

Berkshire Family Historian

the quarterly journal of the Berkshire Family History Society

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Family names appearing in this issue:

excluding living people, authors of sources and members' interests

Abbott 28	Col(e)bourn(e) 11+	Houghton 17	Robson 24
Adams 29	Craven 14 (see illus)	Lowick 21	Rookwood 20
Ashfield 29	Denham 15+	McLachlin 29	Sherman 11
Bacon 21	Englefield 20	Montagu 20	Skylling 14
Baxter 18 (see map)	Eyston 21	Oates 21	Smith 11
Bishop 16	Fisher 19+	Perkins 20+	Staples 14
Brown 14 (see illus)	Goddard 12	Pole 20	Stonor 20+
Browne 20	Godfrey 29	Prothero 16+	Vachell 20
Bunce 29	Henwood 12	Raymond 14	Wilberforce 24
Burdett 20	Herman 29	Reed 11	Winchcombe 21
Campion 20	Hildesley 19+	Revell 16+	Wollascott 21
Cary 20	Hoskyns 24	Richardson 18 (see map)	Wyotte 12

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<www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Membership/how-to-renew-your-membership.html>

Chairman's corner

SHOULD WE PUT OUR FAMILY HISTORIES ONLINE?

Family history is a very personal pursuit. All of us have our particular curiosities, questions, mysteries and concerns that we want to explore. It's not merely a matter of cataloguing a string of names, life events, dates and places.

We amass a substantial collection of documents, data and photographs, organised to varying degrees of accessibility and completeness, with the help of a family history program. Or we did. Today, many online alternatives tempt us to follow a different route. Siren voices of cyberspace entice us to build or post our family trees on one or more publicly accessible websites. So, should we listen to them?

Few people seem to appreciate that most online options offer scant protection for the ownership and integrity of our data. Nor do we always realise that sites may not treat our privacy and security concerns as we would address them ourselves. Usually we are invited to hand over material under a licence that is world-wide, royalty-free, perpetual, irrevocable, transferable and sub-licensable. In other words, our content ceases to be our own. Once offered online, it becomes the publisher's property, to do with as that organisation sees fit, and that includes denying us any right to unpublish it. Should we withdraw from a service, any content that we provided stays available to all. Even seemingly free-to-use facilities — for access or storage — could be summarily withdrawn at any time.

Is sharing always a good thing? Many researchers think nothing of re-using and reproducing articles, documents and photographs that they find online as they see fit. Material is misappropriated daily in a mistaken belief that such action is rendered permissible by "principles" of open access that makes any published information free to all.

How often do we encounter family trees online that contain erroneous details? Or have



been adjusted to fit some predetermined supposition? Or lacking proof sources? Or, worse still, revised incorrectly without reference to the tree's originator? We quickly realise that many others will accept less exacting quality standards than we demand in our own research.

Not least, most of our ancestors held firm religious convictions. Some of them were ostracised, persecuted or driven to seek refuge in unfamiliar places for their faith. Those beliefs deserve respect and, to me at least, it does not seem quite right that others should seek retrospectively to impose alternative beliefs on our ancestors and on their memories.

There is much to think about and we will not all reach similar conclusions, but before relinquishing any part of your family history to the internet, consider the possible ramifications and their implications. It's your family tree: you should decide what happens to it.

TAKING AN INTEREST

The trustees look forward to welcoming as many of you as possible to Abingdon in pre-1974 north Berkshire on Monday 17 June for the 38th Annual General Meeting. The AGM provides a rare opportunity for members from within and beyond Berkshire, and representatives from all six branches, to gather to express their views and help to influence

future society direction. It is also the opportunity to elect (or in some cases, re-elect) trustees for the coming year. It would be invaluable to introduce a few new faces who can bring extra financial, computing or software skills and experience to the group.

A FAREWELL FOOTNOTE

This is my last Chairman's Corner for the *Historian*. The four years in which it has been my privilege to hold this position have proved eventful. Society finances are in good shape. Society transcriptions of some Berkshire parish registers are at last accessible online. A trio of quality CDs of Berkshire Baptisms, Marriages and Burials is available to all. The website stands contemporary scrutiny, and social

media are at last engaged. It's a start.

But change is due, probably overdue. After serving nine years as a trustee – first, five as a branch representative and later, four more as society chairman – I should like to thank fellow trustees, past and present, for their advice, application, encouragement and patience. I'd also like to record my deep appreciation of the key contributions of the many dedicated and reliable volunteers, without whom your society would be but a pale shadow of what it is today.

To every member, thank you for your continuing support of the society. Do consider carefully what part you could play to secure its future and to help to satisfy the needs and expectations of today's family historians.

Derek Trinder
<chairman@berksfhs.org.uk>

Notice of annual general meeting

The 38th Berkshire Family History Society Annual General Meeting will be held before the Vale of the White Horse Branch meeting, and will start at 7.30pm on Monday 17 June 2013 at Long Furlong Community Centre, at the end of Boulter Drive, off Dunmore Road, Abingdon OX14 1XP.

The main business will be to receive a brief chairman's report on the past year's activities, to receive from the treasurer the independently examined accounts for the year ending 30 April 2013 for acceptance and approval, and to elect for the year 2013/2014 the society's president*, vice-presidents, officers and trustees.

Officers and trustees form the society's Executive Committee. Of its current membership, Margaret Crook (Reading Branch representative) retires under the five-year rule and Dr Michael Booth (Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead Branch representative) has indicated his wish to step down. The Executive Committee seeks to fill these vacancies and, in addition, to restore trustee numbers up to their permitted maximum (16).

The following are willing to stand again as trustees:

Richard Ashberry, Sandra Barkwith‡, Vanessa Chappell‡, Judith Mitchell, Tony Roberts, Catherine Sampson, Penny Stokes, Derek Trinder, Ian Ward‡ and Tony Wright.

‡ *subject to nomination at branch meetings*

If you would like to nominate a member to the Executive, in the absence of a society secretary nominations should be emailed or posted to reach the chairman no later than Monday 3 June 2013. Nomination forms are available from branches, from the Research Centre and downloadable from <www.berksfhs.org.uk>. Please ensure that any person you nominate is prepared to be an Executive Committee member and a trustee of the charity. Nominations should include names and membership numbers of nominee, proposer and seconder and, for written nominations, the signatures of all three members.

Information about what being a trustee of a charity entails can be found at <www.charitycommission.gov.uk> (see publication CC3). Some people are disqualified by law from acting as trustees, including anyone described in sections 178 to 180 of the Charities Act 2011. This includes:

- persons under the age of 18;
 - anyone who has an unspent conviction for an offence involving deception or dishonesty;
 - anyone who is an undischarged bankrupt;
 - anyone who has been removed from trusteeship of a charity by the Court or the Commission for misconduct or mismanagement;
 - anyone under a disqualification order under the Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986;
- and
- anyone who has entered into a composition or arrangement with their creditors which includes an individual voluntary arrangement (IVA), and is currently on the Insolvency Service Register.

** At the 2012 AGM members gave unanimous support to a resolution granting the incoming Executive Committee interim authority to appoint a successor to Sir William Benyon, immediate past president, before the AGM in 2013, at which any person so appointed would be nominated for re-election in the normal way. At the date of publication of this notice, the committee had not made such an appointment.*

After the AGM

Liz Woolley, who has previously given a number of excellent talks to several society branches, will talk on *Children and war*. Liz is a local historian specialising in aspects of the history of Oxford and Oxfordshire, and her talk examines how the lives of children, both those born locally and those evacuated from other parts of the UK, were affected by the Second World War.

Getting to OX14 1XP from A34

(distances approx)

Leave A34 at Marcham interchange, sliproad left
to roundabout, take 3rd exit onto the A415
0.4 miles to roundabout, take 2nd exit
0.2 miles to roundabout, take 1st exit, Colwell Drive
0.2 miles to roundabout, take 2nd exit
0.3 miles to roundabout, take 2nd exit, Copenhagen Drive
0.7 miles to roundabout, take 2nd exit, Dunmore Rd
In 1 mile turn right onto Boulter Drive.

Around the branches

Bracknell and Wokingham Branch

<bracknell@berksfhs.org.uk> Fiona Ranger

Our January meeting was cancelled due to bad weather, so our first meeting of the year was in February, when Gillian Stevens and Chad Hanna gave their talk entitled *Berkshire beneficiaries, Oxfordshire obituaries and Wiltshire wills*. They originally gave this presentation at *WDYTYA* in 2012. We were guided through the complex phases of finding where a will may be, who made a will, and who can obtain a will, not just in Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Wiltshire, but all over the country.

In March, Karen Richardson from Ancestry gave an informative talk on the company from its foundation in 1983 through to the newest records of 2013, covering the partnerships and contracts they have with numerous organisations throughout the world, how the images were digitised and indexed, and conservation of the records that they scan. We were also guided in the use of the searches, and the

videos available on the site.

In March we gave two PowerPoint presentations, one at Crowthorne Library and the other at Finchampstead Library. The talk was entitled *Your ancestors uncovered*, and both were well attended, particularly at Crowthorne. The talks were followed with Q&A sessions, after which individual guidance on using the libraries' computer software was given. We have been asked to give the talk at Wokingham Library in the autumn, and a new presentation has been requested by Crowthorne Library.

Drop-in sessions at Wokingham Library continue to attract visitors and members, undeterred by the traffic restrictions. Sessions at Bracknell Library have resumed following the refurbishment. We need to encourage more visitors here, but Bracknell town centre is be completely redeveloped, so this may influence numbers.

Newbury Branch

<newbury@berksfhs.org.uk> Nick Prince

Members of Newbury branch were saddened to hear of the sudden death of Stella Sampson on 23 February. Eileen Barnes wrote the following obituary:

Stella was member no. 1499, and has been an active member of Newbury Branch in various guises for over 25 years. For a long time she was librarian, before taking over the table inside the front door, where she greeted all who attended. I remember her as the friendly face who greeted me and made me feel welcome when I went to my first meeting in 2002.

Due to the ill-health of her husband, John, Stella had to relinquish her role, and was unable to attend meetings for while. After John's death, we were pleased to see her back at most of our meetings. She came to the Christmas party, and sat at a table with Yvonne Brick, Ann Rutt and myself for Nick's quiz, when we had a very jolly time.

It was only a year or so ago that Stella moved into a lovely flat, where she told me she was very happy and planning for the future. Her plans, sadly, did not reach fruition.

Reading Branch

<reading@berksfhs.org.uk> Margaret Crook

We continue to hold outreach help sessions at Mortimer Library where the staff promote our visits. We are able to help visitors with their research problems, set them on the right track and also to encourage them to join the society.

We plan to have a stall at some local events

during the summer, including a Southcote community event on 4 May, the Hill School Summer Fair in Caversham on 15 June, and the LDS Church Open Day on 6 July.

Our July meeting this year will be a guided tour of Reading town centre led by Joy Pibworth.

Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead Branch

<windsor@berksfhs.org.uk> Mike Booth

In March Tony Wright gave us an informative talk on Merchant Navy records, describing the difficulties you may encounter if you do not know the Official Number (ON) of the ship your ancestor may have served on. This is usually necessary, as all crew lists are filed by ON and date the voyage ended. Then there is the problem of finding where the record may now reside (if not destroyed) which could be TNA, Greenwich or the Maritime History Archive at the University of Newfoundland.

Various other finding aids were described and background information given to service in the Merchant Navy. The talk stimulated many questions and comments.

The branch continues to be represented at the family history advice sessions held on the second Wednesday afternoon of each month at Slough Central Library. A session at Windsor Central Library is planned for a Saturday morning in June, possibly the 1st of June.

Vale of the White Horse Branch

<vale@berksfhs.org.uk> Vanessa Chappell

Our January meeting was cancelled due to snow and icy conditions, which disappointed many members, but local historian Bruce Hedge's talk entitled *Abingdon's malting industry* has been rescheduled for later this year.

In February we had an entertaining talk by Alan Turton on *The social history of the English Civil War soldier*. Alan is the curator of Basing House in Hampshire, and author of many English Civil War books. His talk described billeting, clothing, food and the military equipment the soldiers used, enhanced by his dressing-up in the clothing which would have been worn, and brandishing a musket.

Our March speaker was Hazel Brown, a local historian and author. Her talk was entitled *Gallon loaves and fustian frocks: the Wantage Union*

and *workhouse*, also the title of her 2008 publication. The period of the talk was 1835 to 1900, and it was illustrated with photographs and maps of the old workhouse.

Our outreach events also started in February, beginning in Abingdon Library with a family history surgery. This was held as part of the library's open day. It was good to welcome people who were just starting out on their family history research. The next outreach was in March at Wantage Library.

We are continuing to get out and about publicising the society at local events in Abingdon. We attended *Abingdon Air and Country Show* on Sunday 5 May, and will be at Abingdon mayor's *Fun in the Park* in Abingdon on Saturday 1 June.

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Outreach activities

All branches of the society are, in varying degrees, engaging with the general public in their respective hinterlands to offer family history advice and promote society membership.

Bracknell Branch has long-standing monthly drop-in sessions at Wokingham and Bracknell branch libraries. More recently the branch has taken a presentation entitled *Your ancestors uncovered* to Crowthorne and Finchampstead branch libraries, where it was well received. The presentation was followed by a Q&A session and individual advice, and the format is likely to be repeated elsewhere soon. Bracknell also organises its own branch stand at the Bracknell Family History Fair each January.

The **Computer Branch** has recently withdrawn from advice sessions at Lower Earley and Woodley branch libraries because of a downturn in demand, but is to represent the society at the Museum of English Rural Life fete in June for the second year running.

Newbury Branch benefits from the dedicated enthusiasm of Brian Snook, who gives a two-hour session every Friday morning in Thatcham Library. His time is usually booked at least two weeks ahead. Lambourn Library has had four sessions over the last 12 months from Dave Morris and Penny Stokes, and these too are usually fully booked in advance. Sessions at Wash Common Library, manned by Eileen Barnes and Sylvia Green, have had less uptake, and may benefit from a switch to weekdays rather than Saturdays, when too much else is going on in the library. Yvonne Brick took the society's message and expertise to Newbury Library on National Libraries Day.

Reading Branch holds a monthly sessions at Mortimer and Pangbourne Libraries, and is to run stalls at a Southcote community event in May, the Hill School Summer Fair in Caversham in June, and the LDS Church Open Day in July.

Vale Branch, the society's smallest in membership numbers, has an active outreach programme. Vanessa Chappell's advice session team rotates

monthly between Abingdon, Wantage and Faringdon libraries, with pre-booking. Visitors often exceed a dozen per session. The branch also represents the society at open-air events, such as Abingdon's *Air and Country Show*, scheduled to take place in the early summer of this year.

Windsor Branch holds regular sessions in Slough Library, and occasionally at other venues, such as Cookham, Eton Wick and Windsor libraries. Windsor and Bracknell branches come together to represent the society at the Ascot Retirement Fair each August, an all-day event at which the society's publications are on sale.

The key to success of library advice sessions seems to be the enthusiasm of the library itself at branch level. (Centralised publicity has so far been an unattainable goal.) Advance promotion is essential and a booking system is advantageous; this has been associated with high uptake in Abingdon and Lambourn. Family history doesn't lend itself so readily to spontaneous drop-ins, because of the necessity for customers to have marshalled their material in advance.

The customers tend to be relatively inexperienced, but their queries range widely, and they can sometimes test the expertise of the advisers. However, in many cases an introduction to the three basic websites (Ancestry, Free BMD and FamilySearch) will produce gratifying results. If FindMyPast looks potentially helpful, the customer can be usefully steered towards the Research Centre.

Does outreach recruit new members for the society? Leaflets and membership forms are usually given out to all, but it can be hard to gauge precise results. However the activity certainly helps to fulfil the society's charitable obligation to offer a service to the general public. It is also very enjoyable and sociable for the society members who take part. If you feel that you would like to offer your services in this role, contact your local branch chairman (see email addresses on the inside front cover).

COMING SOON

Conflict and change: the early twentieth century

*A conference for local and family historians
organised by Berkshire Family History Society*

18 October 2014 at Theale, near Reading



Next year sees the centenary of the start of the First World War, a conflict which brought lasting change to many Berkshire families and communities. Berkshire Family History Society proposes to commemorate this key anniversary and also the wider economic, social and political changes which shaped the lives of our ancestors, with a number of events throughout 2014.

During 2014 we plan to organise a number of special visits to places of particular interest to family and local historians connected with the early twentieth century. These will be advertised in advance, so that you can plan your diary and reserve a place in good time.

The climax of our commemorations will be a day conference focused not just on the war but on the early twentieth century. Encompassing a range of topics, the conference will offer the chance to listen to keynote speakers and experts, and put your questions to them, as well as the opportunity to book one-to-one time with a key subject expert. There will be a choice of talks and workshops to attend, the opportunity to chat with fellow researchers, and lunch (optional) will be provided within the price.

The conference is designed specifically for the needs of local and family historians, wherever they are researching, giving both the wider context and key milestones of the subject and also the “how” and “where” to research personal areas of interest in more depth.

The key date for your diary is Saturday 18 October 2014 for the conference, which will be held at Theale, near Reading, Berkshire, whilst the visits will run over the course of the year at a number of locations, both within and outside of Berkshire.

More information will follow in future editions of the *Historian*, on <www.berksfhs.org.uk> and Twitter.

Catherine Sampson (6979)

World War I casualties from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead

Do you have a story to share about a casualty or civilian who aided the war effort and who came from or worked in the Royal Borough of Windsor or Maidenhead? If so please contact <projects@berksfhs.org.uk>.



U P D A T E

Projects and publications

You'll no doubt be aware that we achieved our goal of launching Berkshire Baptisms Edition 1 at *WDYT YA? Live* at the end of February, enabling us to offer Berkshire family researchers for the first time countywide transcriptions of baptisms, marriages and burials.

Transcribing and checking the baptism registers published in Edition 1, converting old Word transcriptions to Excel and producing the actual CD has taken considerable effort by members and non-members over many years. I'd like to take the opportunity to acknowledge and thank the many people who contributed: **Val Ayres, Terry Barlow, Alan Betteridge, Carolyn Boulton, Gloria Boyle, Jenny Bryan, Gill Cameron-Waller, Barbara Campbell, Pat Carter, Paul Carter, Betty Clarke, Melanie Cossburn, Pat Croad, Margaret Crook, Fiona Davies, Brian Edwards, Elaine Feast, John Feast, Rosemary Fishburn, Margaret Foreman, Paul Gallagher, Alan Gater, Sally Goddard, Meg Goswell, Margaret Green, Pippa Green, Doug Hatto, Jean Herbert, Nan Keightley, Michelle Lancaster, Karen Lee, Irene Littleby, David Mason, Jocie McBride, Heather McGuinness,**

Richard McDonald, Peter Neate, Linda Pelling, John Price, Mary Price, Gwen Prince, Hatty Rickards, Catherine Sampson, Caroline Smith, Susanne Spencer, Daphne Spurling, Julia Varey, Glennis Wade, Roger Wallington, David Watkins, Yvonne Watkins, Sheila Wheatley, Elaine Williams, Margaret Woodall, Michael Woodall, David Wright, Tony Wright, the late Margaret Young and the Remenham Archaeological and History Group. Sadly, a few transcriber names were not recorded in the early days, and I'm sorry if your name has been inadvertently missed off the list.

Work continues on the next edition of Berkshire Marriages, which is planned for later this year. We have received a number of requests to include specific parishes if possible, including Tidmarsh, Wallingford, Abingdon and Newbury, and I'm pleased to say that these are currently on track for being amongst the many new parishes which will be included in Edition 3. Check out September's *Historian* for further information. To offer your help in transcribing or checking contact me at <projects@berksfhs.org.uk>.

Catherine Sampson (6979)
Projects co-ordinator

You can now read the *Berkshire Family Historian* in the Members' Area of www.berksfhs.org.uk as soon as it is published

Almost all issues of the *Berkshire Family Historian* since its first publication in 1975 are now posted on the society's website, for members only, and new issues appear online at the same time as the printed version is posted to members.

Go to <www.berksfhs.org.uk>, log in and choose *Berkshire Family Historian* from the sidebar headed Members' Menu (not *Journal, Berkshire Family Historian* on the Main Menu, which is just a sample copy for the general public.) Current and past issues are posted in full, mostly as pdfs.

Now you can keep up with your society's magazine whilst travelling, or away on holiday, but remember: in order to access the magazine and other useful pages in the Members' Area, **you need to register as a site user.**



The view from next door

Could you ever have such a thing as an unwanted ancestor? One or two things going on at the Berkshire Record Office have made Mark Stevens wonder whether that's a possibility.

How would you feel at the moment if you were a close relative of Abu Qatada? Or Jimmy Savile? My guess is that you wouldn't welcome small talk about it. But perhaps time changes the way that we feel about such people. What if you had an ancestor who had been a terrorist – alternatively known as a patriot or freedom-fighter – or one who was a notorious criminal? At what point do such relationships cease to be an embarrassment and start to be a feature on your family tree?

The effect of the passage of time can be felt on our short project called *Enemies of the state*. This is a project in partnership with the University of Reading's English Department, looking at Irishmen who were part of the 1916 Easter Rising, and who subsequently ended up in Reading Gaol, interned without trial. For the British government, these men were the Abu Qatadas of the day and Reading was their Guantanamo Bay: a slightly bizarre thought.

Several of these gents went on to play key roles in the formation of the Irish Republic, and *Enemies of the state* will, amongst other things, tell their experience through a small display which will be on view at BRO over the summer.

Jimmy Savile, of course, had a role – though perhaps not the “keys” the media are keen to hand to him – in Broadmoor Hospital, and this year sees the famous institution's 150th anniversary. We already get plenty of enquiries

from genealogists who have found an ancestor at Broadmoor. Rather than experiencing fear or shame, the reaction of these family historians is one of curiosity. Can they find out more about events or people often not spoken of within the family?

The fact that someone is enquiring about a patient ancestor means that life went on for their nearest and dearest, no matter how shocking the incident that befell them. One of the most powerful features of the Broadmoor archive is how families react to a killer being within their midst.

No matter that mental illness may absolve the patient of responsibility for their actions, it is always rather humbling to have children write to the father who murdered their mother, or husbands ask for the return of the wife who destroyed their child. The motive for contact could be one of practicality as much as of forgiveness, but it is affecting, nevertheless.

We are expecting there to be some interest in Broadmoor's 150th. The hospital is keen to mark the event for its current patients and staff, and at least one television channel is also readying a documentary for broadcast. The record office will also seek to raise the profile of the Broadmoor archive: my own book, *Broadmoor revealed*, will be reissued in revised form this May.

So could you ever have such a thing as an unwanted ancestor? Yes, probably, but you may find that notoriety is no longer something that you wish to hide.



Family historians are usually advised never to try to research forwards down the generations, but

Grace Gillions (7431)

has been driven to this desperate remedy in trying to verify what she found posted on Ancestry.

Colebournes of Kintbury

Since I started seriously researching my family history about 18 months ago I've been challenged by a friend to see which of us could be the first to unearth a genuine, bona fide, authenticated and fully-sourced ancestor from Generation X – in other words, a 7xgreat grandparent. Up to this point I have found several ninth-generation ancestors on my husband's tree and three 6xgreat-grandfathers among my father's Scottish ancestors, but as my friend is a professionally-qualified genealogist who has been researching since well before things went digital, I didn't really fancy my chances of beating her to the line.

My tree is especially twiggy as regards my maternal grandmother, who was illegitimate. There is little likelihood of establishing her father's identity with any degree of accuracy, so I was very excited when Ancestry threw up a connection with other family trees which appeared to take her mother's family back to sixteenth-century Wantage and the dizzying prospect of

Generation 14.

This was seven generations further back than I had managed to get along that branch; unfortunately it was also seven generations that I have utterly failed to verify.

My Berkshire ancestors are the Colbourn family (variously spelled Colborne,

Colebourne or any one of half a dozen other possibilities) from Kintbury. So far I've confidently identified a 3xgreat grandmother, Jane Colbourn, baptised in 1792, who married a wood sawyer from Wiltshire named James Reed in 1816, and moved to Bristol where she gave birth to seven children and died of bronchitis in 1865. She was one of at least five children born to William Colborne, baptised 1770, who married Mary Sherman and died in 1840. I have worked out that William was the second child of that name born to Jonathan Colebourne and his second wife Jane Smith (the first William having died in infancy). I have also established that after Jane's death in 1776 Jonathan married Harriet Smith, who was probably his sister-in-law. But this is where the facts start to get murky, because there are just too many people of the same name in the same place at the same time.

I found three Johns or Jonathans of Kintbury, all possible candidates for my



Kintbury St Mary's

5xgreat grandfather, at the Berkshire Record Office: one baptised in 1740, parents John and Elizabeth; a second baptised in 1731 to the same parents (or different parents with the same names); and another baptised in 1733, parents John and Mary. The other researchers on Ancestry had opted for the 1740 one, named his parents as John Colebourne and Elizabeth Goddard and added a lot of biographical detail that I have been unable to confirm, either online or at Reading. Despite numerous messages to other Ancestry users I haven't yet made contact with anyone who can tell me why this Jonathan is more likely to be my ancestor than either of the others, and I never like to add information like this to my tree without confirming it to my own satisfaction.

So, having failed to authenticate my Jonathan, I tried another tack. According to those other trees, at some point between generations 10 and 11 the family moved to Kintbury from Wantage, and it is there that I should be able to trace the line all the way back to the splendidly named Albone Henwood and his wife Elizabeth Wyotte, born about the middle of the 1500s, whose daughter Elizabeth Henwood married a Francis Coleborne. So while I was in the BRO I thought I would start from the other end, as it were, and see if I could make the connections from the opposite direction.

I did find a marriage between Albone Henwood and Elizabeth Wyotte in 1573 and a marriage between Francis Colesbourne and Elizabeth in 1603, the year of James I's accession – historically very exciting, but I could not satisfactorily connect the two; the

Kintbury's main street in the first quarter of the twentieth century



only baptism I could find for Elizabeth suggested that her mother was called Annis, and I was not aware of Albone Henwood having more than one wife. Then I was stuck with a yawning gap with no evidence at all between Francis and Elizabeth's son Robert and his supposed grandson John, whose mother (if I go by the baptism I found on the IGI) was called Elizabeth, when according to all the other trees she should have been called Mary. By this point, struggling with the sixteenth-century handwriting, I gave up in despair. (*Memo to self – must enrol on a palaeography course.*)

Perhaps I should confess that this was the first time that I had set foot in an actual records office. Prior to visiting to Reading my only experience of hands-on research had been twiddling the knobs of a microfilm reader in my local library. So it is more than likely that I missed a vital clue or misinterpreted something while I was trying to navigate my way around the unfamiliar indexes and microfiches. I know I got home to Hertfordshire and realised that the one record I really wanted to find – Jane Colbourn's baptism – was the one I had completely forgotten to print. Obviously another trip to Reading will be necessary at some point. But in the meantime, is there anyone out there who can help to fill in some of the gaps between me and that elusive Generation X?

In loving (if not entirely clear) memory



Nature conspires against MIs, and graveyards are not the restful environments that we might like to suppose. The stones are prone to list and sink as the substrate shifts with insect and earthworm activity, not to mention root growth of nearby trees and bushes, and the gradual decomposition of the cadaver and its wooden coffin. Part of the inscription may have disappeared underground.

The first rule of graveyard work must be not to endanger yourself. Excavation of the stone could destabilise it, and lying underneath a tilted stone to get a better view is very unwise.

The second rule must be to not to damage the stone in any way. It probably isn't your property, and the use of chemicals and abrasion to reveal the inscription cannot be justified. Chalk and shaving cream have, in the past, been recommended by enthusiasts, but most authorities would deplore this (although

Deciphering the lettering on tombstones cropped up as a topic on the online discussion list in April, and at its conclusion several people suggested that it would be helpful if the Historian were to summarise the advice given. Sean Brady (3432) Roger Cox (7368), Richard Croker (4678), Chad Hanna (382) and Tim Powys-Lybbe (7001) offered useful contributions, and this summary also owes a debt to Jill Muir, whose website <www.gravematters.org.uk> has much helpful advice and pictures.

Two other sites have yielded a few more tips: <www.ctgravestones.com/Conservation/inscriptions.htm> (Connecticut Gravestone Network) and <www.nnygenealogy.com/pages/reading-grave-stones.html> (northern New York State).

<http://blog.eogn.com/eastmans_online_genealogy/2005/05/tombstones_and_.html> offers an alternative opinion).

Moss and lichen should be removed with extreme care: water and a brush is usually considered acceptable. Purists would specify distilled water or, at the very least, tap water which has been exposed to the air for long enough to evaporate the chlorine. Beware of dirty water. A good criterion for choosing your brush is: if you wouldn't use it on your car, don't use it on a gravestone.

If you can't read the inscription after this gentle cleaning, you may have to come again at a different time of day, when the light is more favourable. Low sun is recommended. You may need to view from more than one position in order to pick up the best angle for different parts of the inscription. In the absence of sunlight a torch can be useful.

A mirror can be helpful in reflecting sunlight onto a shaded inscription, sometimes from some distance away. There are some good illustrations of how this works on <www.ctgravestones.com/Conservation/

inscriptions.htm>. Another technique is to use a cardboard tube or plastic drainpipe, sawn off at an angle at one end. Move this around to obtain the optimum view.

The next resort is photography. Take your pictures from several angles, as light strikes across the stone. Try with and without flash or, better still, use a detached flash gun at various angles. Zoom, if used, should be optical rather than digital; the latter simply enlarges part of the image, whereas the former brings it closer.

Imaging software such as Photoshop Elements will allow you to play with the results, trying light changes, inversion and various tricky filters which may suddenly reveal more of the lettering.

Don't forget the footstone: it may have only the deceased's initials and date, but if these are problem elements in the main inscription your query may be solved.

Before you start, remember that many churchyards have been previously recorded by various groups; check local libraries and ask the incumbent (or look in the parish magazine for the most likely person). This may reveal a

recording of inscriptions made several decades ago. Hamstead Marshall and Enborne, for example, were recorded in 1929, and thus several MIs which are now illegible have been preserved.

In deciphering the letters remember:

f for s, as in Mifs for Miss;

ye for the;

a relict is a widow;

and that 1 January was the start of the year only from 1752; prior to this it was Lady Day, 25 March, and for several years after 1752 inscriptions that mention two years, such as "1760/61" indicate a date between 1 January and 25 March.

Two old, but still valuable sources of reference are:

1. *Rayment's notes on recording monumental inscriptions* (1992)

ISBN 1-872094-47-3. Out of print, but second-hand copies can be found on the web.

2. H Leslie White *Monuments and their inscriptions: a practical guide* (SoG, 1987)

ISBN 0901878200/9780901878205. Available on Amazon.

Few memorials can match the helpfulness (to family historians) of this example inside Kintbury St Mary's.



Discovering the men and women behind the wheel

For many years I've researched the bus and coach operators in the rural hinterland of Newbury. Between 1900 and 1950 there were over 100 small outfits operating services, all of them with stories that go deeper than just what they achieved in the public domain.

When I first started, transport books tended to presume some prior knowledge on the part of the reader regarding vehicle developments and general history of the industry, whilst the backgrounds of the protagonists were rarely explored. I'm pleased to have changed that viewpoint, bringing such histories into their rightful context as both local and social history.

When I decided to write a new book on the Newbury area operators (replacing two earlier volumes from 1985 to 1987, long out of print), my genealogical experience stood me in good stead for fleshing out the stories of individuals. Resources for researching those whose businesses began before or just after the Great War have much improved in recent years. With these and research from local trade directories and newspaper advertising, a remarkably complete picture started to emerge of some individuals who had previously been something of a mystery. As a spin-off, I also found myself supplying information previously unknown to relatives in a number of cases.

DENHAM BROTHERS

Brothers Theo and Ambrose ("Boss") Denham became the main bus operators providing services radiating from Newbury and, having interviewed old Boss in the early 1980s, I knew a bit about

Paul Lacey

has been researching and writing about bus transport in the Thames Valley since 1969. Here, he revisits the Newbury area, focusing on the people who pioneered local services.



Boss Denham stands in front of 14-seater Talbot bus wearing his best driving trousers.

them, including the fact that the family had moved whenever their father (an engine-driver for the Great Western Railway) was posted to other locations.

For the new book I contacted Boss's son Lionel, visiting him and his wife Trixie when they were sorting through a trunk of his father's old papers, revealing some interesting early employment history. The family story that he was driving taxis at 15 years old in Birmingham was given substance by his hackney carriage driver's licence



Flora Prothero and the Ford RX 4272 her husband bought for her to drive

dated 28 November 1913, a month before his sixteenth birthday. After war broke out he volunteered to drive for the French Red Cross, for which there was a testimonial letter from his current employer, giving his home address. I had already traced the family's movements through the 1891 and 1901 censuses, which gave the Denhams some information they didn't know.

Boss entered the regular forces in 1916, and it was disappointing not to find his WW1 record, but further items from the trunk made up for that. Further employment correspondence revealed his appointment as chauffeur-mechanic to the Countess of Aylesford of Packington Hall in Meriden in 1919. After a few years he left to work at the Humber Motor Works in Coventry, before joining his brother's expanding garage and bus business in Newbury.

PROTHERO'S BUS SERVICE

The origins of this enterprise had long puzzled me; I had no knowledge of the owner, John Prothero, prior to the start of the service, other than that he had previously run a country carrier's bus service with one R V Revell. The only information on the latter came from his son Ralph, a driver (later inspector) on the Newbury and District Buses, and from a granddaughter still living in Newbury.

However, along came one of those lucky

breaks that so often can change the pace of discovery: an old photo in the local newspaper showed one of Prothero's buses and its driver, Charlie Bishop. I recalled him, but also knew he was no longer around, so off went a letter to the person submitting the photo. He couldn't help me directly, but he did tell me where Charlie's daughter, Dot Hibberd, was. She was pleased to hear from me, adding that she had a draft letter written to me by her father on his deathbed in the late 1980s.

We met up in the Empire Café in Cheap Street, Newbury, and when Dot arrived, not only did she have the draft letter, which told me things only an eyewitness could possibly have known, but also produced her father's fuller account of his life, right through from boyhood assisting his father, who was a shepherd.

Dot also recalled that John Prothero's wife, Flora, was somehow connected to Mr Revell, which set in train a series of discoveries. Through Ancestry I traced the origins of both, using a combination of BMD and census searches, revealing that John Prothero had originated in Gloucestershire, leaving his rural farming existence for the emerging world of motor cars with the Hereford Motor Company. This was actually revealed by papers attached to his WW1 records on Ancestry, which also include several other letters of recommendation. With his driving and mechanic skills John was an obvious candidate for the Army Service Corps (Mechanical Transport), a theme prevalent among those involved in setting up transport enterprises after the war. The other key discovery was that Flora was the sister of Robert Valentine Revell: hence the later business partnership.

After the war John was finding it difficult to find employment, but his brother-in-law (who had spent the war in the Army Veterinary Corps) had landed a position looking after polo

ponies on the Berkshire Downs at West Ilsley. John joined him nearby at Beedon, and the pair bought a Ford Model T as a carrier's bus. Although they fell out after about a year, Revell continued as carrier, and John expanded into a motor garage business and bus operation.

By now I knew quite a lot about these activities, but photos remained in short supply. I trawled the connections on Ancestry, on another lead from Dot that Prothero had a son who used to travel with her father on the bus. And there was indeed someone interested in John, stating all the correct dates and locations, so off went an email.

A few days later I received a letter from a rather surprised Mr Prothero, who turned out to be the young son Dot had mentioned, who was happy to cooperate. The next letter produced two really excellent photos, one showing John as chauffeur to the Bishop of Llandaff, whilst the other was of Flora. The latter also tied in with Charlie Bishop's memories, as he recalled teaching Flora to drive the Ford bus that John bought for her, something the latter hadn't managed to do. I was also able to let "young Dick" (who must be in his 80s) have copies of the records I had found along the way, including his father's military service in France and Egypt.

DOUGLAS WILFRED HOUGHTON

Doug Houghton had been a mystery to me before the advent of the 1901 and 1911 census. The 1901 census had revealed that the family lived as farmers a short way west of Newbury, at Westbrook in the Lambourn Valley, together with Doug's birth at Sutton Coldfield in 1882. With this information I searched the 1911 census and found nothing. A trawl of marriages did reveal one possibility, though the bride was also given as Houghton, so I was not sure and, although I was certain he had seen war service, the papers had not survived.

The situation didn't look hopeful, but again I tried the connections on Ancestry, and there was someone interested in him, so off went

another email. A reply came back from Dianne Scoles, a relative in Canada, who filled me with details even I could never have figured out. It transpired that the family had emigrated to Canada in 1903, but Doug returned in 1905 to marry his cousin Augusta ("Gussie") Houghton, and the couple had a daughter, Stella, in England. In 1906 they returned to Canada to try homesteading in Saskatchewan, something they found rather hard, so they returned yet again in 1913.

IN CONCLUSION

The above are just three examples from the scores of personal history trails followed up during my researches, and by the time I had finished virtually everyone's story could be revealed. To me this was immensely satisfying, as part of my brief is to record the histories of such proprietors for posterity, something which I know from past experience will be a resource for those searching out family members in the future.

The methodology used is exactly the same as for most genealogical research, but several points are worth noting. Always keep notes of source materials and possible leads, even if incomplete. Examine family stories and try to prove or disprove their relevance. Each piece, like a jigsaw puzzle, helps to assemble the full picture. Try all available sources, and never give up.

The results of this highly detailed history were published as *The Newbury & District Motor Services Story* in March 2011, comprising 224 A4 pages in laminated covers, illustrated with over 300 black and white photos, route maps, fleet list and index of operators. **Published at £25, this is offered to readers of the *Berkshire Family Historian* at £15.50 post and packing. Order from Paul Lacey, 17 Sparrow Close, Woosehill, Wokingham, Berkshire RG41 3HT.**

See all of Paul Lacey's titles listed on <www.paullaceytransportbooks.co.uk>.

Surname mapping

Surname mapping used to be hard work.

John Gurnett (303)

welcomes a helpful CD for family historians.

When I began writing my family history almost 50 years ago I gathered information from my parents, but my great-grandfather, Peter, caused problems until my aunt suggested that there was another family with a similar name who lived in the same road, and possibly came from Essex. If this was true I had to identify the area. I began to search parish records, but this was an arduous task, and I ended up with hundreds of people with similar names. To simplify matters I bought a map of the parishes of Essex and fixed it to a cork board. On the edge I marked coloured sections from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. A coloured pin was then entered on each parish where a family lived.

The completed map revealed some strange oddities: clusters of families in some parishes, while large parts of the county were empty. This enabled me to narrow the search.

This was my first attempt at surname-mapping without using a computer, but no longer do historians need to spend months as I did exploring migration patterns.

The Surname Atlas is an interactive CD from Archer Software which displays maps showing the historical distribution of all 400,000 surnames and 160,000 forenames found in the 1881 census of England, Scotland and Wales.

Click the surnames or forenames, and enter into the Edit box. Press Enter to see the map displayed.

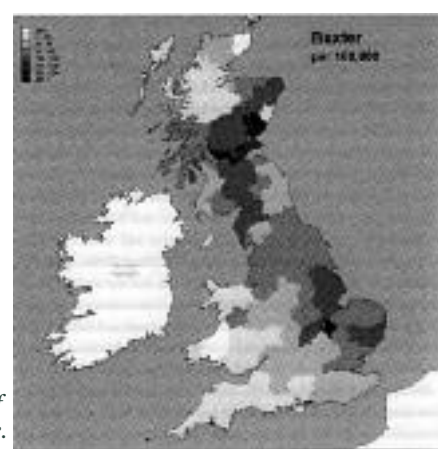
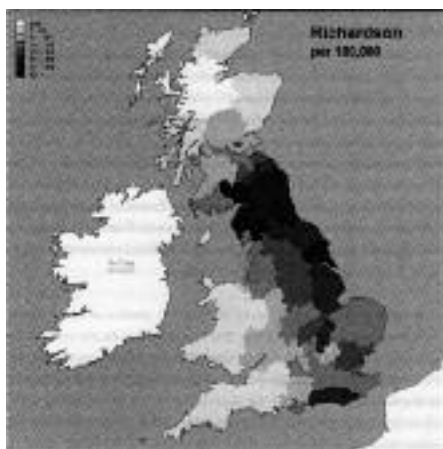
Most people had no fixed spelling of their names, and they did not regard surnames as important as we do today. They gave their full names only to a local clergyman or parish clerk, who often guessed at the spelling from how it sounded. Dialect played an important role in this, as did too much drink and the failure to look after teeth, so searching variant spellings can be important.

The CD maps appear in colour segments showing actual numbers and densities (numbers per 100,000 of the population in each county), and value labels added (the numbers in white boxes). Distribution of the names can be shown by county or by Poor Law union.

The CD allows simultaneously display of four maps at a time, which can be zoomed and panned, configured by colour, and exported for print.

The original version of the atlas was launched in 2003, and the current version in February 2011.

The Surname Atlas is available from Berkshire FHS Bookshop at £15 plus p&p.



Two examples of surnames mapped. The CD display is of course in full colour.

The recusant Hildesleys

Tony Hadland,
former chairman of Oxfordshire FHS, talks
regularly at Berkshire FHS branch meet-
ings. His knowledge of Catholicism in the
Thames Valley is unrivalled.

On the southern outskirts of Cholsey is a road called Papist Way, leading to Ferry Lane, at the end of which flows the Thames. Just across the water, on the Oxfordshire side, is Littlestoke Manor. For most of the seventeenth century, it was the principal home of the main line of the Hildesleys. They were Catholic recusants, people who refused to obey the laws that required everyone to attend Anglican services in the parish church. The Hildesleys used the ferry and Papist Way to travel to their property on the Berkshire Downs, and to visit fellow recusants, such as the Eystons of East Hendred.

Hildesley is the standardised spelling adopted by the heralds for most Berkshire gentry branches of the family. It derives from the Anglo-Saxon for battlefield. Fighting between the Saxons and Danes took place in an area that became known as Hildesley: we know it better as East and West Ilsley. There are many spellings of Hildesley, the commonest modern versions being Ilsley and Illsley; others include Hilsley, Elsley and Hyldersley.

The Hildesleys held property at Ilsley from the mid-thirteenth century, and at Beenham from the reign of Henry VII. Although from 1540 onwards the main line's principal residence was just across the Thames in Oxfordshire, the family always described themselves as being "of Ilsley" and continued to hold property there.

One of the highest profile Catholic martyrs of Henry VIII's reign was Cardinal John Fisher, Bishop of Rochester. His successor was John Hildesley of Beenham, former head of the English Dominicans. As a friar, he had few possessions and, on becoming Bishop of Rochester, he requested his martyred predecessor's staff. Thus this artefact came into the hands of the main line of the Hildesleys.

THE FAMILY BECOME RECUSANTS

After the accession of Queen Elizabeth I and the final separation of the English church from Rome, the Hildesleys remained loyal to the old faith. They did this in common with a



The much-altered front facade of Littlestoke Manor

significant proportion of the noble and gentry families of western Berkshire. Many of these dynasties had been long involved in the production, sale and export of wool. The Hildesleys were sheep-masters, and East Ilsley was the venue for a sheep fair that became one of England's biggest. There were high profile Catholics in the area. For a while, Sir Francis Englefield of Englefield, Mary Tudor's most ardent and militaristic supporter, owned the manor of East Ilsley. Sir George Browne held property at Great Shefford: his father, the first Viscount Montagu, helped negotiate the return of Catholicism in Mary's reign. At Ufton Court lived Francis Perkins, whose father was gentleman usher to Cardinal Pole. Thus there was a network of Catholic-leaning families, united not only by religious conviction but also by bonds of class, profession, geographical location, intermarriage and links with the regime of Mary Tudor.

Towards the end of Henry VIII's reign, William Hildesley married into what was to become one of the leading recusant families in all England, the Stonors of Stonor, near Henley-on-Thames. William's wife Margaret was the sister of Sir Francis Stonor. In 1584, Margaret Hildesley was arraigned by the archdeacon's court for recusancy, and from 1588 onwards was regularly fined. She died in 1607 (new style) and is commemorated by a

brass plaque in East Ilsley parish church, erected by her daughter Katherine, a nun. In the seventeenth century half a dozen or more Hildesley daughters became nuns on the Continent, especially at Liège.

William and Margaret's son Walter was also a convicted recusant. He married Dorothy Burdett of Sonning, whose brother William donated 31 manuscripts to the Bodleian Library. Most were from Reading Abbey, probably salvaged by Thomas Vachell, the recusant son of the commissioner who suppressed the abbey.

Another of William and Margaret's sons was almost certainly the William Hildesley of Beenham arrested with the Jesuit Edmund Campion at Lyford Grange near Wantage. (Campion was executed in 1581 and canonised in 1970.) It was probably also this William who was arrested for smuggling Catholic books into England from Amiens in France.

Further evidence of the Hildesleys' continuing Catholicism comes in the aftermath of the Gunpowder Plot. Honor Hildesley was cross-examined when her brother Henry Cary was arrested in Dorset for alleged complicity in the plot. She said that the Spanish ambassador gave her a jewelled crucifix when he visited her house at Ilsley. Her husband Walter sold a horse to the gunpowder plotter Ambrose Rookwood.

In East Ilsley parish church is this brass plaque with florid Latin inscription, erected in memory of Margaret Hildesley by her daughter



THE RESIDENCE ACROSS THE RIVER

Through his marriage in 1540 to Margaret Stonor, William Hildesley acquired an Oxfordshire estate principally in Crowmarsh Gifford parish. This comprised Howbery Farm, which became the family residence, plus *one messuage, two virgates of land and one cottage, with appurtenances, in the villages, fields, parishes or hamlets of Crowmarsh Gifford and Newnham Murren*. William died in 1576, leaving the estate to his widow Margaret and eldest son Walter. For 16 years Walter also held the former monastic leper hospital at Crowmarsh. There is a brass commemorating William and his children in Crowmarsh Gifford parish church.

The lease on the Crowmarsh estate expired in 1605 and the Hildesleys subsequently moved to Littlestoke Manor Farm. There had been Hildesleys at Littlestoke as early as the reign of Edward VI, when the Archbishop of Canterbury granted Francis Hildesley of Littlestoke permission to eat meat in Lent. Littlestoke, often written as two words, is a narrow strip of Checkendon parish letting onto the Thames, where the now defunct ferry from Cholsey crossed the river.

Littlestoke became a Catholic mission, served for some years by Benedictines. Dom Lawrence Lowick died there in 1633, as did Dom George Bacon 30 years later. In the Heralds' Visitations of 1665-66, Francis Hildesley of Littlestoke and Ilsley certified the pedigrees of two other Berkshire recusant families, the Perkins of Ufton and Wollascotts of Shinfield. He was also the first named gentleman in the heralds' list for East Ilsley.

FALSE DAWN AND FINAL DUSK

In 1687 James II suspended anti-Catholic legislation. Five days later, George Eyston

commenced refurbishment of his family's medieval Chapel of St Amand at their home in East Hendred. Christmas Day Mass was celebrated by seven priests, including the Jesuit Fr Francis Hildesley. He was a son of Francis Hildesley of Littlestoke and Ilsley, and his wife Mary, a Winchcombe of Bucklebury. Also present were Fr Francis' brothers William and Martin. Fr Francis Hildesley studied at Liège, gave evidence against the perjurer Titus Oates (who was responsible for the death of five Jesuits and many more people) and became Superior of the Jesuit province of St Mary, which included Oxfordshire.

Within a year of that Christmas Mass, the Dutch army trashed the chapel at Hendred, and soon anti-Catholic legislation was imposed with renewed vigour. Mary Hildesley, whose father William attended the Mass, married Robert Eyston, son of the chapel's owner. William Hildesley died in 1707 leaving no male heir. Mary's oldest son was named George Hildesley Eyston, continuing the family name a little longer. Thus ended the recusant main line of the Hildesleys of Ilsley. The staff of the martyred Cardinal Fisher thereby passed to the Eystons of Hendred House, where it remains to this day – a treasured relic, still in Catholic hands.



The initials of Francis Hildesley, either side of the date 1681, on the barn at Littlestoke

Taxes: one of life's certainties

In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes is as true now as when Benjamin Franklin uttered his famous quote. PAYE is familiar to all of us; the increase in VAT to 20 per cent two years ago and the continued argument over Inheritance Tax thresholds are also common topics for complaints about excessive taxation.

Additionally, in the last few months, arguments about the morality of those seeking to avoid paying taxes has also become a topic of contention.

Although income tax dates only from 1798, when it was introduced to pay for the Napoleonic wars, our ancestors also had to deal with a variety of taxes which affected their lives. Most people will be aware of Window Tax, which explains the bricked-up areas in many older houses, but this was just one of the, to us at any rate, bizarre taxes which were implemented by governments in the past. Powder Tax, whereby the powder used on wigs was taxed in the late eighteenth century, is again a fairly well-known tax. In 1795 a one-off tax of a guinea a year for anyone wishing to powder their wig or hair was introduced, rather than taxing the powder itself. Between 1786 and 1800 other toiletries were also subject to tax, for example tooth powder, perfume and ointments.

From 1784 to 1811 there was a tax on hats, which were, of course, *de rigueur* until comparatively recently. The export trade in hats had increased following the introduction in France of a tax on hats in 1690. Following the introduction of regulations by the British government, those who sold hats had to have an annual licence, and additionally hats themselves were taxed according to their price. The government believed that this would tax people according to their means, as the rich would own many expensive hats whilst a poor

Hats, bricks, windows, soap... was nothing safe from the taxman?

***Julie Kennedy,
secretary of the Oxfordshire Family
History Society, leads us through some
of the more bizarre targets of the
Exchequer.***

person would only own a cheap hat or none at all. In 1804 the tax was varied to cover the materials from which these goods were made. The death penalty was introduced for forgers of Hat Tax revenue stamps. Gloves were also taxed between 1785 and 1794.

Between 1709 and 1811 candles were taxed; the amount varied according to what the candle was made of. Additionally, it was against the law to make your own candles, unless you held a licence and paid the correct tax. The increased popularity of rush lighting and the rationing of the usage of candles is attributable to this tax.

In 1784 a tax on bricks was introduced to help Britain fund the wars in the American colonies. The rate was four shillings per thousand but, as with many taxes, people sought to evade this. In this case bricks were made in larger sizes, so that fewer were required. The government finally set a maximum brick size, and at its peak the tax was 5s 10d per 1,000. The effect of this tax was not only to force many of the smaller brick producers out of business, but also to increase the use of timber and weatherboarding in the construction of buildings. The tax was abolished in 1850.

We are aware that personal hygiene was not of great importance to our ancestors for a variety of reasons, one of which would have been the fact that soap was taxed. The reason for the tax was not to discourage people from being clean, but because it was an expensive commodity. The tax raised on soap was considerable, but it was repealed in 1835.

Family historians are possibly not aware that between 1695 and 1706 there was a tax on widowers and bachelors (but not widows and spinsters). Due to a shortage of money in this period to finance the various wars, measures under the Marriage Duty Tax were introduced.

As the tax on bachelors was implemented only when they were 25 or older, it may be seen as proof that this was considered an average age for a man to marry. The rate varied according to social status, although those receiving alms were exempt. The tax on widowers was applicable only if they were childless. Lists were compiled to provide the relevant information to tax the correct people, an early form of census.

By the early eighteenth century the use of wallpaper was becoming widespread and the government saw its chance to raise some useful revenue. Consequently in 1712 a tax was introduced on paper that was "painted, printed or stained to serve as hangings". By 1806 the falsification of wallpaper stamps was punishable by death.

A tax that would have affected people at all levels of society was the Playing Cards Tax. Introduced in the sixteenth century, it was not finally repealed until 1960. Makers, and later purchasers, of cards had to pay tax on each pack. The tax rates were raised in 1588, 1628 and

again in 1711. It is unclear whether the tax also sought to discourage gambling, but was most likely just a chance to raise additional funds.

Other taxes include Carriage and Wagon Tax, which was levied according to such things as the number of wheels or usage of the vehicle. There were also taxes on horses and servants. The rules as to the liability of a particular item to taxation are quite complicated, perhaps to make it easier to raise larger sums.

In conclusion, although our current taxes are less numerous, the above taxes would have had some impact on the lives of our ancestors, both those who used the various commodities and those who were involved in their production. Brick Tax, for example, led to some builders going out of business, which would also have affected their employees and others whose businesses relied on builders to put business their way. All in all, even with the problems we experience with HM Revenue and Customs, today we are taxed more fairly and the taxes levied are easier to understand.

This article is reprinted from the *Oxfordshire Family Historian* of December 2012, where it first appeared under the title *Nothing can be said to be certain, except Death and Taxes*.

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Parson's piece

*portraying some of
Berkshire's more
colourful
clergymen*

The Rev John Hoskyns (1817 – 1911) of Aston Tirrold

Penny Stokes (2916)

How often is the wish expressed that the clergy of past times had in their Register Books made a few observations on passing events; such notices would have been interesting when they touched on public and national affairs and still more (especially to the successive clergymen of the parish) if parochial and local matters had been judiciously chronicled.

Thus wrote the Rev John Hoskyns in Aston Tirrold's parish register on 18 October 1857. He had already been rector of the parish for 12 years, so was making a belated start, but from then on he noted local and national events alongside the formal record of baptisms, confirmations, marriages and burials.

A catch-up diary of sorts follows his initial declaration, noting that the old parsonage of his predecessor had been pulled down, and that a new schoolroom had opened in September 1847, employing Miss Robson from the training school in Kidlington. 1848 was the year of revolution on the continent. The king of France, Louis Philippe, had escaped to England in an open boat, while England remained "perfectly tranquil". On 1 May 1851 the Crystal Palace Great Exhibition opened in Hyde Park, a "glorious sight quite beyond description here", suggesting that Hoskyns attended it in person, even if its magnificence defeated his penmanship.

Also in this résumé he records the death of the Duke of Wellington in 1852. He was impressed by a diorama of the duke's life, and found this event even more moving than the funeral the next day, witnessed from "a good seat at Charing Cross", but which was spoilt somewhat for Hoskyns by an irreverent crowd.

He recalled his intense emotion at the losses

of the 1854 Crimea campaign. Aston Tirrold's one soldier was taken ill on arrival, and taken straight to Scutari hospital. On the train Hoskyns met a dragoon survivor of the charge of the Light Brigade. Later he visited Aldershot, and saw "bearded and bronzed campaigners".

It was perhaps the Indian mutiny of 1857 which prompted Hoskyns to start his chronicle. He believed that it came even closer to the lives of ordinary people than had the Crimean War. He wrote of "homes full of mourning", and lamented the "heart-rending cruelties inflicted on ladies and children". The word sepoy, he noted, is now "used to express everything vile and cruel".

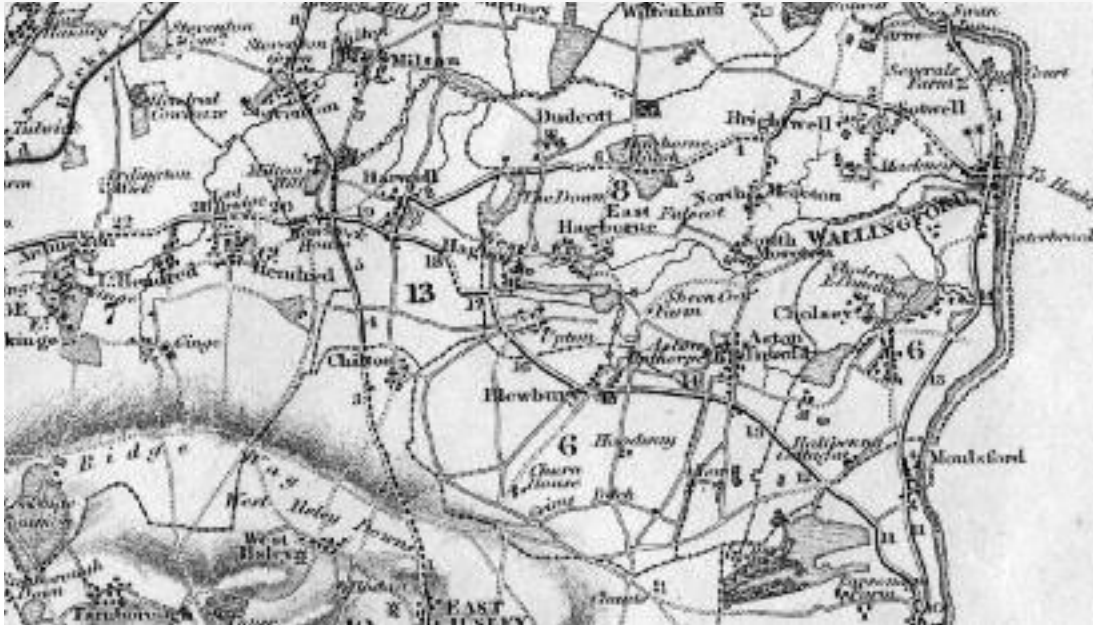
Nonetheless, within a year Hoskyns was in Paris to marvel at the sight of the great Donati comet, in a summer of intense heat.

In 1862 the Rev John Hoskyns became the Rev Sir John Leigh Hoskyns, ninth baronet, on the death of his titled father, but this went unrecorded in his register. Instead, he noted that penny readings had become fashionable and popular in the village, and that the Aston and Moreton Benefit Society had grown to 90 members. Rectory and school room refurbishments and expansions were mentioned alongside, in 1865, joyful celebrations of the Prince of Wales' wedding.

From 1863 he began to stick in press cuttings of Aston Tirrold news, presumably written by him. The title of the newspaper is not given, but was probably *Jackson's Oxford Journal*. The articles majored on church affairs: the death of the Bishop of Oxford, Samuel Wilberforce, in a fall from his horse in 1873; his replacement; a new church organ purchased; confirmations; and the need for a parochial room.

In 1878 the rector went to Italy for the winter, leaving a locum parson to look after the

Aston Tirrold is an Old Berkshire parish of 1,753 acres (710 hectares) about three miles south-east of Didcot, on the river Thames. In the mid-nineteenth century it had a population of 363, mostly in farming, two schools (one National and one British), a pub called the Chequers and a Norman parish church dedicated to St Michael.



North-east Berkshire (Aston Tirrold right of centre) mapped by Greenwood, 1829

parish from September to May. He returned to a wretched summer in which farmers were ruined. Economic depression followed.

In 1880 William Gladstone took over from Lord Beaconsfield (Disraeli) as prime minister. Hoskyns then became more concerned with local affairs: altar cloths, the organ, the church bells. Failure of the cherry harvest in 1883 was of paramount local concern, although apples and potatoes were abundant. He noted the deaths of various clergy and prominent parishioners. And, as always, the weather.

By 1887 the great agricultural depression was evident everywhere. Stock was almost unsaleable. However, changes were afoot: in 1894 Aston's first parish council was elected, and the following year the first telegram from the village was sent from the post office along the newly completed telegraph line.

Hoskyns' last entry was dated 8 April 1910. The following year he died in Bournemouth, aged 94 years, 66 of which had been spent in the service of Aston Tirrold's parishioners.

*John Hoskyns' wife **Phyllis** bore him nine children in 12 years:*

***Chandos** (1848 - 1914) distinguished himself in various colonial wars, rising to colonel in the Royal Engineers before succeeding as the tenth baronet;*

***John**, his twin, died in 1887;*

***Leigh** (1850 - 1923) succeeded to the baronetcy on the death of his brother in 1914;*

***Edwyn** (1851 - 1925) was a clergyman who became Bishop of Southwell, and in turn became twelfth baronet in 1923;*

***Peyton** (1852 - 1919) fought in two African wars, becoming a rear-admiral;*

***Emma** (1853 - 1933);*

***Benedict** (1856 - 1935) became Archdeacon of Chichester cathedral;*

***Mary** (1858 - 1949);*

***Florence** (1860 - 1909).*

The Aston Tirrold parish register can be seen at the Berkshire Record Office on microfilm.

Bookends

Compiled by **Tony Roberts, Geraldine Marsden and Ivan Dickason**

Prices quoted are for:

a) direct sales from the bookshop at the Research Centre

b) mail order purchase within UK, including p&p by second class post

c) mail order purchase from overseas, including p&p airmail.

Please note that from our online bookshop at <www.berksfhs.org.uk/shop>, you can pay by credit card, and you may be able to make savings on p&p if you are buying more than one item.

LOCAL INTEREST

Reading: the 1950s

Stuart Hylton (History Press, 2013), 233 mm x 156 mm, perfect bound, 127pp.

Shop £12.99, UK £15.39, airmail £21.54

Stuart Hylton is a freelance author who has written several books on Reading, as well as three books on post-1945 social history. Here, these two topics with which he is familiar are combined to give an insight into the town of Reading, its changes and development and its people during a period of transition from wartime austerity to our modern consumer society. This book was first published in 1997, but is now issued as a new 2013 edition.

In many ways the 1950s form a watershed in modern social history. At the beginning of the decade rationing and shortages continue from the 1940s, and there is a general air of drabness and end-of-empire decline. The decade ends with a feeling of optimism for the future, with new cars, foreign holidays, and labour-saving appliances. The physical face of the town reflects these changes too, with new house and road building, and an increasing pace of redevelopment.

The book is divided into 10 chapters, one for each year of the decade, set out in chronological order. It draws heavily on the *Berkshire Chronicle* newspaper for reports on various facets of life during the period, and for contemporary advertising illustrations. The book also has many photographs of the town, its people and their activities of the time.

Each chapter contains descriptions of the local activities, events (tragic, comic or just strange) and of the newsworthy people of that year. The use of contemporary reportage means that the general voice of the book is

very much that of the town's local paper rather than that of the author – although the latter does throw in the occasional wry observation of his own. Inevitably some topics occur in several (in some cases all) chapters: the outspoken and colourful MP Ian Mikardo's latest words; the perennial rollercoaster of Reading FC's fortunes; council concerns on road traffic and building; the latest fashion advice from the women's page; and the more notable reports on petty crime and motoring offences. (I particularly liked a motorist's rebuttal of the charge of drunk-driving on the grounds he was too drunk to get into his car, let alone drive it.)

This book is very much the story of an ordinary town and its ordinary population during a time of rapid change. But in 2013, living in and around one of the nation's most prosperous and vibrant communities, we can see how far off the mark was Dr Mendelsohn's comment in 1951: *There would be no protection against an atomic bomb dropped on Reading, except that such a bomb was expensive and Reading might not be considered a sufficiently worthwhile target.*

For past and present Redingensians and local Reading historians this book is an entertaining and interesting read.

Tony Roberts

Other titles about Reading by this author stocked by the Berkshire Family History Society Bookshop are:

Reporting the Blitz: news from the home front communities;

Reading, then and now, in colour.

Reading Central Library holds several more books about Reading by Stuart Hylton.

Dreams and delusions: a history of Didcot 1945 - 1974

Brian Lingham (2012) paperback A5
Shop £15.00, UK £18.60, airmail £26.40

This is a very readable final volume in a series of four by Brian Lingham on the history of Didcot. It takes us from 1945 up to the abolition of the Wallingford Rural District Council in 1974. This was a time of change, and the book includes discussion of the closure of the two military depots, the subsequent building of Didcot Power Station, and the effects of these on housing, employment and life in general. This is set against a background of the desire of the parish council to achieve urban status and the delusion that this could ever be achieved.

The book has 275 pages, sourced from the *Didcot Advertiser*, and the minutes of both the Wallingford Rural District Council and the Didcot Parish Council. It is illustrated throughout in black and white. It will be of interest not only to those who live or have lived in Didcot, but also those interested merely in life in a small town after the war. This reviewer, with no known links to Didcot, found it a fascinating book.

Brian Lingham is a founder member of the Didcot and District Archaeological and Historical Society, and has written several other books on Didcot.

Geraldine Marsden

Other titles about Didcot by this author stocked by the Berkshire Family History Society Bookshop are:
The long years of obscurity from earliest times to 1841;
The railway comes to Didcot, 1839–1918;
A poor struggling little town, 1918–1945.
Didcot Library holds several more books about Didcot by Brian Lingham.

Coffers, clysters, comfrey and coifs: the lives of our seventeenth-century ancestors

Janet Few (Family History Partnership) 136 pp
Shop £12.95, UK £15.55, airmail £20.50

In this book the author invites the reader to find out more about the way of life of our seventeenth-century ancestors. Most of the literature about people's lives in the seventeenth century is about persons of substance and wealth, whereas this author tells us about ordinary citizens: the very people that we have all found in our family histories. The 10 chapters deal with such diverse matters as house and home, cleaning and feeding the family, cooking, clothing, gardens, health, herbs, punishment, witchcraft, childhood and leisure.

In each chapter several aspects of seventeenth-century life are explored and explained. What is the best position for the home? What is it built of? What fuel was used for cooking and heating? What about water or, more importantly, beer? How was food prepared and cooked? Indeed, what sort of food was available to our seventeenth-century ancestors? What sort of clothes did they wear? Did they have shoes? What were the raw materials from which clothes were made?

Did our seventeenth-century ancestors have gardens? Yes, the cottage garden was important for the supply of fresh vegetables. Herbs were widely used to add interest and flavour to food. How did our seventeenth-century ancestors deal with sickness and accident? Were there medical practitioners? What were the causes of death and ill health? How were diagnoses made? What, if any, were the available treatments? The seventeenth-century housewife ensured the supply of herbs for use in health cures. How were these prepared and administered? Did they work?

Our seventeenth-century ancestors were not paragons of virtue; there were numerous crimes, both civil and against the church. Many crimes attracted the death penalty. How were such crimes dealt with? What were the penalties or punishments? What was the role of the church in these matters? How was the law enforced? Were there courts?

Even today we have superstitions: we still touch wood and refuse to walk under ladders. For our seventeenth-century ancestors, witchcraft, superstitions and spells were rife. How could one counteract witchcraft? What if one was persecuted by a witch? The law had something to say about witches and witchcraft. Were witches punished? What were the punishments?

Childbirth was a critical moment for seventeenth-century women. Was there help for prospective mothers? Were there midwives? What was a dry nurse? As children grew older, did they have toys? What sort of toys could be made using basic woodworking skills? Schooling was generally the preserve of boys. What were they taught? What was the level of literacy?

Our seventeenth-century ancestors, including their children, had little opportunity for leisure pursuits. Sunday was the only day in which labourers were free from work. What leisure activities were available to them? Ball

games? Indoor games? The weekly market day gave some relief from the daily routine. Attendance at church was compulsory. What relief from daily work did this produce? For adults and children breaks in the monotony of life would have been welcome.

The author provides, scattered amongst the text, examples of hints and tips that may have been accessible to the seventeenth-century man or woman. For example, when to pot butter; how to make fritters of sheep's feet; how to make strong mead; how to dye wool blue; how to make snail water for weak children and old people; a remedy for shingles; how to make an ointment; a test for a barrenness; Twelfth Night celebrations and more.

Further reading is given at the end of each chapter.

This is a very interesting book. All family historians will enjoy reading it – and will squirm in places – whether or not they have identified their seventeenth-century ancestors.

Ivan Dickason

Dr Janet Few has carried out family history research for many years and lectures regularly on local, social and family history. She taught community history at the Open University, and currently she works as a freelance researcher. She spends part of her time as her alter ego, Mistress Agnes, living in the seventeenth century at Torrington, 1646.

Your pictures, your stories, your queries

keep sending them in to <editor@berksfhs.org.uk>

If you have an interesting photo or perhaps one with a mystery attached to it, do please send it in to the Historian with the story behind it. If your story or caption invites readers to respond, it will be assumed that you are happy to have your contact details published.

from **Kate Tame**
01329 310233

I am trying to find relatives of a Sgt Bernard Thomas Abbott, who was killed on the 4 February 1941 while serving with the Royal Air Force. His parents at the time of his death were living in Barkham. Sgt Abbott is buried in Sonning St Andrew's churchyard. The reason for my request for relatives to make contact is that a memorial plaque is going to be placed on the war memorial near the crash site near Middlewich in Cheshire.

Ken Godfrey (3486) revives his long-standing quest to identify the subjects of four Victorian photographs.



My grandmother (Laura Godfrey, née McLachlin), had these photographs in a box but, as usual for us poor genealogists, totally unidentified. They might, however, be members of her husband's family, ie, my grandfather Thomas Godfrey (born West Challow, Berkshire, 30 November 1860, died Ontario, Canada in 1953), the son of William Godfrey (1831-99) and Mary Herman (c1827-68) of East Hanney. William's second wife was Sarah Ashfield née Bunce (bc1841), married on 28 June 1874. Both of them are listed in the 1871 census at the Black Horse pub in East Hanney, he as the publican. Thomas came to Canada about 1888 (perhaps earlier), but of course the photos could very well have been mailed to him after he left.

If any reader has any idea as to who these folks are, I would be most pleased to find out after all these years. Please reply to **Ken Godfrey <kegod@attglobal.net>**, or by post to **94 Wishing Well Drive, Scarborough, Ontario, Canada, M1T 1J4**.

The second photo above appeared in the Berkshire Family Historian of December 1999, together with this commentary from Jean Debney:

No wedding ring can be seen on her left hand, so it is not clear if the couple, who appear to be in their late 40s or early 50s, are married or just brother and sister. Her plain woollen dress consists of a matching close-fitted bodice and separate pleated skirt. The boned and lined bodice is trimmed with toning satin round the neck, in two wide strips either side of the row of shiny buttons and cuffs on her long straight sleeves. The only washable part of the outfit is a fashionable white piecrust frill tacked inside her neck-band. She appears to have a small brooch at her throat.

His comfortable, but unfashionably buttoned up, three-piece suit has a low-waisted morning-coat with stitched edges, a single breast pocket and close-fitting cuffs. The front edge of the skirt curves back so that the

bottom button cannot be fastened. The *Gentleman's Magazine* had said in 1886 that it was fashionable to leave coats unbuttoned or fastened with a single button only, but this had obviously not reached all levels of Berkshire society. His wide-spotted cravat is tied under a turn-down white collar.

This is a well-arranged example of the classic Victorian photographers' pose of a couple apparently disturbed while studying a book together. The out-of-focus lower background seems to be some sort of wall and she is seated in an elaborately carved wide wooden chair.

The photographer Walton Adams had an "Art and Science Studio" at 29 Blagrove Street, Reading, from 1886 until he retired in 1922, after which it continued to operate under the name Walton Adams.

Source: *A Century of Photography in Reading*, by Mary Southerton (1986), unpublished typescript in Berkshire FHS Library.

Gleanings

from exchange magazines

compiled by Tony Wright <gleanings@berksfhs.org.uk>

Copies of these articles (paper or electronic) can be supplied on request. For paper send your request with an SAE (min 11 x 22 cm) and two loose stamps to Exchange Magazines, Berkshire FHS, Yeomanry House, 131 Castle Hill, Reading RG1 7TJ. For electronic copies apply to <gleanings@berksfhs.org.uk>, supplying both the issue date of the Historian and full details of the title and source of the Gleaning. Copyright law requires that photocopies of articles in journals may only be made for the purpose of private study or non-commercial research. Only one article from any one issue can be supplied. All digital copies must be printed off and deleted.

AG LABS

Focus on agricultural labourers: more interesting gleanings from Henry Strickland's A General View of the Agriculture of the East Riding of Yorkshire

Covering working conditions, drinking water, livestock, wages, and a landowner's view of ag labs

Doncaster Ancestor, Doncaster & District FHS, vol 23, Spring 2013, p12-15

Discover more information about your rural ancestors

Why is Frickley church 1.5 miles from the nearest village? The author delves into the history of the village and the types of records he found which helped in his quest.

Doncaster Ancestor, Doncaster & District FHS, vol 23, Spring 2013, p10-12

Life of a Suffolk ag lab

Details the wide range of jobs which the term "ag lab" covered

Roots & Branches, Felixstowe FHS, vol 28, March 2013, p15-20

BACKGROUND

Did you know?

Why you may find "buried in wool" in parish registers, and what it meant

The Flowing Stream, Sheffield & District FHS, vol 34, Spring 2013, p11-12

English probate records (part 1)

Includes a useful diagram illustrating the hierarchy of the ecclesiastical courts. This article

leans towards history and what documents you might find.

East Surrey FHS, vol 35, December 2012, p32-37

Parish registers

The history of parish registers from their inception in 1538 to 1850, why they were kept, how they should be kept, reasons for content and format changes

Bedfordshire FHS, vol 18, December 2012, p33-38

Spotlight on parish chests: the work of the parish constables

Using examples from the Mobberly Research Centre, what parish constables did and what records you might find.

Cheshire Ancestor, FHS of Cheshire, vol 43, December 2012, p27-29

My Friday project: your society needs you

Why transcribing parish registers can be so fascinating

North West Kent FHS, vol 12, December 2012, p533-34

COMPUTERS AND INTERNET

Kindle for genealogists and family history researchers

Amazon lists over 2,000 ebooks relating to genealogy. A free app can turn your smartphone, tablet or notebook into an ebook reader. You can also put your own information on your Kindle.

Bedfordshire FHS, vol 19, March 2013, p15-20

Net that serf: the computer section

Includes a section on the need to review any data you have on obsolescent (or worse, obsolete) formats such as floppy disks, tapes and the transfer of the data to current formats. Do you still have WordStar files? Will your new version of Microsoft Word read old word-processed files? *Cheshire Ancestor, FHS of Cheshire, vol 43, December 2012, p58-64*

HOUNSLOW

A lost generation at Hounslow gunpowder mills

Explosions, and resulting deaths, were frequent occurrences at gunpowder mills. *West Middlesex FHS, vol 30, December 2012, p8-12*

Hounslow Powder Mills: explosions and accidents

A list of the explosions at Hounslow Mills from 1757 to 1926
West Middlesex FHS, vol 31, March 2013, p14-19

The development of Hounslow town

From 1215 to 1990
West Middlesex FHS, vol 31, March 2013, p6-11

MARRIAGE

Irregular solemnization of marriages

Based on a letter to the *Ecclesiastical* [sic] *Gazette* of April 1844 this article outlines the problems of clandestine marriages, and expounds the regulations then in force regarding reading of banns and marriage ceremonies.
Origins, Buckinghamshire FHS, vol 37, March 2013, p29-30

Legitimate ancestors: are you sure?

A clandestine marriage was one without banns or licence, or which took place in neither party's parish. Hardwicke's 1754 Marriage Act was an attempt to stamp out such marriages.
Origins, Buckinghamshire FHS, vol 37, March 2013, p26-28

Marriages of men who were stationed at the Royal Army Medical Corps Record Office in Woking during the First World War

Names of those marrying between 1917 and 1919
Root & Branch, West Surrey FHS, vol 39, December 2012, p118-120

Tracing marriages: legal requirements and actual practice in early eighteenth-century England and Wales

Historians and family historians disagree widely on what percentage of couples married. The author proposes an explanation for the discrepancy.
Shropshire FHS, vol 33, December 2012, p168-171

RESEARCH

Don't upset Father! Advice on seeking access to Catholic records in England

What records you may find in Catholic diocesan archives, and what may prevent you from viewing them
South Australian Genealogist, vol 39, November 2012, p12-15

Irish family history research: why you should never give up

Following advice received at a workshop, the author, having tried for many years to trace his Irish ancestors in Ireland, turns to Manchester records.
Manchester Genealogist, vol 49, March 2013, p85-88

Missing First World War service records

Is the WW1 service record you are searching for one of the destroyed ones? Some alternative sources that may help piece together your ancestor's military career.
Doncaster Ancestor, Doncaster & District FHS, vol 22, Winter 2012, p28-29

Members' interests

directory maintained by Bob Plumridge
<memsec@berksfhs.org.uk>

You may update your surname interests at any time via
<www.berksfhs.org.uk/cms/Members-Surname-Interests>.

When contacting a member by post please always enclose an sae.

Members submitting their interests

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7456 Mrs S Whitworth, 1 Petrie Grove, Thornbury, Bradford BD3 8NH
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7547 C Naborowski, 2335 Kirkwood Lane, Plymouth, MN 55441, USA
cnaborowski@yahoo.com

7453	ADBY	Reading	BRK	1700-1950s
7453	ADBY	Wantage	BRK	1700-1950s
7453	ALEXANDER	Any	WLS	1700s
7453	ATKINS	Chieveley	BRK	1700-1950s
7453	ATKINS	Compton	BRK	1700-1950s
7453	ATWELL	Any	BRK	1700s
7497	BARRET(T)	Besselsleigh	BRK	All
7497	BARRET(T)	Chieveley	BRK	All
7530	BARRETT	Reading	BRK	All
7493	BIDDLE	Any	BRK	All
7539	BLACKWELL	Newbury	BRK	1700-1900
6732	BROAD	Milton	BRK	1700-1920
7547	CHURCH	Stoke Talmadge	BRK	1720-1870
7497	CLARK(E)	Uffington	BRK	All
7493	COLLINS	Any	BKM	All
7539	COLLINS	Greenham	BRK	1700-1900
7539	COLLINS	Newbury	BRK	1700-1900
7539	COLLINS	Thatcham	BRK	1700-1900
7453	COOPER	Bradfield	BRK	1800-1950s
7545	CROLE	Bermondsey	SRY	1810-1820
7545	CROLE	Stepney	MDX	1820-1860
7453	CROOK	Blewbury	BRK	1700-1950s
7453	CROOK	Wantage	BRK	1700-1950s

7516	FORD	Woodley	BRK	1750-1900
7493	GILBERT	Any	LND	All
7493	GILBERT	Any	BRK	All
7453	GILL	Derby	DBY	1800-1950s
7453	GREENAWAY	Wallingford	OXF	1700-1950s
7545	GREENER	Any	BRK	1800-1850
7545	GREGORY	Bray	BRK	1670+
7545	GREGORY	Henley	OXF	1830+
7545	GREGORY	Shottesbrook	BRK	1720-1825
7545	GREGORY	Waltham St Lawrence	BRK	1740-1820
7545	GREGORY	White Waltham	BRK	1670+
7453	HARRIS	Any	OXF	1800-1950s
7493	HATT	Any	BRK	All
7493	HATT	Any	BKM	All
7516	HISSEY	Nettlebed	BRK	1750-1900
7539	HOBBS	East Garston	BRK	1700-1900
7547	HOBBS	Stanford Dingley	BRK	1814-1900
7497	HOLDER	Chieveley	BRK	All
7497	HOLDER	Winterbourne	BRK	All
7456	LARNER	Wokingham	BRK	1750-1900
7539	LIDDIARD	Kintbury	BRK	1700-1900
7539	LIDDIARD	Newbury	BRK	1700-1900
7530	LOADER	Any	BRK	All
7530	LOADER	Kingston	OXF	All
7453	LOVERIDGE	Any	BDF	1800-1960s
7453	MAJOR	Aldworth	BRK	1700s
7530	MARSH	Bath	SOM	All
7530	MARSH	Reading	BRK	All
7545	MOORE Mary	Eckington	WOR	1800-1825
7545	MOORE Mary	St George the Martyr	SRY	pre 1815
7530	MYLAND	Any	Any	All
7493	OXLADE	Any	BKM	All
7493	OXLADE	Any	OXF	All
7453	PARKER	Any	BDF	1800-1960s
7547	PARSONS	Hampstead Norreys	BRK	1660-1900
7547	PARSONS	Moulsford	BRK	1660-1900
7516	PATEY	Pangbourne	BRK	1750-1900
7516	PATEY	Reading	BRK	1750-1900
7516	PATEY	Wokingham	BRK	1750-1900
7493	PEARCE	Any	BKM	All
7493	PIERCE	Any	BKM	All
7531	PITT Joseph	Any	BRK	1755 on
7531	PITT Joseph	Any	BRK	pre 1720
7531	PITT Joseph	Brentford	MDX	pre 1815
7531	PITT William	Any	BRK	1720-1790
7530	ROSE	Any	BRK	All
7530	ROSE	Basingstoke	HAM	All
7453	SNELL	Bucklebury	BRK	1700-1950s
7497	STALLARD	Chieveley	BRK	All
7497	STALLARD	Uffington	BRK	All
7497	STALLARD	Winterbourne	BRK	All
7453	TANNER	Reading	BRK	1790-1950s
7453	WA(L)TERS	Moulsford	BRK	1783-1970s
7453	WA(L)TERS	Reading	BRK	1783-1970s
7493	WALLINGTON	Any	BKM	All
7493	WALLINGTON	Any	OXF	All
7453	WELCH	Any	BRK	1700-1950s
7516	WOODMAN	Beaconsfield	BKM	1750-1900

Berkshire FHS Research Centre

where

YEOMANRY HOUSE, 131 CASTLE HILL, READING, BERKS RG1 7TJ
0118 950 9553 <researchcentre@berksfhs.org.uk>

- 15 minutes' walk from the centre of Reading
- next door to the Berkshire Record Office (BRO)
- in the same building as the Reading Register Office
- free car parking right outside

when

Tuesdays*: 10.00 to 16.00 and 19.00 to 21.30

Wednesdays and Thursdays: 10.00 to 16.00

2nd Sunday each month: 11.00 to 16.00 (excluding bank holiday weekends)

The Research Centre opens early, ie from 18.00 to 21.30, in conjunction with the Open Evenings (from 18.00 to 20.00) hosted and run by society volunteers at the Berkshire Record Office.

**On most Tuesday evenings, knowledgeable helpers are available to answer your computing linked queries.*

what

Ground floor: reception area, **seven PCs** with internet access (see opposite page), **bookshop**, refreshment facilities and cloakrooms

First floor: **library** (see opposite page), fiche readers, magazine archive

Introductory tours of the centre are available – see <www.berksfhs.org.uk> for details.

who

Society volunteers will explain anything you need to know about the centre's resources, but you do your own research at the centre. If you wish, you can print pages or photocopy them for a nominal additional charge.

how

Admission to the centre is free for society members.

Non-members pay a £2 temporary membership fee per visit (offset against the membership fee should the visitor join the society at that visit).

Volunteer helpers are on hand to give advice and guidance.

Can't get to the Research Centre?

The society offers a postal/online search service of Berkshire names, based on:

Berkshire censuses and indexes for 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881

Berkshire Burials

Berkshire Marriages

Berkshire Miscellaneous Index

Berkshire Strays Index.

All you need is a surname (or a number of surnames) to access information, the extent of which will vary with the individual database. Your search of the master index will show you the total of entries of that surname in each individual database. You can then request the full details available. You can ask for a search either online or by post. The charges are:

- **£2 per surname** to search the master index. You will be advised of how many entries there are for that surname in each database. Please note that this search will not give you information from the indexed records.



Computer suite

Findmypast
Ancestry worldwide, with family trees
Origins
British Newspaper Archive

Provided that a PC is available, these subscriptions can be used for a nominal charge of £1 per hour or part hour.

All PCs are internet-linked, so that other family history websites can be searched or consulted at any time.

CDs: Four PCs contain pre-loaded CD data on Berkshire and many other English counties including:

- Berkshire Baptisms
- Berkshire Burials
- Berkshire Marriages
- Berkshire trade directories
- National Burial Index 3rd ed

Berkshire Name Search is a master index of Berkshire names from databases including censuses, marriage and burial indexes, strays and miscellaneous datasets.

Library

The library contains over 7,000 items, about 20 per cent of which are Berkshire-related; the rest cover UK, Irish and international material.

The library catalogue can be searched at the centre and online at
<www.berksfhs.org.uk/librarycatalogue>.

CDs of Berkshire data including MIs, overseers' papers, militia lists, trade directories

Local history and genealogy books for Berkshire and for 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 history

Published family histories/pedigrees and a large number of donated hand-written documents

Microfiche records including IGI (International Genealogical Index) 1988 for Great Britain, parish registers, census index and MI data for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire, Surrey and other counties

Berkshire Family Historian: 36 volumes from 1975 to the present day

Exchange magazine archive: back copies of journals of around 50 other family history societies

→ • **£2 per surname** per database. With this search you will receive full details for up to a maximum of 25 entries. Should there be more than 25 entries, we will let you know the extra cost.

• **£5 per surname** to search all databases currently available. You will receive full details for up to a maximum of 25 entries per database. Again, we will let you know the extra cost if there are more than 25 entries.

Note that for online applications a 50p transaction fee will be added to the total as a contribution to the fees that the bank charges the society for the online payment service. You can contact <berksnamesearch@berksfhs.org.uk> if you have any queries or if you would like an estimate of likely cost for the searches that you need.

You can also apply by post. Postal search charges are the same as those for online searches excluding the 50p transaction fee. For a postal search you must enclose an A4 self-addressed envelope (large) with stamps (or IRC) to cover return postal costs. An alternative is to supply an email address so that results can be sent to you by email. If you don't have an email address please supply a UK phone number. Please send your request for a postal search to **Berkshire Name Search** at the address above.

Dates for your diary * denotes Berkshire FHS participation

10.00-16.30 Sat 1 June	Museum of English Rural Life village fete*	MERL, Redlands Road Reading RG1 5EX	< www.reading.ac.uk/merl >
14.00-15.00 Mon 10 June	Introductory tour of Berkshire Record Office	BRO, Coley Avenue Reading RG1 6AF	book places on 0118 901 5132
10.00-15.30 Sat 15 June	Wiltshire FHS Southern Family History Day	Wilton Community Centre, Wilton SP2 0DG	< www.wiltshirefhs.co.uk >
9.30-18.30 Sat 6 Jul	LDS Open Day*	The Meadway, Tilehurst RG30 4PE	< www.rfhc.org.uk >
10.00-16.00 27 July	Buckinghamshire Family History Society Open Day*	Grange School Wendover Way Aylesbury HP21 7NH	< www.bucksfhs.org.uk >
21 Aug	Ascot Retirement Fair*	Ascot Racecourse SL5 7JX	< www.ascotretirementfair.com >
12 - 15 Sept	Heritage Open Days	numerous Berkshire locations	< www.heritageopendays.org.uk >

The Berkshire FHS bookshop is seeking a volunteer

with bookkeeping experience to deal with routine recording of cash and online sales receipts, and to keep track of invoices. The information is recorded in spreadsheets, from which quarterly reports are produced. Training will be given. The time requirement is an hour or so per week. The volunteer needs to be able to come to the Research Centre three or four times a year for reporting and consultation but, other than that, the work may be carried out at home.

If you are interested in helping your society please contact Ivan Dickason on 0118 897 6785 or <ivan@dickason.co.uk>.

The editor welcomes contributions to the *Berkshire Family Historian*

Articles may be of any length up to 1,200 words, but – please – no more. In the interests of fairness this limit is strictly applied to one and all. Shorter articles are equally welcome; pictures with questions or stories, amusing extracts from the registers and brief anecdotes are important to the overall balance of the magazine. Articles will, of course, be subject to the editing process, which may involve changes (usually minor) at the editor's discretion.

Subjects will usually have direct relevance to Berkshire, or concern genealogical methodology. If you're considering researching a new subject with a view to publication in the magazine it's wise to let the editor know, just in case someone else has had the same idea.

Pictures enhance the text, but please be aware that:

- a) they must be cleared for publication, either by being out of copyright (which applies equally to internet pictures) or by obtaining the permission of the copyright holder.
- b) In order to print well, digital picture files should ideally be 300 ppi (pixels per inch); therefore, an image to be printed 3in x 4in in the magazine would need to be 900 x 1200 pixels.
- e) Please send your pictures as separate JPEG files, not as images pasted into Word files, because these cannot be extracted without degradation. Alternatively you can send the editor (address inside front cover) photos and paper illustrations, which will be returned to you after they have been scanned.

The deadlines are:

7 October for the December issue
7 January for March

7 April for June
7 July for September.

No fees are paid to any contributors, alas, but all articles published are greatly appreciated by thousands of readers. The *Historian* is read by at least 2,000 – not only the society's members, but also members of other FHSs under the exchange scheme, and the users of several public libraries and institutions. Issues of the journal are posted on the society's website (in the members' area) soon after publication.