

Keeping connected

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in touch

Berkshire Family History Society



Malthus School - Blewbury

Image by Penny Stokes

William Malthus was a London merchant who left land at Noke, Oxfordshire, to fund a school at Blewbury. Its five-bay Queen Anne style school building close to St. Michael's church was built in 1709



On your marks!

- **Four** upcoming events in our online programme
- **Three** new links to websites you may not have seen before
- **Two** new member-only website sections - all neatly summarised for you in ...
- **One** edition of **in touch**

GO!**New Landscapes****Enclosure in Berkshire**

Enclosure in Berkshire

Last week's newsletter brought details of how you could view the tithe maps and awards for the parishes you are interested in online. This week we are focusing on enclosure maps.

Between 1700 and 1900 the landscape of Berkshire was transformed. The open fields, particularly predominant in the north, common lands and manorial wastes were swept away and replaced by small fields surrounded by hedgerows. Enclosure impacted over half of the county in this period.

The [New Landscapes](#) website, produced by the Berkshire Record Office, makes use of digital technologies to provide access to historic manuscript maps and documents online. The maps and land awards on this site tell the story of how Berkshire's common fields were enclosed between 1738 and 1883. You can search by parish or name and view images of the original enclosure awards and maps.

[View the site](#)

Our Migration Story The Making of Britain

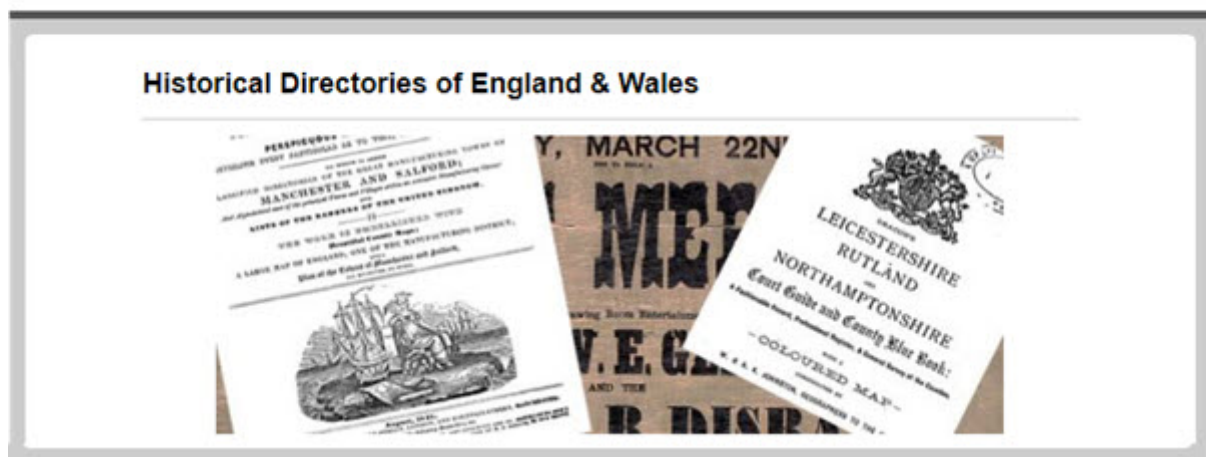
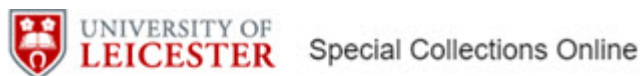
Those of you with migrants in your family histories may be interested in some of the content of this website. It presents often untold stories of those who came to and in many cases helped to shape the British Isles.

Information is drawn from and delivered through a diverse range of historical source material and is grouped into four distinct time-

periods - AD43-1500, 1500-1750, 1750-1900 and 1900-2000s.

While you are unlikely to find direct ancestors of your own within this material, you will be provided with valuable historical perspective and context on those who came to the country during these times. Discover such things as Letters of Denization from the 15th century, follow the arrival of the Huguenots, learn of Irish and Italian migration into Britain and many accounts of many other peoples during the last century,

<https://www.ourmigrationstory.org.uk/>



Historical Directories

A reminder for many of you, I'm sure, but possibly new for some, do keep an eye on the University of Leicester's excellent historical directories collection which is periodically updated. This contains almost 700 digital copies of trade directories for England and Wales dating from 1760 to the 1910s.

There are 12 directories available for Berkshire dating from 1833 to 1915.

Happy Hunting!

[View the site](#)



List of Voters

for an Election of Burgesses
to serve in Parliament for
the Borough of Reading, Berkshire

17 June 1790

Reading's Voter's List for 1790

Reading's election in 1790 was contested, although the sitting MPs, Francis Annesley and Richard Aldworth Neville would go on to hold their seats against the opposing candidate, Richard Barry, 7th Earl of Barrymore. Annesley had sat in the House of Commons since 1774 and by 1790, enjoyed wide support and popularity in Reading. He came top of the poll that year. Aldworth Neville, later 2nd Baron

Braybrooke, had served Reading since 1784. Both were supporters of William Pitt the younger. Their opponent, an English nobleman also infamous as a rake, gambler, sportsman and womanizer, perhaps unsurprisingly was defeated.

Now in the members' area of the website – [Info > Berkshire Data](#) is a transcript of the voters list for 1790, giving names, occupations and how they voted. The original document is held in the Berkshire Record Office.

Check it out if you have Reading connections, are interested in politics or haven't seen a Voter's List before.

[View the web page \(login required\)](#)



Railway, Plans and People

In the nineteenth century, Britain's railway network grew rapidly. Between 1845 and 1900, £3 billion was invested in building railways. Six thousand miles of track was laid by 1870 alone, and by the end of the century, millions of passengers were using trains.

As each potential new line was investigated, railway officials had to establish ownership of the land it needed to purchase in order to lay its track.

A fully index transcript of this data is now available on the society's website for two new railways proposed in 1845

- Reading, Guildford & Reigate Railway
- Reading & Reigate Railway

Find it in the Members only section, under [Info > Berkshire Data](#).

Take a look if your ancestors may have been owning or occupying land along this route or if you haven't explored Railway sources before.

[View the page](#)



DNA Special Interest Group - online

25 July 14.30-16.30 Facilitated by Debbie Kennett

This special interest discussion group is aimed at those wanting to get the most out of their DNA results. It is facilitated by international DNA expert, Debbie Kennett. Sessions are held quarterly, but there is no obligation to attend on a regular basis and first time attendees are always welcomed. Pre-booking required.

£4 members £5 non-members

[Book now](#)



Natter Group – online

4 August 19.00 - end time varies
Facilitated by Gillian Stevens and Chad Hanna

Informal discussion group, topics are chosen by the group on a monthly basis. Pre-booking required.

Free

[Book now](#)



Reading in the Second World War

6th August 14.00 – 15.00 Online Talk by Stuart Hylton

Based upon his book *Reading at War*, Stuart will explore how the war affected Reading and its citizens. From the victims of war, both military and

civilian, the privations and shortages; examples of heroism and self-sacrifice; to in contrast, the black market and war-related crime. Hear about the relationship between the townspeople and the 25,000 or so evacuees visited on them in September 1939. And see how wartime advertising expounded 'make do and mend', to combat the lack of things to buy.

£4 members £5 non-members

[Book now](#)

Reading's Home Guard

13th August 14.00 – 15.00 Online Talk by Mike Cooper



Formed in 1940, the Home Guard was one of a number of voluntary and part-time formations raised for local defence. Despite the bumbling image created by the BBC classic "Dad's Army", the force emerged as a well-trained, well equipped and highly motivated part of Britain's defences. Find out about Reading's Home Guard in this fascinating talk.

£4 members £5 non-members

[Book now](#)

[View Complete Events List](#)



Berkshire Family History Society
for family history research - in Berkshire and beyond

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