Berkshire Maps: Ordnance Survey First Edition 1881–1887

About the maps

In 1862 it was decided that the Ordnance Survey should survey the whole of England and produce both 25 inch and 6 inch scale maps. The surveyors arrived in Berkshire in 1867 and 14 years later, in 1881, began publishing their work.

In 2004, Berkshire Record Office and Berkshire Family History Society published all of Berkshire's 6 inch maps on a single CD. The maps held at the Record Office in Reading were first scanned and the images then compressed to allow the 51 maps to fit on a single CD.

An index map shows the boundaries of the 51 maps, and, as they were around 1830, Berkshire's old parishes and boroughs. From the index map, it can be seen that 35 of the 51 maps also include parts of adjoining counties – Buckinghamshire, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Middlesex, Oxfordshire (in particular), Surrey and Wiltshire.

The full CD is generously bookmarked and an extensive gazetteer and index means that it is a simple and straightforward task to locate the relevant First Edition map for any given place in Berkshire. (The gazetteer also contains the modern National Grid references.)

Sample content

The Index Map

This shows the boundaries of individual maps. On the full CD, clicking in any one of the grid boxes opens that particular map but in the sample, Map X (Abingdon) works in this way. For those unfamiliar with Berkshire geography, the 'Find' function in Adobe Reader can be used to highlight the location on the index map of a particular town or village in many cases.

The map also shows the locations of Berkshire's old parishes and boroughs (as they were in 1830).

It is also worth adding that almost all of the original records for the towns and villages shown on the index map are held at Berkshire Record Office in Reading.

The Sample Map – Map X

This particular map features the former county town of Abingdon and its surrounding villages, including those on the opposite bank of the River Thames in Oxfordshire.

At 100% resolution, all main features on the map are clearly visible, including unexpected elements like the racecourse and the volunteer rifle range on Abingdon Common, west of the town.

At higher resolutions, more detail becomes apparent, including many road and street names, and smithies, inns, malthouses and similar buildings can be found. Even flood meadows adjoining the River Thames are identified – for the benefit of later planners.
Copyright

Copyright subsists on the two images (rights holders: Berkshire Record Office and Berkshire Family History Society) and all rights are reserved. These sample maps are provided for personal and non-commercial use only and may not be copied, adapted, published or otherwise distributed in any medium without prior written permission of the rightsholders.

The Berkshire Maps CD may be obtained from:

**Berkshire Record Office**, 9 Coley Avenue, Reading, Berkshire RG1 6AF
0118 937 5132  <arch@reading.gov.uk>  <www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk>

and

**Berkshire Family History Society Bookshop**
Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading, Berkshire RG1 7TJ
0118 950 9553  <bookshop@berksfhs.org.uk>  <www.berksfhs.org.uk/shop>

**Price £12.50**, plus postage and packing.

The Bookshop applies a small charge for online purchases made by debit or credit card to cover the additional cost involved.

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*Berkshire Maps: The Ordnance Survey First Edition 1881-1887 (BRK0217)*

A joint publication by

Berkshire Family History Society (Registered Charity Number 283010)
and Berkshire Record Office.
Place names mark the old parishes and boroughs of Berkshire c1830. Spellings are modern and may be different on the old maps. Some parishes later absorbed from adjoining counties are also shown.
About Berkshire Family History Society

Introduction

Berkshire Family History Society aims to meet the needs of those researching into family history across the UK and overseas - as well as in the pre-1974 Royal County of Berkshire.

The society formed in 1975, growing from Reading Amateur Genealogical Society, founded two years earlier. The society then merged with Windsor, Eton and Slough Family History Society and set up more branches across the county. It is still the only family history society to cover all of the pre-1974 county of Berkshire.

Berkshire Family History Society is a Registered Charity (Number 283010) and subject to the provisions of charity law in England and Wales. Its objects are:

- to advance education of the public in research into family history and genealogy, primarily but not exclusively within the boundaries of the pre-1974 Royal County of Berkshire; and
- to work to promote the preservation, transcription, indexing and ready public accessibility of related records and information.

The society offers you:

- a first-class Research Centre and bookshop in Reading
- monthly Branch meetings in six Berkshire locations – open to everyone
- outreach advice sessions in many main libraries and venues across Berkshire
- an online discussion list for its members, providing informed help and advice
- a growing range of quality publications, including indexes and transcriptions of Berkshire’s historic records
- an up-to-date and easy-to-navigate website – www.berksfhs.org.uk - with an online shop
- an award-winning quarterly magazine - Berkshire Family Historian
- friendly links to the experience, advice and support of members worldwide

The society has around 2,000 members and Single, Family and Overseas memberships are available. The website gives current information.

The Executive Committee and the team that run day-to-day operations are all unpaid volunteers.

Contact details

Address: Berkshire Family History Society
Yeomanry House
131 Castle Hill
Reading
Berkshire
RG1 7TJ

Telephone: + 44 (0) 118 950 9553
Website: www.berksfhs.org.uk
email: secretary@berksfhs.org.uk

(for general enquiries only. More contacts can be found on the Society pages of the website.)
About the society's Research Centre

Yeomanry House in Reading is also home to the society's Research Centre, which is Berkshire's foremost facility for family history research. It is just a few yards from Berkshire Record Office, where the vast majority of deposited parish registers and other records relating to the pre-1974 county of Berkshire (including the Vale of the White Horse) can be found.

Both buildings are 15 minutes walk from the centre of Reading and use the same entrance from Coley Avenue. There is free car parking on site and buses run frequently from Reading Station up Castle Hill, stopping close to the Research Centre (see map below).

The Centre holds an unparalleled set of resources, whether your immediate research tasks are local to Berkshire, national, or international. It is open to the public and to members and current opening times can be found on the website (www.berksfhs.org.uk)

For society members, admission is free. Non-members pay a £2 temporary membership fee per visit. (This is offset against the membership fee should you join the society at that visit). You are expected to carry out your own research at the Centre. Volunteer helpers are on hand to explain the many resources available and suggest how you can use them most effectively. Please note, volunteers do not undertake searches and other research for you, but are on hand to give advice and guidance if you need it. You can print pages or photocopy material at a small additional charge. Help with computer problems and related queries is generally available on most Tuesday evenings.

On the ground floor, you will find the computer suite with seven PCs, all with internet access, bookshop, reception, refreshment facilities and cloakrooms. The first floor (accessible by stairs only) houses the library, fiche readers, and magazine archive.
**Computer suite**

Seven PCs are internet linked so that you can search online family history sites at any time. Four major online services can be accessed at the Centre.

- **Findmypast**: brings you census records for England & Wales (1841 to 1911), the most complete online index of BMDs (1837 to 2006), and millions of parish baptism, marriage and burial records, military, migration and many other specialist datasets.

- **Origins**: contains unusual, older and harder to find records, including British, Irish and particularly London records. It also holds the **National Wills Index** simplifying the task of locating wills proved before 1858.

- **The British Newspaper Archive**: this is a rich source of information for all family historians and contains around 6 million scanned images of British and Irish newspapers published between the early 18th and early 20th centuries.

- **Ancestry.com**: as well as UK data, this offers datasets from Europe, North America and Australia with parish and other records for Greater London (not Westminster). This version allows access to family trees submitted by other family historians.

You are asked to pay a nominal fee of £1/hour or part hour to access these subscription services. This helps to offset the cost of providing them. All other online facilities are free.

- **There are** extensive datasets for Berkshire too and for many other English counties, including those adjacent to Berkshire. These resources include Berkshire Marriages, Berkshire Burials, assorted Berkshire Trade Directories and the National Burial Index 3rd Edition.

- **Berkshire Name Search** offers a searchable index of over two million Berkshire names from a range of society databases including censuses, marriages, burials, strays and other datasets.

Entrance from Coley Avenue showing the Berkshire Record Office and the Research Centre.
Library
A short staircase leads to the library and over 5,500 items, just a fifth of them Berkshire related; the rest cover UK, Irish and international material. The library catalogue is browsable and searchable online and in the centre.

- **Local history and genealogy books** for Berkshire and other English counties, Wales, Scotland, Ireland and some other countries.
- **National Index of Parish Registers** volumes covering most English counties.
- **Directories**: biographical, trade, professional, military, clerical and school.
- **General reference books on all aspects of family and local history**.
- **Published family histories/pedigrees** and a number of donated hand-written documents.
- **A limited number of records on fiche**, including IGI (International Genealogical Index), 1988 for Great Britain, parish register, census index and MI data for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Surrey and other counties.
- **Berkshire Family Historian** 36 volumes of the society's journal from 1975 to the present.
- **Exchange Magazine Archive** five to seven-year files of back copies of journals of some 80 family history societies from other counties and countries. More local and family history journals are also in the library.

Yeomanry House – home of Berkshire Family History Society.

Introductory tours of the centre are available – see website for dates – or you can take a 'virtual tour' here: [www.berksfhs.org.uk](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk)

Research Centre contact details: Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading, Berkshire, RG1 7TJ. Phone + 44 (0) 118 950 9553.
Branches
The six local branches generally meet monthly (except in August). Meetings are open to everyone and free to attend. For programme details see [www.berksfhs.org.uk](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk) or call the Research Centre during opening hours on + 44 (0) 118 950 9553.

**Bracknell Branch**
Meets at 7.15 pm for 7.45 pm on the third **Friday** of the month in Priestwood Community Centre, Priestwood Court Road, Bracknell RG42 1TU.

**Newbury Branch**
Meets at 7.30 pm for 7.45 pm on the second **Wednesday** of the month at St Mary's Church Hall (next to the church), Church Road, Shaw, Newbury RG14 2DS.

**Reading Branch**
Meets at 7.15 pm for 7.45 pm on the last **Thursday** of the month at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, The Meadway, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4PE.

**Vale of the White Horse Branch**
Meets at 7.15 pm for 7.30 pm on the third **Monday** of the month in the Long Furlong Community Centre, Boulter Drive (off Dunmore Road), Abingdon OX14 1XP.

**Windsor Branch**
Meets at 7.15 pm for 7.45 pm on the last **Tuesday** of the month at Christ Church, United Reform Church, William Street, Windsor SL4 1BA.

**Computer Branch**
Meets at 7:15 pm for 7:45 pm on the third **Wednesday** of the month at the Oakwood Centre, Headley Road, Woodley RG5 4JZ.

Outreach events
Berkshire Family History Society works closely with a number of outside organisations to provide informed advice and assistance to family historians in Berkshire and elsewhere in the UK. Some of the regular initiatives are outlined briefly below:

**Library drop-ins**
Members regularly offer free research help and guidance at many of Berkshire's libraries, from Faringdon in the west, Abingdon in the north, Newbury in the south and Bracknell and Windsor in the east. Usually, you can just drop in – but at some smaller venues booking is necessary. The current programme of events can be found at [www.berksfhs.org.uk](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk)

**Open evenings at Berkshire Record Office**
These are staged regularly, hosted and run by society volunteers. These informal evenings provide you with an opportunity to explore much of the material available (original documents are not produced) and to ask your research questions – whether Berkshire related or linked to other areas. The Research Centre is also open for extended hours on these evenings.
Exhibitions, fairs, heritage open days

The society supports a number of local and regional events during the year, including selected events staged by neighbouring societies. Nearly all of these events give you a chance to bring your enquiries and questions to the society, to request 'look ups' in the society's databases, to purchase its publications and to take advantage of special membership offers. For details of current outreach activities see www.berksfhs.org.uk/

Training

From time to time, the society arranges workshops and seminars on a range of general family history and specialist computer topics. Details are publicised on the website and in the magazine.

The society website and other online resources

This has become a key source of information for family historians. It carries both general content relevant to research in Berkshire and specific news of society activities and developments. The 'Berkshire Resources' section of the website offers important material for any researcher who is less familiar with the pre-1974 county of Berkshire. See www.berksfhs.org.uk

There is additional information available to society members in the Members' Area of the website. It is necessary to register before you can access this part of the website.

The society also hosts the Berkshire pages of GENUKI (Genealogy - United Kingdom and Ireland) to provide you with a combination of genealogy handbook and web directory in virtual form for all of the pre-1974 Royal County of Berkshire. A society member maintains these Berkshire pages which you will find at www.berksfhs.org.uk/genuki/BRK/

Projects and publications

Whether you are a member or non-member of the society, you are probably keen to see more Berkshire records published in readily accessible form, whether on CD or available online.

For this to happen, sufficient volunteers have to commit their collective time and effort to agreed and specific projects, using proven methodologies with built-in quality assurance. This approach leads to outputs that can be checked against original records before providing valuable and accurate publications for other family historians to use.

Berkshire Family History Society is very appreciative of its members – both in Berkshire and beyond Berkshire - who give their time generously to such work. There is still plenty left to do and new volunteers who are prepared to give regular amounts of their time to project work are always welcome.

If you would like to get involved with any of the projects listed below, or have ideas for new initiatives, please contact the Projects Co-ordinator projects@berksfhs.org.uk
Ongoing projects

- **Berkshire Marriages** new editions of this CD are published as more transcriptions are added
- **Berkshire Burials** new editions of this CD are published as more transcriptions are added
- **Berkshire Baptisms** a first edition CD is planned for issue in 2013
- **Monumental Inscriptions** the most recent CDs contain photographs
- **Parish Registers** produced as full and checked transcriptions not simply as indexes
- **Berkshire Pedigree Index**
- **Berkshire Strays Index**
- **Berkshire BMD** indexes to local registrars' records, see www.berkshirebmd.org.uk
- **War Memorials**

Completed projects

- **Berkshire Probate Index** (1480 to 1857) available on CD
- **Berkshire Overseers Records** (pre-1834) available on CD
- **Parish Registers** most as full and checked transcriptions - see CDs on current list
- **Berkshire Maps** OS First Edition 51 maps at 6 inches/mile, with gazetteer, and available on CD
- **Berkshire Coroners' Index** available on CD
- **Poll Books and Electoral Rolls** available on CD
- **Monumental Inscriptions** - the most recent CDs contain photographs (in a few cases, there are fiche publications also)

Project work draws on a broad range of skills and abilities and you may underestimate the part that you could play in it. Fieldwork, transcribing and checking against originals (at Berkshire Record Office or at other archives) are among the key tasks to be completed.

But the society also needs people who are able to build the data into easy to use and simple to search CDs. It needs photographers too, and people with mapping skills, volunteers who can use graphics packages, Word, Excel, Access and other data handling and manipulation programs, authors for information to accompany published data, and for web pages... The list is a lengthy one. In the computer age, many of these tasks can readily be completed even when you live outside Berkshire.

**BerksFHSBooks**

**BerksFHSBooks** stocks more than 800 items. As well as all society publications, these include CDs from other sources, a wide range of books on Berkshire towns and villages, local and family history publications, maps and other items. You can shop by mail order or shop online, using a credit or debit card. See www.berksfhs.org.uk/shop You can purchase items at the Research Centre too when it is open, paying by cash or cheque.
The society publishes *The Secretary Hand ABC* by Alf Ison, a society founder member. This is a very useful (and recommended) reference work if you are meeting problems of deciphering old handwriting for the first time.

**Research services**

If you cannot get to the Research Centre in Reading, a number of research services are available.

**Berkshire Name Search (BNS)**

Offers a searchable index of over two million Berkshire names from a range of society databases, (see section above under Research Centre). Online and postal search request options are available. You should note that search charges apply.

For details, go to [www.berksfhs.org.uk](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk)

**Birth briefs**

Birth Briefs are five-generation ancestral (pedigree) charts containing the names and vital records – Birth/Baptism, Marriage and Death/Burial – submitted by members of Berkshire Family History Society. Most records are Berkshire related but a significant number have little or no connection with the county – the only link being that a descendant is (or was) a member of the society. Currently there are almost 36,000 names (November 2012).

Birth Briefs are computerised for easy search and retrieval. This index gives surnames and forenames with vital records by year and county. For more information, see [www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Birth-Briefs/](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Birth-Briefs/)

**Members’ surname interests**

All society members are encouraged to register their surnames of particular interest with the society. There are now 8,000 surnames recorded (November 2012). All enquiries and contacts – whether by email or by post must be channelled through the society. For more information, see [www.berksfhs.org.uk](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk)

**Paid research.**

The society does not undertake paid research.

If you are considering the engagement of the services of a paid researcher, and only in response to prior written application, Berkshire Family History Society can return a short list to you of names and contact details of researchers who undertake commissioned projects. The society offers this information purely as a public service. Inclusion of a researcher on a list neither constitutes nor implies recommendation, endorsement or warranty of any kind by the society. Client and researcher should always negotiate any commissioned work directly and in entirety.

You can request this list by sending an email to berksnamesearch@berksfhs.org.uk
Introduction
Berkshire Record Office occupies a modern building off Castle Hill, in Reading and is adjacent to the society's Research Centre and Reading Register Office. There is ample free parking.

Using the Record Office is free and it is open from Tuesday 09.00 – 17.00, Wednesday 09.00 – 17.00, Thursday 09.00 – 21.00, Friday 09.00 – 16.30. The society's Research Centre is also open on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

There are special arrangements at Christmas and Easter and an annual closure for stocktaking, usually the last week in November and the first week of December.

While you can drop in at any time to the society's Research Centre, at the Record Office you need to book your place in advance. You will also need a County Archives Research Network (CARN) ticket. You can obtain this when you arrive as long as you bring suitable personal ID with you.

Berkshire Record Office offers a number of research services but a fee is payable for each of these.

If you intend to stay all day, bring sandwiches and drinks for your lunch, or use a nearby pub.

Records
Berkshire Record Office holds the vast majority of deposited parish registers (from 1538 onwards) and historic records for the pre-1974 Royal County of Berkshire (including those for the Vale of the White Horse and North Berkshire).

Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre (in Chippenham) holds surviving early Bishop's Transcripts for Berkshire (to 1835/1836). For a number of Berkshire parishes, certain of these transcripts pre-date or supplement surviving registers.

The archdeaconry of Berkshire transferred from the Salisbury Diocese to its Oxford counterpart in 1836 and any original transcripts sent to the bishop from that date can be found at Oxfordshire History Centre in Oxford.

Berkshire Record Office holdings
Original Berkshire documents that may prove useful to local and family historians include:

- Anglican Parish Registers for pre-1974 Berkshire from 1538 onwards containing records of Berkshire's baptisms, banns, marriages and burials
- Nonconformist parochial registers
- Pre-1858 Berkshire wills (Archdeacon's court)
Manorial records and documents relating to historic houses and estates
Local government records
Quarter Sessions records
Poor Law Union and workhouse records
Berkshire census returns
Records for over 800 Berkshire schools
Patient records from Broadmoor Hospital and Berkshire's Fair Mile County Lunatic Asylum
Trade directories and business records
Tithe and enclosure maps and records
Poll books and electoral registers
Maps and plans of Berkshire places, from Hungerford in the west to Windsor in the east
The Thames Conservancy archive, management records of the river from its source to Teddington

Berkshire's Probate Records

Until 1858 and the arrival of the present civil system, church courts dealt with grants of probate and letters of administration. Probate records of the Berkshire archdeaconry form an impressive collection. For the period between 1480 and 1857, over 23,000 wills and more than 10,000 grants of administration survive. From the early period particularly, many inventories and probate accounts are available to researchers and, after the dioceses of Canterbury and Lincoln, the Berkshire collection holds the third largest number of probate accounts in England. Berkshire Record Office holds all of these original documents.

A collaborative project to index the 39,000 probate documents of the Berkshire archdeaconry ran for four years and involved Berkshire Record Office, Berkshire Family History Society, Berkshire Local History Association, Berkshire Record Society and Oxfordshire Family History Society (with additional support from the Marc Fitch Fund). At the end of this time, Berkshire Family History Society compiled and produced a fully searchable CD - the Berkshire Probate Index 1480 – 1857 – on behalf of the project partners. This CD contains nine finding aids, three overview datasets and a 'Full details' report.

This CD is available from Berkshire Family History Society and from Berkshire Record Office.

Records of other jurisdictions covering Berkshire can be found as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jurisdiction</th>
<th>Location of Records</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prerogative Court of Canterbury</td>
<td>The National Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistory Court of Salisbury</td>
<td>Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consistory Court of Oxford</td>
<td>Oxfordshire History Centre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peculiar of Faringdon</td>
<td>Berkshire Record Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peculiar of the Dean of Salisbury</td>
<td>Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peculiar of the Dean and Canons of Windsor</td>
<td>Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre</td>
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