



Repairing old photographs  
Yeomanry House - a potted  
history

Gleanings from exchange  
magazines

'Didn't you know they came from  
Reading?'

# Programme calendar 2004

## Bracknell and Wokingham Branch

Priestwood Community Centre, Priestwood Court Road, Bracknell,

7.15pm for 7.45pm

- 19 Mar *Mutual self help in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The Royal Order of Foresters: for agricultural labourers.* Audrey Fisk
- 16 Apr *Workhouses for all. The New Poor Law of 1834; theory and practice.* Eve McLaughlin
- 21 May *Old photographs, their identification and dating.* Tom Doig
- 18 Jun Society AGM followed by *Civil registration: an update on future changes.* Barbara Dixon

## Newbury Branch

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

- 14 Apr *Adoption from a personal experience.* Sheila Mitchell
- 12 May *Education records.* Richard Ratcliffe
- 9 Jun *Quarter Sessions.* Eve McLaughlin

## Reading Branch

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

7.15pm for 7.45pm

- 25 Mar *Lloyd George knew my grandfather.* Philip Nash
- 29 Apr *Dating old photographs.* Jean Debney
- 27 May *Death clouds.* George Sewell
- 24 Jun *Will power.* Meryl Catty and Audrey Gillett

## Vale of White Horse Branch

Long Furlong Community Centre, Boulter Drive, Abingdon. Doors open at

7.15pm

for 7.30pm

- 19 Apr *Bread, gruel and dumplings. Life in the Workhouse.* Ian Waller
- 10 May *'Funny Blood' - tracing an inherited blood disease.* Ann Simmonds
- 14 Jun *Records before the Tudors, what chance?* John Titterton

## Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead Branch

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

7.45pm

- 30 Mar *So your ancestor was a publican.* Dr Judith Hunter
- 27 Apr *Computers and family history.* Berkshire Computer Group
- 25 May *Branch annual meeting followed by a meeting devised by members*
- 29 Jun *Cricket bats to haystacks. Researching a real family from the seventeenth century to modern times with audience participation.* Paul Blake

# Berkshire family historian

For family historians in the Royal County of Berkshire

Volume 27 • March 2004

## Contents

John Gurnett  
Editor

### Features

- 119 Repairing old  
photographs
- 124 Yeomanry House - a  
potted history
- 128 Q & A with Jean  
Debney
- 145 The Bishop's family
- 154 'Didn't you know they  
came from Reading?'

### News

- 114 Exchange Magazine  
Library
- 117 Gleanings from  
exchange magazines
- 137 Berkshire Burial Index

### Regulars

- 135 Book Ends
- 141 The Bulletin
- 152 Letters to the Editor and  
Help Wanted
- 160 Members' Interests
- 166 Research Centre
- 168 Research  
services

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*The illustration on the front cover is the Research Centre at Yeomanry House. See page 124*

**Copy deadline for June issue is 15 April 2004**

# Exchange Magazine Library

*Andrew and Daphne Spurling*

BFHS exchanges family history magazines with 83 societies in the British Isles, Canada, Australia and New Zealand. The societies within the exchange service vary from time to time. A recent drop-out is East Surrey. We would be pleased if any member who is also a member of East Surrey, or other societies not on the list, would like to pass on their copy.

Most magazines are issued quarterly with a few being monthly. Some overseas societies send us two issues at a time. Every month we list those magazines which have arrived since the last meeting.

For two years these magazines are brought to the Reading Branch meetings where they can be borrowed and returned at the next meeting (or as soon as possible). If you have any unreturned from the past, please let us have them back. After two years they are deposited in the Research Centre reference library where they can be read but not taken home.

<b>No</b>	<b>Name of Journal</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
1		Bedfordshire FHS
2	Midland Ancestor	Birmingham & Midland Soc. for Gen. & Heraldry
3		Bristol & Avon FHS
4	Origins	Buckinghamshire FHS
5		Cambridgeshire FHS
6	Cheshire Ancestor	Cheshire FHS
7	Family Historian	North Cheshire FHS
8		Cleveland FHS
9		Cornwall FHS
10		Coventry FHS
11		Derbyshire FHS
12	Devon Family Historian	Devon FHS
13		Dorset FHS
14	Essex Historian	Essex Society for Family History
14A	Roots in the Forest	Waltham Forest FHS (Essex)
15		Gloucestershire FHS

No	Name of journal	Organisation
16	Hampshire Family Historian	Hampshire FHS
17	Herefordiensis	Herefordshire FHS
18	Hertfordshire People	Hertfordshire FHS
19	The Huntsman	Huntingdonshire FHS
20		Kent FHS
21		North West Kent FHS
22	The Kentish Connection	Folkestone and District FHS
23		Lancashire Fam Hist & Heraldry Soc.
25		Manchester & Lancashire FHS
26		Leicestershire & Rutland FHS
27		Lincolnshire FHS
28	The Islonian	The Isle of Axholme FHS (Lincs)
29	Cockney Ancestor	East of London FHS
30		London & North Middlesex FHS
31		Woolwich & District FHS
33		Hillingdon FHS
34		West Middlesex FHS
35	The Norfolk Ancestor	Norfolk FHS (formerly Norfolk & Norwich Genealogical Society)
36	Footprints	Northamptonshire FHS
37		Northumberland & Durham FHS
38		Nottinghamshire FHS
39		Oxfordshire FHS
40		Peterborough & District FHS (Cambs)
41		Shropshire FHS
42	The Greenwood Tree	Somerset & Dorset FHS
43	Suffolk Roots	Suffolk FHS
44	Roots and Branches	Felixstowe FHS
45		East Surrey FHS
46	Root and Branch	West Surrey FHS
47	Sussex Family Historian	Sussex Family History Group
47A		Hastings & Rother FHS
48	Family Roots	Eastbourne & District FHS (Sussex)
49		Wiltshire FHS
50	Yorkshire Family Historian	Yorkshire Archaeological Society
50A	Doncaster Ancestor	Doncaster & District FHS
51		City of York & District FHS
52	Banyan Tree	East Yorkshire FHS

<b>No</b>	<b>Name of journal</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
53	The Flowing Steam	Sheffield & District FHS (west Yorks)
54	Fraueyn as Banglaneyn	Isle of Man FHS
55		Isle of Wight FHS
56		The Channel Islands FHS
57	Family History Section, La Societe Guernesiasie	
58		Aberdeen, North East Scotland FHS
59	Hel Achau	Clwyd FHS
60	Clychgrawn Hanes Teuluoedd Dyfed	Dyfed FHS
61		Glamorgan FHS
62		Gwent FHS
63	Gwreiddian Roots	Gwynedd FHS
64	Descent	Society of Australian Genealogists
65		Australian Family Tree Connections
66	The Ancestral Searcher	Heraldry & Gen' Soc. Of Canberra
67	The Cedar Log	Richmond-Tweed FHS (Australia)
68	S Australian Genealogist	South Australian Gen & Heraldry Soc
69	N Z Genealogist	New Zealand Soc of Genealogists
70	Tasmanian Ancestry	Tasmanian FHS
71	Chinook	Alberta FHS (Canada)
72	Br. Columbia Genealogist	British Columbia Genealogical Soc.
73	Catholic Ancestor	Catholic FHS
74	Quaker Connections	Quaker FHS
75	FH News and Digest	Federation of Family History Soc.
76	Genealogists' Magazine	Society of Genealogists
77	Journal of One Name Studies	Guild of One Name Studies
78	Family Tree	New Zealand FHS
79	Family History	Institute of Heraldic & Gen. Studies

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## Gleanings from exchange magazines

**Coins of England.** History and description of coins used in England in the last 2000 years. (Hastings and Rother FHS, Vol 18, No 4, Winter 2003).

**Catholics in two City of London Parishes.** The City was staunchly Protestant but a few Catholic families have been identified from parish censuses in 1708/9 and 1733/4 of St Thomas the Apostle and St Mary Aldermary. (*Catholic Ancestor*, Vol 9, No 5, June 2003).

**Catholic Schools c1845.** List of 116 schools with few names but detailing source of income, deficiency in school accommodation, number of children requiring free education, number of boys attending school, number of girls attending school, and whether boys and girls in separate rooms. (*Catholic Ancestor*, Vol 9, No 6, Nov 2003).

**Comparison of two Pay-per-View Websites.** The Chairman's September Letter, A Report to Members, compares Origins and FamilyHistoryOnLine in great detail both from the point of view of participating FHS and the individual researcher. (*Root and Branch*, West Surrey FHS, Vol 30, No 3, Dec 2003).

**Quakers in the Exchequer and Ecclesiastical Courts.** This is a series of 12 articles giving extracts from Joseph Besse's 'Brief account of many prosecutions of the people called Quakers in the Exchequer, Ecclesiastical and other courts ...'. The lists give the year, forename, surname and place. (*Quaker Connections*, Nos 17 to 28).

**Quaker schools in Great Britain and Ireland: a selective bibliography and guide to records.** (*Quaker Connections*, No 29, July 2003). More detail on the archives of Leighton Park School in Reading and the addition of two Scottish schools in *Quaker Connections* No 30, Nov 2003.

**London Local History Books.** A flyer lists for sale by post a wide range of local history books, postcards and maps from general publishers and from organisations in Barnet, Camden, Edmonton, Enfield, Hornsey, Islington and Westminster. (*Metropolitan*, London and N Middlesex FHS, Vol 26, No 2 (100), Dec 2003).

**We don't spell our name that way!** Article explaining why spellings differ in Parish Registers. (Shropshire FHS Journal, Vol 24, No 4, Dec 2003).

**The Convict ship *Alexander* 1806.** Names of male and female convicts, convicts' wives and passengers on the *Alexander* which arrived in Sydney in 1806. (*Australian Family Tree Connections*, Jan 2004).

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## Foto Restore

Turning a Disaster into a Memory



# Repairing old photographs

Kevin Tomes

*Of all the documents passed to us by close relatives after their death, photographs must be one of the most important. Photographic evidence brings reality to our memories, but all too often ancient photographs have lost their glamour, become faded, or even torn. So how can we revive the damage brought about by the ravages of time? Here Kevin Tomes explains how even relatively cheap (and sometimes free) programs for photo editing can do the job. And in many cases it's much easier than you think.*

Working with pictures is the same as working with text files – you create a new file or picture, edit it, save it, print it, and possibly open it again tomorrow for re-editing or printing. Before you start it's worthwhile setting up some folders for 'just scanned pictures', 'editing in progress pictures' and perhaps 'pictures to keep'.

To begin scanning you will need:

- a scanner (you don't need an expensive one – even using relatively inexpensive hardware will produce excellent pictures)
- editing software (again this doesn't need to be expensive. Photoshop LE is a great program and has been given away free on covers of computer digital and camera magazines)
- a computer and naturally a photograph in need of repair.

Before you scan your first picture consider what you require as an end product. Will you want to use it on your computer for family tree software, will you want to print copies for your family, or do you expect to print an enlargement for framing? The answer to these questions will govern the resolution (or dpi/lpi) that you will ask the scanner to use. Scanning at too high a resolution means wasted disk space, and at too low a resolution means poorer quality printing. We scan most pictures at 300 dpi if they are going to end up being printed at the same size or smaller. If they will need enlarging then we follow a pretty basic rule of thumb.

A rough rule of thumb to calculate the resolution is to divide the printer's maximum dpi by three. That means a 300 dpi printer

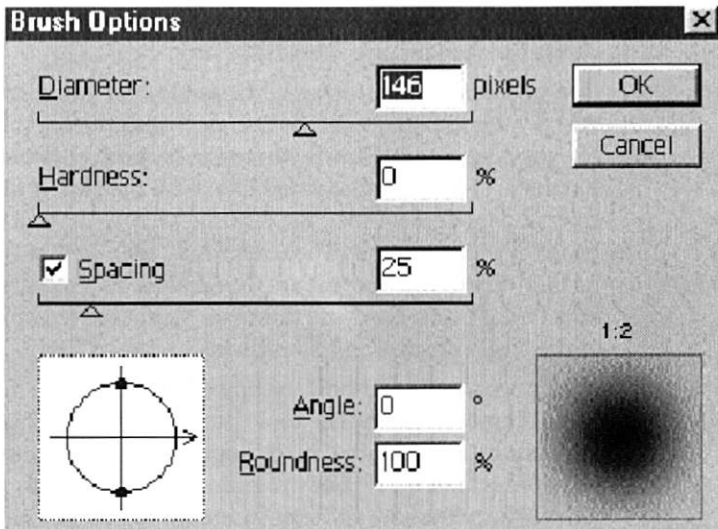
gives you a halftone (printed photograph) resolution of 100 dpi – about the quality of a newspaper photo. A 600 dpi printer gives you a resolution of about 200 dpi – just about standard magazine quality. If this sounds too much like techno-gabble then ignore it and scan at 300 dpi until you get more experience.

The next thing to think about is the kind of colour you will use. Scanners scan in a mode called RGB (stands for red, green and blue). That's the method televisions and computer monitors use to display pictures. Printing machines work with different colours. They use a mode called CMYK (stands for Cyan, Magenta, Yellow and black). If your work is going to be used only on computers then feel free to keep it as a RGB file. Otherwise it's handy to change it to a CMYK mode fairly early in your work. This will give you a better idea of what the printed article will print like. I even scan black and white pictures as colour (I think the scanner picks up more subtle tones this way). I change them back to greyscale when I've finished editing.

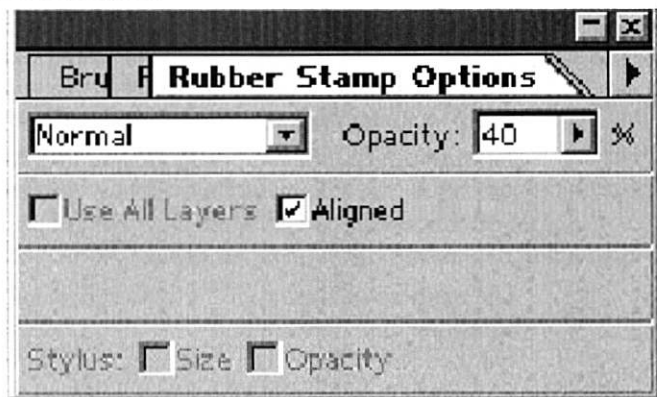
If you forget or can't figure how to change the colour mode don't panic. Nothing bad will happen and you can always change it tomorrow if you want.

Soon after scanning, save the file. Then make a copy to work on. This will save re-scanning if things really go wrong. This brings us on to file types. When you save your work the program will probably default to its own file type. These work with that program only and won't usually give you something you can put into your family tree program. There are many kinds of file types, but in practice you only need one or two. TIF files aren't the smallest but everyone (and almost all programs) can use them. JPG files are equally popular and offer the bonus of compressing the files to save a lot of disk space. Be aware though that when you edit a JPG file and re-save it will re-compress the file. Eventually you will compress until it is unuseable. Of course you can still open and view it as often as you like (as long as you don't re-save it) and it will be fine.

When repairing pictures you will only need to use a couple of tools. When using these tools you will have to select a 'brush' and pick attributes for the brush. Imagine doing a watercolour. You will need a broad very soft brush for doing the soft wash for the sky and a small firm-tipped brush for detailed work. Your program will allow you to select a brush size and alter its 'softness'.



The second brush option is that concerning 'opacity'. This controls how thick your paint is, or how many coats of paint you will need to completely cover what you are doing (I normally keep this at around 50%). Both of these options, soft brush edges and thinning your paint, reduce the problem of seeing the join when you make repairs.



The first thing to do with the picture itself is to look at the strength of colour or contrast. Each program has a lot of different options for doctoring this. In Photoshop I work with the 'levels' controls. In Photopaint I use the 'gamma'. These add depth to the whole picture. Then I'd play with the contrast settings. (I say

'play', 'work', 'try' etc because there is no single answer as to what works for each picture. This is the artsy bit.)

Don't be tempted to deal with the small dust and scratches, or try sharpening the image yet. Best to deal with the big things first, like missing pieces. This is where the first 'artsy' decision is made. You have to decide what you'd like to fill the gap. It's better to copy and 'bodge' some of the existing picture than to try and 'paint' a similar colour. The colour may tone well but won't include any of the fine texture that makes up a picture, and so will look out of place. Next use the same technique to copy over some of the larger creases and blemishes.

Here's an overview of how to copy bits of picture to fill in missing bits or remove marks. The tool to use is called a 'rubber stamp' in Photoshop, and 'cloning' in Photopaint. Most programs have something similar. If your program doesn't then this part of the job will be a lot more difficult (if not impossible). The tool works by using the brush to first select where you want to copy from, and then to paint to the new location. This is where the size and softness of your brush will become important.

Remember – none of this is cast in stone. The only way to find what works best for you is to practise. Let people know you are doing this and you'll be amazed at how many old photos arrive on your doorstep to practise with.

For busy parts of pictures such as foliage it becomes much easier. You can copy random leaves and the joins really don't matter much. Things like brickwork need some care to line up otherwise it will look like the brickie had a long lunch at the pub.

To work on scratches or creases use a fairly small and soft brush and try to 'clone' from as close to the scratch as possible. You'll find the tones here blend the best. For spots use a soft brush and 'dab' rather than stroke the brush.

The really small dust and scratches can be taken care of by using either the 'blur' feature or a 'dust and scratches' filter. Don't be tempted to let this facility, no matter how powerful, do all the work for you or before you know it all the carefully preserved details will disappear in the blur.

After 'blurring' your picture, probably the last thing to try is a little 'sharpening'. This effectively undoes what you did when you blurred your picture, hopefully just sharpening the edges of the objects in the picture. If you over-sharpen you get your dust and

scratches back, or can even make the picture appear very grainy. With just these few tools you can repair all but the most seriously damaged pictures. Like painting it will take some practice but will be well worth the effort. Just remember it's supposed to be enjoyable so don't stress. Save often and relax.

*Kevin Tomes works for Parchment at Oxford.*

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## Yeomanry House - a potted history

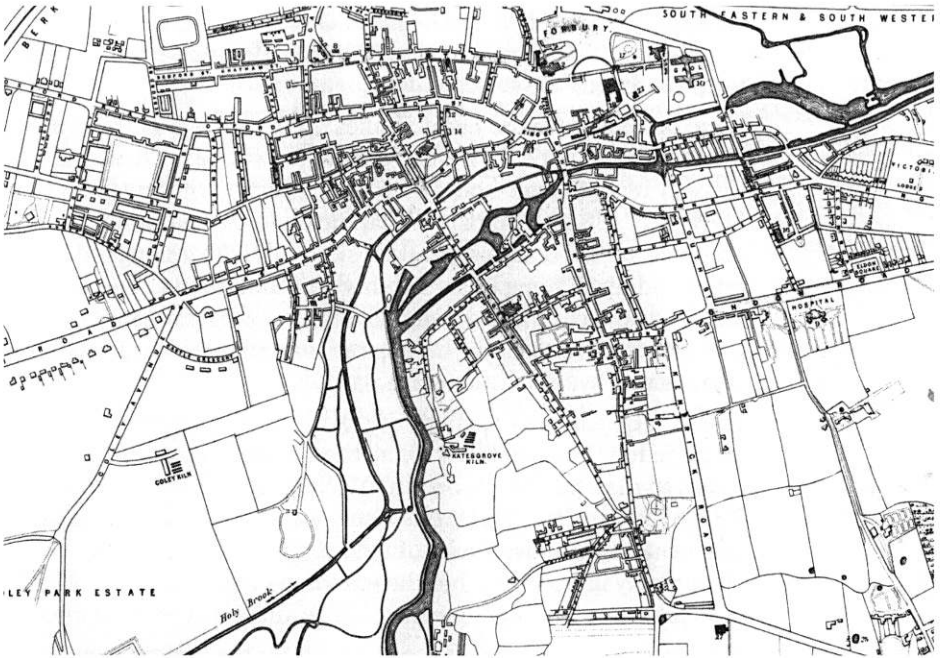
*Ed Pearce*

With a decision that the Research Centre should participate in the Heritage Weekend in September 2003 it was suggested that it would be appropriate to mount a small display on the history of Yeomanry House, the west wing of which we occupy. However, it was then realised that, apart from the fact that it is a Grade 2 listed building, thought to date from the early nineteenth century, little more was known.

Having drawn the short straw, as a first step, I examined early maps and plans available in the Reading Local Studies library. The earliest, a plan entitled 'The Fortifications of Reading during the Siege of 1643', emphasised the importance of this position at the top of 'Castle Street Hill', with a bastion at a corner where the town wall returned to the line of the Holy Brook and an earthwork marked 'The Forlorn Hope' at the beginning of the 'waye to Tylhurst'.

On Pride's map (1790) of 'Ten miles around Reading' it is just possible to make out 'Turnpike' at this point at the western limit of the town on the 'Bath & Bristol Road'. The position of the 40 milepost (from London) is also indicated – a milepost remembered from walking to and from school in the 1930s. No building is shown on the site but the drive to Coley House, the residence then of the Monck family, is shown. During the second world war, known then as Coley Park House, the Keevil family lived there, although the greater part of it was occupied by the Region 6 headquarters of the War Damage Commission. Tomkins map of 1802 shows the site as 'Nurserys' with the 'Old Fortification' adjacent.

A map, unidentified, of 1813 shows a building on the site which is most probably the present house, while Snare's 'New Plan of the Town of Reading', dated 1840, shows this more clearly, though smaller in size than the present building. At this stage Coley Hill was beginning to be developed and Tilehurst Road was then known as 'Prospect Hill'. By then, also, a lodge had appeared at the entrance to 'Coley Walk', now Coley Avenue.



*Macauley's 'Plan of the Town of Reading', 1861*

Macauley's 'Plan of the Town of Reading', 1861, shows the house, entrance drive and the extent of its grounds, with Castle Crescent now being developed. Finally, the 1/500 OS map of 1879 shows the house, identified now as 'Castle Hill House', in great detail, with the addition of the western wing which we now occupy, outbuildings, greenhouses and gardens and its own lodge (still there). By now Monck's lodge on Coley Avenue had been augmented by the addition of the two imposing archways, surmounted by stone griffons, flanking the road. These are long since demolished, but will, no doubt be remembered by some local members and frequently featured in the late Harold Hill's 'Reading in Yesteryear' series: favourite sites for 'hide and seek', as I recall. Surprisingly, this same map of 1879 identifies the large building with the cedar tree on the opposite side of Castle Hill – the old 'King's Arms Inn' – also as 'Castle Hill House'.

Turning now to its occupiers, 'our' Castle Hill House shows up on the 1851 Census (HO 107/1692/72) with Mr John Cooper (70), a landed proprietor, born in St Mary's parish, with his wife Hannah (64) from London and four locally-born but unmarried daughters

aged 42, 39, 32 and 30 – poor man! There was also a cook from Boughton in Wiltshire, a housemaid from Streatley and a groom from Bradfield.

Local directories in the Local Studies library show that by 1860 the Rev. and Mrs Levitt were in residence, with Mrs Levitt still there in 1875, though from Macauley's directory of 1867 to Stevens' of 1884 it is apparent that the building was being occupied as four or five separate residences, with amongst them a retired admiral, some lesser nobility and 'annuitants'. The Jesse family, who owned and developed a considerable amount of property in the area and whose name is perpetuated in Jesse Terrace nearby, also lived in one part.

The 1871 Census (RG 10/1278/118) lists 24 persons residing in the house in four households. A name change and change of use occurred in 1890 when it became 'Ascham House Preparatory School for Gentlemen' and this lasted until 1905. The building is not mentioned in directories of 1906 and 1907, when it was presumably unoccupied, but the founding of the Territorial Army in October 1907 brought further change and a new lease of life.

The directory for 1908 lists the building, for the first time, as Yeomanry House and it then housed HQ The Berkshire Yeomanry, Berks Royal Horse Artillery, Berks Territorial Army Association and HQ South Midland Mounted Brigade. By 1914 it was also an Army Service Corps depot and by 1918 the HQ of the 4th (TA) Bn. Royal Berkshire Regiment was also established here. Use as the local TA HQ continued between the wars, with a drill hall and riding school housed in a large building to the south-west of the house, in the area now occupied by Berkshire Record Office.

By 1939 the units housed were 264 Berks Field Battery RA (TA), 395 Berks Yeomanry Battery RA (TA), 49th South Midland Divisional Company RAOC and HQ South Midland Infantry Brigade. During WW2 the LDV, later the Home Guard, were much in evidence and one has memories of training there in 1943, prior to joining the army, with such fearsome weapons as the Blacker Bombard and the Sticky Bomb. At this time, several of the larger houses in nearby Coley Avenue, Castle Crescent and Mansfield Road were occupied as the headquarters of various army units and a bomb which fell in 1941 on a house in Coley Park Road did some minor damage.

The Army and the TA moved out finally in 1967 but not before the



small group of semi-detached houses on the edge of the property and fronting onto Coley Avenue had been built as WD housing for the permanent staff instructors. These, now private, back onto the Record Office. The drill hall was leased to various local organisations, amongst them one for model railway enthusiasts and also a model car-racing track. The Museum Service also had a base here and the Register of Births, Marriages and Deaths moved from Thorn Street to its present home in Yeomanry House in March 1968.

The year 2000 saw further changes on the site when the Berkshire Record Office, which had left Shinfield Park following the dissolution of Berkshire County Council, moved into newly-built premises to the west of Yeomanry House and opened for business in October 2000.

We originally established a Research Centre at Prospect School in March 1995 but after school expansion moved the Research Centre to Yeomanry House in May 2000.

### **WILTSHIRE'S NIMROD INDEXES**

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## Q & A

Jean Debney

### **A photograph by Marrett & Co of Maidenhead**

*Sarah Johnson (4814), Ashbourne, DE6 5BE*

*There are no dates on this photograph which was found underneath another picture in a frame. I am hoping it is a lady born in 1830 who died in 1907 and was the mother of nine children. When and whereabouts was the photographer, Marrett & Co, in Maidenhead?*



The style of lettering on this photograph and her dress suggests that it was from the 1890s or possibly very early 1900s. It is what is known as a vignette i.e. a picture of the head and shoulders only which fades away into white at the edges.

A slightly earlier date is confirmed by entries for the photographers, Marrett & Co of Maidenhead, in Kelly's Trade Directories: for 1887 at Market Street; 1891 at 2 Northwick Terrace, Market Street; 1895 at 4 Northwick Terrace, Market Street & Queen Street; and in 1897 at Northwick Studio, Market Street.<sup>1</sup>

Although you haven't given any measurements, to judge by the size of the wording at the foot it appears to be a cabinet card measuring 4fi" x 6fi" (114 x 165mm).

As an elderly woman her clothes are unfashionable and consist of a basic long-sleeved top buttoned down the front and the ubiquitous brooch – this one is shaped like a leaf rather than the more usual round or oval. Inside the neck band she has tucked (tacked or pinned?) a small white inner band (ruffle) which would have been the only washable part of her dress. She may also have had similar small white inner cuffs round her wrists. The sleeve on her left arm has an interesting detail of a ruched strip down the front.

The small black dots are where the photographer has 'improved' the pale image by touching up the pupils of her eyes, between her lips, in her hair, on the sleeve and outlining the brooch. In the course of time, the picture has faded a little and they now show up quite starkly. The lighter, fuzzy dots scattered over the whole image are 'foxing' caused by storage in damp conditions: very hard to avoid in the unheated houses in the past.

She appears to be aged about 60+ and therefore is quite likely to be a portrait of 'your' lady who was born in 1830 and died in 1907.

1. With thanks to Paul, Local Studies Librarian, Maidenhead Library, who checked this information for me: the directories available were only 1883 (no entry), 1891, 1895 & 1897 (above) and 1906 (no entry).

## A midwife from the early twentieth century

*Mrs Jill Carr (4782), Camberley, Surrey GU17 9JE*

*This is a photograph of my grandmother, Edith Emma Sargeant, a midwife enrolled on 26 May 1904. She was registered in the Midwives Roll 1907 as No. 11238, c/o Miss B Blair, Heatherley, Wellington College Station, Crowthorne, Berkshire and married in 1908 in Hackney, London.*

*Stamped on the back of the picture is 'A. Piper, Photographer, ...escent Rd, Reading' and a couple of handwritten prices: 8/6 and 13/-. It is a postcard with the printed words 'For Inland Postage ONLY this space may be used for communication'.*



This is a charming picture taken outside of a pretty young midwife seated on a low wooden nursing chair with very new twins on her lap. Her uniform is reminiscent of a late Victorian maid's uniform. Her white Sister Dora cap is perched on top of her hair which is back-combed and drawn into a bun near the top of her head in a 'cottage-loaf' style. The 'strings' tied under her chin in a bow may

or may not be attached to the cap. She has a stiff white collar and cuffs and a high-bibbed apron, the former held in place with collar studs and the latter with several large safety pins at the waist and a white belt to cover them.

The address on your photo is probably Crescent Road, a turning off the Wokingham Road, Earley, opposite the shops by Palmer Park and the site of Sutton School. However, according to Mary Southerton's *A Century of Reading Photographers*, Arthur Piper was at 10 Pitcroft Ave between 1907 and 1910. She adds that he worked from home, not a studio and rubber stamped his name and address in an oval surround on the back of his photographs.<sup>1</sup>

Pitcroft Avenue is a turning on the opposite side of the Wokingham Road near the junction with St Peters Road where there used to be a tram terminus. Both addresses consist mainly of small brick terraced houses largely occupied by workers at Huntley and Palmer's Biscuit Factory.

Pictorial postcards with divided backs for a message and address were authorised by the Post Office in 1902 and rapidly became very popular for commercial views as holiday souvenirs, etc. and also by professional and amateur photographers to print pictures. At first the words 'For Inland Postage ONLY this space may now be used for communication' were printed on the back, but about 1904/5 the word 'now' was dropped: a useful indicator for dating early postcards.

As your grandmother was registered as a qualified midwife in 1904 this photograph was probably taken to commemorate this important event in her life and before she married sometime later. Until after the Second World War women had to resign from any employment on their marriage and take on their new, full-time job of caring for their husband and family. This dates your photograph to between 1904 and 1908.

*1. A Century of Reading Photographers* is an unpublished alphabetical typescript list of photographers compiled by Mary Southerton in 1986 from entries in trade directories. A copy is in our Reference Library, I have my own and there should also be one in the Reading Local Studies Library.

## Stillbirth records

*Name & address withheld for personal reasons*

*An elderly aunt told me one of my grandmother's sisters gave birth to an illegitimate child which, it was said, was registered as though it was her parents' child but it did not live. The event may have taken place sometime after 1906 or during the First World War. The impression I got was that the birth came as a total surprise, possibly because the girl tightened her corsets to conceal the pregnancy. She was born in 1892 and married in 1921. Her mother was born in 1865 and there is, of course a time limit when it would not have been plausible for her to give birth. Would such a birth have been registered and also would the death be registered?*

In 1906, your grandmother would have been 41 and quite capable of giving birth. However, the daughter born in 1892 and married at the age of 29, could have given birth any time between about 1909 (17y) and 1920 (28y) which is quite a long time span. If the baby lived even for a short time before dying the relevant certificates would be issued.

But, prior to 1927, there is no easy way to find out about stillbirths except by guesswork from a gap in a regularly spaced series of births or baptisms in a family or, as in your case, a family story. There may occasionally be an entry relating to the burial of a stillborn child in a burial register, but this is extremely unusual. Reading St Mary has the following burial entries in 1606<sup>1</sup>:

3 Feb - Daughter of John Wigg not baptised

29 Mar - Daughter of Rich Lovegrove not baptised

1 Apr - A son of Richard Johnes not baptised.

According to Church teaching unbaptised infants could not be saved so midwives were licensed by the bishop between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries to practise their craft, which included baptising any babies liable to die either in utero (before birth) or soon after. These infants were usually put into the next grave dug but there is a story that a stillborn or illegitimate baby in a cardboard box, found in Thatcham church tower, had

apparently been hidden until a suitable time came to bury it – which, in this case never happened.

Between 1 July 1837 and 1874, the local registrar was responsible for registering all live births in his sub-district within 42 days (six weeks - the same as today) and it was not until 1875 that, under the Births and Deaths Registration Act 1874, parents were made responsible for registering all live births<sup>2</sup>. No death certificate was required for a stillborn child which led to an increase in under-registration of live births, especially the illegitimate [Rogers, 108]. One source consulted said from 1874 deaths of stillborn children were registered if the body was identified and unidentified bodies were registered as 'unknown' or 'unidentified' and are indexed after 'Z' in the quarterly indexes. However, the GRO suggest that this may not be the case as you cannot technically register the death of a baby who has never lived independently of its mother.

Compulsory registration of stillbirths dates only from 1 July 1927 but there are no public indexes. The details, combining the characteristics of birth and death entries, are entered by the local registrar into a special register which, when full, is forwarded to the Registrar General. Certificates were issued, but only if the parent registering the event requested one – if they didn't ask, none was issued. Today the registrar enquires if the parents want a copy.

To obtain a copy of a stillbirth certificate retrospectively an application form must first be obtained from the GRO Stillbirth Department at Southport and completed by a parent or, if deceased, a sibling. Other relatives may also apply and each case is considered on its own merits. They cost £7, including search fees to check the family details which is refunded in full if the certificate is not issued for whatever reason. However in most, circumstances, unless you know the date, there is no way of finding out when a stillbirth took place and obtaining a certificate.

One of our Society members, who never saw her stillborn son, subsequently applied for a certificate which she treasures as the only evidence of his birth. The undertakers also told her where he was buried, although the practice then was to inter the body in another grave unless otherwise instructed. The cemetery has a memorial to all stillbirths and neo-natal deaths where she goes to remember him.

Following the scare about the effects of radiation on infant

mortality, the Population (Statistics) Act 1960 required compulsory notification of the causes of stillbirth.

In the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, women were kept deliberately ignorant of the way a baby was conceived and born, so the chances that your grandmother's sister didn't know she was pregnant are quite feasible. She probably thought she was putting on weight and then, as she developed labour pains, had eaten something that disagreed with her. In such circumstances many babies were delivered into the toilet making their survival rate very poor. Recent television programmes have recalled instances of this happening until quite recently especially among very young girls.

Unfortunately the above information indicates that 'no' is the answer to your questions about whether a stillborn child's birth and death will be registered and so your only record of the event is likely to be your elderly aunt's story.

Acknowledgements and thanks for answering my questions to:

1. The General Register Office, PO Box 2, Southport, PR8 2JD; Tel. 0151-471-4400 (Stillbirth Section); email <certificate.services@ons.gov.uk>; <www.ons.gov.uk>
2. David Owen, Reading District Registrar
3. An anonymous Berkshire FHS member for permission to quote her story.

Sources consulted:

Reading St Mary, Berks: Baptisms, Marriages and Burials 1538-1812 (2 vols, printed)

Mark Herber, *Ancestral Trails* (Sutton Publishing Ltd & Society of Genealogists 1997) p.47

Colin D Rogers, *The Family Tree Detective* (MUP 1983) p.108

Muriel Nissel, *People Count, a history of the General Register Office* (HMSO 1987) p.117

Tom Wood, *An Introduction to British Civil Registration* (Fedn.FHS 2nd edn 2000) p111



# Book Ends

*Jean Debney*

**General Conway and his Jersey Temple, Brian Read (Henley-on-Thames Archaeological and Historical Group, 1985). A5, white flexiback, illustrated, 36pp. Price £2.00 BFHS Bookshop, £ 2.50 inc p&p UK, £ 2.80 o/s surface.**

This is a well-written and referenced story of how a megalithic granite monument, discovered in St Helier on the Island of Jersey in 1785, was presented to General Conway, then the Governor of Jersey, who removed it to beautify the garden he was creating at his house, Park Place at Wargrave. The site of the 'Druid Temple' is marked on old maps and, despite questions in Parliament and housing development in the area, over 200 hundred years later it survives in a private garden. Another example of the high-handed attitude of eighteenth century wealthy gentlemen?

**Lifting the Latch, a life on the land, Sheila Stewart (Day Books, 2003, reprinted 2004). 130mm x 196mm (5.5" x 7.7"), flexiback, etchings & photographs, 231pp. Price £8.99 BFHS Bookshop, £10.25 inc p&p UK, £ 11.00 o/s surface.**

This is a fascinating story which took the award winning author over two years to complete. It was compiled from the tapes she made of 'Ould Mont' Abbott, carter and shepherd of Enstone, Oxfordshire who began life as a farm boy in 1915. Beautifully written to recreate his local dialect, 'bloodies' and all, it includes a glossary and notes about the people and places mentioned.

**The Winkfield Chronicles, a new history of Winkfield (Winkfield History Project Group Publishers, 2000). A5, black illustrated flexiback, list of documentary sources and index of properties, 195 pp. Price £9.50 BFHS Bookshop, £11.20 inc p&p UK, £12.10 o/s surface.**

Published in Millennium year and researched and written by several members of the group, this book contains new historical

facts and events which complement the previously published *History of Winkfield*. The chapters deal with natural history, crown, church and congregation, historic houses in Winkfield, Winkfield's common alehouses, the parish council, Inchmery (you have to read the book to find out what this is), Cranbourne, Maiden's Green, trades and crafts in Winkfield Row, brickmaking and Civil Defence during the Second World War.

**'Time Gentlemen please' (300+ years of pubs and brewing in East and West Ilsley), Susanna G Burnay (Sigma Books, 2003). ISBN 0-9542134-2-4; A5 flexiback, illustrated, index, 102pp. Price £8. 00 BFHS Bookshop, £8.00 inc p&p UK, £8.70 o/s surface, £9.20 airmail.**

For a small village, there were a lot of pubs in East (Market) Ilsley due, as the author explains in her introduction, to the position of the village on an ancient north-south route, sheep fairs held between 1620 and 1934, and a weekly market. West Ilsley is smaller and more isolated but still had two breweries. Two figures, based on a list compiled in 1577 and data from Kelly's Directory of 1847, compare the distribution of public houses in the county of Berkshire.

The main part of this publication, illustrated with photographs and sketch maps, is the history of each of the fourteen pubs (three of which still exist) which were on or near the High Street, East Ilsley, and two breweries – Morlands and Horners – in West Ilsley. This is followed by three appendices listing the references used, transcripts of probate inventories and an alphabetical list of family histories of publicans.

This interesting publication could be a very good excuse for a pub crawl in East Ilsley, preferably with a teetotal driver.

# Berkshire Burial Index

The parishes and periods which have been added to the Berkshire Burial Index since the position shown in the September 2003 issue of the *Berkshire Family Historian* are shown below. The index now contains more than 295,000 entries.

The CD ROM of the Berkshire Burial Index which was published in December 2002 was updated in November 2003. The update includes the parishes and periods listed below except for the periods in italics which have been added to the index subsequently.

Ascot Heath All Saints 1909-1941

Barkham St James 1539-1733

Beenham St Mary 1561-1778

Brimpton St Peter 1607-1674 (BTs) and 1735-1755 (BTs)

Buckland St Mary the Virgin *1838-1930*

Buscot St Mary 1869-1950

Caversham St Peter *1652-1682*

Chaddleworth St Andrew *1736-1797*

Chieveley St Mary the Virgin 1745-1763, 1895-1931, *1931-2003*

Childrey St Mary the Virgin 1813-1883

Clewer St Andrew *1838-1845*

Coleshill All Saints *1813-1986*

Cookham Holy Trinity 1680-1694, 1721-1727

Cumnor St Michael 1851-1899

East Challow St Nicholas *1813-1829*

Hatford Holy Trinity *1874-1969*

Hermitage Holy Trinity 1840-1978

Hungerford St Lawrence 1914-1923, *1923-1935*

Inkpen St Michael & All Angels 1607-1623 (BTs)

Letcombe Bassett St Michael & All Angels *1776-1812*

New Windsor St George's Chapel 1625-1737

New Windsor St John the Baptist *1644-1663, 1687-1696,*

*1708-1732, 1781-1792*

Old Windsor SS Peter & Andrew 1728-1759 (BTs), 1772-1812  
Reading St Mary 1777-1784  
Remenham St Nicholas 1697-1909  
Sparsholt Holy Cross 1734-1812  
Stanford Dingley St Denys 1700-1979  
Stratfield Mortimer St Mary 1681-1812 and 1925-1949  
Sunninghill St Michael & All Angels 1813-1837, 1870-1947  
Swallowfield All Saints 1754-1812  
Thatcham St Mary 1880-1914  
Warfield St Michael 1779-1812, 1813-1859  
West Hanney St James the Great 1783-1812, 1813-1848,  
1848-1964  
West Hendred Holy Trinity 1727-1812

Details of the various options for researching burials in the Berkshire Burial Index are given on page 169.

## **Docklands Ancestors Ltd Baptisms Registers**

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**St John Wapping 1813-1847 (3 fiche) £3.95**

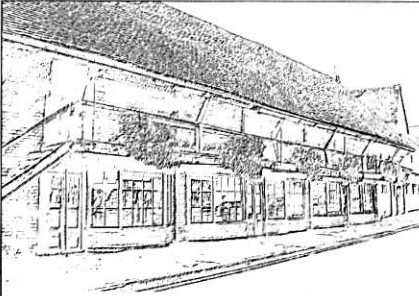
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COUNCIL

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## Researching Local or Family History?

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**Library: Local History and Archaeology**  
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**Nominal Rolls**  
**Maps**  
**Photographs**  
**Local History Files**  
**Sites & Monuments Record**  
**Listed Buildings**  
**Treasure Advice**

The Resources Room is available for consultation on a Tuesday and Thursday.



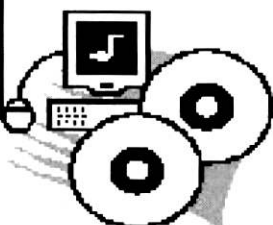
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More information about the Museum is available at

**[www.westberks.gov.uk](http://www.westberks.gov.uk)** (Under Tourism).

**BERKSHIRE**  
**BFHS** FAMILY  
HISTORY  
SOCIETY



## Computer Branch

**Wednesday 18 February '04**  
**'Census Search  
Techniques'**  
with **Jeanne Bunting**

**Wednesday 17 March 2004**  
**Chad Hannah**  
**Our own 'Mister  
FamilyHistoryOnLine'**

**Wednesday 21 April 2004**  
**'Your Questions  
Answered'**  
and **Annual Meeting**

**The Computer  
Branch's  
next  
meetings.**

Venue:  
**St Peter's  
Hall, Earley,  
Reading**  
7.15pm for  
7.45pm  
**Come and join  
Us**

### Forthcoming events

**Publishing on the Internet  
with Peter Christian**

**'Projects' – the inside story**

# The Bishop's family

*Daphne Spurling*

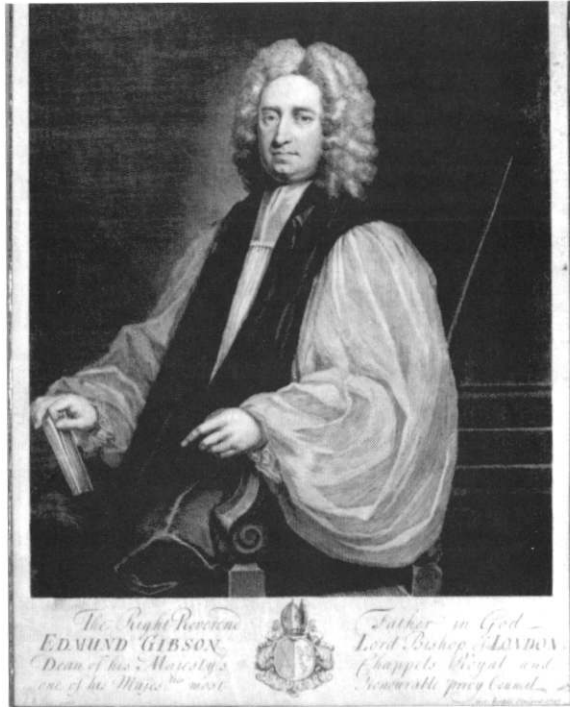
Family historians frequently discuss the value of different sources of information, especially if they give different answers. This article describes research which started to find out why a relative had a portrait of an early eighteenth century bishop and ended by being a comparison of various sources of data. Many regard the Parish Registers as the closest we get to the truth although others cite errors even in recent entries. Just occasionally, as in this case, a more reliable source miraculously appears even after 300 years.

## **The Portrait**

The story began 25 years ago with the death of Miss Olivia Gibson, my husband's great-aunt. As we were helping to sort out the house an imposing black and white etching of a portrait with a gold mount and a thick black frame caught our eye. The caption read:

The Right Reverend Father in God  
EDMUND GIBSON Lord Bishop of LONDON  
Dean of his Majesty's Chappels Royal and  
One of his Majest<sup>ies</sup> most Honourable privy Council  
I. Ellys pinx Geo Vertue  
Sculpsit 1727

No family member present had heard of him but given his names and occupation it was likely that he 'was one of us'. No one wanted the picture so we, not wishing it to disappear into a skip or charity shop if important in the family, offered to take it. The Bishop's portrait hung almost forgotten in an attic for 20 years until we moved and found a suitably dark corner in which to hang the sombre gentleman. Four years ago we contacted a cousin, the Rev Robert Gibson, who told us that Bishop Edmund Gibson's parents and our Gibson ancestors lived on opposite sides of the broad pass that divides the Lake District fells and the Pennines.



Neither Robert nor his father had been able to establish a link between the two families although, he added, 'the tradition has always been handed down in our family that the two families were collaterally related and this view is confirmed by persons who recently lived in the neighbourhood and were related to the Gibsons of Bampton'. What a challenge to us new-comers to family history.

### **www.familysearch.com**

This was an ideal opportunity to try out the familysearch website that we had heard so much about. Not wanting to miss anything, we ticked 'all the sources available' box. Soon we found Bishop Edmund as the son of Mr and Mrs Gibson of Bampton. Well, we thought, that was not going to get us much further in proving a family connection. We learnt that Edmund married Margaret Bettesworth of Bampton whose parents were Mr and Mrs Bettesworth. Obviously Bampton was a very formal place in those



days if no one used Christian names. Edmund and Margaret were listed as having 12 children all born at Bampton at two yearly intervals: (George c 1697, William c 1699, Robert c 1701, Elizabeth c 1703, Jane c 1705, Anne c 1707, Margaret c 1709, female c 1711, Mary c 1713, female c 1715 and female c 1717).

By this time, we novices were very sceptical of this source. To become Bishop of London, Edmund must have been a 'high flyer' in the Church so it seemed unlikely that all his children would be born in a remote Westmorland village.

### **The Biography**

We then remembered that together with the portrait we had taken a biography of Edmund Gibson by Norman Sykes<sup>1</sup> from Aunt O's house. The book had been given by great-uncle Edmund to his father Rev T W Gibson (you understand why we thought the Bishop to be one of us) on his birthday in 1927. TWG had not read the book, and neither had anyone else in the intervening 75 years as none of the pages were cut! To cut them now would reduce the value of the book, but on the other hand we suspected the book had little or no value, cut or uncut. So out came a sharp knife in the expectation that a biographer would be a reliable source of information.

From Sykes we learned that the Bishop was very precocious, intelligent and political who when young was a scholar of distinction and eminence. After the long Catholic/Protestant turbulence, the Hanoverian dynasty opened up new possibilities and Edmund used his family connections to good advantage. He was active in political affairs, becoming the friend of kings and their ministers including Walpole (Prime Minister 1721-1742). He persuaded the clergy that their interest lay with the new monarchs despite their traditional loyalty to the Stuarts. He was in turn Rector of Lambeth, archdeacon of Surrey, Librarian at Lambeth Palace, Bishop of Lincoln (1716-1720) and Bishop of London (1720-1748). Sykes states that 'his solid scholarship, untiring industry, practical sagacity and sober piety represented the best qualities of churchmanship while his lack of originality, poetic feeling and prophetic foresights equally represented the worst'. The satire of the pamphleteers prevented his being offered the archbishopric of Canterbury. He died aged 79 and is buried in a vault, built during his lifetime for himself and his family, in Fulham churchyard. The remains of his wife Margaret, who had

died 7 years previously, were moved to Fulham in the last month of Edmund's life.

Sykes was much less forthcoming on Edmund's private life but does tell us that he was the younger son of Edmund Gibson and Jane Langhorn. Sykes and the familysearch website disagree about the identity of Edmund's wife and details of the children. She was initially buried in the Bettesworth vault in the chancel of Lambeth Church and has been variously described as the widow, sister and sister-in-law of Dr John Bettesworth, Dean of the Arches. Familysearch gave her as Margaret Bettesworth of Bampton whereas Sykes identifies her as the daughter of the Rev John Jones, Rector of Selattyn in Shropshire. Sykes found that the registers at Selattyn were very badly kept during Rev Jones' 30-year incumbency: Rev Jones even neglected to record his own marriage, the baptisms of his daughters and the burial of his wife!! But Rev Jones left his estate to his daughters Margaret Gibson (wife of Edmund Gibson) and Jane Jones. Sykes concluded that Margaret was the sister-in-law of Dean Bettesworth, Jane having married Dean Bettesworth after her father wrote his will. Other than the discussion of her identity, the biography dismisses Margaret Gibson with 'Fully occupied by the cares of a numerous family Mrs Gibson does not seem to have emerged much from the domestic sphere and she is hardly ever mentioned in her husband's correspondence'.

As to the date of the marriage, the familysearch.com gives none but has the eldest son being born in 1695. Sykes used Edmund Gibson's letters to place the marriage in 1704. There is also disagreement over the number and names of the children. Familysearch lists 12 children born from c1697 to c1717. Sykes says the eldest son was born in 1705 and died in 1709 but his family tree omits this son and lists nine (Elizabeth, John, Thomas, Edmund, George, William, Robert, Anne and Mary) children living to adulthood. He does not give birthdates.

### **The Guildhall Library**

The last and most important source of information was found accidentally. My husband and I were spending the day at the Guildhall Library. He was engrossed in dusty tomes but the records I had planned to see had to be ordered 24 hours in advance. So I wandered around, browsing, and came to the Name

Index. There was Edmund Gibson, Bishop of London. A packet of papers discovered in a basement had been handed over to the authorities at St Paul's Cathedral who had handed to the Guildhall Library a page approximately 12" x 14" giving details of his family<sup>2</sup>. A note at the bottom states: 'The above account was written by Bishop Edmund Gibson with the lines at the bottom written in another hand'.

Figure 1 Transcription of list of children in handwriting of Bishop Edmund Gibson

<i>An account of the Marriage and Children Of Edmund Gibson and Margaret His wife</i>		
Saturday	Edmund Gibson Married at St Peter's Cornhill	
Jul 22 1704	Margaret Jones by his Grace the Lord Archbishop of Canterbury	
Friday	A son born dead after a very severe and dangerous	
Oct 26 1705	labour, between the hours of ten and eleven in the morning	Lambeth
Friday	Elizabeth born about 9 a clock at night	Lambeth
Aug 15 1707		
Sunday	Edmund born about 10 a clock on Sunday morning (Died Sunday Jan 30 following	Lambeth
Dec 5 1708		Lambeth
Saturday	John born half an hour after 11 a clock at Night	Lambeth
Febr 18 1709/10		
Sunday	Thomas born forty minutes past 3 in the Morning	Lambeth
Mar 4 1710/11		
Trinity Sunday	Margaret born 50 minutes past 8 at night.	Lambeth
June 15 1712	Died	
Tuesday	Edmund born about 3 in the morning	Lambeth
April 15 1714		
Wednesday	George born 24 mins past 9 at night	Lambeth
Jan 18 1715/16		
Tuesday	William born about 2 in the morning	Queen's Square
Sept 22 1717		Westminster
Sunday	Margaret born about 9 in ye morning	Duke Street

**Table 1 Comparison of birth years of children of Bishop Edmund Gibson from three sources  
Edmund Gibson mss.      Biography by Sykes      Familysearch.com**

	Born	Born	Born
Unnamed male	1705	1705	--
Elizabeth	1707	1707*	c 1703
Edmund	1708	<i>no year given</i>	c 1695
John	1709	<i>no year given</i>	not mentioned
Thomas	1710	<i>no year given</i>	not mentioned
Margaret	1712	not mentioned	c 1709
Edmund	1714	see above	see above
George	1715	<i>no year given</i>	c 1697
William	1717	<i>no year given</i>	c 1699
Margaret	1719	not mentioned	see above
Jane	1720	not mentioned	c 1705
Robert	after 1723	<i>no year given</i>	c 1701
Anne	after 1723	<i>no year given</i>	c 1707
Unnamed female			c 1711
Mary		<i>no year given</i>	c 1713
Unnamed female			c 1715
Unnamed female			c 1717

Notes: \* Sykes does not name girl born in 1707

Places of birth: Edmund Gibson: first eight at Lambeth, next three at Westminster and last two not given

Sykes: no place of birth given

Familysearch: all births at Bampton

From the Bishop's own document we know that he married Margaret Jones in 1704. So Sykes is probably right about her identity and Familysearch is wrong to identify her as Margaret Bettesworth. Edmund lists the birth of 11 children (of which three died young) and a note in different handwriting at the bottom states that two more children, Robert and Jane, were born after Edmund was translated to the See of London in 1723, giving a total of 13 children. Neither Sykes nor Familysearch picked up on the two names Edmund and Margaret that appear twice in Edmund's list due to the death of the first child of that name. Also both Sykes and Familysearch have a non-existent Mary, perhaps a corruption of Margaret.

### **Conclusion**

The discovery of Edmund Gibson's portrait in an aunt's house started this search. The exercise proved to be an early lesson in the variations between different sources of information. We were extremely fortunate in finding what must be the most accurate of all sources: that of a parent. The detail Edmund gave belied the impression in his biography that he had little interest in his family.

And is there a connection between the Bishop and my husband's family? That research got forgotten as we became intrigued by the different accounts of his family and still remains to be done.

<sup>1</sup> *Edmund Gibson Bishop of London 1669 - 1748. A Study in Politics and Religion in the Eighteenth Century* by Norman Sykes, Publ OUP 1926

<sup>2</sup> Guildhall Library, London, Manuscript reference MS 25,761

## Letters to the Editor

*Mr Victor J. Pocock, Hillcrest, Beedon, Newbury, Berkshire RG20 8SN*

I was very interested in Carolyn Boulton's observations in the December issue on an unusual baptism. The 'daughter Mary Jane Butler who was baptised on 5 March 1857 and was re-baptised as a boy at Burghclere' was my second cousin twice removed. My great-grandmother was Rachel Butler who married Alfred Smith. The baby's mother was buried on 12 March 1857 in the same year. That means that she died very soon after the birth, so it would not be surprising there was so much confusion. The name of the baby was probably Harry as a person with this name was buried at Beedon in 1927 aged 69.

*Christine Matthews*

I think the most likely explanation for the confusion over the sex of the child is that he had undescended testicles.

## Help Wanted

*Christine Matthews*

One of my ancestors, John Charles Girard (Charles Jacques Girard) came over to England in the early 1800s. I believe he was born between 1766 and 1770. He had worked as a gardener at Versailles for the Duke of Orleans, who arranged his passage to this country. I have copies of many family papers I was given about his arrival and also information about his family: wife (Charlotte Sophia Dieuset), children (John Girard and Sophia Charlotte Girard). However, I know nothing about his ancestors and do not know quite where to start. Has anyone experience of this sort of research? Mr Girard and his family lived in Castle Street around 1814 and Paddington (Marylebone) later. He was

a well known botanist who discovered a new species of plant *Wolffia Arrhiza* (small type of duckweed) and is mentioned in the archive at Kew Gardens.

*Valerie A. Norris, 10 Queens Avenue, West Byfleet, Surrey KT14 7AD*

### **Batten and Beacon**

John Batten, born 2 April 1775 at Thatcham, married Charlotte Beacon on 24 January 1802 at Thatcham. John's parents were William and Mary Batten. Has anybody come across the marriage of William and Mary, and did John have any siblings? John and Charlotte Batten had children: George baptised 22 May 1803, Mary Ann baptised 25 January 1807, John baptised 12 May 1811, all at Greenham. They also had Harriet, my 3 x great-grandmother, who was baptised 5 February 1809. I would dearly like to hear from any descendants of the Battens and Beacons.

## **Tracing Your 20th Century Family History**

The sources for twentieth century family history are extensive, but so often everything beyond civil registration records and the 1901 census are ignored. This book introduces you to the wide range of sources that are available, and that will enable you to track your family's history back to 1900. Published FFHS, 2003. Price £6.60

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email [samjraymond@btopenworld.com](mailto:samjraymond@btopenworld.com)

## 'Didn't you know they came from Reading ?' - a seventeenth century family saga

Margaret Main

My father, Peter, was born at Streatham in London during the summer of 1900. He was the eldest of five children who were brought up to believe that their family, Hamlin, was of Huguenot origin. It was not until the late 1980s that I had the opportunity to test the theory. By this time he had been dead for some 20 years and my cousin, John, had started to explore the family's history in the capital city during the nineteenth century, but could find no link back into the 1700s.

Serendipity, through membership of the Hampshire Genealogical Society (my husband's county) found previously unknown cousins and the knowledge that our forbears had come, not from across the Channel, but down the Thames from Reading. They were to be found, from the late sixteenth century, in the Borough, Tilehurst, Burghfield, Caversham and Sonning, but there were always connections with the City of London. In the 1580s, among the butchers in the town, were Edward and Michael Hamlin. Both traded in the market and both were, on occasion, fined. Michael for '*hogges that offendeth*' and Edward for '*the weight too ligghte*'. During the next 30-40 years, a number of references to the family are seen in the registers and churchwarden's accounts of the parish churches in and around Reading. Michael died in 1615 and Edward in 1620. Both left wills, the first among the dozen or so that survive from the seventeenth century, and from now on it seems practical to treat each family separately.

For several reasons I believe that they were cousins, if not brothers, but have no proof of their relationship. No son among Edward's family is ever christened Michael or Henry and Michael's does not use Edward, but both families use John, James, William and Francis. When Edward Hamlin died in 1620 he was no longer a butcher, but a yeoman with property and land; some of which required an Inquisition Post Mortem. This calculated that houses and 68 acres of land were producing an annual income of £4.10s (£370 at the present day). A Chancery Deposition of 1601 gives his age as 53, suggesting that he was born during the reign of Edward VI.



His will was lengthy and he made special provision for the butchers of the town. The rent from eight acres of land in Burghfield was to provide *'towards the Yearlie reliefe of Ten poore Olde men in Reddinge aforesaid forever of which number my mynde is three or fower of them at the least shalbee Butchers if any such poore butchers shall have neede'*. He was survived by his wife Ann and six children: John, Edward, William, Agnes (Baker), Deborah (Stroude) and Mary (Blake). Anne's comfort was assured with plate, jewels etc, apparently her dowry, plus the lease of a house in Fryer Street. His daughters received bequests of silver.



*A seventeenth century butcher's shop*

William was to receive £150 (£12,300) at the age of 31 while his older brothers, John and Edward, inherited land. Here came a sour note: *'I give and bequeath to my said sonne Edward whome though I find not so dutiful and loving unto mee as I expected when I advanced hime withall my free landes and Tenements (when he married Susan (Gunter) in 1618) yet because he should call himeself to bitter remembrance of his dutie unto me neglected but Threepence'*.

The brothers, John and Edward, went to law in 1635 squabbling over some copyhold land in Tilehurst, but in 1640 described as a yeoman, John, died. His elder and bachelor son, a tanner and yet another Edward, survived his father by just a year. Their wills provide for Edward's mother, Elizabeth, his younger brother John

and four of five sisters, Catherine (Cranidge), Mary (Wilder), Sarah (Fuller) and Elizabeth (Jones). The fifth, Frances (Johnson) was only mentioned in her mother's will. There was a bonus - each will had an inventory. There is a complete description of the house and farm at Hunny End, Tilehurst. The house comprised a hall, parlour, kitchen, 'butterie' and cellar, plus four bedrooms and a cheese loft with 'nine and fortie cheeses'. In addition there were barns, a stable, brewhouse and millhouse. Furniture, linen, kitchenware, tools, farm implements and livestock were all listed plus nearly 70 acres of cereal crops, the whole assessed at £5281.8.4d (£391.000).

John's widow, Elizabeth, died in 1642 leaving their younger son, John, in Tilehurst. She made her mark to the will, although 'Bookes' were noted in the inventory. Her will was proved just five days before Charles I raised his standard at Nottingham and the Civil War began. The family were Royalists and Edward, the ungrateful one, refused to take the oath as a Borough alderman in 1643. He was promptly imprisoned in the Compter and fined. The Parliamentary commissioners exacted a considerable sum from him, £33.6.8d, on his release and a similar sum six months later (the equivalent of £5,000 in all). His nephew John, in Tilehurst, went to the Chancery Court in 1647 with a dispute over some leasehold land which, he said, had caused him considerable loss of income. Whatever the legal situation he said that the disputed land had been laid waste and he had *'no remedy or recompense by reason of ye great numbers of unruly soldiers then quartering and swarming in this unhappy part of the Kingdom'*. He lived on until the Restoration, dying in 1662 and with only two surviving daughters, Hannah (Curtis) and Elizabeth (Horne) of Stratfield Saye, his direct line died out.

His uncle and aunt, Edward and Susan, lived in Burghfield. Their family was small, a son Edward (the third of seven generations bearing this Christian name) and his sisters, Ann (Goade) and Deborah (Leaver). The only son, Edward, had married at Sonning in 1648, Elizabeth (Farnham). During the years that followed, until his death in 1663, they raised seven children. The next Edward and his siblings: John, William, James, Francis, Elizabeth and Susannah. From now on finding the family became more difficult. Aged 24, the newest Edward married Elizabeth (Page), a 'gentleman's daughter', in 1673 at St Giles's Cripplegate in the City of London. His brother John was apprenticed to a pewterer, John

Bennet, of East Cheap, London in 1670. Susannah went to London and married a goldsmith, Peter le Roux, in 1678, *'with the consent of her guardian Mr. Thomas Cole, her parents being dead. At St Giles'*. What became of William, James, Francis and Elizabeth is uncertain. John was dead by 1700 with no sign of wife and children. So too was Edward when his son, Edward, a mercer, married Mary Lawrence, a baker's daughter from Wokingham in 1701. Thereafter, the only family members that I was able to trace lived in London.

I and my cousins are descended from Michael Hamlin, butcher, who died in 1615. He described himself as *'beinge of age of life threescore eight years or thereabout (1540s)* and left a widow, Jane, and at least eight or nine surviving children: Henry, Michael, John, William, Francis, James, Phillis, Jane, Alice and maybe Elizabeth. Land, freehold, copyhold and leasehold, was for his widow, Jane, and then to their eldest son, Henry. Among the boys only he and his brother, Michael, were over 21 at the time of their father's death.

The younger sons were to receive legacies of £20 (£1600) at the age of 21. A similar sum was to be given to Phillis when she married. This took place at St Nicholas Cole Abbey in London during 1627 when she married Lawrence Burrows, *'gentleman of Reading'*.

All the brothers were butchers and, with the exception of William, were Freemen of the Borough but this did not make them law abiding citizens. On several occasions between 1629 and 1637 one or more of them, though not Michael, appeared before the Borough Court accused of what we would describe as breaches of the peace, threatening behaviour and grievous bodily harm.

Michael's problems were domestic. In 1631 the Court declared *'the differences between Michael Hamblen and his wief were heard and in part reconciled and to live together'*. The peace was shortlived, as a year later - *'it is complayneth that Michael Hamblen doth misuse his wief, putteth her awaye, denyeth to dwell with her or to allow her mayntenance and sayeth he will not'*, but a promise of maintenance was made on the following day. Cicely (Raymond), his wife, was obviously not a gentle creature. In 1633, when she was accused of beating an Elizabeth Holderness, Michael stood surety for her and paid 17/- (£50) *'in satisfaccione'*.

Later that year most of the family gave evidence concerning a possible runaway marriage between Michael's nephew, Richard Bagley (son of Alice) *'who had married one with four thousand pounds'* (£308.000). A servant of the Bagleys' said that *'her Mistress and Mrs. Burrows came home on Friday last and brought three gentlewomen with them from Windsor; and that one of the said gentlewomen was carried away by her Master's sonn on Monday morning last about one of the clock'*. However, I have never been able to prove the facts of the case.

Cicely was widowed in 1639 and the Great Bell of St Lawrence was tolled for a fee of 2/6d (£9). Like his father, Michael had property and land. Some *'grounde and two Tenements - lying on the east side of the highway - towards Caversham'* was left to his elder son, another Michael. However, until the boy's majority, the income was to be used *'toward the better breedinge and mayneteyneing of my two youngest children'*. These were John and Elizabeth, born after their father's Borough Court appearance in 1632. A daughter, Cicely, had died at Tilehurst in 1632 aged 17, perhaps while living with John Hamlin and his family. Only Mary (Pusey) was married, being left property in Gutter Lane. Otherwise the family, Michael, Ann, John and Elizabeth were minors to be 'overseen' by their father's brother John and his friend, alderman Peter Burningham. Sole executrix, Cicely, lived on for almost 30 years until her death, at Sonning in 1668.

The only other brother to be properly traced is Henry 'the elder'; who married Mary (Wapshot) in 1616. His only son, Henry, died aged 39, in 1666, just five years after his father, when his third wife, Barbary (sic) was expecting their child, Elizabeth. Barbary was given strict instructions as to the care of his older children, Henry and Mary (Elizabeth Shefford) and Hannah (Mary Seward) implying that his trust in her was doubtful. Barbary was still alive in 1694 mentioned in a will as being of *'High end in the Parish of Brinstone in Hampsheir'*. With the exception of Francis, the younger brothers, John, William and James all married. However, repetitive Christian names other than Michael and Henry, register gaps, the Commonwealth and probably more than one marriage between cousins, has meant that the next generation was difficult to disentangle.

Various clues point to the the baptism of a Michael in 1663 being the son of John, who was five years old when his father Michael died in 1639. This Michael married a Mary Wilder, possibly the

granddaughter of Mary Hamlin/Wilder from Tilehurst earlier in the century. The couple married at St Lawrence in 1683, but their children, Mary, John, Michael and Ann were born in Tilehurst. There the family stayed, Michael now described as 'yeoman' and the children and grandchildren marrying within the community for the next century.

By the 1790s, Michael and Mary's great-grandchildren were becoming restive and began to move away. Three brothers, John, William and Richard, went off to London, settled and became 'Londoners'. All married and raised families, but that is another story. Enough to say that John's son, Henry, and William's daughter, Louisa, both born in 1800, married in 1823 becoming John's and my great-great-grandparents. The three families continue to the present day but with no sons to carry on the name. Perhaps it is still with those branches of the family not yet researched.

This story of a family is dedicated to Philip Edward Hamlin (1934-2003) descendant of Richard and lifelong genealogist. When we all first met some years ago, his was the voice of serendipity that said 'but didn't you know they came from Reading?'

*Compiled from research at the Berkshire R.O.; Wiltshire R.O.; Public R.O.; Society of Genealogists; Guildhall Library. Adjusted Monetary Values based on the Bank of England's Retail Price Index Table of the £'s value in 1996 and calculated from 1270 A.D.*

## Members' Interests

*Compiled by Bob Plumridge, Bob.Plumridge@ntlworld.com*

### Members submitting their interests:

- 1626 Mr E Bailey New Haven 7 Woodbank Glen Parva Leicester LE2 9QP  
2178 Mr JJ Forkin Simmaries St Leonards Hill Windsor Berkshire SL4 4AT  
4672 Mrs KJ Jones 41 Wayside Green Woodcote Reading Berks RG8 0PR  
4994 Mrs J Ball 5 Caradon Heights Darite Liskeard Cornwall PL14 5JH  
4996 Mrs L Begg 41 Victoria Street East Maitland NSW 2323 AUSTRALIA  
5235 Mr P & Mrs CL Merchant 25 Mill Road Abingdon Oxon OX14 5NS  
5320 Mrs C Aitken 12 Kildare Gardens Caversham Reading Berks RG4 5JA  
5321 Mr DA Reid 7 Loch Road Saline Dunfermline Fife KY12 9UL  
5363 Mrs N Walker 28 Eastheath Avenue Wokingham Berks RG41 2PJ  
5377 Mr D Morris 7 Hardwicke Road Poynton Stockport Cheshire SK12 1BJ  
5396 Mrs LA Allen 11 Calspick Way Longlevens Gloucester GL2 0XA  
5409 Mrs J Stevens Mole Park Cottage Sindlesham Road Arborfield Berks RG2 9JQ  
5435 Mrs G Patterson Rockspray 1 Seafield Road Barton on Sea New Milton Hants BH25 7JR  
5441 Mrs M Taylor 2 Strathcar Down Road Tavistock Devon PL19 9AG  
5443 Mrs BE Nash 37 Lower Golf Links Road Bradstone Dorset BH18 8BQ

No	Name	Place	Code	Dates	No	Name	Place	Code
5396	ABRAHAM	Kintbury	BRK	1820-1970	5443	BUNCE	Denchworth	BRK 1600+
5443	ADAMS	Buckleberry	BRK	1600+	5443	BUNCE	Culham	BRK 1600+
5443	ADAMS	East Hendred	BRK	1600+	4994	BURTON	Tilehurst	BRK 1600s
5377	AKERS	Brize Norton	OXF	1650-1850	5363	CANNON	Chobham	SRY All
5443	ALDER/ALDWORTH	Denchworth	BRK	1500+	2178	CARNEY	Derrynabrock	MAY 1800-1850
4672	ALEXANDER	All	BRK	1830-1880	5363	CARTER	Littleham	DEV All
4994	ALLAWAY	Tilehurst	BRK	1600s	5441	CAVELLEY	West Ham	MDX pre 1870
4994	ALLAWAY	Pangbourne	BRK	1600s	4672	CHIVERS	All	BRK 1800-1970
5396	AUST	Corsham	WIL	1830-1900	5321	CLACK	Coxwell	BRK 1830-1918
1626	BAILEY	Binfield	BRK	pre 1760	5321	CLACK	Marylebone	MDX All
1626	BAILEY	Henley	OXF	pre 1806	5443	COOKE	Denchworth	BRK 1600+
4994	BAKER	Tilehurst	BRK	1600s	5443	COOKE	Circott	BRK 1600+
4672	BEARD	All	BRK	1840-1970	5320	COX	Reading	BRK 1880+
5435	BEAVER	Marlow	BKM	19c	5320	DANRIDGE	Stadhampton	OXF All
1626	BEECH	Biddulph	STS	pre 1800	4672	DAVIS All		BRK 1860-1946
1626	BELCHER	Wellingborough	NTH	pre 1750	5435	DEACON	Wantage	BRK 19c
1626	BELCHER	Wilby	NTH	All	4996	DIBLEY	Long Lane	BRK 1700-1800s
5363	BERRY	Holcombe	DEV	1750-1850	4996	DIBLEY	Thatcham	BRK 1700-1800s
4994	BLACKMAN	Tilehurst	BRK	1600-1770	5441	DICKERS	Brentford	MDX pre 1870
4672	BOLDERSON	All	BRK	1880-1980	5443	DRY	Denchworth	BRK All
4996	BRAZIER	Chieveley	BRK	1700-1800s	5443	DRY	Hannays	BRK All
5443	BROOKS	E & W Hanney	BRK	1600+	5443	DRY	Marcham	BRK All
5435	BRUNTON	All	NFK	19c	5363	DUDLEY	Raunds	NTH 1750-1900
5441	BULL	Winkfield	BRK	pre 1860	5363	DUDLEY	Thrapston	NTH 1750-1900
5443	BUNCE	E & W Hanney	BRK	1600+	2178	DUFFY	Derrynabrock	MAY 1800-1850
5377	BUNCE	Kintbury	BRK	1800-2000	5320	DYER	All	HAM 1880+

No	Name	Place	Code	Dates	No	Name	Place	Code	Dates
5320	DYER	Reading	BRK	1880+	4996	HAMBLING	Chieveley	BRK	1700-1800s
5443	EAGLES	Buckleberry	BRK	1600+	4994	HARPER	Tilehurst	BRK	1600s
5320	ECKTON	Christchurch	HAM	1830+	5377	HARVEY	Hilgay	NFK	1800-1950
5435	ELVEY	Hanlow	ESS	19c	5441	HATHAWAY	Newberry	BRK	pre 1850
1626	FAIRMAN	All	SRY	pre 1880	5377	HATTON	Ashmansworth	HAM	1750-2000
1626	FAIRMAN	Midhurst	SSX	pre 1884	4994	HEADACH(E)	Pangbourne	BRK	1600s
2178	FINN	Derrynabrock	MAY	1800-1850	5441	HEARNE	Chiswick	MDX	pre 1900
5443	FISHER	Marcham	BRK	1600-	5435	HOCKEY	All	SOM	19c
5443	FISHER	West Hanney	BRK	1600-	4994	HOLLOWAY	Tilehurst	BRK	1600s
5396	FISHER	Aldbourne	WIL	1845-1950	4994	HOLLOWAY	Pangbourne	BRK	1600s
1626	FORBES	Linlithgow	SCT	pre 1830	4994	JONES	Tilehurst	BRK	1600-1750
2178	FORKAN	Derrynabrock	MAY	1800-1850	2178	KEANE	Glenhest	MAY	1800-1850
2178	FORKIN	Derrynabrock	MAY	1800-1850	5377	KEEBLE	Blaxhall	SFK	1800-2000
2178	FORRESTAL	Glenhest	MAY	1800-1850	2178	KELLY	Westport	MAY	1800-1850
5396	FRANKLIN	Hungerford	BRK	1820-1970	4994	KERTON	Burghfield	BRK	1600-1900
5443	GARL	Buckleberry	BRK	1600+	4994	KERTON	Tilehurst	BRK	1600-1900
5377	GEATER	Kinbury	BRK	1800-2000	2178	KING	Louisburgh	MAY	1800-1850
2178	GEEVER	Derrynabrock	MAY	1800-1850	5441	KNIGHT	Isleworth	MDX	pre 1927
5377	GERRISH	South Wraxall	WIL	1700-2000	5363	KNIGHTON	Raunds	NTH	1750-1900
5377	GILLET	Marston M	BDF	1800-1900	5363	KNIGHTON	Chippenhams	WIL	1850-1900
5443	GREEN	Letcombe Bassett	BRK	1700+	4996	LAILEY	Thatcham	BRK	1700-1800s
5377	GREENAWAY	Brize Norton	OXF	1650-1850	4996	LAILEY	Hermitage	BRK	1700-1800s
5377	GREENAWAY	Langford	OXF	1650-1850	4996	LAILEY	Chieveley	BRK	1700-1800s
4672	GREGORY	All	BRK	1830-1880	5441	LARNEY	Hounslow	MDX	pre 1890
5443	HALL	Buckleberry	BRK	1600+	5435	LEWINGTON	All	ESS	19c
5443	HAMBLETON	Culham	BRK	1600+	5409	LINE/LYNE	Chieveley	BRK	1700-1800



No	Name	Place	Code Dates	No	Name	Place	Code Dates
4994	LOVEGROVE	Tilehurst	BRK 1600-1790	5235	PUDWELL	All	OXF pre 1900
5435	LUNGLEY	All	ESS 19c	4994	PUSEY	Thatcham area	BRK 1800-1840
1626	MacKENZIE	Poplar	LND pre 1840	5363	REEVES	Chippenham	WIL 1800-1900
4994	MAJOCK	Tilehurst	BRK 1650-1770	2178	REGAN	Derrynabrock	MAY 1800-1850
1626	MASSEY	All	WLS pre 1760	5443	RHODES/R(H)OADES	Buckleberry	BRK 1600+
5435	McLEAN	Liverpool	LAN 19c	5320	ROBERTS	All	OXF 1836+
4994	MERRIWEATHER	Tilehurst	BRK 1600s	5441	SARNEY	Hounslow	MDX pre 1890
5441	MITCHELL	Chiswick	MDX pre 1900	5441	SAVAGE	Newberry	BRK pre 1912
5320	MITCHELL	Reading	BRK 1885+	5320	SAYER	Reading	BRK All
4994	MORRICE	Tilehurst	BRK 1600s	5320	SEWARD	Reading	BRK All
5377	MORRIS	South Wraxall	WIL 1700-2000	5320	SEWARD	Kingsclere	HAM All
5377	MORRIS	Tetbury	GLS 1780-2000	4996	SHEEN	New Windsor	BRK 1800s
5377	MORRIS	Inkpen	BRK 1830-2000	4996	SHEEN	Middlesex	MDX 1800s
2178	MURPHY	Louisburgh	MAY 1800-1850	5443	SINGLETON	Marcham	BRK 1600-
4996	NIBLEY	Long Lane	BRK 1700-1800s	4994	SMITH	Tilehurst	BRK 1600s
4996	NIBLEY	Thatcham	BRK 1700-1800s	1626	SNOWSELL	Quenington	GLS pre 1760
5396	NOCK	Hungerford	BRK 1835-1915	5443	STEVENSON	East Hanney	BRK 1600+
5396	OAKES	Hungerford	BRK 1836-1960	4672	STEVENSON	All	BRK 1840-1940
4672	O'DELL	All	BRK 1830-1970	1626	STONE	Portland	DOR pre 1840
2178	O'MALLEY	Westport	MAY 1800-1850	5363	SUMNER	Winkfield	BRK 1750-1850
5443	OSBORN(E)	West Hanney	BRK 1600+	5441	TAYLOR	Hammersmith	MDX pre 1930
5363	PALMER	Topsham	DEV All	5363	THURMER	Winkfield	BRK All
5435	PATTERSON	Liverpool	LAN 19c	5363	THURMER	Warfield	BRK All
1626	PAYNE	Paddington	LND pre 1860	5377	THURSTON	Blaxhall	SFK 1800-2000
4996	PIKE	Reading	BRK 1800s	2178	TOWEY	Derrynabrock	MAY 1800-1850
5235	PUDWELL	All	BRK pre 1900	4996	TURNER	Windsor	BRK 1800s

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No	Name	Place	Code Dates
4672	TURNER	All	BRK 1830-1870
5443	TURNER	Upper Letcombe	BRK 1700+
5320	UTTING	Winchester	HAM 1860+
5320	VARNY	Haddenham	BKM 1800+
5320	VOKES	Alresford	HAM All
5435	WAKELIN	All	OXF 18c
5441	WARD	Hammersmith	MDX pre 1930
5320	WAREHAM	Winchester	HAM 1800+
4994	WEBB	Tilehurst	BRK 1600-1770
5443	WELLMAN	Denchworth	BRK 1600-
4996	WELLS	Chieveley	BRK 1700s
5443	WESTBROOKE	West Hanney	BRK 1600+
4672	WHEELER	All	BRK 1830-1878
5443	WIBLIN	Denchworth	BRK 1500s
5377	WICKHAM	Rockland St Mary	NFK 1800-1950
5396	WIGGINS	Hungerford	BRK 1820-1960
5435	WILKIE	All	ROX 19c
4672	WITHERS	All	BRK 1830-1870
4994	WOODESON	Tilehurst	BRK 1700s
5320	WOODWARD	Winchester	HAM 1800+
5320	WREN	Reading	BRK 1800+

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## Back pages

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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.

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# Back pages

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## BFHS Research Centre

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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.

- New times of opening
- Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10am to 4pm
- Late opening and computer night on Tuesday 7pm to 9.30pm
- Second and fourth Sunday each month 11am to 4pm, with computer advice 2pm to 4pm

Full details are available on the website:

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### Address

BFHS Research Centre, Yeomanry House,  
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Telephone 0118 950 9553

### Research Centre & Reference Library tours

The tours for the next four months are:

Monday	19 April	7.30 - 9.30
Saturday	15 May	2.30 - 4.30
Monday	21 June	7.30 - 9.30
Saturday	17 July	2.30 - 4.30
August - no tour.		

# Back pages

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## Berkshire Name Search

consists of the following censuses and indexes:

### 1851 Census

Complete checked transcription of the 173,748 persons within Berkshire on 30 March 1851. Printouts are available for a surname search (listing all and giving district) or either the page or the household of a selected person. Also available on CD ROM.

### 1861 Census

Transcription has just started with 60,297 individuals to date; more districts will be added as available.

### 1871 Census

Transcription and index of 195,559 people now completed; checking ongoing and will be included as available. Printouts as 1851.

### 1881 Census

Complete transcription and index of 223,936 people.

## Berkshire Marriage Index

Work is in progress transcribing and checking pre-1837 registers. Includes 127,336 entries to date, see the *Berkshire Family Historian* or the BFHS website for the parishes and dates covered. Printouts of early entries only give date and names of bride and groom; later entries include if from another parish or by licence. Witnesses not included.

# Back pages

---

## Berkshire Burial Index

Work in progress transcribing from parish registers. Includes over 295,000 entries to date, see the *Berkshire Family Historian* or the BFHS website for the parishes and dates covered. Printouts show name, age, parish and date with an indication if more information is in the register. 280,000 burials are now available on a new CD ROM.

## Berkshire Strays Index

This dataset includes 25,913 people recorded in events taking place outside Berkshire if the person has given some reference to Berkshire. Strays records come from a variety of sources including 1851 census of several neighbouring counties.

## Berkshire Miscellaneous Index

This dataset is based on the former Berkshire Name Index and includes 100,279 records that were extracted and submitted by individuals. When possible running sets (such as baptisms from a parish register) will be placed in specialist datasets leaving the disparate individual records and small datasets in this Miscellaneous Index. The amount of information available depends on the record.

## Records wanted

If you have records of any names that would fit into our Miscellaneous Index (event occurs within Berkshire) or Strays Index (event occurs outside Berkshire but person has Berkshire connections) please send them by email to <MiscIndex@berksfhs.org.uk>, <Strays@berksfhs.org.uk> or by post to BFHS, Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 1TJ labelling the envelope either BFHS (MiscIndex) or BFHS (Strays).

# Back pages

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## Berkshire Name Index

This is the master index for all of the above indexes.

### Searching the Berkshire Name Index

You may:

- do your own search at the Research Centre
- visit a BFHS stand at a family history fair
- request a postal search.

### Postal Search

Send your request to BFHS (BNS), Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 1TJ enclosing a cheque for the charge together with your email address or an A4 sized stamped self-addressed envelope or two IRCs.

### Charges

- To search the Berkshire Name Index send £2 per SURNAME requested to obtain the number of entries in each census or index. This search will not provide any information from the records.
- To obtain the full details from the records printed on an A4 sheet (up to 25 entries or lines):
  - £2 per surname per requested database
  - £5 per surname to search all databases currently available (price will increase as more databases are included)

We will advise the additional cost if more entries are found.



# Back pages

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## Birth Briefs Index

Birth Briefs are five-generation ancestral charts submitted by members of the Society. Fully completed charts contain the names and vital records – birth or christening, marriage and death or burial – of the member and up to 30 ancestors.

- You can search the index, currently 15,000 names, on the website or for £2 per SURNAME by post.
- For £2 per Birth Brief you can order a copy of a particular Birth Brief (Identification Number from website or postal search) either as hard copy in PAF Pedigree format or as a file in GEDCOM format. Cost £2 per Birth Brief.
- If you wish to contact the person (if they are still a member, as indicated on website) who submitted the Birth Brief, we will pass on a letter or an email.

All requests to BFHS (BB), Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 1TJ marking your envelope BB and include the BB ID No (if known). Enclose the cheque, your email address and an A4 sized stamped self-addressed envelope or two IRCs. To contact a member, either email your message to [BBxxxx@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:BBxxxx@berksfhs.org.uk) (where xxxx is the BB ID number) or send two envelopes (one self addressed and one blank) with two stamps or four IRCS. Don't stamp either envelope as some members live overseas.

**In addition we do have a list, available on request, of members who carry out research. Apply to the Research Centre at Yeomanry House for the list.**

# Back pages

## Useful addresses

### ☐ Chairman

Chad Hanna  
161 St Peters Road, Reading  
Berkshire RG6 1PG  
0118 966 3585 Email: [chairman@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:chairman@berksfhs.org.uk)

### ☐ Secretary/Editor

John Gurnett  
5 Wren Close  
Burghfield Common  
Berkshire RG7 3PF  
Email: [editor@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:editor@berksfhs.org.uk)  
[secretary@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@berksfhs.org.uk)

### ☐ Treasurer

Ann Rutt  
39 Oak Tree Road  
Thatcham  
Berkshire RG19 4QP Email: [treasurer@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@berksfhs.org.uk)

### ☐ Membership secretary

Liz Longhurst  
20 Stanhope Road, Reading  
Berkshire RG2 7HL Email: [memsec@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:memsec@berksfhs.org.uk)

### ☐ Email Discussion Group and webmaster

Email: [joindiscussion@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:joindiscussion@berksfhs.org.uk)  
[webmaster@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@berksfhs.org.uk)

### ☐ Projects Co-ordinator

Daphne Spurling  
The Fifteenth, 7 Broadlands Close  
Calcot Park, Reading  
Berkshire RG31 7RP Email: [projects@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:projects@berksfhs.org.uk)

### ☐ Members' Interests

Email: [members-interests@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:members-interests@berksfhs.org.uk)

### ☐ Website

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

# Back pages

## ▣ Branch Chairmen:

### *Bracknell and Wokingham*

Derek Trinder  
58 Knox Green  
Binfield, Berkshire RG42 4NZ Tel: 01344 457751

### *Newbury*

Phil Wood  
58 Hambridge Road  
Newbury  
Berkshire RG14 5TA Tel: 01635 30857

### *Reading*

Peter Lavarack  
Honeys, Walden Avenue  
Arborfield, Reading  
Berkshire RG2 9HR Tel: 0118 976 0391

### *Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead*

Valerie Storie  
15 Anthony Way  
Cippenham, Slough  
Berkshire SL1 5PG Tel: 01628 605411

### *Vale of White Horse*

Ken Marsden  
3 Wharf Close  
Abingdon  
Oxon OX14 5HS

## ▣ Branch information

Email: [branchinfo@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:branchinfo@berksfhs.org.uk)

## ▣ Bookshop

Email: [bookshop@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:bookshop@berksfhs.org.uk)

## ▣ BFHS Research Centre

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

## ▣ Berkshire Record Office

9 Coley Avenue  
Reading  
Berkshire RG1 6AF  
Tel: 0118 901 5132

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

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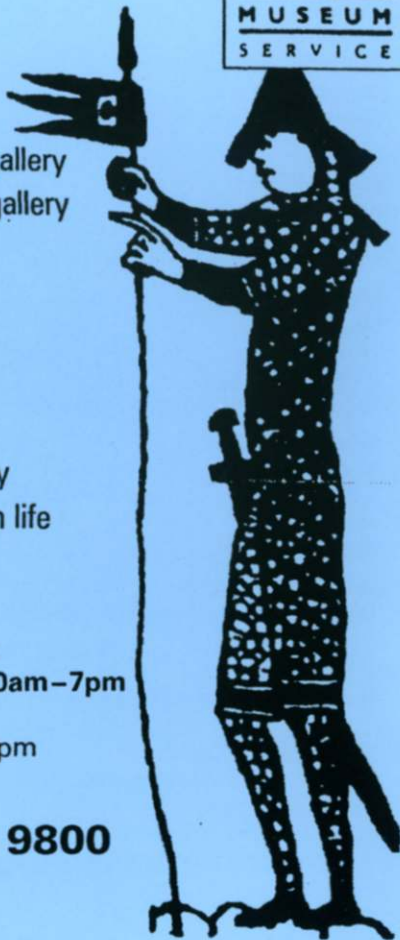
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# The Bulletin

## Research Centre notes from Cliff Debney

As we briefly noted in the December journal late evening openings on Thursdays will no longer be held. That is not to say, naturally, that they will not be brought back again if there is sufficient demand.

As promised, the administration desk has been replaced since the last report but we have not yet found a suitable replacement for the final unit holding miscellaneous papers, files, etc. for the duty Assistants. We are also still thinking about more drawers for the Assistants' area.

As many of you will be aware by now, the Library catalogue is now on the Society website, accessed from the opening page. There is still work to be carried out on the catalogue to make it even more user friendly and informative. The catalogue is always available on the computers in the Centre.

Work has continued apace on accessing the backlog of books and other information for the library. One problem, if you can call it that, is that we continue to gain many more which means that the backlog does not get any smaller. This is just a statement of fact and a reminder that we are always pleased to receive more donations of books, fiche or CD, particularly those

containing lists and indexes of names whether on Berkshire or any other British county. This naturally includes other societies' publications such as census transcriptions, parish register transcripts, and so on. If anyone has records of emigration from or immigration to or within the British Isles we shall be pleased to receive those publications also.

The range of information available on the computers in the Centre continues to increase rapidly. One of the biggest problems we have on displaying these additions is that each computer has to be individually set up for each new file which has led to them all being at different stages of updating. We can only apologise for these differences and say that if you know we have information available, please look at the various screens to find which one fits your needs.

Within the next few months we are going back to the Reference Library to make more changes. Those of you who know the first floor will be aware of the large range of other society journals and serial publications of interest to family historians that are available for study. These journals are largely unused and as they are restricting the displaying of publications and fiche having a more regular demand, we are going to put some of the older stock into store so better display units and shelving can be

installed. Items in store will always be accessible by appointment. We do not have a timetable as yet.

## Dates for your diary

*The Federation of Family History Societies* will be celebrating its foundation in 1974 with a spectacular conference at Loughborough University in August. They have secured a wide-ranging list of speakers including Dr Carezza Lewis, archaeologist of Time Team; Sarah Tyacke, from the National Archives (formerly the PRO); Mac Dowdy and Nick Barrett from the TV 'House Detectives'; and two of the executives of the Australian Society of Genealogists. There will be lectures on issues as diverse as criminal law, the geography of surnames, and genetic testing. You can book by the day, or for lectures, lunches and dinners. Fees range from £295 to £320. The conference lasts from 26 to 30 August.

*The Guild of One-Name Studies* will be holding their 25th anniversary conference at the Wyboston Lakes Conference Centre, Wyboston, Bedford. Full details may be found at <[www.onename.org](http://www.onename.org)>.

*The London Cornish Association* annual family history day conference will be held at Hawkestone Hall, Christchurch and the Upton Chapel, Kennington Road, London SE1 on April 3. Details from <[Brenda@londoncornish.co.uk](mailto:Brenda@londoncornish.co.uk)>.

*The Wiltshire Local History Forum's* spring day school on how to read a

parish church will be held at the New Baptist Church, Sheep Street, Devizes, on April 17. Call Lorna Haycock on 01380 727369.

*The Yorkshire Family History Fair* will be held at York Racecourse on Saturday 26 June from 10 am to 4.30 pm. It's said to be the largest family history event in the UK with 224 tables. Admission is £3.00 and there's free car parking and cafeteria facilities.

*The Chipping Norton Family History Group* is holding its second open day at the Ace Centre, Burford Road, Chipping Norton on Saturday 12 June. Many family history societies will be mounting displays so it's bound to be an event not to miss.

*The South Coast Family History Fair* will be held at Worthing Pavilion Theatre on 25 April. See <[www.familyhistoryfairs.com](http://www.familyhistoryfairs.com)>.

'*How Times have Changed*' is the title of an exhibition looking back to 1904 through photographs and paintings currently being held at the West Berkshire Museum, Newbury, throughout March. Admission is free.

## Berkshire and the First World War

Archive Britain has just published *Berkshire and the War*, a unique record of the county's contribution to the First World War on CD ROM. Included are photographs and articles first published in the *Reading Standard*. Around 9,000

men are recorded by name, regiment and by place. The index in many cases is detailed down to street name enabling the user for example to look up people who lived in Oxford Road, Reading. Many from Berkshire served in almost every unit of the of the armed forces including the Royal Marines and Royal Navy. Further information may be found on Archive Britain's website <[www.archivebritain.com](http://www.archivebritain.com)>.

## Newsplan

Newsplan London and South East Database of some 2,500 local newspaper titles held in libraries and archives in London and the South East is now available at <[newsplan.co.uk](http://newsplan.co.uk)>. Anyone researching London families may find this site especially useful.

## Brightwalton marriages

Sabina Sutherland, writing in the latest issue of the newsletter of the Berkshire Record Office, reports that marriages at Brightwalton from 1864 until the end of the nineteenth century were not legal. Apparently in 1861 a faculty had been granted to take down the old parish church and build a new one. The new building was not consecrated until 1863 but a deed substituting the old church for the new one was never obtained. This made all the marriages illegal. The illegality was not resolved until the passing of the Marriages Legalisation Act of 1903.

## Damn his limbs

Peter Shilham is indexing Poor Rates for Southwark and found this little gem in the lists for St George the Martyr for 1801. Living in George Passage was a Mr C. Dummer. Next to his name is, 'Damn his limbs, before he will pay any taxes he will lose his life'. As Peter says it would seem that the strength of feeling against Council Taxes has some way to go before such oaths are uttered.

## Notes from Berkshire parish registers

Neila Warner from the Berkshire Record Office discovered these jottings from the registers at Speen:

- Capt William Wood 46 from Bristol, died at the Angel, Speenhamland. He took 3 French ships, the least of greater force than his, they were all together and attack'd him. He was on his way to London to be made a Commodore. (24 Feb 1745)
- George Purnell 75 A good honest patient Man, born (I think) at or near Wooton Under Edg Glostersh (sic), had been in good circumstances, but much reduced, yet bore undeserved Hardships and neglect with a Christian mind.

In the Hungerford burial register for 1833 there is a note against the entry for the burial of Sarah Jane, daughter of Sarah Ann and William Bunce. The grieving parents were so annoyed when asked to pay the fee to the clergyman

that they refused to hand over the money. The incumbent wrote, 'Won't pay it, the woman told me she would bury in the garden the next time'. I wonder how many people were buried in their plots of land to avoid paying a fee. If you come across other notes in parish registers do let the Editor know.

## **Berkshire Record Office**

By the time you read this magazine you will have noticed that the building work at the BRO has ended. At last more records will be available and there's more car parking.

## **New additions at the BRO**

Perhaps the most fascinating document received recently is a photographic album entitled Didcot Senior School at Work. It was produced in 1935 as a souvenir of the school's experimental work. The school was originally a mixed secondary school set up in 1931. Among the rural subjects taught were science and horticulture and building construction. There was also a commercial course in shorthand, typing, duplicating and book-keeping. This last course was probably exclusively for girls unlike today.

Many family historians will welcome the Shottesbrooke register of baptisms from 1813 to 1974, the Reading St Laurence baptism register 1889-2002 and marriage registers from White Waltham and Earley St Peter. A large number of Methodist records have also been received.

## **Annual General Meeting notice**

The BFHS annual general meeting with annual reports from the Chairman and Treasurer will be held at the Bracknell and Wokingham Branch meeting meeting on 18 June. If you would like to nominate a member for election to the Executive Committee let the Secretary know by 1 May. Do make sure that the individual you nominate is prepared to sit on the Committee.



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