origins online

Just a year ago the Society of Genealogists went into partnership with Origins.net to provide some of the Society's library data online under the banner of English Origins. Over the last year Origins.net ([www.origins.net](http://www.origins.net)) has been adding substantially to the content available to Scots Origins and English Origins users. Since launching English Origins in

January a significant number of records can be searched including the marriage licence allegations index, Boyd's marriage index (covering a large area of East Anglia), Bank of England will extracts, archdeaconry Court of London wills index, London apprenticeship abstracts and London Consistory Court Depositions index.

The indexes may be searched free, although access to the site costs £6 allowing up to 150 records to be retrieved over a 48 hour period. Members of the Society of Genealogists receive a special discounted rate. For details about the index go to: <http://www.englishorigins.com/bmi-details.html>

## **BOPCRIS**

Yet another acronym, but this one may reveal some interesting information for family historians. BOPCRIS is the British Official Publications Collaborative Reader Information Service (yes I know it's a mouthful, but bear with me). Official government publications cover a wide range of documents from Royal Commissions to statements of policy. Perhaps the most interesting of them are the many Royal Commissions set up by various governments during the nineteenth century from those on child labour to the study of the agricultural depression. For example those on agriculture often include evidence given by landowners in Berkshire on the state of their farms and how much they pay labourers. The

website enables you to search and browse information from publications over the period 1688-1995. You can also read abstracts, and view detailed subject indexing, of key documents and then read the digitised full-text version of a limited number of these documents. BOPCRIS currently contains 23,279 references to key British Official Publications 1688-1995. The website address is [www.bopcris.ac.uk/](http://www.bopcris.ac.uk/)

## **Public Record Office events**

The Public Record Office will be showing some of its treasures, including many Victorian Christmas cards and a seventeenth century recipe for mince pies at a Christmas Past exhibition open from December 10 until the 21st. There will also be costumed tours of the Visitor Centre on December 29 .

## **Dorset open day**

Open up your new diaries and put in the Dorset Family History Society's open day which will be held on 20th April. It will be held at Oakmead College of Technology, Duck Lane, Bear Cross, Bournemouth.

## **Reading Branch meetings**

Don't forget that from January the Reading Branch meetings will be held at the Church of Latter-day Saints, Church End Lane, Tilehurst on the last Thursday of the month.