

# Berkshire Family Historian

*the quarterly journal of the Berkshire Family History Society*

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**September 2013**

*vol 37*

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### Family names appearing in this issue:

*excluding living people, authors of sources and members' interests*

Beaconseal 15	Fidler 15	Mount 7	Thirkell 16
Benyon 7	Flownder 24	Osgood 25	Turner 24
Blay 19	Gallagher 12	Pears 25	Waldron 12
Bosley 22	Gold 25	Poynter 16	Wheble 28
Boulger 32	Grimshaw 22	Pugin 28	Wilberforce 26
Bowland 28	Humfrey 21+	Ringrose 28	
Burgess 21	Johnson 24+	Saxby 17, 18	
Cave 16	Lane 14+	Shergold 24	
Chambers 17, 18	Longuet 28	Simonds 32	
Church 22	Lousley 21+	Smart 28	
Collins 25	Merry 14	Smith 32	
Cowslake 28	Morris 12	Spoor 14	

# Meet your new Exec

The society's Executive Committee meets every two months, and would normally include the chairman, vice-chairman, secretary and treasurer. However the posts of chairman and vice-chairman are currently vacant. Meetings will be chaired by other committee members in rotation.



Richard Ashberry

## **RICHARD ASHBERRY (5694)**

Richard joined the Exec as treasurer last year, and has been re-elected to that office for 2013-14. A society member since 2004-05, he is also a member of the Projects committee, the 2014 Conference working group, the Windsor Branch committee, and is a Research Centre assistant. He also burns the society CDs and prepare them for sale.

## **SANDRA BARKWITH (3550)**

Sandra joined the Exec last year as the representative of Bracknell and Wokingham Branch. She has been a member of the society since 1998, has served on the Bracknell and Wokingham Branch committee, and was formerly the Exec's minutes secretary.

## **VANESSA CHAPPELL (6075)**

Vanessa has chaired the Vale of the White Horse Branch, and been an Exec member, since May 2011, and has been a society member since 2006.



Vanessa Chappell



Ken Houghton

## **KEN HOUGHTON (6213)**

Ken joined the society in 2006, and in 2008 was elected to the Windsor Branch committee, within which he has been responsible for setting up the projector, laptop and screen, displaying the noticeboard and looking after the branch publicity. He joins the Exec for the first time this year.

## **JUDITH MITCHELL (4279)**

Judith became a committee member of Windsor Branch in 2011, having previously been involved in a couple of projects. A society member since 1989, she is on the Research Centre committee, and manages the Strays Index.



Judith Mitchell



Tony Roberts

## **TONY ROBERTS (7118)**

Tony joined the Exec for the first time in 2012, having been a Research Centre assistant. He has been a member since 2010, and has been elected secretary for the year 2013-14. He is also on the board of Berkshire Family History Enterprises Ltd as company secretary.

## **CATHERINE SAMPSON (6979)**

Catherine has been projects co-ordinator and an Exec trustee since October 2011, and chairs the Projects and Publications sub-committee. She joined the society in 2009-10, and was initially involved in writing parish histories for CDs. She is currently organising the 2014 *Conflict and change* conference.

## **GILLIAN STEVENS (3959)**

Gillian returns to the Exec this year, having stood down for a year in line with the requirements of the society's constitution. She has taken on the task of events management, and will continue to be closely involved with the Computer Branch and the website.

## **PENNY STOKES (2961)**

Penny has been a member since 1994, becoming editor of the *Berkshire Family Historian* in 2006. She contributes to the society's website, and has this year joined the Newbury Branch committee. She joined the Exec in 2011.



Derek Trinder

#### **DEREK TRINDER (4369)**

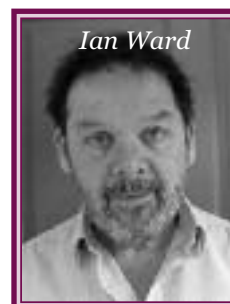
Derek was the society's chairman from 2009 until 2013. He relinquished the chair this year, having stayed for a year longer than he had intended for lack of a successor. A trustee for 10 years, he has agreed to continue to represent the society in local media and FH-related organisations.

#### **GRAHAM VOCKINS (6464)**

Graham has joined the Exec this year as representative of Reading Branch.

#### **IAN WARD (6907)**

Ian represents Newbury Branch on the Exec. He has been a member since 2009-10.



Ian Ward

#### **TONY WRIGHT (6776)**

Tony has represented the Computer Branch on the Exec since 2012. He is a key figure on the technical side of producing the society's CD publications, as well as giving advice at the Tuesday evening RC sessions and at library surgeries. He has been a member since 2009-10.

**CHAD HANNA** and **JEAN HERBERT** are not Exec members, but they attend most meetings in their respective capacities of vice-president and Research Centre manager.

## **Cliff Debney (1930 - 2013)**

*In mid-July the society was saddened to learn of the sudden death of Cliff Debney. Chad Hanna and Ivan Dickason both worked closely with Cliff and Jean Debney in the early days of the society, and remember him here.*

Cliff and Jean's membership number of 205 signifies very early membership of the society, and his importance in its growth and development can scarcely be overestimated. As chairman, Research Centre manager (both at Prospect School and Yeomanry House) and member of the Executive Committee, Cliff contributed enormously to the society's success.

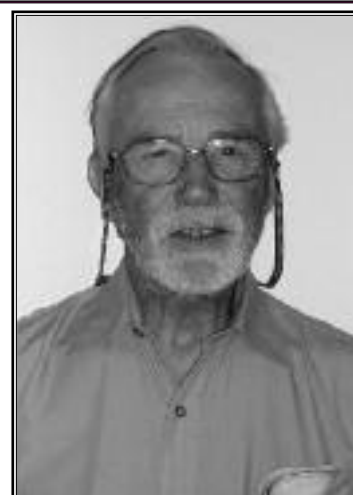
In the 1980s he worked with Alf Ison and Chad Hanna on a new constitution to create the society's branches, and with John Gurnett he steered through the merger with Windsor, Eton and Slough FHS. Before the Research Centre or branches existed the society's library of nearly 3,000 items was stored at Cliff and Jean's house (at some inconvenience), and brought to society meetings in Palmer Park Church Hall every month.

Cliff also chaired the FFHS from 1999 and 2001. He also served on the FFHS publications sub-committee, and he was a keen supporter of the organisation even when not in office.

Project Purley owes much to Cliff, who with Jean played a large role in setting it up. He was also active in the Berkshire Local History Association for 30 years, serving as chairman and vice-president. Perhaps to escape from history of one sort or another, Cliff sang with the Reading Male Voice Choir. In his RAF days he was a keen gymnast. Later he joined Reynolds, a mechanical engineering company, as a salesman.

The Berkshire Family History Society has benefited enormously from Cliff's enthusiasm, loyalty and talent for engaging others in its service. In this sense he was a keen opportunist: when serving refreshments at a Reading Branch committee meeting, Chad Hanna ventured an opinion, and was consequently asked to succeed him as branch chairman. His vigour, humour and commonsense will be much missed.

Cliff is survived by his wife, Jean, and their two sons, Andrew and Peter.



# 38th AGM of the society

**The society's annual general meeting, hosted by the Vale of White Horse Branch at Abingdon on 17 June 2013, was attended by 52 people.**

**The chairman's and treasurer's reports were distributed, and questions taken, and this was followed by the election of trustees for the coming year. After the official business and a short break, Liz Woolley spoke to the assembled company on *Children and war*.**

**The full draft minutes and reports are posted on <[www.berksfhs.org.uk](http://www.berksfhs.org.uk)>. The accounts will be posted on <[www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk)> in due course.**

## Chairman's report (summary)

The chairman explained that his written report was long by intention. After contacts with members and responses to recent branch questionnaires, he had sought to provide more information for members on society aims, key tasks and operating methods.

He reminded the meeting briefly of comments made last year on the changing world of family history research and of the society's need to find new volunteers to come forward to play a part in its ongoing development. The society must adapt successfully to the challenges of change.

He next turned to projects and publications, commenting that society data online with Findmypast had made little impact on CD sales via Enterprises. After thanking Ivan Dickason and his team, he went on to outline the new CD publications introduced during the year and those that were expected in the year ahead. He emphasised the society's insistence on quality standards and checking procedures, contrasting this with less exacting data measures from some online publishers, certain family history societies and some members of the public. He thanked Catherine Sampson for her energetic leadership of the projects programme, Tony Wright for data-handling and CD building, Brian Wilcock for overseeing MIs work and David Wright for leading the Berkshire Burials project. He placed on record the society's appreciation of the work of all project volunteers at home and abroad.

He then advised the meeting of news just received from Reading Borough Council that the society had received an interim extension of the lease on Yeomanry House in all but name. He explained that the society had never enjoyed security of tenure under any lease on its premises, and that the council's undertaking to give six months' minimum notice in the event of termination allowed the society to move forward. Plans were in place should the society be required to vacate Yeomanry House and, until anything changed, full volunteer effort had to be concentrated on plans and activities to bring positive returns and benefits to the society, its members and the wider public.

The chairman ended by thanking both vice-presidents for their advice and support. Special thanks were due to Chad Hanna for sterling work on two websites and to Mike Dabbs in the Research Centre. He thanked retiring trustees Margaret Crook and Mike Booth, and other Executive Committee members, for their work for the society and for their counsel and support. His final words were to thank all volunteers, for it is their contributions that enable the society to deliver quality products and services to benefit family historians, wherever in the world they might be.

## Treasurer's report (summary)

### Statement of Financial Activities for the year ending 30 April 2013

	2013 £	2012 £
<b>INCOMING RESOURCES:</b>		
Incoming resources from generated funds		
Voluntary income	46,442	48,101
Activities for generating funds	168	67
Investment income	422	416
Incoming resources from charitable activities	8,411	7,807
<b>TOTAL INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	<b>55,443</b>	<b>56,491</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED:</b>		
Costs of generated funds		
Costs of generating voluntary income	11,863	11,841
Investment management costs	3	0
Charitable activities	27,659	25,973
Governance costs	35	500
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>	<b>39,560</b>	<b>38,314</b>
<b>NET (OUTGOING)/INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	<b>15,883</b>	<b>18,177</b>
 TOTAL FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD	 72,599	 54,422
<b>TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>88,483</b>	<b>72,599</b>

In presenting the accounts the treasurer, Richard Ashberry, noted that the balances are currently higher than normal because the society is holding back on major and capital expenditure until the leasing situation on Yeomanry House has been clarified. (*See next page.*)

He also noted that Berkshire Family History Enterprises Ltd was able to make a large donation to the society again this year, primarily because of good sales of products at external events, and because a number of new CDs introduced during the year generated higher sales.

Following the two main reports:

- 1) It was agreed that the authority to appoint a society president should pass to the incoming Executive Committee, this task having been put on hold pending resolution of the uncertainty surrounding the society's premises;
- 2) The vice-presidents Dr Peter Durrant and Chad Hanna were re-elected for the coming year;
- 3) The nominated candidates for the Executive Committee were elected (see pages 2-3);
- 4) Margaret Foreman and Jocie McBride received honorary memberships in recognition of the

significant contributions that their work has made to the success of the society over a number of years. Jocie remarked that Margaret was one of the few society volunteers who was experienced in reading the Latin used in the earliest parish registers and other contemporary documents.

A presentation of wine was then made on behalf of the whole society to Derek Trinder in grateful recognition of his four years' work as chairman. Frances Trinder was presented with flowers.

**Next year's AGM will be hosted by the Bracknell and Wokingham Branch, and is provisionally scheduled for Friday 20 June 2014.**

### ***Statement from Berkshire Family History Society trustees***

#### **Extension of the society's lease at Yeomanry House**

As you know, the society made a request to Reading Borough Council in September 2012 to renew the lease on its premises in the west wing of Yeomanry House. This had been due to expire in May this year.

The society received the welcome advice from Reading Borough Council in June that it has been afforded an interim extension of the existing lease. The society is grateful to the council for giving this reassurance and for its continuing support of the charity.

This news has removed a number of uncertainties. The society looks forward to continuing its activities at Yeomanry House for the rest of 2013 and for some time beyond. The society's attention is now focused on the key tasks of delivering high quality services and advice to members and the general public, and preparations for events such as the forthcoming Heritage Open Days and fresh autumn initiatives at the Research Centre.

It is important to put this good news into context. Members local to Berkshire may know that Reading Borough Council plans to relocate its staff and services from the present Civic Centre to new premises in Plaza West, Bridge Street, Reading. Refurbishment of Plaza West is due to be completed in the last quarter of 2014, and the relocation will then allow regeneration of the Hosier Street/Civic Centre area of Reading. Concurrently the council is reviewing its property portfolio, and how space is occupied, and Yeomanry House must obviously fall within such a review. Understandably, while any lease renewal is of high importance to the society, the renewal request must take its due place in the list of council priorities.

The society has never enjoyed security of tenure under the current (or any previous) lease on its premises at Yeomanry House. Should the council ultimately decide upon a different future for the building, the society is assured of at least six months' notice following such a decision, giving reasonable time to find and secure new premises. The trustees have previously discussed and agreed "what if" plans for the society. They have also ensured that appropriate financial provisions are in place, and they continue to monitor and evaluate other suitable premises as these become available.

It should be made clear that the society's preferred position is to remain at Yeomanry House if possible, and Reading Borough Council is aware of this. The proximity of the society's home and Family History Research Centre to Berkshire Record Office brings important and synergistic benefits to both organisations.

The society's volunteer effort remains fully focused on plans and activities that bring positive returns and enhanced benefits to all members and, equally important, to the wider public. Continued and timely delivery of publications, support, services and research advice and training of high quality are the best ways to demonstrate that Berkshire Family History Society is an effective charity, working in accordance with its charitable objects to the benefit of all, and is a charity worthy of continued support.



# Around the branches

## **Bracknell and Wokingham Branch**

[<bracknell@berksfhs.org.uk>](mailto:bracknell@berksfhs.org.uk)

Fiona Ranger

In May we held the members' evening which had been cancelled in January due to the snow. Our first speaker was Susan Rea, whose talk was entitled *From Prussia with love*, followed by Pauline Wales, who entitled her story *Find the death certificate or not?* Lastly, Catherine Sampson spoke of the projects that the society undertakes and of the conference planned for 2014, an inspiring talk which will hopefully encourage members to volunteer to help on projects.

Our April trip to TNA (by train, giving an opportunity for everyone to discuss their own research on the way) was a great success, and another trip will run in August.

Our June speaker was Michael Forrest, who talked on *Queen Victoria's Army*. He specialises in military history, and has written a book called *The defence of the Dardanelles*. He is writing a second book on the subject, and asked to be contacted on [<mfgf1879@talktalk.net>](mailto:mfgf1879@talktalk.net) by anyone with ancestors who fought in this campaign.

Library drop-in sessions are continuing at Wokingham and Bracknell libraries, and an additional drop-in session was run at Crowthorne Library in May.

## **Computer Branch**

[<computerbranch@berksfhs.org.uk>](mailto:computerbranch@berksfhs.org.uk)

Gillian Stevens

We had an interesting day at the Museum of English Rural Life Summer Fete on 1 June. This event is based on the idea of an old-fashioned fete offering lots of different activities and stalls. Visitors come from nearby, as well as from quite a distance away. Two or three of us were on duty, and we were kept really busy, even during the last hour. Luckily the day turned out once again to be warm and dry. We took two laptops, one with access to Berkshire data and to the 1881 Surname Mapping CD, the second with net access to the normal free websites plus Findmypast.

## **Newbury Branch**

[<newbury@berksfhs.org.uk>](mailto:newbury@berksfhs.org.uk)

Nick Prince

Our June meeting featured the local historian John Trigg from Woolhampton talking on *Some nineteenth-century squires and their estates*. He illustrated how squires shaped the county and impacted on people's lives as employers and owners of property. They were often teetotal and quite evangelical in their views, building and refurbishing churches and schools. Some caused headaches for family historians by reversing the traditional name-change on marriage: a husband marrying an heiress might take his bride's name, Mount or Benyon for example, to secure the inheritance. Insights into the backgrounds of the squires were offered. Some in the audience recalled going with parents to the "big house" to pay rent as late as the 1940s.

Brian Snook continues his ever-popular weekly FH advice sessions in Thatcham Library. A drop-in session at Wash Common Library in early July, however, was not a great success, and is unlikely to be repeated for a while. Meanwhile contact is being sought with West Berkshire Libraries' volunteer co-ordinator to discover where else FH advice might be welcomed.

## **Reading Branch**

[<reading@berksfhs.org.uk>](mailto:reading@berksfhs.org.uk)

Graham Vockins

Our June speaker was Les Mitchinson, who spoke about tracing Hampshire ancestors. Les is a tutor for the IHGS and runs his own company, LMentryFH, which researches family history. He explained that most of the records were kept at Winchester, Hampshire RO, Southampton City RO, Portsmouth History Centre or the Isle of Wight RO. His comprehensive set of presentation notes gave members many sources to follow up.

Outreach activities in the Reading Branch area included Southcote Fete, where the weather resulted in an early exit. The Hill Primary School event did not take place. However, we will have a display table at the Church of the Latter-Day Saints Open Day on 6 July. In the same month our meeting is a walking tour of Reading led by Joy Pibworth.

### **Vale of the White Horse Branch**

<vale@berksfhs.org.uk> Vanessa Chappell

The branch committee remains unchanged: Vanessa Chappell, chair; Jo Lent, secretary; Margaret McAlpin, treasurer; Sue Matthews, programme secretary; and general members Sarah Matthews, Simon Burbridge, Gordon Radcliffe and Keith Holloway. Following the formal part of the annual branch meeting we had an illustrated talk on using wills to help with research.

In May we visited the Museum of Oxfordshire and the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock. Our guided tour included the *Children and war* exhibition. In June we hosted the society's AGM. We were happy to welcome so many members to our small venue. It was a tight squeeze (and very warm), but we hope everyone enjoyed the talk by Liz Woolley following the official part of the meeting. Liz lives in Oxford and has a MSc in English local history from the University's Department for Continuing Education. Her *Children and war* talk ties in with the work that she has been doing with the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Trust and their project to establish a new museum in Woodstock.

### **Windsor, Slough and Maidenhead Branch**

<windsor@berksfhs.org.uk> Ken Houghton

At our annual branch meeting in May Mike Booth stepped down as chairman and Ken Houghton was elected in his place. We welcomed Wendy Dodds to the committee, who joined Ken, Mike Booth, Olwen Mundye, Judith Mitchell, Helen Conchar and Richard Ashberry. With the official business over, we were given a guided tour through the new FamilySearch website by Alan Johnson and his wife, Christine. Some of our members said they had difficulty with the new site, and Alan explained the reasons behind the changes, and gave guidance on how to search the site, including what you can now find that was not available before.



The branch held a Family History Clinic on 1 June at Windsor Library, as pictured left. There were six society members present to help and advise. However, there was not the response we had hoped for, with just five people attending. Those that took part found the experience most useful, and one couple spent several hours with us. We will hold another clinic again later in the year at a different venue.





# U P D A T E Projects and publications

## URGENT PLEA FOR HELP

The society currently has a small army of transcribers busily copying parish registers and other documents and generating their output in MS Excel. **What the society currently lacks are people who can take those Excel spreadsheets, process the data and create CDs ready for publication.**

Skills required include:

- Getting data out of Excel and into a database in a standardised form;
- Data analysis to detect things which need investigating;
- Data cleansing;
- Creating a name index;
- Creating and running reports;
- Editing Word documents and creating a consistent look-and-feel to files from a variety of different authors;
- Generating PDF files from Word;
- Editing PDF files, adding links, joining PDFs;
- Securing PDF files;
- Designing graphics for CD faces and jewel case inserts or CD covers, some for in-house production, others for external duplication and printing;
- and, of course, testing.

### It doesn't matter if you don't have all these skills

but we'd like to get together a group of people who between them have the requisite skills to go from data in Excel to a published CD. Ideally, several such groups of people would make an impact on the backlog of transcriptions awaiting publication.

**Your location is also unimportant**, because this work can be done at home. In fact it is one area of volunteering which can be shared among our overseas members.

**If you'd like to know more, please contact** [<projects@berksfhs.org.uk>](mailto:projects@berksfhs.org.uk).

*We're making good progress with transcribing and checking new registers for the third edition of **Berkshire marriages**, and this has kept most of our transcribers and checkers busy for the last couple of months. Moving forward, our focus will now start to shift to baptism registers, as we begin to prepare for the first update to **Berkshire baptisms**, which we hope to publish next year.*

*The summer months are typically the time when we complete most of our burial ground surveys, and volunteers are currently working at a number of sites including Burghfield, Boxford and Sulhampstead Abbots. The Wokingham St Paul monumental inscription project is nearing conclusion, whilst work will begin at St Sebastian's churchyard in the autumn. Please do contact the projects team if you would like to get involved.*

## WWI casualties from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead **a reminder**

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>](mailto:projects@berksfhs.org.uk).

**Catherine Sampson (6979)**  
**Projects co-ordinator**

# Berkshire marriages

## 3rd edition

The third edition of *Berkshire marriages* is currently being prepared for publication, and should be in the bookshop in the late autumn. This new CD will have transcriptions of almost 165,000 marriages, more than half a million names, and will contain marriages from 170 parishes, 49 of them new to this edition. For the first time, banns of marriage will also be included with coverage added for seven parishes. At the time of going to press it is intended that the following parishes and periods will be included. New parishes or those with added material are highlighted in coloured bold italics. For launch and purchase details, together with the final list of parishes included, please check the website closer to launch.

### ***Abingdon, St Nicholas***

***1538-1835, 1681 (BTs)***

Aldermaston, St Mary 1559-1837

Aldworth, St Mary 1556-1837

### ***Appleford, St Peter & St Paul***

***1755-1837***

### ***Appleton, St Lawrence***

***1710-1840***

Arborfield, St Bartholomew

1580-1837

### ***Ardington, Holy Trinity***

***1607-1673 (BTs)***

### ***Ascot Baptist Church 1958***

Ashampstead, St Clement

1614-1976

### ***Ashbury, St Mary 1612-1703***

***(BTs)***

### ***Aston Tirrold, St Michael***

***1607-1705 (BTs)***

Aston Upthorpe, All Saints

1862-1971

Avington, St Mark and St Luke

1699-1834

Barkham, St James 1542-1998

Basildon, St Bartholomew

1540-1837

Bearwood, St Catherine 1846-1979

Beech Hill, St Mary 1868-2003

Beedon, St Nicholas 1607-1836

Beenham, St Mary 1563-1836

### ***Besselsleigh, St Lawrence***

***1715-54***

Binfield, All Saints 1538-1837

Bisham, All Saints 1560-1836

### ***Boxford, St Andrew 1559-1839,***

***1839-1982***

Bradfield, St Andrew 1559-1989

Bradfield, Tutts Clump Methodists

1921-2006

Bray, St Michael 1607-1837

Braywood, All Saints 1867-1956

Brightwalton, All Saints 1559-1837

### ***Brightwell, St Agatha***

***1691-1754***

Brimpton, St Peter 1607-1982

### ***Buckland, St Mary 1693-1837,***

***1605-90 (BTs)***

Bucklebury, St Mary 1538-1876

Burghfield, St Mary 1559-1987

### ***Buscot, St Mary 1607-73***

***(BTs), 1676-1812, 1813-1978***

Catmore, St Margaret 1724-1837

### ***Caversham, St Peter 1597-1837,***

***1837-1936***

Chaddleworth, St Andrew

1538-1836

### ***Charney Bassett, St Peter***

***1607-1725 (BTs)***

Chieveley, St Mary 1560-1837

### ***Chilton, All Saints 1607-95***

***(BTs)***

Clewer, St Andrew 1607-1837

### ***Coleshill, All Saints 1755-1812***

Combe, St Swithun 1560-1985

Compton, SS Mary & Nicholas

1553-1963

Cookham, Holy Trinity 1563-1837

Cumnor, St Michael 1559-1948

### ***Drayton, St Peter 1814-46***

### ***East Challow, St Nicholas***

***1754-1840***

East Garston, All Saints 1554-1837

East Ilsley, St Mary 1608-1978

East Lockinge, All Saints 1547-1866

East Shefford, St Thomas

1604-1833

Easthampstead, SS Michael & Mary

Magdalene 1558-1835

### ***East Hendred, St Augustine***

***1813-37***

### ***Eaton Hastings, St Michael***

***1754-1811***

### ***Enborne, St Michael 1614-1837,***

***1637 (BTs)***

Englefield, St Mark 1561-1837

Farnborough, All Saints 1614-2004

Fawley, St Mary 1545-1850

Finchampstead, St James

1607-1838

Frilsham, St Frideswide 1607-1837

### ***Fyfield, St Nicholas 1813-35***

Grazeley, Holy Trinity 1850-1987

### ***Greenham, St Mary 1706-1837,***

***1612-36 (BTs)***

Hampstead Norreys, St Mary

1541-1839

Hamstead Marshall, St Mary

1605-1837

Harwell, St Matthew 1559-1837

### ***Hatford, St George 1803-36***

### ***Hungerford Wesleyan Chapel***

***1886-98***

Hungerford, St Lawrence

1600-1837

Hurley, St Mary 1600-1836

Hurst, St Nicholas 1579-2005

### ***Inkpen, St Michael 1607-1837,***

***1837-1900***

### ***Kingston Bagpuize, St John***

***Baptist 1754-1836***

Kingston Lisle, St John Baptist

1560-1837

Kintbury, St Mary 1557-1837

Lambourn, St Michael 1571-1837

### ***Leckhampstead, St James***

1754-1837, ***1838-1985***

### ***Letcombe Bassett, St Michael***

***1612-82***

### ***Little Coxwell, St Mary***

***1840-1949***

### ***Little Wittenham, St Peter***

***1539-1986***

### ***Long Wittenham, St Mary***

***1607-1755 (BTs), 1813-44***

***(BTs)***

### ***Longcot, St Mary 1754-1812***

### ***Longworth, St Mary 1754-1812***

### ***Lyford, St Mary 1846-1979***

### ***Maidenhead Congregational***

***Church 1879-95***

### ***Marcham, All Saints***

***1658-1754***

### ***Marlston, St Mary 1907-96***

Midgham, St Matthew 1608-1837

**Milton, St Blaise 1607-35**  
(BTs), 1662-1753  
**Mortimer West End, St**  
**Saviour 1615-80 (BTs)**  
**Moulsford, St John Baptist**  
**1616-1772 (BTs),**  
**1754-1808**  
**Newbury Lower**  
**Congregational 1839-60,**  
**1934-38**  
**Newbury, St Nicolas**  
**1660-79,** 1799-1838  
**North Hinksey, St Lawrence**  
**1607-1730**  
**North Moreton, All Saints**  
**1754-1811**  
Oare Chapel (Chieveley), St  
Bartholomew 1802-53  
Padworth, St John Baptist  
1618-1838  
**Pangbourne, St James the**  
**Less 1556-1641,** 1641-1704,  
**1704-53, 1736 (BTs),**  
1754-1841  
Peasemore, St Barnabas 1800-36  
Purley, St Mary 1607-1840  
**Pusey, All Saints 1615-31**  
**(BTs)**  
**Reading, All Saints 1909-80**  
Reading, Christchurch 1862-77  
Reading, Greyfriars 1866-2002  
Reading, Monthly Meeting  
(Quakers) 1801-35  
Reading, St Giles 1564-1991  
Reading, St Laurence 1605-1963  
Reading, St Luke 1909-65  
**Reading, St Mark 1920-2010**  
**Reading, St Mary (Castle**  
**Street) 1914-97**  
**Reading, St Mary (The**  
**Minster) 1619-1838,**  
**1838-1954**  
**Reading, St Saviour 1922-85**  
**Remenham, St Nicholas**  
1607-1838, **1937-63**  
Ruscombe, St James 1559-1798  
Sandhurst, St Michael 1580-1837  
Shaw cum Donnington, St Mary  
1563-1837  
Shellingford, St Faith 1583-1960  
Shinfield, St Mary 1605-1837  
Shottesbrooke, St John Baptist  
1566-1837

Sonning, St Andrew 1592-1837  
**Sotwell, St James 1605-98**  
**(BTs)**  
**South Hinksey, St Laurence**  
**1612-68 (BTs)**  
Sparsholt, Holy Cross 1559-1812  
**Speen, St Mary** 1617-1837,  
**1837-1918**  
Speenhamland, St Mary  
1847-1972  
Stanford Dingley, St Denys  
1540-1834  
Stratfield Mortimer, St Mary  
1607-1837  
Streatley, St Mary 1607-1836  
**Sulham, St Nicholas**  
**1607-1724 (BTs),** 1723-1836  
Sulhamstead Abbots, St Mary  
1602-1837  
Sulhamstead Bannister, St  
Michael 1607-1837  
Sunninghill, St Michael  
1562-1837  
**Sutton Courtenay, All Saints**  
**1728-54**  
Swallowfield, All Saints  
1607-1926  
**Thatcham, St Mary**  
1561-1838, **1960-80**  
Theale, Holy Trinity 1833-1964  
**Tidmarsh, St Lawrence**  
**1731-1979**  
Tilehurst, St Michael 1614-1986  
Tubney, St Lawrence 1848-1978  
**Uffington, Baptist Church**  
**1983**  
Uffington, St Mary 1612-1988  
Ufton Nervet, St Peter 1607-1836  
**Upton, St Mary 1663-1735**  
**Wallingford, St Leonard**  
**1605-98 (BTs)**  
Waltham St Lawrence, St  
Lawrence 1558-1837  
**Wantage, SS Peter & Paul**  
**1691-1812**  
Warfield, St Michael 1569-1837  
Wargrave, St Mary 1539-2006  
Wasing, St Nicholas 1612-1832  
Welford & Wickham, St Gregory  
1754-1835  
Welford, St Gregory 1603-1753  
**West Challow, St Laurence**  
**1612-35 (BTs)**

West Hanney, St James  
1762-1837  
West Hendred, Holy Trinity  
1558-1833  
West Ilsley, All Saints 1560-1839  
West or Great Shefford, St Mary  
1599-1799  
West Woodhay, St Lawrence  
1614-1836  
White Waltham, St Mary  
1556-1836  
Wickham & Hoe Benham, St  
Swithin 1620-99  
Windsor Castle, Royal Free  
Chapel of St George 1627-1856  
Windsor, New, St John Baptist  
1559-1837  
Windsor, Old, SS Peter & Andrew  
1612-1837  
Winkfield, St Mary 1564-1837  
Winnersh, St Mary the Virgin  
1967-99  
Winterbourne, St James the Less  
1565-1837  
Wokingham, All Saints 1589-1837  
Woolhampton, St Peter  
1636-1837  
Wootton, St Peter 1725-1977  
Yattendon, SS Peter & Paul  
1559-1932

## **Banns**

**Burghfield, St Mary**  
**1754-1825**  
**Combe, St Swithun**  
**1755-1966**  
**Compton, St Mary & St**  
**Nicholas 1755-1966**  
**East Ilsley, St Mary 1823-66**  
**East Lockinge, All Saints**  
**1754-1802**  
**Farnborough, All Saints**  
**1822-2002**  
**Fawley, St Mary 1854-1923**  
**Speenhamland, St Mary**  
**1847-1963**  
**Wargrave, St Mary**  
**1755-1995**

# The Irish question

***Not exactly a solution, but an alternative approach to trying to locate ancestors who were enumerated simply as "born Ireland"***

When Irish immigrant ancestors put simply "Ireland" as place of birth in the census it can be very frustrating. One possibility for obtaining a sense of the region in which to search is to consult <[www.irishtimes.com/ancestor/surname](http://www.irishtimes.com/ancestor/surname)>, which allows you to enter a surname



and see its distribution across the Irish counties in 1848-64, based on property valuation surveys. You will see variant spellings and their total occurrences, and the number of households per county (as a table, on a map and in a pie chart). If your wayward Irish ancestor has a known spouse, you can enter this as a second surname and see the counties in which these two names overlap. This is all free, but for a fee you can then see these locations broken down into parishes.

It's a crude instrument, particularly if your surnames are relatively common, and it can do no more than arrange potential places of origin in order of likelihood. I entered the names of two of my Irish-born great-great-grand-parents, Gallagher and Morris, of which Gallagher is by far the most common (5,626 occurrences, against Morris 1,389). The search engine came up with 34 Irish counties and cities, ie almost all of them, in which the two names occur together. However, by clicking back to the respective results pages for the two surnames, extracting the two tables and pasting them into Excel, I can make closer comparisons of frequency.

From this I see that Gallagher is strongly a Donegal name (31% of all occurrences), but Morris' are almost unknown there. County Mayo looks more promising: it's Gallagher's second stronghold (11%), and Morris'

seventh (4%). Tyrone is Morris' primary county (15%) and Gallagher's fifth biggest concentration (albeit only 4%).

Migrants frequently move to an area in the host country where they have been preceded by friends and family, in what economists call a pattern of path dependency. In search of evidence that might point more closely to where Mary Gallagher and John Morris originated, I looked at the wider Irish immigrant community in their part of Shropshire. The 1851 census gave me names, but even more useful was the Catholic parish register for St Peter's, Newport, which told me whom Mary and John had chosen as godparents to their Shropshire-born children. These were strongly likely to have had connections to John and Mary's home territory in Ireland.

Waldron was one godparent, and it proved to be overwhelmingly a Mayo name; this links with the Gallagher/Morris correlation in Mayo.

But of course it doesn't actually prove anything.

I'm probably never going to know for sure where John Morris and Mary Gallagher came from in Ireland (if indeed they came from the same place). I'm unlikely to pinpoint their marriage, which I guess took place in Ireland around 1830. Their names are just too common, and the records may no longer even exist, but this is an intriguing exercise for those who like playing with numbers and probability. Just don't confuse it with actual evidence.

***Penny Stokes (2961)***





# The view from next door

**Mark Stevens**

**of the Berkshire Record Office**

**reflects on *WDYTYA?* as an agent of change**

It was in the autumn of 2004 that the first series of *Who Do You Think You Are?* was shown on BBC2.

Unlike earlier family or local history programmes, this one would be shown in primetime. The hook, of course, was not really family history so much as celebrity, a fact that has become more obvious over time as the research elements of the programme have given ever more ground to the celebrity's own personal journey. Everyone wants to see the "tears" money shot, after all.

The appearance of the programme felt like a big deal at the time. I do remember watching Bill Oddie looking at real documents in a variety of familiar-looking local government institutions. All of a sudden, what I did for a living had acquired a sort of cast-off spotlight from being shown on the telly. I can't remember whether I felt Bill Oddie's family crises would have an impact upon my job, but it was certainly going to raise awareness of the whole genealogy business. What would the consequences of that be?

As we approach the tenth series of the programme this autumn, it is clear that "business" is the key word in that last sentence. For *WDYTYA?* appeared just as family history was being seen as a commercial prospect. The GRO index was being digitised, and before too long searching for information by hand became a bit passé. I think that *WDYTYA?* actually became part of the process that took family history away from smaller organisations and

into the hands of multinational corporations.

The programme itself spawned a BBC-affiliated magazine and a national fair, not to mention a US version of the original show.

That's not to cast *WDYTYA?* in a negative light. To a certain extent I think you can argue that the creation of the *WDYTYA?* brand is one factor in the increasing professionalisation we have seen in family history over the last decade. Simply pottering on is no longer seen as a real option for long-term survival or success. It's no bad thing that the bar has been raised. And that's something that record offices have had to grapple with just as much as family history societies.

A couple of years after the first series went out, I was at a seminar addressed by Alex Graham, who was one of the creators of *WDYTYA?*. His presentation consisted mostly of showing clips from the show and then inviting his audience to consider their response. This was an effortless way of demonstrating the show's potential to engage, as we were swept along by some of the stories that the *WDYTYA?* researchers had unearthed.

I would guess that Alex's point was that it is all about the people. That's probably something on which we could all agree. Not necessarily the people who are living amongst us, either, but how we, the people, respond to those who have long since left this mortal coil. That's the power of family history. Perhaps the true legacy of *WDYTYA?* is reminding us of that power.

## **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**



# Maidenhead National School

***Penny Stokes (2961)***  
***observes a National school***  
***of the 1820s through the eyes***  
***of its managers***

We are sometimes quick to presume that our ag-lab ancestors of the early nineteenth century would probably have been illiterate but, whilst charity schooling was somewhat patchy across Berkshire throughout the eighteenth century, the ideal of universal free education was struggling to become a reality 200 years ago.

Nonconformists took the lead in 1808, establishing the Society for Promoting the Lancasterian System for the Education of the Poor (later renamed the British and Foreign School Society). Not to be outdone, the Anglican church created the National Society for the Promotion of the Education of the Poor in the Principles of the Established Church in 1811. From these grew two rival systems of religious schooling.

The National Society had the advantage of the parochial network, through which local National societies were formed. The government, sensing a movement in which it should be taking part, commissioned a Parliamentary inquiry into educational provision in 1818; this found National-type schools afoot in the majority of Berkshire parishes, catering for poor girls and boys.

Maidenhead was a good example of which we know some detail because the managers' minute books from 1817 to 1839 are in the Berkshire Record Office. They reveal that a meeting called on 16 October 1817 led to the formation of the Maidenhead National School Society. Subscriptions and managers were sought from the great and good of the town, but control was firmly in the hands of the established church. Reverend gentlemen dominated the management committee.

Maidenhead National School, which opened eighteen months later, was essentially a new foundation, but it absorbed two ancient charitable funds: in 1686 £5 a year had been willed by Mrs Elizabeth Merry to the schooling of five poor boys, and this (conveniently) was managed by the minister of Maidenhead chapel; Abraham Spoor's charity was a similar endowment, managed (less conveniently) by Maidenhead corporation, which

nominated and funded about a dozen boys. In the early days there was some friction between town and church in the way that the corporation exercised this power. Beyond these funds the school collected one penny a week from each pupil, and as much as it could possibly drum up by way of subscriptions from local supporters.

The minute books describe themselves as relating to the boys' school; presumably there were corresponding girls' school managers' minutes, which have not survived. However in the later years of the series, the boys' school minutes also mention facts and figures relating to the girls. The "ladies committee" consisted almost entirely of the same surnames as were found on the boys' school committee, and when these (apparent) wives and daughters were faced with the daunting task of finding a new headmistress, four men were deputed to assist them.

***"Neither extreme poverty nor  
difference in religious  
sentiment to be cause for  
pupils' exclusion"***

The academic year began in September, and comprised two terms: from January through to July (no Easter break is noted), followed by a month off for harvest, and then a shorter term running up to a month's Christmas holiday. This mirrored the practice of middle-class, fee-paying schools established many decades earlier.

The first staff to be appointed were Mr John Lane and his wife (her forename is not recorded). His salary, as head of the boys' school, was £50, hers as headmistress of the girls' school was £25. However, in line with the law at that time, whereby a married woman's earnings were her husband's property, the two were treated as one salary, ie his, and paid quarterly as one cheque to him. Mr Lane supplemented his income by chasing unpaid

subscriptions (a Sisyphean task) and doubling as caretaker.

Mrs Lane fell ill for six weeks in 1829 and this, coupled with the fact that she had five children, prompted the committee to decide to sack them both. The decision changed when it was found hard to recruit another couple: it was proposed that Mr Lane should stay on the payroll, but lose the school house. Then the committee did find two replacements, albeit not a couple, so at the end of 1829 the Lanes, after more than 10 years' service ending in nine months of uncertainty, were dismissed at a month's notice.

Pupil attendance at the boys' school was typically in the 50s during the 1820s, but rose to the 80s in the following decade. Girls were 25 to 30 per cent fewer. Admissions were routed through the managers, with each boy's age, place of residence and place of worship noted. The founding constitution prescribed "Neither extreme poverty nor difference in religious sentiment to be cause for pupils' exclusion" and by no means all the boys were Anglican; quite a few came from independent chapels, but there were no Roman Catholics, or at least none who admitted to it.

## **The star prizewinner of 1833, Daniel Beaconseal, was expelled the next term for absence and arrears**

Sunday worship was a condition of being on the roll. The Anglican boys were marched to divine service at Maidenhead St Mary's by the schoolmaster each Sunday, and attendance at other places of worship was policed with a ticket system.

The minute book records frequent expulsions; sometimes three or four boys a month. The offence was usually irregular attendance, with or without arrears of pence. (Pupils paid one penny a week to attend.) In practice it seems to have been a policy of suspension rather than expulsion; those who had been expelled often appeared as re-admissions a few months later. The book makes no mention of how discipline was enforced other than by

exclusion. Corporal punishment was either not used or, more likely, was not considered to be worth recording.

Reading, writing and arithmetic were officially on the curriculum, with the girls also being taught needlework and household tasks, but bible studies and the catechism were of paramount importance to all. Scripture was the only subject on which pupils were tested. Following a morning's examination on the last day of the summer term, rewards would be presented for good attendance and/or learning progress. In the first year this was typically 6d or 9d to relatively few pupils. Later an "all shall have prizes" policy was evident, and rates increased. In the early 1830s some 150 girls and boys were named and their awards detailed each summer. They received tickets valued from a half-penny to three shillings (redeemable on leaving), and clothing in the form of calico, stockings, handkerchiefs, pinafores, smocks and frocks. In one case a girl received stays. Boys got pinafores and frocks too. The value of the clothing appears to have been roughly proportionate to ticket value; the highest award in 1832 was 3s 3d to Isaac Fidler, who also got a jacket. A few pupils – usually those with lower ticket values – were given books.

Possibly the system was a little too undiscriminating to be motivational; the star prizewinner of 1833, Daniel Beaconseal, was expelled the next term for absence and arrears.

In 1827 an Annual Feast was introduced. Immediately after the summer examination and prize-giving, around 80 children, boys and girls, sat down to a free dinner of boiled beef, potatoes and plum pudding, costing a total of just under £5, which was raised by special donations. Beer was donated by one of the managers. Sadly, in 1832 the feast was cancelled because of "misconduct and intemperance the previous year".

**This article is based on notes taken in the course of researching for a current Berkshire Record Office publication project which is documenting Berkshire schools before 1833.**

**The Maidenhead National School (Boys) managers' minute books can be found in the BRO under reference D/P43/25/1-7. They contain extensive lists of pupil names.**

# Finding Naomi: *the story of a photo album*

***A passion for family history can  
sometimes lead you into tracing other  
people's families, particularly if there is  
a point of contact with yours.***

***Wendy Wright (6167)  
followed such a trail and is now hoping  
to discover the connection.***

Among many fascinating treasures I inherited from my Cave ancestors of Warfield is a small collection of Victorian photo albums. They contain beautiful full- and half-page sepia photos mostly taken at the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in and around the Bracknell area and also the Isle of Wight, Scotland, North Wales and Norway, where the family and others had taken holidays. Some of the photos showed identifiable family members, some were captioned, many were not. It has become something of a challenge to find who and where the photos are, which involves lots of reading and research, and where possible interesting visits to nice places to take a present-day photo.

One mystery was a volume, part photo album, part scrap collection, inscribed "To Naomi Thirkell Nov 11 1884 from Carrie and Jack". This contained photos of what appeared to be a Grand Tour of southern France, postcards of Scotland and Ireland, Dover, the Isle of Wight, pictures of Wokingham, Crowthorne, and other places in and near Berkshire, as well as pictures of graves, a local cricket match, and evocative captioned photos of the 1st Royal Berkshire Mounted Company at Windsor Camp in 1899. I was certain that Naomi was not an ancestor, and often wondered about her: her life, who she was, and why I had her book.

I deposited this and several other albums at

the Berkshire Record Office and continued to search for Naomi via family history internet websites. A breakthrough came when the Berkshire Record Office indexed my photos. They had – amazingly – recognised one of the large and grandly furnished domestic interior scenes, because it showed, amongst the crowded Victorian furniture, billiard table and bookcases, several gigantic oil paintings. The archivist identified one as the work of Sir Edward Poynter; the painting no longer exists but was known to have been at Wortley Hall, Yorkshire.

Following this lead, I found that Wortley had been the home of the Earl of Wharnccliffe, whose gamekeeper was George Thirkell. George and his wife Mary originally came from Goudhurst, Kent, and had a daughter, Naomi, born in 1857, and other children, Helen aka Jemima, Harriet, Amelia, Emma, John George, Caroline (presumably the donor of the album), and Herbert Ernest Burton.

A newspaper item revealed the tragedy which had taken place on 11 December 1867. George Thirkell, the gamekeeper, had apprehended some poachers, who had shot and killed him. He was 45, and his memorial stone, erected by subscriptions from friends and fellow servants, described him as a "brave and honest servant gamekeeper". George's wife Mary had died in June earlier that year, and their daughter Amelia had also died only two days previously, and "was lying dead in his home when his body was brought home". So Naomi and her remaining siblings had lost both parents and a sister in the space of six months. Her sister Harriet suffered a mental breakdown and was confined to an institution for most of her life.

There is some information about the family after this date. Lord Wharnccliffe felt a responsibility for the orphaned family and provided schooling for several of the children. It is



possible to trace the life journeys of the remaining family through censuses and other sources, but I was interested mainly in Naomi, who was aged 10 at the time of her father's murder.

In 1871 Naomi and her younger brother Herbert were living in Wortley with their older sister Ellen, who had married James Saxby, an artist. By 1881 Naomi was on the staff of the Earl and Countess of Cawdor at Stackpole Estate, Pembrokeshire, a long way from her home and family. The great house at Stackpole no longer exists, and the estate is now in the care of the National Trust, but extensive landscaping carried out by the earl remains, and the estate is now considered one of the great parks and wildlife reserves in Wales.

Then a Berkshire connection emerged. In April 1886 Naomi Thirkell married William Chambers of Wokingham at St George's Church, Hanover Square. There are two views of the church in Naomi's album. With hindsight, there were clues in the photos: a baker's shop with the name "Chambers"; "House at Wellington College built by W Chambers 1891"; and "Col Sgt Chambers [mounted] at Windsor Camp, August 1899". The Chambers family were bakers and confectioners at Market Square, Wokingham.

Naomi and William had five sons. Sadly, the first William died as an infant, and a later child





was named after him. The children's birth certificates state Wellington College, probably referring to the above-mentioned premises in Station Road, Crowthorne, a post office and general store, where William was in 1891 post-master, cook and confectioner, and one of Naomi's nephews, George Saxby, was a telegraph assistant.

In 1893, following the death of William's father, also William, by 1901 the Chambers family had moved to Market Square, Wokingham, and William as baker, cook and confectioner had taken over the family trade. In 1911 William and Naomi were still at 4 Market Square, Wokingham, running the bakery and confectionery business with sons William, George and Frank.

I had contacted a descendant of Naomi's Saxby relations, and was delighted when he emailed to say that he had found Naomi's great-granddaughter, Linda, who lives in the east of England and was researching her own family history. I was able to send her a complete set of copies of Naomi's photos, which she found very moving, and in return

Linda updated me with much later photos of Naomi and William. After all the tragedy and upheaval of her earlier life, Naomi obviously made a well-deserved happy and comfortable marriage.

Naomi died in March 1912, in Wokingham at the age of 54. Their son Frederick Tom (born 1888) died on active service in Mesopotamia (now Iraq) on 14 November 1918. He is commemorated on the Basra memorial, and there is further information on websites Wokingham Remembers and the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

My final question, as yet unanswered, is how Naomi's album came to be among my family's possessions? The Caves were solicitors in Bracknell for three generations, and there may have been a professional connection, or they may have been military contemporaries in the volunteer reserves, pictured in this and other albums. Whatever the reason, tracing Naomi's life story has been a fascinating quest.

The album is now in the care of the Berkshire Record Office (Ref D/EX1690/1).



*Naomi Chambers*



*William Chambers*



# The tragic death of James Blay on the Great Western Railway at Maidenhead in 1928

**Dave Morris (6564)**

*describes the sources which enabled him to discover the circumstances under which his great-grandfather died*

Having been born and bred in Maidenhead, I've always had a fascination for the GWR, train-spotting and steam engines and, like most boys in the 50s, I wanted to be an engine driver. I remember my grandfather, Ernest Blay, worked as a linesman on the GWR at Maidenhead. When I was very young he fell down a snowy embankment at work and broke his leg, and he had to retire. He died in 1957.

It wasn't until I started family history in 2002 that I found in the 1891 and 1901 census that his father, my great-grandfather, James Blay, worked on the GWR too. Then bells started ringing about conversations with my grandmother when I was a teenager, prior to her death in 1966. She had talked about her life in service, how she met and married Ernest, her family of 13 brothers and sisters, and she told me that one of my ancestors also died on the railway.

On FreeBMD I saw that James Blay died in 1928 so, on the off-chance, I ordered his death certificate. Eureka! It showed me that he died an accidental death at work on the railway at Maidenhead on the 9 June in that year. I telephoned the *Maidenhead Advertiser* in search of the inquest report, and they directed me to Maidenhead Library, where a helpful assistant looked at the papers after this date.

Within a few days the assistant got back to me saying he had found the initial report of the accident, headed *Terrible railway fatality – Maidenhead man killed by express – A victim after 47 years service*. He also found the *Advertiser's* inquest report in a later edition. These two columns were copied and posted to me for a very reasonable price.

The first newspaper accident report told graphically the circumstances of his death. James Blay was killed by the Paddington to

Penzance express, a train that I knew well in my train-spotting days. It didn't stop at Maidenhead, and travelled extremely fast through the station. The report stated that my great-grandfather was due to retire later the same year, and that he worked as a ganger on the line from Maidenhead through to Newbury, near where I now live. It also stated that he left one son (my grandfather) and three daughters, who were all married, a family history fact I didn't know.

The later inquest report headed *The Maidenhead railway fatality – The shout that was not heard – Familiarity breeds contempt*. Again, there were graphic details of death, explicit details of gruesome injuries, witnesses' names and their actions, and the coroner's jury verdict of death from misadventure. There was an extra paragraph stating that the funeral was held later that afternoon, with more than 150 people attending and it included names of GWR representatives. Among some excellent family history detail was the home address of my grandfather, who identified the body, as 27 Park Street, where I was born in 1947.

Like most family historians I have many ancestors who changed or adapted their occupations in the early to mid-nineteenth century in order to work in the new railway industry: blacksmiths, cooks, agricultural labourers to name but a few, and so many of them died at their work. If you see "accidental" or "misadventure" on the death certificate, try to find the inquest report. At one time I did try to prove things without the expense of buying certificates, but now I am more flexible. I might never have found out about James' death without his death certificate.

I found an old aerial photo of Maidenhead

*The Clock Tower and Edwards Tent Works, Maidenhead, 1928*  
 <[www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EPW022623](http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk/image/EPW022623)>  
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railway station for this article in <[www.britainfromabove.org.uk](http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk)>. This picture, showing Maidenhead railway station, was dated 15 August 1928, two months after James Blay's death and, unbelievably, the east signal box was also marked out, the actual site of the accident. I have added notes to it above, and also noted James' home address of Bell Street to the north-east, a stone's throw from where he died.

This article aims to show three things:

- The first is to see what local newspapers can reveal. Even if your deceased relative died of natural causes, there may be a nugget of family history, such as the family putting something in like *Thanks to everyone for sympathy... from wife June, and children Bob, Joe, Janet and George, and grandchildren Sue, Dave* etc, names you may only know one or two of, or it may confirm what data you already have, give addresses of family you may not know (nor could find until the post-1911 censuses are released, by which time you may have already joined your ancestors).

- The second is to search online. I just typed in Maidenhead Railway Station in the search bar and got loads of non-specific hits such as Maidenhead, railway, station and GWR, and some poor quality photos. After toiling through about 20 pages I found <[www.britainfromabove.org.uk](http://www.britainfromabove.org.uk)>. Later, when I wanted to see the picture again, I typed in Maidenhead Railway Station, 1928 and it was the third hit on the first page. I learnt to be more specific in my initial search terms, then gradually to be less so, working backwards if you get no hits.

- The third important piece of advice I can give is: talk to your oldies about their life as I did, before they join their ancestors. I now understand why my grandmother was petrified of going to a workhouse, and I know who the people were in the old photos she had. You will find out about their parents' lives, their hardships and what they had to endure. Talk to them, or all will be lost for ever; it is fascinating.

# Blewbury parish chest records

**Nicky Stepney  
(2783)**

*goes digging for  
FH gold in the vestry  
of a downland parish*



Over the years I have gained a greater knowledge and understanding of records that I was once a little tentative to research. This hesitancy was due to a lack of confidence at handling such material and not from a lack of enthusiasm. However, by searching parish chest records I have learned more details about the lives of my Lousley and Humfrey ancestors who came from Blewbury.

The first documents I came across with references to the Lousleys were memorial inscriptions recorded by Rev Burgess of St Michael's Church in the 1700s. They revealed that many of my ancestors were buried in the north chancel, each burial marked with the initials of the person on a small white square of Sicilian marble. The first inscription gave me the date of death of Joseph Lousley's wife, Mary Lousley, who had died on 3 December 1797, six days before her burial which I had found in the burial register. The record revealed she had been 31 when she died, which meant I now had her year of birth: 1766. Mary's inscription reads: "A wife most kind, a mother dear, a neighbour good is buried here,

the Lord in mercy thought it best to take her to a place of rest."

On the south side of the church Joseph's mother, Elizabeth Lousley, was buried, having died on 28 June 1796 aged 62, giving her a birth year of 1734, and her husband had also been named Joseph. Elizabeth, like her daughter-in-law Mary, had obviously been much loved, as her inscription reads: "A loving wife, a friend most dear, a tender mother lieth here, affliction sore with patience she bore, physicians were in vain, till death did seize and God did please to ease her of her pain, though great my loss I hope with joy to meet in heaven again."

The Poor Law documents prior to 1834 revealed that my ancestors from Blewbury were not amongst the parishioners reliant on poor relief but had been substantial property and land owners. In fact, they were the parochial officers who assessed the poor rate and made the decisions that affected the poor.

I found only two references in the removal and settlement records in connection with my ancestors. The first was a removal certificate,

22 July 1799 for a “complaint and order thereon by two justices to convey Sarah Grimshaw a single woman with child from the parish of East Hagbourne to the parish of Blewbury and to the complaint and order of that place to receive and provide for her.” Sarah had had a long-term relationship with my four-times great-grandfather, Joseph Lousley (1765 - 1825), after his first wife, Mary Bosley, had died in 1797. Sarah had given birth to two illegitimate daughters before having a son, Joseph Grimshaw Lousley, with Joseph Lousley in 1812, so this removal certificate must have been drawn up when she was expecting her second daughter Maria, who was born in 1799. As she was an unmarried woman with one illegitimate daughter and no certificate of settlement, the parish officials of Hagbourne were keen to remove her back to Blewbury, her legal place of settlement, before she and her baby became chargeable to their parish. A close inspection of the bastardy documents in Blewbury did not reveal any information about the putative father of either Sarah’s first child or her unborn baby.

In the churchwardens’ accounts on 18 April 1773 it was reported that Joseph Lousley was appointed churchwarden for that year by the vicar. Looking at the date, this is likely to have been Joseph senior, and not his son Joseph, who was not born until 1765. The church rate to cover the parish church and repairs was set for the year 1773-74 by Thomas Church and Joseph Lousley at a rate of 2d to the pound, based on the value of parishioners’ property and land. Joseph continued to be elected churchwarden for the years 1776, 1779 and 1784.

On 23 August 1811 there was a note regarding the purchase by Joseph Lousley (who it is now possible is Joseph junior born 1765) for

the sum of £11 6s 3d half in full for “building a new pew in the said parish of Blewbury that is the third from the pillar, the vicarage seat and it is thereby declared by us the undersigned that by allowing the pew, there is room for the said pew without taking away any seat, hereby declares that the said pew is the sole property of Joseph Lousley and his heirs forever.”

Joseph must certainly have been a religious man of some wealth, as this was a large sum of money to pay for the privilege of having his own personal pew for himself and his family to worship from.

The vestry minutes revealed in 1822, 1823 and 1824 that Joseph Lousley was

living at Manor Farm and paying a substantial amount of money totalling £3 - 1s - 1½d towards the upkeep and repairs of the church, and was the parishioner paying the highest amount of money. On 30 July 1825 when Joseph’s son Job was 35 years old, he himself was elected as a churchwarden for Blewbury, along with an Edward Humfrey.

The overseers’ poor rate books from 1837-1848 showed that in 1837 Daniel Lousley, Joseph and Mary Lousley’s son, was living at Lower Farm, and was listed at the top of the list of parishioners

paying into the poor rate. It is difficult to read the value given of Daniel’s arable and meadow land, but I could see that Daniel was listed as both occupier and proprietor. Included on the list of poor rate contributors were Edward Humfrey senior, proprietor of Home Farm, and Edward Humfrey junior (probably the husband to Mary Ann Lousley), proprietor of another farm, and also a Joseph Humfrey who had married Martha Lousley, youngest daughter of Joseph and Mary Lousley and a William Humfrey.

The vicar’s tithe book from 1665 to 1778 contained a number of references to the



*Joseph Lousley senior*

Lousleys and Humfreys with regard to the vicarial tithes paid to the parish, including on 27 March 1773 received from Edward Humfrey a calf which sold at market for £1 2s and wool which was sent to Wallingford to be sold. On 8 July 1777 the vicar received from Joseph “by the hands of his son Joseph” a sum of £20, confirming that there was a Joseph senior and Joseph junior living in the parish at the same time.

The vicar’s parish note book was crammed with entries of visits to the local parishioners, particularly the sick and dying, confirmations and an index of sermons. One entry that caught my eye was that of Hannah Elizabeth Humfrey, aged 17, who was confirmed on 11 March 1878, giving her birth year of 1867. Further investigation will be required to find out how she fits into the family. A Mrs Edward Humfrey was visited several times in the summer of 1878, and this could be a reference to Mary Ann Lousley who had married Edward Humfrey in 1836; Mary Ann had died in the October of 1879, and after this date no further visits to a Mrs Edward Humfrey were recorded.



*Blewbury church of St Michael*

This is just a snapshot of information I discovered about my ancestors from the parish chest records. Although they do not always enable you to sketch out a basic family tree, they can provide you with the information to “hang” onto a family tree. My Lousley and Humfrey ancestors were privileged in that they were reasonably wealthy and lived prosperously in the parish of Blewbury, and I only hope that in their positions as parochial members of the parish they helped to better the life of the poor, and did not sit in judgement upon them.

I would encourage anyone who has not yet delved into the world of parish chest records to take the plunge to see what they can discover.

*Source*

Berkshire Record Office. Blewbury Parish Chest Records Catalogue D/P 20

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# Parson's piece

*portraying some of  
Berkshire's more  
colourful  
clergymen*

## Rev Charles Augustus Johnson (1820-92) of Enborne

**The Rev Charles Augustus Johnson succeeded to the benefices of Enborne and Hamstead Marshall in the summer of 1848, the previous incumbent, Charles Thomas Johnson, having been his father.** Hereditary succession was by no means unusual in the Church of England. In this case, the Johnsons were relatives of the Earl of Craven, who owned almost all of both villages and held the advowsons.

The two rectories had a combined worth of £831 a year and £740 in tithes,<sup>1</sup> but this income would not have been of great significance to the 28-year-old Mr Johnson who, like his father, was an independently wealthy man. He returned to live at the rectory at Enborne, where he had grown up. It was a large and comfortable house, which had been extensively renovated by his father in 1816.<sup>2</sup>

In the 1851 census the new rector was unmarried, and his household included his sister Lucy, who stayed until her marriage in 1855, and his widowed mother (until her death in 1876). In later middle age Charles Johnson found a wife: in 1875 he married Sophia Ann Turner in Liverpool,<sup>3</sup> perhaps having been introduced through his brother William, who had moved to that area when he retired from the army.<sup>4</sup> The dowry included considerable

investments and a box with the Liverpool Philharmonic Society.<sup>5</sup> Sophia being of similar age to her new husband, there were no children.

Mr Johnson had inherited responsibility for the village schools founded by his father in Enborne and Hamstead Marshall, and he continued the tradition of running them at his own expense. Although they were Church of England schools in character, the rector chose not to seek funding from the National Society. He seems also to have held himself grandly aloof from the 1870 Elementary Education Act.

The schoolmistress at Enborne was Mary Flownder in the mid-century,<sup>6</sup> succeeded by Thomas Shergold, an out-pensioner of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea.<sup>7</sup> The Education Act of 1870 introduced compulsory schooling for all five-to-10-year-olds by certificated teachers under a system of annual government inspection. These inspectors found Enborne school wanting. Their recommendation was for a new school to be built a little south of the present cottage school, fit to take 69 boys and girls, and with a teacher's house alongside.

Nothing happened to implement this, and the next official departmental notice, dated 1872, was also apparently ignored. A final notice in 1874 threatened to take Enborne's education out of the hands of the church, and place it with a school board under the new legislation. Such prospects usually prompted the church to action; school boards ran secular schools, and were deplored by the Anglican church, although they were more popular with nonconformists, who were generally ready to challenge the traditional hegemony of the established church in village life. By the mid-nineteenth century dissidents in Hamstead Marshall



*The former Enborne Rectory*

and Enborne sustained three flourishing non-conformist chapels.<sup>8</sup>

A government memorandum following the final notice recorded that the Rev Charles Augustus Johnson was neither answering letters, nor proceeding with work as instructed, and had failed to put in an appearance when inspectors made a site visit. The rector subsequently claimed that the visiting inspectors had confused Enborne with Hamstead Marshall, and that his curate had attended a meeting. This defence seems to have bought some time, and the threat of a board receded. By August 1875 Mr Johnson was assuring the department that Enborne's new elementary school would open after the harvest.

In January 1876 the inspector called at the newly built Enborne school, and his report was unfavourable, not least because the teacher was unqualified. Again there was no answer from the rectory, prompting an internal memo: "the place is very small and Johnson has left the department with no alternative [other than] to proceed to extremities."

Spring came, still with no response from the rector, although the department still seemed willing to give him the benefit of doubt. "He seems well-intended." They accepted his assurance that the teacher, Elizabeth Gold, who had started in April, would present herself

for examination and certification, but within a month this had become "impossible on health grounds". Miss Gold was replaced by Mary Ann Osgood, who also lacked qualifications, but she would definitely obtain the statutory certification. However by September 1876 Miss Osgood "does not feel equal to presenting herself for examination next Christmas." After another long silence Mr Johnson promised that she would sit the exam the following year.

This brinkmanship continued for another three years. Miss Osgood had gone by the summer of 1879, to be replaced by yet another unqualified teacher, Ellen Collins, sister of William Collins, who was publican of the White Hart in Hamstead Marshall. The department wearily settled for 1880 as the deadline for her certification. In February 1881 Charles Johnson wrote to the department announcing that Collins had gone, and had been replaced by Ann Elizabeth Pears, a 60-year-old qualified and experienced teacher. Eleven years after the Act, Enborne school had come into line with statutory requirements.<sup>9</sup>

Charles Augustus Johnson died suddenly at home on 3rd March 1892, a year to the day after his wife, and having taken the normal church service earlier in the day. The cause of death was given as syncope (fainting), which suggests a stroke. He was 72.



His obituaries in the local press<sup>10</sup> made no reference to any battle with bureaucracy. They applauded him as a Craven Hunt enthusiast rather than as a pastor (unlike his father, who had renounced field sports on ordination). “Charlie” was said to have been one of several Berkshire clergymen depicted in a then famous painting of hare-coursing at Ashdown. If this was true he must have been at odds with his bishop in Oxford, Samuel Wilberforce, who had declared sporting clergymen to be “a great evil in a parish”.

In accordance with the rector’s will the whole contents of the rectory went up for sale. *The Newbury Weekly News* reported that a “large and fashionable company” converged on Enborne for the auction, at which his brougham was snapped up for £50, a wagonette for £21, a dog-cart for £10 10s and a basket park phaeton

for £9. In addition to these his guns, china, furniture, pictures, books, magazines and wine all came under the hammer. From these proceeds he left £1,000 for the restoration of St Michael’s Church in Enborne.

1. *Ford’s directory* 1868
2. BRO Enborne parish register MF114
3. FreeBMD
4. Johnson, W T *Twelve years of a soldier’s life* (Innes & Co, 1897)
5. BRO D/EX 402/1 pre-nuptial settlement
6. 1851 and 1861 censuses
7. 1871 census
8. BRO D/MC 7/10/1/1 Methodist meeting house; D/N 32/8/2/2, 32/9/3/1, 32/13/1/1-2,4 papers re Wash Water Independent... chapel;
8. Summers, W H *History of the Berks...Congregational Churches* (Blacket, 1905)
9. Enborne school correspondence of 1870s and 1880s in The National Archives and Lambeth Palace Library
10. *The Newbury Weekly News* and *Reading Mercury* March 1892



**On page 2 you will have read that the society has, at present, no chairman, due to lack of volunteers.**

**On page 9 you will have read that the society needs more volunteers to work on producing the high-quality CD publications for which we are justly renowned.**

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\*Nobody gets paid, so they must all be doing it for fun!

# Bookends

Compiled by Tony Roberts, Grace Gillions,  
Judith Mitchell and Derek Trinder

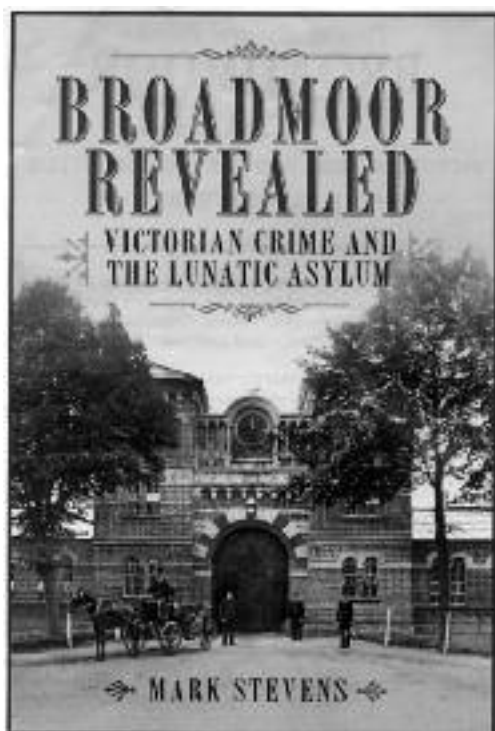
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## ***Broadmoor revealed***

Mark Stevens (Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 2013), 240x160mm, hardback, 180pp

Shop £19.99, UK 23.70, airmail £32.02

Mark Stevens is well known to readers of the *Berkshire Family Historian* with his regular *The View from Next Door* articles. A professional archivist, he is clearly keen to bring his in-depth knowledge and interest of Broadmoor and its archives into greater public consciousness. This book was first published in 2011, and is now revised and expanded in this new edition.

As one would expect, the content of the book is carefully researched, both from the Broadmoor archives, contemporary newspaper and court reports, and in some cases particular patient biographies.

The author has taken pains to ensure that a balanced view of the hospital, its activities and patients, is presented to the reader. While devoting chapters to some of the best

known and best documented patients and the work of the hospital staff, he also sheds light on the lives of the less fortunate patients. Thus it is that the first chapter covers the founding of the hospital and the way its buildings facilitated control and treatment of patients. The next five chapters take the reader through the lives and treatment of several well-known patients, and touch upon a coterie of unfortunate foreign in-patients. The remaining chapters discuss the escapes from the hospital and the authorities' subsequent responses to those events; recount a sad litany of the babies born in the hospital and their mothers' illnesses; and finally they describe the author's own first visit to the secure areas of the hospital.

Understandably the book confines itself mainly to the Victorian period, where records are more freely available, and during which period the most change in buildings and treatment regime took place, as experience of dealing with different classes of patient was gained.

The book is well written and very readable. What shines through the whole text is the care and humane treatment of patients by the hospital staff and authorities. The occasional necessity to treat the most recalcitrant and violent patients more harshly than the norm was clearly unwelcome to the medical staff, and was applied reluctantly against their preferred moral and social reintegration treatment ethos.

In summary a very satisfying and informative book, and thoroughly recommended to our members.

***Tony Roberts***

## ***Reformation, revolution and rebirth: the story of the return of Catholicism to Reading and the founding of St James parish***

John and Lindsay Mullaney (Scallop Shell Press, 2012), paperback, 161pp

Shop £10.00

When I first looked at the cover of this booklet, written and carefully researched by John and Lindsay Mullaney, I assumed that it was mostly a guidebook to the handsome flint church which is situated in the Forbury near the park. However, as the title says, it is mostly a history of the return of Roman Catholic worship to Reading.



After the Reformation, the closure and demolition of the great abbey at Reading and subsequent persecution and discrimination, Catholics disappeared from Reading. There were nearby landowning families who remained loyal Catholics, but they adopted a low profile.

In 1778 an Act was passed removing much of the discrimination against Catholics. Concessions had also been made on the part of the Pope. In 1791 religious assemblies were permitted providing that they were registered at the Quarter Sessions and that the priest was notified to a justice of the peace.

Anna Maria Smart and her two daughters settled in Reading in 1762. Anna Maria came from a publishing family and took over the *Reading Mercury* with the help of her brother. Later her son-in-law, Thomas Cowslake, became her partner, and his descendants ran the paper until 1915. Anna Maria was a Catholic and she and her daughters re-established Roman Catholic worship in Reading by converting a room in Finch's Buildings into a chapel in 1791.

The following year a group of French priests arrived in Reading fleeing likely death in revolutionary France. These priests settled in Castle Hill, and the building is still there opposite Yeomanry House. A young seminarian called François Longuet fled to England and after ordination also settled in Reading in 1802. François supported himself by teaching Latin and French. Younger than the other priests, he spoke good English and established good relations with the local Protestant clergy. However, he does not appear to have had good relationships with the older émigré priests. In 1807 he started to plan a new chapel and, with the support of the bishop and patrons, was able to purchase a site in Vastern Street in 1811, where the chapel of the Resurrection was built. The new chapel was not supported by the Smart/Cowslake family however, who continued to worship at Finch's Buildings.

Father Longuet's ministry came to an abrupt end when he was murdered when riding back to Reading from Wallingford. The weapon used was believed to be a sword, and the motive was put down to robbery as he had quite a sum of money with him. The murderer was never caught.

In 1820 a new priest, an Englishman, Francis Bowland, was appointed. The congregation continued to expand as Reading increased in size and the old building was obviously inadequate. A new patron, James Wheble of Woodley Lodge, came forward and the new church of St James was started in 1837 on part of the site of Reading Abbey, which he already owned. By the time St James's was completed in 1840, there was a new priest, Father Ringrose.

The architect of the church was the now famous A Welby Pugin, this being the first church he had designed. It was built in the Romanesque style, a period of architecture not usually popular with Pugin. However, it may have been thought to be in keeping with the nearby abbey ruins, and flint and stone was used in its construction. Most

unfortunately Mr Wheble died of a heart attack three weeks before the church was opened.

The book describes many of the details of the building, which were probably designed by Pugin himself. Although some alterations were carried out in 1926 and subsequently, very nearly all of the original church remains as he planned it.

**Judith Mitchell**

## ***Genealogy: essential research methods***

Helen Osborn (Robert Hale, 2012) 222x145 mm, hardback, 272p  
Shop £14.99, UK £18.70, airmail £27.02

There is much to commend in this book for the serious researcher.

Its focus is firmly on methodology and research skills, in contrast to numerous titles that describe records in fine detail but say little about how best to use them. If your research has progressed beyond the basic stage, the book is a valuable source of ideas, help and advice, with plenty of illustrative examples in the text taken from Helen's own family history and from her professional work.

The book covers a range of topics, including effective searching, document analysis and interpretation, building a research plan and problem-solving, recording findings and citing sources, and it has a substantial chapter on organising, storing and passing on the information uncovered in your research. The final chapter considers proof, and contrasts the efforts of American researchers to establish standards of evidence and proof with the less exacting practices of many of their British counterparts.

The chapter on analysing and working with documents and the one that follows it, planning and problem solving, are especially useful. The first reminds the reader that no document, even a supposedly official one, provides a researcher with "the truth". It is simply someone's version of the truth at a particular moment in time, and needs objective assessment. In the chapter that follows there is a handy checklist of sources and ideas to consider when faced by (apparently insurmountable) problems in research. Helen then continues to give a brief introduction to proving relationships and family reconstruction techniques, citing Andrew Todd's quintessential *Nuts and bolts* booklet, before moving on to how the research plan is built, how sources used are documented and the importance of keeping this whole process under active review.

On the downside, organisation of content is, in places, a little muddled, as in Chapter Three, where administrative systems in England and Wales preface a short discussion of



primary and secondary evidence. And the text is often dense on the page, reminiscent of an old-fashioned text book with its single column layout, broken infrequently with just a handful of plain tables and grayscale illustrations. But these minor irritations should not detract from its value to any thoughtful researcher.

Helen Osborn (Pharos Tutors) is a professional genealogist and historical researcher who has lectured, written and taught widely on research methods. Her book should be compulsory reading for any armchair researcher who thinks that a website such as Ancestry is sufficient to build a family tree.

**Derek Trinder**

### ***The top of Whitley revisited***

Daphne Barnes-Phillips (Corridor Press, 2013), paperback, A5, 160pp  
Shop £9.95, UK £11.18, airmail £15.32

In 2002 Berkshire historian Daphne Barnes-Phillips published an intimate little book in tribute to an institution with which she has had a lifelong connection: the Whitley Hall Methodist Sunday School in the Spring Gardens area of Reading. Much of her material was drawn from a collection of reminiscences by former members, begun in 1986 when the Sunday School was celebrating its 80th anniversary. More and more people sent in their contributions and, as

the pile of material grew over the following years, so did an interest in researching not just the history of Whitley Hall but also of the Spring Gardens mission which preceded it.

The result was a lovingly drawn portrait called *The top of Whitley* which quickly sold out, so the author has enhanced the book with many more illustrations and recent photographs to produce *The top of Whitley revisited*. As she points out in her introduction, there has been very little else written on this topic, so the facts and figures in her book will be of great value to anyone with ties to the area.

The exhaustively researched detail about Methodism from the nineteenth century to the present day will be of wide-ranging interest, although there is much to engage the reader on a more general level too. Scouring records for the historical data, she has discovered naughty members of the Boys' Life Brigade "disturbing meetings and being insolent to the Hallkeeper"; a prize-winning brass band falling foul of church regulations; and the difficulties of catering for church socials during times of rationing ("tea and coffee....audience to bring own sugar"). Local newspapers provide tales of everything from dog bites and bazaars to corruption and highway robbery, and the people of Whitley are brought to life by photographs, maps and sketches.

The structure of the book, with each chapter concentrating on a different aspect of local life, has led to some duplication of material, but Daphne Barnes-Phillips here gives an object lesson in how to use varied sources to create a complete picture of a vanished era.

**Grace Gillions**

***A Birth Brief is a five-generation ancestral chart containing the names and vital records – birth/baptism, marriage and death/burial – of the family of a member of the Berkshire Family History Society.***

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*Remember, our website is searched from all parts of the world.*

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# Gleanings

## from exchange magazines

compiled by Tony Wright <[gleanings@berksfhs.org.uk](mailto:gleanings@berksfhs.org.uk)>

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**This will be the last edition of Gleanings, because the society is withdrawing from the Exchange Magazines Scheme.**

### HISTORY

#### **All roads lead to Smithfield**

Until around 1850 animals were moved by drovers walking them. Drovers managed 25 miles a day – Scotland to London in six weeks. Better pay than ag labs. Had to be married, licensed and over 30.

*Hertfordshire People* (18), June 2013, p32-33

#### **The way the manor operated and what information can be found in the records**

Manors have left behind many records useful to family historians.

*Hillingdon FHS* (33), June 2013, p27-29

#### **Exploring the symbolism in your parish church**

*Kentish Connection* (22), vol 26, June 2013, p119-121

#### **Seeking a new home**

A description of what people emigrating to US and Canada faced before they had even left home

*Woolwich & District FHS* (31), April 2013, p17-18

### MISCELLANEOUS

#### **Eighteenth-century Westmorland weddings: persistent myths and actual practices**

Informal folk wedding ceremonies are one of the myths detailed, some of which would not have been legal if they had taken place. Many

marriages were not recorded as prescribed by the 1753 Act.

*Cumbria FHS* (10a), February 2013, p25-29

#### **Crompton-Parkinson Jubilee Garden Fete Chelmsford 9th July 1938**

Lists all the people receiving long service awards

*Essex Family Historian* (14), June 2013, p25-31

#### **Tracing Welsh ancestors and relatives in the USA**

*Glamorgan FHS* (61), June 2013, pi-iii

### DECEPTIONS

#### **Was Uncle Jack really in the Dragoon Guards: photo of him in his uniform proves it, doesn't it?**

*Essex Family Historian* (14), June 2013, p8-12

#### **Was your ancestor really married?**

Why marriage with a deceased wife's sister was illegal until the twentieth century, and what is marriage

*Origins Buckinghamshire FHS* (4), June 2013, p83-84

#### **The pitfalls of genealogical research**

Can you believe all of the family stories passed down to you?

*Yorkshire Family Historian* (50), vol 39, June 2013, p47-49

## PARISH RECORDS

### ***Spotlight on parish chests: the surveyor of the highways***

Surveyors of the highway were unpaid, chosen annually, and had no knowledge of road maintenance. Rates were levied to pay for maintenance. Thus there are records. *Cheshire Ancestor* (6), vol 43, June 2013, p33-34

### ***1837: Transition from parish records to the civil registration***

A misunderstanding of what civil registration meant caused a huge number of people suddenly to be baptised. Covers background to the changes, C of E position, mass baptisms and problems.

*Doncaster Ancestor* (50a), vol 23, Summer 2013, p16-18

### ***Missing baptisms?***

The 1753 Marriage Act stipulated that all marriages (except of Quakers and Jews) had to take place in an Anglican church. Can you identify Catholic marriages in the Anglican records?

*East Surrey FHS* (45), vol 36, March 2013, p28-30

### ***Combe: an alternative register***

Combe (five miles north-east of Witney) has far fewer surviving parish registers than surrounding parishes. Some alternative records.

*Oxfordshire Family Historian* (39), vol 27, April 2013, p19-21

## PEOPLE

### ***Agnes Mary Croft 1894 - 1985***

Starting from "You'll end up like Aunt Ag, sold into the white slave trade" the author delves into the history of her ancestor to discover a

remarkable woman.

*Kent FHS* (20), vol 13, June 2013, p1045-53

### ***Mr and Mrs L K Shaw and the founding of the Manchester and Salford Boys' and Girls' Refuges and Homes Part 1***

*Manchester Genealogist* (25), vol 49, 2013, p130-137

## PLACES

### ***Dyce Work Camp: meeting summary***

Initially conscientious objectors were imprisoned. Soon it was realised this was a waste of manpower, and work camps set up instead. This is the summary of a talk on one such camp.

*Aberdeen and North-East Scotland FHS* (58), May 2013, p11-12

### ***My parish: Kingston Seymour***

History of a coastal north Somerset village  
*Bristol & Avon FHS* (3), June 2013, p34-37

### ***Early schooling in Flackwell Heath***

Primarily about Flackwell Heath infants' school and teacher Mrs Sarah Abbott  
*Buckinghamshire FHS* (4), June 2013, p96-101

### ***The 1604 Monk Fryston plague families***

The author analyses baptisms, marriages and burials in Monk Fryston in the years surrounding 1604 to see what, if any, effect the plague had.

*Yorkshire Family Historian* (50), vol 39, June 2013, p42-46

# 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 **John Joyes** (7328)  
<john@joyes.org.uk>

## **William Boulger of Bradfield** *a man of substance*

In 1807 at St James Piccadilly, William Boulger married Frances Rebecca Smith, daughter of William and Mary Smith of Bradfield House, owners of a sizeable estate at Bradfield.

William and Frances settled at Bradfield, and their children contributed fully in Reading's development. Edward Boulger played a part in the founding of the Royal Berkshire Hospital and was its house surgeon, Henry Boulger was a leading Reading solicitor but died young "By Visitation of God", Mary Ann Boulger married George Simonds of the famous, but then infant, brewing and banking firm, and one of their sons was a sculptor, listing amongst his works the Forbury Gardens' Maiwand Lion.

But who was William Boulger? He was born around 1761 and died in 1825 at Bradfield. He was clearly a man of substance, to marry into such a wealthy family, and as such you would think his life and activities might be recorded somewhere. But I haven't managed to find out where he came from, or the source of his wealth. Any ideas or suggestions would be much appreciated. I've seen his will at TNA, but it offers no clues. Boulger is of course an Irish name, so maybe he was an immigrant?

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from **Ray West** (3205)  
<rayc.west@btinternet.com>

I enclose this article from the *Daily Sketch* of 17 February 1925, which members may be interested in, and maybe someone can tell me where the house was in Caversham and the story behind the Catholics who were interred in the garden!



# 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

5080 **Dr W ARCHER** The Old Nursery, Pump Lane, Marlow SL7 3RD  
<berksfhs@cud.co.uk>  
7360 **Mrs M BROWN** PO Box 898, Moonee Ponds, Victoria 3039, Australia  
<margietg@raggedtier.com>  
7406 **Mr A LODER** 3 Kendal Meadow, Whitstable CT5 3PZ  
<a\_loder@talktalk.net>  
7553 **Ms M JOHNSON** 4 Independence Way, Hazlet, NJ 07730 USA  
<mjohnson1983@gmail.com>  
7571 **Mr D PENDRY** 28 Trent Close, Yeovil BA21 5XQ  
<d.pendry408@btinternet.com>

7360	ARLETT	Ufton	BRK	1770
7360	BRELSFORD	Mortimer	BRK	pre 1770
7553	BURTON	Reading	BRK	Any
7553	EMERY	Reading	BRK	Any
7553	EMORY	Reading	BRK	Any
7360	EVANS	Padworth	BRK	1848+
7553	HUGHES	Stanford in the Vale	BRK	Any
7553	HUGHES	Faringdon	BRK	Any
7571	LEAVER	Any	BRK	1700-1920
7406	LODER	Harwell	BRK	1557-1840
7406	LODER	East Hagbourne	BRK	1557-1840
7406	LODER	Kintbury	BRK	1557-1840
7406	LODER	Hinton Waldrist	BRK	1557-1840
7553	MURPHY	Reading	BRK	Any
7553	MURPHY	Newbury	BRK	Any
7553	MURPHY	Bradfield	BRK	Any
7553	OWEN (S)	Stanford in the Vale	BRK	Any
7553	OWEN (S)	Tilehurst	BRK	Any
7553	OWEN (S)	Stanford Dingley	BRK	Any
7553	OWEN (S)	Bradfield	BRK	Any
7571	PENDRY	Any	BRK	1700-1800
7360	POLLEY	Mortimer	BRK	pre 1840
5080	PULKER	Any	Any	Any

## BERKSHIRE and LONDON

*(all of England & Wales  
for 19th and 20th centuries)*

Experienced and affordable researcher. I am a member of the Society of Genealogists. No task too small. Please contact me for more information – the initial consultation is free.

**Rob Dickinson BSc.**  
**Chestnut Tree Genealogy**  
9, Leighton Road, Ealing,  
London, W13 9EL

**Email:**  
**info@chestnut-tree-genealogy.co.uk**



# 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.

## 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 probate**

**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 probate
- 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](http://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

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- **£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](mailto: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 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 top left.

## Dates for your diary \* denotes Berkshire FHS participation

12 - 15 Sept	Heritage Open Days	numerous Berkshire locations	< <a href="http://www.heritageopendays.org.uk">www.heritageopendays.org.uk</a> >
Sun 29 Sept 10.00 - 16.00	Hampshire Genealogical Society Open Day*	Horndean Technology College PO8 9PQ	< <a href="http://www.hgs-familyhistory.com">www.hgs-familyhistory.com</a> >
Sat 5 Oct 10.00 - 16.00	Oxfordshire FHS Open Day*	Marlborough School Woodstock OX20 1LP	< <a href="http://www.ofhs.org.uk/OpenDay">www.ofhs.org.uk/OpenDay</a> >
Mon 7 Oct 14.00 - 15.00	Berkshire Record Office Introductory Tour	Berkshire Record Office Reading RG1 6AF	book ahead on 0118 901 5132
Sat 26 Oct 10.00 - 16.30	West Surrey FHS Open Day*	Woking Leisure Centre GU22 9BA	< <a href="http://www.wsfhs.org/pages/openday.php">www.wsfhs.org/pages/openday.php</a> >

### 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) your pictures should be sent 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 the users of several public libraries and institutions. Issues of the journal are posted on the society's website (in the Members' Area) at the same time that the printed edition is mailed.