

Orphans at Bearwood
Family history at the Imperial War
Museum
Apprenticeship documents in
Berkshire
The new Berkshire Marriage Index

Programme calendar 2002-2003

Bracknell Branch

Priestwood Community Centre, Priestwood Court Road, Bracknell,

7.15pm for 7.45pm

- 13 Dec *Christmas meeting. This is the second Friday in the month.*
- 17 Jan *Purpose-built villages. Trevor Ottlewski*
- 21 Feb *Problems in London ancestry. Michael Gandy*
- 21 Mar *Charles Booth's survey of the London poor. John Gurnett*

Newbury Branch

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

- 11 Dec *Data on CD ROMs and Christmas party. Chad Hanna*
- 8 Jan *A Yorkshire man in Wiltshire. Peter Donovan*
- 12 Feb *Dating your family photographs. Jean Debney*
- 12 Mar *Charles Booth's survey of the London poor. John Gurnett*
- 9 Apr *Why can't I find them? Jeanne Bunting*

Reading Branch

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Church End Lane, Tilehurst,

7.15pm for 7.45pm

- 12 Dec *A nineteenth century Christmas*
- 30 Jan *The IGI and other Mormon indexes. Richard Moore*
- 27 Feb *London: the Metropolitan nightmare. Paul Blake*
- 27 Mar *Victorian crime. Barbara Aldridge*
- 24 Apr *AGM. Making more sense of the census. Jean Debney*

Vale of White Horse Branch

Church Room, Baptist Church, Ock Street, Abingdon, 7.45pm for 8pm

- 9 Dec *Vale of White Horse in photographs. Nigel Hammond*
- 13 Jan *Creating your own luck - Internet sources for family historians. Sue MacKay*
- 10 Feb *Digging Deeper: have you used all family sources? Richard Ratcliffe*
- 10 Mar *Have you done your homework? Marjorie Moore*
- 14 Apr *Journal keeping for family historians. Roz Cawley*

Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead Branch

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

7.45pm

- 10 Dec *Annual dinner, at a venue to be announced*
- 28 Jan *Guide to the Family Records Centre. Audrey Collins*
- 25 Feb *Echoes of old village life. Photographs of the past and present. Stuart King*
- 25 Mar *How to read old handwriting. John Hurley*
- 29 Apr *Education records for family historians. Richard Ratcliffe*

Berkshire Family Historian

For family historians in the Royal County of Berkshire

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Contents

John Gurnett
Editor

Features

- 62 Orphans at Bearwood
– the Merchant
Seamen's Orphan
Asylum
- 73 Black Britons – where
are their monuments?
- 84 Family history at the
Imperial War Museum
- 97 Apprenticeship
documents
- 107 A Winter's Tale
- 123 Balance Sheet for the
year ending 30 April
2002

News

- 67 Berkshire Marriage
Index
- 81 National Burial Index
- 82 Birth Briefs Project
- 91 Membership Survey
- 113 Research Centre News

Regulars

- 71 Letters to the Editor
- 93 The Bulletin
- 110 Book Ends
- 117 Members' Interests
- 124 Research Centre
- 126 Postal research
services

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The illustration on the front cover is of the Imperial War Museum at Lambeth Road, London (courtesy of the Museum). See page 84

**Copy deadline for the March issue is
January 15 2003**

Orphans at Bearwood - the Merchant Seamen's Orphan Asylum

Bearwood House, near Wokingham, was rebuilt by John Walter III, the grandson of the founder of The Times, after his father's death in 1847. By 1860 he was extending his estate, buying land in much of the Arborfield, Wokingham and Sandhurst area. He pulled down the old Bearwood House and built the present mansion with its extensive grounds and large ornamental lake. In the early twentieth century the house became the home of the Merchant Seamen's Orphan Asylum. John Hann, the archivist of what later became Bearwood College, explains the background to the fascinating history of the orphanage.

Today the house is an independent co-educational day and boarding school, but, like many other public schools, it started life as a charity for children in need. It was founded 175 years ago, on 25 October 1827, as the Merchant Seamen's Orphan Asylum. Based originally in London's dockland, it moved in 1834 to Bow and in 1862 to Snaresbrook, before coming to Berkshire in 1921.



John Walter III's Bearwood House, Wokingham

From William IV and Queen Adelaide to our own Queen Elizabeth every sovereign has been Patron to the charity, and in 1902 Edward VII gave permission for the word 'Royal' to be included in its title. The new name was Royal Merchant Seamen's Orphanage. By 1935 another change had become necessary. Former scholars were complaining that it was a handicap in later life to have attended a school described as an orphanage, and the name was therefore changed to Royal Merchant Navy School. Finally, in the 1960s, when children unconnected with the sea became eligible, parents were often misled into assuming that it was a training school for the navy, and it was decided to adopt the current name, Bearwood College.

Nowadays it is generally assumed that an orphan has lost both parents, but in the nineteenth century this was not so. A dictionary definition of 1857 is 'a child who has lost father or mother or both.' The Managers of the Orphan Asylum assumed that the 'inmates' had mothers or grandparents to go home to. A child was eligible for admission only after the age of seven and was required to leave on his or her fourteenth birthday. Most children went home for three weeks' holiday in July and in some years, for ten days at Christmas, though medical advisers often objected to the winter break because the children were likely to return with whatever infectious disease was prevalent at the time. The Constitution of the Asylum laid down strict rules for the admission of orphans and it was the responsibility of the Board of Management to vet each application and confirm that the child was eligible. First the dead parent had to be the father. A child whose dead mother had been at sea as a stewardess was rejected out of hand – the Constitution referred only to seamen. Second he must be British, which meant from anywhere in the British Isles. The MSOA always claimed to be a national institution. Although half the children were Londoners the other half came from dozens of coastal towns around the country, and the Asylum had representatives in no less than 38 of these so-called 'outports'.

Black candidates

An interesting question of Britishness arose in 1850, when the first application was received on behalf of Richard Millington – 'a boy of colour'. One committee member objected that 'he would be objectionable in the school and lessen the respectability of the charity', adding that The Institution was for British only and if

anyone were asked what was the complexion of our Merchant Marine he would say at once 'white'. However, his was a lone voice. Another member retorted that 'any attempt at exclusion in consequence of complexion will be likely to bring much odium on the Institution.' No vote was taken, and in due course the boy became an inmate of the asylum.

The dead father had to have been a seaman, and following the widespread introduction of steamships a special meeting was held to consider whether the children of engineers and stokers were eligible. Some argued that these men were not genuine seamen as they could work as easily on land as at sea. Stokers especially were 'no more than labourers who could turn their hands to anything on shore'. Others maintained that all persons who assisted in the navigation of a ship must logically be seamen and these men also risked their lives at sea for the benefit of the public. After two adjournments of the meeting it was agreed to consider each individual case on its merits.



Boy and girl at Bow in the 1840s



Girls at the Snaresbrook swimming pool

Many fathers were killed in accidents at sea, but what if the accident left a man unfit for sea service but able to do some kind of work ashore before his death? The father of Charles Hall had been crippled in both hands through loss of fingers from the explosion of a gun at sea and was subsequently employed for many years as a ship-keeper in harbour. The child was accepted, and cases like this were again considered on their merits.

Illegitimate children

The Constitution allowed no such latitude in cases of illegitimacy: bastard children were 'improper objects'. An application from Newcastle explained that as the father had been away at sea the parents had married after the child was born. The Committee could not help. Another rule was, however, relaxed. A candidate had to be destitute, but if the widowed mother remarried it was at first assumed that the stepfather could support the child, who was promptly sent home from the asylum. Later it was thought that this rule was only encouraging immorality, and cases were considered individually.

Charities today often gain our sympathy by publishing names, photographs and tragic life stories of children in their care. Unfortunately the small print at the end hardens our hearts again when we read that the names are false, the life stories fictitious, and the photographs of models. Victorian charities had no such inhibitions: their advertising was for real. Children accepted by the MSOA Committee as candidates had still to be elected by the subscribers, who were known as governors. At the half-yearly elections each governor had one vote for every half-guinea subscribed. The voting papers gave details of each candidate, including the father's name, rank and ship and cause of death, the mother's name and address, and the number of children dependent on her. Little information survives about the unsuccessful candidates, but the annual reports which we still have give all these details about children actually in the asylum. This can be of great assistance to the family historian.

Election of candidates

The elections often caused excitement, with demands for recounts and accusations of malpractice. Large sums of money could be raised from new subscribers who were entitled to vote immediately. Family and friends of some candidates obtained lists of governors and canvassed for votes, but this disadvantaged other equally deserving children. In 1837 a petition was presented on behalf of an unsuccessful girl, Ellen Fotheringham, whose mother 'on her dying bed was unable to exert herself in canvassing the subscribers on behalf of her child' who would be 'shortly cast upon the world a wanderer without home or protection'. A special Board meeting admitted her at once. However, most of those elected in the nineteenth century were

children of captains or mates, and it was even argued by the secretary of the Foundation that this was only right. 'The widow of a captain will toil and slave under a constant burden of anxieties and hardships to preserve her family pride.' If the children of ordinary sailors' 'thrifless, easy-going widows' were admitted it 'merely enables them to spend more of their own earnings and doles upon themselves'. Fortunately in recent times the number of seamen's orphans has declined. No elections have been held since 1915, the admission rules have been relaxed, and the fifty or so 'foundationers' today at Bearwood or elsewhere can be treated far more generously. No longer dismissed on their fourteenth birthday, many are assisted through university and even beyond. Finally, a word of warning to family historians. Many ships in the nineteenth century simply disappeared, and it was eventually assumed they had sunk with the loss of all hands. In 1844 it was discovered that the father of John Folkes, who was reported dead had in fact returned home a few months later, but the mother had said nothing and the child had remained in the asylum. I suspect there were some other undiscovered cases. At a time when the MSOA offered education and medical care not easily obtainable elsewhere other mothers must have been tempted to leave well alone.

In addition to the annual reports already mentioned the Archive at Bearwood has complete Admissions Registers which often mention the child's educational standard and intended career. The Board Minute Books on which this article is largely based begin in 1827 though some volumes for the late Victorian period are missing. Their indexes enable one to find references to a number of children for reasons either good or bad. Other records are much less complete, but we do have copies of testimonials for many leavers between 1910 and 1940. I am happy to search for names submitted by family historians. No charge is made for this, but contributions to the RMNS Foundation are always welcome. Enquiries should be addressed to: The Archivist, Bearwood College, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41 5BD.

Berkshire Marriage Index

Sue Matthews

The development of a marriage index database searchable by both bride and groom is due to the enterprise and hard work of a few members of the Society's Vale of White Horse Branch. This gap in our records was identified when the Branch started only four years ago and shows the difference that a small number of dedicated members can make. They were initially disappointed to find that Oxford Family History Society was already indexing their area of north Berkshire, now part of Oxfordshire, but nevertheless decided to continue. The group started transcribing in libraries. The process quickened when they managed to borrow films and fiche and the relevant readers and began to transcribe at home. Some film readers not being rotatable made this easy task far more difficult – neck ache was an occupational hazard.

Later another group based around Reading started checking the transcriptions against the original registers held at the Berkshire Record Office. Anyone wishing to volunteer to help the project should email or write to the Projects Co-ordinator at Yeomanry House.

At the time of writing, more than 95,000 entries have been transcribed and over 39,000 records have been checked. Work continues on preparing further batches for inclusion in the Index. Parishes in north Berkshire that were in the ancient county of Berkshire, but now in Oxfordshire, are on the North Berkshire Marriage Index compiled by Oxfordshire Family History Society.

We offer a postal search service of the Berkshire Marriage Index: see page 127 or the website. It should be remembered that an index is a research tool. In work of this nature some errors will inevitably remain, and the writing in old, sometimes damaged, registers is open to differing interpretations. We recommend that after using the index you refer to the registers yourselves. The parishes and periods that have been transcribed are given below; checked entries are in bold type. This list will be updated regularly in the magazine and on the website.

Aldermaston St Mary the Virgin 1602-1679; **1680-1837**
Aldworth **1601-1837**
Arborfield **1581-1837**
Ashampstead St Clement (Some early BTs to check); **1614-1837**
Avington **1699-1837**
Barkham St James **1600-1837**
Basildon St Bartholomew 1600-1799; **1800-1837**
Beedon St Nicholas **1607-1837**
Beenham St Mary 1600-1774; **1774-1837**
Binfield All Saints 1600-1799; **1800-1837**
Boxford St Andrew 1559-1799; **1800-1837**
Bradfield St Andrew 1545-1799; **1800-1837**
Bray St Michael 1607-1799; **1800-1837**
Brightwalton All Saints **1559-1837**
Brimpton St Peter 1607-1799; **1800-1837**
Bucklebury St Mary the Virgin 1538-1799; **1800-1837**
Burghfield St Mary **1559-1837**
Catmore St Margaret 1730-1759; **1764-1837**
Caversham St Peter 1581-1633; **1643-1837**
Chaddleworth St Andrew 1539-1799; **1800-1837**
Chieveley St Mary the Virgin 1560-1799; **1800-1837**
Clewer St Andrew **1607-1837**
Combe St Swithin **1560-1837**
Compton SS Mary & Nicholas **1553-1837**
Cookham Holy Trinity 1530-1799; **1800-1837**
East Garston All Saints 1554-1564 and 1607-1799; **1800-1837**
Easthampstead SS Michael & Mary Magdalene 1559-1799;
1800-1837
East Ilsley St Mary **1608-1836**
East Shefford 1603-1799; **1800-1837**
Enborne St Michael & All Angels 1607-1799; **1800-1837**
Englefield St Mark 1559-1799; **1800-1837**
Farnborough 1614-1799; **1803-1837**

Fawley St Mary 1554-1799; **1800-1837**
Finchampstead St James **1607-1837**
Frilsham St Frideswide 1607-1799; **1800-1837**
Greenham St Mary 1612-1799; **1800-1837**
Hampstead Marshall 1605-1799; **1800-1837**
Hampstead Norris 1540-1799; **1800-1837**
Hungerford St Lawrence 1555-1799; **1800-1837**
Hurley 1563-1799; **1800-1837**
Hurst St Nicholas 1574-1799; **1800-1837**
Inkpen St Michael & All Angels 1614-1799; **1800-1837**
Kintbury St Mary 1557-1799; **1800-1837**
Lambourn St Michael & All Angels 1557-1570; **1571-1837**
Midgham St Matthew 1612-1772; **1813-1837**
Newbury St Nicolas 1538-1799; **1800-1837**
New Windsor St John the Baptist 1548-1799; **1800-1837**
Old Windsor 1612-1799; **1800-1837**
Padworth St John the Baptist 1617-1799; **1800-1837**
Pangbourne 1554-1799; **1800-1837**
Peasemore St Barnabas 1542-1799; **1800-1837**
Purley St Mary the Virgin 1607-1799; **1800-1837**
Reading & Warboro MM 1644-1799; **1800-1837**
Reading St Giles 1547-1799; **1800-1837**
Reading St Laurence 1605-1799; **1800-1837**
Reading St Mary 1559-1799; **1800-1837**
Ruscombe St James the Great **1559-1779; 1800-1837**
Sandhurst St Michael **1604-1695, 1696-1837**
Shaw cum Donnington St Mary the Virgin 1612-1799;
1800-1837
Shinfield St Mary **1605-1837**
Shottesbrooke St John the Baptist 1556-1799; **1800-1837**
Speen St Mary the Virgin 1609-1729; **1730-1837**
Stratfield Dingley 1539-1799; **1800-1837**
Stratfield Mortimer St Mary 1607-1699* BT's; **1607-1837**

Streatley St Mary 1607-1799; **1800-1837**
Sulham St Nicholas 1607-1799; **1800-1837**
Sulhamstead Abbots St Mary 1603-1799; **1800-1837**
Sulhamstead Bannister St Michael **1607-1837**
Sunninghill St Michael & All Angels **1561-1837**
Swallowfield All Saints 1608-1782; **1782-1837**
Thatcham St Mary **1561-1837**
Theale Holy Trinity **1833-1837**
Tidmarsh St Lawrence 1613-1837
Tilehurst 1605-1837
Ufton Nervet St Peter 1607-1753; **1754-1837**
Waltham St Lawrence 1558-1750; **1751-1837**
Warfield 1569-1685; **1686-1837**
Wargrave St Mary 1538-1671; **1672-1837**
Wasing St Nicholas **1612-1837**
Welford St Gregory 1605-1837
West Ilsley All Saints **1559-1837**
West Shefford St Mary 1614-1799
West Woodhay St Laurence 1614-1799
White Waltham St Mary 1556-1837
Wickham 1620-1837
Winkfield St Mary 1558-1837
Winterbourne St James the Less 1564-1602; **1603-1837**
Wokingham All Saints 1589-1590
Woolhampton St Peter 1609-1837
Yattendon SS Peter & Paul 1559-1837

Letters to the Editor

Eric Saxton, 34 Goodways Drive, Bracknell, Berkshire RG12 9AU

Was Frogley Cox a catholic?

While reading Tony Hadland's article, 'Catholic recusancy in Berkshire', in the last issue of *Berkshire Family Historian*, two words, Buckland and Woolhampton, leapt from the page. Was this the clue I have been looking for?

For two years I have been recording monumental inscriptions in East Ilsley, and also writing short biographies of former characters, one of whom was Frogley Cox (1755-1826), whose story contains several unknowns. His carved headstone and footstone stand in isolation on the west side of the churchyard near the supposed place of earlier plague burials. However, he was obviously well regarded, as his epitaph records:

'He was a truly honest Man
and
for nearly thirty years
a faithful Servant
of
the person who has placed this stone
as a
Memorial of his worth'

Yet, despite this, it is not known who placed the stone and employed Frogley, nor is the nature of that employment known. Furthermore, his burial is not recorded in the East Ilsley registers. Frogley Cox was born and baptised at Buckland on August 24 1755, and later married at Woolhampton on September 27 1777. Both ceremonies were recorded in the Anglican registers. Is it too much of a coincidence that he moved from Buckland to Woolhampton to East Ilsley? Could he have been one of those servants or estate workers mentioned in the last paragraph of Tony Hadland's article?

Pat Mason, Trustee and volunteer Researcher of the Norfolk Family History Society

Strays

I am currently transcribing the nonconformist microfilms for Norfolk held at the PRO. As you are probably aware, the register book was sometimes seen as the property of the minister and sometimes ended up travelling with him. The minister of the King's Lynn, Broad Street Independent Church seems to have taken the register with him to Berkshire for a time before returning to King's Lynn. The entries from the Church register baptisms 1745-1837 (PRO ref RG4/2467) may be of interest to your members. They include families with the surnames: Bishop, Darval, Fowlder, Hardon, Harris, Leach, Lee, Nibbs, Ranse, Searl, Sharp and Winch. Most of the baptisms took place at Maidenhead.

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Turning a Disaster into a Memory

Black Britons – where are their monuments?

In the early nineteenth century there were an estimated 20,000 black people living in London. Individually they rarely appear in public records although you will often find them mentioned in parish registers. Samson Battyn was one of three black adults baptised at Warfield in 1760. Another infant was buried at Midgham and yet another burial took place at Pangbourne. In the main our understanding of the black presence in England during the eighteenth century comes from black authors like Equiano and Ignatius Sancho and the many artistic images found in our public galleries. Black images were often used as a startling contrast to white women. Gainsborough, Hogarth and Sir Joshua Reynolds often included black people in their art. Here John Siblon, Head of History at St. Andrew's International High School, Blantyre, Malawi, examines the reasons why public monuments are rarely found to black people in Britain.

Among the few things I remember about my time at school were my history lessons. In particular, I remember a trip to the British Museum. This was the first time I had travelled to the centre of London. My memories of the trip were of grand buildings, colonnaded facades, statues and monuments. Suddenly the history lessons about Britain's majesty and imperial dominance seemed to come alive and make sense. I had seen with my own eyes the evidence of Britain's greatness through the vast number of statues and monuments to the great and good scattered around the capital. From Lord Nelson to Winston Churchill, Oliver Cromwell and Boudicca, around me stood the historical figures that made up the vast patchwork of British history, their monuments signalling as much a notion of Britishness as the deeds for which these people were celebrated.

It is no surprise, therefore, to relate that I grew up with the notion that British history, or for that matter English history, was made exclusively by English men and women of a particular sort. That sort was predominantly a white Anglo-Saxon male. Our history lessons at school contained no alternative to the endless procession of heroic men and sometimes women, usually royal or titled, who contributed to Britain's greatness. Absent were the working men and women who surely must have made

contributions, apart from the General Strike of 1926, and leaving aside the Welsh, the Scots and the Irish. More glaringly absent although I didn't apply much thought to it at the time, was the black and Asian presence in Britain.



Perhaps the most striking portrait, attributed to Zoffany, is of Dido Elizabeth Lindsay or Dido Belle. She was the daughter of Sir John Lindsay and brought up by her uncle Lord Mansfield.

Over the years, I have come to realise that the histories made by men and women of minority ethnic groups have not been fairly represented in the mainstream of the British education system at any sector, whether that is primary, secondary, tertiary or higher. That is not to say that there have not been attempts over recent years. If this situation is to change then two things have to happen. Firstly, the government must make firm changes to the National Curriculum and secondly, historians must make further contributions in researching and informing the public at large of Britain's settled black presence going back some 500 years and the contribution this community has made to Britain's wealth and development.

A neglected area of this ongoing research is the lack of public space given to monuments to black Britons or their achievements. There have been recent acknowledgements to the black post-war presence such as the Windrush celebrations of 1998¹. However,

the primary focus here was the arrival of Caribbean immigrants and returnees in 1948. The article here aims to focus on the lack of public monuments to those Africans, Asians and Chinese who have lived on these shores as visitors, servants or slaves over the last 500 years and so make up part of Britain's history and heritage.

The black presence in Britain can be traced back over 500 years, indeed in the period of the Roman occupation almost 2000 years ago, African soldiers and indeed an African emperor, Septimus Severus, were stationed in Britain. One of the first visible records of a black person is from a Westminster tournament roll of 1511, which clearly and colourfully shows a black trumpeter on a horse.² Henceforward, as Britain's role and involvement in the slave trade assumed greater prominence, so do the amount of records and documents charting the black presence in Britain. One of the most prominent of these shows that, as early as 1596, Queen Elizabeth I wrote to the mayors of various cities requesting them to deport Africans from her territory.³

Since the 1980s, a few historians and educationalists have produced a number of excellent articles, books and educational packs on the subject of the black presence in Britain.⁴ Sadly, the basis of these books has still to filter through into the mainstream of the National Curriculum in British schools.⁵ Museums and galleries have made attempts recently to incorporate the black presence into their exhibits. The Merseyside Maritime Museum opened in 1994 a Transatlantic Slavery Gallery. One of the themes of the exhibits is that Liverpool's involvement in the slave trade left a lasting legacy in terms of wealth, landscape and population. There is also a guided tour and virtual Internet tour of places in Liverpool that had connections with slavery. In 2001, the museum commemorated August 23 as International Day for Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition with a programme of events. Similarly, in Bristol, another city which grew on the back of the profits of slavery, the Industrial Museum has a small but important permanent exhibition on Bristol's role in the slave trade. It too has a slavery heritage trail and has published guides for public use. In 1997, a plaque dedicated to those who suffered as a result of the slave trade was unveiled outside the museum. More significantly, in 1999 a bridge in the redeveloped dock area of Bristol was named after a black servant of the Pinney family. 'Perot's Bridge' is one of the only public monuments in Britain to

reflect Britain's inglorious role in the slave trade and the fact that a settled community of black people in Britain was a consequence of this involvement. This public monument was indeed a step forward but only after decades of denial. But what of the metropolis, London, the other major port to have grown rich on the profits of slavery and the first port of call for immigrants and settlers from distant shores? How many public monuments are there to the black presence in the capital?

Like Bristol and Liverpool, London museums and galleries have made efforts to signal the black presence in the capital through exhibitions, displays and conferences. The Museum of London runs courses for teachers on black British history, runs a programme of events for Black History Month and has a London Voices project to engage communities under-represented amongst its visitors. It also hosted the Peopling of London exhibition in 1993. In 1995, the Tate Gallery held an exhibition entitled 'Picturing Blackness in British Art, 1700–1990'. The National Portrait Gallery had an exhibition on Ignatius Sancho in 1997 and the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich staged commemorative events on slavery and its abolition on 23 August 2002.

But, what of permanent monuments to the black presence? Here the picture is somewhat different. For many tourists coming to London, the initial attraction is the capital's long and public history. For others, London's appeal is its diversity and its explicit multicultural and cosmopolitan outlook; but if you seek monuments reflecting that diversity do not look around you. There are statues to renowned black and Asian figures such as Nelson Mandela and Mahatma Gandhi but they were visitors from other shores as was Jimi Hendrix, who has a welcome blue plaque.

There are many blacks who took up residence in Britain or were native-born, who could quite easily have statues commemorating them. The most celebrated are Olaudah Equiano, Mary Seacole, Ignatius Sancho, Samuel Coleridge-Taylor and Dadabhai Naoroji. It would be instructive to confine any search to these five figures and to see if they have been permanently commemorated in any way.

Olaudah Equiano was a former slave in the late eighteenth century, who bought his own freedom and wrote a book about his life as a slave. By committing his experiences to print and actively



Olaudah Equiano published his autobiography in 1789. It was the most realistic account of a black person's life that the world had yet seen. He was invited to dinner parties and soirees across the country to talk about his life.

campaigning for the abolition of the slave trade, he surely played a major part in the downfall of the iniquitous trade and its eventual abolition. However, whereas William Wilberforce, Granville Sharpe and Thomas Clarkson are rightly commemorated (many times in the case of Wilberforce) there is only one permanent monument to Equiano. This is a green plaque in Riding House Street in Westminster, which was erected in 2000. The green plaque signifies it was the local council, not English Heritage, who erected the plaque. Similarly, there is no plaque or statue to another famous eighteenth century black man, Ignatius Sancho. There is a picture of him with a small caption and on an information board on a small green in Broadway, Westminster where there was formerly a burial site.

The most glaring absence is the lack of a plaque or monument to Mary Seacole, surely one of the most celebrated of nineteenth century black women. There used to be a plaque in London but that was removed in a dispute about its siting on private property. This example demonstrates that where there is no visible monument then a person can be written out of the history books. Mary's loyal service and bravery in attending to the health of British troops in the Crimean war is an amazing piece of history but most people would have only heard about Florence

Nightingale. Florence's contribution to the development of nursing is well documented. She has a blue plaque, a statue and a museum next to St Thomas' hospital in the heart of London. The only monument to Mary is her gravestone.



Mary made her own way to the Crimean War front and set up her 'British Hotel'. She provided hot meals and looked after the sick and wounded. Hailed as a national heroine back home, she received a commendation from Queen Victoria.

Britain's most celebrated composer at the turn of the century was black. He was Samuel Coleridge-Taylor but the only monument to him is a blue plaque hidden behind a large hedge in South Norwood, near Croydon. Britain's first black MP was elected to Parliament in 1892: he was Dadabhai Naoroji, originally from India. In Islington there is a road named after him but he has no permanent monument or plaque.

A cursory glance at the statues and monuments of the metropolis and other cities shows them trying to affect a pomp and majesty from a bygone age of Empire and colonialism when Britain's black and Asian subjects were at the receiving end of endemic racist attitudes. In the twenty-first century, Britain's ethnic make-up is fast changing, as is its national identity. The truth, though, is that this diversity is not new; it has always been there. However, this is not reflected in statues or public monuments. In London there are at least 500 statues and monuments but not a single one to the black and Asian presence. 15 out of 750 blue

plaques are dedicated to blacks and Asians. This simply isn't trying hard enough and is feeding a false perception of a 'white' British history.

There needs to be an effort of will by those in English Heritage and other bodies to ensure that this diversity is reflected in the visible landscape. An excellent example of this is the monument to Walter Tull, outside Northampton FC's football ground. Here, one of Britain's first black footballers is permanently commemorated in stone of black, white and grey, representing Britain's diverse community. Who designed and paid for the monument? The fans, of course.

1 Phillips, M and Phillips, T. Windrush: The Irresistible Rise of Multi-Racial Britain. HarperCollins 1998

2 Merriman, N. The Peopling of London: Fifteen Thousand Years of Settlement from Overseas. Museum of London 1993

3 Edwards, P. The History of Blacks in Britain. History Today. Volume 31 September 1981

4 See for example File, N and Power, C. Black Settlers in Britain 1555-1958. Heinemann 1981; Fryer, P. Staying Power: The history of Black People in Britain. Pluto Press 1984; Vizram, R. Ayahs, Lascars and Princes: The Story of Indians in 1700-1947. Pluto Press 1986

5 Ali, L. The case for Including Black History in the National Curriculum. Improving Schools, Volume 3, Number 1. 2000

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Family History Societies include: The Society of Genealogists, The Guild of One Name Studies, Glamorgan, Manchester & South Lancs, Wiltshire, Somerset & Dorset, Hastings & Rother Essex, Kent, N.W.Kent, Nottingham, Family Roots, West Surrey, Hampshire, Oxford, Buckinghamshire, Hillingdon, plus other societies and specialist groups. Other stalls include Books, maps, computer software, postcards, microfiche readers, family tree printers, in fact everything for the genealogist

Other Nationwide Fairs include:

Crawley Leisure Centre, Haslett Ave, Crawley Sunday Feb 9th
Thurrock Civic Centre, Blackshots Lane, Grays Essex Sunday Feb 16th
The Bath Fair, Bath Pavilion, Njorth Parade Road Sunday Feb 23rd
The West Midlands Fair, Wolverhampton Racecourse, Wolverhampton Sunday March 2nd
Watford Leisure Centre, Horseshoe Lane, Garston, Watford Sunday March 9th
Hulme Hall, Bolton Road, Portsunlight, Wirral Sunday March 16th
The Oxford & Bucks Fair, Exeter Hall, Oxford Road, Kidlington Sunday March 23rd
Stockport Town Hall, Wellington Road South Stockport Sunday April 6th
South Wales Fair, Llantrisant Leisure Centre Llantrisant, Sunday April 13th
Worthing Pavilion Theatre, Marine Parade, Worthing Sunday April 27th
Warwickshire Fair, Royal Spa Centre, Newbold Terrace, Leamington Spa Sunday May 11th

For extra details and other fairs visit the web site:

www.familyhistoryfairs.com

Berkshire Burial Index

The parishes and periods which have been added to the Berkshire Burial Index since the position shown in the September 2002 issue of the *Berkshire Family Historian* are shown below. The index now contains more than 207,000 entries.

Ashbury St Mary 1612-1638 (BTs)
Chaddleworth St Andrew 1538-1676 and 1678-1735
Chieveley St Mary the Virgin 1718-1745
Easthampstead SS Michael & Mary Magdalene 1558-1687
Hurley St Mary the Virgin 1746-1864
Hurst St Nicholas 1623-1633 (BTs)
Maidenhead Boyne Hill All Saints 1905-1912
Newbury St Nicolas 1757-1762
New Windsor St John the Baptist 1813-1822
Old Windsor SS Peter & Andrew 1700-1728 (BTs)
Padworth St John the Baptist 1607-1723 (BTs)
Purley St Mary the Virgin 1663-1773
Reading St Laurence 1660-1705
Sandhurst St Michael 1935-1959
Shinfield St Mary 1653-1785
Speen St Mary the Virgin 1614-1628 (BTs)
Ufton Nervet St Peter 1607-1635 (BTs)
Winterbourne St James the Less 1567-1748
Woolhampton St Peter 1636-1746

Details of the postal service for researching burials in the Berkshire Burial Index are given on page 127.

Birth Briefs Project

Errol Page

You may remember that on joining BFHS, and similar societies, you were given a blank pedigree form to fill in with, as far as you knew them, five generations of your family. Birth Briefs received until about 1990 have been indexed and filed in the Research Centre but are rarely referred to. About a year ago it was decided to computerise all the BFHS Birth Briefs to allow easy access and so increase their usefulness.

We consulted with, and acknowledge great help from, the Oxfordshire Family History Society (OFHS) which had already started a similar project. Like them, we decided to base our system on the Family Search Personal Ancestral File (PAF) developed by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. PAF has many advantages, not least being free to download from the Internet at www.familysearch.org/paf/ and easy to understand and use. Family tree pedigree charts can be printed out and a variable, searchable index produced. In addition, existing data can be updated and new Briefs can be added as they are submitted.

The project started slowly with just three members as 'inputters' while the process was developed and refined. The paper Birth Briefs (BBs) are photocopied and batches of 15 are sent to the volunteer for inputting at home. They started with the 'oldest' BBs and now over 3,500 names are indexed. Initially we concentrated on the standard five generation charts. A few people have submitted charts that are far longer (one is 12 generations), some are descent instead of ascent and others contain many side branches. For a few, it is difficult to see how the names on the BB relate to the BFHS member who made the submission. Later we will input, when possible, these non-standard BBs.

Each BB is given a Custom ID e.g. BerksFHS1234. Where family members have each submitted a brief, then a suffix letter is added to the Custom ID, e.g. BerksFHS1234a, BerksFHS1234b. All the names within a single BB are given the Custom ID of that Brief. This allows for quick identification of the relevant Brief.

A PAF file is created for each BB. For each individual we input all or as much of the following records as exist in the original paper

copy: full names, sex, nickname, date and place of birth/christening, marriage and death/burial, and occupation. Short notes such as 'Had six children' are also included.

The individual PAF files of the BBs are collected into the PAF main file from which we create an index. The Index will allow a surname search which will show the year and county of birth/christening, marriage and of death/burial and, most importantly, the Custom ID. The searcher may then request a printout of PAF chart and ask to be put in touch with the submitter if he/she is still a member. For reasons of privacy, only the name and no further details will be included in the Index and the BB printout for persons born less than 110 years ago and for whom we do not have a death/burial date.

It is planned to place the Birth Brief Index for self-searching on the BFHS website at www.berksfhs.org.uk which can be accessed from home, from the Research Centre in Reading or from an Internet café or library anywhere in the world. We regret that no postal searches will be available at this time. Once the search facility is up and running the website will give details of how to obtain the Birth Brief chart or be put in touch with the submitter.

Most Briefs were prepared when the member joined BFHS and perhaps knew little of their ancestors; they may now know more or maybe have found errors in their original submission. Other members did not send in BBs. Enclosed with this edition of the *Berkshire Family Historian* are blank forms so that members may update their data or submit a Brief if they have not done so before. Please send these to Birth Briefs at Yeomanry House.

If anyone would like to help input Birth Briefs, work which is easily done at home during odd moments of time, please email projects@berksfhs.org.uk or write to the Projects Co-ordinator at Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading, Berkshire RG1 7TJ.

Family history at the Imperial War Museum

The Imperial War Museum is a 'must visit' institution for the family historian. It was established in 1917 as both a memorial to those who had died and a centre where the First World War could be studied and remembered. From the beginning, it was used by people trying to find out what had happened to members of their families, and this function has continued and increased in recent years. Sarah Paterson of the Department of Printed Books at the Museum explains just what is available for researchers.

The twentieth century has been a century overshadowed by war, that has involved everybody. Consequently, the scope of the Imperial War Museum is greater than many people might imagine. Although it naturally has material relating to the Armed Forces, there is also considerable civilian coverage, for instance of the evacuation of children, women coping with shortages and danger, the internment of foreigners, munitions manufacture and conscientious objection. Though there is a concentration on the British and the Commonwealth, there is also material about the opposing forces and about what was happening in enemy-held countries.

The Imperial War Museum in Lambeth Road provides changing exhibitions and narrative displays on the two World Wars. HMS Belfast, a Second World War Cruiser anchored on the Thames, is an ideal place to visit for those seeking to find out about what life was like in the Royal Navy of this period. Wandering around Duxford, a former RAF base near Cambridge, will enable you to find out more about the Royal Air Force, and you can see vintage aircraft flying at the regular air shows held in the summer months. Other Imperial War Museum branches are the Cabinet War Rooms (Churchill's wartime government headquarters in Whitehall), and Imperial War Museum North.

For some visitors, it may be enough to see these displays. But if you would like to take things further there are a number of different reference departments that are all open to the public by appointment. These are the Imperial War Museum Collections, which are based in the Museum at Lambeth Road or at the All Saints Annexe a few minutes' walk away. You can do as much or as little research as you like, and there is no charge (except for

copies). Staff are unable to do detailed research for you, but are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and will be able to offer advice.

There are seven different Collections: the Department of Art, Department of Documents, Department of Exhibits and Firearms, Film and Video Archive, Photograph Archive, Department of Printed Books and Sound Archive.

The Department of Printed Books is probably the best starting point for the family historian. This is a national reference library with a variety of materials ranging from song sheets to trench maps, and greetings cards to knitting patterns, as well as the books and periodicals you would expect. Although we have material that is rare, occasionally unique, one of our great strengths is that so many publications you sometimes have to visit several different libraries to see, are available under one roof.



Reading Room at the Museum (courtesy of the Imperial War Museum)

The Department of Printed Books does not have service records or official documentation – these are held either at the Public Record Office or the Ministry of Defence – but can advise on where to find these, and how to interpret what you find. The crucial piece of information is to know the unit(s) that an individual served with – in the service record, these usually appear as a list of numbers and abbreviations, and can appear

confusing. The library has the unit histories and other sources that will enable you to find out where these units served and what they did. For those just beginning their research we have produced a number of family history notes covering the Army, Royal Air Force, Royal Navy, Merchant Navy and prisoners of war. We also have information sheets on tracing American service personnel and the following women's formations in the First World War: the Women's Royal Naval Service, Queen Mary's Army Auxiliary Corps and Voluntary Aid Detachments. Booklists may also prove helpful for those wishing to find out about various subjects ranging from the Imperial Camel Corps to the Women's Land Army. Some of these are available on the Museum's website at www.iwm.org.uk or copies can be requested directly from the department.

Publications

The Department also has a flourishing publications programme. A complete catalogue is available on request, or can be downloaded from the Museum's website. There are four titles currently available in the Tracing Your Family History series: Army, Royal Air Force, Royal Navy and Merchant Navy. These sell for £5.50 each, and have been produced in response to frequently asked questions. They aim to help those who are confused about the complicated structure, language and abbreviations of the Armed Forces, and as well as providing information, they include useful reading lists and addresses. The next books in the series will relate to the different women's formations, to tie in with the Women in Uniform exhibition that will be held in Autumn 2003.

Debt of Honour

The Internet has revolutionised family history research. The Museum's website provides more information about the different branches of the Museum as well as online exhibitions and links. There are many sites that enable you to appeal for information or to make contact with comrades who may have served with the person you are researching. Ironically it is those who died who are easiest to trace and the launch of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission's Debt of Honour database in November 1998 has had a tremendous impact on our enquiries. All the Commonwealth War Graves Commission registers are available

on open shelves in our reading room, and these can also be helpful for the maps and plans they provide, as well as enabling you to see exactly who from the same unit died on the same day.

WAR DIARY			Army Form								
INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY			(Erase heading not required.)								
Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information								
	3 rd	4 th	<p>The Battalion which consisted of about 70 men, and the C.O., was ordered to go to the ALBERT Trenches for the night. Here the men made defensive positions and the officers & NCO's who had been left at the Transport lines were relieved, & Corporals were brought up - for the evening 3rd Lieutenant BREACH and MAY, and about 60 men who had been dug in, in the 'No man's land' position - he was all very glad to see them -</p> <p>4th } 5th } owing to the extreme heat the Battalion was taken into the vacant lanes in ALBERT, and there the days were spent in resting and refitting.</p> <p>Character for the operations against OFFLERS, here -</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Officers - Killed 3.</td> <td>Other Rank Killed 2.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wounded 2.</td> <td>Wounded 212.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Wounded 3</td> <td>Killed 104.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Missing 7</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> <p>The Medical Officer and the other Nurses remained below in the Aid Post in STANDISH Street when the Battalion was withdrawn from the trenches; they performed excellent work in bringing in many wounded -</p> <p><small>249 W. 119557450 7/1916 J.R.C. & A. Form C.311/12</small></p>	Officers - Killed 3.	Other Rank Killed 2.	Wounded 2.	Wounded 212.	Wounded 3	Killed 104.	Missing 7	
Officers - Killed 3.	Other Rank Killed 2.										
Wounded 2.	Wounded 212.										
Wounded 3	Killed 104.										
Missing 7											

Part of the war diary for the Royal Berkshire Regiment at the Battle of Albert in 1916 (WO 95/1850) courtesy of the Public Record Office. Although war diaries are not held at the Imperial War Museum, more detailed accounts can often be found there in regimental, divisional and campaign histories as well as other sources.

'Soldiers died in the Great War, 1914-19', originally published in 80 volumes in 1921 with a separate listing for officers, and an official roll of honour for the Second World War Army dead (never published in conventional form) are now available in CD ROM form, and have made researching casualties much easier. These are available for consultation in our catalogue room.

Rolls of honour are one of the library's great strengths. These are listings of those who died, and sometimes those who served as well. The amount of information varies – sometimes only brief details are given, but some publications include potted biographies as well as photographs. Most regiments and towns or villages produced these, but the range of listings varies from

commercial organisations – banks and railway companies being especially well represented – to Scottish clans, churches and scout groups. There are many rolls of honour from public schools and universities, although these tend to concentrate on officers. There are listings for British residents of Chile who fought in the First World War and the British Community in the Argentine Republic who fought in the Second. ‘The National Roll of the Great War’, a publication produced in the early 1920s, lists those who served as well as those who died, and is frequently requested by those researching family members. Although the museum has all 14 volumes known to have been produced, it appears to have been published on a subscription basis, and only a very tiny fraction of possible names are included. The growth in war memorial indexes and transcripts and in family history as a leisure interest has resulted in new publications of this type being produced, and we are always keen to acquire these to add to the collection.

War Memorials project

Some of you may have contributed to the United Kingdom National Inventory of War Memorials project. This is attempting to list and record the condition of all war memorials in the country. Although initially it was decided not to record the names listed on all these memorials (because this would have been too enormous an undertaking) there are hopes that this will happen – and much supplementary information is already available in the Inventory office. [The Berkshire Family History Society has produced an index of names and memorials in the county]. The Museum database, containing over 45,000 memorials, was launched last November and can be consulted in our Reading Room.

The library contains regimental, ship and squadron histories, official histories, campaign histories and autobiographies. These are not just British, but relate to most nationalities. The Commonwealth holdings are especially strong; for example, we have a complete run of the ‘Indian Army List’ for the years between 1914 and 1947, a nominal roll for most of the original units of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and a microfiche listing of members of the Australian Imperial Force in the First World War (including dates of death or repatriation to Australia). Although this is now also available on the Australian War Memorial website, it is useful to be able to consult this and the

many Australian regimental histories we have.

One of the outstanding holdings of the Department of Printed Books is the journals collection. Although large numbers of national newspapers were destroyed by fire, there are many titles that will give you an excellent feel of what it was like to be in a particular place at a particular time. Regimental journals can be brilliant sources of information, especially if you are tracing a regular soldier. These feature births, marriages and deaths columns, and often contain details of postings and promotions. You will be able to chart movements from one location to another, including details of the journey, the state of the barracks, exercises and local events. If your ancestor was a keen sportsman or interested in amateur dramatics, he may be mentioned in the battalion sports or entertainment reports. Holdings of 'The China Dragon: the Chronicle of the Royal Berkshire Regiment' run from 1907 to 1914 when publication ceased, from 1919 to April 1921 (runs of some journals ceased during the inter-war period as the remit of the Imperial War Museum was only to cover the First World War – coverage was extended on the outbreak of the Second World War), and then from December 1940 to 1959.

Visitors can conduct research in our Reading Room, which is located in the dome of the building. This was formerly the chapel of the Royal Bethlem Mental Hospital, more popularly known as 'Bedlam', and the Ten Commandants still grace the walls. Access involves a twisting staircase, and it is not ideal for those who have difficulty climbing stairs, though alternative accommodation can be arranged as long as prior notice is given. The Departments of Printed Books and Documents share the reading room and it is possible to consult both collections at the same time. Documents consist of personal papers, such as letters or diaries as well as retrospective unpublished memoirs, and these are invaluable for personal insight into different campaigns or situations. The department also has important materials for family historians in listings such as the Changi Civilian Internment Camp Register or the Milag Nord Register (a prison camp for merchant seamen at Westertimke in Germany).

All departments at the Museum are continually acquiring new items and it is therefore worth revisiting. There is a wide variety of material available at the Museum, some of it unique, but all of it easily accessible to everybody free of charge. All you need do is make an appointment, and contact numbers are given below. The

Imperial War Museum offers itself as 'part of your family's history' and holds a wide range of material that will provide a clear insight into the nature of personal experience in wartime.

Imperial War Museum, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ

Open daily: 10.00am-6.00pm. Tel: 020 7416 5320 Fax: 020 7416 5374 Email: mail@iwm.org.uk; website www.iwm.org.uk

Imperial War Museum Collections

Department of Printed Books

Reading Room is open by appointment Monday-Friday: 10.00am-5.00pm (and most Saturdays between the same hours, although this is a limited service). Tel: 020 7416 5342 Fax: 020 7416 5374 Email: books@iwm.org.uk

Department of Documents

Reading Room is open by appointment Monday-Friday: 10.00am-5.00pm (and most Saturdays between the same hours, although this is a limited service). Tel: 020 7416 5222 Fax: 020 7416 5374 Email: docs@iwm.org.uk

Department of Art

Reading Room is open by appointment Monday-Friday: 10.00am-5.00pm. Tel: 020 7416 5211 Fax: 020 7416 5409 Email: art@iwm.org.uk

Department of Exhibits and Firearms

Visitors' Room open by appointment Monday-Friday: 10.00am-5.00pm. Tel: 020 7416 5272 Fax: 020 7416 5374 Email: exfire@iwm.org.uk

Film and Video Archive

Visitors' Room open by appointment Monday-Friday: 10.00am-5.00pm. Tel: 020 7416 5291 Fax: 020 7416 5299 Email: film@iwm.org.uk

Photograph Archive

Visitors' Room open by appointment Monday-Friday: 10.00am-5.00pm. Tel: 020 7416 5333 Fax: 020 7416 5355 Email: photos@iwm.org.uk

Sound Archive

Visitors' Room open by appointment Monday-Friday: 10.00am-5.00pm. Tel: 020 7416 5363 Fax: 020 7416 5379 Email: sound@iwm.org.uk

Membership Survey

Eddie Spackman

In recent years there has been much debate on the need to redefine the Society's publications policy. As the computer becomes used as a research tool by an increasing number of members we decided to ask whether publications should be issued on microfiche, CD ROM, floppy disk, in paper form or on the Internet as Pay-per-View. To answer these questions we also needed to discover what proportion of members used computers. So it was decided to send a questionnaire with the June issue of the *Berkshire Family Historian*. The response exceeded all our expectations with over 1100 questionnaires returned. So what are the results?

Publications

The most popular with more than eight out of ten of those who answered was printed material. This was followed by seven out of ten for CD ROMs and around four out of ten for fiche and disk. Only a third opted for Pay-per-View. Fiche was relatively unpopular. It was interesting to note that members living in the Oxford postcode area were more in favour of fiche (no doubt related to the large number of parish registers and other research material available from the Oxfordshire Family History Society). Pay-per-View was the least popular and several indicated an unwillingness to pay for access to records over the Internet by credit, debit card or even voucher. But perhaps experience with the 1901 census will change the minds of some members. Although there was little difference in preference between the sexes it was apparent that older members were rather less in favour of computer media than younger ones.

Computer usage

It was revealing, and perhaps a little surprising, that eight out of ten of the sample use a computer for family history research and more than six out of ten use a computer program for storing their data. Also three-quarters of those over 65 use a computer. However, only half of nearly 1700 who have already renewed their membership supplied an email address. We are left to speculate why that percentage is so much lower. We would like to know

why. Perhaps many use a computer at work and cannot use their email address for personal purposes. Or do a significant number use a computer in libraries, Internet cafés or at the homes of friends or relations? Of course some will choose to keep their address private and not to divulge it to us. It came as no surprise that Family Tree Maker is the most used program. It is used by four out of ten of those who told us which program they use, one out of five use Generations and just under one in ten use PAF and Brother's Keeper. A few used word processors, spreadsheets or databases.

This is only a sample of the information from the detailed statistical summary that has been generated. It was a useful exercise and will influence the way we publish research material in the future. We would like to express our gratitude to all those who responded. If you have comments or would like more detail on specific aspects please email or send comments to the email discussion group.

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Apprenticeship documents

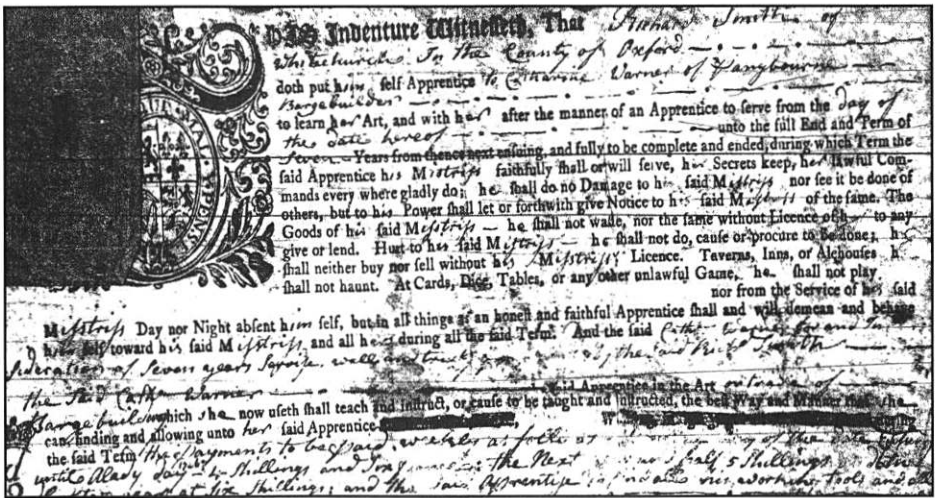
Apprenticeship was the process by which children entered the majority of skilled trades and some professions in the modern period. The institution itself goes back to medieval times, although very few records survive from this period. One example in the Berkshire Record Office is the 1421 apprenticeship (for 12 years) of John son of Alice Spynster of Newbury to butcher William Hackere of Maidenhead.¹ Lisa Spurrier, archivist at the Berkshire Record Office, explains the value of these records.

The Statute of Artificers (1563) was an Act of Parliament which made it illegal to practise any craft without having served an apprenticeship of seven years,² and it remained in force until 1814. Quarter sessions records contain a number of prosecutions under this law, no doubt encouraged by those local businessmen who had served their time and resented the competition. Anyone interested in this aspect of apprenticeship may like to consult an excellent academic study of the subject which is available in the Record Office searchroom: Margaret Gay Davis, *The Enforcement of English Apprenticeship: A Study in Applied Mercantilism 1563-1642* (Harvard University Press 1956).

Length of training

In Abingdon, William Mills was prosecuted in 1737 for following the trade of a mercer without having served an apprenticeship.³ One cannot help wondering how much training was actually needed for this occupation; the historian James Sharpe notes in this context that ‘many [crafts] could be learnt in a few weeks’, and apprenticeship for seven years had more to do with controlling adolescent males in the community.⁴ The 1765 indenture of Richard Smith of Whitechurch, Oxfordshire, to Catharine Warner of Pangbourne, barge builder, for instance, includes the promise that ‘The Goods of his said Mistriss he shall not waste, nor the same without Licence of her to any give or lend. Hurt to his said Mistriss he shall not do, cause or procure to be done; he shall neither buy nor sell without his Mistress’s Licence. Taverns, Inns, or Alehouses he shall not haunt. At Cards, Dice, Tables, or any other unlawful Game, he shall not play.’⁵ Indentures usually included these kinds of restrictions on the

apprentice's behaviour, although they were usually framed in rather less colourful language; another standard provision forbade the apprentice to marry. A child was usually placed at the age of 14 and would thus normally achieve legal adulthood at 21 about the time his apprenticeship ended. There are, however, a number of exceptions to this; one example is that of seven year old John Berksdell of Englefield, apprenticed to Thomas Clarke, a Reading gardener, in 1709 for 14 years [i.e. until he was 21].⁶ The Englefield and Thatcham parish records have several instances also of youths apprenticed until the age of 24, such as Joseph Allen's apprenticeship in 1761 to Hampshire blacksmith Francis Cottrell.⁷



Indenture of Richard Smith of Whitchurch to Catherine Warner of Pangbourne, 1765 (BRO D/P/91/14/1) reproduced by permission of the Berkshire Record Office

The vast majority of apprenticeships were privately arranged between the child's family and the prospective master. The master was indeed often a relative or friend of the child's parents. The master was paid a cash premium by the child's family, in return for which he or she undertook to train the child in the relevant profession and to maintain him or her during the apprenticeship. The amount paid varied, depending on the trade to be learnt. The apprentice was not normally paid any wage during his apprenticeship, receiving only bed and board. The vast majority of apprentices were boys, girls being more likely to work in the same

households as servants — also given bed and board, but hired by the year and paid a wage.⁹

The indentures very rarely survive, as once the apprenticeship was completed, it was not normally required any more. Some have been deposited in local record offices, generally as single survivals or as part of a collection of family papers; those at the Berkshire Record Office should be easily accessible via the personal names index. It was not only craftsmen and shopkeepers who took apprentices: most rural and provincial attorneys, apothecaries and surgeons, for instance, were trained by apprenticeship to an existing practitioner — something which led to complaints about lack of skill and low social origins.¹⁰ A Berkshire example is the apprenticeship of John Blandy, son of Adam Blandy of Letcombe Regis, to Francis Blandy (clearly a relative of some kind) of Henley-upon-Thames, Oxfordshire, as an attorney's 'apprentice, clerk or servant', in 1729.¹¹

Indenture stamp duty

Family historians whose ancestors were apprenticed by private arrangement between 1710 and 1808 (1811 for London), are in luck. During this period a tax (stamp duty) was payable on the indentures, and the Public Record Office has a series of registers of apprenticeship (or more precisely of the payment of the duty on the same). These books contain the name, address and trade of the master, the name of the apprentice (and to 1752 his parents' names), the length of the term and the date of the articles, although the entries were made, and hence the books are arranged, chronologically by the date the tax was paid, which may be some years into the apprenticeship.¹² The Society of Genealogists has compiled indexes to apprentices and masters, 1710-1774, and the PRO has some incomplete indexes to masters for later years. You will need to remember that this stamp duty was payable only on private apprenticeships, and hence those organised by the poor law authorities or by charities will not be mentioned. It was also due only when a formal apprenticeship was entered into by indenture. In many very common trades, a father might well train his son to follow him without going to the expense of drawing up legal documents and paying stamp duty on top. Stamp duty was levied according to the cost of the premium received by the master (6d for every pound under £50 and 1s for every pound over £50). Some of these apprentice registers have

been published by local record societies.¹³ The Berkshire Record Society may consider an edition of Berkshire apprenticeship records at some point.

Pauper children

The largest number of indentures to have been kept are those made at public expense, by the poor law authorities of pauper children, or by independent charities which specialised in arranging apprenticeships for poor children whose families could not afford a premium. An example of the latter is the Hungerford charity established in 1626 by the gift of local gentleman Vincent Smith 'towardses the well and orderly puttinge forth and placing of one or twoe poore boyes or men children of the Towne and parishe of Hungerford aforesayd to be Apprentices, (whose parentes and friendes are not of abilitie to p[er]forme the same'.¹⁴

The wages for the within named Apprentice for her Earnings in Mowing
 being as within referred to are to be as followeth
 For every Piece or Cot (containing in Length 2.5 fards) of the Wight
 or Taxe called W^o 2s of the Manchester Hill or any lower Number,
 three Shillings;
 For every such Piece or Cot of the Wight or Taxe called W^o 2s three
 Shillings and three Pence;
 And so proportionally three Pence in Addition for every three Numbers that
 the Wight or Taxe shall contain in Fards
 The Apprentice to be employed every Day (except Sundays) and during
 the six Months of each year called the Summer half year from seven o'clock
 in the Morning until seven o'clock in the Evening and during the six
 Months of each year called the Winter half year from seven o'clock in the
 Morning until eight o'clock in the Evening being allowed the usual Time
 daily for the ordinary Meals Refreshment

Charlotte Hyde's wages and working conditions (BRO D/P 51/14/1)
 reproduced by permission of the Berkshire Record Office.

The poor law authorities became responsible for apprenticing the children of paupers under an Act of 1597, which also forced potential masters to accept the child.¹⁵ Many of the pauper children apprenticed in this way ended up being used as cheap labour rather than actually being taught a real skill. A Berkshire

example is Mary Saxton, who became 'Apprentice in the profession of a Housewife' in 1741 by the overseers of Wantage, to Dorothy, wife of local innholder Richard Wellman.¹⁶ An even more flagrant example of this kind of abuse is found in the 1803 'apprenticeship' of 17 year old Charlotte Hyde of Enborne by the overseers of her parish, to Speen cotton manufacturer Robert Jones, 'to serve him at his Factory in Speen' until she was 21. Jones promised to teach her 'the Art of weaving Calico in a Loom called Gordons Patent Loom'. The true nature of her employment is revealed in the indenture's laying out rates of pay. Charlotte was clearly to be put to work almost immediately, and would be paid on a piecework basis. She was to work six days a week for 13 hours a day.¹⁷ In 1799-1800, the overseers of Thatcham managed to dispose of six 12 or 13 year old girls by apprenticing them all to a ribbon weaver in the parish.¹⁸

Apprenticeships of pauper children also often took children away from their home parish. Perhaps this was deliberate policy, as serving an apprenticeship was one of the qualifications for legal settlement in a parish for poor relief purposes, so even if the child was used as cheap labour and as an adult proved unable to maintain him or herself, at least the original parish would no longer be liable. They may have thought the premium money well spent. Obviously this can have real implications for the family historian. For instance, in 1818 Samuel Ford of Pangbourne was apprenticed to George Bowness of the Temple Bar in Middlesex, a fishing rod maker.¹⁹ A present day descendant of Samuel might have no reason to know that he had come from Berkshire at all, let alone the parish, and as this was a local charity apprenticeship (Breedon's Charity), the records are found in the Pangbourne parish records.

New Poor Law

The conditions which such children endured gave rise to the first statutory attempts to regulate child labour: Peel's Factory Act of 1802, for instance, was aimed specifically for the benefit of pauper apprentices in factories. Ironically, this type of apprenticeship was to decline in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century as employers found they could fill their workforce with children whose families volunteered them for casual employment, and who could (unlike apprentices) be laid off without cost in a poor economic climate.²⁰

Apprenticeship of pauper children did not cease with the establishment of the New Poor Law after 1832, but was taken on by the Boards of Guardians. Pauper service books, where these survive, record such arrangements in summary. The Berkshire Record Office has them for three Poor Law Unions: Bradfield, 1851-1911 (G/B 23), Hungerford, 1877-1917 (G/H 8) and Windsor, 1877-1914 (G/WI 5). These list the name, age and home parish of the young person, the date he or she entered the apprenticeship or other employment, and the name, parish and trade of the master or mistress. One of the Bradfield Union examples is of 14 year old Emma Higgs of Basildon, bound apprentice on 28 November 1856 to a London tailor. This arrangement clearly did not work out, for on 22 April the following year, Emma was bound instead to a Sandhurst shoemaker.²¹

Not all the cases included are apprenticeships: many, probably most, children were disposed of by sending them into service or casual employment. Indeed, none of the cases in the Hungerford pauper service book are definitely identifiable as being formal apprenticeships, although the volume itself was labelled 'register of servants and apprentices'.²²

The traditional seven year apprenticeship became less common, particularly as time went on. For instance an 1850 apprenticeship bound 14 year old John Hanson to blacksmith Thomas Mersham of Waltham St Lawrence for six years;²³ this sounds at first sight as a rather odd period, but may have been to ensure that John was free of his apprenticeship by the time he was 21. In 1852 John Deacon of Pangbourne was apprenticed to William James Ward of Prospect Hill, Tilehurst, gardener, 'for the term of four Years to learn the art and business of Gardening in all its various branches'.²⁴

Charity accounts and vestry minutes

Where a set of indentures does not survive, poor law or relevant charity accounts may record some information relating to apprenticeships, or they may be mentioned in vestry minutes. For instance the accounts of an apprenticing charity, 1752-1811, are included in a volume of charity accounts preserved in the Englefield parish records. Expenses covered by this particular charity include half the cost of producing the apprenticeship indenture and other legal documents required as well as the premiums to the master and sometimes fitting the child out with a

set of clothing. Entries include one in 1754 'Paid Wm Whittingham with Dinah Doe £10'; in other words, the charity paid Whittingham a premium of £10 to take Dinah as an apprentice.²⁵ More information about Dinah may be found in the accompanying collection of apprenticeship indentures, which includes one apprenticing Dinah to William Whittingham of Yattendon, for her to learn mantua making from Whittingham's wife. The apprenticeship was to last until Dinah was 21, or until she married.²⁶ The charity also 'Paid Wm Doe for to Cloath his Daughter Dinah Doe 10s 6d'. In other cases the clothing money was paid directly to the master, who would then spend it at his discretion. Another expense was that of sending a child to his or her place of apprenticeship. For instance in 1797 the Englefield charity spent 2s on sending 'young Wells to Ilsley', accompanied by an adult.²⁷

Decline of apprenticeship

The custom of apprenticeship began to decline in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, especially after the Statute of Artificers was abolished in 1814. By 1815 masons were complaining that apprenticeship was no longer usual in their trade.²⁸ It continued to provide a legal settlement for poor law purposes. In one case I have come across, in 1919 pregnant 18 year old Dorothy Andrews, staying with her parents in East Hendred, was admitted to Wantage Union Infirmary for the birth of her child. Although she was herself a local girl, Dorothy's legal settlement derived from the apprenticeship in Sutton Courtenay (in Abingdon Union) in 1879-1884 of her husband, so the Wantage Board of Guardians applied to their counterparts in Abingdon for money to pay for Dorothy's care.²⁹ Charities offering apprenticeship were finding few applicants by the twentieth century. In 1905, for instance, the Charity Commissioners, enquiring into the endowed charities of Berkshire, observed of Dame Dorothy Harrison's charity, established in 1690 with objects including the annual apprenticeship of one poor boy of the fairly populous parish of Hurst, that 'There is not much demand for this charity ... never more than two applications having been under consideration at one time', even though it offered a way into training in such occupations as wheelwright, carpenter, plumber, builder and baker. The Commissioners also noted that 'the trustees do not follow the careers of the boys, but two appear

to have been successful [since 1886], one as a shoemaker and the other after emigrating to Canada'.³⁰ The trustees here made considerable efforts towards placing children suitably.

Approached in 1912 by the father of 16 year old 'cripple' Henry George White, who 'wishes to learn the Boot trade, it is a trade which he can sit at', Reading shopkeeper Archibald Brown Wagnell had agreed to take on the boy for a premium of £14, and 'will undertake to teach him the trade of Boot Repairing in all its branches'. One of the trustees visited the shop to ensure the business was as it had been represented, and indentures were then prepared.³¹

Apprenticeship records can be extremely valuable sources for local, economic, social and family historians. I hope this gives you an idea of the records likely to be available.

Further reading

K M Thompson, 'Apprenticeship and Bastardy Records' (Historical Association Short Guides to Records no.29) in K M Thompson (ed), Short Guides to Records 2nd Series: Guides 25-48 (Historical Association 1997)

Peter Durrant, *Berkshire Overseers Papers 1654-1834* (Berkshire Record Society vol 3, 1997)

J A Sharpe, *Early Modern England: A Social History 1550-1750* (London 1997)

G D H Cole and Raymond Postgate, *The Common People 1746-1946* (4th ed London 1949)

Margaret Gay Davis, *The Enforcement of English Apprenticeship: A Study in Applied Mercantilism 1563-1642* (Harvard University Press 1956)

References

1 BRO D/EZ 34/F1

2 J A Sharpe, *Early Modern England*, p211

3 BRO A/JQP 3

4 J A Sharpe, *Early Modern England*, p217

5 BRO D/P 91/14/1

6 BRO D/P 52/14/1/15; calendared in Peter Durrant, *Berkshire Overseers' Papers* no. 1104

7 BRO D/P 130/14/2/10; calendared in Peter Durrant, *Berkshire*

Overseers' Papers no. 1651

8 Cole and Postgate, *The Common People*, p69

9 J A Sharpe, *Early Modern England*, pp211, 217

10 J A Sharpe, *ibid*, pp196-197,217

11 BRO D/EX 1679/39

12 Public Record Office class IR1, available in microform only

13 Examples include editions by the Surrey Record Society of apprenticeships for that county 1711-1731 (ed Hilary Jenkinson 1921), Sussex Record Society for 1710-1752 (ed R Garraway Rice 1924), Wiltshire Record Society for 1710-1760 (ed Christabel Dale 1961) and the Dugdale Society (Warwickshire 1710-1760, ed K J Smith 1975)

14 BRO H/ZQ 1/1

15 K M Thompson, Apprenticeship and Bastardy Records

16 BRO D/P 143/14/1

17 BRO D/P 51/14/1

18 BRO D/P 130/14/1/69-74; calendared in Peter Durrant, Berkshire Overseers' papers nos. 1656-1661

19 BRO D/P 91/14/1/18

20 Cole and Postgate, *The Common People* pp 195, 208-209

21 BRO G/B 23

22 BRO G/H 8

23 BRO D/P 91/14/1/33

24 BRO D/P 91/14/1/34

25 BRO D/P 52/25/2

26 BRO D/P 52/14/1/29

27 BRO D/P 52/25/2

28 Cole and Postgate, *The Common People* p176

29 BRO G/A 5/18/45. Henry George Andrews was much older than his wife, being 52 at this time. He had married Dorothy in 1918, having met her in 1914 when he was lodging with her parents in Hendred before joining the Army at the start of the war. Dorothy planned to return to him after the baby's birth.

30 Charity Commission report on the Endowed Charities of Berkshire (1908)

31 BRO D/QX 30



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A Winter's Tale

A few years ago members of the Berkshire Family History Society carefully recorded all the details from graves at Reading's London Road Cemetery (situated at Cemetery Junction). The details were produced as a set of microfiche. Jayne (Redgrave) Thorne found some of her husband's Reading based ancestors and was saddened by this inscription:

In affectionate and loving memory of
Ellen (Nelly) Hopkins
Who was drowned whilst skating on the River Kennet
On
Saturday January 3, 1891
Aged 15 years

Ellen Hopkins was the youngest sister of my husband's great grandmother, Kate Eva Hopkins, and Ellen's name had appeared on our family tree for some time. It seemed very sad that she had not lived until adulthood and I decided to try and find out more about the incident.

At Reading Local Studies Library I consulted the microfilms of the local newspapers for January 1891, looking for information on both the skating accident and the weather conditions at that time. The newspapers were fascinating and gave me a great insight into life that winter.

The winter weather had been particularly severe but by the weekend of January 3rd and 4th, a partial thaw had set in. Newspapers carried reports of the River Thames in London being covered in ice floes, 'a moving mass of white crests'. The London fog was particularly bad on Friday 2nd January and it lingered on into Saturday 3rd January. Light rain also fell and this froze immediately, leaving the roads and footpaths in a treacherous condition.

Throughout England the weather was atrocious, causing unemployment for farm workers who were unable to work. Livestock froze to death and soup kitchens had to be set up to feed the farm workers and their families.

There were many accidents involving children who had been tobogganing or skating and the *Reading Mercury* of Saturday 10th January 1891 carried a report of the tragic accident which had claimed the life of Ellen Hopkins. The accident took place near Blakes Bridge on the River Kennet, close to the Huntley & Palmers biscuit factory. That afternoon, Ellen had been skating with four of her friends, Arthur Piercy of Tilehurst, aged 15, Alfred Wyles of Kings Road, Reading aged 14, Sydney Wyles aged eight, and a fourth boy with the surname Heath.

The ice gave way when Ellen was skating with Arthur Piercy and one of the other children, while they held on to a scarf. All three of the children fell through the ice. When their two companions tried to help them, they also fell into the freezing water. Arthur Piercy managed to clamber out of the water and the other three boys were rescued by people pushing ladders out along the ice. A worker from the nearby biscuit factory desperately tried to save Ellen by holding out a pole across the water. Ellen managed to grab the pole twice but eventually became too weak to hold on and she disappeared under the water.

When the body of Ellen Hopkins was recovered later that day, she was taken to St Giles Coffee House in Southampton Street, Reading, and it was here that the inquest took place. The Coroner heard evidence from Arthur Piercy and the factory worker, Benjamin Hambling, who tried to save Ellen. Ellen's father, George Hopkins, a blacksmith from Merchant's Place, also gave evidence, detailing how his daughter had left at 2pm to go skating with her friends. He had been informed of the accident and had arrived at Blakes Bridge at 5pm just as his daughter's body was being recovered from the river.

The place where the five children had chosen to skate was particularly dangerous because there were many steam and hot water pipes coming from the Huntley & Palmers biscuit factory and this made the ice very unstable. The jury considered the evidence and returned the verdict that Ellen Hopkins had 'accidentally drowned in the Kennet'. The Coroner promised to write to the Mayor about the possibility of posting notices at the site.

Although Ellen Hopkins died in such a tragic accident, I am glad that I was able to find out exactly what happened to her, mainly

as a result of the Berkshire Family History Society recording the details from all those graves in the London Road Cemetery. I often spare Ellen and her family a thought when passing near to the former site of the Huntley & Palmers' factory in Reading and the River Kennet

Family History Research

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News flash – Search Suite

We are developing a new initiative to improve the accessibility of information from Berkshire records. Until now indexes and transcripts have been sold as fiche which are not easy to read (but cheap to produce and distribute). The drawback is that we are all reluctant to buy publications if no one of interest is included on them.

The Search Suite will gather together the range of information the Society has in electronic form. These include transcripts of parish registers, the 1851 and 1871 censuses, the Berkshire Burial and Marriage Indexes, Overseers Papers, the Berkshire Name Index and less well known documents such as police records and Birth Briefs. The indexes to this data will be available as self-search to visitors to our Research Centre, or we will conduct a postal search on your behalf. The indexes will indicate where you can find or purchase the full transcripts it will also show the quality of the data in a range from 'unknown as supplied by a third part' to 'checked by Society volunteers'.

Watch this space for more information or check our website.

Book Ends

Jean Debney

User Guide to the Online Census for England and Wales (1891 & 1901) by G T Ledbrooke (Sep 2002). A5 yellow illustrated card cover, screen shots, text & 4 appendices, 29+VII pp. Price (incl p/p) £3.85 overseas £4.10

This is the first publication I have seen explaining the 'how' and 'what' of using the Online Census for 1901 with lots of helpful information to get you started with the minimum hassle. The full table of contents includes the individual section heading for easy location. Although the text appears solely to deal with the 1901 census, the 1891 and, in passing in the Introduction, the 1881 censuses have been included in the title to cover their future digitisation.

Basic facts about: Descendant tracing, by Tom Wood (Federation of Family History Societies (Publications) Ltd, 2002). A5 pale & dk green card cover, 16pp. Price (incl p/p) £2.00 overseas £2.35

Having been asked many times how to trace descendants, I find this very concise booklet includes not only sources I have used or knew about, but many I hadn't even considered.

An Introduction to: Using computers for genealogy, by David Hawgood (Federation of Family History Societies (Publications) Ltd, 3rd edn. 2002). A5 card pale & dk turquoise illustrated card cover, title on spine, screen shots etc, index, 54 pp. Price (incl p/p) £4.40 overseas £4.75

This book is divided into five sections headed 'Using a computer', 'Typing documents', 'Personal family history', 'Family research' and 'Addresses, bibliography and help'. This experienced author starts his preface: 'This books aims to help anyone with little experience of computers to start using one for family history'. Need I say more? Except to add there is likely to be information for those with more than a little experience as well.

Was your grandfather a Railwayman? A directory of Railway Archive Sources for Family Historians by Tom Richards (Federation of Family History Societies (Publications) Ltd, 4th edn. 2002). A5 pale yellow and brown illustrated card cover, title on spine, illustrations, 132pp. Price (incl p/p) £7.90 overseas £8.60

The author was a senior officer of the Great Western Railway and, since the 1st edition in 1988, has discovered many more sources for material for railway employees in the UK and Eire, Australia, New Zealand and Tasmania, Canada and the United States of America, India and South Africa, each of which is covered in this expanded edition.

Current publications on microfiche by Member Societies, compiled by John P Perkins (Federation of Family History Societies (Publications) Ltd, 5th edn. 2002). A5 red, white & blue card cover, title on spine, 264pp. Price (incl p/p) £9.20 overseas £9.95

This extraordinarily useful guide has grown from a measly 23 pages of publications in the 1982 edition to separate volumes covering printed and microfiche (including CD ROM) titles listed in this massive tome. The member societies and the categories they publish on microfiche are listed alphabetically in the contents. As well as most English and Welsh societies there are entries for the Isle of Man, the Anglo-German FHS and some from Australia. It is worth noting that unlisted societies may not produce microfiche and only currently available items are included: details of earlier publications may be in previous published editions.

CD ROM: £8.30 o/s £8.55. Identical to the book — you require a PC running Windows 95 or later with a minimum 10Mb RAM and a CD drive. The data has been created using PDF files which can be read using Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.0 software.

Surnames and Genealogy - a new approach, by George Redmonds (Federation of Family History Societies (Publications) Ltd, 2002). 6 x 9", beige and brown illustrated card cover, title on spine, 5 chapters, 5 appendices, illustrations and surname index, 292 pages. Price (incl p/p) £13.80 overseas £14.95

The author, who has studied surnames since 1970 and is author of *Yorkshire Surnames* (1973) published as Vol.1 in the English

Surname Series, is an acknowledged expert in his subject. In this book he discusses the origin and meaning of surnames, heredity, changes of name, the linguistic development and the study of surnames. The appendices include a dictionary of difficult names and variants. Altogether a fascinating and comprehensive book which will definitely find a place on my bookshelf.

New Berkshire Publications on CD and fiche

The Berkshire Burial Index. An index of burial registers containing over 207,000 names. Some of the data (35%) is in the NBI and all will be in Issue 2 of the NBI, but this is an opportunity to access the information early. Annual updates will be available at reduced cost to registered purchasers. For coverage (places and periods) see the website. Price (incl p/p) £10.00 overseas £11.00

Snare's Post Office Directory of Reading, 1842. Trade and street directory of Reading in facsimile. List many residences in main streets as well as the more familiar (Piggott's etc.) trade listings. A sample page will appear on the website. Price (incl p/p) £7.50 overseas £8.50

Berkshire 1851 Census. This will be a vital aid to those researching Berkshire families. The CD covers the complete County – as currently available on fiche. When it is available it will be put on our website, together with the price, so do check www.berksfhs.org.uk as often as you can. It may even be available now.

Berkshire Parish Registers (pub. by OFHS on Fiche)

Caversham St Andrew & St Barnabas (Marriages 1930-1959)
Price £1.70 o/s £2.10

Caversham St John (Baptisms 1888-1949, Marriages 1908-1958)
Price (incl p/p) £3.70 overseas £4.50

Moulsford (Baptisms/Burials 1607-1990, Marriages 1617-1837)
Price (incl p/p) £1.70 overseas £2.10

Shippon (1856-2002) Price (incl p/p) £2.20 overseas £3.00
Shrivenham (Marriages 1575-1924) Price (incl p/p) £3.20 overseas £4.00

Unless otherwise stated all these publications and many more are available from our Bookshop at the Research Centre, Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading, Berkshire RG1 7TJ or at our website on www.berksfhs.org.uk.

Research Centre news

Cliff Debney

In August we began making alterations in the Research Centre. The coat rack has been moved to the entrance hall and in the lobby, having repositioned the fridge and kettle, we installed two sets of six lockers, making 12 in all. These lockers are now to be used for personal belongings except those papers needed for research. A clear plastic wallet is available in each locker into which your research papers can be placed and at the end of your visit the empty wallet should be returned to the locker for the next user.

We have also made changes on the first floor. The small Reference library, commonly called the NBI Room, is now used for Society administration and is no longer available to members. All the fiche ring binders containing the IGI and other loose fiche such as parish register indexes, are now to be found on the bottom shelf of the census book stack. The remaining uncomputerised Berkshire Name Index slips, the Members' Interests and Surname files are in the reorganised main library.

The large census book stack now holds all census material, ranging from 1841 to 1891, except that in electronic form which is on the ground floor, and the Berkshire Census films 1851-1881 stored by the film reader. All other fiche issued in card pockets, e.g. by ourselves and West Surrey FHS, are found in the relevant county book stack.

Judith Morgan-Russell has been appointed Research Centre Assistants Co-ordinator, in other words she now arranges the rosters for the eighty or so volunteers required each month, without whom the Research Centre cannot open. I know she will be pleased to welcome new Research Centre Assistants to enlarge the pool of volunteers. To help both new and established Research Centre Assistants, we are now holding regular training sessions.

The computerisation of the Berkshire Name Index is continuing apace and it is anticipated it will be fully available electronically by Easter. Meanwhile those slips which have been computerised are now available electronically.

The two autumn courses of Family History Classes held in the Centre, run by Carolyn and Barry Boulton were fully subscribed and bookings for the first course of the new year, starting in January, are coming in fast.

Library acquisitions, Jean Herbert, Research Centre Librarian

This is my first attempt to bring to your attention what is being added to the library stock. There are some 7000+ items in book, fiche, film, and electronic forms, and about 4000 of them do not relate to Berkshire. I am this time highlighting Berkshire, but hope in following issues to draw to your attention to material from other counties and from overseas. The Reference Library Catalogue has been revised and there is a new printed edition, which will shortly be available on computer.

Parish registers

North Berkshire — these have been transcribed by the Oxfordshire FHS. They have been on sale for a number of years. Recently we did a complete check of what has been published and what the library has in stock. There are still gaps where transcriptions have not been done.

The new additions to stock are:

Abingdon Workhouse — deaths: Aston Tirrold Presbyterian (U R C): Compton Beauchamp:

Cholsey 1851-2001: Cumnor 1754-1948: Kingston Lisle: Letcombe Bassett to 1997:

Letcombe Regis: Littleworth: Radley: Shrivenham — baptisms: Sotwell: Stanford in the Vale:

Uffington: Wantage Union Workhouse: Wantage — burials 1813-1935:

Wantage — baptisms 1813-1946: Wantage — baptisms 1538- 1704:

Wantage — baptisms, marriages and burials 1705-1813: Watchfield.

These are in the Berkshire Parish Register fiche files (folders). A-L and M-Z and are shelved in the Berkshire section of the library.

Rest of Berkshire

These are new to our shelves and are the first of our transcriptions. As the fiche are in folders which contain other information about the Parish, they have been put together in a pamphlet box and are shelved in the Berkshire section of the library.

Burghfield, St Mary the Virgin 1559-1987: Clewer St Andrew 1607-1860:

Compton (Compton Parva) 1553-1955: East Ilsley 1608-1884: West Ilsley 1558-1967: Theale 1832-1968.

Berkshire Monumental Inscriptions

These are now available in the library in fiche form. However there are some in booklet (loose leaf) form, which have been donated to us by the transcribers.

Census

1841 Census: Berkshire transcripts and indexes – new to the library:

vol 10 — Hormer, Ock Hundreds and Abingdon

vol 11 — Moreton, Wallingford and Wantage Hundreds:

vol 12 — Faringdon, Shrivenham and Ganfield Hundreds.

1851 Census: Berkshire index and transcripts — these will be available in the library by December.

1861-1871 Census: these cover Abingdon, Faringdon and Wallingford registration districts and are indexes only.

Census — all fiche census are arranged by county and shelved together on the Census fiche shelves.

We realise that the labelling is poor at present, but we hope to rectify this shortly.

Berkshire Overseers Papers

These are in the Berkshire section in a pamphlet box.

Books about Berkshire places

The new ones cover the following areas:

Abingdon, Ascot, Cheapside, Compton, Cookham, Didcot, East Garston, The Hagbournes, Kintbury, Mortimer, Newbury, Thatcham, Wallingford, Wantage, Windsor, Wokingham and Bracknell.



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Jenny and David Carter, 1 Lansdown Rd, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN1 3NE

email: enquiries@nimrodindex.co.uk

More information on our website:

Coming soon the 1851 Census on line (see website for details)

Members' Interests

Compiled by Bob Plumridge Bob.Plumridge@virgin.net

Members submitting their interests:

- 375 Mr JL & Mrs RH Bowley Gayton House High Road Cookham Maidenhead Berkshire SL6 9JF
3230 Mrs A Himmons 88 Lutterworth Road Nuneaton Warks CV11 6PH
4777 Mr KW & Mrs CL Pickett 23 St. Margaret's Road Swindon Wilts SN3 1RU
5008 Mrs KM Evans 51 Teign Bank Road Hinckley Leics LE10 0ED
5010 Mr KR & Mrs C Farrell 208 Steventon Road Drayton Abingdon Oxon OX13 6RN
5017 Mrs TA Meadows 12 Peterborough Road Castor Peterborough Cambs PE5 7AX
5040 Dr P Ford Braeside Cottage Cannongate Road Hythe Kent CT21 5PT
5043 Mr C Pickard 75 Baker Road Abingdon Oxon OX14 5LJ
5055 Mr EC Partridge Sunnyside Eyton Wrexham North Wales LL13 0YD
5064 Mr J & Mrs D Branch Simba 11 Gurney Drive Caversham Reading Berks RG4 7LG
5065 Mrs MM Turner 21 Keydell Avenue Horndean Waterlooville Hants PO8 9TA
5075 Mr P Walch 10 Highfield Crescent Ulverstone Tasmania 7315 AUSTRALIA
5078 Mr JSC Kingham Pebble Cottage Milestone Avenue Charvil Reading Berks RG10 9TN
5079 Miss S Pike 25 Epple Road Fulham London SW6 4DJ
5081 Miss C McCarthy 31 Crummock Gardens Kingsbury London NW9 0DE
5095 Mrs M Marsh 29 Kingsway West Wickham Kent BR4 9JD
5104 Dr JT Brauhnoltz 46 Brackendale Road Camberley Surrey GU15 2JR
5106 Mrs M & Mr JA Davis 54 Bishops Croft Barningham Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 1BZ
5109 Mr BW Pearson 17 Stonefield Park Maidenhead Berks SL6 6ES
5118 Mr P & Mrs S Gale 22 Mons Way Abingdon Oxon OX14 1NJ
5138 Mrs J Groome 2 Springfield Lane Smeeton Westerby Leicester LE8 0QW
5154 Mr A Clark 27 South Street Caversham Reading Berks RG4 8HY

No	Name	Place	Code	Dates	No	Name	Place	Code	Dates
5138	ADAMS	Kings Sutton	NTH	1600-2000	3230	BRIDGEMAN	Thatham	BRK	1800s
5064	ALEXANDER	Bicknor	KEN	1500-2000	5064	BRIGHTWELL	Mildenhall	SFK	1500-1800
5095	ARNOLD	Sutton Courtney	BRK	1870-1895	5138	BROOKES	Chipping Norton	OXF	1600-2000
5138	ARNOLD	Caversham	BRK	1600-2000	5138	BROOKS	Chipping Norton	OXF	1600-2000
5095	ARNOLD	Abingdon	BRK	1750-1860s	5010	BROWN	Stepney	MDX	1880-1910
5095	ARNOLD	Oxford	OXF	1860-1900	5118	BROWN	Watford	HRT	1700-1900
5079	ASHFORD	Notting Hill	MDX	1840-1960	5118	BROWN	E. Bradenham	NOR	1700-1900
5106	BARKER	Hewham	ESS	1700-2002	5010	BROWN	Bethnal Green	MDX	1830-1880
5095	BARSDEN/ON	Culham	OXF	1800-	5043	BUNCE	Drayton	BRK	1700-2000
5118	BARTLETT	Bruiton	SOM	1700-1800	5010	BUSH	Stepney	MDX	1880-1920
5008	BEANEY	Ore	SSX	1800-1909	5008	BUSWELL	Hinckley	LEI	1800-1907
5138	BELCHER	Chipping Norton	OXF	1600-2000	5008	CAIN/KAIN	Rotherham	YKS	1800-1893
5043	BERRY	Abingdon	BRK	1800-2000	5008	CAIN/KAIN	Scotland	SCT	1800-1893
375	BLAKE	Sulham	BRK	1850-1920	5138	CAMPLIN	Faringdon	BRK	1600-2000
375	BLAKE	Stanton Harcourt	OXF	1700-1900	5079	CANNELL	Sunninghill	BRK	1500-1870
5064	BOOTMAN	Boyton	SFK	1500-1800	3230	CARTER Sarah	Bucklebury	BRK	1800s
5104	BOSELEY	Earley	BRK	1700-1900	5064	CHAMBERS	Stepney	LND	1800-1900
5104	BOSELEY	Ashampstead	BRK	1700-1900	5081	CHAMP	East Hendred	BRK	1800-1880
5104	BOSELEY	Sonning	BRK	1700-1900	5118	CHRISTOPHER	London	MID	1700-1900
5104	BOSELEY	Reading	BRK	1800-1900	5118	CHRISTOPHER	Medway	KEN	1700-1900
5104	BOSELEY	Basildon	BRK	1700-1900	5154	CLARK	Welford	BRK	1700-1900
375	BOWLEY	Theale	BRK	1880-2000	5154	CLARK	Boxford	BRK	1700-1900
375	BOWLEY	Tidcombe	WIL	1800-1900	5118	CLIFFORD	Any	PEM	1700-1800
375	BOWLEY	Buttermere	WIL	1700-1800	5081	CLIFTON	West Bromwich	STS	1780-1900
5064	BRANCH	Mildenhall	SFK	1500-1800	5078	CLOSE	Belfast	ANT	1800-1900
5010	BREADSEL	Tring	HRT	1890-1910	3230	COLBO(U)RNE	Knitbury	BRK	1800s

No	Name	Place	Code Dates	No	Name	Place	Code Dates
5118	COLLINS	Amersham	BKM 1700-1800	3230	EMANS	Newbury	BRK Any
5118	COLLINS	Cheries	HRT 1700-1800	3230	EMANS	Thatcham	BRK Any
5055	COMPTON	Reading	BRK 1800-1920	3230	EMMINS	Thatcham	BRK Any
5065	COOK Charlotte	Cookham	BRK 1764-2000	3230	EMMINS	Newbury	BRK Any
5065	COOK George	Cookham	BRK 1760-2000	3230	EMMONS	Thatcham	BRK Any
5065	COOK Giles	Cookham	BRK 1700-1772	3230	EMMONS	Newbury	BRK Any
5065	COOK Mary	Cookham	BRK 1767-2000	5010	FARRELL	Stepney	MDX 1880-1940
5065	COOK Mary	Cookham & Bray	BRK 1700-1768	5010	FARRELL	St George in the East	MDX 1850-1900
5017	COOPER	Sunninghill	BRK 1837-	5010	FARRELL	Bethnal Green	MDX 1830-1860
5017	COOPER	Newbury	BRK 1837-	5079	FINCH	Any	ESS 1800-1900
3230	COOPER Eliz'	Newbury	BRK Abt 1900	5079	FINCH	Hackney	MDX 1860-1900
5154	CORDEROY	Newbury	BRK 1700-1900	5079	FINN	Limerick	LIM 1066-2002
5138	CORK	Northcourt	BRK 1600-2000	5079	FINN	Notting Hill	MDX 1870-1960
5043	COX	Appledore	DEV 1700-2000	5040	FORD Henry	Thatcham	BRK 1900s
375	DANCE	Marlborough	WIL 1700-1860	5040	FORD John	Sichester	BRK 1730-1830
375	DANCE	Welford	BRK 1860-1920	5040	FORD William	Wallingford	BRK 1900s
5106	DAVIS	Bristol	AVN 1750-2002	5078	FRANCIS	Belfast	ANT 1800-1900
5081	DAWSON	East & West Hanney	BRK 1700-2002	5118	FRANCIS	Bath/Keynsham	SOM 1700-1900
5081	DAWSON	Didcot	BRK 1700-2002	5118	FRENCH	London	LDN 1700-1900
3230	DENNIS	Newbury	BRK Any	5106	FRENCH	Poplar	LND 1700-2002
3230	DENNIS	Woodspeen	BRK Any	5118	GALE	West Dorset	DOR 1700-1900
5010	DOWLING	Stepney	MDX 1880-1940	5043	GAMMON	Herne Bay	KEN 1800-2000
5109	DUMMER	Lacock	WIL 1780-1840	5081	GODDARD	Plymouth	DEV 1780-1890
5008	EAGLE-MEIGH	London	LND 1800-1898	3230	GODDARD	Martha	HAM 1735-1800
3230	EAGLETON	Snelsmore\Newbury	BRK Any	3230	GODDARD	Martha	BRK 1735-1800
3230	EGGLETON	Snelsmore\Newbury	BRK Any	3230	GORE	Newbury	BRK 1800s

No	Name	Place	Code	Dates	No	Name	Place	Code	Dates
3230	GORE	Stroud Green	BRK	1800s	5095	HUSE	Knowl Hill	BRK	1920s
5104	GOTT	Basildon	BRK	1700-1800	5081	HUTCHINS	Harwell	BRK	1600-1840
5081	GREENAWAY	Steventon	BRK	1750-1890	3230	HYDE	Sparsholt	BRK	1775-1850
5106	GROVES	Lynnton	DEV	1700-2002	5104	ILSELY	Ashampstead	BRK	1700-1800
5118	GUTHRIE	London	MID	1700-1800	3230	IMMONDS	Thatcham	BRK	1700-1800s
5095	HALL	King Suition	NTH	1800-1900	3230	IMMONDS	Newbury	BRK	1700-1800s
5118	HALL	Keynsham	SOM	1700-1800	5138	IVEY	Fyfield	BRK	1600-2000
5154	HAMBLIN	Newbury	BRK	1700-1900	5118	JANES	Keynsham	SOM	1700-1800
5118	HANSFORD	W Dorset	DOR	1700-1800	5078	JOHNSTON	Belfast	ANT	1800-1900
5138	HARBAGE	Middleton Cheney	NTH	1600-2000	5104	JONES	Earley	BRK	1700-1900
5010	HARDWICK	Kennington	SRY	1890-1930	5081	KENT	Salisbury	WIL	1700-2002
5138	HAWKES	Middleton Cheney	NTH	1600-2000	5008	KING	Hinckley	LEI	1800-1910
5017	HAWTHORN(E)	Sunningdale	BRK	1800-	5078	KINGHAM	Upton cum Chalvey	BKM	1650-1800
5017	HAWTHORN(E)	Sunninghill	BRK	1800-	5078	KINGHAM	Rochester	KEN	1750-1850
5017	HAWTHORN(E)	Blackwater	HAM	1833-1850	5118	KINSBURY	London	MID	1700-1800
5109	HAYES	Turville	BKM	1790-1910	5081	LAILEY	Aldermaston	BRK	1700-1900
5109	HAYES	Swincombe	OXF	1756-1850	5109	LAILEY	Hurst	BRK	1800-1900
5154	HEADLONG	Newbury	BRK	1700-1900	5081	LAILEY	Bucklebury	BRK	1700-1900
5065	HEILIS Mary	Cookham & Bray	BRK	1700-1768	5078	LAMB	Any	BKM	1650-1800
3230	HEMANS	Thatchem	BRK	Any	5008	LAMBERT	Scotland	SCT	1800-1830
3230	HEMANS	Newbury	BRK	Any	5008	LAMBERT	Rotherham	YKS	1830-1915
3230	HIMMONS	Newbury	BRK	Any	5118	LATHEY	W Dorset	DOR	1700-1900
3230	HIMMONS	Thatcham	BRK	Any	5064	LEECH	Mildenhall	SFK	1500-1800
3230	HIMMONS	Ashmore Green	BRK	Any	5118	LEWIS	Any	PEM	1700-1800
5008	HIVENS	Meriden	WAR	1790-1871	375	LINDSAY	Any	BRK	1880-2000
5154	HOLLOWAY	Newbury	BRK	1700-1900	375	LINDSAY	Any	OXF	1880-2000

No	Name	Place	Code Dates	No	Name	Place	Code Dates
5081	LLEWELLYN	Dilwyn	HEF 1740-1900	5010	OWEN	Ilford	ESS 1910-1940
5081	LLEWELLYN	Abbey Dore	HEF 1740-1900	5010	OWEN	Wallingford	SRY 1890-1910
5008	LORD	Leicester	LEI 1800-1888	5008	PARKER	Liverpool	1830-1914
5081	LYFORD	Steventon	BRK 1600-1860	5017	PARR	Sunninghill	BRK 1800-
4777	MACGRAW	Bray/Maidenhead	BRK Any	5017	PARR	Teignmouth	DEV 1800-
5075	MACKRELL	East Garston	BRK 1750-1850	375	PAYNE	East Woodhay	HAM 1830-1870
5064	MASTERS	Bearsted	KEN 1500-2000	3230	PETTIT	Sparsholt	BRK 1800s
5079	MAUNDER	Any	DEV 1500-2002	5118	PHILLIPS	Pembroke (Dock)	PEM 1700-1900
5118	MAYGROVE	London	LDN 1700-1900	5043	PICKARD	Folkestone	KEN 1900-2000
5079	McCARTHY	Notting Hill	MDX 1900-1960	5043	PICKARD	Keighley	WYK 1800-2000
4777	MCGRAW	Bray/Maidenhead	BRK Any	5079	PIKE	Notting Hill	MDX 1870-1970
3230	MILES Lucy	Kingsclere	BRK 1780-1820	5138	PIKE	Cumner	BRK 1600-2000
3230	MILES Lucy	Stroud Green	BRK 1780-1820	5106	PRENTICE	Ongar	ESS 1700-2002
5081	MILLNER	West Bromwich	STS 1780-1900	5081	PRICE	Kings Pion	HEF 1780-1900
5081	MILLS	Sutton Courtenay	BRK 1680-1830	5008	PRITCHARD	Windsor	BRK 1800-1900
5118	MORRISH	Crediton	DEV 1700-1800	5078	PROCTOR	Any	YKS 1800-1900
5138	MORTON	Chipping Norton	OXF 1600-2000	3230	RANDALL	Knitbury	BRK Any
5118	NDOT	Any	PEM 1700-1900	5008	RANDELL	Leicester	LEI 1830-1877
5064	NEAGUS	Ridgmont	BDF 1500-1900	5064	RAYFIELD	Stockbury	KEN 1700-1850
375	NEWTON	Welford	BRK 1600-1880	375	RIPPON	Any	DEV 1700-1881
375	NEWTON	Wandsworth	SRY 1750-1850	375	RIPPON	Thattham	BRK 1869-1900
5118	NORMAN	W Dorset	DOR 1700-1800	5118	ROACH	Keynsham	SOM 1700-1900
5010	O'BRIEN	Blackheath	KEN 1890-1910	5138	ROGERS	Thenford	NTH 1600-2000
5010	O'BRIEN	Any	IRL 1850-1890	5138	RUDGE	Cumner	BRK 1600-2000
5043	OGLIVIE	Aberdeen	ABD 1700-2000	5075	SANGWELL	Woolhampton	BRK 1750-1900
5118	OLIVER	Bath	SOM 1700-1900	5109	SAW	Watlington	OXF 1800-1860

No	Name	Place	Code Dates	No	Name	Place	Code Dates
5106	SCHRODER	Limehouse	LND 1700-2002	3230	VINCENT	Lambourne	BRK 1800s
5078	SCOTT	Any	GTL 1700-1900	5079	WALLACE	Notting Hill	MDX 1870-1960
5010	SHAW	Blackheath	KEN 1870-1910	5079	WALLACE	Canada	1888-2002
5010	SHAW	Ilford	ESS 1910-1940	5079	WALLACE	Limerick	LIM 1066-2002
3230	SHERMAN Mary Any		BRK 1770s	5079	WALLER	Any	DEV 1500-2002
5081	SIDERY	Any	BRK 1650-1860	5043	WEBBER	Bideford	DEV 1800-2000
5118	SPURRIER	Newport	MON 1600-1900	5043	WELLS	Wimbleton	SRY 1800-2000
5118	SPURRIER	Poole	DOR 1600-1900	5008	WELLS	Sibley	LEI 1782-1883
5109	STAMP	Reading	BRK 1880-1930	5104	WICKENS	Brimpton	BRK 1750-1850
5064	STARR	Westminster	LND 1800-1900	5138	WICKS	Faringdon	BRK 1600-2000
5118	STEER	Newport	MON 1700-1900	5008	WILBUR	Leicester	LEI 1830-1876
5118	STEER	Crediton	DEV 1700-1900	5095	WILKINS	King Suiton	NTH 1800-1900
5010	STEWART	Stepney	MDX 1850-1890	5118	WILLIAMS	Clulton	SOM 1700-1800
5104	STREEK	Ashampstead	BRK 1700-1800	5118	WILLIAMS	Bristol	GLS 1700-1800
5081	TALBOT	Harwell	BRK 1500-1980	5109	WISE	Reading	BRK 1850-1910
5081	TALBOT	Didcot	BRK 1500-1980	5109	WITHERALL	Bradfield	BRK 1790-1860
5138	THOMAS	Cummer	BRK 1600-2000	5081	WOODAGE	Chieveley	BRK 1690-1840
5106	TITCHNER	Shrivenham	BRK 1750-2002	5081	WOODAGE	Compton	BRK 1690-1840
5079	TODD	Sunninghill	BRK 1700-2000	5064	WOOLLETT	Rochester	KEN 1700-1850
5079	TODD	Camberwell	MDX 1870-2000	5118	WORLEY	Any	SRY 1700-1800
5079	TODD	Middleton Stoney	OXF 1860-1940	5118	WRIGHT	Newport	MON 1700-1900
5008	TOWERS	Hinckley	LEI 1800-1913	5118	WRIGHT	Crediton	DEV 1700-1900
5118	TRAVERS	W. Dorset	DOR 1700-1900				
5118	TUCKER	Newport	MON 1700-1900				
5118	TUCKER	Ilfracombe	DEV 1700-1900				
5017	TURNER	Sunninghill	BRK 1800-				

**Berkshire Family History Society
Balance Sheet as at 30 April 2002**

	£	£	30.4.01 £	30.4.02 £
Liabilities				
Accumulated Funds	35981		29877	
Bookstall Surplus	2253		7723	
Bookstall Creditors	0		0	
General Surplus	4172		-1619	
General Creditors	0		0	
Assets				
Computer and Copier Equipment		1		1
Debtors		0		0
General Account		9946		9396
BFHS Conference Account		2200		210
Business Call Account		20723*		14722
Bookstall Account		1557		3000
Instant Savings BSA		0		672
Cash		100		100
Stock		7880		7880
	<u>42406</u>	<u>42406</u>	<u>35981</u>	<u>35981</u>

**Berkshire Family History Society
Income for the Year to Date 30 April 2002**

Subscriptions	23929		19633	
Inland Revenue	3312		2508	
Deposit Interest	119		247	
Advertising	499		862	
Research	41		6	
Symposia	4221		588	
Donations	211		49	
Berkshire Name Index	348		154	
1851/1881 Census	279		325	
Fiche Printer/Copier	1102		1023	
Miscellaneous	151		390	
	<u>34211</u>		<u>25784</u>	
Total Income & Expenditure				
Income	34211		25784	
Contribution from Bookstall	2253		7723	
	<u>36464</u>		<u>33507</u>	
Expenditure	30039		27403	
	<u>6425</u>		<u>6104</u>	

Signed: Chad Hanna
Chairman

Ann Rutt
Secretary

Date: August 5 2002

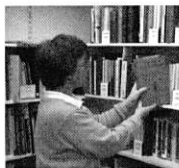
Back pages

BFHS Research Centre



Not only Berkshire, but also

The Research Centre contains most of the published 1851 census indexes together with a fully fitted computer suite with the 1881 census for the United Kingdom, Vital records, access to the 1901 census on the Internet and many CD ROMs; thousands of books, fiche, leaflets, transcripts and indexes. Your Research Centre supplements the Berkshire Record Office and local studies libraries with a wide range of material from throughout the United Kingdom.



Membership fees

The annual membership fee, payable on the first of July, is £13 (inclusive of a £2 enrolment fee for our new members pack). For family members the fee is £14. Overseas members is £15.

Some comments from visitors

‘I didn’t realise just what an immense and valuable resource the Centre had. On my first visit I was able to use census transcripts not only from Berkshire, but also for a number of other counties where my ancestors lived in the nineteenth century.’

‘What a friendly atmosphere. I felt at home as soon as I walked through the door.’

‘What a marvellous library and a great place to carry out research.’

‘I was really surprised how easy it was to park immediately outside the entrance.’



Back pages

BFHS Research Centre



How to find us

Next door to the new Berkshire Record Office, off Coley Avenue, close to the centre of Reading. Good parking, 10 minutes' walk from the main railway station, with buses passing close by. Follow the signs to the Berkshire Record Office.

Open:

- Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10am to 4pm.
- Late opening from 7pm to 9.30pm on Tuesday and Thursday.
- Second Sunday of each month from 11am to 4pm.

Full details are available on our website:

www.berksfhs.org.uk

Address

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

Research Centre & Reference Library tours

The tours for the next three months are:

Monday	20 January	7.30 - 9.30 pm
Saturday	15 February	2.30 - 4.30 pm
Monday	17 March	7.30 - 9.30 pm

For those who have not yet used the Research Centre these dates give you the opportunity to have a guided tour around the Reference Library, with its 7,000 plus books and fiche available for research, and to find out what family history resources are available and how to access them using computers.

Back pages

Postal research services

Berkshire Name Index

This contains more than 100,000 index 'slips' of Berkshire names found in a variety of documents. The Society's 'strays index' and some family histories have also been incorporated. The charge is £5 for up to five surnames, with a maximum of 30 'slips' photocopied for each enquiry. Mark the envelope 'BNI' and enclose a large SSAE.

1851 Berkshire census

Computer printouts can be supplied of any folio. The required reference can be obtained from our published indexes. The minimum charge is £3 for two pages. Thereafter A4 printouts are charged at 50 pence for each additional page. Alternatively, we can search for any given surname and estimate the total number of printouts involved. The charge for this service is £2 for each surname and printout charges are then as above. Send your enquiry to: BFHS c/o Mr. Geoff Mather, 18 Ravenswood Avenue, Crowthorne, Berkshire RG45 6AY

1881 census for the United Kingdom

The charge for an estimate of the number of prints is £3 per county searched for each surname, including two sample prints. Thereafter, A4 printouts are charged at 50 pence for each additional page. Mark the envelope enclosing your enquiry '1881'.

Except where otherwise stated, applications for all Postal Research Services should be made to: BFHS Research Centre, Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading, Berkshire RG1 7TJ, accompanied by an SSAE or two IRCs and the appropriate fee. Cheques should be made payable to BFHS. Payment may also be made with dollar cheques drawn on your own bank account from Australia, New Zealand, the United States and Canada.

Back pages

Postal research services

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 £3 per county searched per surname including two sample prints. Charges thereafter will depend upon the type of A4 size copies to be made and the number of printouts involved. Write to the Research Centre for an estimate marking the envelope 'OCI'.

Berkshire Burial Index

So far we have more than 207,000 references in our own database and we are able to offer a research service. The charge is £2 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 (telephone 0118 966 1401) has offered to consult free of charge for BFHS members his database for the following churchyard monumental inscriptions: Aldermaston, Avington, Compton Beauchamp, Hurst, Mortimer and Twyford. These have not yet been put onto fiche as they have no maps. David will answer telephone enquiries only.

Berkshire Marriage Index

We can do limited searches for the parishes and periods given in the Index website or updates in the journal (see page 67). The cost per surname is £2.00 for each side of an A4 sheet (about 25 entries fit onto one side). A request for a specific individual will usually only require one side. Send a cheque, made out to BFHS, and a large SSAE or two IRCs to the Research Centre marking the envelope Marriage Index.

Back pages

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☐ Website

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Back pages

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- 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

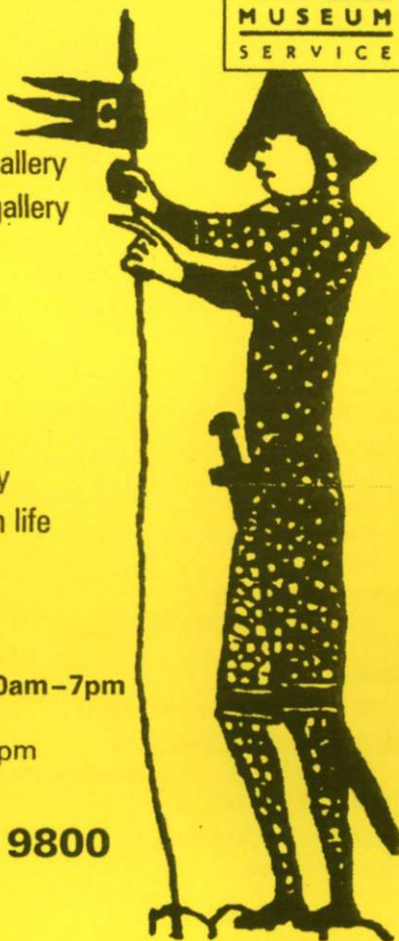
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The Bulletin

A word from our Chairman

As I write in October there is much going on in the family history world, so I've had a little difficulty deciding what to write about. I've chosen two subjects, the 1901 census and moving to publishing on CD ROM.

1901 census

As many of you will already know, at long last the 1901 census is back online and from our experience in the Research Centre it is working well. When we print images of the pages from the enumerators' books we have clear and crisp results with the unfortunate black border. However, some of you are finding difficulties using the index. It seems clear to me that contracting out work with a tight deadline to the Indian sub-continent has not given high quality results. It has been alleged that the entries were transcribed twice and checked; if so, the second transcription was largely a repeat of the first and the checking was generally cursory. How else can we explain a clear Charles on the image being transcribed as George? Certainly the 1881 census project that so many of us worked on years ago stands up very well in comparison. For the 1901 what I suggest is firstly that you use large amounts of lateral thinking to try and find a way through the index to your relative, they're probably there but mis-transcribed by either the enumerator or transcribers. Next, that

you save and print the invaluable images of the census enumerator's book and avoid the transcript except in certain special cases. A transcript may be the best solution for an institution, as the institution's name does not occur on most pages. We are continuing to sell the vouchers at a 10% discount, at least for the foreseeable future, and volunteers are on hand on Tuesday evenings in the Research Centre to help you with the 1901 Census and other genealogy sites on the Internet.

Other genealogical sites include the recently updated International Genealogical Index on the FamilySearch website and the new FamilyHistoryOnline site that you helped to test (vouchers for this are also available from the Society, but no discount for these – sorry!).

Moving to CD ROM

I found the results from the June questionnaire you completed with your renewal form very interesting. Our Society is already taking some of the results on board and actively pursuing a program to publish more on CD ROM.

Those of you who already have microfiche readers may find it difficult to understand the need to move away from microfiche to other media. There are two very persuasive arguments: First, the majority of our members have computers that almost certainly have

CD ROM drives – they would rather not have to buy a microfiche reader if they could buy what they need on CD ROM.

Second, it is all very well to say, ‘Visit your local library’ but even there we’re finding the microfiche readers are giving way to Internet computers.

There are difficulties for those who don’t want to use a computer. I could repeat the argument that computers are now much easier to use than they used to be but for some (you may be one), I am left with a feeling that dealing with a computer will always be unwelcome. And let’s face it: even I would agree that it’s easier for a novice to get something out of a microfiche viewer than out of Adobe’s Acrobat Reader. There are, after all, only four ways to put a fiche in a viewer, you do have to figure out how to open the tray and then find the switch to turn the thing on. Even in a library there are occasional problems, the magnification is not what you need, a mirror inside became dislodged when the viewer was moved, or the bulb has gone. All these require moving to another unit or asking for help from a supervisor. Finally you do have to work out how the information is organised on the fiche.

With library computers there are different problems. What happens if you take your own CD ROM to the library, or a Cyber café? Will they let you use your CD ROM in their computer? They might if they knew it was something safe like an Adobe Acrobat file, but almost certainly not if it needs to copy a program from the CD

ROM to the computer’s own disk drive as many need to do.

These search programs are all very different and of varying quality. Sometimes you need to scratch your head to get anything off the disk. In the case of some, like the Nottinghamshire FHS CDs, you might have to scratch quite hard.

For a computer novice in most libraries finding information on the Internet is the easiest way forward. The help on hand has been taught to understand the Internet. Genealogical information is as far away as clicking on Search on the menu bar, typing in ‘International Genealogical Index’, ‘FamilySearch’, ‘freebmd’ or ‘Genuki’, pressing the Enter key and clicking on one of the underlined links that soon appears.

Nevertheless we can and must continue to support those who don’t want to use a computer. Our postal research services will fill much of the need; we understand why many of you prefer paper and we’ll investigate the cost-effectiveness of short production runs on paper.

Crew lists

Just published a Crew List CD giving seafarers’ details from the Crew Lists and Agreements from 1863 to 1913. The original files have been collated to produce a master name index of more than 269,000 records. The data has also then been sorted into the records matching particular vessels so that it is possible to follow an individual’s career through the crew list records, and work

out which ships he served on. The records have been drawn from Crew Lists, Crew Agreements and Log Books held in local record offices in the British Isles and at the Public Record Office, Kew. The vessel index can provide surname, forename, date of birth, place of birth, name of the vessel, previous vessel and date started. No doubt a copy will soon be in the Research Centre, but it is available at £29.95 from www.genealogy.demon.co.uk.

Gamekeepers Index

If you have a gamekeeper in your family you may wish to know that there's an index to them which covers most of Berkshire. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries gamekeepers had to have a licence from the quarter sessions and this list of licences has been indexed for most of Berkshire. In addition, on an annual basis (usually in September), local newspapers published the complete list of licensees. To consult the database send a stamped addressed envelope including a cheque for £3 for each name to Dolina Clarke, 22 Portobello Grove, Fareham, Hants PO16 8HU.

Berkshire on the Internet

The Berkshire Record Office has a revamped website at www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk. If you intend visiting the Record Office it is worthwhile using the onsite search engine to find the precise records you wish to examine. The Berkshire Local History Society has a new website at www.blha.org.uk which contains details of member

societies as well as a queries page. *Strange Britain* at www.strangebritain.com has pages on Herne the Hunter, and the history of the ghost of Bisham Abbey's Lady Hoby. The *Britannia* website at www.cleaverproperty.co.uk/strange/berkshire/index.html has pages on historic places and the people of Berkshire. If you are interested in highwaymen and footpads then www.outlawsandhighwaymen.com contains the fascinating history of some of our most famous highwaymen including Dick Turpin.

General Register Office (Scotland)

The General Register Office for Scotland's contract with Origins.Net for the ScotsOrigins service expired on the 31st August. A new contract was awarded to Scotland On Line to create a new 'Scotland's People' service, as 'the official online source of parish register, civil registration and census records for Scotland.' The new website at www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk/ contains almost 37 million names, the database being one of the world's largest resources of genealogical information and one of the largest single information resources on the web. It provides a fully searchable index of Scottish births from 1553 to 1901 and marriages from 1553 to 1951. In addition, indexed census data is available from 1891 to 1901. From the results of an index search made on this site it is possible to save and print images of many of the original documents, and order extracts of any

register entries of interest. Such requests are forwarded automatically to New Register House, and the requested extracts are mailed out.

Open University

The OU is starting a short course on writing family history which begins in May next year. The course is designed for beginners researching in the nineteenth and twentieth century with an emphasis on oral, visual and narrative evidence. This course will help you to interpret and write about family history. Further details can be found at: <http://www3.open.ac.uk/courses/bin/p12.dll?Co2A173>

Reading University courses

Sweet Suburbia: the rise of suburban Britain 1850-1950. Seven Tuesday afternoons from April 29. The development of the rail network established many dormitory suburbs around our towns and cities. From these suburbs commuters would travel to work creating new lifestyles and social change. This course explores the development of suburban life.

Exploring local history. Saturday day school on May17. This is designed for those wanting to explore the history of their own town, village, or street and also provides an opportunity to meet others researching local history.

Telegrams and telexes

Earlier this year BT Archives appealed for examples of telegrams and telexes related to news of significant events, or which were sent to, or by, people of

note. They were also attempting to find the oldest telegram in existence. The earliest telegram so far identified is held in the Essex Record Office archives. It is dated 1846 and was sent to Mrs. Harrison, a grocer, informing her that her husband would be home by the first train in the morning. You may not have an earlier telegram, but you may well have one of national significance, or one sent by an important person. If you have then let BT Archives know. Their address is BT Group Archives, Third Floor, Holborn Telephone Exchange, 268-270 High Holborn, London WC1V 7EE.

British Vital Records Index second edition

The set of discs contains 10.4 million baptism entries and 1.9 million marriages. Church and civil records are included and entries range from 1530 to 1906. It costs £22.95 and is available from the Church of Latter-day Saints, 399 Garretts Green Lane, Birmingham B33 0UH.

Apology

My apology for omitting the crucial page from the accounts published in the September issue of the *Berkshire Family Historian*. No excuses, it was a careless mistake and I should have picked it up before it went to print. The missing page can be found on page 123 of this issue. Once again my apologies.

Bracknell Family History Fair

Finally, don't forget to visit us at the Fair on Sunday January 26.