



Berkshire Family Historian

Volume 15 - No 3 - March 1992



PROGRAMME SUMMARY TO JULY 1992

Newbury Branch

Meetings are normally held on the the second Wednesday of each month, 7.15pm for 7.45pm at United Reform Church Hall, Cromwell Place (opposite Marks & Spencers), Northbrook Street, Newbury.

8th Apr	Settlement and Vagrancy.....	<i>Jean Cole</i>
13th May	“Thou shalt not” – Crime in the 18th & 19th centuries	<i>Beryl Hurley</i>
10th June	The Society of Genealogists.....	<i>Chris Watts</i>

Reading Branch

Meetings are normally held on the last Friday of the month 7.00 for 7.45 at the Park United Reform Church Hall, Wokingham Road, Reading

24th Apr	Branch Annual meeting & The Census (inc. 1891).	<i>Jean Debney</i>
29th May	Members' working evening	
26th June	Death beds and Last Wills.....	<i>Ralph Houlbrooke</i>
31st Jul	Members' working evening.....	at Earley St Peter Church Hall

The series of Tuesday evenings to do project work together, including checking the 1881 census and MI data entry, are continuing, with meetings on the 10th March and 7th April at the Church Hall (1st Floor), Earley St Peters, Church Road, Earley, Reading at 7.30pm. Saturday sessions at Reading Cemetery start at 10.30 am on 25th April, 9th & 30th May, 13th & 27th June

Slough Branch

Monthly Meetings, normally held on the last Tuesday of each month at 7.45 at St Andrew's Church Hall, The Grove, Slough.

28th Apr	Local Military Records.....	<i>Dr I. Beckett</i>
26th May	Branch Annual meeting & Talk.....	<i>Marion Brackpool</i>
30th June	Biographical sources in the India Office records .	<i>Mr. T. Thomas</i>

Bracknell branch

Monthly meetings are held on the third Friday of the month at 7.45 at the Priestwood Community Centre, Priestwood Court Road, Bracknell

20th Mar	To be announced	
17th Apr	No meeting - Good Friday	
15th May	For the Price of a Stamp	<i>Marion Brackpool</i>
19th June	Family Traditions – True or False?	<i>Eve McLaughlin</i>

BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORIAN

Volume 15, 1991-92

Part 3, March 1992

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The opinions expressed in the letters and articles in this magazine are those of their authors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editor or the Society.

Deadline for the June Magazine is the 24th April. All contributions very gratefully received. Also any suggestions of what you would like in the magazine.

The illustration on the front cover is taken from the cover of "The Sonning Parish Magazine" of July 1882 and is from the collection of the County Local Studies Library.

Chairman's bits ...

by *Chad Hanna*

There is a lot of information in this issue of the *Berkshire Family Historian* which gives us a bit of headache squeezing it into just 36 pages. This issue seems to have a good mixture of Berkshire articles, Census information and project updates. I'm sure you'll enjoy it!

The Keep

As many of you know, the Society is homeless and has been on the lookout for suitable accommodation for some time. As the Society and its library have got bigger but the high rents for commercial properties in this area have meant we couldn't be optimistic.

An exciting opportunity has now arisen and a sub-committee is looking into the possibility of using the ground floor (or part of it) of the Keep at Brock Barracks along the Oxford Road in Reading. The Keep was visited on the 14th Feb. by members of the sub-committee and will be making proposals to the Reading Borough Council at the end of February. There is a lot of interest in this building by other voluntary groups so we face some stiff competition! We will have more news in the next issue.

Projects

I was very pleased to read Brian Hunt's account of the Overseers Project in this issue and the Executive Committee fully supports his plan to restart it. Many other counties have already published information from their poor law records (and which you may have benefited from) and I find it difficult to conceive of a project which would have a greater impact on 18th Century family history research in Berkshire.

We do aim to have a variety of projects on the go, so that you will find something which will interest and motivate you. I can

testify that nothing will improve your family history as much as doing some transcribing (or checking).

In the September issue I promised a list of the Monumental inscriptions which Mrs Monica Martin holds for the east of Berkshire (and so many of which she recorded) – so here it is (showing the number of pages):

- 9 Bray, Touchen end, Holy Trinity
by Brian Boulter
- 29 Bray, Windsor Road Cemetery
- 4 Braywood, All Saints
Clewer, St Andrew
- 32 Datchett, Ditton Road Cemetery
Datchett, St Mary
Dorney St James
by Mr & Mrs Friar
- Eton Wick, St John Baptist*
by Gladys Charlton
- Eton St John the Evangelist
typed by Bill & Liz Longhurst
- Hitcham, St James*
by Mr & Mrs Friar
- 29 Horton St Michael's, Bucks
Langley Marish St Marys, Bucks
by Monica Martin and
Windsor, Slough & Eton FHS
- 3 Poyle United Reform Church, Bucks
- 6 Shottesbrooke, St John the Baptist
- 39 Slough, Upton-cum-Chalvey St Laurence
- 1 Slough, Church Street URC
- 1 Windsor, William Street URC
- 13 Windsor (New), Bachelor's Acre
by Eliz Brown

- 1 Windsor (Old), Victor Street Baptist
- 32 Wraybury, St Andrews, Bucks

Mrs Monica Martin can answer enquiries from members who enclose an S.A.E. (£1 for non-members). Her address is 22 Eton Close, Datchet, Slough, SL3 9BE. The Society has just completed photocopying the ones not in *italics* and these should shortly appear in the Society Library and be despatched to the usual repositories. Some of these graveyards have now disappeared for ever, except for these valuable transcripts.

Situations Vacant

The Society is always on the lookout for members who want to apply their talents and skills to the benefit of their fellow family historians. Areas where we know we need your help are:

Publicity is something we think we could do better. We do have some ideas but we really need someone to organise our publicity and make sure we tell everyone the good news about Family History in Berkshire. Some snappy graphics design, cartoons and so on would be a help, for example I think we can do better than the front of the Family History Symposium leaflet enclosed with this issue. Contact me if you can help here.

More **secretarial** type help is needed in the Purley area to help Jean Debney deal with postal bookstall orders. This is definitely a case where many hands make light work!

Conference

Symposium at The Holt School, Wokingham, Berks

Saturday 20th June 1992

What is a Symposium? Well the dictionary definition is a meeting for philosophic conversation, a conference, or a collection of views on one topic.

We claim that our Symposium adds a new dimension to the more conventional one-day Conference or Open Day. Where else can you hear two talks on a theme, do research and browse amongst the entire holdings of the Berkshire Family History Society or buy books on all aspects of family history from our well-stocked bookstall? That is not all! We expect to be joined by over 20 other Family History Societies each with a stand of their own and displaying their own publications. Amongst those coming from far afield are Birmingham and Midlands, Cornwall, Leicestershire, Glamorgan, Gloucestershire, Kent, Somerset

and Dorset and Bedfordshire with many more from nearer at hand.

There is sure to be something of interest for everyone so why not come along and make a day of it in lovely surroundings, even if only for a chat about family history with other like-minded people.

For a programme and application form, please send a SAE to Bill Grose, 120 Foxcote, Wokingham, Berks RG11 3PE.

The 17th Annual General Meeting of the Berkshire Family History Society will be held at 1.30 pm, Saturday 20th June, 1992 in the The Holt School, Wokingham

Agenda

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of the 1991 Annual General Meeting
- 3 Matters arising
- 4 Chairman's Report for 1991-2
- 5 Treasurer's Report for 1991-2
- 6 Election of President and Vice-Presidents
- 7 Election of officers for 1992-3
- 8 Accept the ex-officio committee members appointed by Branch Committees.
- 9 Election of committee members for 1992-3
- 10 Nomination of auditors for 1992-3
- 11 Any other business

Nominations for the Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, and Committee members should be sent to the Hon. Secretary, Mrs M Goswell, 87 Finchampstead Road, Wokingham, RG11 2PE by 5th June 1992.

Nominations must be signed by the member who is making the nomination and should indicate the acceptance of the nominee to stand for election.

Cemetery Junction – Up-date

By David Watkins

The recording of all monuments in Cemetery Junction, Reading, continued during 1991. We held 14 Saturday recording sessions, the best attendance being thirteen with an average of eight. Fifteen turned up for the Friday afternoon on 26 July but Bryan Willson worked alone on the Tuesday morning session on 3 October. The late season sessions were marred by bad weather. Once again Bryan Willson did a considerable amount going along whenever he could. Vincent Millett did the same. If there are any others willing to work on their own please let me know.

The numbers participating are low when you consider our large membership in the Reading area. However we did get a lot done. Sections 48 and 56 to 80 have now been recorded and checked. This is about a quarter of the total.

On one Tuesday in each month we are holding working evenings at Earley St Peter's church hall. Amongst other things we are transcribing the Cemetery Junction inscriptions onto computer. We have now transcribed and checked about half of the work done so far.

As you might guess the real object of writing this piece is to persuade a few more of you to join the team. At present pace we should complete by 1996. Why not try to help us make this earlier? If you have your own computer what about doing some of the transcription?

Three members responded to my last article by asking for details of a particular grave. Sorry, none found to date, your requests will be kept on file.

The programme for this year is as follows:-

Cemetery Junction

Saturdays 10:15 - 16:00

25 April	9 May	16 May	30 May
13 June	27 June	11 July	8 Aug
22 Aug	5 Sept	19 Sept	3 & 17 Oct

Earley St Peters Church Hall

Evening sessions are planned for Tuesdays 7:15pm – 10pm on 10th March and 7th April.

A special afternoon session is planned for Wednesday 1:30pm – 5:00 pm on 6th May.

“Men of Iron”

A Reading Cemetery profile by Bryan Willson

Two iron cylindrical monuments can be found at the entrance of where once stood the Dissenters' Chapel in Reading Cemetery. One on the left to the Barrett family and the other, on the right, to the Andrewes family. Just behind the Andrewes monument is a stone memorial to the Exall family.

There is, of course, a reason for the choice of iron monuments. The firm of Barrett, Exall and Andrewes, later to become Reading Ironworks, had a substantial foundry in Reading in the 1800's. It was situated on both sides of the River Kennet, connected by a bridge, in and adjoining Katesgrove Lane.

In the 1870's this enterprise employed some 300 men and won much acclaim for the excellence of its varied products which ranged from fixed and portable horizontal steam engines (generally used for threshing machines and pumps), to ploughs, harvesting and other agricultural machines and implements. There was also an invention of Mr Exall's known as the Safety Horse Works (a device for giving motive power to almost any type of horse drawn machinery), which continued to be a popular product long after the introduction of steam power.

In its heyday, the business was highly successful and won a host of national and international awards. At a Royal Agricultural Society Exhibition in 1867 it was announced that tests by the Society had proved that a Reading Iron Works Engine gave the greatest economy of fuel then recorded.

Berkshire Overseers Project

By Brian Hunt

The poor in England and Wales lived under the shadow of the settlement laws from the middle of the seventeenth century up to the end of the Old Poor Law in 1834. The administration of settlement laws through the Justices of the Peace, the Churchwardens and the Overseers of each parish led to the production of many documents. These range from Examinations and Settlement Certificates, Removal Orders, Apprenticeship Indentures, Bastardy Allegations and Bonds, Militia papers, through to the sometimes very interesting accounts of the running of the Poor-house and the distribution of clothes, food and monies.

Those few members who braved the freezing fog to attend the Christmas meeting at Reading, and those in Newbury who heard the recent talk by the County Archivist, Dr Peter Durrant, will have seen a display of the various documents and the information that can be gleaned from them. As Dr Durrant illustrated, a good Examination for Settlement can give a potted history of a person's working life, as well as such vital items as his or her age, place of birth, parents, place and date of marriage, wife's name and childrens' names and ages, etc.

The papers that have survived the 150 to 300 years are lodged in the Berkshire Record Office under Parish classes 13 to 18. Understandably the coverage for the county is patchy, there being no records at all in these classes for some parishes, whilst in one or two relatively small parishes several hundred documents have survived; in Reading there are more than 3000. Even in the last few years, further

documents have been deposited. I have recently examined most of the BRO holdings and have updated the lists prepared by Alf Ison back in the 1970s. There are now over 10,000 documents to be considered.

The "Overseers Project" started at about the time of the birth of the BFHS, and I am sure that there have been articles and progress reports in this magazine over the years. The objective was to transcribe all the documents, parish by parish, and to prepare index slips for the Berkshire Name Index, together with an additional copy for the BRO. Many BFHS members have been involved over the years and some present members will recall the hours spent at the Friends Meeting House juggling with transcripts, two sizes of index slips and bits of carbon paper – computers were virtually unknown in the Society in those days. The work continued over many years but petered out in the mid-1980s. It appeared that the hard-core of the willing volunteers had diminished or that they had diverted their attention to other projects.

Last year all the Overseers Project papers in Alf Ison's possession were deposited at the BRO. The files, transcripts, half-finished slips etc, filled eight boxes. Sorting these out has been quite a task in itself.

It will be a pity if all the years of work put into the original project were to be confined to those index slips already incorporated in the Berkshire Name Index. Dr Durrant (and I'm sure the BFHS) would like to see the project revived, but with a much wider range of users in mind. To this end it has been suggested that a calendar (abbreviated transcript) of all the documents be prepared, proba-

bly grouped in parishes under the various Berkshire Poor Law Unions. These would all be indexed by names, places and occupations, and initially about half a dozen or so copies be prepared for BRO, BFHS Library, Society of Genealogists, and the larger Berkshire Reference Libraries. Whether a wider publication is viable, and in what form, would all have to be the subject of joint BRO/BFHS decisions.

I found in sorting through the boxes that most of Chieveley's 480-plus documents had been transcribed many years ago by Gwen Hardwidge and myself. This parish, which has a range of surviving documents covering all classes of the overseers' records, has been selected as a "trial" volume and by the time this magazine is published I should have completed in draft form for checking back against the original documents. It already shows that at least two of the new members, whose interests were listed in the last magazine, would almost certainly find items to interest them. It also dispels the thought that only those people with Chieveley ancestors would be interested in this particular volume. In the 300-odd items already on disk as I write, there are no fewer than 145 different parishes mentioned. The "strays" indexer will have his/her work cut out, with quite a few London entries and others as far apart as Scotland, Lancashire, Northants, Shropshire and the Channel Islands; and that is in just about 300 of the 10,000-plus items available.

From our checking of the boxes we fear that some of the original work will need to be re-done to produce results in the suggested new format, since it would appear that the original transcripts may have been discarded after the index slips

were completed and checked. If any of the original volunteers have any partially completed transcripts still at home – or copies of what they did, however little they may seem – please pass them on to Dr Durrant or Brian Hunt.

We need volunteers who can spend some time at the BRO transcribing and checking from the original documents. The work is interesting – and good practice for transcribing your own early documents. It can sometimes involve a little detective work in other records when a particularly difficult signature is encountered. Just fitting in an odd hour or two while doing your own research would be welcome, but if you would take on the transcribing of a parish it would be even better. We do not want to "poach" members from other current projects, so this requires a new influx, plus some of the old hands who worked on the project before. Surely if we managed to do a lot of work when the BFHS was about 300-strong, it is not too much to ask now that our membership is well into four figures.

Dr Durrant has promised that if the project gets off the ground again he will give it the backing of the Record Office. One archive trainee on a placement with the Record Office has already completed the calendaring of over 100 documents from Aldermaston. Permanent staff will help to keep records of progress, acting as links between transcribers and me, and perhaps themselves contributing to the calendaring from time to time.

However we will still need volunteers. If we can get some, I will be willing to act as project co-ordinator. If we cannot, I might still carry on at my own pace but it may then be another 20 years (D.V.) before "your" parish is reached.

Women Land Workers in Victorian Berkshire

by Pamela Horn

Pamela Horn has lectured at Oxford Polytechnic for over twenty years and has written a number of books on Victorian country life and women's work, of which the most recent are "The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant", "Victorian Countrywomen" and "Ladies of the Manor (1830-1918)". The following is the first part of a two part article, which offers an insight into the lives of our female Victorian ancestors.

By the middle of the nineteenth century the large-scale employment of women on the land was coming under increasing criticism. It was condemned as conflicting with prevailing 'respectable' opinion that the proper sphere for females was in their own home, looking after their family, or as domestic servants, in that of someone else. The proliferation of government reports and parliamentary debates on female employment during the 1860s underlined the mounting unease. At the same time, within agriculture itself, changing methods of cultivation and the greater use of machinery were reducing the demand for women to work on the land. Farmers found it relatively easy to dispense with their services except at the busy seasons of the year, such as haymaking, corn harvest, and the weeding of crops in the spring.

In Berkshire one of the strongest critics of female agricultural employment was the rector of Lockinge, near Wantage. He claimed it was 'the certain ruin' of their character:

"They become bold, impudent, scandal-mongers, hardened against religion, careless of their homes and children, most untidy, given to drink, coarse minded, debased, depravers of any virtuous girls who work with them; they have no pride in their home or their children, [and] few home feelings. Their children are ragged and quite untaught, and a dirty home often drives the husband to the public house."¹

The Rev. G. Purdue from Challow likewise argued that 'field talk' was a common expression in his neighbourhood when women engaged in 'loose' gossip. 'Six or seven women working together will talk of matters male labourers would not mention.'² However, perhaps the most widespread reaction was that of the Rev. J. MacDonald of Blewbury, when he declared in 1869:

"All females should go to service. Those employed in the fields remain in ignorance; they learn nothing, they know nothing; when they are married they are poor managers in every respect... If females must go to field labour, it should be confined to the hay and corn harvest - better not there."³

Even those who disagreed with these exaggerated views considered that land work was unsuitable for women because of its heavy physical demands. A visitor to Berkshire in the late 1860s also commented on the 'miserable' winter dress of the county's female labourers:

"their husband's coat and an apron cut from an old manure bag may keep out a

1. "Second Report of the Royal Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons and Women in Agriculture" Parliamentary Papers 1868-69, Vol XIII, Evidence p.373. This report is hereafter cited as "1868-69 Report".

2. 1868-69 Report p.373

3. 1868-69 Report p.374

*certain amount of rain from the upper part of their person, but the slipshod feet can rarely remain dry for half an hour on an ordinary winter's day."*¹

He estimated that three-fifths of those employed on downland farms worked throughout the year, for a wage of about 3s a week during ordinary time and with £2 for the harvest month. At the same time he firmly refuted the allegation that field workers were less house-proud than women who stayed at home. According to him there was little to choose between the comfort and cleanliness of their dwellings and those of hearth-bound neighbours. It was 'the opinion of many labourers, as well as labourers' wives, whom I examined on this subject, that the best wife for a farm labourer is a woman who is able and willing to do farm work'.²

As the century drew to a close, working-class families themselves began to doubt the desirability of female agricultural labour. In the early 1890s a government report on the Wantage poor law district claimed that although wives still took up farm work in that area to a greater extent than in many other parts of England, 'the supply is diminishing because young women prefer to go into domestic service'.³ Improvements in education, following the 1870 Elementary Education Act, and a growing awareness of life in the wider world had increased their distaste for the drudging toil and low social status of field work. For they rarely occupied responsible posts as farmers or farm managers. In 1891, Berkshire had

just 123 female farmers compared to 1,463 males; twenty years later that had shrunk to a mere one hundred females.

Nonetheless, a substantial number of Berkshire agriculturists continued to employ women labourers to the end of the nineteenth century. This was particularly true of the downland communities around Faringdon and Wantage, and of villages near Abingdon. Others worked on the farms as domestic servants, combining household duties with work in the dairy or looking after poultry and livestock. At the busy haymaking season they might also help in the fields and many were very young. Advertisements in the local press give a flavour of what was expected, as in the "*Abingdon Herald*" of 18 October, 1890: 'WANTED - A strong GIRL about 16, for general work in a farm-house'. In 1881, of thirty-two girls employed as maids on farms in the six parishes of East Hendred, Childrey, Long Wittenham, East Hagbourne, and North and South Moreton, no less than twenty-one were under the age of 20; four were under 15.

Sarah Jane Reeves, whose father occupied the 640-acre Manor Farm at Catmore in the 1850s and 1860s remembered that her mother always had one older servant to assist with the cooking and the dairy, to whom she paid £10 a year, and a second, younger, girl, who was expected to stay about two years whilst she was trained. She received £2 for the first year and £3 for the second, plus her keep. Sarah Jane remembered, too, that the names of the maids were always changed to 'Ann and Mary when in our service', - a denial of their individuality which some girls resented. Restrictions were placed on their dress and behaviour. In winter they wore linsey-

1. 1868-69 Report p.84

2. 1868-69 Report p.84

3. "Royal Commission on Labour: The Agricultural Labourer" Parliamentary Papers, 1893-94, Vol XXXV, Wantage Poor Law Union, p.64

woolsey dresses and in the summer, cotton. No flower or ornament was allowed on hat or bonnet. 'I think these little tyrannies and "no followers allowed", and too little recreation or holidays, added to the dislike of domestic service'.¹

Many women, however, worked in the fields and in this respect family historians should be aware that the official census figures are misleading, since they under-estimate the true totals involved. When tracing women relatives it is worth remembering that a number of part-time workers did not declare an occupation to the census enumerator, even though their names appeared in farm wages books, or farmers noted in their own census declaration that they employed female labourers. Thus in 1881, at East Hagbourne, East Hendred and Childrey, farmers claimed to have four, nine and eleven women workers, respectively. Yet, with the exception of one East Hendred wife, no female in any of these parishes admitted to the census enumerator that she was a field labourer. This contrasted markedly with the nearby small parish of West Hendred. Here Mrs Susannah Reeves, a widowed farmer, employed twelve women in 1881, and no less than eighteen female villagers described themselves as field labourers in the census. Twelve were married and six were unmarried girls. Clearly in this community field labour continued to be seen as an acceptable – and respectable – occupation when it was being regarded with disfavour elsewhere.²

1. Kathleen Philip ed., "The Memoirs of Sarah Jane Harris of Manor Farm, Catmore, Berks." (privately published, 1973), under "The Farm Servants". In 1861, the two maids were aged 18 and 15, respectively.

2. See Census Returns for East Hagborne, East and West Hendred and Childrey.

From the farmer's point of view, women were attractive because of their relative cheapness (they were paid at about half or less the male wage rate) and because of the flexibility with which they could be deployed. This was particularly important during the years of agricultural depression at the end of the nineteenth century, when arable acreage generally was declining. As Mr Burton, a Childrey farmer, put it in the 1890s:

*'we keep men on all the year round, and we can put women on when we want something extra done.'*³

Some employers made it a condition that male workers' wives should turn out when needed. Certainly the labour book of Steventon Farm, Steventon, reveals that in the spring of 1847 about half the adult male employees had their wives at work. The women earned 7d or 8d per day, though this was apparently paid over to the husbands rather than the workers themselves!⁴

Again, when one Berkshire tenant farmer entered on his new holding in the early 1880s he made a point of visiting the five cottages attached to it and warning the occupants that if they wished to continue to live there they must provide a woman worker for the hay and corn harvest: 'I am not going to put up with any humbug', he declared, '... and if five women don't turn out to come a hay-making at one shilling and sixpence per day..., I am very soon round at the cottage to know what is the matter'.⁵

3. "Royal Commission on Labour: The Agricultural Labourer", p.64

4. Labour Book for Steventon Farm at the University of Reading Farm Archives. BER.16.2.1.

5. Hubert Simmons, "Farnborough Hall" (3 vols, London Tinsley Bros, 1882) Vol 2, pp.79-81.

Changing husbandry techniques during the nineteenth century, as sickles were superseded by scythes and later reaping machines, reduced women's role as reapers at harvest time. For females rarely used a scythe or fagging hook to cut the corn in the way they had earlier employed a sickle, although they continued to help by binding the sheaves and with other tasks. At Childrey in the 1880s the rector's son remembered that most of the villagers migrated to the cornfields as family units:

*"Father, with his broad-bladed fagging hook in his right hand and crooked stick in his left, slashed through the yellow stalks and left them gathered by his foot. Mother followed, swept a sheaf together placed it on 'the bond', drew this lightly and fastened it by a twist. The children pulled the bonds, the younger perhaps only able to select the six or eight stalks needed to make one, the elder making them ready for mother to use."*¹

Before they started work the families drew lots for the strips on which they were to work in the field and the unmarried men (nicknamed "widow men") who lacked female assistance were soon outdistanced "by their more fortunate neighbours".

Tom Strong's fictional "Stubble Farm", probably located in East Berkshire, was also a scene of activity and hard work during the harvest. "[The reapers] were ... of all sizes and ages", wrote Hubert Simmons, "men and women, Irish and English, strollers and neighbours, reapers and faggers, good workmen and bad, grandmothers and children, kettle-boilers and tiers, married and single: but they had all assembled with two com-

mon views, viz. to cut Tom Strong's corn and to earn money".²

Sometimes under the pressure and heat of harvesting, quarrels broke out among the workers. At Letcombe Regis in August 1859 a dispute between some of the women took a serious turn when one of them was wounded in the arm by a blow from a hay fork. The culprit was fined 5s., with 9d. costs, at Wantage petty sessions.³ Then there was 71-year-old Sarah Lawrence of Cholsey who returned home so exhausted by a long day's toil in the harvest field in July 1869 that she died in her bed that night.⁴

On the Reeves farm at Catmore, as elsewhere, younger women brought their smallest children with them when they were reaping. These were put to rest in the shade of the corn shocks or under a hedge but often they 'suffered terribly from the harvest bugs which caused intense irritation and brought them up in large red lumps'.⁵ Nevertheless so great was the pressure of family poverty that the women had to earn money whenever they could. These unpleasant by-products were accepted as unavoidable evils in that situation. At Catmore there was even one old woman who earned a little by carrying pails of water on a yoke for use in the steam threshing machine; in return for her arduous toil she was paid 1s. a day.⁶

2. [Anon.] [Hubert Simmons] "Stubble Farm; or Three Generations of English Farmers" (2 vols.) (London: Tinsley Bros., 1880), Vol 2, pp. 16-17.

3. D.H. Morgan, "Harvesters and Harvesting 1840-1900" (London: Croom Helm, 1982), p.144.

4. D.H. Morgan, op.cit., p.141.

5. Kathleen Philip ed., op.cit., under "The Farm Servants".

6. Kathleen Philip ed., op.cit., under "The House and Garden

1. J.G.Comish, "Reminiscences of Country Life" (London: Country Life, 1939), pp.81-82.

Q & A with Jean

Compiled by Jean Debney

Q What is a Peculiar?

David Keep (2160) from Sussex writes as follows: One of my ancestors, Thomas George KEEP claimed (in the 1851 Census) to have been born in Hurst c.1819/20. The parish records do not list him but I understand that Hurst was a “peculiar”. Can you say what this means and whether different records might be available outside the Berkshire R.O.?

A According to my dictionary a “peculiar” is a separate or independent ecclesiastical district exempt in English canon law to the ordinary of the diocese .ie. a parish or group of parishes not subject to the jurisdiction of the archdeacon or bishop.

In this instance, Hurst was one of a group of Berkshire parishes in the jurisdiction of the “Peculiar of the Dean of Salisbury” which included Arborfield, Aston Upthorpe, Blewbury, Ruscombe, Sonning, Upton, Wokingham and Sandhurst. The Dean was a clerical member of Salisbury Cathedral chapter who had jurisdiction over these parishes with the right to collect any fees or income deriving from such endowments: eg. by proving wills, etc.

Until 1832, Hurst was partly in Berkshire and partly in Wiltshire. It was in the Hundred of Sonning and the Wokingham Poor Law Union and Registration District. Until 1831 it was a Chapelry of Sonning and consisted of the Liberties of Broad Hinton and Winnersh (including Sindlesham) and, until 1832, the Chapelry of Twyford.

Most of the above was obtained from the *National Index of Parish Registers Vol. 811 Berkshire* (SOG 1989)† which is an invaluable

source of information for anyone researching in parish registers. If any of the above is not very clear, then I am sure there will be someone who will write in with further information.

As your ancestor was not baptised in Hurst, you should check the surrounding parishes, eg. Sonning, Arborfield, Barkham, Wokingham, Ruscombe and Wargrave. The parish registers are in the Berkshire Record Office. The Bishops Transcripts to 1836 and probate records to 1857 are in the Wiltshire Record Office at Trowbridge.

Q. Dade’s Registers

Susan Lenton (2145) of Bracknell says that she remembers hearing a speaker at one of the Society meetings mention “Dade’s Registers” and she would like to know what these are.

A Rev. William DADE devised a registration system which was used from 1777-1812 in the baptism and burial registers of the Church of England for some parishes in the City of York and the Vale of York; the surviving registers are in the Borthwick Institute at York. The system was not used in the marriage registers as these were covered from 1754 by Lord Hardwicke’s Act.

Details in the baptismal registers comprised the child’s name and seniority in the family, ie. 1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc., the father’s name, profession, abode, descent (ie. details of his parents), mother’s name and descent & child’s dates of birth and baptism.

Details in the burial registers comprised the deceased’s name, age and occupation, place and cause of death, descent, dates of death and burial.

For further details see: *A Guide to the Parish Records in the Borthwick Institute of Historical Research*† by C C WEBB (Univ.

of York 1987) introduction pp v & vi; W J SHIELS: "Mobility & Registration in the north in the late 18th century" in *Local Population Studies* vol.23 (1979) p41-4.

Q. Doctors' Commons

Helen Relf (912) of Newbury has seen a reference to "Doctors Commons" and wonders what these are?

A Doctors' Commons was a college in London of civil lawyers who practised in ecclesiastical courts: the Court of Arches (the appeal court of the Archbishop of Canterbury dealing with disputed wills, etc.), the Court of Delegates (dealing with appeals in the Prerogative Courts of both Canterbury and York) and the Admiralty Division of the High Court of Justice (which dealt with probate, divorce, etc.) In the Middle Ages these lawyers were ordained priests but after 1545 were lay persons. Doctors' Commons was dissolved in 1858. Records from 1567 to 1857 are in the Public Record Office (Ref. PRO 30)

Further details are in *Tracing Your Ancestors in the Public Record Office** (HMSO 1990); *Guide to the Public Record* (1986) gives details of classes & has a comprehensive index; *Records of Attorneys and Solicitors in the PRO PRO Information Leaflet No.112* (no charge but personal callers only; NOTE, this does not seem to mention "Doctors' Commons", pity.) See also G D SQUIBB *Doctors' Commons* (Oxford 1977).

Q. Where was he born?

Diane Ridley (1975) of Surrey writes as follows:-

"My great-grand-father, Frederick Ambrose NEWELL, married Sarah CURTIS on 10 June 1866 at Clewer Parish Church, Berk-

shire; his father's name was Thomas; they both gave their residence as "Clewer Village". There are no NEWELLS listed in the *Berkshire 1851 Census Index (Vol 12 Windsor RD)*. I have checked the 1861 and 1871 censuses at Chancery Lane and the only NEWELL family did not include a Frederick or Sarah.

In 1876 my grandmother was born on 7 Feb at Mitcham, Surrey. I cannot find them at this address in the 1871 or 1881 censuses. My ancestors seems to have moved house a lot and also most selfishly married and gave birth in the middle of a decade, so I can't find out where Frederick or Sarah were born. I have a long list of Frederick NEWELLS born between 1840 and 1845 from the St Catherine's House indexes; I also have his death certificate for 1889 which gives his age as 47. Can you suggest what I do next?"

AThe address given on a marriage certificate is only that for the previous three weeks, so both parties might be in the area very briefly. You do not say what your grandfather's occupation was. Many working class folk moved house frequently in the endless search for employment and tracking them down can be difficult. Try checking local trade directories such as Kelly's etc. for NEWELL entries in both Berkshire and Surrey.

In addition to the Berkshire Census Index, West Surrey FHS have also produced some for Surrey parishes. The address of the secretary is on the back cover of the latest edition of the *Family History News & Digest*†. Did your grandmother have a brother or sister who might have been born near a census date? if you obtain that certificate you will have an address that can be checked. The 1881 census indexes for Berkshire or Surrey may provide you with your answer

when they appear; as you may know the returns are being transcribed by local family history societies and will be issued on microfiche by the Mormons as completed – some are available now.

From his age at death, it appears that your grandfather was born ?1842; what age did he give at marriage? does this give the same possible year of birth? It is an expensive business asking for certificate checks via St Catherine's House and it may be cheaper to write to each local registry office in turn using the entries in your SCH list of births 1840-1845 and, enclosing a cheque for £5 50, ask for a birth certificate for Frederick son of Thomas. They will search 5 years and send a copy certificate if found.

Colin D. ROGERS gives further suggestions for tracing a birth/baptism in *The Family Tree Detective* (1989)†

Q. An unexpected migration

Mrs Marjorie Burrett (2072) of West Yorkshire writes as follows:-

"Whilst following up a baptism from the IGI in Newcastle, Northumberland, from where I thought my husband's family originated, I found the father, Thomas BURRETT, was "formerly of Swallowfield, Berks". Further investigations showed that his father must have left Swallowfield with a young family (including 10 year old Thomas,) around 1775: Mary Smith BURRETT bap 1774 at Swallowfield and Ann Booth BURRETT bap 1776 in Newcastle. The family remained there for about 100 years. I would like to know why they travelled all the way to Newcastle?

I also have another baptism in Newcastle in 1778 which gives the father's job as "wide open beator". Is this something to do with an estate (ie. to do with partridges) and did

he move to an estate in Newcastle with a family from Berkshire?"

A Your lucky discovery about your husband's Berkshire origins just proves the point that entries on the IGI should always be checked for (a) the correct entry and (b) additional information – which you certainly found.

The reason for leaving Berkshire for Newcastle was probably the age-old problem of work. Have you tried looking in the Poor Law Records for Berkshire to see if he was sent north by his parish. Coal mined in Newcastle was sent by boat all round the country: the old saying that you don't send coals to Newcastle suggests its all pervading presence! Perhaps the father met a coal bargee at one of the wharves on the river Kennet in Reading who told him of work and good money to be had up north. He would probably have travelled by water – down the river Thames to London and then up the coast to Newcastle.

"Wide Open beator" is really two separate pieces of information: (1) "Wide Open" is a parish in Northumberland, 5 miles north of Newcastle; (2) a "beator" may be someone who packed the charge of powder in a hole in coalmining, a worker who spreads filler material evenly in quilts or mattresses, or one that beats up game (as in your suggestion of an estate) plus many other possibilities.

† Books obtainable from the BFHS book-stall (address on back cover)

A popular name?

M Seymour (member no. 5) is curious about the popularity of the name Adolf in German speaking countries, before and after 1945. From *The Guardian* of 5/8/1991

The Reading Connection

By Jayne Thorne

Jayne Thorne (née Redgrave) was born and brought up in Twyford, Berks, before moving to Wokingham with her two children and husband (a Thames Valley police officer). In between helping her children create masterpieces out of Lego and Playdough, she is working on her family history.

I am sure that you all know how expensive it can be to trace your ancestors, particularly when they all seem to come from the opposite end of the country from your home town. Most of my ancestors are Londoners and I must admit that it is quite difficult to find the time and money to travel up to London to track them down. I decided to save my trips to London for Christmas and birthday treats. I then resolved to find some family history research that I could do closer to my home town of Wokingham, Berkshire.

I received a flying start to my local research when my father-in-law handed me a piece of paper listing a number of ancestors and their dates and places of birth and death. I could not believe my luck, especially as the earliest date listed was 1692 and several of the ancestors had been born in the Windsor and Reading areas. It turned out that my father-in-law had been given the details by a maiden aunt who died a few years ago. From this moment on, I set out to prove all the names and dates were correct and to add as much detail as I could find.

Two of my father-in-laws's ancestors have turned out to be particularly inter-

esting as they lived in parts of Reading which still exist today. One of these was George Hopkins, who was a great-grandfather of my father-in-law. He was born in Kingsclere, Hampshire in 1837 and married a lady from Newbury named Hannah. George and Hannah Hopkins then moved to Portsmouth for some reason and three of their children Charles, Henry and Kate Eva were born there between 1867 and 1870. Soon after the birth of Kate Eva the family moved to Reading where two more children: Frank and Ellen were born. I found the family on the 1881 census for the parish of St Laurence, Reading. George Hopkins was working as a blacksmith by this time and the whole family were living in Merchant's place, off Friar Street in Reading town centre. Merchant's Place seems to have been a hive of activity as it was also home to a horse dealer and a cattle dealer and their families. There is still a smithy in Merchant's Place today and it is easy to imagine how the little street must have looked (and smelt) all those years ago. The family were still living in Merchant's Place in 1895 and a reference to George Hopkins, Blacksmith appears in Kelly's Directory for that year.

The other ancestor of whom I am particularly fond is another of my father-in-law's great grandfathers. His name was Thomas Philp and he was born in Launceston, Cornwall in 1824. He came to the Thames Valley to live and in 1850 he married Miss Ann Gray, a baker's daughter from Eton. Between 1853 and 1864 the couple produced five children: Thomas jr., Charlotte, Frank, Emily and Fanny. Thomas Philp was in the hardware and stationery business and he

ran a shop at 21 Minster Street, Reading for many years. The earliest reference to the shop as Philp & Co is in an 1859 copy of *MacCauley's Reading Directory* and the latest reference I can find is in a 1947 *Kelly's Directory*. The shop was situated on the same side of Minster Street as the Heelas Department Store. According to the 1871 Census, Thomas and Ann Philp, their five children, Ann's widowed mother (Charlotte Gray) and a servant girl (Charlotte Reeves) all lived above the shop.

By 1881 the family appeared to have moved away from the shop, leaving the second eldest son, Frank, living at 21 Minister Street under the watchful eye of a 70 year old servant by the name of Ann Vass. However, the 1881 Census showed that the remainder of the family had moved to 191 King's Road, Reading. This is the road where part of the Reading College of Technology is now situated and some readers have probably seen the beautifully restored houses which are now home to a number of assurance companies. The houses were constructed in the 1830s and 1840s as suitable homes for local businessmen and some medical staff at the Royal Berkshire Hospital. I was hoping to find no.191 still intact, however it seems that it would have been situated on the site of the petrol station which is now next to the Reading College of Technology.

When Thomas Philp died in November 1882 his eldest son (Thomas Philp jnr) continued to run the business with his wife, Caroline Tipton. Thomas and Caroline both died in 1944 and from information obtained from various trades directories it would seem that Philp & Co was still in business up until 1947

and quite possibly later than this date. This means the company was in existence for at least 88 years.

I've really enjoyed finding out about my husband's ancestors in Reading and I hope to find out a lot more about them. I certainly find myself looking at Reading in a different light now and I seem to spend as much time looking at the old buildings as I do looking in the shop windows.

Finally, there is a rumour in my husband's family that there is an Abbot of Reading somewhere back along the line. I was going to take this with a pinch of salt but when I checked a list of Abbots of Reading Abbey, I found Abbot no.28 was John Thorne I (1446-1486) and Abbot no.29 was John Thorne II (1486-1519), one of whom is falsely reputed to have founded Reading School in 1486. I dread to think how long it would take to prove or disprove a connection to the Abbots of Reading, but it should certainly keep me busy for the next century or two!

Editor's note:

Whilst idly glancing through a copy of *Kelly's* for 1972, I noticed that a Philp & Co. were listed at 82 London St., as "paper bag mers"! A possible connection with the stationers of 21 Minster St?

The school at Kintbury Crossways

by Douglas Barnes

Douglas Barnes has published a number of books on educational topics and is now trying his hand at writing about the pleasures of family history. He is a member of several county Family History Societies and his interests include Pounds, Barlow and Colyer in Berks, Wing and Hooper in Herts, Hurst and Quartermain in Oxon and Barnes and Withall in West Middlesex.

Not all of the excitements of family history come from unearthing the details of the furthest past: even well-remembered relatives can set us puzzles whose solution comes as a surprise. Although I do not remember my mother's mother, who died before I was two, I do have photographs of her. These reveal a prematurely-aged lady with a thin lined face; she was only sixty-two when she died in 1929. Her maiden name was Margaret Maria Willis and for most of her life she was a school teacher, and effectively the family's main breadwinner, as her husband, Ernest Wing, seldom had regular employment. The reasons for this might provide the material for another interesting story if only I could discover them. Amongst my photographs of her is one with her school class, one child holding a slate on which is written in a copper-plate script "Christchurch Kintbury Group III". It must have been taken in about 1900. In a full dark dress that sweeps the ground and a broad white collar, her dark hair brushed neatly upwards, she stands with a baby in her arms (my uncle, also Ernest Wing, who

was born that year), looking much younger than in other photographs. My mother, a child perhaps three years old, stands before her. Around her is a class of nineteen infants, all dressed in their best with frilly or starched collars, and with them two older girls who were perhaps pupil-teachers. There is also an unidentified small dog, half-embraced by a little boy sitting in the front row. How was it that a woman with a baby and another young child could hold down a teaching appointment in 1900?

My mother had told me that she lived for a few early years in a village called Kintbury in Berkshire, so this was perhaps where the school was. Visiting Kintbury, my wife and I soon found the village school, a single-storey red brick building with semi-gothic trimmings, attractive and very recognisably a school despite then being converted into a private house. However, when I returned home and consulted the photograph, I realised that it was not the right school, for the details of the building were quite different. Was it another school where my grandmother had taught before going to Kintbury? No, that was impossible because of the age of the baby.

Another possibility appeared when we next looked at the Berkshire records, for I found that Christchurch was not the village school: there had been another church and school in that area, built in 1866 a mile or more outside the village at "Kintbury Crossways". It must have served the country area lying between Kintbury, Hampstead Marshall and Inkpen. So when we had finished at the Record Office we drove to Kintbury again and out to the Crossways, which proved to be at the junction of several

country roads, but little else. There were woods and fields, and an overgrown driveway, perhaps leading to a distant country house. Close to the junction there was a small group of buildings - a cottage and some outhouses - and another group was visible on a hilltop beyond some fields. It did not look promising for our search.

At the junction there was also an old graveyard, so we went in and looked around. It was interesting to find the graves of several people called Pounds, which had been my grandmother's mother's family name. This branch had however lived in Inkpen and not in Kintbury. Moreover, even more relevant to our quest, was a grave with a generously worded memorial to a Mrs Caroline Leonard, a young and popular teacher at the Crossways school who had died in 1899. The cross had been "erected to her memory by her husband, friends and the parents of her pupils". Was this my grandmother's predecessor? There was also something else, a level rectangle where a building had once stood. That must have been Christchurch, but where was the school? No solution offered itself, so we got into the car and drove away towards Kintbury.

Some distance along the road we noticed a pub called the "Crossways Inn" so on the spur of the moment I decided to stop and ask the publican's help. In reply to my question, "Do you know where the old Christchurch School was?", the barman replied, "You're in it!" Indeed the room had far too high a roof to be a typical bar. We then went outside; the window shapes familiar from the old photograph were now clearly recognisa-

ble, though before I had had no eyes to see them.

When I had explained the nature of my interest to the barman, he showed us the cottage where the schoolmistress had lived. Little bigger than the garage of a suburban house, it had been converted to lavatories in the later years of the school. My grandparents and their two small children lived for several years in that small box. Indeed I found that my uncle had been born there.

Some time later it occurred to me that I now knew why the school authorities had been willing to appoint a married woman with young children. They may have put up that tiny one room house for an unmarried teacher, but no unmarried woman would have been willing to live alone, in that isolated place. I imagine that my grandmother was still in touch with her Pounds relatives in Kintbury, who perhaps knew that she needed a post urgently after her husband had lost his job and that the unexpected death of Mrs Leonard had made a new appointment urgent.

The 1903 Directory shows a Mrs Cook as the school mistress at Christchurch, so by then my grandmother had moved on - to a teaching post in Sunbury-on-Thames and a small, but comfortable house. I eagerly await the 1891 census in the hope that the entries for Park Street near St Albans in Hertfordshire will throw light on whether my grandmother was teaching before 1899, and perhaps even some hint of whatever misfortune forced my grandfather and his family to undergo those constricted years at Kintbury Crossways.

HELP!

This page continues to be very popular, so if you have a lost ancestor or are stuck in any way, drop me a line, and perhaps someone will be able to help.

Charles Martin (929), 4 Delphi Court, Hope Rd., Shanklin, Isle of Wight, PO37 6EL, has a problem with his OAKLEY family. The 1851 Census for Swallowfield shows a Frederick OAKLEY aged 36 and his wife Elizabeth aged 45. They were married at Waltham St. Lawrence. The 1861 Census for Three Mile Cross has a Frederic OAKLEY aged 45 and wife Harriet aged 36. A Frederick OAKLEY died at Shinfield in 1879, aged 72. His sister Lucy RAPPLEY was present. Any ideas anyone?

John Greenslade (2002), 251 Ermin St., Stratton St. Margaret, Swindon, Wilts SN3 4LN, is trying to trace a John DEACON, who married Mary PEARCE on 13 Sept. 1761 at Ramsbury, Wilts, but his baptism and parentage cannot be traced in Wiltshire and he thinks John may have come from Berkshire.

George Buckland (2014), 76 Sutton Road, Seaford, E. Sussex, BN25 1SX, is looking for any information on the birth/baptism of Charles BUCKLAND born circa 1769. He married Jane GIBLET, whose family came from Bagshot, at St. Mary's Ealing, on 1st November 1795.

Kay Collins (2410), 286 Newton Rd., Rushden, Northants NN10 0SY, seeks any information of marriage or origins of Job & Martha WALDEN. Their daughter Elizabeth was bapt 1813 at Inkpen, Berks and married in 1835 to William ANSELL at East Woodhay, Hants. There are no other WALDEN baptisms

at Inkpen and no burials were found either. No trace in either Berks or Hants marriage index.

Edward Jones, (2476), 52 Ing Head Terrace, Shelf, Halifax HX3 7LB, is trying to find out where his grandmother, Rachel STONE was in the period between 1871 and 1896. In 1871 she appears on the census for East Hendred, aged 4 months, the daughter of Francis STONE and Elizabeth his wife née BOSHER (mar 1870). There were two other children, Tom and Caroline born 1866-1868. She next turns up getting married in Bingley, Yorkshire in 1896. She is not to be found on either the 1881 Census for East Hendred or Bingley.

Mr. Jones is also very anxious to obtain a copy of a book called *A Description of East Hendred* by E.R. Manley, published by the Three Bird's Press, Abingdon in 1969. If anyone knows where a copy can be obtained please contact Meg Goswell.

Geoffrey Packer (2493), "Willow End", 2 Cranbourne Rd., Oldswinford, Stourbridge, West Midlands DY8 1QZ, writes that he has looked in vain for the baptism of Henry PACKER, who would appear to have been born in Reading c.1822. From the 1840s Henry was a "City Missionary" in the East End of London. He married in 1848, at Bethnal Green an Eliza LONG of Bethnal Green. Her father was a William LONG. Henry's father was a James PACKER, a weaver. A Joseph PACKER appears as a witness to the marriage. Henry's son, Henry James married a Mary Ann Margaret MARCHANT, whose mother, Elizabeth LONG appears to be the sister of Eliza LONG.

Mr. Tony Warrick (2537), 11 Charlotte Close, Charminster, Dorchester, Dorset

DT2 9PY is trying to find the baptism of John WARRICK. According to the 1871 Census of East Wickham, Kent, where he died in 1872, aged 74, he was born at Aldermaston, Berks, However, the Parish Register of Aldermaston shows no trace of his baptism around 1795-1800.

He later became a Drug Merchant and Manufacturing Chemist in London. Can anyone help?

Finally, Marlene J.Gibbs (2218) has sent photocopies of two postcards of Tubney and asks if these places in Tubney (NW of Abingdon) still exist?



Picture of the Meet taken on the lawn of Tubney House, "Captain Bourn is going towards the front door".



This is a Beckley house at the Wayside "made into a big one now"

A Rough Guide to the Census Room

By Pauline Wales

Pauline Wales is a mother of two, who has recently returned to part-time clerical work. She has been researching her families of Allen and Bond in the Reading area and Wales in South London/Norfolk/Suffolk for about eighteen years.

On Monday 6th January armed with my one day travel pass I emerged from Waterloo station at 10.15am and set off for Chancery Lane, via the Strand, to look at the 1891 Census Returns. As I approached the Public Record Office, I expected to see a queue of eager family historians, but the area was quiet. After signing in, I descended into the basement to the reception desk. Here I was given an orange card with my seat number on and shown where to put my bag and coat. I discovered that plenty of loose change is necessary both for the locker (a 1 coin is needed for the returnable deposit) and for the self-service photocopier. Two other practical points, the Ladies' is next to the cloakroom, and thus some way from the Census Room itself, and as air conditioning is in operation inside the Census Room it is a good idea to wear warm clothing.

I located my reader in one of many rooms, all clearly marked. There are now 242 seats, which is an increase from 104 in anticipation of heavy demand. To my surprise I had a room full of about 60 microfilm readers to myself until lunch-time when it began to fill up.

I hurried along to the 1891 Census room and a helpful gentleman showed me how

the self-service system worked. I selected my film and placed my dummy box, bearing my reader number, in its place.

Having found my family, albeit that the surname was Moles not Wales as expected, I took the film to the photocopying room. Staff charge 82p per frame or there is a DIY service for 31p per frame. I opted for a member of staff to copy 2 frames for me while I watched, but the process is not difficult and staff are on hand to help.

The IGI is available, as are a number of finding aids, including street directories. There are plenty of staff to ask for advice and all are very helpful.

Finally there is a refreshment room with a drinks machine and a small shop selling genealogical guides, which is well worth a visit on the way out. Altogether, I had a very enjoyable and fruitful day.

The 1891 Census

By Jean Debney

The 1891 Census returns were made available for public inspection on microfilm or microfiche at the Public Record Office, Chancery Lane, London from 2nd January 1992. Readers are admitted in batches of 25 when the doors open at 9.30 am. There are several new information leaflets but these can only be collected personally when inside the PRO or in the Census Rooms (they will not supply ANY by post - pity!) The PRO have also produced a new publication "Making Use of the Census" by Susan Lumas (see "Book Ends" for details).

The 1891 Census was taken on 5 April; the PRO group letters and class number are RG 12. The method of finding the relevant piece number is the same as for the earlier censuses. However, the PRO

are preparing new place-name indexes to show the registration district number and also if street and place name indexes are available. This will eventually cover all the censuses.

The information given in 1891 is the same as for 1851 to 1881: ie. schedule number, address, surname and Christian name/s, relationship to head of household, marital condition, age, occupation, place and county of birth, and whether deaf, blind, lunatic. Two additional features in the 1891 Census are:

1. The number of rooms occupied by the household, if less than 5.
2. Whether a person was an employer, employed, or neither.¹

PRO News

from Jean Debney

Saturday opening

The PRO intend to open the Census Rooms at Chancery Lane on Saturdays for a trial period of six months from 7 July 1992.

The Reading Rooms of the PRO are closed on Saturdays and Sundays and on the following days in 1992:

Easter	17-20 April
May Day Holiday	4 May
Spring Holiday	25 May
Aug Bank Holiday	31 Aug
Stocktaking	5-16 Oct
Christmas	24-28 Dec

1901 & 1911 Census Returns

Some information can be supplied to direct descendants only from the 1901 re-

turns by applying (on form CAS 1/C) to St Catherine's House, Kingsway, London WC2B 6JP.

The 1911 census cannot yet be consulted because the returns were not entered into books.²

Marriage Witness Indexes

These are being compiled by members of Genealogical Societies in the UK, New Zealand and Australia. Each entry includes the names of the witnesses, groom and bride as well as the date and place of the marriage and the name of the genealogist who contributed the information.

The UK Index stands at 16,200 entries, the New Zealand Index at 9,000 and the Australian at 1,000. The organisers of the UK and New Zealand Indexes are willing to undertake research on receipt of 50 cents per surname and a long SAE or 2 IRC.

The Australian Index is not yet open to researchers as it is at present quite small. They would also welcome further contributions to these indexes. The organisers are: NZ Index – Mrs Ann Lensee, PO Box 71-031 Rosebank, Auckland 7 UK & Australian – Ted Wildy, 167 Carlisle Rd, Browns Bay, Auckland 1310.

Society of Genealogists

Please remember to take your membership card when visiting the SOG Library. As from March, the SOG is likely to enforce regulations and refuse admittance.

1. "Making Use of the Census" p14

2. Making Use of the Census p4

Seven Farm Diaries

By Dorothy Wise

Dorothy Wise is a life long local historian, farmer's widow, occupied with a 101 things not least amongst which is family history. This article is an introduction to some early twentieth century farm diaries in her possession and sets the scene by looking at the family in 1903. Subsequent extracts from the diaries will show the family growing up in pre-war rural Berkshire.

Introduction

I have inherited seven farm diaries that were kept by my father-in-law, Henry George Wise. He farmed at Wokefield, near Mortimer, Berks. There were many more diaries, one for each of the years that he farmed, but sadly only those for the years 1903, 1904, 1908, 1910, 1913, 1914 and 1921 remain.

For the most part they were written by Henry George, who refers to himself always as 'Self'. Each day 'Self' would record the day's activities detailing the work done, and for whom, under appropriate headings, such as 'OWN WORK' or the names of the people for whom he did work, such as 'PALMER Esq' or 'ROAD CONTRACT'. This latter refers to the contract which he held to maintain the roads in his parish in good order. Henry George was not only a farmer, but also a baker, shopkeeper and furniture remover.

He had nine children in the following order, four boys, three girls and two boys, with the last boy, whom I married, being born in 1903. The diaries reveal more than farm work. They tell us such things as who came to tea on Sundays, or who

went to Church or Chapel. Henry George was Church of England, whilst his wife Lizzie was Wesleyan and the family went to both or none as the mood seemed to take them. Sometimes the diary was used for jotting down the odd recipe (there is one for gingerbread), or some item that had appeared in a paper or magazine. His three small girls Dorothy, Alethea and Irene, used the old diaries for practising their spelling, handwriting and compositions. Historical figures like Lloyd George and General Booth get brief mentions, but perhaps best of all are the letters that Henry George composed on the back pages, before committing them to note-paper and envelope. They reveal much of his character. Thus he wrote to Mr E.J.Arman on the 8th May, in reply to one of his of the 7th May:

"...re damage done to post box. I think that the box WAS finally thrown by my mare rubbing against it, BUT there had been a crack in the joints of the brickwork for some time past.

I am sorry that the box was knocked down, but as I am a commoner, and Goddards Green is an open common on which I have rights of grazing, I am not liable for the damage done.

I mentioned at the time that it was a silly place to put the box."

1903

This is a rather battered Diary and commences on Saturday 3rd January, with the following entries:

Home sweet home

1903

Mid pleasure and palaces though
though we may roam be it ever
shumble there no place like home

There are few stranger creatures
even in the sea, than the jelly fishes
their structure is most remarkable.
Water enters very largely into the
composition

A page from the 1903 diary

W.E. WISE: Ben Hutchins with two horses ploughing Rag Ground.

OWN WORK: Tom Lewington with one horse cleaning out pig styes. Took one sack of potatoes to Bluchers. Fetched one ton of coal for Mother.¹ Made up day siding cart.

Rd. CONTR.: Half day siding cart.²

OWN WORK: Harry Hutchins done cattle. Made up day clearing stuff from the lawn. George West levelling lawn."

At the bottom of this page, in his wife's handwriting is a list of groceries bought by one of the staff at the farm shop:

"Half pound Fresh butter, 3lbs moist sugar, 1/2 lb lard, 1lb cheese, 1 tin of milk, 1/2 lb tea, 1 pk. candles, 1/2 lb starch."

On most days Harry Hutchins and George West journeyed to the gravel pits, to extract and cart gravel for the roads. It wasn't always for the roads, on October 8th we see:

"TYSER: Ben Hutchins, Harry Hutchins, Self, T. Lewington, Frank and Bert, with six horses, carting gravel to Tyser's Stable."

By 1903, Henry George's first four sons were all old enough to be helping on the farm, and indeed they are mentioned regularly. Jack at this time was 17yrs,

1. H.G.'s mother was 81 years.

2. The sides of the roads were cut and trimmed, and the trimmings were collected and carted away to a large heap in the farmyard, on which Henry George grew marrows, which he sold for 10d each to a Reading greengrocer, a Mr Britten.

SUNDAY 22 (53-312) Quinquagesima.

LESSONS.

Composition on a camel (Genesis i. 20-22; Matthew xxiii. 32-33; Genesis iii. 14; Romans vi.)

The camel is a useful animal. ~~It~~
 It is used to carry Arabs across
 the desert. Its ~~on~~ its back is a hump
 sometimes one and sometimes two

10

10

Randall went to doctor to get medicine
 for Hector and himself.

A page from the 1903 diary

Frank 15yrs, Bert 13yrs and Randal
 11yrs. Thus June 19th:

"OWN WORK: Randal to Beesley
 with horse rake, then to Seven Acres
 raking in, then to Lower Folks, rak-
 ing after spindle broke 1st time."

The men's wages are given with season-
 al variations and sometimes additions
 for piece work. The entry for the 9th
 February is typical of the wages paid:

"Harry Hutchins 4 days and
 Sunday..... 12/4

Ben Hutchins one week
 less cottage..... 17/-

Tom Lewington one week
 less cottage..... 17/-

George West four days 10/4

George West and Harry Hutchins for
 gravel digging 16/-"

Sometimes if the work had been thirsty
 work, there was 6d extra, "beer money".
 It is interesting to note that the wages
 were substantially the same in 1913.

However, the entries are not all about
 work. For example, the entry for the Au-
 gust Bank Holiday (Monday 3rd),
 records:

"Ben Hutchins with two horses and a
 van to Prospect Park. Self, and fami-
 ly, except Jack and Mother¹ to Cot-
 tingham Hill with two cobs and
 van."

These trips on Bank Holidays are re-
 membered with pleasure to this day by
 the one remaining member of the family,
 Alethea, now aged 95 and living in Syd-

1. She did not go as she with heavily pregnant
 with my husband-to-be.

ney, Australia. She said that they always took a picnic and often did not get home until midnight, ambling back through the lanes, singing the popular songs of the day. Henry George had a good tenor voice.

One Sunday, written in a painstakingly careful but childish hand is:

"Dorothy, Alethea, Irene, went to chapel. Aunt was not a tal well."

'Aunt' was Lizzie's sister. She came to help out when the first child came along, and as the others came along so regularly, and because they all loved her dearly, she never left. Her name was Sarah, but she was known as Aunt Sally.

This Diary does not tell us much about the family Christmas, but on the 21st December:

"SELF: To Reading with Bonnie [horse] brot, Potatoes, Oranges, and Apples."

On Christmas Eve, he recorded the day's work:

"finished turnip and swede cart, Harry done cattle and half day off. Jack kept house, Self, Mother and Aunt to Reading. Frank done cattle at night."

There is no entry for Christmas Day, except that someone, probably Dorothy, wrote in pencil "Christmas Day."

Shadows of us men

by Jean Perrin

*"Say art not women truly then Styl'd
but the shadows of us men?"*

Ben Jonson

Few of us today would agree with Ben Jonson's opinion of women but, even so, when starting Family History research there is often a tendency to concentrate on the males because they carry on the family surname and were more likely than the women to have achieved something worthy of record. However, experience teaches us that, by taking the women for granted, we may well miss a good story or, at least an interesting sidelight on the main family history.

Take, for example, the case of my Great-Aunt by marriage, Agnes Fisher, Brearley or Fairgrieve, as she was variously known. She was the wife of my Great-Uncle, Peter Walker Fairgrieve, who was Head Gardener to the Dowager Duchess of Atholl at Dunkeld, Perthshire. He acquired some fame as the organiser of a large Fruit Conference held there on the 31st August, 1888. *The Gardener's Magazine* of the 2nd March, 1889,¹ carried a lengthy report of a dinner given in his honour in Edinburgh at which the Chairman, Mr Malcolm Dunn of Dalkeith Gardens, spoke of Peter in laudatory terms. Unexpectedly, however, Mr Dunn mentioned Peter's wife to whom, he suggested, Peter, no doubt, owed much of his success. To commemorate the Fruit Conference, Mr Fairgrieve was given a gold medallion and Mrs Fairgrieve, "a ring of massive gold set with five diamonds" which was said

1. Seen in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

to be “of considerable value”. Why was she so honoured?

I began to unravel this mystery by recalling what I knew of her and was gathered from my father’s reminiscences in his old age. In these his Uncle Peter figured quite largely, but his Aunt was only mentioned in passing, sometimes being called Agnes Fisher and sometimes Agnes Brearley, something I never thought to question. Then two years ago, I acquired a copy of Queen Victoria’s “More Leaves From a Journal of a Life in the Highlands” and, reading it in bed that night, I was amazed to find the following entry for the 4th October, 1866 relating to a walk around the Dunkeld estate with the Dowager Duchess:

*“we saw Mrs Fisher, the mother of Agnes Brierley (sic) who was formerly schoolmistress to the Lochnagar School near Balmoral”.*¹

I nearly fell out of bed with surprise for I was certain, by the juxtaposition of the names that this must refer to my Great-Aunt. However, I had no idea that she had been a schoolmistress, let alone at Balmoral.

Straightaway, I wrote to the Grampian Regional Archives Department in Aberdeen, to try and find out more about this school. The archivist there, Mrs Cluer, was unable to help but suggested three possible avenues of enquiry, including the Royal Archives at Windsor. An answer duly arrived from them. It would seem that the school concerned was the female school established by Queen Victoria on the Abergeldie Estate and that the only reference they had to Miss

Fisher, as she was then, was connected with her departure from the school on the 31st December, 1863, as she was shortly to be married. It was disappointing that this was the ‘only’ reference, but it was a very important one for me.

From this I was able to trace her marriage on the 20th January, 1864 in Perth to James Brearley, an Inland Revenue Officer of Amersham, Bucks. How had she met him, we wonder? Perhaps he was working at the nearby Distillery! At this stage I had found out that she was a widow when she married my Great-Uncle in 1869, so I started to look for James Brearley’s death and found it shortly after their wedding, on the 29th May, 1865 in Alloa. I imagine that, after James’s death, Agnes returned to live with her parents at Dunkeld.

I now began to wonder how Agnes had come to be chosen as the schoolmistress for Queen Victoria’s school at Abergeldie. I had a feeling that the Queen’s friendship with the Dowager Duchess of Atholl might have had something to do with it. These two ladies had been friends for years and were especially drawn together when they were both widowed in 1861. Furthermore both set up schools for the children who lived on and around their respective estates.

At this juncture I must point out that in the course of tracing my ancestry I have had one or two amazing strokes of luck, the first being the purchase of Queen Victoria’s book. The second came in the form of an invitation to tea with a Miss Jackson, an historian who lives in Perth. I had once read an article she had written for the “Scots Magazine” about a Mr McKenzie who was a photographer who, from 1865, had a studio near the Railway Station in Birmam, which is

1. Victoria RI, “More Leaves from the Journal of a Life in the Highlands 1862-1882” (London: Smith Elder 1884), p59.

very near Dunkeld. As this was the terminus of the Highland Railway, he was well-placed to gain the custom of all those who flocked to the Highlands in the wake of the fashion set by the Queen. I had read that Miss Jackson had quite a collection of his photographs and as we were going to be in Scotland that year, I wrote asking if it would be possible for us to see these photographs, offering in return a copy of a photograph of Great-Uncle Peter taken by Mr McKenzie. To my delight, she agreed.

We found the collection most interesting and after viewing it, we started to chat about our connections with Dunkeld. Miss Jackson gave us a booklet she had helped to produce called, 'Dunkeld Remembered' and this was where my amazing luck showed itself again, for on page seven was a photograph of the teaching staff at the Duchess Anne's

School, Dunkeld in 1858 and there as a pupil teacher was Agnes Fisher! (See photograph). This to me certainly seemed to suggest that when Queen Victoria wanted a teacher for her school, the Dowager Duchess had recommended Agnes.

In conclusion, I now know that, although my Great-Uncle Peter was by no means illiterate and was extremely well-trained in matters horticultural, his wife probably helped him with the accounting and letter-writing that formed part of his duties as Head Gardener. It also seems very likely that she helped with the organisation of the Fruit Conference. Thus when Mr Dunn stated that her husband owed much of his success to her, it was not just idle flattery. Furthermore, the fact that she had been favoured by the Queen no doubt added a certain amount of prestige to them both.



Photograph showing Agnes as a pupil teacher at the Duchess Anne's School from the collection of His Grace the Duke of Atholl at Blair Castle.

Book Ends

Berkshire Local History

County Guide To Berkshire by Peter Speed (1991) £3 95.

Latest addition to a series covering most English and some Welsh counties; contains a comprehensive guide to places of interest. JD

Cookham - A village in Heaven

55 minute video with commentary by Tim Brooke-Taylor. It includes the local scenery, interviews with local residents, plus the history of this beautiful Thames-side village.

£16.90 (VHS) or £18.20 (American format) plus p&p: £1 UK, £2 overseas surface, £5 overseas airmail.

Family History Research Aids

Parish Register Copies in the Library of the Society of Genealogists 9th ed. (SOG 1991) £4 50.

A vast number of transcripts have been deposited with the SOG since the last catalogue was published in 1987. The layout is improved and place names are now listed alphabetically by pre-1974 County in separate sections for England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales; also some overseas. Information includes outline dates plus library shelf numbers. JD.

Using the Library of the Society of Genealogists (SOG 1991) 40p.

Basic guide to SOG collections; includes floor plans, subject index, etc. Should be read by everyone BEFORE visiting the Library. JD.

Making Use of the Census by Susan Lumas (PRO 1991) £3 95.

This is headed "PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE READERS' GUIDE No.1" with a

promise of further titles! A5 booklet with a laminated mauve cover which deals with all the available censuses from 1841 to 1891 and is a companion volume to E J HIGGS' "Making Sense of the Census". It guides readers through the maze of PRO finding aids so that specific parts of the census returns can be found, describes the census rooms at the PRO and explains the referencing system, gives a complete list of registration districts with their numbers for each census year, plus available street indexes. A useful guide to anyone using or indexing the Census Returns. JD.

The Growth of British Education and its Records by Colin R Chapman (Lochin Publishing 1991) £5 00.

Described as "another in the series of Chapmans Records Cameos" this A5 booklet has 76 pages and the same pale yellow-brown cover as his previous publication¹ which makes them difficult to tell apart. It traces the history of education from the Dark Ages to the 20th century and covers educational establishments in England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland as well as British Academies overseas. JD

Gedcom Data Transfer - Moving your Family Tree by David Hawgood (1992) £2 50.

If you use a computer for family history, this book tells you how to use GEDCOM to move your information from one computer to another. JD

Miscellaneous

Turnpike Roads by Geoffrey N. Wright (1992) £1 95. *London Statues & Monu-*

1. Pre-1841 Censuses & Population Listings (1991): see *Berkshire Family Historian*, Vol 15.2 (Dec 1991) p63.

ments by Margaret Baker (1992) £4 99
Fashion a la Carte 1860-1900 by Avril
Lansdell (reprint 1992) £3 95 *Wedding
Fashions 1860-1980* by Avril Lansdell
(reprint 1992) £3 95

All the above are available from BFHS
Bookstall (address on back cover).
Please add postage where appropriate as
per Booklist.

Another research aid

*Register Offices of Births, Deaths and
Marriages in Great Britain and North-
ern Ireland* by Victor J. Price price £2.95
available from the author at 269 Robin
Hood Lane, Birmingham, West Mid-
lands B28 0DJ. This gives the addresses
of nearly 1000 Register Offices, along
with the details of how to apply for copy
certificates and their cost.

Help offered

Wayne H. Bonner (1936), who was pre-
viously based at Reading University, has
now returned to the States. He is willing
to do research in America for members
of the BFHS in return for an IRC or
SAE.

Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)

Due to building work in progress at the
Library, some material will be unavaila-
ble to readers. Furthermore, the Friends
House will be completely closed to all
readers at some point between the end of
April 1992 and December 1992. Ther-
fore if you intend to visit the Library,
please write stating what you hope to see
and when. Their address is Friends
House, Euston Rd, London NW1 2BJ.
(Tel 071-387-3601)

Dates for your diary

- 7th Mar 1992
W.Surrey Computer Day at St John's
Woking.
- 11th Apr 1992
"Pedigree" User Group meeting at
Reading. Contact Chad Hanna
- 9th May 1992
Dorset FHS One Day Conference "Law and
Disorder" at Corfe Mullen Village Hall.
- 23rd May 1992
Wilts FHS One Day Conference "Medical
Records" at Marlborough School.
- 20th Jun 1992
Berks FHS Symposium at the Holt School,
Wokingham.
- 20th Jun 1992
Wilts FHS Open Day at the New Baptist
Church, Devizes. This will take the form of
a Victorian Fair.
- 4th-8th Sep 1992
6th British Family History Conference at
Worcester College, Henwick Grove,
Worcester. The theme of the conference is
"Potters, Plotters and Pikemen of the
Midland." Further details from Mrs Linda
Spencer, Conference Bookings Secretary,
14 West Ave, Castle Bromwich,
Birmingham B36 0EB.
- 26th Sep 1992
Hampshire FHS Open Day at the West End
Centre, nr Southampton.
- 3rd-4th Oct 1992
Maryborough Family Heritage Institute Inc
are hosting the celebrations to mark the
arrival of the first immigrant ship, the
"Ariadne", 130 years ago to the Port of
Maryborough, Queensland. Further details
from PO Box 913, Maryborough,
Queensland 4650 Australia.

Berkshire Record Office News

By Dr Peter Durrant (County Archivist)

Open at lunchtime again

Regular users will know and have suffered from the closure of the public search room at lunch-times for much of last year. I am pleased to say that lunch-time opening has been restored, though unfortunately as we are still short-staffed it has not been possible to reinstate the 12.30 document production service. This means that at present no documents can be produced from the strong rooms between 12.30 and 2.00. Readers can of course work on documents already ordered and will continue to have access to microfilms and microfiche for the whole day. We hope that we shall soon be able to restore the full service.

Self-service microfiche

One of the projects undertaken during our stock-taking fortnight in December was the extensive conversion of rollfilm to fiche, and the conversion of microfiche to self-service. This means that fiche of many more documents than formerly are now available on a help-yourself basis. We hope this makes things easier for readers and reduce the delays sometimes experienced when exchanging fiche. We do ask, however that users take particular care to put fiche back exactly where they came from!

Readers' Tickets and Original Documents

Until now visitors who have arrived at the Record Office without their reader's ticket or suitable I.D. have been permitted to use the full range of services, provided that it was their first such visit. On

second and subsequent visits without a ticket they have been excluded. We have now amended the procedures slightly. In future there will be no bar to visitors using microfilm and fiche and other resources in the search room, but no access to original records will be permitted to anyone without a reader's ticket. In the light of further reports recently of the theft of documents from public repositories it is necessary for us to be even more careful about security to protect the interests of the majority against the self-interest of a few. Since the readers' ticket system is designed above all to protect original documents, we are sure you will understand and appreciate why we have taken this step. The moral is simple: **Remember to bring your readers' ticket on every visit!**

Staff changes

Last autumn we welcomed Andrew Mitchell who joined us as Archives Assistant. Almost immediately we heard that Sue Shaw, Assistant County Archivist, had been appointed to a post in the Public Record Office. Sue left in November, after almost exactly five years in Berkshire. We hope to have news about her successor in time for the next issue of the "Berkshire Family Historian"

Coming your way

Plans are in hand for a number of events during the coming year which we hope will make more people in Berkshire aware of the work of its Archive Service. We are hoping to stage a couple of "roadshows", when members of staff will be on hand to talk about the Record

Office, discuss research problems, identify documents, and demonstrate the work of the Conservation Unit. We also hope to have a travelling display, building on the success of the exhibition which toured libraries in the Newbury area last autumn. Other events will contribute towards the celebrations to mark the 450th anniversary of the Diocese of Oxford: as one of the Diocese's three approved Record Offices, Berkshire Record Office has an important role to play in preserving a record of church life in the area. More details in the next issue.

The Royal Anniversary

To celebrate the fortieth anniversary of Her Majesty's accession, the Record Office is mounting a display of royal portrait initials, great seals and royal signatures, dating from Henry VIII to Queen Victoria. Initially this will appear in the show-cases in Shire Hall, but we hope to mount a photographic version which can go on tour in the country.

News from Berkshire Library and Information Service

*By Margaret Smith
Senior Librarian: Local Studies*

We have now acquired the microfilm edition of the 1891 census returns, the 1841-1881 returns already being in stock. Locations for the 1891 Census and areas covered are as follows:

County Local Studies Library, Reading whole of pre-1974 Berks, plus neighbouring areas of South Oxon.

Maidenhead Library
Cookham Registration District.

Windsor Library
Windsor Registration District.

Slough Library
Slough and neighbouring areas of South Buckinghamshire

Due to the workload on staff, we would prefer that, where possible, searchers visit the relevant library to do their own work. Please ring Reading 509243/509245, Maidenhead 25657, Windsor 860543 and Slough 535166 to enquire about arrangements for booking a film reader.

If you are researching Cookham and Windsor Registration Districts, Maidenhead and Windsor Libraries are alternatives to the County Local Studies Library.

A microform printing service is available at all the above libraries, except Windsor. Fees are currently 20p handling charge per reel of film or fiche and 40p per each A3 or A4 print. Where applicable, postage on orders is charged at the appropriate second class or airmail rates.

Research service

From April 1992, the County Local Studies Library will be offering a fee-based research service. Further details will be available then.

Letters to the Editor

14 St Barnabas Rd, Emmer Green,
Reading, Berks, RG4 8RA

Dear John,

We should like to recommend a researcher named Kaye Purnell who lives in New South Wales, Australia and operates under the name of Colonial Research Services.

She has been conducting research for us into the Australian line of our Goodworth one name study and she is excellent. Her charge of \$12.50 per hour is about equivalent to £5 an hour over here and is about half the rate charged by most professional researchers 'Down Under'.

Because Australia is so vast she can only research in NSW, but as this was the main landing point for most early settlers and convicts there are many people there today who have links with England.

Yours sincerely,

W.A. & M. Goodworth (1341)

Kaye's address is Colonial Research Services, 15 Balla Machree Way, Gympes Bay NSW 2227 Australia. Send SAE (or 3 IRCs) for estimate

Bernevyl, 54 Edinburgh Rd, Newmarket, Suffolk, CB8 0QD

Dear Editor,

Can I draw your attention to what I believe is an incorrect statement made in Rosemary Dunhill's article "Archives in Danger" in the Berkshire Family Historian of Dec 1991.

Miss Dunhill writes, "...of English Shire counties only Avon (a creation of the 1974 re-organisation) has no county record office." Could this be because

Avon is NOT a Shire county, but an administrative county?

In 1971, the Minister of the Environment said, "In the Bill we are creating new counties for statutory purposes. They are not binding for any other purpose and if people still wish to refer to the Traditional Counties they are at liberty to do so".

The authors of the White Paper which led to the 1974 changes spelled it out – "We do not see any reason why our proposals should affect many of the other organisations based on the geographical counties. We are not trying to blot out loyalties to the Traditional Counties". These new counties including Avon are merely "paper" counties and NOT Shire counties.

People have been encouraged to believe by local councils, as well as by the Post Office, the National Trust and English Heritage that some Traditional Counties have disappeared and that others have taken the place of Traditional Counties – they have not. It would seem that Miss Dunhill has joined them in perpetuating the myth. Additionally, I wonder what has happened to the Record Office which covered Bath in the Shire County of Somerset, has that also disappeared?

Yours faithfully,

Beryl R.A. Griffin

Miss Dunhill, County Archivist of Hampshire Record Office and Hon Secretary of "The National Council on Archives" replies:

"I am very sorry inadvertently to have offended Mrs Griffin. I used the term 'shire county' in what I understand to be the normal local government sense which contrasts shire councils with metropolitan counties and districts. I do

have some sympathy with her as my own family came from what I certainly persist in considering as Yorkshire rather than Humberside!

We are most grateful for the support we have received, in particular from family historians, as we seek to ensure the survival of the network of county record offices and the services they provide. The Local Government Bill is now going through the Commons. It is hoped that an amendment will be proposed providing for the maintenance of a county-wide archive service in areas where the recommended structure is based on a smaller unit. We need as many MPs as possible to be aware when this happens that this is an issue that their constituents care about. May I please therefore urge all those of your readers who have not already done so to write to their MPs on this subject, expressing their concern and asking for their support. Letters based on personal experiences are much the best, but I can supply a skeleton letter if this is helpful."

Computer Corner

by the editor

I had two letters in response to a suggestion that the magazine includes a Computer Corner (I think that is a better title and besides I can't spell column!)

Diane Merryweather (745) 11 Faldo Close, Rushey Mead, Leicester is a member of the Leicestershire FHS computer group, which meets once a fortnight and tries out different programs. One of these is *Gentree* which is for the Amstrad PCW and Amstrad CPC 6128. She writes that "once all your information has been put into the computer this

program will draw descendant/ancestor and one line charts, search and print the data in a number of ways and also print a family group sheet." They have also tried out *Brothers Keeper* which is a shareware program for any IBM compatible PC.

David Wornham (410) 20 The Parklands, Droitwich Spa, Worcs WR9 7DG, suggests another approach. He does not use a commercial program specifically designed for family history. Instead he uses a database, using the following fields:

First name, SURNAME
Birth (b.) / Baptism (bp) date and place
Death (d.) / Burial (bd) date and place
Marriage (m.) date and place
Spouse's 1st names, SURNAME, Birth (b.) / Baptism (bp) date and place
Spouses's Death (d.) / Burial (bd) date and place
Reference number in form aabbb/ccddd/eefff-egggg

where aa =number of chart in file
bbbb =number of entry on chart
cc =number father's chart
dddd =number of father's entry
ee =number of childrens' chart
ffff-gggg =childrens' entries, first-last.

As he is engaged on a One Name Study for WORNHAM/WERNHAM/WIRDHAM, he does not include a separate entry for the spouse. He writes that this "system can be used on computers and databases with small memory capacities as each chart can be saved on an individual disk. The entries can be printed, cut and pasted into the form of a family tree, using the reference numbers."

Berkshire Name Index

by Tom and Rita Hine

We have over 100,000 slips stored in 36 drawers, the bulk of which form the "Berkshire Name Index". Each slip has a name and date on it taken from an event of some kind. The index also contains "Strays" sent in over the years, in slip form (5" x 3" in duplicate) by thoughtful members, found whilst doing their own research. Some are census strays.

If you are seeking further information on a Berkshire forebear, or someone who might have come into Berkshire from a neighbouring county or indeed for a Berkshire person who might have got married outside the county, it is well worth writing to us with the usual stamped addressed envelope for a check. Please specify all known names of the person you seek, with approximate dates and place if known, to help in our research. We may be able to help but, please do allow for a little "turnaround" time.

Over the last year an increasing number of members have sent in "Trees". We file these in A4 size envelopes alphabetically and again is something else we refer to upon an enquiry. Thus your "Tree" would be appreciated, and may put you in touch with relations you never knew you had. The indexes and collections of trees are on display at our meetings at Newbury, Bracknell and Reading.

Finally thank you to those folks who wrote out so many slips out just prior to Christmas.

Members' Pages

compiled by Meg Goswell

Mrs Linda Sullivan (2285) has written to say that she has registered the name LIVERMORE and variants with the Guild of One Name Studies and would welcome communications from people interested in this name.

Obituary

1650 Mr Henry John Davis of 323, Chanterlands North, Hull HU5 4DY

Change of Address

1993 C.A.Martin to 6, Richmond Rd, Reading RG3 2SP

960	Mrs Frances M. Insell, Springfield Villa, 66. Fishguard Rd, Haverfordwest, Pembroke, Dyfed SA61 2QA	
?	PARTRIDGE	Marsh Benham 18 & 19 C
BKM	JEFFS	19 C
BRK	ALDRIDGE	Aldermaston 19 C
BRK	HERBERT	Chaddleworth 18 & 19 C
BRK	HIDDEN	Speen 18 & 19 C
BRK	INSELL	Reading 19 C
BRK	KING	Newbury 19 C
BRK	LOVEGROVE	Aldermaston 19 C
BRK	MINALL	Reading 19 C
DOR	STIBY	- 16 C +
SOM	WADMAN	- 17 C +
WIL	HARDY	Pitton 18 & 19 C
WIL	WADMAN	- 17 C +

1825 Mrs K. Smith, 47 Elmstone Drive, Tilehurst, Reading, Berks has written to say that her entry in the Members' Interests Directory is incorrect. The entry should read WILSON, not Wilson, so:

CANADAWILSON	Manitoba	1840-1990
SFK WILSON	Any	1600-1815

2313	Mr Derek Latimer, 13, West Avenue, Chelmsford, Essex CH1 2DB			KEN	SHELVEY	North or East Kent	?-1809
BKM	CLARK(E)	Horwood, Ltl & Grt	Pre 1890	KEN	SHELVEY	Deptford	1809-1810
HAM	LATIMER	Vernham Dean	Pre 1920	MDX	BOON	?	1800-1900
HAM	LATIMER	Andover	Pre 1920	MDX	DADY	?	1800-1880
OXF	LATIMER	Benson	Pre 1880	MDX	FELLOWS	?	1800-1880
WIL	LATIMER	Buttermere	Pre 1920	MDX	SHELVEY	Hackney	1810-1860
WIL	LATIMER	Ham	Pre 1920	MDX	WHITTICK	?	1800-1880
WIL	LATIMER	Shalbourne	Pre 1920	MDX	WILLIAMS	Hackney	1800-1840
2333	Mrs G. Picken, 12, Northbrooke Rd, Aldershot, Hants GU11 3HE			2476	Mr Edward C. Jones, 52, Inghead Terrace, Shelf, Halifax, West Yorks HX3 7LB		
BRK	BASTON	Maidenhead	1900-1950	BRK	BOSHIER	Any	All
BRK	COLDICUTT	Tubney	1750-1900	BRK	DENTON	Any	Pre 1850
BRK	DENTON	Milton	1740-1900	BRK	ELLAWAY	Any	Pre 1880
BRK	EDWELL	Sutton Courtney	1750-1900	BRK	GODDARD	Any	Pre 1850
BRK	HOAR	Radley	1700-1900	BRK	GUNTER	Any	Pre 1800
BRK	HUDSON	Abingdon & Fyfield	1850-1900	BRK	PAGE	Any	Pre 1850
BRK	SHEWRY	Tubney	1840-1900	BRK	STONE	Any	All
BRK	SHURY	Tubney	1840-1900	BRK	THOMAS	Any	Pre 1860
BRK	STIBBS	Sutton Courtney	1770-1900	BRK	TRIPP	Any	Pre 1850
OXF	BASTON	Culham	1780-1900	LAN	GERRARD	Any	Pre 1890
OXF	CAULKETT	Stanton Harcourt	1750-1900	OXF	BOSHIER	Any	All
2385	Mrs M. D. Langston, 16, Abbots Close, Rainham, Essex, RM13 9LA			OXF	STONE	Any	All
BRK	CREIGHTON	Great Shefford	1780+	2478	Mr Brian C. Fawcett, 28, Woodcote Rd, Caversham, Reading RG4 7BA		
BRK	CREIGHTON	Inkpen	1825+	CUL	WRIGHT	Any	1700-1800
BRK	DYMOND	Inkpen	1865+	LND	SHEPHERD	Any	1800-1850
BRK	SMITH	Chaddleworth	1790+	SAL	ENGLAND	Any	1700-1850
BRK	WELLS	Chaddleworth	1790+	WES	FAWCETT	Any	1640-1750
ESS	DYMOND	Epping	1800+	WES	HARRISON	Any	1700-1800
2439	Mrs J. Shelvey, Lillydown House, Sherbourne St John, Basingstoke RG24 9LH			WIL	ENGLAND	Any	1700-1850
KEN	BALDOCK	Chatham	1800-1850	YKS	SHEPHERD	Any	1800-1850
All	HEADRCHE			2480	Mr A.L. Heredge, 40, Fort Rd, Northolt, Middlesex UB5 5HH		
All	HEREDGE			All	HEADRCHE	Any	All
All	HERIRGE			All	HEREDGE	Any	All
All	HERLIDGE			All	HERIRGE	Any	All
				All	HERLIDGE	Any	All

All	HERREDGE	Any	All	HAM	KNIGHT	S. Warnborough	1800-
DUR	MOORE	Any	All	HAM	KNIGHT	Holybourne	1800-
2484	Mr David Chamberlain, Les Coquelicots, Clos Du Villocq, Castel, Guernsey			HAM	NEAL(E)	Holybourne	1800-
BRK	CHAMBERLAIN			HAM	SOFFE	Minstead	All
		Lockinge, E & W	All	2533	Jeanne Nickson, 31, Lowfield Rd, London W3 0AZ		
BRK	CHAMBERLAIN			BRK	TWITCHIN/TUTCHIN/TOUCHIN		
		Hendred, E & W	All			Inkpen	1635-1736
2490	Mr Brian J. Hatt, Greenacres, Swan Hill, Ellesmere, Shropshire SY12 0LY			BRK	TWITCHIN/TUTCHIN/TOUCHIN		
All	HATT/HAT/HATTE					West Woodhay	1635-1736
		Any	All	BRK	TWITCHIN/TUTCHIN/TOUCHIN		
2515	Mrs B. Strangeward, 2712, Palisade Dr, SW Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2V 3V3					Newbury	1720-1890
BRK	FORD	Newbury		BRK	TWITCHIN/TUTCHIN/TOUCHIN		
BRK	FORD	Shrivenham	1735-			Thatcham	1726-1800
BRK	HOCKLEY			BRK	TWITCHIN/TUTCHIN/TOUCHIN		
		Sulhampstead Banister	1755-			Enbourne	Mid 1700s
BRK	NORRIS	Newbury	1753-	BRK	TWITCHIN/TUTCHIN/TOUCHIN		
BRK	THORNE	Newbury	1755-			Chieveley	1850s
BRK	TRUMAN	Shrivenham	1735-	BRK	TWITCHIN/TUTCHIN/TOUCHIN		
2521	Mr D.J.R. Leach, 126, Edgeley Rd, London SW4 6MB					Speen	1860-1900
BRK	LEACH	Brimpton	Pre 1900	BRK	TWITCHIN/TUTCHIN/TOUCHIN		
2525	Mr G. Peckitt, 19, Stewart Garth, Epleworth Rd, Cottingham, N.Humber-side HU16 5YQ					Shaw-cum-Donnington	1860s
BRK	ABSOLON	Wallingford area	1600-1850	2537	Mr A.B. Warrick, 11, Charlotte Close, Chamminster, Dorchester, Dorset DT2 9PY		
2529	Mr & Mrs T.M. Matthews, 18, Mandhill Close, Grove, Wantage, Oxon OX12 7HY			BRK	WARRICK	Aldermaston	1700-1800
BRK	NICHOL(L)S	Hampstead Norris	All	GTL	BUTLER		1600-1700
CON	HARRIS	Crowan	All	GTL	DAY		Pre 1800
CON	JEFFREYS	Sithney	All	GTL	WALMSLEY		Pre 1750
CON	MAHR	Feock	All	KEN	POTTS	Sheerness	Pre 1800
DEV	MATTHEWS	Zeal Monarchum	All	SOM	WINTON	Shepton Mallet	Pre 1700
HAM	AVERY	Winsor	1780-	SXE	WINTON		Pre 1700
HAM	AVERY	Hursley	Pre 1780	SXW	WINTON		Pre 1700
				WAR	BETSON		Pre 1750
				WAR	GREAVES		Pre 1750
				WOR	BETSON		Pre 1750
				WOR	GREAVES		Pre 1750

BERKSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

The Society, which started its life as the Reading Amateur Genealogical Society in 1973, emerged under its present name in 1975 to encourage the study of family history in Berkshire. It aims to promote contacts between members through regular meetings and by the quarterly magazine.

The Society is a registered charity – number 283010.

Berkshire Name Index

This index may be consulted by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope, with your membership number, to:

Tom and Rita Hine, Oakley Cottage,
Westbury Lane, Purley-on-Thames,
Reading, RG8 8DL.

Berkshire Marriage Index

This index (to males names only) to 175,000 marriages in Berkshire between 1538 and 1837 may be consulted by sending details of the marriage being sought (groom's name and approximate date) and a stamped, self-addressed envelope showing your membership number, together with an additional second class postage stamp, to the Secretary. (Blanket searches cannot be undertaken.)

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A wide selection of books of interest to family historians is available at meetings and by post. Publications lists are available from the Secretary and from the Bookstall organiser (addresses on back cover)

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