

# ORIGINS

SPRING 2022



## *Included in this Issue*

- The Iver Diggers
- The Last Ferryman at Medmenham
- William Lewis – Father of Lewis William Spittles?

# BUCKINGHAMSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Registered Charity 290335

Box 2 c/o Unit 7 Broadfields, Aylesbury, Bucks HP19 8BU

Website: [www.bucksfhs.org.uk](http://www.bucksfhs.org.uk)

Email: [society@bucksfhs.org.uk](mailto:society@bucksfhs.org.uk) (General Enquiries)

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<b>Chairman</b>	POSITION VACANT		
<b>Vice Chairman</b>	Dave Foster		
<b>Treasurer</b>	Colin Kightley	Email: <a href="mailto:treasurer@bucksfhs.org.uk">treasurer@bucksfhs.org.uk</a>	
<b>Honorary Secretary</b>	Tony Sargeant	Email: <a href="mailto:secretary@bucksfhs.org.uk">secretary@bucksfhs.org.uk</a>	
<b>Committee Members</b>	Rosemarie Bucknell Graham Gough	Steve Powell John Price	Gillian Talbot
<b>Northern Group Chairman</b>	Rex Watson	Email: <a href="mailto:northerngroup@bucksfhs.org.uk">northerngroup@bucksfhs.org.uk</a>	
<b>Southern Group Chairman</b>	Geoff Edwards	Email: <a href="mailto:southerngroup@bucksfhs.org.uk">southerngroup@bucksfhs.org.uk</a>	
<b>Membership &amp; Members' Interests Secretary</b>	Steve Powell	Email: <a href="mailto:membership@bucksfhs.org.uk">membership@bucksfhs.org.uk</a> Box 2 c/o Unit 7 Broadfields, Aylesbury, HP19 8BU	
<b>Editor</b>	Rebecca Gurney	Email: <a href="mailto:editor@bucksfhs.org.uk">editor@bucksfhs.org.uk</a> Box 2 c/o Unit 7 Broadfields, Aylesbury, HP19 8BU	

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*The affairs of the Society are governed by a Constitution,  
copies of which are available from the Secretary or Chairman*

## BUCKINGHAMSHIRE FHS MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION RATES for the year commencing 1st January 2022

UK Individual (A)	£12.00	Overseas (E)	£17.00
UK Family (B)	£15.00	Individual online (W)	£6.00
UK Corporate	£14.00		

Go to our website and join online  
Or email [membership@bucksfhs.org.uk](mailto:membership@bucksfhs.org.uk) for how to pay by standing order

# MAGAZINE OF THE BUCKINGHAMSHIRE FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Spring 2022 Vol. 46 No. 1

## CONTENTS

	<b>Page</b>
Members' Interests and Membership Renewals .....	Centre pages
From the Editor .....	2
A Note from the Honorary Secretary .....	3
Society Notices and Meetings .....	5
Diary Dates .....	10
William Lewis – father of Lewis William Spittles? (Corinne Yates) ...	13
Is Blood Really Thicker Than Water? (Sally Scagell) .....	17
A Murder Most Foul (Michael Wing) .....	22
Bucks Research Timeline 1600–1699 .....	26
Well Sinkers (Tony Sargeant) .....	28
The Iver Diggers (Joe Saunders) .....	29
Accounts: A Superior Type of Record (Tony Sargeant) .....	32
Transported Felons (Howard Lambert) .....	36
Beatrice Maud Press (Linda Smith) .....	37
The Last Ferryman at Medmenham (Joe Guttridge) .....	39
Parish Brief: Beachampton .....	56
Help Wanted .....	57
Press Release: New Book .....	58
Society Services .....	Back pages





# From the Editor

Welcome to the Spring edition of *Origins*, filled once more with very welcome contributions from our members. I hope you enjoy the Alan Dell Award entries – all of which are very worthy of publication.

Well done to everyone who submitted. There was some fascinating research and wonderful stories and we are very grateful to have such excellent content for this journal as a result of your efforts. This year, surprisingly, not so many entries were submitted. Perhaps more time at home during a pandemic is not an ideal motivator after all. But please do continue to send in your articles for this award, which does offer prizes and publication.

The big news recently has of course been the release of the 1921 census online at Findmypast (as well as being available at The National Archives, Manchester Central Library and the National Library of Wales). There was plenty of debate in various genealogy media about the fees for online access, but I couldn't resist accessing a handful of key records and I found out that my great-grandmother was living as a servant at the Grey House, Little Hampden. If you know the exact location of this house, please let me know.

If you have any interesting 1921 census finds, or mysteries, or anything else for that matter – photographs, snippets other members might find useful, or of course your own research stories – please don't hesitate to send them in. This journal relies on you!

Rebecca Gurney  
editor@bucksfhs.org.uk

## Origins Submissions Deadlines

July 2022 (Summer) issue – 3rd May 2022  
December 2022 (Winter) issue – 4th October 2022  
March 2023 (Spring) issue – 4th January 2023

*Submissions received after the deadline must be held over for the next issue*

# A Note From the Honorary Secretary

It has been a frustrating few months as hopes of returning meetings dwindled, then the latest variation of Covid-19 came along. The situation when you read this in late February or March 2022 may have changed – again. Some, including me, are hoping for a re-start of physical meetings in April 2022. One thing is for certain, long-term planning for meetings may not be feasible with speakers being booked at short notice. This will cause other problems in keeping you informed. We hope email and the website will provide help. Signing up to the website will help us with this.

I plan to continue with the Zoom sessions on the 2nd Monday of each month. They provide a forum for research with discussions and problem solving. The links and time will appear on the website each month.

Organisation of an AGM has problems in two areas, whether the meeting is face to face or online. The prerequisite for a face-to-face AGM is being able to hold normal Saturday meetings at Aylesbury.

The other problem is to change the Society's constitution to follow the guidance issued by the Federation of Family History Societies to reflect the reality of possible online meetings in the future. We could not make any changes last year as our agenda had already been published.

This is complicated by ensuring that all members receive proper notification, which can really only be done via email. There is also a problem with the existing constitution and a requirement for secret voting in the section about extraordinary general meetings. I'm not sure that can be done in an online meeting.

Tony Sargeant, Honorary Secretary  
secretary@bucksfhs.org.uk

# Society Notices

## Online Family History Workshops

I am running a series of Online Workshops to help members tackle problems with their research. These are advertised with the Zoom link on the website and usually take place in the second Monday of each month. I can look at particular problems or subjects if given notice.

Please email me at: [tony.sargeant@bucksfhs.org.uk](mailto:tony.sargeant@bucksfhs.org.uk)

**\*\* POSITIONS VACANT \*\***

**CHAIRMAN**

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**PUBLICITY OFFICER**

**All Society activities are run by volunteers**

If you would like more details about these roles, please email:  
[secretary@bucksfhs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@bucksfhs.org.uk)

Please send your contributions and comments to the Editor, who reserves the right to edit all contributions.

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# Executive Committee Dates

All the Executive Committee meetings are being held via Zoom.

If you wish to participate, please contact the Secretary by email at [secretary@bucksfhs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@bucksfhs.org.uk)

Executive Committee meetings, all at 7.30 pm:

Friday 4th February 2022

Friday 1st April 2022

Friday 3rd June 2022

Friday 5th August 2022

Friday 7th October 2022

Friday 2nd December 2022

Additional meetings will be added as required.

To be confirmed:

Friday 3rd February 2023

*Tony Sargeant, January 2022*



# Buckinghamshire Family History Society

*A Member of the Federation of Family History Societies*

Registered charity No. 290335



Proposed  
NOTICE OF  
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
SATURDAY 21st MAY 2022

## AGENDA

To be held at 15.15 p.m.

(Venue to be decided)

1. Introduction and Apologies.
2. Minutes of meeting held on 19 June 2021.
3. Annual Report for 2021.
4. Annual Accounts for 2021.
5. Appointment of an Independent Examiner for the 2022 accounts.
6. Election of Principal Officers and members of the Executive Committee.
7. Proposal to amend the constitution to accommodate the holding of meetings online.  
(This will be defined in final notice.)
8. Any Other Business.

By Order of the Executive Committee.

Tony Sargeant, Honorary Secretary

January 2022

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Buckinghamshire FHS Box 2 c/o, Unit 7 Broadfields, Aylesbury, HP19 8BU  
E-Mail: [Society@bucksfhs.org.uk](mailto:Society@bucksfhs.org.uk)



# Buckinghamshire Family History Society

Nomination of Officers and Executive Committee Members for 2022 / 2023

(Completed form to reach the Secretary by 23 April 2022)

For the election as Chairman / Secretary / Treasurer / Committee Member \*  
(\* delete positions not applicable)

Nominee's name and membership number: .....

Nominee's signature (see notes below):.....

Date: .....

Proposer's name and membership number: .....

Proposer's signature: .....

Seconder's name and membership number: .....

Seconder's signature: .....

Notes:

1. The signature of the nominee confirms that he/she is not a committee member of any other Society which might incur a conflict of interests.

2. Membership of the Executive Committee carries with it responsibilities as a trustee under charity law. The signature of the nominee confirms that he/she is not disqualified by law from being a trustee by virtue of being any of the following:

- a person under the age of 18;
  - a person who has been convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty, unless the conviction is spent;
  - a person who is an undischarged bankrupt;
  - a person who has been removed from trusteeship of a charity by a Court or by the Charity Commissioners;
  - a person who is under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986.
- (See section 72(1) of the Charities Act 1993.)

When complete please send this form to  
Honorary Secretary, 18 Churchill Road, Langley, Slough, SL3 7QZ  
Or email to [secretary@bucksfhs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@bucksfhs.org.uk)

# Letters to the Editor

If you have any additional information relating to articles in *Origins*, please contact the Editor: editor@bucksfhs.org.uk

## Tokens book

Regarding Geoff Swindells' article 'Seventeenth-Century Ancestors' (*Origins* Winter 2021, Vol. 45 No. 3, page 150), as a collector of traders' tokens I have long been aware of their value in genealogical research. Members might be interested in George Berry's book:

*Seventeenth Century England: Traders and their Tokens*, Seaby:  
London, 1988.

Trevor Owens (7306)

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## Veary and Ball

Re: Carol Bossenberry's articles on Arthur Veary Treacher (*Origins* Summer 2021, Vol. 45 No. 2, p 112; and Winter 2021, Vol. 45 No. 3, p 161).

This photo may be of interest [to Veary and Ball researchers].

It gives the date of birth for John Parker's wife Sarah (née Veary) [*I think MDCCXCIII = 1793 – Ed.*] and describes her as the niece of James Ball.

The stone is in All Saints' churchyard, High Wycombe, below the east window.

A very interesting article.

Hazel Langford



# Society Meetings

## ONLINE TALKS

At present, the Society is running a series of free online talks to replace the cancelled meetings. This means we can continue to provide a key benefit to our members, as well as extending it to members who live away from Buckinghamshire.

Details of talks will be announced on our website [bucksfhs.org.uk](http://bucksfhs.org.uk) or sign up to the monthly newsletter.

## ACCESSING ONLINE TALKS

Details will be emailed in advance to members. If you think we may hold an out-of-date email address for you, contact [membership@bucksfhs.org.uk](mailto:membership@bucksfhs.org.uk).

You may be requested to download Zoom or a Zoom plug-in for your internet browser. Audio will be switched off when you enter the online room but you will be able to activate your microphone if you wish to ask (or answer) questions.

The talk is limited to 100 participants and in order to protect the talk and participants from unwanted visitors, please do not publish the meeting links.



# Diary Dates

## \*\*\* PLEASE NOTE \*\*\*

At the time of writing (Jan 2022), some events are still subject to Covid-19 restrictions. Government guidelines continue to change, so always check with the event organisers or on the relevant websites before attending.

## Family History & Heritage Events

<b>Sat 19th Feb</b> <b>10am to 4.30pm</b>	<b>The Family History Show</b> Online 2022 event Price: £10.00 (early bird £7.00) <b>w</b> <a href="http://thefamilyhistoryshow.com">thefamilyhistoryshow.com</a>
<b>Sat 2nd Apr</b> <b>2.00pm to 3.00pm</b>	<b>My Ancestor was a Liar: Ignorance, Half-truths or Wilful Deceit?</b> Host: Society of Genealogists Online talk Price: £10.00 <b>w</b> <a href="http://societyofgenealogists.arlo.co/w/">societyofgenealogists.arlo.co/w/</a>
<b>Sat 9th &amp; Sun 10th Apr</b>	<b>Living History Festival</b> Host: Chiltern Open Air Museum Newland Park, Chalfont St Peter HP8 4AB Telling the story of the British soldier of the past 200 years <b>w</b> <a href="http://coam.org.uk/events/living-history-festival/">coam.org.uk/events/living-history-festival/</a>

<p><b>Sat 23rd Apr</b></p>	<p><b>GOONS 41st Guild Conference and AGM – ‘Sources and Resources’</b>  Host: Guild of One Name Studies  Jurys Inn Oxford, Godstow Road, Oxford OX2 8AL  <b>w</b> one-name.org</p>
<p><b>Sat 30th Apr 2.30pm</b></p>	<p><b>The Old Poor Law: Rural Queries of 1832 &amp; the Experience of the Poor</b>  Host: Society of Genealogists  Online course: Dr Judy Hill offers two topics of importance when researching our ancestors under the Old Poor Law, to get a better understanding of their experience.  Price: £20.00 (SoG members £16.00)  <b>w</b> societyofgenealogists.arlo.co/w/</p>
<p><b>Sat 7th May 9.30am to 6.00pm</b></p>	<p><b>SFHG 50th Anniversary Annual Conference and AGM</b>  Host: Sussex Family History Group  Price: £15.00. Book online.  <b>w</b> sfhg.uk</p>

## WEBSITES

### Twyford Local History Group

Exploring the history of the people of Twyford, Charndon, Poundon and Calvert. <https://www.twystory.co.uk/>

### Winslow History

Features a good names index, with plenty of extra information.  
<http://www.winslow-history.org.uk/index.shtml>

# Alan Dell Memorial Award

Best article competition

**DEADLINE 31 DECEMBER 2022**

First prize £50.00  
Second prize £25.00



For entry requirements visit  
[www.bucksfhs.org.uk](http://www.bucksfhs.org.uk)

# William Lewis – the father of Lewis William Spittles?

by Corinne Yates

*Alan Dell Award entry*

My paternal grandfather, Lewis William SPITTLES of Stoke Mandeville, Bucks, was born in 1866 to Emma Spittles, age 17, youngest of the family of Ann OLLIF/OLIFF and William Spittles, of Stoke Mandeville.

I have always wanted to discover the name of my true paternal line great-grandfather, the father of Lewis.

When I began my search, I could not find any paper records which would prove the identity my great-grandfather. I was informed at the Records Offices in Aylesbury, some years ago, that they suspected the records I needed, from 1866 to 1868, for Stoke Mandeville and Aylesbury, Bucks, such as the Assizes records, might have been destroyed in a fire years ago. I do have parish records showing the birth of Lewis William Spittles, revealing he was born out of wedlock, recorded in not such a kind way by the vicar in the margin of the births. Neither of his marriage certificates show a father. In 1868 Emma had another spurious child, Annie Elizabeth. I wondered if Annie shared his father.

So I tried to discover the name of my true paternal line and I didn't seem to be getting anywhere; but, after revisiting some old family history magazines, and reminding myself that mothers of illegitimate children often gave the father's surname as a second name, I began to think about how I had searched for any possible candidates in the past, and had failed. I also thought that perhaps Lewis could be a Christian name or a surname. Could it be that Lewis was the family name of the missing father? What if I could find a man, with the surname Lewis, in the area of Stoke Mandeville, around 1866 and 1868, when Emma was conceiving her two illegitimate children: Lewis William Spittles and Annie Elizabeth Spittles? I very much



**Lewis William Spittles**

doubted that I could find any definite evidence to prove the relationship but, if lucky, circumstantial evidence might show it to be likely.

I put in a search on Ancestry for any man with the surname Lewis, in the 1861 census in Buckinghamshire. I expected quite a few. The result was amazing. It made the hairs on the back of my neck stand up. At the top of the list, a 17-year-old William Lewis. Even better than I expected: it was not just exciting that had I found a Lewis, but one with the other name my grandfather had been given. I had assumed he had been named William after his grandfather, William Spittles. Furthermore, when I went back to 1851, the census revealed that this William Lewis had two brothers called Daniel and Edwin; two names Emma used for Lewis's half-brothers further on down the line. Could it be that Emma had had a deep affection for this man? That would make sense of Annie and Lewis having the same father. It made me feel that perhaps she may not have been such a loose woman after all.

William Lewis was from Great Missenden, which is fairly near Stoke Mandeville. Between 1861 and 1871, he must have moved from the farm where he was a servant, to Aylesbury, much nearer to where Emma lived, and where he would settle down with Julia WILKINS after their marriage in 1870.



Although none of this proved anything conclusively, I had a gut feeling this could be a tentative lead. I decided to research this family, in case my hunch was correct, to see whether 'Ancestry DNA' leads came up with someone from this tree.

The plot thickens.

I began to think that there may be a reason why Emma and William did not marry, when she found she was expecting at the tender age of 16/17. I then found a record for William Lewis, labourer, dated 20 Oct 1865, which would have been around the time when she fell for Lewis. He was found guilty of larceny at Aylesbury Assizes. Along with his accomplice Joseph Hardy, they stole some 23 yards of cotton print and 2 pairs of braces, £2 in value, from a shop in Langley Marish. In September 1865, they were sentenced to hard labour. Hardy, having been convicted before, got six months, and William four.

William Lewis also features in the *Bucks Herald* under Aylesbury petty sessions on 21 June 1884, where he is referred to as 'of Gt Missenden' – proof that he is indeed the William Lewis living near Stoke Mandeville. He appears again on 16 July 1887, although I did not have access to the whole text – so I'm not sure why. Maybe he was just a witness on this occasion!

Most shocking of all, is that Lewis William Spittles, potentially William Lewis' son, is also mentioned in the Petty Sessions on 24 Feb 1883, when he would have been about 17. This was at the time when he was lodging with Betsy BATES. His mother had died in childbirth some two years back, at the tender age of 32. Along with William UNDERWOOD, he was charged with stealing a gun, the property of Solomon NASH of Ellesborough. This article is also featured in the *Buckingham Advertiser*. Perhaps he hoped to 'borrow it' for a bit of poaching, a common pastime. So, it transpires that I have a grandfather for a criminal, as well as a great-grandfather. The saying 'like father, like son' is ringing in my ears! But then life was hard and they were difficult times.

So, William Lewis did not stand much chance of maintaining gainful employment, was of a dubious character, and was not trustworthy. He was hardly going to be welcomed into the Spittles family with open arms.

With the timing right for this young man and Emma to be linked, but not married, I felt the chances of William Lewis being my great-grandfather were pretty good. I'm not sure how I feel about that!



**George William Lewis,  
the first legitimate son of  
William Lewis, and possible  
half brother to Lewis  
William Spittles**

A brief look at his family tree reveals:

William Lewis born c.1844/5, son of Joseph Lewis b. 1812 in Hughenden, married Sarah FOUNTAIN, b. 1813, of Stoke Mandeville.

Joseph Lewis b. 1812 in Hughenden, son of Edward Lewis and Elizabeth MOORES.

William married Julia WILKINS in 1870 at Prestwood.

Since I began this journey I have enlisted help of the fantastic volunteer searchers at the Bucks Records Centre. I should also like to thank all the Bucks FHS members who have sent me information. The availability of copies of the parish records has been so extremely helpful. I know I would not be as far along my path without their help. So, many thanks!

Since writing this I have had some hot matches on 'Ancestry DNA' linking me to

trees with Fountains and an Elizabeth TURNEY, née Fountain, giving me hope that my hunch is correct.

And finally, on Ancestry DNA I found a new entry: great-great-grandfather, Joseph Lewis.

Joseph Lewis is the father of William Lewis. So my hunch proved to be correct.

*Corinne Yates*

# Is Blood Really Thicker Than Water?

by Sally Scagell

*Alan Dell Award entry*

My family tree centres on the town of High Wycombe. Both paternal and maternal lines can be traced back several generations in this locality. Although the town would have been considered small compared to London or Oxford, it was a popular stopping-off point on the London to Oxford stagecoach route, and this is where my ancestors evidently stopped, and stayed.

These particular ancestors, through good fortune or hard work, rose up the ladder and so by great-grandpapa's time they were moving in the 'right' circles. They were councillors, aldermen, mayors, solicitors, money-lenders and furniture manufacturers.

This meant that marriages between such solid citizens of the community were not uncommon and were quite often 'engineered' for their offspring between the town elders. Such was the case of my great-aunt Minnie PEACE born 1867 who married Arthur CLARKE, solicitor, the son of her father's best friend Daniel Clarke.

Minnie's mother, Emma Ellen Peace née GIBBS, born 1836, was from the Gibbs family of Wycombe lace dealers, and it is believed that it was her money that launched James George Peace, born 1838, her Hertfordshire-born husband, into Wycombe society.

It was while I was researching the Peace and Gibbs families that I came across an interesting connection with another High Wycombe family, the JUDSONS.

During the early 1850s, if not before, Elizabeth Gibbs, Emma Ellen Peace's aunt, had worked in a draper's shop in Holborn. I believe this to be the

establishment of Charles MEEKING as, judging from the 1851 census, it had a large number of shop assistants, all of whom would have lived in lodgings nearby.

Elizabeth Gibbs, born circa 1815 in High Wycombe, was listed as the forewoman of the cloaks department and under her command was a Martha JUDSON, also from High Wycombe. Martha was born in 1829, so was quite a bit younger than Elizabeth, but one assumes that Elizabeth had probably found her the job. Closer in age to Martha was another assistant, Louisa LAY, from Suffolk. Louisa was to later marry Elizabeth's younger brother, Thomas Gibbs. No doubt they all remained in close contact until Martha left for Tasmania in about 1858 where her older step-sister, Jane Priscilla AIKENHEAD née Judson, had already settled.

Elizabeth GIBBS was to remain single all her life. She went to live with her brother Thomas and Louisa in Hackney but continued to work as a draper's assistant. Back in High Wycombe, the JUDSON and Gibbs families continued their friendship and, knowing how my ancestors seemed to marry friends and neighbours, I began to look for a possible marriage. But in this I seem to have been thwarted.

Martha Judson came from a large family. Her father, the Rev William Judson, was a dissenting minister of the Crendon Lane Chapel in High Wycombe. He married four times. This resulted in Martha having a large number of siblings and half-siblings. The oldest of the surviving brood (there were 18 children in total, beginning in 1800) would appear to be Benjamin R G Judson, a chemist who was born in 1812, and the youngest was Rachel Judson born in 1840. The youngest son of the family was named after his father, another William. Bucks family history researchers may be familiar with this name, as it was this William Judson (born 1833) who was the creator of the Judson's Directory of High Wycombe. He was a chemist like his older step-brother and was also an early editor of what was to become known as the *Bucks Free Press* newspaper.

William Judson, the chemist, lived in Church Square near to the Antelope Inn. Later landlords of the Antelope were members of a Gibbs family from Chalfont St Giles. Overlaps between this Gibbs family and the Gibbs family of High Wycombe seem to be too many to dismiss as sheer coincidence, but finding the family connection still eludes me.

Certainly these Gibbs, Peace and Judson families all knew one another. When William Judson the chemist died in 1879 his widow Margaret Judson went to live in the village of Blockley, now in Gloucestershire, where she set up a school for girls. This was later to become an elite girls' school, The Abbey School, in Malvern Wells. In these early days of the 1880s, however, it was still very small. The list of pupils, when I first looked at the 1881 census record some 15 years ago, meant very little. I was not to discover until later that virtually all those pupils' surnames would be appearing on my family tree. One was Minnie Peace herself and the rest were Minnie's cousins or the offspring of her father's friends. The question was: why?

Why would Minnie Peace, and later her younger sisters, be shipped off to the remote village of Blockley? Who exactly was Margaret Judson? And how did Margaret have the money to set up such an enterprise? Was she, perhaps, my missing link?

This last question has had me going round in circles ever since. Margaret was born a WILKINSON in 1837, and she came from Sheffield, the



**The school in Blockley known as Malvern House**  
*(Blockley is now best known for the Father Brown television series)*

daughter of Henry Dawson Wilkinson, a silver plater, who was born in Portsmouth. The Crendon Lane Chapel's book of baptisms included a number of baptisms for the offspring of a Joseph Wilkinson. So who was he? Well, it appeared that he had come from Chalfont St Giles and his sister Rebecca Wilkinson born circa 1791 had married a James Gibbs born circa 1793, and it was a William Gibbs, grandson of James and Rebecca, who was to become the landlord at the Antelope Inn in High Wycombe. So here at least was some sort of a link.

At this point I returned to another question that had long puzzled me. Not long after James George Peace arrived in High Wycombe he had run a tailors and outfitters shop in White Hart Street. He did well and by 1881 was living at Castle Hill House along Priory Avenue. Also living along Priory Avenue in 1901 was a young outfitter, a Henry James Gibbs, who now had a tailor's shop in White Hart Street and was yet another grandson of James and Rebecca Gibbs. There had to be a connection!

I drifted back to the Judson family again. Martha Judson and her sisters seemed an adventurous bunch and it was therefore no surprise to discover that William Judson, the chemist, should marry someone who was as equally enterprising. He married Margaret Wilkinson on 13 September 1865 at the Mildmay Park Chapel in Islington. However, it was not until William's early death at 46 that Margaret was able to put her aspirations to the fore. Both William Judsons, father and son, had been rather opinionated I believe, and this may have been why Margaret chose to leave High Wycombe for Blockley and make a fresh start. She was left sufficient funds by William to afford a three-storeyed house there, which became her first school, but probably not enough to support her new enterprise without additional help. So who provided the financial backing?

There are several possibilities for this. Firstly, James Olliff GRIFFITS, who lived at The Priory in High Wycombe and who was a solicitor and QC and a generous benefactor of educational enterprises. (His nephew, another chemist, John Alonzo Griffiths, married a girl from Guernsey and it was in Guernsey that Margaret died in 1889.) Secondly, fellow solicitor Daniel CLARKE, father of Arthur Clarke, a distant relative of James Olliff Griffiths, may well have helped. He provided mortgages for those who needed loans and with the upsurge in interest in girls' education may have seen this as a

suitable investment. Thirdly, my great-grandfather James George Peace, who appears to have recruited Margaret's first pupils.

I was still keen to find out if the Judson family did indeed have a place on my family tree. I really thought I was getting somewhere when I found a New Zealand tree on Ancestry which had both my Clarkes and Judsons on it. Here must lie the missing link I thought but, alas, it was not to be. The tree owner revealed an interesting game of chance:

'Ephraim Clarke is my first husband's 2x great-grandfather. The Clarkes are on his line and were a pioneering family of Western Australia. (Minnie Clarke née Peace was married to his great nephew.) But Rhoda and Lydia Judson (sisters of Martha Judson) are my 3x great-aunts on my line. They married and died in Victoria, Australia. As far as I know the two families are not connected.'

And yet, miles away from High Wycombe, these families are united again on a New Zealand family tree. Frustrating though my research has been, as it would appear that I have no blood tie to the Judsons, the friendship between these Wycombe families all those years ago proves that blood is not always thicker than water.

*Sally Scagell*

## HEYHAM

Spotted in *Family Tree magazine*, October 2006:

Buckingham Recovery, 1520 Grant to Richard and Marjorie HEYHAM of lands in Waddesdon, Quanton and other places.  
Vellum 20 in x 14 in.

Source: John Titford's *Guide to auctioneers' and booksellers' catalogues of manuscript material*.

*Howard Lambert*

# A Murder Most Foul

Michael Wing

*Alan Dell Award entry*

During the wars with France the price of wheat was high and there was plenty of work to be had on the farms. It was into this world that two of our ancestors were born, in Stone, Bucks: John in 1798 and Mary in 1807.

John WING (the second son of John and Elizabeth) was born just before Christmas 1797; his elder sister was just three years old. As his father worked on a farm, it was natural that when he grew up John should follow in his father's footsteps and also work on a farm. He moved from the family home in Wheatley to Stone in Buckinghamshire, where he met Mary GEORGE, a young lady whose family had lived in Stone for over a hundred years. Their banns were duly read in the parish church of St John the Evangelist, and on 15 October 1827 they were married. His elder sister Mary was a witness at the wedding. In March the following year George WING was born at Stone.

After the war was over, wages on some farms dropped from ten shillings a week to seven, so John and Mary moved back to Wheatley near Holton in Oxfordshire, which was a small village of some 220 houses.

Seven more children were born in Wheatley and all were baptised at St Bartholomew's Church, Holton. In the parish records of 1841, John is described as a 'Sunday school teacher'. Mary died in 1854, aged only 47 and having had eight children.

A year later John married again to Sarah MORRIS, the local schoolmistress. They were married for 21 years until John died aged 78 in 1876. Sarah his widow continued to live in Wheatley until she died there aged 89 in 1902; her headstone is in the graveyard there.

The Wings had lived in Wheatley for 75 years.



George WING was born in 1828 at Stone in Buckinghamshire, the eldest son of John Wing and Mary George. His parents had moved back to Holton near Wheatley quite soon after he was born and that is where he grew up. He would have attended the local school, and must have showed promise, because at the age of 14 he was apprenticed to a boot and shoe maker. In 1701, a bequest of £100 was made in the village of Holton by Diana MASTERS: 'the interest on which was to be used to apprentice poor boys of Holton chosen by the rector of St Bartholomew's'.

George almost certainly benefited from this bequest. Apprenticeship was for seven years, and the rules of conduct for an apprentice were strict.

'He shall not contract matrimony within the said term, he shall not play at cards or dice tables or any other unlawful games, he shall not haunt Taverns or Playhouses nor absent himself from his master's day or night unlawfully ...'

He would have been paid one shilling a week for the first year, and this would have gone up a shilling a year until he qualified.

During his seven years he must have met up with Keturah HOPCROFT, a young lady whose father was a tailor in Long Crendon. She was working in Holton as a needlewoman. As soon as his indentures were completed, they were married at St Bartholomew's, Holton. The ceremony was witnessed by Keturah's father Philemon Hopcroft, and Kezia Wing, George's younger sister.

George was now a 'journeyman', and to gain experience he was expected to change his employer each year or so. George and Keturah's first child, daughter Henrietta, was born in Wheatley in 1849. A son Barzilla Frederick was born in Long Crendon (where they worked) a year later. In the 1851 census the family was living at Smith End Square. Sadly the little boy only lived a year, and is buried in the local baptist churchyard.

The census also shows Keturah's mother Sarah, a widow, and her sister Mary, a milliner – the first member of our family in the hat trade, so to speak. Emma Louisa and Maria were both baptised in the village of Long Crendon.

In *Pigot's Directory* of 1830, Long Crendon is described as:

‘being eight miles from Aylesbury, and three miles from Haddenham ... The village is pleasantly situated upon rising ground, and nothing to attract the observation of the tourist: but may be noticed by the man of business having extensive trade in the manufacture of needles; and was still more prosperous in time of war ...’.

Keturah's younger brothers and sisters were engaged in the needlemaking business. William aged 17 is described as a ‘needlemaker’ and his 15-year-old sister a ‘needlepaperer’, and Sarah his 15-year-old sister is described in the 1851 census as a ‘needle sorter’.

By 1862, when he was able to call himself a ‘master bootmaker’, and to set up business on his own, and able to employ apprentices, they moved to Bedfordshire from Brill, where they had been living. George and Keturah bought a house in Chapel Street, and opened ‘The Boot Warehouse’ in George Street, Luton, the town that was the centre of bonnet making, with a population of 17,000, and growing.

But in March 1865 disaster struck, and I can do no better than quote the *Bedford Times*:

‘Great consternation prevailed in this Town on Thursday morning last, occasioned by the report that a jeweller's shop had been broken into and property valued at £200 removed, and also that the residence of a shoemaker had been burglariously entered the same night and that the miscreant had murdered the man and his wife. In the case of the robberies the report was confirmed, and although murder was not actually committed, a more diabolical and unprovoked attempt has not been made in the district. It would appear that about one o'clock in the morning in question the landlord of the Queen's Hotel which is situate in Chapel-street was aroused by a kind of yelling noise, accompanied by cries of murder. Descending into the street he discovered the fearful cries proceeded from a house immediately opposite his own, and which was occupied by a shoemaker named Wing and his wife, and that the person giving the alarm was the man Wing, who lay with his head on the sill of the bedroom bleeding fearfully. After medical aid had been summoned, and the arrival of police, it was ascertained that the

premises had been entered by some person from the back window who after packing up what shoes he could find in the shop, made his way into the coal cellar, and having armed himself with an axe proceeded to the bedroom occupied by Wing and his wife, and without the least provocation or apparent design, other than that of murder, struck the unfortunate female a blow on the temple, inflicting a fearful gash; not content with this the villain also struck her a severe blow on the eye with the blunt head of the murderous weapon, leaving his victim senseless. All this was but the work of an instant, during which time the husband had got out of bed, and was next attacked in a similar manner by the ruffian, receiving fearful injuries upon the head and shoulders. By this time the burglar was doubtless disturbed, for he made off, and then the poor fellow managed to crawl to the window and give the alarm.

Before leaving, however the villain took the trousers belonging to Wing and which contained 20s in silver, leaving his own, a waistcoat, braces, cap and shoes behind him; these may probably lead to his discovery. Up to Thursday night no clue had been obtained as to the perpetrator of the deed, and the unfortunate man and woman were not likely to recover. The poor woman describes the fellow as being “tall and ugly”.

The following is a description of the man supposed to have assaulted Mr and Mrs Wing – his name is John ELLIS, alias SMITH, supposed to be a native of Baldock, Herts, when a boy he was a chimney sweep, has been abroad, and is supposed to have served in the army and navy. About 38 years of age, 5ft 8in high, slender make, long face, large Roman nose, face very freckled, straight black hair, has a gruff voice, supposed to have been occasioned by a wound in his throat, arms tattooed with a female figure, lion, &c, &c, on the left arm crucifix, &c, on right arm: other scars, sabre wounds, &c, received in battle. He has recently been discharged from gaol, is in the habit of getting refreshment at public and beer houses, and leaving without paying his bill.’

George’s wife Keturah died of a fit in June just 12 weeks later. She was buried in Brill. The police are still looking for ‘an ugly man with sabre wounds, and a gruff voice, calling himself Ellis or Smith’.

*Michael Wing*

# Bucks Research Timeline 1600–1699

Year	Significant dates in Bucks history and family history research
1600	East India Company started trading
1601	Poor Law Act. This placed responsibility on parishes to care for those who could not work
1603	The reign of James I started
1604	System of marriage licences was created through church laws
1605	Gunpowder plot
1620	The Pilgrim Fathers sail to America
1622	The first British settlement in the Caribbean established at St Kitts
1625	The reign of Charles I started
1634	Ship Money was levied, and opposed by John Hampden
1642	(4 Jan) Attempt by Charles II to arrest five members of the House of Commons, including John Hampden
1642	(23 Oct) Battle of Edge Hill. Among the deaths was Sir Edmund Verney of Middle Claydon
1642	(1 Nov) Battle of Aylesbury (19 Nov) Special petition to King Charles read to him at Colnbrook
1642	(28 Nov) Garrison for the King established at Brill
1643	(1 Mar) Cessation of arms in Bucks & Oxon proposed by Charles I (27 Apr) Great Marlow surrendered to Parliament forces

<b>Year</b>	<b>Significant dates in Bucks history and family history research</b>
<b>1643</b>	(24 Jun) Death of John Hampden at Thame after being wounded at Chalgrove Field
<b>1644</b>	(30 Mar) After being at Buckingham, Oliver Cromwell and his force took Hillesden House (11 Jul) End of the siege of Greenland House near Great Marlow
<b>1645</b>	(22 Feb) Attempt to agree a peace treaty at Uxbridge failed
<b>1648</b>	Quakerism began, founded by George Fox
<b>1649</b>	Execution of Charles I. Interregnum started until 1653
<b>1651</b>	Battle of Worcester brought an end to Civil War with about 8,000 Scottish soldiers deported
<b>1653</b>	Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell's direct rule started
<b>1655</b>	Sufferings Register of the Society of Friends started (Bucks Archives Ref NQ 1/6/1)
<b>1658</b>	Lord Protector Richard Cromwell's direct rule ended
<b>1660</b>	Charles II returned to England and started his reign
<b>1666</b>	Burial in Wool Act, which introduced payment of a fine of £5 to the parish overseers of poor for non use of a woollen shroud at burial. Affidavit recording in burial registers. (Slipped out of use by 1760; repealed 1814)
<b>1669</b>	Minute Book of Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends for the Upperside of Bucks is available from BRS
<b>1678</b>	Start of the surviving Quarter Sessions records for Buckinghamshire. (This series (Q/SO) continues to 1959)
<b>1685</b>	Reign of James II of England started
<b>1689</b>	James II deposed and William and Mary's reign started, after they were offered the Crown by Parliament

This series will continue in future editions.

*Tony Sargeant*

# Well Sinkers

Tony Sargeant

I have come across an occupation I have not seen elsewhere – well sinker.

This appears to be a necessary occupation, especially in areas without ponds or streams. Some maps show many properties in a street, each with their own well. For example the southern end of East Common Road, Gerrards Cross. Another example can be seen on an old map of Bradenham. Stokenchurch has a Well House at the side of the main road. The villages have some properties with wells, although there also appear to be many ponds. In 1899 a report in the *London Evening Standard* of 25 August 1899 talks about a drought affecting Stokenchurch, Bledlow, Downley and other places.

Clearly there must have been many people who dug wells, but may not have said it was their main occupation. In the parish registers there are only two people, William COX of Gt Marlow and Benjamin GILES of Woburn Sands, shown as well sinkers.

My initial find was John COTTON and his son Joseph appearing in the 1851 census of Newton Blossomville, their occupations given as well sinker. Kelly's Directories only have one or two well sinkers for the whole county. There must have been others who were engaged through word of mouth. William Hearn & Son was the only entry in the 1939 Kelly's Directory. The occupation does not appear as an inn name in Buckinghamshire Kelly's Directories, like other trades such as brick makers.

The end of well sinkers must have come with the provision of piped water by councils. Today there appears to be only one company sinking wells in southern England. And there is only one Well Sinkers Arms pub, near Petworth, Sussex.

*Tony Sargeant*

# The Iver Diggers

Joe Saunders

In September 2021 Buckinghamshire Archive's Twitter account shared a picture of the 1649 tract *More Light Shining in Buckingham-shire*, a pamphlet containing Leveller ideas. The Levellers were a radical group who emerged during the English civil wars championing political and legal liberties. Bucks Archives shared this picture to mark the anniversary of the death of Gerrard Winstanley, another radical of the time. His ideas went even further than the Levellers. He wrote several tracts expounding his ideas and the group he established, the True Levellers, has been described as proto-Communist. Their name was taken from their belief in economic equality, which they understood was ordained in the Bible. They strongly objected to the Levellers who did not promote egalitarianism and the Levellers in return made repeated attempts to distance themselves, while their enemies deliberately conflated the two groups.

The True Levellers soon became known as the Diggers, after their practice of occupying common ground to cultivate it. Their main attempt at this was on St George's Hill in Surrey. They claimed that the earth was a 'Common Treasury', disdained private property as sinful and believed that a better world was within their grasp. This truly revolutionary movement acquired some fervent supporters, but those who took action can probably be counted in scores rather than hundreds. The actions of the Diggers would have been truly shocking to much of society and it was the neighbours of the Diggers who often gave them the most opposition. After just a few years the colonies were disbanded and the movement collapsed. As one of many dissenting groups that emerged at this time, the Digger example influenced other groups, such as the belief in egalitarianism and refusing the practice of 'hatting' (removing one's hat to a social better). Though no other group challenged the economic status quo in the same way they had.

The excellent person/people behind the Bucks archive Twitter account included in their post the comment that Winstanley 'has no connection (we know of)' to Buckinghamshire. The anniversary of his death was simply a

(justifiably) good reason to share a fascinating related item of radical print from the county. However, as someone especially interested in this part of history (a PhD student researching the print trade in seventeenth century England) I know that there was in fact a Digger link to Buckinghamshire. A colony established in the parish of Iver. This absence from the historical consciousness extends far past Twitter accounts. My apologies to those who were already aware but a look through Iver's entry in the *Victoria County History* shows no knowledge of the Digger connection. An internet search for 'Iver Diggers' comes up with nothing, bar a fantastic story from April 2021 about a rampaging digger-driver in the village.

We know of the Iver Diggers from a single-sheet printed broadside of which at least one copy survives. I have not seen this myself but at least as recently as 1969 it was in the Guildhall in London. Historians know of it today because a transcript and some analysis were printed in an article by the great (now Sir) Keith Thomas. Published in 1650 the broadside begins:

A Declaration of the grounds and Reasons, why we the poor Inhabitants of the Parrish of Iver in Buckinghamshire, have begun to digge and manure the common and wast Land belonging to the aforesaid Inhabitants, and there are many more that gives consent...

Thomas reprinted the text, so for anyone interested do see if you can access his article. He also offers a summary of the Declaration:

In attacking the inequalities produced by private property and the manorial system the authors seem to have drawn heavily upon Winstanley, though they add some vivid touches of their own and their tone is unusually bitter and defiant. Like the Digger leader, they urge the rights of the inhabitants to the common land and stress that it is only its communal cultivation which can relieve the plight of the poor. This is a much needed reminder that the aims of the Diggers were practical as well as symbolic. Winstanley frequently pointed out that a large area of the country (which he variously estimated at between a third and two thirds) was waste land awaiting cultivation. He saw communal digging and manuring as an urgently needed way of increasing the food supply. Indeed the whole Digger movement can be plausibly regarded as the culmination of a century



of unauthorized encroachment upon the forests and wastes by squatters and local commoners, pushed on by land shortage and the pressure of population. In the Iver broadside the emphasis upon food scarcity and high prices is particularly marked.[1]

I hope my strange meeting of seventeenth and twenty-first century communication may bring this fascinating aspect of Buckinghamshire's history into the open a little more. For those interested there are some excellent books on the radical groups of the period.

- J. F. McGregor and B. Reay (eds), *Radical Religion in the English Revolution*
- Christopher Hill, *The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution*
- Andrew Bradstock, *Radical Religion in Cromwell's England*

John Gurney's *Brave Community: The Digger Movement in the English Revolution* is the best on this group specifically and mentions Iver.

Lastly, and most importantly for *Origins*, there are some interesting family history discoveries for some. Of course, those with ancestors from the parish can know their forbears came close to one of the most radical experiments in English history. They may have been the very neighbours who looked on in a mixture of horror and curiosity at events. Some of your ancestors may have even been Diggers themselves. At the end of the Declaration are the names of several men of Iver who were members of the parish's Digger community. They were likely not the only ones involved and women are particularly absent from the list. Thomas for his short article did some research to establish these men can be found in the parish registers and other sources. If you do have an ancestor named then I hope this piece has been especially interesting to you.

Henry NORMAN; Edw: DUN; Rob: DUN; Benj: DUNT; Tho. TAYLOR;  
Wil. SAUNDERS; Henry SLAVE; Tho. BEEDLE, younger; Rich: MOSELEY.

*Joe Saunders*

1. Keith Thomas, 'Another Digger Broadside', *Past & Present* No. 42 (Feb. 1969), pp57–68, p58.

# Accounts: A Superior Type of Record

Tony Sargeant

Accounts are boring. Aren't they just lists of numbers? Well, not quite, but work has to be done to understand them. A payment to your ancestor, or by your ancestor, needs context.

For example, I was looking at the rateable values given in Beaconsfield Poor Rate books for the 1780s. Gregories, one of the big houses in the vicinity, had a value of £37 for just the house. Mr CHARLSLEY, living in London End, opposite the Saracen's Head, had a house rated at £20. The person I was interested in had a house rated at £25.

The context is that Gregories was occupied by Edmund BURKE, an Irish MP and his family. Mr Charsley was a solicitor and clerk to the local petty sessions, while the person of interest was Salisbury HAVILAND. She was a widow of a general, and lived near the church in a red-brick house with her sister and daughter-in-law. This sort of research shows the relative worth of a person living in a property; the type and size shows social position. I think both the Charsley and Haviland houses are still standing in Beaconsfield Old Town.

Why are accounts a superior sort of record? For the main reason they are produced in the first place – to accurately track the money with two parties checking the numbers. Although there is a caveat: accounts of bankrupts. These may give information such as knowing who a business was trading with, but some of the numbers cannot be trusted.

So when you come across an account book in your research, do not ignore it. There will be real events in those payments and debts.

1876 Mr. Bartlett

To E Eaton

Nov 25	For slating at Tar Farm	2	10
	man 10 days labour 4 days		10
			<hr/>

1877

Nov

For plastering cottages  
at Thorp Common &  
plastering ceilings at  
Smokedown Farm

GB	21 days	<sup>DAILY</sup> 6/-	126	4/-	6	6
DB	7 "	4/-	42	4/-	2	2
WFB	28 "	3/-	84	1/-	4	4
GB	18 "	3/-	54	1/-	2	14

1878  
Mar 30

Self & Brad 1/2 day, 1st plaster @ Common Bar

Apr 30

Self & Qu 1/2 day Sluffing walls

1883

April 28 For plastering Arch @ Millbroyk 11/-

May 5 Plastering @ No 4/-

" 20 Contract for work at Lane Farm 7-14=0

Extra at No. Whitewashing attic 11/-

Mr Eaton of Aylesbury was a builder who lived in Aylesbury. I think he was a councillor, but I don't know what level of local government.

Another example:

Mr William Duley to Mr John Rayner Acting Trustees from Easter 1846 to 1847

**Income**

In Hand	£4 7s 9 ½d
Mr Sparks ½ year to Michaelmas	£5 5s
Thomas Holderness 1 year to Sept 29th	£1 10s
James Pendry Snr 1 year to Xmas	£6 6s
Mrs Horwood 1 year to Xmas	£5 4s
Mrs Cowdery 1 year to Xmas	£4 11s
Mrs Pendry 1 year to Xmas	£5 4s
James Dowsen 1 year to Xmas	£4 11s
Joseph Pendry 1 year to Xmas	£5 17s
Mr Sparks ½ year to Ladyday	£5 5s
Property Tax returned Horton	<u>3s 6 ½d</u>
	<b>Total £48 4s 4d</b>

**Outgoings**

Paid Mr William Duley in part of his bill	£4 7s 9 ½d
Thos Holderness property Tax (land)	1s 2d
Thos Holderness property Tax (land)	1s 9d
Land Tax (Horton)	12s 6d
Property Tax (Horton)	7s 1d
Property Tax (Langley)	9s 2d
H Mole as per bill (Bricklayer)	19s 9d
Adm of Plumridges Bill	4s
Insurance	£1 4s
Weston (Glazier)	2s 9d
Quit Rent	6d
W Duley (Carpenter)	£5 5s 11 ½d
Distributed as per list	£27 14s 6d
Property Tax Langley	9s 2d
Hideage & Bean l'leas	4d
Land Tax Horton	6s 3d
In hand	<u>£5 10s 8d</u>
	<b>Total £48 4s 4d</b>

**Meeting 9 day of April 1847**

Meeting to appoint collectors held at the Chequers Inn

Committee: Mr Alexander Holderness Snr, Mr Joseph Saunders,

Mr Harvey Hickman, Mr John Richardson.

Collectors: John Rayner & Alexander Holderness

**24 Dec 1847 Meeting at the Black Boy Inn**

Payments to the poor

## 24 Dec 1847 Meeting at the Black Boy Inn

Payments to the poor

Receiving 12s	Joseph Pendry
Receiving 12s	Widow Irons, Widow Smith, Widow Holton, Widow Fryer, Widow Hart, Widow Wells, Widow Bowden, Widow Shingleton, Widow Jeffs, Widow Pendry, Widow Lamprey, Widow Taylor
Receiving 10s 6d	Widow Cox, Martha Barnes, Susan King, James Pendry Snr, Widow Houlton, Widow Carter
Receiving 10s	Charles Buckland, John Chamberlain, Charles Bowler, John Miller, George Hill, Thomas Miles, Edward White, James Dowson, James Allum, John Gill, James Pendry Jnr, William Dickson, John Osborn, Thomas Puzzey, James Bailey, William Holderness, John Warden, John Pendry, Joseph Duley, Edmund Bartlett
Receiving 8s	John Puzzey, Henry Haynes, James Seward, Richard Cowdery,
Receiving 7s 6d	James Morten Snr, Abraham Hill, James Bowler, John Lane, R Dalton
Receiving 5s	John Hill, Henry Jones, Widow Harrod, John Jackson, William Tripp, Robert Finch, John Phipin
Receiving 4s	Receiving John Warden, James Marten
	Total £26 12s 6d

As you can see from this example from the Colnbrook Town Houses Charity, the year accounts is full of information. Colnbrook at this time was not prosperous with the coming of the railways; in the 1830s the decline which started early in the century had continued. The main work beyond market gardening and agriculture were jobs in the Poyle paper mills.

The town also had the burden of maintaining the main road running the length of the town until it was taken over by the Colnbrook Turnpike Trust.

Not only do we know who was receiving charity, and who were trustees,

we know from other sources that the trustees were business people in Colnbrook. William DULEY was a carpenter, Alexander HOLDERNESS was an ironmonger, and RAYNER and RICHARDSON were farmers.

Much more can be gained by comparing years. Income fluctuated due to work required and people paying rent. The accounts also become an annual return of the poor within Colnbrook.

*Tony Sargeant*

## **TRANSPORTED FELONS**

**Midsummer Session, 16th July 1724**

**Calendar of Quarter Session Records Vol. vii (1724–1730)**

At the Assizes and Gaol Delivery held the 2nd March 1724, Robert Lowndes, Francis Ligoe and Francis Tyrringham, justices, were appointed to contract for the transportation to America of William HAWTREY, Ann HOLDING, Edward MORGAN, William INGRUM, Abraham PREIST, Daniell PREIST, Nicholas RANDALL and Thomas BAKER, felons. A contract was made with Jonathan Forward of London, merchant and an order was given for the felons to be delivered over to Forward, who undertook to land them in America and not suffer their return before the expiration of their sentences.

**Midsummer Session, 15th July 1725**

**Calendar of Quarter Sessions Records Vol. vii (1724–1730)**

At the Assizes and Gaol Delivery held at Aylesbury 1st March 1724/5, contract was made by the justices with Jonathan Forward of London, merchant, for the transportation of John CHATTAWAY, William PEIRCE and John CHILCOTT, felons, to America.

Howard wonders what crimes they committed, and whether transportation was for life.

*Howard Lambert*

# Beatrice Maud Press

Linda Smith

Beatrice Maud PRESS was born in 1880 Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, the third child of George and Annie Press. Her sister Gertrude died in 1894 aged 6 from typhoid and her mother died in childbirth in 1895. Her father remarried in 1899 and went to live in West Ham, and Beatrice made her way to Norwich where she worked and resided in Ber Street as a draper's assistant.

On 7 November 1904 Beatrice travelled to King's Lynn to witness the marriage of her eldest sister Annie and again she was witness to her sister Florence's marriage on 21 September 1907 in West Ham. By 1911 at the age of 27 she had moved to 465 High Street, Lincoln and her occupation was still a draper's assistant.

On the 10 July 1920 Beatrice married at Hampstead London to Edmund Henri KEYAERTS, a commercial clerk born in Belgium. Edmund records his father as Joseph Guillanne Keyaerts, a retired distiller. Beatrice was now 39 years old.

I can find no record of Edmund Keyaerts being in England in 1911 so I presume he was one of the many thousands who made their way across the Channel from Belgium on the outbreak of WWI. This caused resentment among British men who were fighting on the continent, knowing that many women were having romances with these foreigners. One being Beatrice Press. From 1931 to 1933 Edmund is listed in the telephone directory in Hampstead London. The 1939 register records Edmund as married – an unemployed clerk living in Cuckfield Sussex, while Beatrice is recorded as a female inmate at an asylum in Dartford, Kent. So what has happened?

The family believes that she had a nervous breakdown when she found out that Edmund had embezzled large amounts of money to supplement his gambling habit. I can find no evidence to substantiate such a claim.

A list of aliens to whom certificates of naturalisation have been granted by the Secretary of State and whose oath of allegiance had been registered in the Home Office during the month of December 1949 appeared in the *London Gazette* issue number 38815, page number 295 entry 17 January 1950. Edmund Henri Keyaerts, Belgium, commercial traveller of 1 Hooking Green, North Harrow, oath taken 18th November 1949.

However, the electoral register for this address in 1950 lists Edmund with a Cecilia R Keyaerts. The couple had married in Harrow in the same year. In 1949 only Cecilia is listed at this address. Who is this woman? Cecilia had married in 1908 to Samuel COELHO, a professor of music whose father was Benjamin Coelho, a diamond merchant. Samuel had obtained a naturalisation certificate in 1908 stating he was from the Netherlands. Their name was then changed to CLIFFORD. Cecilia's mother's maiden name was WELLARD and when her sister died in 1933, probate granted to Cecilia Rosamond Clifford was £3438-0s-10d. Samuel Clifford died in 1936. So, what an opportunity for Edmund Keyaerts.

Edmund Henri Keyaerts died in 1956 aged 68 at Penmaemawr Llanfairfechan, Wales.

Cecilia Rosamond Keyaerts died 1961 aged 76.

Beatrice Maud Keyaerts née Press died in 1962 aged 81 in Dartford, Kent.

*Linda Smith née Press*

## **A DELAYED MARRIAGE**

Readers might be amused by this pairing from the Stoke Poges parish registers:

1653 Bap. Anne daughter of William GROOM and Joan HAWS,  
Harlot

1695 Mar. William GROOME and Joan HAWS

*Peter Evans*



# The Last Ferryman at Medmenham

by Joe Guttridge

My brother died recently. An old friend also. These things touch you. Also, I have lost touch with many of my cousins. And only one of my uncles, my father's brother, remains alive.

And then this virus, which itself makes you ponder.

So, faced with my own mortality and questions about the family from grandchildren and children, I am now delving through my own memories and fading photos, many without citations.

But those early memories are still quite vivid. I was born in 1948, 70 years after my grandad, Harry GUTTRIDGE. We visited his home in Medmenham, where he was the ferryman, quite often. In his last years (he died in 1957) he came to live with us in our small bungalow near St Albans and we were, as is often the case with such relationships, very, very close. I can still see him in my mind's eye. I still think of him, often. Recently, more often. Indeed our eldest son is another Harry Guttridge because of him.

We also visited his younger sister, Aunt Doll (actually christened Margaret) COKER, in the house he was brought up in, in Lane End, Bucks.

Later (around 1960) my parents moved to Lane End to run two shops in the village and we lived there until the mid 1970s. At that time many people still remembered my grandfather and his family, particularly his father, Charlie Wag Guttridge who was the blacksmith at the local foundry and something of a colourful character. For a few months in 1968 I worked at Lane End Sawmills with a lot of older men, including one who was a close friend of Charlie Wag. So I soaked up a lot of tales about him and his family. Dad and Mum, being shopkeepers, were also often told of incidents around Grandad and Charlie Wag. Too many to include here, so I have written also some notes about the Lane End Guttridges and an even earlier set of notes tracing the family origins.

And, of course, I married a Wheeler End girl, Margaret Simmons, whose family were an established local family and continued to live in the local area until her mother's death in 1989.

So I heard a lot of rumours, tales, all sorts really, about the Lane End Guttridges.

Now, nearly 50 years after Dad and Mum moved from Lane End, I suppose a lot of these memories are probably mine alone. Hence this short reminiscence. Some of the tales I heard I barely believed and never thought they could be proved or disproved. But, in some cases, I have been proved wrong – and fascinating it has been.

So, where do I start? Well, the notes around the Guttridges in Lane End, Charlie Wag (my great-grandad) particularly I have already talked about in a separate article, so I will say no more of him and his life in Lane End, other than to introduce the man I knew and loved so well, my old grandad, Harry Guttridge.

At the turn of the 19th century, Charlie Wag and Ly were established at Guttridges corner; old man Hobbs, his employer and the proprietor of Hobbs foundry in Lane End, was about to join his maker; and Harry Guttridge had fallen for a West Wycombe girl, Emily Elizabeth HOBSON, a couple of years or so younger than him. On 31 March 1902 he married her and was, according to the marriage certificate, a wheelwright then still living in Lane End.

In the way of certification, I have his marriage certificate and his death certificate, nothing further. But I know what I was told by him and those who knew him, including my parents, my uncles and aunts and my father-in-law (who knew him also). But memory can play tricks and it is possible my memories have embroidered what I learned. But of course, I do have a number of old photographs that tend to support what I know of Harry.

Most of the photos of Harry and of his wife and children were taken in Medmenham. Of these, a lot are taken at the end of Ferry Lane where he had some work sheds, long since demolished, in what is now a copse on the right-hand side of the lane. These sheds were situated a matter of yards before what is now a slipway, but was then the docking area for

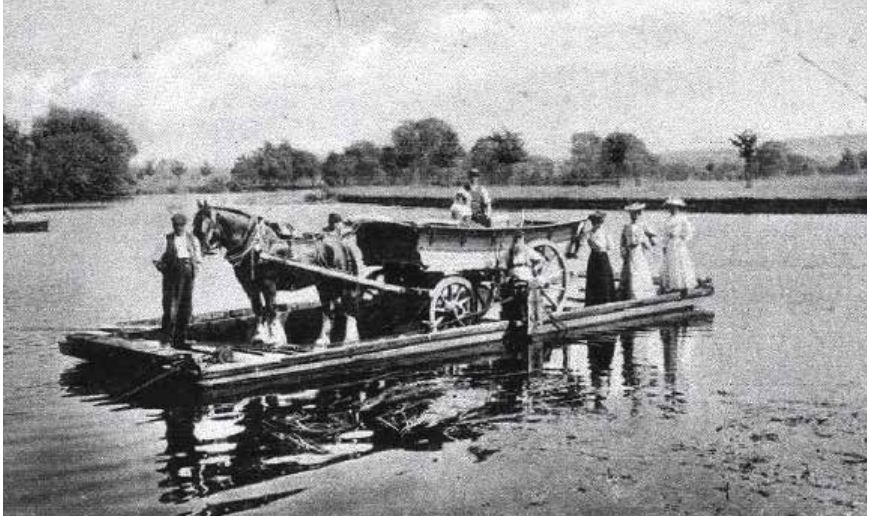
the horseboat that most of his children remembered and of which there is abundant photographic evidence.

I remember this shed, pretty well exactly as remembered by Alison Uttley in her book on Buckinghamshire,<sup>1</sup> so I guess it was still there well into the 1950s, possibly later. When I first knew Grandad, he still lived in Medmenham (with his daughter Hilda COLEBOURNE and family, who then lived in his cottage and looked after him). By that time the horseboat had long gone, certainly I don't recall seeing it. He did take people across the river in a dinghy, which I do remember well, and there are a number of photos of him in this grey, clinker-built dinghy.



**Harry Guttridge in the ferry dinghy, 1930s (top) and 1950s (right)**

When I was married, my father-in-law, Fred SIMMONS, commented in his speech on how characteristic is the way that Guttriges stand. For those who, like me, recognise that characteristic, the male figure on the horseboat photographs, although often cited as 1890s photographs, has simply got to be a Guttridge. Arthur Guttridge, now in his 90s and the last surviving of Harry's children, is also certain it is him.



**The chain ferry or horseboat at Medmenham ferry 1900s (top) and 1930s (above)**

Back to the historical context. Harry was born in Ditchfield, near where Lane End parish church is now. In 1881 his family was living in one of the cottages up near the Old Sun pub. By 1882, I believe, he and his family had moved to one of a new pair of cottages in Park Lane, Lane End, possibly built for his father by his father's employer, Hobbs Foundry of Lane End.



**'Guttridges' (later 'Cokers') corner in Lane End  
at the corner of Park Lane and Bullocks Farm Lane**

Harry served an apprenticeship as a carpenter and wheelwright. I have a photo taken many years ago of him and a number of others in a workshop close to the Peacock pub in Bolter End, near to Lane End. I would guess that photo dates from just before the turn of the 1800s/1900s. Another photo of him, dated from 1899, is recognisably the same person. Mum recounted being told in the 1960s that Harry's wedding (1902) was celebrated on Handleton Common, just in front of our then house, Walnut Tree Cottage, by the team drinking from a chamber pot full of beer with ginger biscuits floating in it!

But after his marriage he seems to have moved, lock stock and barrel, to Medmenham. His step-grandmother, Anne Guttridge, Robert Guttridge's second wife, survived her husband Robert who died in 1896, and by 1911 she was living in Church Cottages in Medmenham, with her daughter Jane





Harry Guttridge 4th  
left: believed taken at a  
carpenters/wheelwrights  
shop at rear of the Peacock  
pub at Bolter End c 1900



Lane End football team, 1899, back row left, Stratford, Avery, Guttridge, Avery, S. Carr, from  
Woodward, R. Elles, H. Parsons, C. Elles, Avery, front, F. Keep.

Harry Guttridge, centre rear, 1895

KIRKLAND. Possibly that was the Medmenham connection that led to his move to work for the Medmenham Abbey estate as wheelwright, carpenter and ferryman.

Certainly my understanding was that Harry was, from soon after his marriage (and for most of his life) the employee of the Medmenham Abbey private estate and that the cottage he and his family lived in (the end cottage of Abbey Cottages) was then owned by that estate. I understood that he carved the bargeboarding of Abbey cottages. Possibly he may even have worked for the Ferry Hotel before the move, but it is unclear when the hotel was demolished. It was there in 1911, according to the census. The census of 1911 appears to indicate that Granddad's eldest son Bob was born in Lane End eight years previously, but Joe (b 1904) and Hilda (b 1906) were born in Hambleden. So maybe Harry's move from Lane End to Medmenham was via Hambleden over a period of three or four years. Will we ever know?

My father was clear that his father's first employer in his memory was Sir Douglas Dawson, whom contemporary records indicate lived at Medmenham Abbey, presumably from his marriage in 1903 until he sold it in 1920. I understand the restoration and conversion of Medmenham Abbey (in the early 1890s a derelict ruin) by an architect may have been commissioned originally by Robert Hudson of Danesfield around 1898/99.



**Harry and (believed) Sir Douglas Dawson 1920**

Again I have photograph (right) of Harry with, my father told me, Sir Douglas Dawson down by the ferry. Dawson was an equerry to the King, George V. This may also explain the context of a photo (overleaf) I have dated 14 April 1916, which has noted on it that George V, Queen Mary, the Prince of Wales and Prince Albert (later George VI) crossed on the ferry that day and 'This photo is of their Royal Highnesses [from?] the Abbey Lawn', showing the royal group on the far bank. I understand this was not the only visit by the King to Dawson at Medmenham.



**"Royalty at Medmenham Abbey 1916"**



**Arthur Gustav Bendir at Medmenham Abbey c 1947**



**Harold 'Bill' Guttridge at Medmenham Abbey c 1930**



In 1920, or thereabouts, the Dawsons moved on to Remenham Place, across the river, where royal visits continued. Medmenham Abbey was sold to the very wealthy Arthur BENDIR of Ladbrokes (bookmakers), who had recently married after a scandalous affair and divorce some years previously. He and his wife Margot came to live in the Abbey. My father's memories were of 'Mr Bendir' whom he told me stressed to him that 'the bookmaker is the only winner'.

My father (Harold William, often known as 'Mick') went to work as a gardener at the Abbey in 1929 and worked there until 1935. One story has stuck with me. Dad told me he was kneeling, weeding the path one day, when Mr CLARKE, the head gardener, asked why he was kneeling. Dad said it was because his back ached. Clarke said 'your back is meant to bl\*\*\*y ache when you're weeding, now stand up!' However, Clarke obviously and evidently came to value him, as witnessed by Dad's references from the Abbey.

The Abbey was not, however, a stuffy, over-formal place. Dad told me often of a parrot in the house whose vocabulary was nothing if not ripe!

Harry and Emily Guttridge had nine children, in descending order of age: Bob, Joe, Harry, Hilda, Tom, Harold, Ron, Herb and Arthur. I think I have the order about right. I had always understood them all to have been born at Medmenham between 1903 and 1925, but the 1911 census suggests otherwise for Bob, Joe and Hilda.

I can't recall who told me of the bailey bridge incident at Medmenham, it may have been Dad, it may have been Grandad. But I do know that Grandad's chair and certainly his rather tatty 'truss' (for his hernia!) were held together with bits of cord and rubber tape which were reputed to have come from a bailey bridge across the Thames at Medmenham. And that somehow there was a dreadful accident on that bridge. For many years I just put it down to hearsay, but recently photographic evidence has come to light of such an incident on such a bridge in 1913 during military manoeuvres.

By the time of the Great War Harry and Emily had, I think, five, possibly six children, including my dad who was born on 27 March 1914.



Medmenham pontoon bridge accident in 1913

Grandad joined the Royal Engineers as a sapper, but I know little of his war service from the family, other than that there are photographs of him believed to be at Haines Park in Bedfordshire, presumably on training. Also, again half-remembered hearsay, that he was with the Royal Engineers in Ireland at one time during the war. It may be that the army manoeuvres in the Medmenham area prior to the war, which involved also the Royal Engineers, introduced Harry to the regiment he was later to join. Pure supposition. I recently found a postcard addressed to Sapper H Guttridge, Wheelers Shop, Haynes Park R E, Signal Depot, nr Bedford dated December 1915. Maybe this suggests he had joined up before conscription, possibly with his employer's encouragement, Sir Douglas Dawson being a military man.

I have only one photo of Harry and Emily together (guess my elder daughter's name, but my wife's granny was an Emily too!), taken at their daughter Hilda's wedding in around the 1920s.



**Harry Guttridge, sapper 59305, rear centre with pipe**



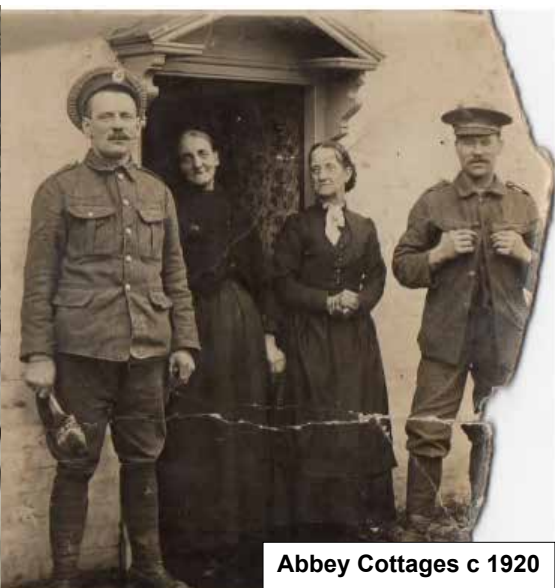
**Harry's wife Emily with son Arthur c 1930**

There is, however, a lovely, if rather blurred, photo (left) of Emily with, I think, her son Arthur. Late 1920s I would guess.

After Dad left the Abbey Gardens in 1935, obviously his own memories then ceased. But I understood that Grandad's wife, Emily, promised another Medmenham family (Mr POTTER who lived at the mill, but had, I think, no children) that when Mrs Potter died, the Guttridges would look after Mr Potter. Dad certainly remembers sleeping down at the mill with Mr Potter. Possibly other family members did likewise. The cottages were all occupied by Abbey estate workers at this time (1930s). Grandad, Emily and family lived in the end one (nearest Ferry Lane). Then Mr and Mrs Long next (and before them the



**(Left) Harry Guttridge in working clothes, down near the ferry, mid 1930s**



**Abbey Cottages c 1920**



**Emily, Mrs Long and dog 'Rip' during the floods c 1930, nr Abbey Cottages**

Jordan family, I think). Then Jack Roberts and family, then the Owens and, finally and before the end cottage which was a 'bothy', was 'Old Soldier' and Mrs Jones.

Floods were a regular features of life in the cottages then. Uncle Arthur recalls that the highest floods reached the second step on the stairs in their cottage. Dad remembered duckboards downstairs being a regular feature of life during the floods. Also Dad recalled one of the families trying, Canute-like, to stop the floods by creating bund walls around their house, but to no avail – the floods simply came up through the floor. All the bund walls did was keep the water in afterwards!

Also from this period (judging by the car, which looks early 1930s, possibly a Rover, to me) is a photo (below) of Harry down by the ferry.



**Harry with dog 'Rip' down by the ferry, early 1930s**

Emily died at only 58 years old on 31 August 1938. Mum said Grandad never went into a church again. Possibly Mum remembered this particularly as he wouldn't attend church when she and Dad were married a year later at Medmenham. I expect it stuck with her.

But she was wrong, I now learn! For there is a photo of Grandad Harry, with all his sons and daughters, taken at Uncle Arthur's wedding in 1951.

Following the loss of Emily, at some point I understand

that his son Ron and Ron's first wife Lou then went to live with the family and to look after them. The war came then. At some point Ron joined the army and Lou went to live with her mum for the duration of the war.





**Harry and Hilda late 1930s  
outside Abbey Cottages**

Aunty Hilda (married to Joe COLEBOURNE, a grenadier guardsman from Gosport) was bombed out of Gosport and then came to live at Abbey cottages and remained there for many years looking after Grandad, well after Grandad came to live with us in St Albans.

There are few photos from this period. One shows Harry with all his children, at Arthur's wedding in 1951 (below).

Then, probably the last photo of him, possibly at home in Ferry Cottages with Hilda around the middle of the 1950s (right).



**Harry with all his sons and his daughter at Arthur's wedding, early 1950s**



**Harry and his  
daughter Hilda,  
mid 1950s**

Possibly the floods of 1947 were the beginning of the end for Grandad as ferryman. I understood he was rescued from the upper windows of Abbey Cottages by DUKW, but cannot confirm this.

Regarding the Abbey itself, there are a few black and white photos which I believe to be of Medmenham Abbey in its heyday (1920s).

Also, thanks to Arthur Bendir's granddaughter, Caitriona Reed, I have a few beautiful colour photos taken in the 1940s when the Abbey was, like so many big house after the Second World War, starting to fade. Two photos particularly point to the change. Compare the trellis particularly, rather overgrown in the later picture with the earlier picture. By that time inheritance tax and the social revolution after the conflict meant the days of the big houses with a multitude of servants and gardeners were over.<sup>2</sup>

Arthur Bendir and Grandad died within months of each other (Grandad in August 1957, Arthur Bendir in October). With them died an era.

So there you have him. The last ferryman at Medmenham. And the last of a unique generation. Born into a world with no cars, no aeroplanes, no antibiotics, no health service, no pensions, no social security. Born in a



**Medmenham Abbey cloister, 1920s. The infamous parrot is on the left.**

**Medmenham Abbey gardens, 1920s (right, and below)**



**Medmenham Abbey gardens, late 1940s (right)**  
*With kind permission from Caitriona Reed*





tied, rented house with no electricity, no inside toilet, no gas, no central heating. Lived for most of his life in another tied, rented house where the floods washed through the house most winters and oil lamps lit the way to bed. Born when Victoria was on the throne, God was in his firmament and over half the world map was red. The year he died, space travel began, his family owned and lived in a modern house, with an inside toilet and bath, electricity, most mod cons. We had a car, planes flew overhead, cars and lorries queued in traffic jams or hurried up the newly built M1 at speeds of up to 100mph. As his old Dad, Charlie Wag was reputed to say 'not bad for a hedgehog!' Or as Harry would say, 'you're a clever old stick, but you can't lay eggs!'

*Joe Guttridge*

## REFERENCES

1. Alison Uttley, *Buckinghamshire*, Robert Hale Ltd, 1950
2. Caitriona recalls her mother telling her the pre-war staff establishment of over 30 had reduced to 12 after the war.

# The New Constabulary Force Bill

*The Aylesbury News*, 11 May 1839

The appointments of constables furnish arguments for a total change of system. At Chesham, for instance, there is a smith appointed constable, thief-taker and peace-officer, who has been once publicly flogged in the very town of Chesham, once privately flogged at Aylesbury Gaol, once convicted of feloniously stealing lead, and once committed to hard labour for three months for assaulting and robbing a boy. The moral influence of such a gentleman must be truly wonderful.

Footnote: This Bill led to the appointment of constables who served with county police forces. It was enacted in 1839, ten years after the establishment of the Metropolitan Police by Sir Robert Peel.

*Submitted by Howard Lambert*

# Parish Brief

## BEACHAMPTON

Beachampton is a parish between Stony Stratford 2½ miles to the north-east and Buckingham 6 miles to the south-west. The parish covers 1,492 acres (604 ha) in Aylesbury Vale. The northern boundary is marked by the River Ouse which is also the county boundary. The main village is along the Nash Road with the Assumption of St Mary the Virgin church to the north. Seven farms account for 1,138 acres in the 1851 census, where the main occupations in the parish were, for men, working as labourers in agriculture and for women, lacemaking – with 20 lace makers in the census (although this could be under-reported).

Hall Farm, on the south bank of the Ouse, is on the site of Beachampton Hall, the residence of the lords of the manor. The manor was held by Walter Giffard in 1086 and part was sold by John de Beachampton in 1289 to a John Wolf. From the Wolf family, the manor was passed to Richard Pigott, who was killed in the battle of Wakefield in 1460. After a Chancery case, the manor remained in the Pigott family until a George Pigott sold the manor to Sir Thomas Bennett, Kt. in 1609, and he passed it on to his second son, Simon. The manor was sold by the Marquess of Salisbury to George Brooks, in trust for James Walker on the death of John Harrison who died without a male heir.

The surviving parish registers start in 1628 with archdeacons' transcripts starting in 1575. There is a good collection of overseers' accounts and books from 1728 to 1835. The overseers' records also include an apprentice book, bastardy bonds and settlement certificates. Some records exist for Sir Simon Bennett's Charity from 1691 to 1835 and Elmer's Charity from 1791 to 1817.

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Research queries, mystery photos – all welcome.

Reach our members who don't use our online  
platforms!

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## William SALKELD or SAWEKELL of Little Brykhyll c 1480

I am writing to enquire whether or not any member of BFHS might be researching the above-mentioned William SALKELD or SAWEKELL.

This William seems to have been a descendant of the Salkeld family of Rosgill Hall in Westmorland and became a draper in the City of London during the period 1450–55. By 1486 William seems to have become a yeoman of 'Little Brykhyll in the County of Buckingham' (Court of Common Pleas 4 Henry VII CP/40/9070).

I am currently researching the Salkeld family of Rosgill and am trying to fill in some of the many gaps in what is currently known about this family during the period 1450–1500.

I have made searches of the Heralds' Visitation for Buckinghamshire and online but I have been unable to find any references to this William or his descendants in the county, and I know of no other connection between the Salkeld family and Buckinghamshire during this period.

Robert E Salkeld

Contact: [membership@bucksfhs.org.uk](mailto:membership@bucksfhs.org.uk)

# PRESS RELEASE: NEW BOOK

Buckinghamshire Record Society Volume 40

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE JUSTICING NOTEBOOKS**

**SIR ROGER HILL (1689–1705) AND EDMUND WALLER (1773–1788)**

Edited by Roger Bettridge. Introduction by Roger Bettridge and John Broad.

Two justices of the peace from South Buckinghamshire kept notebooks recording their justicing activities: Sir Roger Hill of Denham Place and Edmund Waller of Hall Barn, Beaconsfield. Hill's notebook covers 1689–93 and 1702–05, with some additional documents from 1727–28. Waller's notebook covers 1773 and 1786–88, and an appendix includes loose papers from 36 of his cases.

Justices dealt with a vast range of matters, not all of them related to crime. The notebooks contain cases of assault, highway robbery, and theft of anything from apples to a horse. Hill and Waller also oversaw parish administration. They had to look into matters of bastardy, immorality and unpaid wages, and deal with the consequences of the poor law and the game laws. The notebooks provide insights into a world of rural poverty and petty crime in Stuart and Georgian times.

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### Contact

Madeleine Harvey, BFHS Baptisms, 1 Drove Cottages, Newhaven Road, Rodmell, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 3HD

**Email:** [baptisms@bucksfhs.org.uk](mailto:baptisms@bucksfhs.org.uk)

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Marilyn Blake, BFHS Marriages, 5 Mandeville Close, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 2BD

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Our new Facebook group (which is separate to our Facebook page) is proving popular. There are now over 80 photos of Bucks churches and chapels. Members are beginning to share research interests, and some have already found common ancestors and other links. It's also a good source of news about family history developments, and the various events and shows that BFHS will be attending during the year.



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