

Berkshire Family Historian



*The quarterly journal of the
Berkshire Family History Society*

March 2021
Volume 44



Inside this issue:
Marriage downloads
Ancestral tourism
Australian connections to Berkshire
Origins of the Stoter family name

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

East Hendred by Steve Bennett (Stevage) [CC BY-SA 3.0]

Berkshire Family Historian

The quarterly journal of the Berkshire Family History Society

March 2021

Volume 44

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(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 March *Berkshire Family Historian*. It only seems like yesterday that I was writing the Editor's Notes for the December edition, how can three months disappear so quickly? With the nights shortening and the springtime plants blooming and budding, we can hope that it brings with it a sense of renewal that, as family historians, feeds our desire to search out our ancestors and understand the world in which they lived.

This issue is packed with personal stories alongside the regular Branch round-ups and Society updates and we hope that you will find articles that inspire and inform you.

Vicki Chesterman

editor@berksfhs.org.uk



Chairman's Corner

I hope that you are all well and hopefully the vaccination programme is progressing well. We can hope that by the summer there can be some reopening of the face to face activities of the society. As things are changing frequently the weekly newsletter is the best way to find out what is happening. At the November executive meeting, we decided that future society AGMs will be mainly held online, in June, as more out of county members can join in.

The impact of COVID continues to be devastating on communities and individuals, and yet the Society has managed to deliver online services which are increasingly popular and this will continue.

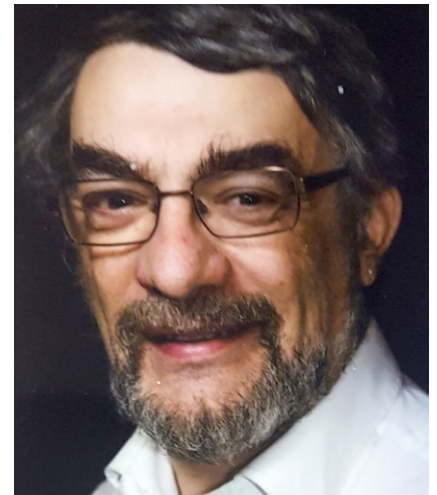
Last time I mentioned obtaining feedback, this has proved to be more difficult than hoped for but you can provide ideas and opinions via the website or via branch reps and society officers.

The development of online services continues and we are seeing more new members of the society in late 2020, which suggests we are getting something right! Zoom remains our main online tool and will continue into 2021. Face to face meetings for members of local branches may be possible but the requirements to keep everyone safe are still challenging and likely to remain so for some time to come. Again I want to express my thanks to those keeping everything running smoothly.

Regards.

Nick Prince

chairman@berksfhs.org.uk



Notice of 2021 Annual General Meeting and election of officers and trustees

As mentioned by Nick Prince in his Chairman's Corner, the society has taken the decision to hold future Annual General Meetings via Zoom. This allows access to the Annual General Meeting for a vast majority of our members throughout the world, rather than in previous years where only those within travelling distance of that year's venue, could attend.

In accordance with the society's constitution, notice is hereby given that the 46th Annual General Meeting will be held on **Friday 18th June** at 7.00pm for a 7.30pm start.

The main business of the meeting will be to receive a brief report from the Chairman on the past year's activities, to receive from the Treasurer the independently examined accounts for the year ending April 30th 2021 for acceptance and approval, and to elect for the year 2021/2022 the society's President, Vice Presidents, officers and trustees.

Officers and trustees form the society's Executive Committee. The committee will be seeking to fill a number of vacancies to restore trustee numbers to their permitted maximum*. Without its full complement of trustees, the society may be unable to continue to provide all existing services.

If you would like to nominate a member to the Executive, please let the Secretary know, in writing, by **Tuesday May 18th 2021**. Nomination forms may be obtained from the Secretary at secretary@berksfhs.org.

uk or downloaded from the website at www.berksfhs.org. Please ensure that the person you nominate is prepared to sit on the Executive Committee and be a trustee of the charity – all nominations should be seconded. Information about being a trustee of a charity and what it entails can be found on the Charity Commission website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/charity-commission>

See *The essential trustee: what you need to know, what you need to do* and *Charity trustee: what's involved* (Ref CC3 and CC3a July 10th 2015).

Certain people are not able to be a trustee:

- Persons under the age of 18;
- Anyone convicted of an offence involving deception or dishonesty unless the conviction is spent;
- Anyone who is an undischarged bankrupt;
- Anyone who has been removed from the trusteeship of a charity;
- Anyone who is disqualified from being a Company Director;
- Any other person described in sections 178 to 180 of the Charities Act 2011.

** Please contact your local branch if you wish to be considered as a branch representative to the Executive Committee. Also, there are vacancies for ordinary trustees within the Executive Committee.*

Honorary Treasurer Position Vacancy

Our current Honorary Treasurer has to stand down at the Annual meeting in June having completed his term of office allowed under our constitution. We are therefore seeking a new Honorary Treasurer.

If you have the appropriate skills and would like to support the Society by taking on this important voluntary role, please contact Vanessa Chappell at secretary@berksfhs.org.uk.

Full handover and ongoing support will be given and it is not essential that you live in Berkshire.

We are also looking for Trustees. Two of our Trustees will also be standing down in June having completed the term allowed in the constitution. If you are interested in becoming a Trustee please email secretary@berksfhs.org.uk.

All our Executive Meetings are held over Zoom and therefore your location is not an issue.

John Septimus Roe (1797 - 1878)

Penny Stokes *highlights the life of a Newbury notable*

John Septimus Roe was born on 8th May 1797 in the elegant Georgian rectory which still stands beside the river Kennet in Newbury, albeit now hemmed in between the back end of a Costa coffee shop and office buildings. John was the son of the Rev James Roe and his wife Sophia, née Brooks. His parents were prodigious breeders: Sophia was to bear ten children between 1787 and 1803 (two died in 1802). John was, as his name suggests, the seventh son and he was followed by another son and two daughters.

His father had become rector of Newbury's parish church just a few months before John was born, and was to serve Newbury for 43 years. One of his duties was to celebrate services in the chapel at Sandleford Priory for Elizabeth Montagu, "queen of the blue-stockings" and, after her death, for her heirs. One of John's happiest childhood memories was of riding the two miles out to Sandleford with his father on a Sunday morning.

This idyll ended abruptly when he was 10 years old, and gained a place at Christ's Hospital school in London under the Wests' Gift bequest. His social status and skills in mathematics saw him entered into the Royal Mathematical School, the middle stream (between the Grecians who studied classics with a view to university, and the Writing School whose pupils were destined for the counting house).

The Mathematical School prepared boys for entry into the Royal Navy, into which John Roe was apprenticed four years later. He quite probably did not see his parents during his entire time at school; Christ's Hospital, like Eton and Winchester, forbade pupils "sleeping out".

The French wars were still in full spate, and John Roe's early naval experience began with blockades of the French ports. After Waterloo he was posted to a ship tasked with surveying the northern and north-western coasts of Australia. Arriving in 1817, Roe narrowly escaped drowning in Oyster Harbour.

There followed a series of expeditionary voyages around Australasia on various ships, including one incident in which Roe was nearly killed in an Aborigine ambush, and another in which he fell from the masthead and lost the sight of one eye. Having completed several assignments, including a survey of Sydney Harbour in which his boat capsized with the loss of four lives, Lieutenant



The Old Rectory

John Roe returned to England in 1823.

Nine months later he was sent back to help establish settlements, before sailing to the Indian Ocean and taking part in the first Anglo-Burmese War.

In late November 1827 he returned to England, where his parents were still in Newbury. Although barely 30, he was in poor health, and he wanted to leave the navy. He started work at the Hydrographer's Office at the Admiralty but was soon offered, and accepted, the civilian post of Surveyor General of Western Australia.

Meanwhile he met and proposed to Matilda Bennett from the Isle of Man. They were married in Newbury on 8th January 1829, and it was reported that they left for Australia the same day, although the couple did not in fact embark upon the *Parmelia* until 3rd February. It is to be hoped that they had some sort of honeymoon, because the task ahead of them was no light one. In 1831 John wrote at length to his father (the letter was published in the *The Reading Mercury*) describing the hardships of founding the Swan River Colony on such a remote coastline, rarely visited by passing ships. He wanted emigrants to settle, but made no reference to any indigenous population.

Almost every year Roe took off on months long inland and coastal expeditions to survey the surrounding territory, and in one instance to rescue three starving men who had survived a different expeditionary disaster. His travels furnished him with a collection of scientific samples and specimens which were later to form the basis of the Western Australian Museum, and his log books, diaries and letters constitute

an important collection in the state library. He is regarded as the founding father of both institutions.

Towns, mountains, highways, districts and schools were named after him. He chose the sites for Perth and Fremantle, and laid out the former. Matilda was passionate about gardening, and it is said that a present-day kink in Perth's otherwise grid layout, between St George's Terrace and Adelaide Terrace, came about because she wanted to keep her extended garden intact.

In between this seemingly frenetic activity, he fathered 13 children with Matilda.

In 1861, remarkably, John Septimus Roe and Matilda had returned to England, for they appear in the census of that year with two of their sons, George and Augustus, as guests of Hugh Hammersly of the manor house in Pyrton, Oxfordshire.

On his retirement in 1870 Queen Victoria gave Roe 4,000 acres of land beside the Swan river. He named the estate Sandalford (as it is spelt today).



John Roe's statue in Perth



Sandalford

This was locally assumed to be his “home town” in England, although Newburians will recognise the name as honouring a more specific childhood memory.

At Sandalford John Septimus Roe, as keen a horticulturalist as was Matilda, spent his retirement experimenting with importing South African grapevines, laying the foundations for a winery which flourishes today.

Matilda died in 1871, survived by her husband by seven years. When John Septimus Roe died in 1878 he was given a funeral with full military honours, the grandest seen in the colony.

Sources

Not an idle man: biography of John Septimus Roe, by J L Jackson (1982)

DNB

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Septimus_Roe

<https://www.eastperthcemeteries.com.au/explore/stories-and-people/54-john-septimus-ro.html>

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-02-25/john-septimus-roe2c-the-man-who-mapped-out-perth/6261214>

<https://fremantlebiz.livejournal.com/494621.html>

<https://www.sandalford.com/winery/our-history>

The Reading Mercury

Events organised from The Centre for Heritage and Family History

March - June 2021

Our events continue by Zoom until at least the end of June, although we look forward to offering a selection of face-to-face events as well, when the situation allows. This means that all of our events remain available to everyone, if the time zone allows, wherever 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 speakers/headphones and preferably a microphone and webcam. If you haven't yet tried an online event and would like help to do so, just contact us at booking@berksfhs.org.uk

Please do check the society's website regularly, as changes may occur and new events are regularly added. For more information on all of our events, see <https://berksfhs.org>

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

| Workshops - Online | |
|---|---|
| TICKETS £10 (members £9) | |
| Places limited, pre-booking required. | |
| April - Saturday 17th 2.00 - 4.00pm | Getting more out of Ancestry and Findmypast <i>Tutor: Tony Wright</i> Are you getting the most out of Ancestry and Findmypast (FMP)? In this workshop, discover the datasets they hold using Ancestry's Card Catalogue and FMP's Record Sets. Learn the benefits of the lesser used records, such as Ancestry's Census Enumerator's Summaries and where to find Census References and why you should use them. Find out how to locate Family History Societies' transcriptions of parish registers and why you should prefer them. Tony will also share tips and best practices such as saving and renaming images. If there is time, Tony will also touch upon military records and passenger lists. |
| May - Saturday 8th 11.00am - 1.00pm | Education c.1860 - c.1914 <i>Tutor: Joan Dils</i> Discover how the provision for education for our English ancestors was transformed between 1860 and the start of the First World War. After 1870, schools run by local elected boards (Board Schools) supplemented those founded by religious bodies; in turn in 1902 schools became council schools administered by local education authorities (LEAs). Throughout the period, teacher training was improved, the school syllabus developed and pupil numbers increased until, in the 1890s, compulsory free schooling was provided for most children. |

| Natter Group - Online and FREE | |
|---|---|
| March - Tuesday 2nd April - Tuesday 6th May - Tuesday 4th June - Tuesday 1st | 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. |

Social History Talks - Online

TICKETS £5 (members £4)

Pre-booking is required. Book all five talks in the 'Spring Potpourri' series for the price of four.

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>March - Saturday 6th</p> <p>2.00 – 3.15pm</p> <p>Final talk in 'Winter Potpourri' series</p> | <p>The Arrival of the Railways in Reading: <i>with Richard Marks</i></p> <p>Brunel's Great Western Railway arrived in Reading on the 30th March 1840. The history of railway building states that railways destroyed property when the railways were built, and always resulted in huge economic growth for those towns it reached, but was this true in Reading? In this talk, historian Richard Marks will look at the impact the railway had on the town when it arrived, and how this compared to other places. We will also look at how the first train service compared to the service Reading enjoys today.</p> |
| <p>April – Thursday 8th</p> <p>2.00 – 3.15pm</p> <p>1st talk in 'Spring Potpourri' series</p> | <p>The Kitchen Garden of Caversham Court: <i>with Dr John Evans</i></p> <p>The talk will look at how kitchen gardens have evolved over time from early monastic plots to the grand walled gardens of the Victorian era. Using the walled gardens at Caversham Court, in Caversham, as an example, it also follows how many have survived the passage of time to become allotments. Valued plots which provide a source of folklore, amusing techniques, fine food and friendship.</p> |
| <p>April – Thursday 22nd</p> <p>2.00 – 3.15pm</p> <p>2nd talk in 'Spring Potpourri' series</p> | <p>Prospect Park Mansion House, Reading: <i>with Katie Amos</i></p> <p>This talk will explore the history of one of Tilehurst's most iconic landmarks and the families associated with it. These include many of Reading's more important families such as the Childs, Kendricks and Liebenroods. Katie Amos shares the extensive research, stories and rich history which resulted in her book <i>The Mansion House: Its history and its Occupants</i>.</p> |
| <p>May – Saturday 8th</p> <p>3.00 – 4.15pm</p> <p>3rd talk in 'Spring Potpourri' series</p> | <p>Jane Austen's School Days in Reading: <i>with Joy Pibworth</i></p> <p>This quarter, in celebration of the 900th anniversary of the founding of Reading Abbey by Henry I, we have two talks focusing on aspects of the Abbey. The first features the Abbey Gateway, home to the Ladies Boarding School which Jane Austen attended from 1785-6. With the help of contemporary sources we shall look at the buildings, daily routines, the teachers and the local environment Jane would have become familiar with (and possibly even muse on the echoes in her writing).</p> |
| <p>May – Thursday 20th</p> <p>2.00 – 3.15pm</p> <p>4th talk in 'Spring Potpourri' series</p> | <p>The Abbey and The Castle - Reading in the Middle Ages: <i>with Mike Cooper</i></p> <p>A lot has been said and written about Reading Abbey, but what can looking at the Abbey tell us about Reading during the 400 years it was active? In the second of our 900th anniversary talks, Mike Cooper will look at the relationship between the Abbey and the town, and will also explore the evidence for a castle at Reading.</p> |
| <p>June – Thursday 3rd</p> <p>2.00 – 3.15pm</p> <p>Final talk in 'Spring Potpourri' series</p> | <p>A Stroll through Berkshire's Graveyards: <i>with Catherine Sampson</i></p> <p>Berkshire's churchyards are full of stories. About the individuals who are buried there, the communities in which they lived and the prevailing burial customs and superstitions. They reveal local industry and commerce, the impact of events – both local and national, and of course pandemics and other causes of death. This talk explores some of those stories and showcases some of the outstanding architecture of Berkshire's funerary monuments – both in its burial grounds and also inside its churches.</p> |

Courses - Online

See website for full details. Places limited, pre-booking required.

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| <p>Tuesdays March - 16th, 23rd & 30th April – 6th, 13th & 20th 2.00 - 3.30pm Tickets £35 (members £28)</p> | <p>Beginners' Family History Course <i>Tutors: Chad Hanna and Gillian Stevens</i></p> <p>This course comprises 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.</p> |
| <p>Fridays June - 18th, 25th July – 2nd, 9th & 16th 2.00 - 3.45pm (all 5 sessions) Tickets £50 (members £45)</p> | <p>An Introduction to the Industrial Revolution in Britain <i>Tutor: Richard Marks</i></p> <p>The Industrial Revolution in Britain changed the world forever, but why did it occur in Britain first? In this five week course for family historians we will look at why the Industrial Revolution happened in Britain and whether it really was a “Revolution”.</p> <p>The course will scrutinise some of the important people who made the Industrial Revolution, and why their inventions were so important, as well as how life in the Industrial Revolution was experienced by the factory workers and its impact upon their health. We will also look at how the Trades Unions began and how the first welfare systems started (and how to find evidence of them). We will consider the experiences of women in the workplace and how this changed over time. Finally, we will explore how the Industrial Revolution can be researched by family historians seeking to trace and better understand how their ancestors lived and worked during this period of great change.</p> |
| <p>Saturdays June - 19th & 26th 11.00am - 1.00pm (both sessions) Tickets £20 (members £18)</p> | <p>House Histories <i>Tutor: Margaret Simons</i></p> <p>Researching the history of a house can be both exciting and rewarding, revealing fascinating stories of those that lived there before you. Do you have a house that you are interested in knowing more about, have you come up against a dead end or do you just want to know how to approach the subject?</p> <p>If so, then this course will help you reveal people, dates, events and much more using familiar resources like the census, but also introduce you to the less familiar such as the national Farm Survey, ‘Modern Domesday’, the 1910 Inland Revenue valuation survey, rate books, tithe records, local authority records, sales particulars and auction catalogues. You will be welcome to bring your housing project to these sessions.</p> |

DNA Interest Group - Online

TICKETS £5 (members £4)

All welcome. Pre-booking required.

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| <p>April - Saturday 10th 2.30 - 4.30pm</p> | <p>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.</p> |
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Guided Walk

TICKETS £10 (members £9)

Places limited, pre-booking required. Please see website for full details.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and required restrictions, bookings will only open online when it seems likely that this walk will be able to go ahead.

June - Thursday 24th
2.30 - 4.30pm

Abbey Quarter followed by cream tea *Guide: John Painter*

In medieval times, Reading was the site of a great royal abbey - a religious community centred round a magnificent church - one of the largest monasteries in Europe. It was formed in 1121 by Henry I and closed in 1539 on the orders of Henry VIII. In this its 900th anniversary year, our walk will explore the rich history of the Abbey Quarter with abbey guide and expert John Painter. It will be around 90 minutes in length, and generally on flat ground. We will finish at The Centre for Heritage and Family History, built on the site of the Abbey's former stables, for a cream tea.

The Centre for Heritage and Family History

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

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

As we went to print for this edition of the *Historian*, the Research Centre remains shut due to the Covid-19 pandemic. We plan to reopen when it is safe to do so. 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 from their own homes, 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.

For full details and to access these sites see the society's website: ***Info/Temporary access to subscription sites.***

Assisting family historians at a distance

In addition, the society offers an established postal/online search service of Berkshire names based on: Berkshire baptisms, Berkshire marriages, Berkshire burials and 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. Charges start at £3 for up to 25 entries for a single surname in one database.

For full details see: **<https://berksfhs.org/info/research-guides/research-services/>** or refer to previous *Historians*.

Lieutenant Frederick F. Kislingbury, 1846 - 1884

Eric Saxton tells the story of a Soldier, Pioneer, and Arctic Explorer from East Ilsley

On May 17th 1846 John Kislingbury, a glazier of East Ilsley and his wife Maria, brought their second son to St Mary's Church to be baptised. The child was named Foster Frederick Kislingbury. No one present on that day could have imagined, 38 years later when Frederick died, that he would be buried with full military honours and that 20,000 people would come to pay their respects.



Lt. Frederick F. Kislingbury in uniform

John Kislingbury and Maria Chennery were married in London in 1840, and living in East Ilsley when the 1841 census was taken. By 1851 the census shows that they had five children, including Frederick, who was known for the rest of his life as Frederick F. Kislingbury.

John and Maria had two further children, a daughter Jessie, born early 1852 and another, Ada, late in 1853, but their youngest son Harry Jesse died in 1854.

Within a year of Harry Jesse's death, John and Maria and their remaining six children left Liverpool on the journey to America on the ship *Webster*, arriving in New York on September 3rd 1855. They then settled in Rochester, New York. There seems to have been a general exodus of Kislingburys around this time. John's sister and her husband travelled on the same voyage, and intriguingly, John's sister-in-law, who had been a witness at his marriage, his niece, and perhaps even his widowed mother, all preceded him and his family to America.

At the age of 17 Frederick enlisted in the Army of the United States in 1863. In 1866 he was retired from active service, and was made paymaster's clerk at Detroit, Michigan. That same year he married Agnes Bullock who was a sister of the famous Seth Bullock, Sheriff of Deadwood, Dakota Territory. They had a son, Harry, in 1867, and another, Walter, in 1869.

Frederick was made a First Lieutenant in the regular army in 1873, and his first station in this capacity was at Fort Concho, Texas, where he helped to build a telegraph network across the southern plains working under the command of Lieutenant Greely.

In 1875 he was transferred to Fort Standing Rock, Dakota, where he had charge of the scouts in service against the Native Americans.

Frederick and Agnes had two further sons, Douglas in 1874 and Wheeler in 1876. In 1878 Agnes died and Frederick had her body returned to her home in Windsor, Canada for burial.

At the time of the Custer massacre he was with General Reno and was subsequently responsible for the capture of the Native American who killed Custer in the fight.

In 1879 Frederick married Jessie, the other sister of Sheriff Bullock and moved to Colorado. In 1880, while his regiment was stationed at Fort Custer, his second wife died of mountain fever, immediately after his return from a scouting



Stereograph of Lt. F Kislingbury (far right) in U.S. Cavalry uniform with Native Americans

expedition. He had been made acquainted with her danger while 150 miles from the post at the head of a scouting party and returned to the station straight away.

About a month later Frederick was asked by Greely to be second lieutenant in command of the Arctic expedition.

The Greely expedition was one of the main components comprising the first International Polar Year 1882-83. The team were to make scientific observations. They would experience 24 hours of darkness in the winter and 24 hours of sunlight in summer and would remain in the Arctic for 3 years.

After much planning and arrangements for supplies of food etc to be left at various base camps along the way, they reached their destination, Franklin Bay. The ship which brought them, the *Proteus*, stayed because it was unable to find a clear path through the icebergs.

The first weeks saw tensions arise between Greely and Kislingbury, who resigned his command and prepared to return home on the *Proteus*. He packed up his belongings and walked out to board the *Proteus*, arriving just in time to see the ship disappearing through the icebergs. The next time it was due back was the following summer. He would have to wait until then. He found himself in a difficult situation, not able to leave but not part of the expedition.

Things only got worse. No ships were able to get through in the summers of 1882 and 1883. The *Proteus* hit an iceberg and sank, its cargo of supplies hastily bundled onto the nearest shore.

Frederick spent his time waiting, exploring the region and collecting lichens and other arctic plants and trying to be part of the expedition. He was the principal food hunter due to his expert marksmanship. Eventually, because they could not receive supplies, they made their way south to where caches of food were supposed to have been left but the team found only 60 days of rations thrown from the sinking ship. In January 1884, one by one, men started dying from starvation. Frederick died on June 1st 1884. The few remaining men were later found emaciated and barely alive. The rescuers loaded them and their dead, who had been buried nearby, onto the rescue boat.

Frederick Kislingbury's casket arrived in Rochester on the evening of August 9th and a military funeral was held the next day at Monroe County Court House with more than 20,000 present to pay their respects. He was interred the same day at Mount Hope Cemetery.

There is a grisly postscript to this story. Suspicions had been aroused among the public and the media. The six survivors who were rescued looked remarkably fit having supposedly lived for eight months on 60 days' worth of



The Greely expedition group (Frederick is third from left on the front row)

rations. The Army had told grieving families that they should inter the remains right away and under no circumstances should they open the caskets. The public began to ask if Frederick Kislingbury was even in the casket or if he had been left behind buried in the Arctic.

These rumours concerned Lieutenant Kislingbury's relatives so much that they were granted permission for an exhumation, to enable a competent examination to take place. So, four days after the funeral, the iron casket containing the body was opened, and the remains found wrapped in a woollen blanket. This was removed to reveal a skeleton from which, apart from the head hands and feet, most of the skin and muscles had been removed. All extremities were attached to the body by ligaments only. No evidence was found that Lieutenant Kislingbury had died from anything other than natural causes. However, it was established, beyond doubt, that cannibalism had been resorted to by the starving men whose lives were saved by eating the dead bodies of their companions.

Despite many hardships the party had managed to survive for over three years and carry out essential scientific research. The expedition had helped map and characterise the area, and had reached the furthest point North that anyone had achieved up to that time, 83° 24N. The party also pushed further west and discovered an unexplored fiord on the western side of Ellesmere Island.

If John Kislingbury had not taken his family to America, Frederick might well have become a glazier and plumber like his father and grandfather and lived an uneventful life in this quiet corner of England.

Frederick's brother, William, also married in America and one of his daughters, Elizabeth, became a famous dancer on Broadway and a Ziegfeld Follies girl, even touring England in the 1920's. But that's another story....

Pictures supplied by Mike Nicolay of the USA.

Berkshire Buddies

The appearance of Covid-19 coincided with the launch of *In Touch* - our email newsletter. What was intended to be a monthly newsletter quickly moved to weekly so that we could stay connected with you. From the feedback we've received, it has been very well received.

For those members who are not digitally connected we appreciate that you're unable to benefit from *In Touch* and in the absence of face-to-face meetings, the *Historian* is your only contact. But, in true Baldrick style we have a cunning plan! We have appealed to our online members to be Berkshire Buddies and have volunteers for the postcode areas listed below. What would that mean?

Well, it's very much up to the two of you to decide, in line with the current Covid-19 rules. Perhaps they could pop a printed copy of the newsletter through your letterbox? If you have a computer but are not sure how to connect to the society website and newsletter, perhaps they could guide you through it?

We have volunteer buddies for these postcode areas:

BN3 GU16 NN13 OX10 RG4 RG5 RG7 RG14 RG41

If your postcode area is listed and you would like to have a Berkshire Buddy, all you need to do is call The Centre on 0118 950 9553 and leave your name and phone number. Your Berkshire Buddy will call you to introduce themselves - then it's up to the two of you.

Calling all members

If you would like to volunteer to be a Berkshire Buddy, please email: webmaster@berksfhs.org.uk. We need buddies for members in the following postcode areas:

| | | | | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| BN3 | BN16 | BS36 | BS48 | CF62 | EX31 | GL1 | GL6 | GU4 |
| GU16 | HP14 | HP22 | KT16 | MK3 | MK16 | NP15 | OX1 | OX11 |
| PO12 | RG2 | RG4 | RG5 | RG6 | RG7 | RG8 | RG9 | RG14 |
| RG18 | RG19 | RG20 | RG27 | RG30 | RG31 | RG40 | RG41 | SL3 |
| SL4 | SL6 | SN3 | SO45 | WD4 | | | | |

Rolling Membership & Renewals

Rolling Membership

We have moved to a rolling membership model in which a new member's renewal date will be one year from the date they joined, instead of expiring on 30th June. This change was approved by the members at the AGM on 4th September 2020.

Why are we doing this?

The aim is to make membership more attractive to potential members who join later in the year. With a fixed renewal date, the value-for-money of membership declines as we move through the year and this creates a disincentive to joining. As a consequence we have previously used extended membership offers in the latter half of the year. Rolling membership is fairer and the only reason we haven't offered it before is that it is very difficult to administer manually. However, our new membership system handles renewals automatically - sending reminders as each member's renewal date approaches - it doesn't create any extra administration for us.

Recent joiners

If you joined the society after 1st July 2020 your renewal date has been set to the anniversary of your date of joining.

Existing members

We will not be resetting existing member's renewals to the date they originally joined because that would be an admin task of epic proportions. However, we do need to smooth the transactions through our system so, if you are an online member, we will make a small administrative change to your renewal date, randomly allocating you a renewal date between 2nd and 31st July. This will make no material difference to your membership but it will ensure that our system doesn't send out over a thousand email reminders at once!

Offline members i.e. those who do not have access to email, will continue to renew on 1st July and will receive a paper renewal form in the June Historian, as normal. We would encourage you to convert to online renewal though, because it reduces the administration tasks for our Membership Secretary and our costs. It will also allow you to benefit from In Touch, our regular email newsletter which has current news, events and shop offers, delivered straight to your inbox bi-weekly.

Your new renewal date

Online members can find their new renewal date by logging into the website, going to the menu option *Login/Out > Member Profile* and clicking on the *Subscriptions* tab.

Renewals

It's that time of year when the renewal process starts to gear up for the majority of our members whose renewal date used to be 1st July under the old fixed-renewal-date system. This year will be a little different because for our online members the process will be almost entirely automated. System-generated reminders will be sent periodically, starting six weeks before your revised individual renewal date (see previous paragraph).

Please remember:

- **Online payment by credit/debit card is the best way to renew because it ensures your membership benefits continue with the minimum of effort.**
- **Standing Orders are no longer accepted for membership renewals.** If you formerly paid by standing order and have not cancelled it yet, please do so now - any SO payments will be treated as a donation and will not confer any membership benefits.

If you haven't given us an email address yet you will receive a paper renewal form in the June Historian. If you want to convert to online payment you can do so by telling us your email address (please email memsec@berksfhs.org.uk)

Cheques

As part of automating the renewal process, last year we asked you to switch from cheque to online payment where possible. A significant majority of you responded to that call, for which we are very grateful. We'd like to repeat that appeal this year, in an attempt to further reduce the number of cheques we have to handle. Please, wherever possible, pay by card, online.



News from the Berkshire Record Office

Ivone Turnbull, Senior Archivist at the Berkshire Record Office

Well, 2020 has been a strange year hasn't it? Open, closed, open, closed, open... and we start 2021 closed to visitors again until further notice.

We are able to process enquiries, including copy orders and research, but we cannot guarantee that we will be able to answer the telephone. We can deal with emails more readily, but we ask that you please bear with us as everything takes longer to do. We will help as best we can under the circumstances.

Something that has happened since the last article is that we created a YouTube channel and an Instagram account. Instagram will expand our range of social media profiles where we will share things with you that we hope you find interesting. We have already added a couple of videos on YouTube and plan to add more content as we can. You can find us under our name, the Berkshire Record Office: BRO YouTube and BRO Instagram. Why not take a look?

As ever, do keep an eye on our website and social media feeds on *Twitter@berksarchives* and *Facebook The Berkshire Record Office* for the latest information.

Stay Safe everyone.

What's new to the archives?

We have recently catalogued the Newbury Bypass Records of the Newbury Bypass Protest Campaign and the 'Third Battle of Newbury', 1985 - 2007 (D/EX2473), and the records of the Newbury Bypass Supporters' Association, 1979 -

2006 (D/EX2476); a series of contracts entered into by Berkshire County Council, mainly relating to property and road, up to 1967 (C/CL/L2); the minutes of Reading's New Town Hall Building Committee, 1877 - 1883 (R/AC2/23/1) and minutes and agenda papers for Reading Borough Council up to 2017 (DC/R).

There are also the records of Brightwalton Parish Council (CPC24), and Thatcham Town Council (CPC130); a set of maps showing changes to the county boundaries, c.1880s - 1974 (D/EX2409); a Reading Water Works Company's letter book, 1826 - 1858 (R/UW), and minutes of Reading Borough Council's Waterworks Committee, 1875 - 1881 (R/AC); as well as all the coroners' returns for Maidenhead District (COR/M), Reading County District (COR/R) and Reading Borough (COR/RB) up to 1946 by name.

To keep up to date on what collections we have, please see our online catalogue: www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk/search-catalogue.

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RG1 6AF

arch@reading.gov.uk

0118 937 5132

www.berkshirerecordoffice.org.uk



Reginald Edward Hamblin

Barry Hamblin tells us of a serendipitous event

Recently I have found a missing relative who served in WW1 and died in the trenches in August 1918. The person in question was Reginald Edward Hamblin, who was my great great grandfather's brother's son.

Reginald had been born in Newbury in 1897 to Isaac Ballard Hamblin and Keturah, née Hamblin, the third of four children.

Isaac was a tailor, like his father, Isaac Edward, and they ran a shop in Northbrook Street, Newbury. By the time Isaac Ballard took over the business the family had moved away from living over the shop and were residing in Shaw.

In 1916 Reginald enlisted with the 1st/16th Battalion London Regiment - the Queen's Westminster Rifles (a Territorial unit). Reginald's original regimental number was 6112, but this changed in 1917 when the entire battalion was renumbered as part of the renumbering of the Territorial Force. Reginald became Private 552862 Hamblin.

Reginald died of wounds on 25th August 1918, his body was never recovered. He is remembered on Panel 10 of the Vis-en-Artois Memorial in northern France, Tablet 10 of the Newbury Town War Memorial, and on both the memorial cross and roll of honour in Brightwalton. As his family had a strong link to Brightwalton and his grandparents were still living there, they were able to make sure Reginald was added to the list of fallen commemorated in the village.

Whilst doing the research, I found his service medals being sold on a well-known auction site. Here's the fascinating story on how the seller obtained them. I received a notification from the auction site in response to a saved search I had set up. The saved search was anything that came up for sale with the family name "Hamblin" and to my surprise the notification was for a set of framed WW1 medals and history that belonged



The late Rfn. REGINALD E. HAMBLIN, Westminster Rifles, late of Northbrook St., Newbury - Died of wounds.

to Reginald. I purchased them immediately because I did not want the item to be lost to a collector.

After receiving the medals, I contacted the seller and asked how they came to have them. It was conveyed to me that they had been purchased many years ago from a house clearance. The owner of the shop who purchased the medals hung them in his shop, where they hung for twenty plus years. When the shop owner died, the medals were packed away along with the shop stock and were then stored in a garage for a few more years. When the garage was cleared the medals were listed on the auction site and they came online close to the day that I was researching Reginald.

The family line had ended with nobody to pass the medals onto. So it felt like fate had led them back to the family, and to me.

The medals now hang proudly on a wall in my family home.

The moral of the story is, always keep your eyes open, as you never know what you will find.



Reginald Hamblin's service medals

New Products - Marriage Data Downloads

Following the successful launch of burial and monumental inscriptions downloads last quarter, the Society is delighted to follow that with marriages this quarter.

Not all computers take CDs nowadays and many researchers have interests in specific parishes only. Data downloads have been developed to provide choice and flexibility in how you access data for Berkshire. Each download is in PDF format and your purchase is automatically fulfilled as soon as you have paid. Terms and conditions apply and these downloads are for your personal use only. Prices vary but start from just £2.00. The usual member discounts apply.

The release of Phase 1 of the marriage downloads has been staggered between January and late March. A list of all of those included in Phase 1 is given below. Some marriage registers are not yet fully transcribed and checked, and these will be included in later phases as soon as we are able to.

Marriage entries are presented in date order, and there is also a “by person” finding aid to assist your use of the download. Berkshire’s marriages are also available in CD format. If you’re interested in a number of parishes, please be aware that Berkshire Marriages Edition Four CD may be better value. Individual Parish CDs also exist, so please check what product best meets your needs.

| Parish | Date Span | Download Price |
|-------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Abingdon, St Nicolas | 1538 - 1862 | £4.00 |
| Aldermaston, St Mary | 1559 - 1935 | £4.00 |
| Appleford, St Peter & St Paul | 1567 - 1935 | £3.00 |
| Ashampstead, St Clement | 1614 - 1935 | £3.25 |
| Ashbury, St Mary | 1612 - 1836 | £4.00 |
| Aston Tirrold, St Michael | 1607 - 1935 | £3.25 |
| Aston Upthorpe, All Saints | 1862 - 1935 | £2.00 |
| Avington, St Mark & St Luke | 1699 - 1935 | £2.50 |
| Barkham, St James | 1542 - 1935 | £3.50 |
| Basildon, St Bartholomew | 1540 - 1837 | £3.75 |
| Bearwood, St Catherine | 1846 - 1935 | £3.25 |
| Beech Hill, St Mary | 1868 - 1935 | £2.50 |
| Beedon, St Nicholas | 1607 - 1935 | £3.50 |
| Beenham, St Mary | 1563 - 1836 | £3.00 |
| Besselsleigh, St Lawrence | 1689 - 1935 | £3.75 |
| Binfield, All Saints | 1538 - 1935 | £4.25 |
| Bisham, All Saints | 1560 - 1836 | £3.75 |
| Blewbury, St Michael | 1813 - 1837 | £2.50 |
| Boxford, St Andrew | 1559 - 1935 | £4.00 |

| Parish | Date Span | Download Price |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Bradfield, St Andrew | 1559 - 1935 | £4.00 |
| Bradfield, Tutts Clump (Methodists) | 1921 - 1935 | £2.00 |
| Bray, St Michael | 1607 - 1837 | £4.25 |
| Braywood, All Saints | 1867 - 1935 | £2.75 |
| Brightwalton, All Saints | 1559 - 1837 | £3.00 |
| Brimpton, St Peter | 1607 - 1935 | £3.75 |
| Buckland, St Mary | 1605 - 1837 | £3.50 |
| Bucklebury, St Mary | 1538 - 1876 | £4.00 |
| Burghfield, St Mary | 1559 - 1935 | £4.00 |
| Buscot, St Mary | 1607 - 1935 | £3.75 |
| Caversham, St Peter | 1597 - 1935 | £4.75 |
| Chieveley, St Mary | 1560 - 1837 | £4.00 |
| Childrey, St Mary | 1559 - 1928 | £3.75 |
| Cholsey, St Mary | 1547 - 1917 | £4.00 |
| Clewer, St Andrew | 1607 - 1837 | £4.25 |
| Clewer, St Stephen | 1874 - 1935 | £3.00 |
| Combe, St Swithun | 1560 - 1935 | £3.00 |
| Compton, St Mary & St Nicholas | 1553 - 1935 | £4.00 |

| Parish | Date Span | Download Price |
|---|-------------|----------------|
| Cookham, Holy Trinity | 1563 - 1837 | £4.25 |
| Crowthorne, St John Baptist | 1874 - 1908 | £2.50 |
| Cumnor, St Michael | 1559 - 1935 | £4.00 |
| Didcot, All Saints | 1571 - 1840 | £2.50 |
| East Garston, All Saints | 1554 - 1837 | £3.50 |
| East Ilsley, St Mary | 1609 - 1935 | £4.00 |
| East Lockinge, All Saints | 1547 - 1866 | £3.00 |
| East Shefford, St Thomas | 1604 - 1833 | £2.00 |
| Easthampstead, St Michael & St Mary Magdalene | 1558 - 1835 | £3.50 |
| Englefield, St Mark | 1561 - 1935 | £3.50 |
| Farnborough, All Saints | 1614 - 1935 | £3.00 |
| Grazeley, Holy Trinity | 1850 - 1935 | £3.25 |
| Greenham, St Mary | 1612 - 1837 | £3.50 |
| Hamstead Marshall, St Mary | 1605 - 1837 | £2.75 |
| Harwell, St Matthew | 1559 - 1837 | £3.75 |
| Hungerford, St Lawrence | 1600 - 1837 | £4.25 |
| Hungerford, Wesleyan Chapel | 1886 - 1897 | £2.00 |
| Hurst, St Nicholas | 1579 - 1935 | £4.50 |
| Kintbury, St Mary | 1557 - 1935 | £4.25 |
| Lambourn Woodlands, St Mary | 1842 - 1935 | £2.50 |
| Lambourn, St Michael & All Angels | 1571 - 1837 | £4.25 |
| Leckhampstead, St James | 1754 - 1935 | £3.00 |
| Little Wittenham, St Peter | 1539 - 1935 | £3.00 |
| Lyford, St Mary | 1846 - 1935 | £2.00 |
| Maidenhead, Congregational Church | 1879 - 1895 | £2.00 |
| Marlston, St Mary | 1907 - 1935 | £2.00 |
| Mortimer West End, St Saviour | 1615 - 1680 | £2.00 |
| Moulsford, St John Baptist | 1616 - 1837 | £2.25 |
| New Windsor, St John The Baptist | 1559 - 1837 | £4.75 |
| Newbury, Congregational Church | 1839 - 1935 | £2.00 |

| Parish | Date Span | Download Price |
|------------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Padworth, St John the Baptist | 1618 - 1838 | £2.50 |
| Pangbourne, St James the Less | 1562 - 1841 | £3.50 |
| Peasmore, St Barnabas | 1540 - 1935 | £3.50 |
| Purley, St Mary | 1607 - 1935 | £4.00 |
| Radley, St James | 1599 - 1825 | £3.25 |
| Reading, All Saints | 1909 - 1935 | £3.25 |
| Reading, Monthly Meeting (Quakers) | 1801 - 1835 | £2.00 |
| Reading, St Giles | 1564 - 1779 | £4.75 |
| Reading, St Giles | 1780 - 1869 | £4.75 |
| Reading, St Giles | 1870 - 1935 | £4.75 |
| Reading, St Laurence | 1605 - 1739 | £4.25 |
| Reading, St Laurence | 1740 - 1839 | £4.50 |
| Reading, St Laurence | 1840 - 1935 | £4.25 |
| Reading, St Luke | 1909 - 1935 | £4.00 |
| Reading, St Mark | 1920 - 1935 | £2.75 |
| Reading, St Mary (Castle Street) | 1914 - 1935 | £2.50 |
| Reading, St Mary (The Minster) | 1538 - 1819 | £4.75 |
| Reading, St Mary (The Minster) | 1820 - 1879 | £4.75 |
| Reading, St Mary (The Minster) | 1880 - 1935 | £4.50 |
| Reading, St Saviour | 1922 - 1935 | £2.50 |
| Ruscombe, St James | 1559 - 1932 | £3.75 |
| Sandhurst, St Michael | 1580 - 1837 | £3.00 |
| Shaw cum Donnington, St Mary | 1563 - 1837 | £3.75 |
| Shellingford, St Faith | 1583 - 1935 | £3.25 |
| Shinfield, St Mary | 1605 - 1837 | £3.25 |
| Shippon, St Mary Magdalene | 1856 - 1935 | £2.75 |
| Shottesbrooke, St John Baptist | 1566 - 1915 | £3.00 |
| Sonning, St Andrew | 1592 - 1837 | £4.25 |
| Sotwell, St James | 1606 - 1835 | £2.25 |
| Sparsholt, Holy Cross | 1559 - 1812 | £3.00 |
| Speen, St Mary | 1617 - 1918 | £4.75 |

| Parish | Date Span | Download Price |
|-----------------------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Speenhamland, St Mary | 1847 - 1935 | £4.00 |
| Stanford Dingley, St Denys | 1540 - 1834 | £2.50 |
| Stratfield Mortimer, St Mary | 1607 - 1837 | £3.75 |
| Streatley, St Mary | 1607 - 1836 | £3.00 |
| Sulham, St Nicholas | 1607 - 1935 | £3.50 |
| Sulhamstead Abbots, St Mary | 1602 - 1837 | £3.00 |
| Sulhamstead Bannister, St Michael | 1607 - 1837 | £2.50 |
| Sunninghill, St Michael | 1562 - 1929 | £4.00 |
| Swallowfield, All Saints | 1607 - 1926 | £4.00 |
| Thatcham, Independent Chapel | 1859 - 1880 | £2.00 |
| Thatcham, St Mary | 1561 - 1935 | £4.50 |
| Theale, Holy Trinity | 1833 - 1935 | £3.25 |
| Tidmarsh, St Laurence | 1609 - 1935 | £2.75 |
| Tilehurst, St Michael | 1614 - 1824 | £4.00 |
| Tilehurst, St Michael | 1825 - 1935 | £4.00 |
| Tubney, St Lawrence | 1848 - 1935 | £2.25 |
| Uffington, St Mary | 1612 - 1935 | £4.00 |
| Ufton Nervet, St Peter | 1607 - 1836 | £3.25 |

| Parish | Date Span | Download Price |
|---|-------------|----------------|
| Wallingford, St Leonard | 1605 - 1925 | £4.00 |
| Waltham St Lawrence, St Lawrence | 1558 - 1837 | £3.75 |
| Warfield, St Michael The Archangel | 1569 - 1837 | £3.75 |
| Wargrave, St Mary | 1539 - 1789 | £4.00 |
| Wargrave, St Mary | 1790 - 1935 | £4.00 |
| Wasing, St Nicholas | 1612 - 1832 | £2.50 |
| West Hanney, St James | 1564 - 1837 | £4.00 |
| West Ilsley, All Saints | 1560 - 1839 | £3.25 |
| West Shefford, St Mary | 1599 - 1837 | £3.25 |
| West Woodhay, St Lawrence | 1614 - 1836 | £2.25 |
| White Waltham, St Mary | 1556 - 1836 | £3.75 |
| Windsor Castle, Royal Free Chapel of St. George | 1627 - 1856 | £3.75 |
| Winkfield, St Mary | 1564 - 1837 | £4.00 |
| Winterbourne, St James the Less | 1565 - 1837 | £2.75 |
| Wokingham, All Saints | 1589 - 1837 | £4.25 |
| Wootton, St Peter | 1725 - 1935 | £3.75 |
| Yattendon, St Peter & St Paul | 1559 - 1932 | £3.25 |

Projects and Publications Update

Catherine Sampson

It's been a contrary past twelve months for projects and publications. We have made great progress with data downloads and over the last six months you will have seen the launch of first burials and monumental inscriptions downloads, and then marriages. In contrast, Covid-19 restrictions have limited the progress we have been able to make with transcribing and checking new records. As I write this update, the Berkshire Record Office has been closed since Berkshire entered tier four, and there is little likelihood of that situation changing until the vaccination programme has rolled out more extensively. There is light however at the end of the tunnel.

Once the Archive Offices are able to reopen, we hope to finish the register checking we're currently doing for the Newbury St Nicolas Parish Registers CD and also the final burial registers for Berkshire Burials Edition 13. Marriage register checking for the next release of Berkshire Marriages is also already underway.

Work with preparing more monumental inscriptions has been ongoing in the background during the last twelve months. Weather and Covid-19 permitting, we hope to be back in Berkshire's church yards before too long. Please contact projects@berksfhs.org.uk if you think you might be able to help.

Polish Ancestral Tourism - Wolf Hunting in Womja (Lomza) - Part 1

Leigh Dworkin takes us on a trip in search of his ancestors

In July 2016 I was fortunate to be sent to Warsaw on a business trip. I was beside myself with excitement, and it was hard to focus on work, as I just wanted to rent a car and explore my ancestral shtetlach (settlements).

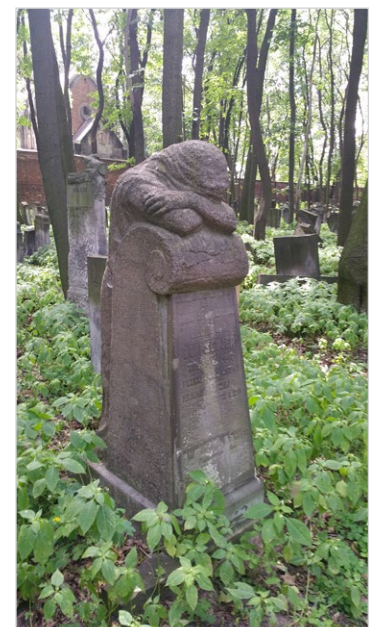
I took the first flight out of Heathrow on the Sunday, which meant a 5am start, and despite my taxi not showing up, I managed to arrive in Warsaw on time at 11am. This time was significant because it was exactly the same time as a memorial service was taking place in Jedwabne to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Jedwabne atrocity (or pogrom) in 1941, when hundreds of Jews were herded into a barn soaked in kerosene and set alight by Polish locals, encouraged by the Nazis. This sadly included Moishe Gryngras, the second husband of my great-grandmother's sister (Sophie Jelen) – as I learned from a page of testimony from Yad Vashem (The World Holocaust Remembrance Centre in Israel).

Poor planning on my part, as I could not get to Jedwabne in time; I only found out about the memorial service after my flights had been booked, and Jedwabne is a good two and a half hours North-East of Warsaw in the Lomza (pronounced 'Womja') district of my ancestors.

Warsaw is a beautiful city, and although I imagined I would be greeted by Tevye (*Fiddler on the Roof*) with fresh milk from the cow, I had to put up with being greeted by champagne at the Hilton instead.

Within walking distance of my hotel, I visited the old Warsaw cemetery on Okopowa Street, to try to find my Berkowicz ancestors. My great grandparents lived and married in Warsaw, before coming to the UK, but their parents stayed behind in the old country. So, I was looking for Abraham and "Lo'se" Berkowicz in a graveyard of over 200,000 tombstones almost entirely in Hebrew with some Polish if I was lucky. My strategy was to attempt to trip over them by wandering about randomly using the genealogical force and my shared DNA to guide me. Needless to say, I was not exactly successful. That being said, I did find a "Jelen". I also found an Adolph Bernhardt - the namesake of my wife's great uncle who died in the Great War.

That evening I discovered a better strategy in the search engine of the website of The Foundation for Documentation of Jewish Cemeteries in Poland at http://cemetery.jewish.org.pl/lang_en/. This has a database of 80,000 of the graves including at least 5 Abraham/Avram



The Jewish Cemetery on Okopowa Street

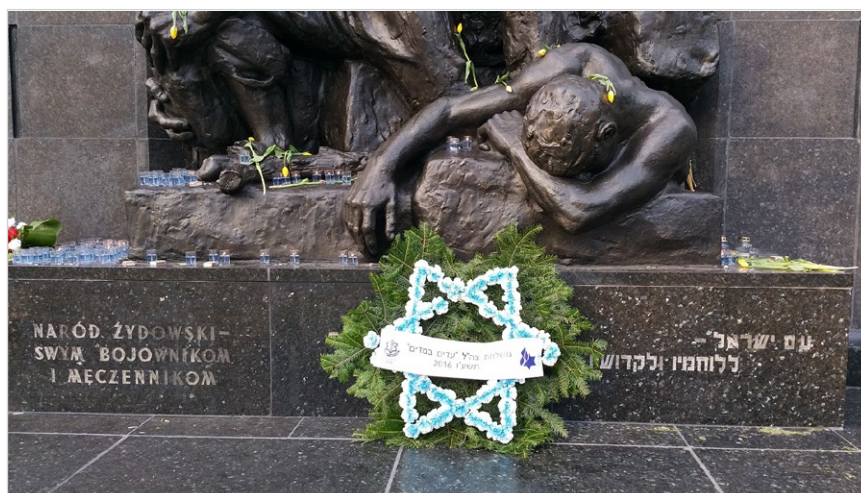
Berkowicz's. Again, bad planning on my part, but I will visit these specific graves next time I am in Warsaw. Until then, I have the pictures of the stones from the database in high resolution, so I have 5 possibilities with 5 different names for possible triple great grandfathers. Sadly, I have no knowledge of which is the right one (if any) and there was no mention of wife "Lo'se" to confirm I had the right Abraham.

My afternoon was spent in POLIN, the Museum of the History of Polish Jews. This was huge and amazing. I spent 5 hours going round reading every plaque, interacting with every display, and listening to every section of the audio guide. Even so, I felt that I rather rushed the First and Second World War sections when hunger got the better of me and I wolfed down a late lunch at the Museum café at 7pm. So, I plan to return and redo those important sections. Outside is a large memorial to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, which had been augmented with some Jedwabne extras.

I walked back to the hotel via the Nożyk Orthodox Synagogue, which is the only synagogue in Warsaw to have survived the Second World War. It was only built in 1898 so may be a little late for my people. Sadly, the great synagogue of Warsaw, once the largest in the world at the time, did not survive. On my next trip I will visit the former when it is still open (oops!) and the site of the latter.

I won't bore you with the details of my work, but the highlight was dinner with a couple of Polish friends of a colleague who taught me that Grushka – a family surname – means "pear". The vodka cocktail tapas bar afterwards was also quite interesting if not genealogically so.

With work out of the way I rented a car and set off for Zambrow where my Jelen's were from, particularly my great-grandmother Leah, her sister Sophie and their parents Aria and Malka. Zambrow means something like home of the bison (Zbr in Polish) and also seems to be the name of the local beer.



POLIN the museum of the history of the Jewish people (top photo) and the Warsaw ghetto uprising memorial with extras added for the Jedwabne 75th anniversary (bottom photo)

Driving in Poland is not for the faint hearted. There were precious few dual carriageways and so mostly people were driving at each other at over 60 mph. It would have been better if this had been in consecutive lanes, but there is a lot of dangerous overtaking and it is quite common to be staring at a huge truck trundling towards you, just hoping that they complete the manoeuvre in time.

You may think that I'm exaggerating, but I wondered why there were so many Christian shrines on the roads. I guessed it was due to being in a religious country, and then suddenly it dawned on me that each represented a failed overtaking attempt.

Somehow, I dodged the juggernauts, and made it to Zambrow. I was literally greeted by a cow (but no Tevye) as I drove into town - a fair substitute for a bison. Nobody spoke English. It was wonderful.

After checking into my hostel, I decided to find the Zambrow Jewish cemetery. This time I had done my research and knew the street it was on. However, there was no street address. I spent over an hour trying to find the place wading through random fields and forests that looked promising. I even spoke to a few locals in my fluent Polish, which involved saying the word for 'Jew' (Zydow) and miming dead people, but to no avail. Luckily, I wasn't reported! As I started to drive out of town and back to the hotel in a state of dejection, I caught sight of a large stone with a plaque and a Magen Dovid (Star of David) on it, and realised I was only a quarter of a mile out with my muddy field, but that now I had found the cemetery.

This turned out to be a bittersweet experience. It was great that something had survived, where in most places the Jewish cemeteries and synagogues have all gone. However, the cemetery is in a terrible state of repair. I photographed every stone I could find, and there are over 100. But almost all are fallen over, broken, covered in moss with some Hebrew writing still legible, but not much. Sadly, the site was also strewn with empty beer cans where the local youth have been using the stones to sit on. The cemetery has been taken over by the forest. I'm not sure that

I would recommend doing this as although I am meant to be young and fit, I was constantly in fear of missing a step and rolling down the steep hill where I had perched to take a photo. In a sombre mood, I headed back to my hostel with a great set of photos. Luckily, all of the stones have already been photographed and indexed on the site above, but that was before the forest had taken over and had won.

At one point I noticed that a very colourful mosquito was making a meal out of me and then remembered that I am allergic. What followed was a tricky negotiation for some antihistamine gel at a shop in Zambrow which was either a chemist or a vet. Having failed to establish which, I put in a masterful performance miming a mosquito and managed to secure the right medication with a picture of a mozzie on the tube.

That evening I successfully managed to mime "vegetarian pizza and a beer please" at a non-English speaking pizzeria, and then I wandered around Zambrow getting a feel of the place where quite a few of my ancestors were born. There were churches and a town square with an impressive bison, but absolutely nothing Jewish was preserved.



The Jewish Cemetery in a forest in Zambrow



To be continued.

Who was Henry Stacey?

Richard Croker looks into a mysterious appearance and disappearance within a family

I am researching a member of the Stacey family who was born in Hampshire around 1846 and lived in Reading about 1881. Places given will generally be the registration district in which the event occurred.

Beginning with a living married couple as a starting point, I have worked back and found ancestors dating to the early 1800s, using the GRO to find a mother's maiden name (MMN) and FreeBMD to find corresponding marriages. Where there is the possibility of more than one birth or marriage with similar names at similar times, I have checked the families in the censuses to ensure I have the correct lineage. Always confirm data with more than one source.

I have checked the generations back to Thomas Stacey (born 1889) and for confidentiality I will start with him. The table below is a summary of the result of those searches:

| Surname | Name | Middle Name | Marr (M) Born (B) | Year | Surname / MMN | Name | Middle Name | Reg Dist |
|---------|--------|-------------|-------------------|------|---------------|--------|-------------|-------------|
| Stacey | Thomas | H | M | 1942 | Harwood | Joyce | E | Reading |
| Stacey | Thomas | H | B | 1917 | Withers | | | Reading |
| Stacey | Thomas | | M | 1911 | Withers | Jessie | W A | Reading |
| Stacey | Thomas | | B | 1889 | Goodger | | | Reading |
| Stacey | Uriah | | M | 1876 | Goodger | Mary | Ann | Reading |
| Stacey | Uriah | | B | 1848 | Wells | | | Basingstoke |

I looked in the **1939** Register for Thomas H Stacey, born 1917 and unmarried. I found him living with his parents and siblings at 49 Orts Road, Reading:

| Surname | Name | M or F | Birthday | M S W | Occupation | Other |
|------------|-----------|--------|-------------|-------|-------------------------|------------|
| Stacey Snr | Thomas | M | 19 Oct 1889 | M | Watchman | |
| Stacey | Winifred | F | 22 Apr 1888 | M | Unpaid domestic duties | (1) |
| Stacey | Frederick | M | 29 Nov 1912 | S | Shop Porter (Grocery) | |
| Stacey | Louisa | F | 7 Mar 1915 | S | Paper Cutting Machinist | M Mortimer |
| Stacey Jnr | Thomas | M | 25 Oct 1917 | S | ?? (??) | |
| Stacey | Edith | F | 11 Apr 1920 | S | Biscuit Packer | (2) |
| CLOSED | | | | | | |

(1) As Jessie W A at marriage to Thomas. As Jessie Winifred Annie at birth.

(2) I checked Ediths birth (Edith A M, born 1920 with MMN Withers), the same as Thomas and therefore the correct family.

I looked in the **1911** census for a Thomas Stacey born around 1889 in the Reading area with a mother called Mary. I found one living at 8 Garrard Street, Reading:

| Surname | Name | Middle Name | Relation | M S W | Age | Occupation | Birthplace |
|----------|----------|-------------|----------------|-------|--------|------------------------|------------|
| Aldridge | William | Thomas | Head | M | 34 | Biscuit Manufactory | Reading |
| Aldridge | Kathleen | Emily | Wife | M | 29 | (M 6yrs, 2ch, 2 alive) | Reading |
| Aldridge | Kathleen | Annie | Daur | | 2 | | Reading |
| Aldridge | Elsie | Edith May | Daur | | 5 mnth | | Reading |
| Stacey | Mary | Ann | Mother in Law | W | 54 | | Tilehurst |
| Stacey | Annie | Emily | Sister in Law | S | 25 | Biscuit Manufactory | Reading |
| Stacey | Edith | Mary | Sister in Law | S | 23 | Biscuit Manufactory | Reading |
| Stacey | Thomas | | Brother in Law | S | 21 | Biscuit Manufactory | Reading |

Kathleen Emily Stacey married William Thomas Aldridge in Reading in 1904. I therefore checked the births of the sisters and found Edith Mary born 1887, and Annie born 1886, both with MMN Goodger. This is the correct family.

Because Mary Ann was listed as a widow, I looked for the death of a Uriah Stacey born about 1848. I found a death for a Uriah aged 63 who died in 1910 in Reading. On the Familysearch website he was aged 63 and was buried on 11th January 1910 in the London Road Cemetery (consecrated) and he had been in the infirmary.

I looked for the birth of Mary Ann Goodger in about 1857 in the Tilehurst/Reading area. I found a Mary Goodger born in Bradfield in 1856 with MMN Wate. This is probably correct as Bradfield covered the Tilehurst area of Reading.

I found a marriage of a James Goodger to Sarah Waite in Dec. quarter 1855 in Bradfield.

Looking in the **1901** census for a Mary Stacey aged about 44 in the Reading area, I found at 7 Cheltenham Place, Reading:

| Surname | Name | Middle Name | Relation | M S W | Age | Occupation | Other |
|---------|--------|-------------|----------|-------|-----|--------------------------|-----------|
| Stacey | Mary | | Wife | M | 44 | | Tilehurst |
| Stacey | Emily | A | Daur | | 15 | Biscuit Makers Assistant | Reading |
| Stacey | Edith | | Daur | | 14 | Biscuit Makers Assistant | Reading |
| Stacey | Tom | | Son | | 11 | | Reading |
| Nash | George | | Boarder | | 38 | General Laborer | Abingdon |

It appears Mary is married, but I could not find Uriah.

I then searched the **1891** census for a Thomas Stacey born about 1889 with a mother Mary born about 1857 and a father Uriah. I found at 107 Friar Street, Reading:

| Surname | Name | Middle Name | Relation | M S W | Age | Occupation | Birthplace |
|----------|--------|-------------|----------|-------|-----|---------------|-----------------------|
| Thatcher | Walter | | Son | S | 19 | Cabinet Maker | Berks, Lower Basildon |
| Thatcher | Linda | E | Daur | S | 17 | Shopkeeper | Berks, Lower Basildon |
| Stacey | Henry | | Lodger | M | 44 | Platelayer | Hants, Hartley |
| Stacey | Mary | | Lodger | M | 34 | | Berks, Tilehurst |
| Stacey | Kate | | Lodger | S | 9 | | Berks, Reading |
| Stacey | Annie | | Lodger | S | 5 | | Berks, Reading |
| Stacey | Edie | | Lodger | S | 3 | | Berks, Reading |
| Stacey | Thomas | | Lodger | S | 1 | | Berks, Reading |

I searched GRO records for MMN of the "lodger children" as a check and found that Catherine, Annie, Edith and Thomas all had a MMN of Goodger. This is the correct family.

So who was Henry? Note that he was born in Hampshire in about 1847 just as Uriah was.

I couldn't find the birth or death of a Henry that fits and I couldn't find a Mary marrying a Henry Stacey, or similar, that matches this couple's details.

I therefore went back to the **1881** census looking for Mary and found at 18 Ball Court, Friar Street, Reading:

| Surname | Name | Middle Name | Relation | M S W | Age | Occupation | Birthplace |
|---------|---------|-------------|----------|-------|------|---------------------------|------------------|
| Stacey | Henry | | Head | M | 36 | Railway Platelayer | Hants, N.K. |
| Stacey | Mary | | Wife | M | 24 | Railway Platelayer's wife | Berks, Tilehurst |
| Stacey | Arthur | | Son | | 3 | | Berks, Reading |
| Knight | Willian | | Lodger | S | 24 ? | Carmans laborer | Wilts, Wilsford |
| Palmer | Alfred | | Lodger | S | 17 | Wood sawyer (Steam) | Berks, Bradfield |

As a check I looked in GRO records and found Arthur Stacey born in 1878 with his mother's maiden name as Goodger. This is the correct family, but once again, who is Henry?

Uriah and Mary were married in 1876 so I searched the **1871** census for Uriah and Henry Stacey and I could not find either of them.

I did find Mary's family Goodger in 1871 and 1861 censuses and she was born in Tilehurst about 1857 so her family fits in nicely.

Back to Stacey. I found Uriah's birth in 1848 in Basingstoke with MMN as Wells. In Familysearch I found the marriage of William Stacey and Mary Wells in Sherfield on Loddon in 1830.

I therefore searched the **1861** census for Uriah Stacey born about 1848 and found in Hartley Westpall (Hampshire):

| Surname | Name | Middle Name | Relation | M S W | Age | Occupation | Birthplace |
|---------|---------|-------------|----------|-------|-----|------------|-------------------------|
| Stacey | William | | Head | M | 57 | Ag Lab | Hants, Hartley Westpall |
| Stacey | Mary | | Wife | M | 51 | | Hants, Sherfield |
| Stacey | William | | Son | | 19 | Ag Lab | Hants, Rotherwick |
| Stacey | John | | Son | | 14 | Carter Boy | Hants, Hartley Westpall |
| Stacey | Uriah | | Son | | 12 | Carter Boy | Hants, Hartley Westpall |

Mary's birthplace ties in with the marriage at Sherfield.

Going through the **1851** census I also found in Hartley Westpall:

| Surname | Name | Middle Name | Relation | M S W | Age | Occupation | Birthplace |
|---------|----------|-------------|----------|-------|-----|------------|-------------------------|
| Stacey | William | | Head | M | 46 | Ag Lab | Hants, Hartley Westpall |
| Stacey | Mary | | Wife | M | 40 | | Hants, Sherfield |
| Stacey | Caroline | | | | 12 | | Middx, Hendon |
| Stacey | William | | | | 11 | | Hants, Rotherwick |
| Stacey | Thomas | | | | 9 | | Hants, Rotherwick |
| Stacey | John | | | | 5 | | Hants, Hartley Westpall |
| Stacey | Uriah | | | | 2 | | Hants, Hartley Westpall |

Looking at births in the GRO records, all the children have their mother's maiden name as Wells. Caroline was registered in 1839 in Hendon. William was registered as William Uriah. John was registered as Peter, but christened as John.

In the **1841** census I found in Rotherwick, Light Green (now Lyde Green):

| Surname | Name | Middle Name | Relation | M S W | Age | Occupation | Born in Hants |
|---------|----------|-------------|----------|-------|-------|------------|---------------|
| Stacey | William | | | | 40 | Ag Lab | Y |
| Stacey | Mary | | | | 30 | | Y |
| Stacey | Arnold | | | | 10 | | Y |
| Stacey | Caroline | | | | 2 | | Y |
| Stacey | William | | | | 7 wks | | Y |

Arnold Stacey was christened in 1831 in Hartley Westpall with parents William and Mary.

I now have two families that appear to be the same, but the Head in 1881 and 1891 is not Uriah but Henry. They were both born in Hampshire at about the same time. I think that Henry is Uriah, but why the change in name?

This appeared at first to be a dead end.

However, I also subscribe to the British Newspaper Archive, so I entered 'Uriah Stacey' in Reading. Three entries were found in the *Berkshire Chronicle* but I needed to confirm that they were referring to "my" Stacey family. I did not find another Uriah in the Reading area, there were several Henry references but none had the same occupation as "our" Henry.

An article published 26th June 1864 referred to a theft.

Another article published 29th July 1876 told of maintenance of an illegitimate child of Charlotte Stacey of 9 Easton Place, his 'brother's widow'. This looked interesting.

Referring to the **1851** census, if this is the same Uriah, there are three brothers - William born about 1840, Thomas about 1842 and John born about 1846. The only one I could find who may have married a Charlotte was John in 1871 in Bradfield. She was either Charlotte Wheeler or Charlotte Carter - but which one?

I found a death for John Stacey aged 28 registered in 1874 in Reading meaning he would have been born about 1846. This looks promising.

Now to find a possible child born to Charlotte Stacey in about 1876. I located an Ellen Stacey whose birth was registered in the September quarter 1876 but the MMN was left blank. I also found an Ellen Stacey baptised in Reading in 1876 with a mother - Charlotte.

Therefore I looked at the **1881** census for Ellen Stacey aged about 4 and found at 3 Easton Place, Brunswick Street:

| Surname | Name | Middle Name | Relation | M S W | Age | Occupation | Birthplace |
|---------|-----------|-------------|----------|-------|-----|------------|------------------|
| Maynard | John | | Head | M | 30 | | Berks, Wokingham |
| Maynard | Charlotte | | Wife | M | 32 | | Berks, Bradfield |
| Stacey | Mary | A | Step dr | | 6 | Scholar | Berks, Reading |
| Stacey | Ellen | | Step dr | | 4 | Scholar | Berks, Reading |
| Maynard | Emily | | Daur | | 2 | | Berks, Reading |

Looking at the GRO record for the birth of Mary A Stacey I found that the MMN was Wheeler. This also looks promising because John Stacey therefore married Charlotte Wheeler if this is the correct family.

To prove this, I found that Charlotte Stacey married John Maynard in 1878 in Reading. Charlotte therefore only moved a few houses away in Easton Place when she became married.

Uriah appears to be the one from the family I am researching (he is in Reading in 1876) but I still wasn't certain that he is also Henry.

The third news item was published on 26th May 1883:

"Uriah Stacey of Ball-court, Friar-street, was fined 2s. 6d. for allowing his chimney to catch fire."

This was my last piece of data about Uriah Stacey, and for me it confirms that he is indeed Henry.

Note where Henry was living in the 1881 census, 2 years earlier – Ball Court, Friar Street.

Luckily Uriah's wayward ways revealed who he claimed to be - I now know who Henry is.

Sources

Stacey family

General Register Office (GRO)

FreeBMD

Ancestry

Familysearch

Findmypast (FMP)

British Newspaper Archive

Around the Branches

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

Abingdon Branch

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We opened our revised programme of Zoom-based meetings by sharing a meeting with Bracknell Branch. It was called 'It all started with a letter from Colditz' and was by Christine Wootton. It seemed a touch ironic that Christine is one of our long-standing members and was actually going to give the talk at our meeting back in March but it was the first to fall casualty to Lockdown. See the Bracknell Branch report for details of the talk.

In November, James Thornber, one of our committee members, gave us a talk on 'Researching Your German Ancestry'. James' wife is German and so he has first-hand experience of the idiosyncrasies of German records and of conducting research there. Unlike here, there is no central repository of historical records. Instead many are held at State level in each state's capital and some even at a town or village level. In order to be able to locate the relevant capital, James explained a little of the history of Germany, the various duchies, kingdoms and regions that existed prior to unification and the current federal state that they have become, together with that state's capital.

James gave us a number of tips on things such as how privacy laws affect access to records; the use of phonetic spellings and the Altdeutsch script in documents; that churches can be used by all denominations and when censuses were taken. He explained that if a Familienbuch or family book survives it can be a treasure trove as it shows all the people living in a house, by family on a single page, if they emigrated and, if so, to which country plus if there was anything interesting to note.

Online resources that James went on to list included the relatively new Archion.de that contains many German birth, marriage, death, family books, and communion records and also Deutsche Arbeitsgemeinschaft Genealogischer Verbände E.V. (German Genealogical Association), which is an umbrella organization for most of the German genealogical agencies.

He explained how best to approach using offline resources such as those held in state archives or at a local level and that if one can locate and

purchase an Ortsippenbuch, or Ortsfamilienbuch (village tribal/family book) then it's absolute gold-dust as it's effectively an index that lists all church book entries by surname for as far as the church books go back.

The virus restrictions put paid to our usual Christmas meal and drinks at a local hostelry so we had a quiz via Zoom instead. Several members were clearly already in festive mood wearing their Christmas jumpers and even some fancy Christmas head gear! Everyone had a good time and it certainly tested people's family history knowledge with questions on censuses, parish registers, other parish records and wills plus a few miscellaneous topics. Tony Wright demonstrated his knowledge and came out on top.

Looking ahead (all by Zoom):

15th March

Sex, Violence and Alcohol: some after effects of the Great War

by Dr Frances Hurd

14th April

A Combined Branches' Special Meeting
The Inland Revenue Valuation and National Farm Surveys

by Gill Blanchard

17th May

Members evening

Unusual and interesting occupations

21st June

Getting the best from the new FamilySearch website

by John Hanson.

John will be taking a look at the current website, which is comparatively underused, giving an overview of what it has to offer, and exploring some ways to use the site better.

Vanessa Chappell & Simon Burbidge

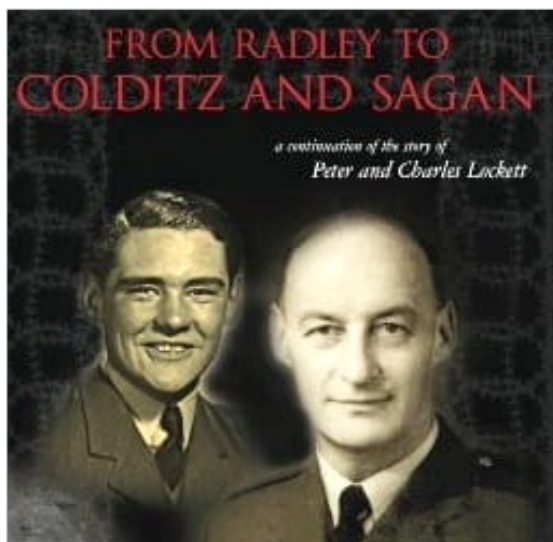
Around the Branches

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

Bracknell & Wokingham Branch

bracknell@berksfhs.org.uk

In October, we held a joint Zoom meeting with Abingdon Branch. The evening's talk was titled 'It All Started With A Letter From Colditz' and was given by Christine Wootton. Some years ago, Radley History Club was given a letter sent from Colditz Castle, a prisoner-of-war camp during WW2, which had been written by Charles Lockett to his wife Evelyn. Christine took on the challenge of researching Charles Lockett's story and we heard about the interesting journey of discovery this took her along as she learnt about his life in the RAF, especially during WW2, when he was captured and sent to Colditz Castle. The story involved his younger brother, Peter, who was also in the RAF and when captured was also sent to Colditz but later moved to Sagan in Poland. Christine's research has been published in *From Radley to Colditz and Sagan*.



Christine's book detailing the story of Charles & Peter Lockett

For our November meeting we joined Reading Branch when Martin Buckland gave a talk entitled 'Canal People' giving a glimpse of canal building history. Beginning with the canal built between about 520 and 510 BC by the Persian Emperor, Darius I, linking the Nile and the Red Sea. The Exeter Ship Canal is one of the oldest in the UK and was opened in 1566. On a working canal boat, a family of four were expected to live in a

space 6ft by 8ft wide with a stove, cupboards and child bunks. Children were uneducated but their parents were numerate having to calculate the cost of transporting the cargo. Some canals are still used today for freight transport, though most now are now used for pleasure. Interestingly, nowadays the canals network in the UK is actually longer than that of motorways.

Leading up to Christmas, our December meeting was called 'Christmas Crackers' and was an enjoyable social evening with a Family History quiz and a Christmas quiz where we learnt about the origins of the seasonal card, cracker and tree.

Sandra Barkwith & Bryan Pledger

Newbury Branch

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Following the society's AGM in September, our branch trustee Nick Prince took on the role of society chairman. This being the first time that a Newbury member has chaired the society, I think the branch is entitled to feel a little proud.

Covid restrictions continue to block our traditional branch activities. With libraries closed, our outreach ceased some months ago, but the society's ever-advancing IT reach ensures that family and local history enquiries emailed are quickly passed to the relevant branch for handling, and Newbury has answered a steady flow.

Our monthly Zoom meetings continue to attract widespread participation, and we hope that the social and educational benefits they offer will encourage more to take part. In October, Anthony Pick regaled an audience of 26 with an account of the good, the bad and the eccentric who have served Newbury as mayor since Tudor times. In November, Dr Hugh Pihlens told 32 of us the story of how his Latvian ancestors came to England and prospered: it was a stirring tale of drama, emotion, and discovery, underpinned by solid hard graft and the occasional lucky coincidence that all family historians need.

We decided to opt out of holding a December quiz evening, on the grounds that two or three society Zoom quizzes were already on offer.

Around the Branches

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

Looking ahead:

10th Mar

Treasures of the West Berkshire Museum
will be unveiled by the museum's curator, *Janine Fox*

14th April

A Combined Branches' Special Meeting
The Inland Revenue Valuation and National Farm Surveys
by Gill Blanchard

11th May

My ancestors came from Hampshire
by Les Michinson

Penny Stokes

Reading Branch

reading@berksfhs.org.uk

In October, we welcomed four branch members who gave short presentations on Zoom about their photographs or memorabilia.

Peter Caton chose a 200 year old jug which had been handed down through the family from an Aunt Emily. He had researched documents which involved not one but three marriages by one ancestor. Richard Brown told members of his grandmother's WW1 medal. Emily Brown was born in the Parish where Charles Kingsley was a Minister in 1869. Emily joined the V.A.D. as a nurse in 1915 and clocked up 3457 hours of unpaid voluntary service.

Richard Croker spoke of Lorne Campbell Reid who was the brother of his great great grandfather, John Campbell Reid, a Scottish surgeon. His piece of memorabilia was a small wooden box engraved "To JC Reid MD from his brother Lorne". Via the internet, he had managed to buy a framed image of Lorne Campbell Reid. Graham Vockins chose a photograph posted on Facebook recently. This showed a blacksmith named Frederick William Vockins Brown outside of his forge. He, it transpired, had been born out of wedlock to Rhoda Brown, who had gone

on to marry Frederick William Vockins ten years and another child after Fred junior's birth. Coincidences during the search to link this person to his tree took Graham back to his place of birth and discovery that FWV Brown later married the aunt of his father's sister's husband.

In November, Reading and Bracknell & Wokingham Branches held a joint meeting where Martin Buckland gave a wonderful talk about 'Canal People'. A summary of this talk can be found in the Bracknell & Wokingham Branch round up.

Our December meeting was also held on the Zoom platform and we were treated to a very challenging quiz set by Vicki Chesterman. This was followed by a short talk by Richard Croker on his Scottish surgeon ancestor, John Campbell Reid, whom he challenged his audience to decide if he was a villain or hero. The evidence was presented and the general conclusion was he did a lot of things on committees that benefited people.

Forthcoming meetings:

25 March

Member's talks
'Mistranscriptions'

14 April

A Combined Branches' Special Meeting
The Inland Revenue Valuation and National Farm Surveys
by Gill Blanchard

27 May

Branch Annual Meeting followed by **How to Lose an Afternoon to a Photograph**
by Vicki Chesterman

24 June

To Be Confirmed

Graham Vockins

Around the Branches

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

Windsor, Slough & Maidenhead Branch

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After the thrill of our branch annual meeting in August with an excellent speaker, record Zoom attendance and a vibrant discussion that went into the night, the WSM branch completed the year with Zoom speaker meetings each month, with Berks FHS members and fans joining from all over the country and even internationally.

In September, Ken Houghton spoke on "Pictures, People and Places" - a record of his family history, through photos, postcards, paintings and film, with the stories behind them. The talk showed a variety of media Ken has used as a record of his family history and encouraged attendees to do the same in the future with their own family history.

In October, Leigh Dworkin covered ancestral tourism in Poland with a talk entitled "Wolf Hunting in Womja", again via Zoom. This detailed a 2016 business trip to Poland, with work in Warsaw followed by genealogy in Warsaw and Lomza in the north-east of the country. He arrived a day early to take in museums, cemeteries and a synagogue. He took a few extra days holiday after business was complete to explore more cemeteries, holocaust memorials and archives in the Lomza district. This was interspersed with walking the town squares and streets of his ancestral home towns and villages.

Despite not speaking a word of Polish, this felt so much more like home than other places he has lived, in such as the UK and the USA. Even with the lack of planning and zero budget, he managed to drive his research back three more generations into 18th century Poland and to discover where his family was really from.

In November, we had immediate past society chair Catherine Sampson speak, yet again via Zoom on "Royal Women". Surviving the political machinations of the Tudor court could be hazardous for many men, but for women it was particularly perilous. The talk examined the lives of three royal women and the strategies they utilised to overcome the challenges they faced. Two were wives of Henry VIII, the third a suspected illegitimate daughter. All three women had connections to Berkshire which, along the

way took us to Windsor, Bisham, Abingdon, Reading, Cholsey and Caversham.

At the time of writing, WSM branch were looking forward to a Christmas genealogical quiz just before the end of 2020 and a January meeting with Daniel Horowitz of *MyHeritage* telling us how the *MyHeritage* platform can help us perform UK and, more specifically, Berkshire research. These will be covered in the next *Historian* along with our other meetings in the first quarter of 2021.

Please check out the BerksFHS website for further details of these meetings and other WSM meetings through to June 2021.

Leigh Dworkin

Woodley (Computer) Branch

woodley@berksfhs.org.uk

Looking ahead:

14th April

A Combined Branches' Special Meeting
The Inland Revenue Valuation and National Farm Surveys
by Gill Blanchard

19th May

Marriage Laws and Customs across the world and throughout time

16th June

How we prepare and present our Family History talks - join us on our journey

July

To be confirmed, possible outing

Gillian Stevens

Membership fees frozen - and more benefits coming in 2021

Last year saw many unexpected challenges for family history societies. Covid-19 halted our face-to-face activities and, for now, has forced closure of The Centre for Heritage and Family History. It means that society income reduces but, sadly, related outgoings do not fall in the same way — the society must still meet The Centre rental and service charges, as one example. Postal charges rose in January too.

In response, the society is actively exploring and, in some cases, adopting new opportunities and technologies to deliver extra benefits for you and for other members. The aim is to introduce services and support that will help as many members as possible with their research and interests, wherever in the world those members may be. Whether from Zoom meetings or workshops, from newsletter items, forum posts or magazines shared on the website, to discounts on your purchases, make sure that you secure and enjoy the full benefits of your membership.

Mentioning membership, it will not be long before most renewals become due. We launched the online membership system last year and, after AGM approval, the rolling membership programme too. When your renewal is due, you will receive your invitation to renew. It will be important to renew promptly (do not risk missing out on valuable benefits!). The trustees agreed to hold fees at current levels (unlike many other organisations). So, your membership fee remains very modest, around 40p a week.

| Membership | Annual Fee | Membership | Annual Fee |
|------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Single | £19 | Young person | £15 |
| Family | £23 | Institutional | £23 |
| Overseas | £22 | | |

To the few who used to pay by standing order, another reminder that the society no longer accepts these (see December's *Historian* and Rolling Membership article in this edition). Instruct your bank to cancel this standing order. In future, please pay your membership fee online (preferably) or by cheque. And for all who pay tax in the UK, remember to complete your Gift Aid declaration, to enhance the value to the society of your membership fee and any added donations.

In the coming months, look forward to more online events. Later in the year, we hope to reopen the Research Zone again, and to resume activities at The Centre, face to face events and local meetings too. More digital downloads are on their way very soon, and expect further online initiatives. Enjoy all of these things along with your existing benefits, your *Berkshire Family Historian* magazine, your newsletters, your member savings, access to member-only content.

Thank you for your continued support of your society.

Amazon Smile

If you use Amazon for online shopping you may be aware of Amazon Smile which is a way to support a charity when you shop. Berkshire Family History Society is now one of the charities you can choose to support.

If you are not already supporting a charity this way go to www.smile.amazon.co.uk and you can sign up.

The donation isn't a lot but it costs you nothing and as a certain supermarket ad says "every little helps".



Cheers from England to Australia

Jennifer Bolton details her convict heritage

I am a descendant of a convict, Richard Chear (Cheer/Cheers), who was transported to New South Wales, Australia in 1790 on the Second Fleet. Richard is my 4 times great grandfather.

Richard was one of eight children born to Edward Chear (1722-1767) and Mary Louisa Freudenberg.

Edward was the son of Thomas Chear (1687-1758) and Susan Walter who married in 1716. Edward was a yeoman who owned his own land in Abingdon, Berkshire.

Richard (the convict) and his siblings were all christened at St Helen's Church, Abingdon:

Mary (May 12th 1743 – April 1775)

Edward (April 11th 1745 – May 1767)

John (December 1747 – April 1st 1788)

Ann (May 1750 -?)

Peter (December 1756 -?)

Richard (August 1759 – February 21st 1827) in Sydney NSW Australia

James (August 1761 -?)

Thomas (March 1763 -?)

Richard Chear and his older brother, John, clashed with authorities on a violent suspicion of having, on October 22nd 1787, led away from Hampstead Norris in Berkshire to Walton-upon-Thames in Surrey, two horses, which apparently had been passed on to them to deliver to the market sale near London, as part of their normal duties.

The Salisbury and Winchester Journal of January 14th 1788 states:

'One Clark, a noted horse-stealer of Gloucestershire, well known at Cheltenham and other places, is now in Kingston goal [sic], where, to save his own neck, he has made great discoveries of horses stolen, and accomplice connected with him. Several farmers are gone to Kingston to claim their horses. It is said Clark and his gang stole eight horses in one week from the neighbourhood of Tewkesbury and Cheltenham. Six of his gang have been apprehended, George Stock, Richard Cheer, John Cheer, John Gordon, John May, and Richard Holloway.'



St Helens, Abingdon by Motmit CC BY-SA 3.0

Richard and John were indicted at Surrey Assizes on March 26th 1788:

'on a violent suspicion of leading away a horse/s each from Hampstead Norris in Berkshire to the sale yards in Walton-on-Thames in 1787, and were committed at the Kingston-on-Thames Assizes, with the owner of the sale yards to be hanged by the neck until they shall be dead'.

John Chear and George Stock were hanged on April 1st 1788 at Kennington Common (in Lambeth, London). John seems to have had some previous, as in 1766 he was tried and sentenced in Reading to death for riotously assembling in Steventon and threatening to break open and set fire to the house of James Stoner the elder, and for extorting 1l. 9d from James Stoner the younger, along with a Daniel Ecland. John received a reprieve in 1767 and his sentence was changed to transportation.

Richards death sentence was commuted to transportation, and he was separated from his first wife, Mary Pratt and their daughter, Ann, (born September 25th 1785) from the time of his committal in December 7th 1787. Mary died in 1789. Ann married William Barrett on March 3rd 1805 in St Peters Drayton, Salisbury. They had a daughter, Mary Barrett, who was christened May 6th 1805.

Whilst Richard was serving his sentence ('for the term of his natural life') Governor Arthur Phillip, in the New Colony at Port Jackson (Sydney) badly needed 'husbandmen' to help feed his

convict population. Hence Richard was sent out on HMS Guardian with 24 other 'farmer' type transportees, none of whom were murderers.

The Admiralty had Lieutenant [later Captain] Edward Riou, R.N. command HMS Guardian, a 44 gun frigate that had been converted for use as a store ship. Richard, being one of the 25 qualified transportees highly skilled in husbandry, was there to load and care for the various animals it procured at the Cape of Good Hope (Africa).

After loading stores and agricultural equipment, HMS Guardian set sail for Port Jackson from Spithead on September 12th 1789. She called at Santa Cruz for 4 days and shipped 2000 gallons of wine and on November 24th 1789, anchored at Table Bay where she loaded cattle, horses, pigs, poultry etc and resumed her voyage on December 11th 1789.

As the animals were consuming an excessive quantity of water, Captain Riou decided to replenish the supply by collecting ice from a large iceberg, some 1300 miles from the Cape in the Southern Indian Ocean on December 24th 1789.

Whilst endeavouring to harness water there was excessive damage done to HMS Guardian through a collision with the iceberg. Richard, along a few other members of the crew helped by pumping

and bailing water, enabling the ship to make the nine week journey return to Cape of Good Hope. The cargo and transportees were transferred to one of the other ships, the 'Surprise' and the journey to Port Jackson continued.

Upon arrival at Port Jackson on June 28th 1790, Richard was given his freedom (a Warrant of Emancipation) *for his fortitude and fidelity to Captain Edward Riou R.N. in helping the few other physically capable and loyal members of the crew to pump and bail, in two hourly relays, day and night, under extremely difficult weather conditions.'*

Richard and thirteen other 'transportee husbandmen' were given conditional pardons by Captain Riou and confirmation followed from the authorities in England to Governor Arthur Phillip. They were given the pardons on condition they did not return to England within the period of their respective sentences.

Richard was granted 30 acres of land at Kissing Point (Ryde, a suburb of Sydney), known as Cheers Farm at Eastern Farms and as further acknowledgement of his good character he was granted two town leases, where he established the first butchering business in the New Colony, running his animals on the area bounded by



Distressing situation of the Guardian sloop Capt. Riou, after striking on a floating island of ice by Thomas Tegg [public domain]

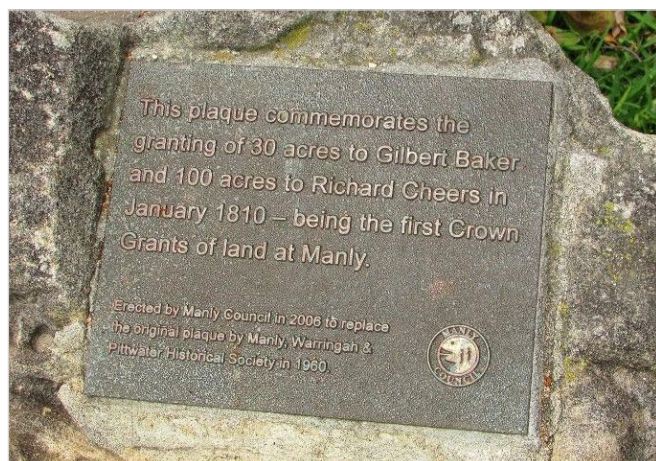
George, Pitt, Hunter and Bridge Streets, and watering them from the Tank Stream. His butcher shop was situated on the corner of George and Hunter Streets. His slaughterhouse was situated at the tip of Dawes Point, where the south pylon of Sydney Harbour Bridge now stands.

His other property was at the corner of George Street north and Essex Lane, where in 1798 he opened the 'Black Bull' hotel.

On January 1st 1810, the day Captain Macquarie took office as Governor of New South Wales, he officially signed various Crown Land Grants of land. The document read:

'Unto Richard Cheers, his Heirs and Assigns to have and to hold forever, 100 acres of land lying and situated in the District of North Harbour bounded in the N.W. side by a N.E. line of 20 chains, commencing on Manly Beach 13 rods northly of the rocks, on the N.E. by the water of the sea and terminated by the rocks on the eastern side of a small sandy bay, on the S.E. side by a line S 20 Degrees W 41 chains, 50 links to the water of North Harbour and on the south and west sides by the said water to be known by the name of CHEERS FARM.' (In 1818 this land was sold to D'Arcy Wentworth).

At Manly's 150th anniversary in 1960, a cairn was unveiled at Fairy Bower (Manly) in Richard Cheers' memory.



Plaque commemorating the granting of land to Gilbert Baker & Richard Cheers

There exists a record confirming the marriage between Richard and Esther Weaver (aka Hester Vevars), on March 2nd 1795. Esther was a convict who arrived in NSW on July 9th 1791 aboard the 'Mary Ann'. It is unknown as to what happened to Esther as there are no records of her death, etc. There were no children to this marriage.

Richard formed a partnership with Margaret Fogarty (another convict who arrived in NSW July 18th 1798 aboard the 'Britannia 2'). Margaret was born in Bristol in 1771. She died August 23rd 1810 in Sydney and is buried in Sydney Old Burial Grounds (under the current Town Hall Railway Station).

Richard and Margaret had the following children:

Richard Cheers, born May 4th 1802, Sydney, NSW

John Henry Cheers, born May 10th 1804 Sydney, NSW – crushed to death in 1940 on a whaling ship- buried on Woodlark Island, near New Guinea

Harriet F Cheers born December 11th 1806 Sydney, NSW

Five years after the death of Margaret Fogarty, Richard married Jane Ann Smith on October 16th 1815 in St Phillips Church, Sydney.

Another convict, Jane Ann Smith arrived in 1814 on the 'Wanstead'. She was born in 1785 and died on March 2nd 1823. She was buried in Elizabeth Street Burial Grounds (on the site of the current Central Railway Station).

Richard and Jane had the following children:

Elizabeth Cheers (May 31st 1816 – December 13th 1883)

Mary Ann Cheers (March 8th 1818 – August 20th 1857)

James Cheers (November 18th 1819 – October 9th 1894)

William Smith Cheers (October 7th 1821 – July 4th 1886)

Richard died February 21st 1827. He was buried in Devonshire Street Cemetery (now under Central Railway Station, Sydney).

I am a descendant of Richard and Margaret's son, John Henry Cheers (born 1804) and am extremely proud of my convict heritage. Hard work and dedication of the convicts have led to the success that our country enjoys today.

The Stoter family name - history and meaning

Stuart Stoter *delves into the origins of his surname*

I came to genealogy quite late in life when I talked to my father about his interest in the subject. He shared some research as well as some anecdotes about the family name. When he died, I inherited his work as well as a trove of old family photographs.

He had always told us that if we met anyone with the name 'Stoter' spelt in that particular way that we would be related. This wasn't entirely correct but is not far from the truth. The name with that spelling is quite unusual and I have spent my life correcting people when they misspell it as Stoater or mispronounce it as Stotter (it is pronounced /stootər/ with a long O as if it were spelt Stoater).

John and Frances West Trust

My father's interest in genealogy had been sparked by his being told by his father that we could be recipients of a very old bequest. This bequest was made from the estate of John and Frances West in 1723. John West was a scrivener, or notary, for Samuel Pepys and is mentioned in Pepys' will.

John became very wealthy as a property owner and as a financier or money lender. He was a donor to a number of charitable works including significant donations to Christ's Hospital school. He predeceased Frances and in her will she left properties in the City of London (including the site of what is now the Mansion House) to a trust run by the Clothworkers' Company to be used for charitable purposes. This trust is now managed by Christ's Hospital private school for the education of children at the school and for the provision of pensions to '...deserving old people who can prove their relationship to the benefactors.'

The trust holds an extensive pedigree, and this certainly helped me with some details of my family tree. The pedigree goes back to 1572 and, because John and Frances West were childless, links are established through their parents, uncles and aunts and their grandparents.

Interest in the origins of the Stoter name

Once I started work on the family tree I became interested in the etymology and origins of the name and so started some research. This was

not always easy as different sources gave slightly different information, but I feel that I have built up a good overview.

Alternative spellings in English that seem to share a common root meaning include: Stot, Stott, Stotter, Stotor, Stutter, Stoter, Stoater, Stather, Stother, Stothard, Stothart, Stothert, and Stothirde. Of these the last is particularly interesting as it is a composite of 'Stot' and 'Hirde'. In mediaeval English Stott meant a large beast, typically oxen or cattle but also horses, so the name would mean 'oxen herder'.

Further back, in archaic Norwegian, Swedish and Old Norse Stut and Stutr meant an ox or bull.

The name is not confined to England. There is some indirect evidence that my particular spelling has links to Dutch workers who came to East Anglia to work on the draining of the Fens in the early to mid-seventeenth century. They were probably working with the horses used in that endeavour.

The name is particularly found in a small region of the modern Netherlands. In the Netherlands and in Northern Germany the name may also be spelt Stöter, Stooter or Stotten. Through Dutch emigration the name can also be found in South Africa.

In Holland, the Stoottroepen is a unit of the Royal Netherlands Army where the soldiers are called the 'Stoters'.

Alternative meanings

Working with large beasts was not gentle work and to herd animals would often require that they be struck quite hard. In slaughtering an ox or bull the beast would be hit a very heavy blow with a poleaxe knocking it to the ground. In modern Dutch stooter or stouten means to knock, push, or hit a heavy blow hence its use in the military.

In the 15th and 16th centuries English slang included the word 'stoter' or 'stoater' meaning a heavy blow and it appears in some literature of the time.

Reference stoter as a noun – Green's Dictionary of slang

1696 Motteux (trans.) *Gargantua and*

Pantagruel II Bk IV: 327: Vinet lent him such a swinging stoater with the Pitch-fork [...] that down fell Signore on the ground.

c. 1698 *B.E. Dict. Canting Crew n.p.: Stoter, a great Blow. Stoter him, or tip him a Stoter, settle him, give him a swinging Blow.*

1725 *New Canting Dict. n.p.: We settled the Cull by a Stoter on his Nob; i.e. We took him such a Blow on.....*

Reference stoter as a verb – Green's Dictionary of slang

1690 *D'Urfey Collin's Walk canto 1 17: He'd tell what Bullocks fate was Tragick [...] And as well knew by wisdom outward, What Ox must fall, or Sheep be stoter'd.*

1705 *Vanbrugh Mistake Act V: Why, Madam, have you no Pity [...] [to] Stand and see one of your Husbands stoter'd before your...*

The word existed in old Scottish dialect, possibly from its Scandinavian origins. A stot, stott, stoat or stottie could mean a young, castrated bull of one- or two-years age. Modern Scottish dialect includes the word to stott meaning to bounce a ball hard against a wall. A 'stoater' means something that is very fine, a beauty or the best of its type. I have also been told that it can mean a charming but roguish young man.

In Northern England and in some parts of Scotland a stottie means a doorstep sandwich or a hefty type of bread cake – '*Stotties, or stotty*

cakes, are a Northeast delicacy - large doughy bread cakes, ideal for providing a hearty meal when filled with various delights.'

In Dutch stot or stott can mean doing something that is naughty and in Afrikaans a stoter can mean a young man who is up to no good.

Berkshire – East Hendred

In carrying out research for my family tree I was drawn to the pretty village of East Hendred. This village, between Harwell and Wantage, is currently in Oxfordshire but for a long time it was in West Berkshire. In the churchyards and memorials and in the fascinating rural museum of Champs Chapel the name Stoter is often to be found. I can trace my direct ancestors for several generations to this village and families with the name Stoter exist there today.

So far, I have been able to trace back to my great, great, great, great grandfather, William Stoter, who was born in East Hendred in 1760.

My last ancestor to live in the village was my great grandfather, Frank Stoter, b 1876. The family story was that he worked as a stable hand (working with horses!) at the local manor. He was kicked in the head by a horse and was badly injured. He moved to Suffolk where he and his wife, Rose Harris, ran a county orphanage.

Rose Harris, my great grandmother, was a direct lineal descendant from the pedigree of the John and Frances West trust.

Lambeth Military Service Tribunal Records Index for WW1

Following on from last year's article about WW1 Military Service Tribunals (Dec 2019 Historian) our attention has been drawn to indexes being compiled of the WW1 Tribunals for Lambeth. As we know not all Berkshire Family History Society members actually have Berkshire roots, these indexes may be of interest to those with ancestors who may have a link to this South London borough.

There are nine volumes of records in total, with the first four indexes being completed. The indexes, and introductions to each volume, can be found free of charge at:

<https://www.lambethlocalhistoryforum.org.uk/archives-guides/>

They include references to 'out of London' persons, as was demonstrated in the article last December.

These indexes can provide a starting point for the researcher, from whence they can then do the 'legwork' to go to Lambeth and see the original volumes (recommended to always be done for accuracy!!).

Members' Surname Interests

Compiled by Bob Plumridge memsec@berksfhs.org.uk

Members submitting their interests:

| | | | |
|------|-------------------|--|--------------------------|
| 6429 | HARRIS J. | 3 Kestor Drive, Paignton, TQ3 1AP | trustrueme2@yahoo.co.uk |
| 7997 | PEARSON C. | 40 Crescent Road, Tilehurst, Reading, RG31 5AH | colin@pearson99.plus.com |
| 8319 | PETHERS J. | Westwyndes, Forestdale, Hindhead, GU26 6TA | dwpethers@talktalk.net |
| 8378 | ANDREWS C. | 5415 Greentree Road, West Vancouver, BC V7W 1N3, CANADA | andrews4@shaw.ca |
| 8390 | NORRIS J. | 13733 Eureka Dr., Magalia, CA 95954, USA | Jbnorris73@yahoo.com |
| 8396 | WHITE S. | PO Box 222, Beecroft, Sydney, NSW 2119, AUSTRALIA | lastmacdade@hotmail.com |
| 8403 | YATES C. | 1598 Quinn Road, Collierville, Tennessee 38017, USA | cryates2@olemiss.edu |
| | | | |
| 8378 | ANDREWS Arthur | Redhill | 1837-1892 |
| 8378 | ANDREWS Arthur | Windsor | 1837-1892 |
| 8378 | ANDREWS Henry | Windsor | 1804-1867 |
| 6429 | CROSS | Reading | 1870-1900 |
| 6429 | HARRISON | All | Any |
| 8396 | HAWKINS/HAUKINS | Shinfield | 17th C |
| 8396 | HISSEY | Bucklebury | 18th C |
| 8396 | HISSEY | Chaddleworth | 18th C |
| 8396 | HISSEY | Englefield | 18th C |
| 6429 | LANDON | All | Any |
| 8396 | LEACH | Arborfield | 18th C |
| 8396 | LEACH | Bucklebury | 18th C |
| 8396 | MAY | Shinfield | 17th & 18th C |
| 8396 | MAY | Swallowfield | 17th & 18th C |
| 6429 | MIDDLETON | All | Any |
| 8390 | NORRIS John | Newbury | 1630-1674 |
| 8390 | NORRIS Mary | Arborfield | 1696-1747 |
| 8390 | NORRIS Richard | Thatcham | 1701-1762 |
| 8390 | NORRIS Samuel | Arborfield | 1701-1762 |
| 8319 | PITHER | Blewbury | Any |
| 8390 | POCOCK Sarah | Chieveley | 1 Nov 1677 |
| 6429 | SHERRIFF | All | Any |
| 7997 | STACEY Arthur | Reading Railway Station and other stations on the SW Railway | 1865-1901 |
| 7997 | STACEY Herbert | St George's Terrace and drapers' shop in Reading | 1940-1950 |
| 8390 | WYATT Mary | Barkham | 1701-1747 |
| 8403 | YATE Edmond | Charney | 1440 |
| 8403 | YATE John | Charney | 1490 |
| 8403 | YATE John att | Berkshire | 1340 |
| 8403 | YATE Richard | Charney | Approx. 1465 |
| 8403 | YATE Sir Thomas | Lyford Grange | 1509 |
| 8403 | YATE William | Charney | 1360 |
| 8403 | YATE William att | Berkshire | 1315 |
| 8403 | YATES John | Lyford Grange | 1612 |
| 8403 | YATES Sir Francis | Lyford Grange | 1541 |
| 8403 | YATES Thomas | Lyford Grange | 1570 |

From the Newsletters

More snippets from recent newsletters. Remember to look out for it each week – it is usually published on a Sunday. Each week we publish either the full newsletter or an Events Update.

More Journal Exchanges

We've added four new organisations to the eJournal exchange programme: Society of Genealogists, Waltham Forest FHS, Berkshire Record Office and East Yorkshire FHS.

Browse the exchange magazines at: <https://berksfhs.org/member-protected-content/journal-exchange/>



*Current home of the
Society of Genealogists*

New Berkshire content on Findmypast

Findmypast has recently announced that the index to the 39,000 probate records of the Archdeaconry of Berkshire, 1480 – 1857, submitted by Berkshire Family History Society, is now live on their website. If you don't have an account with Findmypast, you can access it for free via the Members' Area of the society's website. The content is identical to that on the society's Probate CD, which remains available to purchase for those who prefer to access data offline. Happy hunting.

Berkshire Poll Books

A reminder that as a bonus for members, the society has published its transcripts of Berkshire Poll Books and Electoral Registers in the members' only area of the website. The years covered are: 1727, 1768, 1796, 1812, 1818 and 1832.

My Heritage releases three important Welsh Collections

Good news for those with Welsh ancestry. My Heritage has published three important Welsh record collections: Wales, Parish Births and Baptisms; Wales, Parish Marriages and Banns; and Wales, Parish Deaths and Burials. The collections consist of 14.8 million indexed records covering over 450 years of Welsh history.

Launch of Reading University's Virtual Reading Room

Reading University has launched a Virtual Reading Room, where you can access thousands of items, including images from across Berkshire and rare books, from the University of Reading's Special Collections, Art Collections and Museum of English Rural Life. Check it out at: <https://vrr.reading.ac.uk/>



**University of
Reading**

If you aren't receiving newsletters and would like to, do we have your up to date email address and permission to contact you? If yes, see the article in this Historian on missing emails. Back copies of newsletters are available on the society's website under INFO.

A Combined Branches' Special Meeting

The Inland Revenue Valuation and National Farm Surveys

Gill Blanchard

Wednesday 14th April 2021

7.45pm start (doors open 7.15pm) by Zoom

Free to all members, wherever you live.

Guests and non-members also welcome (requested donation of £3.00).

Pre-booking is required – see the society's website for full details and to reserve your place. Bookings close 24 hours before the event.

The Inland Revenue Valuation Office Survey, 1910-1920 (Lloyd George Domesday) and The National Farm Survey, 1941-1943

Discover what the Inland Revenue Valuation Survey and National Farm Survey were, how they can be of use to house historians, local historians and family historians; where to find records and how to use them.

Taking its nickname from the Chancellor of the time, the Domesday Survey, or the Inland Revenue Valuation Office Survey as it was officially known, is a fantastic resource for house historians, social historians, and genealogists. The National Farm Survey was undertaken as a means of improving productivity during the war. The result was an in-depth analysis of 300,000 agricultural holdings.

About Gill Blanchard

Gill Blanchard is a professional house historian, genealogist, writer, and tutor. She has an academic background in history, sociology and politics and has been a full time historical researcher since 1992. She set up her own research business called Past Search in 1997, qualified as an adult education tutor the following year, and is a full member of AGRA.

Gill is the author of several research guides, biographies and local histories, including *Tracing Your House History*, *Tracing Your Ancestors: Cambridgeshire, Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk*, and *Writing Your Family History* (Pen and Sword Books). She is a regular contributor to national family history magazines and other journals and has conducted much background research for authors, journalists and academic researchers, including the BBC *Who Do You Think You Are?* television series.

