

Berkshire Family Historian



*The quarterly journal of the
Berkshire Family History Society*

September 2020

Volume 44



Inside this issue:

**Talbot family of barge builders
Purley's Japanese Prisoners of War in World War Two
Berkshire's Mayflower connection
Berkshire men abroad**

Berkshire Family History Society

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Submissions to the editorial panel

All submissions to the editorial panel will be considered to be offered for publication in the magazine and on the society's website, unless accompanied by a clear statement to the contrary. If the written piece asks for a response from readers, permission to publish contact details will be assumed.

Copy deadlines are 24 December for the March issue, 24 March for the June issue, 24 June for the September issue and 24 September for the December issue.

Front cover image

Maiwand Lion in Forbury Gardens by Mark Apcar.

Berkshire Family Historian

The quarterly journal of the Berkshire Family History Society

September 2020

Volume 44

Family names appearing in this issue

(excluding living people, authors of sources, royalty, corporate names, glancing reference to famous people and members' interests).

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Editor's Notes

Welcome to your September *Berkshire Family Historian*. As life continues to return to a semblance of normality, we hope that our members are adjusting to the new measures in place to ensure everybody's safety.

The society has managed to continue an active programme of events, arranged both by The Centre and through the branches. You may have attended a local branch Annual Meeting, for which we are grateful for your participation. A bonus of the temporary change to online events, is that more members have been able to be involved, as geographical boundaries have not presented limitations as they normally would. It is very pleasing that we have had more contact with our overseas and out-of-county members, and we hope that this can continue. When it is safe to do so, branches will be returning to physical meetings, but please do keep an eye on your regular newsletters and the website for current information.

The society website is a mine of information with events listings, research guides, exchange journals, members' forum, free data for members and, of course, the society bookshop. If you have not had the opportunity yet, please do take the time to explore the site – it is well worth a visit with a lot of member only content. With this in mind, if you haven't yet done so, please renew your membership - it is very easy and quick to do online.

As always, we welcome articles from our readers, and are always grateful for the effort. Please send anything you feel would be of interest to others to us at editor@berksfhs.org.uk. Long or short articles, it doesn't matter, they all count and are welcomed.

Vicki Chesterman

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Chairman's Corner - Update



This is my final update, for a while at least, as chairman as I step down at the society's AGM, having served the maximum consecutive term laid out in the constitution. Vicki Chesterman also steps down as secretary, again having served the maximum term as a trustee.

It has been a busy three years. We have moved premises, launched a new events programme, began a digital transformation and are now in the midst of enabling the society to continue

to flourish safely for our members and visitors during the Covid-19 pandemic. All of that has happened because of the great team of individuals who step forward to volunteer their time and skills to help the society. Thank you to you all - you are amazing.

Details of September's AGM are given in this *Historian*. It will be online, and we hope that wherever you live, you will be able to join in. As we prepare this edition for press, we already have individuals nominated to stand as Chairman and Secretary. All appointments are of course subject to members' agreement at the AGM, but the society looks to be in very safe hands as it moves forward.

Catherine Sampson

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Society Annual General Meeting and election of officers and trustees

As you are aware, we have had to postpone the society AGM due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Ongoing restrictions mean that we are unable to hold a gathering, so we have made alternative arrangements.

We are pleased to inform you that the society AGM will be held this year on **Friday 4th September at 7.30pm**, via Zoom. Places must be booked in advance on the society website. If there are two members within your household, please book two places.

This is a great opportunity for those of you who haven't previously been able to attend an AGM for whatever reason, to join this important part

of the governance of the society. We welcome all members, wherever you may live.

To be able to join this meeting, you will need a computer device which has a microphone, speakers and ideally also a webcam. You need to be able to access emails from this device. You will be asked to download a small piece of software if this is the first time you have used Zoom, to enable you to use the online conferencing software which can easily be found online.

Details allowing you to join the meeting will be sent to you in advance, along with the relevant paperwork, but only if you have booked a place.

Alf Ison (1933 - 2020)

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Alf Ison, member number 1, on 29th June. He attended the first meeting of what would become the Berkshire Family History Society, when responding to a 1973 advert which Sue Willmott and Jackie Blow inserted in the paper. The advert spoke about forming a society for likeminded people interested in family history.

Alf was truly knowledgeable on the subject and supported the society greatly, being our first chairman and editor. He was instrumental in the organisation of the society and drew up its first constitution with Cliff Debney and Chad Hanna. He oversaw the introduction of regional branches, both newly created ones, and one that came from the integration of the Windsor, Slough, and Eton Family History Society, now our Windsor Branch. Alf, and his wife, Avril, also gave their time to transcribe MIs and to run evening classes to help people with family history.

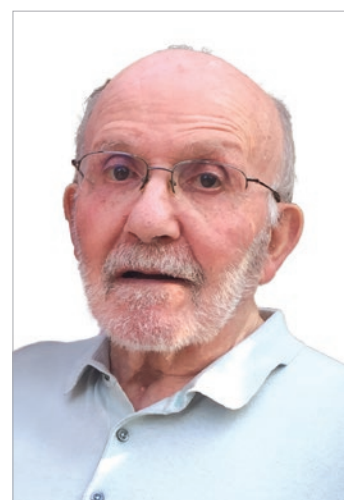
It was Alf who founded the society's first regular journal, from a hand-assembled publication at the start, until he handed over the reins in 1989. He also authored the society's book '*Secretary Hand ABC*' which has proved ever popular to family historians. It grew out of a need to provide a resource for society volunteers who were

transcribing records, and he generously gifted the rights to the society.

One of Alf's many talks on family history was 'Family History from a Biscuit Tin' which was one of three used to launch the Bracknell and Wokingham Branch. Audience members were invited to pick items, e.g. a hire purchase receipt for a piano, from the tin, the contents of which he would then use to show how to build a family tree.

Alf leaves behind three children and their families and a partner. Our condolences go out to them, and we hope that they will take some comfort in the fact that Alf made a lasting difference to family historians in Berkshire, past, present, and future.

Thank you to Jackie Blow and Chad Hanna for sharing their memories of Alf.



A Problem Family

Terry Wickenden illustrates the problems that can be presented when researching a family

Introduction

I am sure that during your research you have found some people who you cannot pin down. This is the story of my chase for information on Lucy Ann Lines, the wife of Edwin Mark Hartwell. Before I start, I think I had better tell you how I do my family history.

Research Sources

I am mainly an “armchair” genealogist by which I mean I do most of my research on the web. I have a 12 Month World Subscription with Findmypast.

On my bookmark bar in my web browser I have short-cuts to all the census search pages in Findmypast - 9 in all: 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911 and 1939. This makes it much quicker to do a search in a particular census than starting at the home page of Findmypast.

I also have several other short cuts bookmarked which include:

1. GRO Register of births at <https://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/certificates>. The great thing about this site is that it allows you to search for births with the mother’s maiden name even for births prior to 1920.
2. FreeBMD at <https://www.freebmd.org.uk/>. A great source for births, marriages, and deaths from 1837 to 1989.

There are many other websites that I use but these do not really impact on this story.

Research Process

When I find a new marriage in my family tree, I have a number of steps that I will follow to complete the family:

1. Check what children they may have had using the GRO register of births.
2. I will then check that I have the right children by using the censuses that occur after the birth date. One of the most important of these is of course the 1911 census which tells us the number of children a family has had and how many are still alive.
3. Sometimes you can find the family but not the child, I would then look for the death of the child on the FreeBMD site.

Building the Family

I first came across Lucy when she appeared in the 1891 census as the wife of Edwin Mark Hartwell, one of my blood relatives. They were living in Byfield, Northamptonshire.

1891 Census

| First Name(s) | Last Name | Relationship | Marital Status | Sex | Age | Birth Year | Birthplace |
|---------------|-----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----|------------|-----------------------------------|
| Edwin M | Hartwell | Head | Married | Male | 24 | 1867 | Byfield, Northamptonshire |
| Lucy | Hartwell | Wife | Married | Female | 24 | 1867 | Little Brington, Northamptonshire |
| Albert H | Hartwell | Son | | Male | 3 | 1888 | Byfield, Northamptonshire |
| Fred | Hartwell | Son | | Male | 1 | 1890 | Byfield, Northamptonshire |

This gave me the basis for finding additional information about the family. I now looked for the marriage on the FreeBMD site. Here I found a marriage between Edwin Mark Hartwell and Lucy Ann Lines in the September 1887 quarter registered in Daventry, Northamptonshire. So, I now had Lucy's maiden name.

Next, I headed to the GRO site to look for children. For those of you who have not used the site, a screenshot of the search form is below. It allows you to search a maximum 5-year period at a time and you have to search for males and females separately. Using the 'Surname at Birth' and 'Mother's Maiden Surname' limits the number of matches returned.

Search the GRO Online Index

Which index would you like to search?
 Events registered in England or Wales: Birth Death

When was the birth registered?
 Year: * +/- year(s) *

Please enter your search criteria, mandatory fields are indicated with a *
 Up to 250 matching results will be returned so providing any additional information you know will help locate the registration you are looking for.

Who are you searching for?
 Surname at Birth: * ? Include: ?
Search for records with a matching surname
 First Forename: ? Include: ?
Search for records with a matching first forename
 Second Forename: ?
 Sex: * ?
 Mother's Maiden Surname: ? Include: ?
Search for records with a matching Mother's Maiden Surname

Where was the birth registered?
 District of Birth: ?

Do you already know any GRO Reference details for the registration?
 Quarter: ?
 Volume: ? Page: ?

Screenshot of search form in GRO site

I found the following:

| Name | Mother's Maiden Name | Date | Registration District |
|---------------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Hartwell, Fred | Lines | 1889 D Quarter | Daventry |
| Hartwell, William Frank | Lines | 1893 J Quarter | Daventry |
| Hartwell, William Thomas | Lines | 1895 D Quarter | Daventry |
| Hartwell, Bertha Lucy Ann | Lines | 1897 D Quarter | Daventry |
| Hartwell, Horace Arthur | Lines | 1899 J Quarter | Edmonton |
| Hartwell, Ethel | Lines | 1901 J Quarter | Edmonton |
| Hartwell, Walter | Lines | 1904 D Quarter | Edmonton |

These results threw up a few questions:

1. Where was Albert Henry who appeared in the 1891 census?
2. Why were 2 sons registered as William so close together?
3. Why were there so many children registered in Edmonton? Were they actually a different family?

The first question was fairly easy to resolve by searching for Albert on the GRO site by name but omitting the mother's maiden name. This gave me the following results:

| Name | Mother's Maiden Name | Date | Registration District |
|------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| Hartwell, Albert Henry | <i>Line</i> | 1888 J Quarter | Daventry |

This was obviously mis-recorded information on the original registration.

My first suspicion when I see 2 children with the same name is that the first one died. Searching the FreeBMD I found the death of William Frank Hartwell, aged 4, registered in the September quarter of 1897 in Edmonton. This was the same district as the suspicious births.

The third question was solved when I found Edwin and Lucy on the 1901 census. Their address was 24 Pembroke Road, Tottenham. So, they must have moved between the 1891 and 1901 censuses.

But the 1901 census added further questions. The household was listed as follows:

1901 Census

| First Name(s) | Last Name | Relationship | Marital Status | Sex | Age | Birth Year | Birthplace |
|---------------|-----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----|------------|----------------------------|
| Mark | Hartwell | Head | Married | Male | 34 | 1867 | Byfield, Northamptonshire |
| Lucy | Hartwell | Wife | Married | Female | 34 | 1867 | Brington, Northamptonshire |
| Albert | Hartwell | Son | | Male | 12 | 1889 | Byfield, Northamptonshire |
| Fred | Hartwell | Son | | Male | 11 | 1890 | Byfield, Northamptonshire |
| Edwin | Hartwell | Son | | Male | 9 | 1892 | Byfield, Northamptonshire |
| William | Hartwell | Son | | Male | 5 | 1896 | Byfield, Northamptonshire |
| Bertha | Hartwell | Daughter | | Female | 3 | 1898 | Edmonton, Middlesex |
| Horace | Hartwell | Son | | Male | 2 | 1899 | Tottenham, Middlesex |
| Baby | Hartwell | Daughter | | Female | 0 | 1901 | Tottenham, Middlesex |
| Bertha | Caswell | Visitor | Married | Female | 22 | 1879 | Brington, Northamptonshire |

The things that struck me immediately was the following:

1. The head of the family was recorded as Mark but then I did know that he was christened Edwin Mark and it was not unknown for people to use their middle name.
2. There was a baby daughter born in 1901 who was obviously Ethel registered in the June Quarter of 1901.
3. There was also a son Edwin who was recorded as being born in 1892.

It was back to the GRO site to find Edwin Hartwell born about 1892. What I found startled me. It gave me the following result:

| Name | Mother's Maiden Name | Date | Registration District |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|------------------------------|
| Hartwell, Edwin Mark | <i>George</i> | 1893 J Quarter | Daventry |

This was puzzling as it was also the same quarter that the William who died was registered. Also why was the mother's maiden name George!

I put this puzzle aside for a bit and looked for the 1911 census so that I could confirm the total number of children that the couple had, only to find yet another conundrum. Their address was in Silver Street, Tottenham.

1911 Census

| First Name(s) | Last Name | Relationship | Marital Status | Sex | Age | Birth Year | Birthplace |
|---------------|-----------|--------------|----------------|--------|-----|------------|----------------------------------|
| E M | Hartwell | Head | Married | Male | 45 | 1866 | Byfield, Northamptonshire |
| Lucy Ann | Hartwell | Wife | Married | Female | 45 | 1866 | Great Brington, Northamptonshire |
| Fred | Hartwell | Son | Single | Male | 21 | 1890 | Byfield, Northamptonshire |
| E M | Hartwell | Son | Single | Male | 19 | 1892 | Byfield, Northamptonshire |
| William | Hartwell | Son | | Male | 15 | 1896 | Byfield, Northamptonshire |
| Bertha Lucy | Hartwell | Daughter | | Female | 13 | 1898 | Edmonton, Middlesex |
| Horace Arthur | Hartwell | Son | | Male | 11 | 1900 | Tottenham, Middlesex |
| Ethel | Hartwell | Daughter | | Female | 10 | 1901 | Tottenham, Middlesex |
| Walty | Hartwell | Son | | Male | 6 | 1905 | Edmonton, Middlesex |
| Stanley | Hartwell | Son | | Male | 4 | 1907 | Edmonton, Middlesex |
| James | Hartwell | Son | | Male | 9m | 1911 | Edmonton, Middlesex |

The other bit of information I got from this census was that Lucy had a total of 11 children, 1 of whom had died. As with all the other census, this one threw up some questions:

1. Albert Henry had obviously left home and I have to look for him in the 1911 census.
2. Where had Stanley come from as he was not one of the children I had previously found.
3. Also, what was the story with Edwin Mark Junior as his registration date did not really tally with his age?

For Stanley I went back to the GRO site and found the following:

| Name | Mother's Maiden Name | Date | Registration District |
|-------------------|----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Hartwell, Stanley | George | 1907 M Quarter | Edmonton |

Another child registered with George as the mother's maiden name!!

I decided that I would double check Edwin's birth on the FreeBMD site and found the following:

| Quarter | Surname | First name(s) | District | Vol | Page |
|----------|----------|---------------|----------|-----|----------|
| Dec 1891 | Hartwell | Edwin Mark | Daventry | 3b | see J/93 |
| Jun 1893 | Hartwell | Edwin Mark | Daventry | 3b | 105 |

FreeBMD infers that the second entry is a late registration of the birth. So, I believe that Edwin was only registered when his brother William Frank was registered.

None of this explains why for two of the children Lucy's maiden name is given as George. I have not been able to find Lucy prior to her marriage in 1887 but it is on my list of "brickwalls" to break down as I am intrigued by this anomaly.

Events organised from The Centre for Heritage and Family History

September - December 2020

Whilst the situation with the Covid-19 pandemic remains uncertain, the society has decided to continue offering only online events for last quarter of 2020. We hope that next year we will be able to return to face to face events, alongside a range online. The great news is that this means that currently all of our events are available to everyone, if the time zone allows, where you live. So please do take advantage of this and the member discounts available.

The society is using Zoom to deliver its webinars. The event link is sent to attendees in advance, so pre-booking is required. To access Zoom, you need a computer device, such as a laptop or tablet, with a microphone, speakers and preferably a webcam.

Please do check the website often, as changes may occur and new events are regularly added.

Book and pay online at <https://berksfhs.org>. To claim your member discount - simply select the member ticket option.

| Courses - Online | |
|---|--|
| See website for full details. Places limited, pre-booking required. | |
| Fridays, 2.00 - 4.00pm October - 2nd, 9th, 16th, 23rd & 30th November – 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th December – 4th Tickets £125 (members £115) | Victorian Sources for Historians Course: <i>with Dr Margaret Simons</i> Build your knowledge of Victorian sources in this ten week course. The nineteenth century is a treasure trove of documents relating to the lives of our Victorian forebears. A selection of these sources will be used to provide context and a sense of period, whilst developing our knowledge of what is available from museums, archives, libraries and record offices. During the course we will consider the type of sources available and using a themed approach uncover what life was like in the 19th century, a period that witnessed profound change and development. There will also be an opportunity to apply learning in a small project. |
| Mondays, 7.00 - 8.30pm October - 5th, 12th & 26th November – 2nd, 9th & 23rd Tickets £35 (members £28) | Beginners' Family History Course: <i>with Chad Hanna & Gillian Stevens</i> This course comprises of a series of six workshops for those new to researching family history including where to start, how to progress and good research practice. Learn how to work with core records of civil registration, censuses, parish registers and modern wills. Discover the different genealogy websites, the content they offer and their strengths and limitations. |

| DNA Interest Group - Online | |
|--|--|
| TICKETS £5 (members £4) All welcome. Pre-booking required. | |
| October - Saturday 10th 2.30 - 4.30pm | 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. |

Specialist 1-1 Consultation (Online) - Military Records

TICKETS £4 (members £3)

1-1 consultation and advice, Three 30 minute slots are available on each day, so places are limited and pre-booking is required.

October - Saturday 24th

11.00 - 11.30am

11.40 - 12.10pm

12.20 - 12.50pm

November - Monday 16th

1.00 - 1.30am

1.40 - 2.10pm

2.20 - 2.50pm

Specialist Military Advice with *Trevor Maidment*

Trevor specialises in research of all forces' records and histories, particularly those relating to the British Army. He is very happy to give general research advice such as what military records were created, where they can be found online and what information can be found in them. He also welcomes more specific enquiries relating to the main services: Army, Navy, RAF and Merchant Navy.

Workshops - Online

TICKETS £10 (members £9)

Places limited, pre-booking required.

October - Saturday 3rd

11.00am - 1.00pm

The Poor Law *Tutor: Joan Dils*

Many family historians have ancestors whose lives were touched by poverty. This workshop will look at provision for the poor between 1834 and 1929 and examine the records which may survive and their usefulness to family historians.

Currently fully booked.

October - Saturday 17th

11.00am - 1.00pm

Writing Up Your Family History *Tutor: Dr Barry Jerome*

Have you been researching your family tree and would like to write it up as a story but don't know how to start? In the workshop, Barry will help you get started and show you how you can structure it, so that you can write-up your family history while still continuing your research.

Family History Talks - Online

TICKETS £5 (members £4)

Pre-booking is required.

October - Saturday 31st

2.00 - 3.15pm

Beginning Your Family History: *with Peter Bevan*

This talk introduces the starting steps to take in discovering your family history, to help you get the most out of your research. Designed to help those just starting out or those a little more established who would like to make sure they have covered all the basics.

November - Saturday 14th

2.30 - 3.45pm

DNA Testing and Family History: how DNA testing can advance your genealogical research: *with Debbie Kennett*

DNA testing is now all the rage but what can you really learn from a DNA test? This talk provides an introduction to the use of DNA testing as a tool for family history research, for those interested in DNA and how testing works, but, who haven't necessarily tested yet.

Social History Talks - Online

TICKETS £5 (members £4)

Pre-booking is required. Book all three talks in the 'Potpourri' series for the price of two.

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>September - Thursday 3rd 2.00 – 3.00pm 'Second World War' 4th talk in series</p> | <p>Women in World War Two: <i>with Bill King</i> Discover how the talents of women were integrated into the British war effort on the Home Front, in industry and in the Armed Services at every level during World War Two. Bill is a popular speaker and his talks are meticulously researched.</p> |
| <p>September – Thursday 24th 2.00 – 3.00pm 'Second World War' 5th talk in series</p> | <p>The Changing Army: The British Army 1939 - 1945: <i>with Mike Cooper</i> The Second World War mobilised British society in a way no other had and this was reflected in the changing composition of the Army. The Army also adapted to different conditions, environments and technology. Discover how the Army was structured, recruited and supported and how this changed during the War. What “being in the Army” meant could vary enormously from being a pay clerk in Manchester, to a tank crewman in Rangoon. A must for anyone with ancestors who fought in the war.</p> |
| <p>October – Thursday 22nd 2.00 – 3.00pm 'Potpourri' 1st talk in series</p> | <p>Reading Abbey: <i>with John Painter</i> Discover the impact of Reading Abbey on the town of Reading, both in its heyday as a royal Abbey and as one of the ten leading monasteries in the country. Hear about the impact of the dissolution and its subsequent use as a royal palace, the destruction of the Civil War, and the subsequent re-development of the Abbey Quarter and preservation of the Abbey Ruins up to the present day.</p> |
| <p>November – Thursday 5th 2.00 – 3.00pm 'Potpourri' 2nd talk in series</p> | <p>Living Through the English Civil War: <i>with Catherine Sampson</i> The countryside in and around Reading was horribly affected by the Civil War, and this talk tells the story of what happened to the ordinary folk when the soldiers arrived. How villagers were caught up in the skirmishes, perished as a result of disease, and attempted to stave off financial disaster. Amongst the masses, we can however still identify the individual: the husband who hid his valuables, the Pest House occupant who feared the worst, and the Woolhampton sheep farmer who attempted to stop the plundering.</p> |
| <p>November – Thursday 19th 2.00 – 3.00pm 'Potpourri' 3rd talk in series</p> | <p>The Fairmile Hospital: <i>with Mark Stevens</i> One hundred and seventy five years ago, public mental health care was invented. Acts of Parliament from 1845 resulted in 'lunatic asylums' being built in every county in England and Wales. Berkshire's own asylum opened in 1870, as what became known as Fair Mile Hospital. Situated near the River Thames, and close to the village of Cholsey, this institution dispensed care to generations of local people. Discover its history and experience 19th century mental healthcare.</p> |

Natter Group - Online and FREE

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>September - Tuesday 1st October - Tuesday 6th November - Tuesday 3rd December - Tuesday 1st</p> | <p>Informal discussion group facilitated by Chad Hanna and Gillian Stevens. Topics are chosen by the group on a monthly basis. Free to attend, members only. Pre-booking is required. 7.00pm - end time varies.</p> |
|--|--|

Historical epidemics discovered during my research

Barry Jerome shows us that the current pandemic is nothing new

The current pandemic has prompted me to write about epidemics I have found while researching my family history. The first epidemic I noticed was in the Ringwood parish records during a visit to the Hampshire Record Office. This was a smallpox epidemic. Although the death toll globally from the Covid-19 virus is high, in the small rural town of Ringwood ninety-two people died in one year in 1726. I do not have exact figures for population in Ringwood then but, extrapolating back from 1821, it appears to have represented about five percent of the population. Translating this into equivalent figures for Reading now, for example, it would represent a death toll of 11,000 in one year.

I was researching my Legg and Mew ancestors in Ringwood when I noticed that many burials in 1726 had a note beside them to indicate smallpox. The epidemic started very slowly with three or four deaths at the end of 1725 in December and January, with no smallpox deaths in February. The number then doubled in March, April and May to seven or eight deaths each month. It was June and July when the epidemic took off to reach a peak of twenty deaths from smallpox in August. This number gradually decreased again until the last death from smallpox in November 1726. The

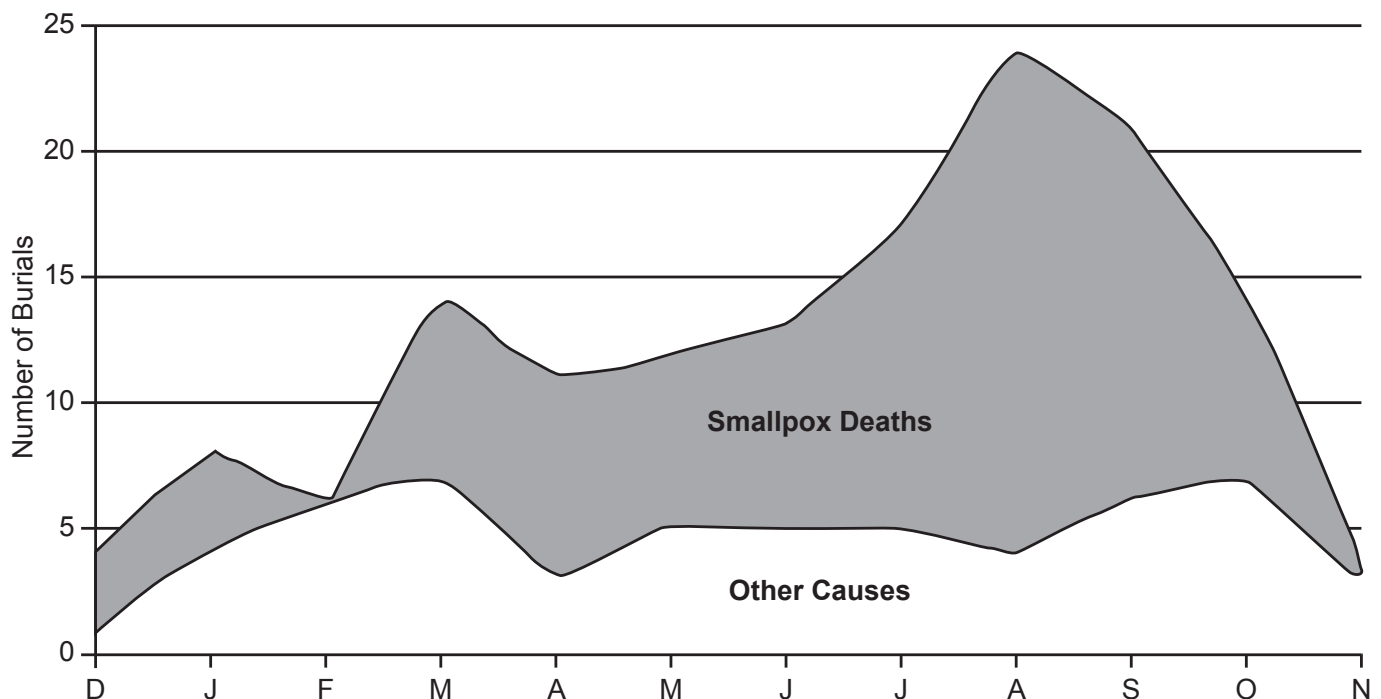
Ro value for smallpox is about 5, compared to Ro of 3 for the current Covid virus. Smallpox is therefore much more contagious with each person infecting 5 others if no preventative action is taken.

I have created a graph of the burials from deaths due to smallpox and other causes to demonstrate the progress of the epidemic (see graph at bottom of page). In total, there were one hundred and forty-eight deaths in Ringwood that year, compared to forty-nine deaths in the same period the following year.

The first death recorded was Elizabeth Emberley who was buried on the fourteenth of December 1725. The last death of the epidemic was just recorded as "A child of John Whifin" buried on the sixth of November 1726. John Whifin had died of smallpox earlier that year.

Christmas 1950 smallpox outbreak in Brighton

Much more recently an epidemic was contained through swift action and tight control from the outset. While researching the history of my daughter's house I found that there was a major event in Brighton and Hove in the early 1950s.



Smallpox epidemic in Ringwood 1725/6

Between 1950 and 1951 Brighton was affected by an outbreak of smallpox. Britain had been free of the disease since 1935. Just before Christmas 1950 there was a full-scale epidemic. It was brought in by an RAF officer who had arrived from India. He was on leave visiting his fiancée in Brighton. The first person affected was the fiancée's father who was a taxi driver. A major incident was declared, and the outbreak was closely managed including a vaccination programme and tracing all people who had travelled in the taxi. 77,000 people were vaccinated in Brighton and a further 50,000 in Hove. All mass meetings were cancelled, and schools were closed. During the epidemic Brighton "was a city of frightened people and deserted streets". The outbreak lasted more than six weeks. Infected patients were due to have been taken to Dartford hospital in Kent, but heavy snowfall made it impossible to get there. Ten people died from catching smallpox including the taxi driver, six nurses and hospital workers. A further twenty-five who caught the disease

survived. The outbreak had been contained through swift action and tight control.

Cholera in Kingston

In another area of my genealogy research an ancestor, Jonathan Jerome, seems to have left Kingston-upon-Thames with his wife and young family in the 1830s owing to the threat from disease. He was in a good trade having been a baker for a number of years but moved to the small village of Shiplake as a (low paid) agricultural labourer. There is no documented reason for the move, but a likely cause appears to have been the growing threat from cholera, which was endemic in Kingston in the early 1800s. RO for cholera is about 2.

It can be difficult to imagine the constant threat of epidemics to our ancestors, even as recently as 100 years ago. However, as the current pandemic shows, even with our access to modern medicines we are not immune from epidemics.

Berkshire's Mayflower connection

To celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Pilgrim Fathers' voyage to the New World we take a look at Berkshire's connection.

September 2020 sees the quatercentenary of the start of the voyage of the *Mayflower*. Leaving Plymouth on September 6th 1620 it arrived at

Cape Cod on November 9th 1620. Normally carrying cargo of wine and dry goods, this time it carried 102 passengers who were all looking to start a new life in the Colonies.



*Mayflower II, replica of the original ship, at Plymouth, Mass.
(GmaJoli [CC SA-BY 4.0])*

Mary Norris is Berkshire's only connection to the *Mayflower*. Thought to be born in 1592 near Newbury, Mary married Isaac Allerton in Leiden, Holland on November 4th 1611, in a double wedding with Sarah Allerton (Isaac's sister) and Degory Priest (Sarah's second husband). Isaac became a citizen of Leiden in 1614 and worked as a tailor.

Mary, Isaac and three of their children (Bartholomew (b c1612), Remember (b 1614) and Mary (b 1616), all born in Leiden) embarked for Southampton from Leiden on the *Speedwell*, to join the *Mayflower* for the journey to the New World.

Originally departing from Southampton on August 5th, a leakage problem with the *Speedwell* meant a stop at Dartmouth on August

12th for repairs. After patching up the *Speedwell*, the two boats left Dartmouth on August 21st. Three hundred miles into the journey, *Speedwell's* problems with sea-worthiness came back and the two boats returned to England, at Plymouth. The recurrent leaks and loss of time spent trying to repair the *Speedwell* meant that the decision was taken for the *Mayflower* to make the voyage alone.

Being one of three heavily pregnant women on board the *Mayflower*, Mary was the first person to give birth in the Plymouth Colonies. Unfortunately, the child was stillborn just as the *Mayflower* docked in the harbour.

Mary and Isaac had another child, Sarah, born in 1618, who travelled over on the *Anne* in 1623, in the care of her aunt, Sarah Priest. There was another child born in Leiden who was buried, unnamed, on February 5th 1619/20.

Mary and Isaac's daughter, Mary (b 1616), was the last survivor of the *Mayflower* Pilgrims when she died in 1699, and one of her descendant's was Franklin D Roosevelt, 32nd President of the United States of America.

Mary, senior, died on February 25th 1620/21 in Plymouth, Massachusetts during the first winter

at the Plymouth Colony. She is buried there in Coles Hill Burial Ground.

After Mary's death, Isaac went on to marry Fear Brewster and had, amongst other children, a son, also called Isaac, whose descendant was Zachary Taylor, 12th President of the United States of America.

Isaac was the fifth person to sign the "Mayflower Compact", originally titled "Agreement Between the Settlers of New Plymouth", which was the first governing document of the Plymouth Colony. It was signed aboard the *Mayflower* on November 11th 1620.

It's not much, but it is our county's link to one of the most notable historic events of the Western World.

Sources:

A History of the Allerton Family in the United States 1585-1885: and a Genealogy of the Descendants of Isaac Allerton by Walter S. Allerton (1900). <https://archive.org/details/historyofallerto1900alle>.

www.mayflower400uk.org



Signing of the Mayflower Compact 1620, a painting by Jean Leon Gerome Ferris 1899 [public domain]

The Centre for Heritage and Family History

2nd Floor, Reading Central Library, Abbey Square, Reading RG1 3BQ

<https://berksfhs.org.uk> 0118 950 9553 researchcentre@berksfhs.org.uk



Gain a new perspective on your research from the Centre

Update

At the time of preparing this edition of the Historian, the Research Centre remains shut due to the coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic. Please check the website for up to date details of the situation.

Whilst the Centre remains closed, the society has successfully negotiated new access arrangements to two of its subscription websites, Findmypast Worldwide and The Genealogist, which allows access to them by all of our members, wherever you are in the world. This is a great opportunity to access new records and extend your family research whilst staying safe and secure in your own home. And it's another great benefit of being a member of Berkshire Family History Society.

Limits and conditions apply – please see the website for more details and for access details (Info / Temporary access to subscription sites). To enable as many of our members as possible access to these subscription accounts, access codes, where needed, will be changed weekly.

Normal opening hours (please check before making a long journey)

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Mondays | 11.00 to 16.00 |
| Tuesdays | 10.30 to 16.00 and 18.45 to 21.00 |
| Saturdays | 10.30 to 14.30 |
| And last Thursday in the month | 10.30 to 16.00 |

Main features of the research zone (when we reopen).

- **FREE admission** for everyone
- **FREE of charge access to burgeoning online datasets** of Findmypast Worldwide, The 1939 Register, The British Newspaper Archive, Ancestry Worldwide edition and The Genealogist.
- **Research assistants** — society volunteers provide expert advice and support where needed.
- **Printing and photocopying** available for a nominal charge A3 and A4, B&W and colour
- **Dedicated PC preloaded with Berkshire data** (including baptisms, marriages, burials, probate records and trade directories). Data from many other English counties too, including the National Burial Index, 3rd edition.
- **Reference library** containing an extensive collection of primary and secondary source material such as Berkshire trade directories. You can also copy material, subject to provisions of UK copyright law.
- **Microfiche data** available on most English counties.
- **Complementary resources** — Reading's top-class local studies library adjoins the Centre.
- **Quarterly exhibitions** to inspire your research.
- **The Bookshop** with society publications, and a range of products in electronic and print formats. These include transcriptions, indexes, general and local guides for family historians, maps and a selection of local history books for Berkshire and adjoining counties. Browse and purchase at the Centre (credit and debit card payments accepted).
- **Refreshments** - tea and coffee, at just £1.00 a cup.
- **Lockers** to ensure that your personal possessions and valuables stay secure at all times.

Assisting family historians at a distance

The society recognises that not everyone can take up the research benefits of the Centre straight away. Keep in mind that the website, discussion list, and social media like Twitter and Facebook still offer you the means to benefit from the collective expertise and experience of fellow researchers.

In addition, the society offers an established postal /online search service of Berkshire names based on:

- **Berkshire baptisms**
- **Berkshire marriages**
- **Berkshire burials**
- **Berkshire probate index**

Simply nominate a surname (or several surnames) to access information. The detail supplied for each entry will vary depending on the particular database, and the content of any individual record within it. You can request searches online or by post.

Current charges are:

- **Individual database search: £3 per surname per database.** You will receive full details, to a maximum of 25 entries. Where there are more than 25 entries (likely for more commonly encountered Berkshire surnames), the society will let you know what the extra cost would be for supplying them all.
- **Search of all available databases: £6 per specified surname.** You will receive full details, to a maximum of 25 entries per database. Again, the society will advise the extra cost if there are more entries than this.

To obtain an estimate of likely costs for any searches that you are considering, or to resolve any other query, contact berksnamesearch@berksfhs.org.uk

For postal requests, you need to enclose a large A4 self-addressed envelope and stamps to cover return cost. (UK Large Letter size, First Class £1.15, Second Class 88p; Overseas postage costs will be between £2.97 and £3.82 according to country. Prices correct at April 2020). Please note that there may be a long delay with the postal service, until the Centre re-opens, so please use the email contact system if at all possible.

In case of any queries, it is helpful to provide a UK phone number too.

William Watkins Waite and his travelling family - the New Zealand years

Fred Waite continues the story of his much-travelled ancestor

It would appear that the Waite family was not treated to any sympathy when they finally arrived at Dunedin as an article in *The Otago Colonist* of December 11th 1857 reported a court action brought by William Waite against Young and Co., the ship's agents. The *Bosworth* tied up off Port Chalmers and the 2nd class cabin and steerage passengers were landed at Dunedin. However, the 1st Class cabin passengers were expected to make their own provisions for landing. William sued the agents for the cost of landing his family and baggage, £1 11s 6d [£75]. The agent argued that it was customary only to pay the landing expenses of the second cabin and steerage passengers and that they had fulfilled their contract by delivering the passengers to the port of Otago. The Magistrate ruled that the shippers were bound to land the plaintiff, with his family and luggage, at the ordinary landing place of the port of Otago; and as it had been the usage of the port to hold Dunedin as the proper landing-place, as admitted by the defendant in their landing the second class and steerage passengers at Dunedin free of expense, he therefore gave judgment against the defendant for £1 11s, 6d [£93], the freight claimed, with 3s costs, but that the jetty dues were payable by the plaintiff. It would appear that William Watkins Waite was not a man to be trifled with as there is no report of other passengers taking similar actions.

Otago is a provincial district in the southernmost part of the South Island. In 1848 the Scottish Free Church founded a settlement at Dunedin based on the ideas of Edward Gibbon Wakefield. Then sheep farmers took up land in the southland plain and in the downlands of North Otago. The discovery of gold in 1861 created a gold rush, which brought an estimated 14,000 people to the area. Later discoveries brought the mining population to 22,000 but by 1865 there were only 10,000 miners left on the fields. The prosperity brought by the gold rushes developed the city of Dunedin and after the gold had declined the land was utilised by sheep farming.

An Editorial in the *Otago Witness* of November 28th 1857, commenting upon the arrival of the *Bosworth* appears to disparage the arrival of this

ship on the grounds that it brought the wrong class of passenger.

“The arrival of capitalists and farmers would increase the need for labour, which was already in short supply. What was required was labour in large numbers.”

However, the arrival of the Waite family must have been welcomed, because William Watkin Waite opened the first school in Warepa and possibly the first in Otago.

A history of Warepa School, written in 1928, indicates that William had travelled from Canada specifically to open a school for the children of the Scottish settlers. How did he know of this requirement? Was the post advertised? The school first opened in William Waite's house, which is described as being quite a comfortable one. The walls and floor of the building were of wood, the roof of shingles and at one end of the schoolroom a spacious open fireplace made room for the large log fire, which was one of the few luxuries that the early settlers enjoyed. The furniture consisted of locally made wooden forms for the children and two small tables where the children went to in turn to write in their copybooks, which were headed by the teacher. All other writing was done with chalk on slates. The house was situated on section V, block CII, Clutha Survey District at the West End of the Warepa Bush. The section comprised 50 acres on which the Waites grazed cattle and grew a little wheat.

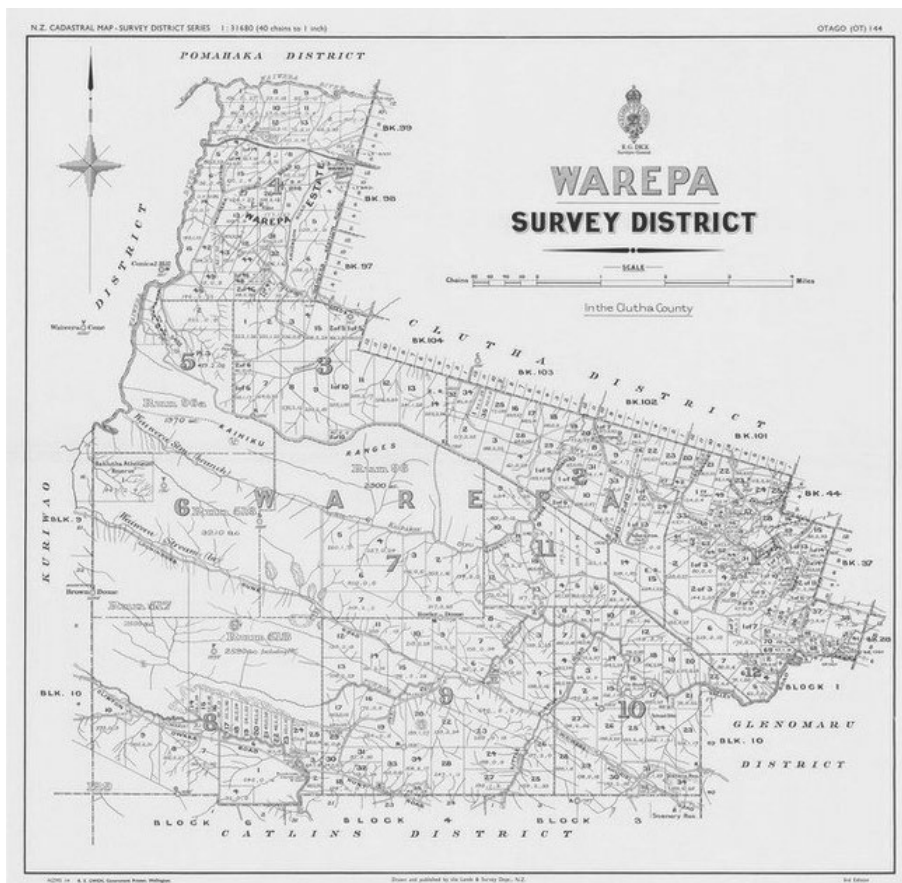
William was described as a man with no previous experience of teaching but was of a good ordinary education and, being popular with the children, maintained good discipline. He was a good penman and a good singer. Many of Warepa's future vocalists, including James Somerville, owed much to the tuition they received from him. The subjects taught were reading, writing, arithmetic, grammar, geography and religious instruction, the last of which took the form of daily Bible reading and prayer. William had the assistance of his daughter Ellen [Nellie]. During the cold weather William wore a thick cap, with wide ear-muffs, which he had brought from Canada and which was something of a novelty to

the pupils. He always warmed it at the fire before going outside. On one occasion when William was caught in a raging tussock fire and badly burned, he claimed that his cap saved him from permanent injury. Whilst he was recovering from this his wife Emily conducted the school. Emily was described as a highly educated lady, extremely popular with her neighbours and a real helpmate to William. It is worth mentioning that, although William had no formal teacher training, in the 1841 census his step-mother, Virtue Waite, is shown to be operating a Boarding School for young ladies in her house in Ock Street, Abingdon. Did William get the idea of teaching from her?

“Warepa or more properly, Wharepa [pronounced Wo-r-paaa] is a Maori word, meaning village or settlement. It was probably a favourite dwelling place with the Maori in pre-colonial days, as the centre of the settlement was a pleasantly situated hill which was at one time thickly covered in bush, and the Kaihiku river, close by, must have teemed with fish. As a colonial settlement, Warepa dates from 1853 when Peter Ayson bought land there and, in a few years, had other pioneers as his neighbours.

Wharepa was the first district in the Clutha to be blessed with the benefits of a school. At a very early date (1855) a Mr. Waite, who had a section to the west end of the Wharepa Bush, opened a private school. For some time, he taught in his own house, and when the first public school was built, he was appointed the first teacher. The school duty for several years until the attendance increased so much that the school was held in the first church, the school building being then used as a dwelling. Before this change came Mr. Waite resigned.

Of the early Wharepa scholars, some have made their mark in the professional world, one especially being worthy of mention vis; Dr. W. L. Christie, who was the first New Zealander to gain the MB degree. Dr Christie was almost a native of Wharepa: and is now practicing as a physician in Bristol, England.”



Warepa district survey 1950
(sourced from LINZ. Crown was Copyright preserved)

Extracts from *Reminiscences of the Early Settlement of Dunedin and South Otago*, Compiler and Editor John Wilson (1912).

By the end of 1858 there were three schools in Warepa, and William’s school became a public one under the control of the Clutha School Committee and the Otago Education Board, which voted £200 [£11,800] for a new building. A section of 50 acres was set apart as the school site and 5 acres of bush reserved for the use of the school. William was appointed as the first teacher for the new school. The old school continued to be held in his house until the new building was ready. The new school was a substantial structure containing, in addition to the classroom, accommodation for the teacher and was completed in 1859. The site was later described as a swampy, flax covered flat where, from the virgin bush clad hillside, echoed the screech of the kaka [large species of parrot], the chatter of the parakeet and the clear bell note of the tui [another native New Zealand bird], a veritable paradise. This building was still in existence in 1928 and being used as a residence.

The new school opened with a class of ten boys and three girls, including the four Waite children. The schoolroom was furnished with desks, forms,

a set of maps and a blackboard. At this time the Education Board provided only half of William's salary, which was about £100, the other half being raised by the school fee of 10s a pupil and subscriptions from the settlers. The attendance at the end of the first year had risen to eleven boys and four girls. The ages ranged from seven to eighteen for the boys and eleven to thirteen for the girls. The attendance figures dropped in the winter due to the lack of roads and bridges making it impossible for the children of the more remote houses to reach school.

Although William continued to educate the children, his situation was far from ideal. A report of December 1859 states –

“The Board has not voted money for fencing the land or even the buildings as protection from the many cattle that are continually grazing in the neighbourhood. It cannot be expected that a side-school teacher, whose salary is so uncertain as to its amount, and the tenure of whose office is at yet undefined, should bear the burden of protecting the property of the Government. The upper portion of the house is as yet not divided into rooms. There is a sum belonging to the committee - part of the original vote -which will suffice for this. The teacher experiences no small hindrance in prosecuting his labours from the want of books, slate pencils and suitable copy books; a proper supply of which seem to be provided neither by the Government nor by the merchants. From £45 to £50 as one-half of salary will be required, as an increase in the number of scholars is expected in consequence of the school-house having been erected.”

In 1861 William tendered his resignation and left the district early in 1862. His departure coincided with the passing of a second Educational Ordinance, which came into force at the

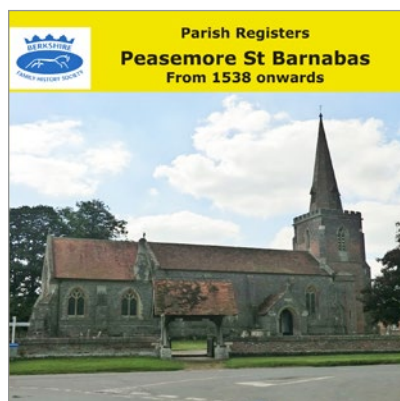
beginning of 1862. Warepa School graduated from a side-school to a main school with a committee of its own.

The Waite family, William Watkins, Emily, Ellen Wilson, Edward Benham, Henry Watkin and William Claxton, left New Zealand, from Port Chalmers, on September 11th 1863. They sailed on the Glencoe from Otago bound for Hobson's Bay, Victoria, Australia, where they arrived on October 4th 1863. It is not yet known where the family spent the time between leaving Warepa early in 1862 and leaving the country late in 1863. However, the Dunedin Town Rate Book shows that in 1859 William Watkin Waite owned the freehold of an unoccupied piece of land designated as Block 25, Section 10 with a rateable value of £2. In 1860 and 1861 this piece of land contained a house, which was occupied, and the rateable value had increased to £24. Is this where the Waite family were living after leaving Warepa? The Electoral Roll for the City of Dunedin dated October 1st 1866 includes William Watkin Waite as the owner of a house and land designated as Section 10, Block 20. This would appear to be the same property mentioned previously and was still owned by William after he had left for Australia.

The Glencoe was a ship of some 746 tons and was 185 feet in length. It had been built at Dumbarton in 1855 and was captained by James Hutton, who appears to have been the owner. On this voyage it carried a total of 32 passengers, 6 cabin, including the Waite family, and 26 in steerage. For such a large ship this suggests that its normal cargo was most probably wool, and, like the Bosworth, it was one of the ships that had been specially built for the fast run from Australia to England.

To be continued . . .

New Product Launch



Peasemore St Barnabas Parish Registers (CD)

This fully indexed CD contains a full transcription of the parish registers and an extensive parish history. It is available in the shop now. The coverage is:

| | |
|-----------|-------------|
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Shop: £8.00 / Members: £7.20

See centre pages for postage costs.



News from the Berkshire Record Office

Ivone Turnbull, Senior Archivist at the Berkshire Record Office

At the time of writing, the BRO is still not open to visitors due to the lockdown. But we are looking forward to the day that we can have visitors onsite once again. As ever, keep an eye on our social media platforms (Twitter @berksarchives and Facebook: The Berkshire Record Office) as well as our website www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk/ for the latest updates.

If you've not seen it yet, do take a look at our online exhibition 'Through Their Eyes' which explores how the people of Berkshire prepared for conflict, adapted to unimaginable change and finally celebrated peace on VE Day. Well worth a look: <https://throughtheireyesww2.com/>



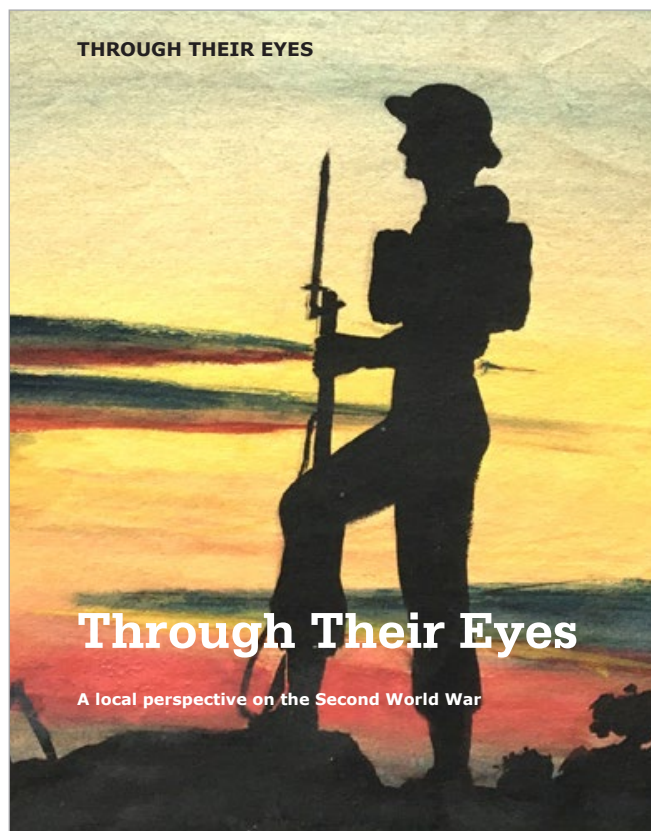
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Bandsman John Charles Harvey, 1914 - 1940

Eric Saxton tells the story of an East Ilsley man who was caught up in Dunkirk

When John Harvey senior and his wife and three small children arrived in East Ilsley in 1916/7, for his wife, Lillian, it was a homecoming.

When the parents of Lillian Harvey (née Walker) moved to Gloucestershire they left their eldest daughter to be brought up by her grandparents, George and Mary Ann Tuson, who kept the White Hart public house on the High Street in East Ilsley. Lillian later moved to London where she eventually met John Harvey. They had one son, George, before they married in 1906, and later had five more children in London, two of whom had died in infancy, before moving to East Ilsley. Therefore, when they arrived, they had with them Walter (5), John Charles (3), and a baby, Alfred. Sadly, Alfred died aged 22 months in November 1917 and is buried in East Ilsley churchyard. In February 1919 Lillian had another son, Frederick. At his baptism his father's occupation was recorded as 'soldier'.



Walter, with cricket bat and ball; Frederick and John Charles, with a wheelbarrow.

The family lived at various locations around East Ilsley, including Compton Road and Broad Street. From their cottage in Broad Street, Lillian would have been able to see the White Hart, a hundred yards away, where she spent her teenage years, and where her initials, and those of her grandparents were carved into the brickwork in the front gable in 1889.

Walter (Walt), John Charles (Charlie), and Frederick (Freddy), all attended school in East Ilsley. Walter left school in 1926 and John Charles in 1928, when he enlisted in the Army aged 14.

In order to support her family, Lillian worked for the Post Office, delivering letters to surrounding villages. When they had to move out of their home in Broad Street, she took her youngest son to live, for a while, in Beedon, but still walked to work each day in East Ilsley.

John Charles was the second youngest surviving child of John and Lillian Harvey and was always known to his family as Charles or Charlie. Having left school at 14 in 1928, he trained as a musician, passing examinations at the Royal Military College of Music before joining the Regimental Band of the Royal Berkshire Regiment, in which he played the French Horn, and accompanied the regiment on its various deployments overseas.

It is reasonable to suppose that Charles corresponded regularly with his mother and brothers during his time overseas, but we have just five surviving letters to his elder brother Walter (Walt) from which to work out where he was at any one time. The story of his army service can be sketched from these letters but is largely conjecture.

The first letter suggests that Charles had been in Germany and was on leave, prior to leaving for India the following February. The letter is undated, but it is fair to assume that it was written in the last months of 1931, (or possibly 1930) as he mentions Christmas is coming and that his leave ends on January 1st. The address on the letter is Hawkridge Farm, Bucklebury, where his mother and younger brother were staying at the time, *'until they find a better place'*.

The next letter dated November 22nd 1932 from 1st Royal Berks Regt. Victoria Bks. Dinapore,



Charlie and his mother showing a strong family likeness. This must have been taken soon after enlistment.

(sic) India, mentions his height of 5ft. 3½ins. He teases his brother that he will be able to look down at him the next time he is home.

The following year, 1933, on October 14th, Charlie says he is very busy, with much to do playing in the band. He mentions leaving on October 16th, 'only 7 more years to go in the army', moving to Sudan on January 10th 1934.

In a letter dated May 26th 1934, from South Barracks, Khartoum, Sudan, he records the temperature at 120° in the shade.

'I suppose I shall be home some time before I finish my time which is 1940 but still think I shall purchase my discharge soon after I get home'.

He says he is fed up with nothing to see but sand for weeks on end. In the same letter he says, 'Only 6 months to do here'. He seems to suggest that he will be leaving within six months and sailing for England. It is not known whether he returned to Sudan after a period of leave or whether he did not return to England until much later. His final undated letter, from HQ 1st Royal Berkshires, British Expeditionary Force, suggests that he has

been home on leave recently and seems to think he will be home again soon, when he hopes to visit his brother in person.

'I hope if I do get time I'll be over to see you. Of course, anything may happen between now and then, but still we are hoping for the best.....'

Well, I suppose its Au Revoir and don't let the war get you down. There's plenty worse off than you out here. Au Revoir.

*From your Brother
Charles*

The Royal Berkshire Regiment had been in France since September 1939, and by May 1940 had taken up positions along the river Dyle. On May 13th they made their first contact with the German forces and for two days held their ground. Later they were given the order to withdraw and make their retreat to Dunkirk.

Among those retreating soldiers was bandsman, **John Charles Harvey**. On May 16th whilst carrying a wounded soldier on a stretcher, he was killed by a hand-grenade. A witness reported to his family some years later that there was no time to do a proper burial, but they dug a shallow grave in a hedgerow and placed him there in France on the way to Dunkirk. His body was never recovered.



A search has found that his name does not appear on any local war memorials, though he is recorded on the Dunkirk Memorial which stands at the entrance to the Commonwealth War Graves section of Dunkirk Town cemetery. It commemorates more than 4,500 casualties of the British Expeditionary Force who died in the campaign of 1939-40.

Pictures supplied by the Harvey Family.

The Talbot family of barge builders

Elizabeth Lloyd delves into her heritage

My interest in family history was sparked by the stories my Grandma told me of the forest of masts she could see over the roofs when she grew up in Rotherhithe in the 1890s. She was very proud of her father and brothers who built barges and lighters (flat bottomed barges used to transfer goods and passengers to and from moored ships) but she also told me more about how the family first started this occupation in Berkshire in the 18th century.

Every descendent of Robert Talbot has been told the story of how he and his brothers brought the family barge building business up to London from Berkshire on a stagecoach. Certainly, there was a stagecoach route from Thatcham to London along the Bath Road and some time before 1799 Robert and his brother, Richard, moved to London, as they were both married there in 1799. There is no evidence of any other living brother accompanying them. As Richard and his wife Elizabeth Jenkins do not appear to have had any children, Robert Talbot is seen as the founder of the barge building dynasty.

Robert and Richard were born in the beautiful village of Pangbourne, on the river Thames in Berkshire, the sons of John Talbot and Mary Ivey. Their only other brother, Edward, died in 1792 and their sisters married in Pangbourne.

Although there is no proof that John Talbot was a barge builder, there were other Talbots who built barges in Pangbourne at that time. As yet no family connection to these other Talbots has been made. After the death of Mary Ivey in 1795, John Talbot married Mary Kirton and had seven more children before his death in 1837 at the age of 92.

Robert Talbot married Ann Proud at St Andrew by the Wardrobe, near St Paul's cathedral in 1799. At first, they lived in Shadwell, a crowded dock area between Limehouse and Wapping, but by the time of the birth of their second child, Thomas Talbot in 1804, they were living by the Thames in Fore Street, Lambeth. Fore Street, as its name signifies, lay on the foreshore of the river Thames. It was a very busy area of boat builders, whiting works and potteries including Doulton's, later Royal Doulton.

By 1839 Robert had moved his barge building business to the up and coming boat building area of Rotherhithe Street. It is probable that they rented all their premises. Leaving Fore Street was wise, as by 1866 it was disappearing beneath the Albert Embankment.

Robert and Ann Proud had 8 children, before Ann's death in 1830. Robert married again twice; to Ann Richards, a widow, in 1833 and to Cricey Finley in 1848, the year before his death of Asiatic cholera. Robert Talbot was buried in a graveyard on Lambeth High Street, near St Mary at Lambeth (The Garden Museum). The stones were moved against the walls by 1950 and have since eroded but it is a peaceful park with a children's playground.

Four of Robert's sons, Thomas, Robert, Richard and Edward followed their father, becoming barge builders while Charles became a stationer and printer, with premises in Tooley Street.

The barge building sons undertook 7-year apprenticeships with the Worshipful Company of Watermen and Lightermen, and 16 members of the extended family became important officials of the Shipwrights Company, including Edward James who was a liveryman of the Shipwrights Company and a Freeman of the river



Lucy Talbot & Sons

Thames. His uncle Edward L. Talbot was Master of the Shipwrights Company in 1869, as was John William Talbot in 1880.

Rotherhithe in Victorian times was a vibrant part of the Pool of London, teeming with Irish labourers, boat builders and sea captains. The “Fighting Temeraire” (as made famous in the painting by J.M.W. Turner) sailed into port to be broken up here in 1838 and the Mayflower had set sail from Rotherhithe in 1620. There were rope makers, sail makers and oar makers like George Henry Leggett. Large quantities of timber were unloaded here. Grain was unloaded into the flat-bottomed lighters made by the Talbots and other

barge builders. The wife of Edward James Talbot, Elizabeth Palmer Hopkins, came from several generations of lightermen.

In 1854 Richard Talbot (b. 1813) moved his barge building business to Caversham in Reading, returning to Berkshire where his wife had been born. It was said that this was because so many of his children died in the unhealthy atmosphere of Rotherhithe. By 1861 he was a timber merchant at Bridge House and three of his sons worked in the business. Some of this branch of the family later emigrated to America but others including Richard are buried at St Peter’s churchyard, Caversham.



*Barge building sheds of R Talbot & Sons at Caversham c1876
(courtesy of Reading Local Studies Illustration Collection)*

Unclaimed certificates on the website forum

I don’t know whether you’ve visited the page, but unwanted certificates and other family history related items are beginning to be posted on the Forum. Some of the family names mentioned on documents that have not yet found a new home are:

HEWETT

JONES

SPENCER

WIGG

WILLMOTT

If you have an interest in any of these family names, take a look at the Forum for more details. It’s easy and quick to do and may provide you with the proof of a family connection that you’ve been looking for.

Any member can post an item for ‘recycling’, and any member can reply to an item offered, and arrangements can be made for passing on the document.

Around the Branches

Please check the Society's website for up to date details of meetings

Bracknell & Wokingham Branch

bracknell@berksfhs.org.uk

Due to the pandemic, we were not able to hold meetings in March, April and May. In June, we were planning to host the society's AGM but this unfortunately also had to be cancelled. Our next meeting will be our Branch Annual Meeting which we plan to hold on Friday, 21st August, via Zoom.

We are hoping that our autumn programme will be able to go ahead as normal. Our Drop-In Sessions at Bracknell and Wokingham Libraries will resume when it is safe to do so. Please see the society's website for details of future meetings and the resumption of the Drop-In Sessions.

*Bracknell Library – 2nd Tuesday of the month
2.00pm to 5.00pm*

*Wokingham Library – last Tuesday of the month
2.00pm to 5.00pm*

Sandra Barkwith

Newbury Branch

newbury@berksfhs.org.uk

We missed just one meeting of our 2020 series due to lockdown and, thanks to Zoom, we have now resumed the branch calendar with webinars in place of physical gatherings in the church hall. In May, Catherine Sampson pioneered this format with a talk on the churches of Berkshire and South Oxfordshire, which attracted a good audience.

In June, Joan Dils gave a webinar on the working women of Newbury in Tudor and Stuart times to an audience of more than 40, including not only some of our branch meeting regulars, but also several members from further afield, and quite a few non-members. Summaries of these talks are online at <https://berksfhs.org/branches/>

Our branch chairman, Eileen Schofield, is stepping down from the committee this year, as is our programme secretary Nancy Maidment, and Sylvia Green, who has manned the greeting desk at monthly meetings. All three have given many years unstinting service to the branch, for which we are most grateful. At the time of writing,

plans for electing the new committee from six nominations by email are being formulated and it is expected that this will take place in August.

Webinars ahead

Meeting time: 19.15pm for 19.30pm

Pre-booking required, see society's website for more details and to book.

9th September

Alice through the wardrobe by David Willetts.



Alice Chaucer's tomb effigy

An enduring myth about Donnington Castle claims that it was once home to the poet of *The Canterbury Tales*, Geoffrey Chaucer. Not so, but it was once the home of his grand-daughter Alice Chaucer. David Willetts is a local and church historian of Shaw-cum-Donnington.

14 October

Mayors of Newbury by Anthony Pick.

Newbury's mayors enjoyed significant power, heading the corporation of 24 burgesses and also acting as the town's chief magistrate. Anthony Pick, a former Newbury mayor himself, will highlight some of the more interesting and unusual characters who have held this post.

18 November

Nick's Quiz.

Details to be advised.

December

Christmas dinner in a Newbury restaurant, lockdown permitting. Details to be advised.

Penny Stokes

Around the Branches

Please check the Society's website for up to date details of meetings

Reading Branch

reading@berksfhs.org.uk

Unfortunately, circumstances dictated the cancellation of April's meeting, although we hope to rearrange the talk for another time. Our May meeting was, for the first time, conducted via Zoom with Joy Pibworth giving a thoroughly comprehensive and well researched talk about Jane Austen and the Thames Valley connection.

Joy outlined the family background of Jane's life and the places where those people lived. A picture was painted of Jane's parent's lives and those of her close relatives. They involved places as far away as America, Russia as well as Oxford, Tonbridge and Bristol in the U.K. There were stories of the Fishing Fleet (female travelling to India to seek marriage) and a scandal of trials for stealing lace which resulted in acquittal. One of Jane's ancestors, Sir Thomas White, who was born in Reading in 1492, went on to found St John's College, Oxford. Jane's parents, George and Cassandra, were married in 1764 in Bath and raised eight children, of whom Jane was the second youngest.

Our June meeting saw Mark Bowman presenting 'The Colin Spickett Experiment', again, via Zoom. This was a display of how much can be achieved for free in a short space of time. Mark showed that starting only with a name (albeit an unusual one) and a rough date of birth, you can, using free, online resources, construct a pedigree going back 250 years, all in a few hours. As usual, Mark's talk was engaging and generated quite a discussion afterwards.

The Reading Branch AGM was held in July, via Zoom, where only Branch AGM business was conducted.

Meetings ahead

Hopefully at the *Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 280 The Meadway, Tilehurst, Reading RG30 4PE. Meeting time: 19.15pm for 19.45pm (otherwise by Zoom).*

Pre-booking required, see society's website for more details and to book.

24th September

Some Wallingford Crooks by Margaret Crook.

29th October

Photographs and Memorabilia - Members night.

26th November

To be advised.

10th December

Members short talks and quiz followed by seasonal refreshments.

Graham Vockins

Windsor, Slough & Maidenhead Branch

windsor@berksfhs.org.uk

It is amazing to think that the last report for the Historian did not include the word "Zoom". Having had to cancel our March meeting to ensure our regular attendees were safe, we quickly resolved to replace physical meetings with virtual meetings by Zoom.

To be honest, it has been difficult to get our normal number of attendees, as not everyone is comfortable with Zoom or the minimum requirements of their computer equipment. However, those that have attended have had a blast. No, it is not the same, but it is the best possible in the circumstances and our Zoom audiences are growing meeting by meeting.

We decided to switch from paid speakers to members giving talks, at least until our audience size justifies paying for a speaker.

In April, I gave a talk on "Finding Booba's Other Sister – Reaching Out to America for Historical Clarity" which was a combination of Polish Jewish genealogy mixed with American genealogical research techniques.

I managed to entertain the ten



The Yellin Sisters (Finding Booba's Other Sister)

Around the Branches

Please check the Society's website for up to date details of meetings

attendees, especially when my router blew up mid-talk and I disappeared quite spectacularly. I managed to re-join by phone within one minute, and still managed to execute my big finale of showing a video of Sophie Tucker belting out "My Yiddishe Momma" as this happened to be written by a relative of mine, Jack Yellin - who was inducted in the Hollywood Hall of Fame, and who I had discovered as part of my research.

In May, Mike Bailey, one of our regular members, gave a fascinating talk about his father's exploits in the Second World War, in "Maurice William Bailey in World War 2". Mike told us about researching the story behind the album of photos his Dad brought back from his time in the RAF.

In June, I made an attempt to surpass the 20 attendee barrier with a rendition of "Udla, Udla, Udla!". This is the story of one man's quest to break through 3 seemingly impenetrable brick walls to research the Szatkowski family from Lask, near Lodz in central Poland. We had over 20 registered but in the end 17 attended, so just short.

We will have no meeting in July and have a summer recess instead. In August, we will have our branch AGM followed by Sharon Hintze speaking on "The Future of Family History".

Leigh Dworkin

Woodley (Computer) Branch

woodley@berksfhs.org.uk

Meetings ahead

Meetings will be held via Zoom.

Meeting time: 19.15pm for 19.30pm

Pre-booking required, whether by Zoom or face to face, see society's website for more details and to book.

16th September

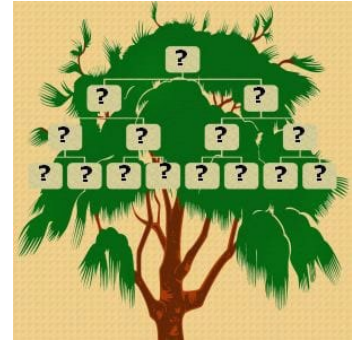
Finding Living Relatives.

A series of short talks each detailing how resources can be used to find living relatives, including Electoral Rolls, Lost Cousins, Facebook, and DNA tracing.

21st October

Heir hunting – a case study by Gillian Stevens.

Gillian will reveal a real-life story that shows how skills in finding living relatives, both on and offline, helped solve a Heir Hunting puzzle with a monetary reward at the end.



18th November

An early Christmas meeting.

Includes our traditional historical quiz to be tackled by teams of approx six people either via Zoom, using 'breakout' rooms, and/or at the Oakwood Centre if current social distancing rules permit.

Gillian Stevens

More free data in the Members' area of the website

The society is committed to publishing more free data onto its website in the members' only area. Three new datasets have been added recently. Do check them out if you haven't yet seen them.

East Hendred Churchwardens' Presentments

Churchwardens and sidesmen were required by Canonical law to present those who had offended against ecclesiastical law at least once each year. Although many presentments merely confirm that all was well, some answers give valuable information about such matters as: attendance at church, the clergy and church officers, and behaviour of the parishioners (including the conception of children outside of marriage). They can, therefore, be a valuable source for family historians.

A fully indexed transcript of East Hendred's presentments is now available on the website, to members only, under **Info > Berkshire Data**. Take a look if East Hendred is one of your parishes of interest or if you haven't explored Churchwardens' Presentments before.

Hungerford National School Admissions

Hungerford National School was built in 1814, in the High Street, just three years after the founding of The National Society. Such schools provided elementary education, in accordance with the teaching of the Church of England, to the children of the poor. The school would eventually close in 1910.

New into the members' area of the website – **Info > Berkshire Data** is a transcript of the admissions register for Hungerford National School from 1816 to 1859.

The records include the name, age and residence of every child admitted, with the date of admission and the number in the register. In addition, the names and details of their parents or other adult(s) sponsoring them are given. The transcript is presented in alphabetical order and was made from the original admission register, now held in the Berkshire Record Office.

Check it out if you have Hungerford connections or if you haven't seen an early school admissions register before.

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.



Francis Annesley, one of Reading's MPs elected in 1790

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.

An Ancestry Review

Tim Powys-Lybbe asks can I verify some of the ancestry of Annie Powys, my great-great grandmother?

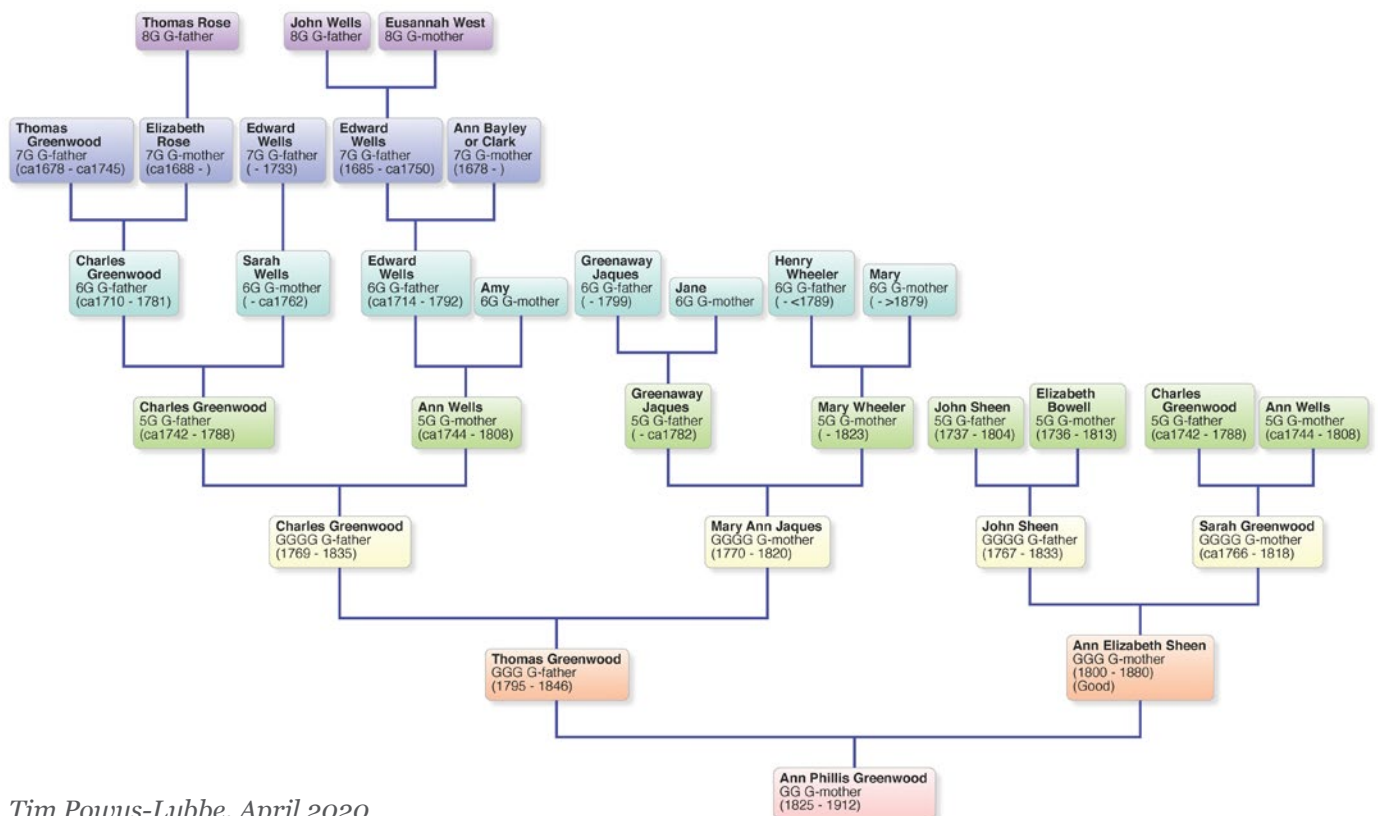
Annie Powys died in 1912 aged 86; while she was born Ann Phillis Greenwood, for at least the second half of her life she was Annie Phyllis Powys. She had had five children, three sons and two daughters but only one of these five survived her, a daughter. One son and both daughters had issue and issue certainly survives to this day for two of these; descendants of the third went to Canada and records there have to stand for 100 years before they are open to the public, so I am not sure what happened to them. Annie herself was deserted by her husband after a bullying problem for their son at Eton, which her husband then raised in the press and could not handle the ensuing onslaught ('trolling' to us). Annie it seems remained devoted to him and when he had become old and senile, she moved to live near to where he lived with his second family.

Uncovering all that was a bit of a trial, so I was delighted to find a full and frank account of Annie's Greenwood ancestry produced by one of her cousins and published privately around 1990. Eventually I found the author in west Canada and we corresponded briefly, by then he was in his

nineties. Fortunately, his family put the results of his research on the internet and updated it a bit as he added information. Currently these Greenwoods of Haddenham, Bucks are catalogued at <https://tree.michaeltgreenwood.com/g/>. Perhaps I should add that while these Greenwoods came from Bucks, many of them lived and died as farmers and ironmongers in Berkshire, notably around Wallingford in the 18th and 19th centuries.

It is now over 25 years since I first heard of this family history and I have not previously reviewed it. Over the years my standards have had to rise in terms of what information I will accept so I decided to see what evidence there was to be found for all these ancestors. There are 1500 people on the Greenwood files. I have dwelt primarily on our ancestors of the 18th century and subsequently, some 31 people, who I thought I might be able to locate information for. These initial 31 are in Chart 1, below, though careful observers will note that there are only 29 different people as there was a marriage of cousins, bringing in the same parents twice.

Chart 1 - The Start: The Asserted Ancestry of Annie Phyllis Greenwood
Before the verifications were started (with relationships to TFPL)



Tim Powys-Lybbe, April 2020

After a week I had made a list of what I could find from the comfort of Covid-19 lockdown at home and from the internet resources of Findmypast and FamilySearch with the addition of the wills found in The National Archive.

Here's the results so far:

- Total No. of people: 31 (29 different people)
- No. of baptisms found: 4
- No. of marriages found: 19
- No. of burials found: 12
- No. of wills found: 18

The most remarkable of these was that the number of wills found in the PCC (Prerogative Court of Canterbury) was 18. I know some families lend themselves to genealogy by will, but this was the first time I have clearly defined how superior wills are as a research tool for people with at least rather modest possessions. I have yet to explore the deanery will records which may have been more used by the earlier generations of Greenwoods.

I have used these documents to answer the questions of whether proof can be found that the

parents are related to the stated offspring. But does a baptism of a John with parents Peter and Mary prove that this John is the son of this Peter? The answer to me is that more information makes this more certain. Do the same parents have other children? Do all these children feature in the wills of the parents? Do the parents get a mention in the marriages of the children? Is the burial shortly before the time of proving the parents' wills?

In a crude manner the number of different documents supporting a relationship is the guide to the veracity of that relationship. My scale is from "good" where many documents survive and confirm one another, to "weak", or even "very weak", where just one document survives to establish a relationship between named individuals. "No evidence" means just that and I have now deleted from my chart the parents of any child with no evidence of their parentage. This left some 23 verified-so-far ancestors and below is a family tree of these including my appraisals of the asserted descents from the asserted parents.

Chart 2 - The Verified Ancestors of Ann Phyllis Greenwood (Gt-Gt-Grandmother of TFPL)

Notes on this verification

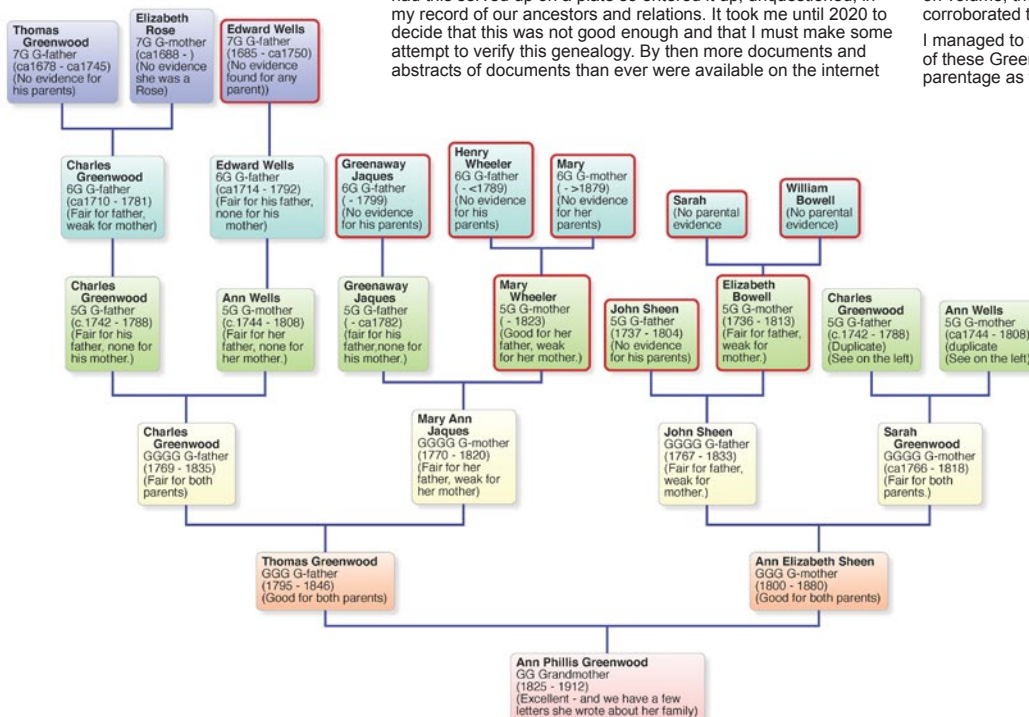
By 1990 or so Alex Greenwood had completed a magnum opus on his family "Greenwoods of Haddenham". Eventually I acquired a copy of the relevant parts (thanks to all the later Greenwoods who provided me with that information) as this book included the ancestry of my gt-gt-grandmother who had been born Ann Phillis Greenwood.

At that time I was a tyro in genealogy and was grateful to have had this served up on a plate so entered it up, unquestioned, in my record of our ancestors and relations. It took me until 2020 to decide that this was not good enough and that I must make some attempt to verify this genealogy. By then more documents and abstracts of documents than ever were available on the internet

so I could do the verifying by the records of the births, marriages, burials and wills that I could access from the comfort of my armchair.

From the documentation that I found I made an assessment of how good a confirmation that it provided that the child of the parents indeed had those people as their parents. To some extent that assessment depended on volume, the number of different documents that corroborated that parentage.

I managed to find, and be told of, a few more ancestors of these Greenwoods, so I've included appraisals of their parentage as well.



Note on new people
The people with a thick RED border round them are not Greenwoods and thus not found in Alex Greenwood's account of his family. But they are Greenwood ancestors.

To make the assessments I made two lists, first of the documents that I had found to date for each person, including the documents that I still could search for. The second list was of how well the documents proved that each person had the asserted parents. While both charts have Annie at the bottom, both tables have Annie at the top; the top of each table therefore has the best evidence as it is closer to us in time.

In Table 1 (below), the facts for each person were taken from my genealogy program (Reunion on a Mac, my trusty program for over 25 years):

Last name

First name

Relationship

Birthplace (this was only non-zero if I had found a record)

Marriage place (ditto)

Burial place (ditto)

Birth - Death years

Marriage date

Will data first sentence (ditto)

This was saved as a CSV (Comma Separated Variable) file and transferred into a spreadsheet where I added in a final column of 'Missing documents' where I listed which of birth, marriage, burial and will (if any) that I still needed to look for. In fact, of the original 31 people only three had the complete set of these four documents. The illustration only shows the first three of the 31 rows. This table did not include any assessment of the viability of the relationship of an ancestor to their stated parents. This table solely gathered together the list of factual sources already found and those needing

to be found. You can see I still have quite a bit of work to do and it will take a long time, particularly now that the libraries have closed.

For Table 2 (next page), its design had to reflect what I was looking for. What I was looking for was the viability of the facts in confirming that each person on the first list was the child of their parents. This was complicated by the fact that Annie had been adopted by her childless Aunt at the age of six, so she had four parents, her natural ones and her adopted ones.

Annie's grandparents occupy eight rows of Table 2. The list continues listing each ancestor to each of their parents and currently occupies 39 rows. I did not include people for whose parents no records had been found, though they may have been included as parents themselves. The columns for each person were, with the column letters of the spreadsheet:

A: Relationship to TFPL,

B: Name with death date of each ancestor,

C: Sex of the parent of this ancestor in B,

D: Name of the parent of this ancestor in B,

E: Did the birth record of this ancestor in B include the name of their parent in D?

F: Did the marriage records of these ancestors in B include the name of their parents in D?

G: Did the will of the parents in D include the name of this child in B?

H: Any other relevant relationship information,

I: Assessment of the validity of the asserted parents in D of this ancestor in B.

| Last Name | First & Middle Name | Relationship | Birth Place | Marriage Place | Burial Place | Birth - Death | Marriage Date | Will | Missing Records |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---|---|---------------|---------------|--|-----------------|
| Greenwood | Ann Phillis | GG Grandmother | Wallingford, Berks | Tilehurst, Berks | Hayward's Heath | 1825 - 1912 | 11 Jun 1844 | The Probate Index has: Powys Ann Phyllis | |
| Greenwood | Thomas | GGG Grandfather | | St Mary the More church, Wallingford, Berks | | 1795 - 1846 | 12 Jun 1823 | His will was dated 9th March 1843 | Baptism |
| Sheen | Ann Elizabeth | GGG Grandmother | Dorchester, Oxfordshire | St Mary the More church, Wallingford, Berks | St Mary the More church, Wallingford, Berks | 1800 - 1880 | 12 Jun 1823 | Her probate index: Greenwood Anne | |

Table 1: Documents needed for ancestors of Annie, nee Greenwood, Powys

What evidence is there that the Name ancestor is the child of the Parent listed in Alex Greenwood's Pedigree of the Greenwoods of Haddenham?

| Relation to TFPL | Name | M/F parent of Name | Parent Named by AAG | Is the Parent on the baptism of the Name? | Is the Parent on the marriage of the Name? | Is the Name on the will of the Parent? | Other info and remarks | Verdict on Name as child of Parent |
|------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|---|--|---|------------------------------|--|
| A | B | C | D | E | F | G | H | I |
| GG Grandmother | Annie Phillis Greenwood, d. 1912 | M | Thomas Greenwood | Thomas Greenwood named as father in bapt transcript | Named as father in transcript | He listed his daughter Ann Phyllis | Factual father | Good |
| | do | M | Wm Stephens, adopter | NA | Named as witness in transcript | Listed Ann P in his will | Adoptive father | Good |
| | do | F | Ann Elizabeth, nee Sheen | Ann named as Annie's mother in bapt transcript | | She listed her daughter Annie Powys in her will | Factual mother | Good |
| | do | F | Phyllis Stephens, adopter | NA | | Listed as caring for Ann P Greenwood, in will of Thos Greenwood | Adoptive mother of her niece | Fair to weak |
| GGG Grandfather | Thomas Greenwood, d. 1846 | M | Charles Greenwood, d. 1835 | Thomas' baptism record not found (yet) | Thomas and Ann named, witnesses were his mother plus three Sheens, so right family | Listed as 'My son Thomas' in his father's, Charles Greenwood's will | | Fair, with two corroborating evidences |
| m. | do | F | Mary Ann, nee Jaques | do | She was a witness at Thomas' marriage | No will found for Mary A Greenwood | | Weak |

Table 2: Greenwood Ancestry Viability

Table 2 was all entered by hand, unlike Table 1 for which only the right-hand column was manually entered, the rest of Table 1 coming direct from my genealogy program.

Several times I found myself getting confused and assessing whether the records proved the existence of the ancestor in B instead of whether they proved the parentage of the ancestors in D to their children in B. You may not have this difficulty, but my warning is "Be very careful to assess only the viability of the asserted parents".

At the moment Alex Greenwood cannot be criticised. So far, all the documents I have found at least corroborate what he wrote. One or two, even, extend it. So, I have every anticipation that

I will slowly find earlier and more documents to corroborate his findings. After all, I only spent a week on this and he must have spent over thirty years on his quest. Though Alex did set a bad example by virtually never mentioning any of his evidence.

In conclusion, I would remark that this sort of review is something you, or a relation, can usefully do for any asserted genealogy.

Purley's Japanese Prisoners of War in World War Two

Catherine Sampson takes a look at some local men's experiences in the Far East

On August 15th 1945, Imperial Japan surrendered to the Allies, effectively bringing the Second World War to a close. VJ Day is commemorated annually on this date in the UK, and on September 2nd in the US, the day the surrender document was finally signed. This year, as you are doubtless aware, was the 75th anniversary and sadly the commemorations had to be reined in due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

VJ Day has always been something of a poor relation to VE Day, yet many Berkshire villages had men who were in the Far East, Purley included. Several villagers, including subsequent incomers, would later briefly recall their ordeal in the camps, including one of Purley's rectors. Revd William Morton sustained a leg injury so severe, that he was never again able to kneel. Two Purley men died in the camps. What follows is my attempt in lock-down to recreate their stories.

John Dudley Matthews was Purley's rector between 1902 and his death in December 1914. His time in Purley wasn't without its dramas, not least his death whilst attempting to row back from Mapledurham, having taken evensong there. He made at least two highly controversial decisions, one of which resulted in questions being asked in the House of Commons. Several sons served in the military, two surviving the First World War. As did daughter Rose, who served as a VAD in Reading.

Ernest Dudley Matthews, John's second son, served with the Royal Garrison Artillery and, by the mid-1920s, had risen to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. By 1924, he was in Hong Kong, and by 1929, sufficiently settled for wife, Clara, to join him. On retirement, they remained in Hong Kong, probate records listing their address as 4 Armand Buildings, Kowloon. Armand Buildings has long gone, but was probably on Kimberley Road, known for its high-rise apartments. Life was probably good, certainly for Ernest, who seemingly spent considerable time at the Royal Hong Kong Golf Club, of which he was secretary for almost twenty years, according to one newspaper report.

In July and August 1940 the British Government, unable to defend Hong Kong and convinced it would fall to the Japanese, began evacuating British citizens. The hurried and compulsory evacuations attracted considerable criticism. Not least of racism, as the local Chinese population were excluded, as were British passport holders with non-European ancestry. As a result, the remaining evacuations were made non-compulsory, "evacuees" could remain provided that they volunteered for auxiliary roles. The Matthews', it would appear, opted to do just that, Ernest becoming an ARP warden.

The anticipated surrender to Japanese forces came on Christmas Day 1941, later known as

Black Christmas. In early January 1942, foreign nationals, including the Matthews', were rounded up and eventually imprisoned in the Stanley Internment Camp, hastily set up in the grounds of the prison and a school. Internees soon discovered there were few amenities. No cooking facilities, no furniture, little crockery, or cutlery. The toilet facilities were dirty, inadequate, and without water. Whilst conditions were basic, they were good compared to many other Japanese camps. However, both food and medical supplies were in extremely short supply, the prisoners being essentially locked up and left to fend for themselves.



Stanley prisoner of war camp

Between 1942 and 1945, 121 prisoners died here. A few were executed, but most died of malnutrition or medical conditions, including Ernest in January 1944. He was aged 68. Clara survived to liberation and returned to the UK in October 1945, on one of the earliest possible ships.

Whilst the conditions in which Ernest and Clara Matthews were imprisoned were basic and unsanitary, those Edward John Reed had to endure were far worse.



Edward Reed, second right back row in Malaya 1941 (photo courtesy of Ian Nash)

The Reeds were well established in the community of Purley. In a photograph of St Mary's choir taken in 1932, 16-year-old "Ted" stares seriously at the camera from the back row. In the front, younger brother Bob grins broadly. The Reeds had moved into a new council house in Glebe Road, just three years earlier. George and Rose had at least seven children, Edward being third from youngest.

By that time, Edward's father, George, was a brick layer. However, by profession he was a musician and had served at least two terms as a bandsman with the Royal Berkshire Regiment. He saw active service in the South Africa War and the First World War. Edward's elder brother, Clement, also served with the Berkshire Regiment. So, the Reed family also had plenty of experience of military service.

Edward would also enlist, but with the Royal Engineers. At the outbreak of war, he was a Lance Corporal with the 35th Fortress Company, and a photograph taken in 1941 shows an older, strapping Edward with his Company rugby team in Malaya. By 1940, the 35th Fortress Company was one of a number of units protecting Singapore, believed by many to be impregnable. After a prolonged assault, Singapore fell to the Japanese in February 1942 and Edward was one of about 80,000 British, Indian, and Australian troops who became prisoners of war. They joined 50,000 taken prisoner by the Japanese in the earlier Malayan Campaign.

Edward would have soon found that life was harsh within the Japanese camps. Like thousands of others, he was forced to build the Thai-Burma

railway, known as the 'Death Railway'. Working conditions were barbaric and included long hours of intense heavy labour with minimal food and water. International Red Cross standards were not followed, and escape was nearly impossible. Dysentery, malaria, and tropical ulcers were rampant, contributing to the deaths of nearly one in four prisoners.

Sometime probably in late May 1943 Edward was moved to the Kanyu No.1 Camp, one of five in this locality. We can tell this by examining Commonwealth War Graves Commissions' Graves Concentration Reports, and The National Archives' WO 361/2235, both online. The latter lists the Thailand-Burma railway camps and contains death rolls, plans and maps drawn up by survivors. For anyone researching the railway camps, it is fascinating reading.

The camp bordered the River Kwai with its cemetery 100 yards outside its main gate. Deaths at this camp are all recorded between June 1st and July 30th 1943, suggesting it was only in use for a short period of time, presumably whilst the land was being cleared and track laid for that stretch of the railway. The Japanese prisoner of war index cards (Fold3) confirm that Edward died there on the June 12th of indigestion, a common description in their records. However, the more detailed survivor accounts point to it being toxic peritonitis and dysentery. Dysentery was the biggest killer by far in No.1 Camp. Nearby, at Lower Kanyu Camp, it was cholera which filled their cemetery.

Edward was 27 years old when he died. He was buried in grave No.25 in the camp cemetery, his

grave adjoining the main path which led to the camps gates. When the war ended, those buried in the camp cemeteries (Americans excepted, whose remains were repatriated) were transferred into three cemeteries at Chungkai and Kanchanaburi in Thailand and Thanbyuzayat in Myanmar. Along with all of those who died in the southern section of the railway, Edward was reburied in Kanchanaburi War Cemetery.

Edwards's parents had been informed that he was missing and then received confirmation that he was alive and a prisoner of war. A nephew later recalled that "Gran ran up Glebe Road to show the neighbours". Sadly, news of his death followed shortly afterwards. One can only imagine their continued suffering when details slowly emerged of the terrible suffering within the Japanese camps.

Grave Adoption

Recently, an initiative was brought to our attention on the Berkshire Genealogy Facebook page. Chantal Van de Vin was seeking assistance in tracking down the relatives of a soldier, Gunner Douglas John Mumford, who was buried in Venray Cemetery, in the Netherlands. His parents had lived in Windsor. Chantal had adopted his grave under a scheme that had been launched by Piet Snellen. Through the Berkshire Genealogy page, much assistance was offered and a probable descendent was identified, and contact was initiated.

What follows is a brief outline of the scheme. A few years ago, Piet started the Facebook group "Venray War Cemetery" with the intention of collecting as many photos and information as possible about soldiers who found their final resting place in the Venray cemetery. Over time, he was able to give a face to some 110 soldiers. For several years he had been thinking about setting up an adoption programme.

Last spring, he contacted the North and Western office of The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) in Ypres, Belgium.



On Christmas Eve, candles are lit on every grave. This was last year's lighting (2019).

In consultation with this British war graves organization, a formula has been jointly made within which adoption of British war graves was made possible, taking into account the conditions of the CWGC. A Facebook appeal was made to form a foundation board together with interested parties. To Piet's great delight, there appeared to be more than enough interest to get the adoption plan off the ground.

The "Adoptiegraven CWGC Venray War Cemetery" Foundation has now been officially established. The aim of the Foundation is to keep the memory of the fallen soldiers alive.

Many will assume that only soldiers who died during the battle of Overloon and Venray rest in Venray War Cemetery. Nothing could be further from the truth. Aircrews of Allied aircraft shot down across the region also found their resting place here. The British Army liberated almost every village in North and Central Limburg, roughly west of the Maas, and British soldiers lost, their lives in the struggle for freedom.

From October 1944 to the end of February 1945, the front line was in the Netherlands, one of the longest periods in Western Europe. When the Allies entered Germany, the field hospitals remained active in North and Central Limburg, in which many liberators would still die from their injuries. After the war, all those victims who rested in field graves all over North and Central Limburg and from far and wide (including from Margraten and Germany) were also taken to Venray for burial. The Field of Honour in Venray has grown into one of the largest regional Fields of Honour with 693 graves.

If you want to know more, take a look at the website www.adoptiegraven-venray.nl. So far over 250 graves have been adopted, but there are many more still available.

Members' Surname Interests

Compiled by Bob Plumridge *memsec@berksfhs.org.uk*

Members submitting their interests:

| | | | | |
|------|-----------------|------------|--|----------------------------|
| 532 | SCOBLE | Pam | 8 Whitegates Lane, Earley, Reading, RG6 1EE | pamscoble@gmail.com |
| 8306 | BRISTOW | Helen | 6 Amberley Close, Burgess Hill, RH15 8JB | helenbristow@gmail.com |
| 8307 | SIMMONS | Paul | 8 White Street, Brighton, BN2 0JH | paulbrixton@btinternet.com |
| 8310 | WEBER | Jacqueline | 897C Adelaide St. W. Toronto, Ontario M6J 3T1 CANADA | jacquieweber01@gmail.com |
| 8312 | STAFFORD | Kerryn | 2 Tiro Court, Bundoora, Melbourne, ACT 3083 AUSTRALIA | dkstaff@bigpond.net.au |
| 8313 | MILLS | John | Sugham Farm, Lingfield Common Road, Lingfield RH7 6BZ | john@amukconsultants.co.uk |
| 8315 | HANKINS | Charley | 1216 West Wesson Street, El Dorado, Arkansas 71730 USA | edu.stringer@gmail.com |
| 8318 | BUCKLEY | Tessa | 42 Grasmead Avenue, Leigh on Sea, SS9 3LA | tmbuckley@hotmail.co.uk |
| 8320 | WELCH | Janet | Heath Rise, Springfield Road, Camberley, GU15 1AB | janet6006@gmail.com |
| 8321 | GREEN | Craig | 44 Grant Street, Bacchus Marsh, VIC 3340 AUSTRALIA | alexcatering@hotmail.com |
| 8322 | CLARK | Scott | 1398 Beryl Ave., Mentone, CA 92359, USA | s7c@gmx.com |
| 8326 | SALADINO | John | 360 Moss Street, Laguna Beach, CA 92651, USA | saladinja@hotmail.com |
| 8328 | LANE | Jane | Dawstone, 2 Dawatone Road, Heswall, Wirral, CH60 4RP | jane.ann.lane@gmail.com |
| 8331 | STOTT | Aly | 1 Vale View, The Old Severalls, Milton Lilbourne, Pewsey, SN9 5LW | alystotty@gmail.com |
| 8332 | STEVENS | Karen | 18 Woodlands Brook, Wantage, OX12 8FS | klambourne@hotmail.co.uk |
| 8306 | BELLINGER | | Reading | BRK Any |
| 8312 | BURGESS Sarah | | Any | BRK 1800 |
| 8320 | CLARK | | White Waltham | 1800-1900 |
| 8322 | CLARK John | | Chilton | pre mid 1800s |
| 8318 | CLODE George | | New Windsor | 1780-1805 |
| 8318 | CLODE John | | Sunninghill | 1780-1796 |
| 8318 | CLODE John | | New Windsor | 1783-1850 |
| 8318 | CLODE John | | New Windsor | 1812-1860 |
| 8318 | CLODE William | | New Windsor | 1780-1842 |
| 8332 | COLLINS | | Childrey | 1600-1920 |
| 8332 | COLLINS | | Stanford | 1600-1920 |
| 8313 | COOPER | | Egham | 1700 on |
| 8313 | COOPER | | Egham | 1730 on |
| 8328 | CROCKFORD | | Binfield | 1700-1800 |
| 8306 | ENGLEFIELD | | Reading | BRK Any |
| 8315 | EWING Jean Jane | | Any | All 1610 |
| 8315 | EWING Marilyn | | Any | All 1625 |
| 8315 | EWING Mary Jane | | Any | All 1620 |
| 8313 | FIELD | | Egham | 1800 on |

| | | | | |
|------|-------------------|------------------|------|----------------|
| 8313 | FIELD | Wokingham | | 1750 on |
| 8332 | FROGLEY | Denchworth | | 1400-1900 |
| 8332 | FROGLEY | Childrey | | 1400-1900 |
| 8326 | GEORGE | Brimpton | | 1700-1850 |
| 8326 | GEORGE | Compton | | 1700-1850 |
| 8326 | GEORGE | Baughurst | | 1700-1850 |
| 8326 | GEORGE | Inhurst | | 1700-1850 |
| 8328 | GILLETT | Winkfield | | 1700-1800 |
| 8313 | GODFREY | Egham | | 1800 on |
| 8332 | GOLDING | Old North Berks | | pre 1700-1850 |
| 8312 | GRIFFIN John | East Hanney | BRK | 1790s |
| 8312 | GRIFFIN William | East Hanney | BRK | 1740s-1800s |
| 8315 | HANKINS Richard | Any | All | 1610 |
| 8315 | HANKINS Thomas W | Any | BRK | 1590 |
| 8315 | HANKINS Thomas W | Any | KEN | 1590 |
| 8315 | HANKINS William D | Any | All | 1568 |
| 8332 | HARWOOD | Kingston Lisle | | pre 1800 |
| 8331 | HEAD | Kintbury | | |
| 8306 | HERBERT | Maidenhead | BRK | Any |
| 8313 | JUDD | Any | BRK | 1750-1850 |
| 8332 | KINCH | Shellingford | | pre 1600-1950 |
| 8332 | KINCH | Stanford | | pre 1600-1950 |
| 8310 | KNIGHT | Newbury | BRK | 1780-1850 |
| 8328 | LANE | Cookham | | 1810-1840 |
| 8315 | LASECKI Rita | Any | All | 1590 |
| 8321 | LIECHE Thamesin | Little Wittenham | 1584 | |
| 8320 | MARTIN | Barkam | | 1700-1900 |
| 8312 | MITCHELL Martha | East Hanney | BRK | 1740s-1800s |
| 8313 | PERKINS | Sunninghill | | 1850 on |
| 8313 | PERKINS | Egham | | 1800 on |
| 8313 | PERKINS | Windsor | | 1870 on |
| 8332 | PIKE | Kingston Lisle | | pre 1600 -1940 |
| 8332 | PIKE | Childrey | | pre 1600 -1940 |
| 8332 | ROLLS | Shellingford | | pre 1500 on |
| 8332 | ROLLS | Stanford | | pre 1500 on |
| 8332 | ROLLS | Wantage | | pre 1500 on |
| 8331 | SADLER | Inkpen | | |
| 532 | SCOBLE | Any | CON | 1850 |
| 8313 | SEARLE | Egham | | 1750 on |
| 8332 | SELLWOOD | Kingston Lisle | | pre 1800 |
| 8331 | SHEARS | Streatley | | |
| 8307 | SIMMONS James | Frilsham | BRK | 1805-1834 |
| 8307 | SIMMONS James | Chilton | BRK | 1841 |
| 8307 | SIMMONS James | West Ilsley | BRK | 1851-1861 |
| 8332 | STALLARD | Old North Berks | | pre 1700-1850 |
| 8332 | TITCHENER | Old North Berks | | pre 1700-1910 |
| 8332 | WHEELER | Old North Berks | | pre 1700-1860 |
| 8321 | WILDGOOSE John | Little Wittenham | | 1584 |

From the Society's Newsletters

Here are snippets of some recent content - in case you missed them.

Berkshire Tithe Maps (now online)

You can now consult geo-referenced tithe maps and apportionments for Berkshire and also Cambridgeshire, Leicestershire and Oxfordshire online at thegenealogist.co.uk.

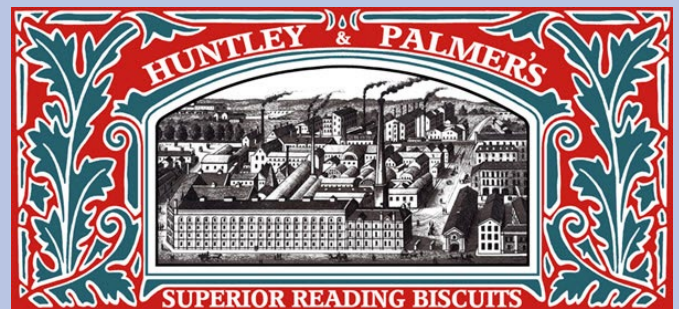
By searching the tithe collection only, you can search by parish as well as by name. Viewing options include a transcript or the original apportionment. Details given include: owner and occupier of each portion of land, size, usage, crops grown if applicable and tithe paid.

Don't forget The Genealogist is available to all members for free via Berkshire Family History Society's website while The Centre for Heritage and Family History remains closed.

Huntley and Palmers

Huntley and Palmers began in 1822 and grew to become the largest biscuit manufacturer in the world and one of Berkshire's largest employers, employing over 5,000 people. If you have ancestral roots in Reading or the surrounding area in the early 1900s, then you may well have a Huntley and Palmer's employee.

Unfortunately, few records about individual employees survive. However, Reading Museum has produced an informative website about the company and its history. The website format isn't the easiest to navigate, but it's well worth persevering. Organised into themes such as People, Factory and unsurprisingly Biscuits! – the website contains historic video and sound clips and some fascinating photographs to illustrate the storyline.



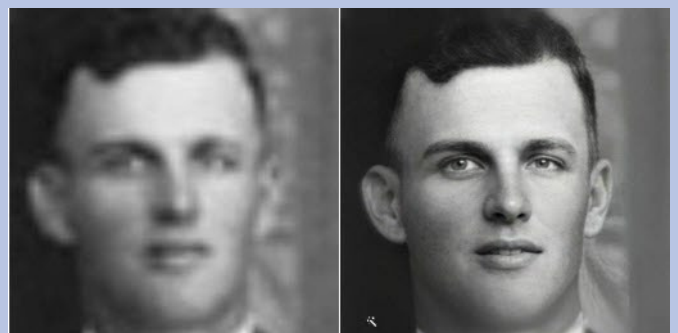
British Newspaper Archive

BNA has just added over 13,000 pages from the Maidenhead Advertiser covering issues from 1870 to 1912 (and ultimately will cover to 1915).

My Heritage Photo Enhancer

My Heritage is back with a new tool and this time it's one that will work on old and new photos. The MyHeritage Photo Enhancer is an exciting new feature that brings faces in any photo into sharp focus.

This feature uses deep learning technology licensed by MyHeritage to enhance photos by upscaling them (increasing their resolution). Enhancement produces exceptional results for historical photos, where the faces are often small and blurry. Your original image is not altered - a new version is created.



If you aren't receiving newsletters, and you would like to, make sure you have given the society your up to date email address and permission to contact you via email. If you have, first check your SPAM box to check they are not lurking there, and then contact our webmaster using the website contact us forms. Back copies of newsletters are available on the society's website under INFO.

From the Forum

<https://berksfhs.org/member-protected-content/forum/> (free to use by all members).

Godfrey Family from East Hanney

"My grandfather, Thomas Godfrey (1860-1953) was born in West Challow, but spent most of his life in East Hanney, before emigrating to Canada c. 1888. This Godfrey family has deep roots in East Hanney, dating back at least into the early 1550s. His father was William Godfrey (1831-1899 E.H.) who married Mary Herman. William's siblings (who lived to adulthood) were - Charles (b. 1833), James (b. 1835), Robert (b. 1842) who married Eliza Preston, and Gabriel (b. 1846) who married Elizabeth Gaines."

Can anyone provide any information on what happened to William's siblings and their families please?

Ken Godfrey, Toronto, Ontario, Canada



East Hannay (Creative Commons 2202)

Berkshire's Electoral Registers

The Berkshire Record Office and Ancestry have teamed up to give free access to Berkshire's electoral registers, up to 1965, online FREE of charge, whilst the BRO is closed to the public.

Kith&Kin with Treedraw

"I have been using Kith&Kin with Treedraw since 1995 ... For me it is the best program, the data base is very comprehensive and the tree layout is excellent in that every graphical element can be modified and added to as you wish. The tree can be exported as a PDF file et al., or family recipients can use the free TreeDraw Viewer. The database can be searched if required, various reports can be produced and new data can be automatically updated in the linked tree ... more detail can be found on the web site at www.spansoft.org/"

Rodney Fry, Crowthorne

Kynch Family



Eaton Hastings church (Jonathan Billinger - a gem of a place! [CC BY-SA 2.0])

Are you interested in the Kynch Family from Hanney, Denchworth and Eaton Hastings?

Peter Watts has let the society know about the website he has just put together using his late wife's research and would be pleased to hear from anyone connected to the family.

<https://rjw2007.tribalpages.com/>