

Part 3 Spring 1984

Saturday 7th July - AGM details to be announced

PALMER'S
INDEX
TO THE
TIMES NEWSPAPER.
1901

WINTER QUARTER—January 1 to March 31.

Containing Index to everything in the various numbers issued during
the Months.

“The only true history of a country is to be found in its newspapers.”
LORD MACAULAY

SAMUEL PALMER, RICHMOND HOUSE,
SHEPPERTON-ON-THAMES,

1901.

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John Gurnett

The origin of newspapers can be traced back to the news pamphlets, mainly dealing with foreign news, which began to appear in the seventeenth century. A great deal of political (much of it censored by the government), literary and social history can be uncovered in these journals, but the earliest papers likely to be of real value to family historians appeared during the eighteenth century. For Berkshire, the first local paper - the Reading Mercury - appeared in 1723.

It should be stressed here that local newspapers were local only in the sense that they were printed locally. A local printer - there was usually at least one in every English town - would subscribe to a large selection of the London papers, take from them the most important pieces of news and combine this with the publication of local advertisements. Often he advertised his own business most prominently of all, for the printers who published these papers usually kept a booksellers and stationers shop and sold a great variety of other articles too, including such items as patent medicines, lottery tickets and all sorts of miscellaneous goods. One such publisher in Preston sold hats and haberdashery, one in Bristol sold rope, charcoal and peas, while a Lancashire stationer and printer was also a watchmaker and sold rings, buttons, buckles, knives, razors, snuffboxes, violins, flutes, silk purses, spectacles, sealing wax and tea. But other shopkeepers liked to advertise too, and later there was a demand for notices of local interest.

Most local newspapers were designed

to bring in money for advertisements, which were profitable to the printers. The news they contained was designed merely to encourage the public to take the paper. Foreign wars, the bloodier the better, were often described at length, as were sensational accidents and suicides. One writer in 1737 described the most popular domestic news as "consisting of robberies, bloody murders, accounts of draymen's carts that have run over people, the adventures of post-boys, tide-waiters (customs officers), messengers and the like, and the promotions, deaths and marriages of the nobility, gentry and clergy". Local printers, in making up their newspapers to attract customers to read their advertisements, naturally concentrated on the sensational rather than on the important news - nothing has really changed has it?

However, advertisements can be just as important as the news, indeed they are often of more interest than what the editor thought was important at the time. They can also be fun to read! Like that for "Daffey's Elixir", which claimed to cure almost everything from the "spitting of blood, smallpox and measles" through "rickets, gallstones, shortness of breath and pains in the heart and head" to "the strengthening of the vessels of both sexes that changes the whole mass of blood, being a noble cordial after hard drinking".

It wasn't until the repeal of the newspaper stamp duty and the increase in literacy that the local press began to improve its coverage of local affairs. Meanwhile, the national press was changing too. With the rise of The Times, also

started by a printer - to publicise his new method of typesetting - the system of writing and printing newspapers changed dramatically. By 1810 The Times led the way by printing the newspaper by steam and a great editor of that paper, Thomas Barnes, fought against government interference to produce a newspaper free of government control.

Given the standards of literacy in the country during the eighteenth century, it's not surprising to find that the circulation of these papers was small, averaging about a thousand a week for most of them. They were usually carried by travelling newspaper sellers, who often tramped many miles a day on foot with their bags of papers. They often also carried stocks of books and patent medicines for sale and collected advertisements from customers on their route for inclusion in the next issue.

Although you are unlikely to find items of news about your own ancestors, unless they owned a shop or held public office in the town, items of interest can be found which will add colour and background to your family stories. For instance, quite recently I came across a short report in The Times telling the story of a husband who sold his wife and children - rather like Hardy's Mayor of Castorbridge. It had happened in the village where one of my ancestors lived - so it will make an entertaining sidelight of their family story when I come to write of their stay in that village.

In addition to the newspapers of the period, I ought to mention magazines which can be just as important in providing information. Perhaps the most important, and certainly the longest running of them, was the Gentleman's Magazine which first appeared in 1731. It

was essentially a precis of what appeared in newspapers and other magazines of the period. It is most useful for the landed and middle classes; the indexes to people mentioned in its pages are very useful. Looking at the numbers of births, marriages and deaths which appear in Gentleman's Magazine, it would appear to hold only about one tenth of those which appeared in newspapers of the time, so if you do find something of interest in it, it is always worth looking in other papers for a much fuller account.

As an example of just what can be found in a single newspaper, a few years ago a writer in the magazine of the Society of Genealogists listed all the people mentioned in one copy of Jackson's Oxford Journal dated April 21, 1810; he found nearly three hundred people in that one edition. Some were deaths, others bankrupts, one was advertising rat poison, yet another a marriage. If 300 can be found in a single edition, multiply that by fifty for the number of editions in a year and we have almost 15,000 names; a vast source of valuable information about life and death and the ups and downs of life in a provincial town. If that's true then considering that in Britain today some 7,000 newspapers and magazines are published and that the first newspaper appeared in the seventeenth century, then the total amount of information on people and events published during the past three hundred years must be staggering.

In recent years more and more family historians have begun to use newspapers as information sources. But having decided to find out just what might be available in our local and national press, how do we go about identifying and finding items which might interest us? The major problem is how to get at the

information without laboriously turning over page after page, or peering at the faded image on a microfilm reader. I am afraid there is no real answer to this perennial problem.

True, some dedicated researchers are beginning to abstract local newspapers and some farsighted local librarians have undertaken the mammoth task of indexing (of which more later), but the amount of information is enormous and the indexing problems so great that it would take years of effort to make even a small dent in the surface. An ideal task for the computer, one might think, but the cost of inputting the information would make the effort prohibitive. So how can family historians make use of this vast information source? As always we begin at the beginning - how to locate a newspaper concerning any particular area of the country and then narrow down the search.

There are two basic sources for modern newspapers, Willing's Press Guide and Benn's Newspaper Press Directory. Both have a regional index and provide a quick and easy method of identifying particular newspapers. We, on the other hand, are more likely to be interested in the nineteenth, or possibly eighteenth, century newspapers. Again there is a handy reference tool in the shape of The Times Tercentenary Handlist of Newspapers and Magazines. It has two indexes (one covering the London and suburban press and the other the provincial press) and contains information on over 20,000 separate publications. In addition there is the British Library Catalogue of Newspapers, in eight volumes, which covers around 80,000 individual titles. While on the subject of tracing particular newspapers, more or less complete files of Benn's Newspaper Directory are held at Benn's offices at Tunbridge Wells, and their staff are

more than willing to help to locate an individual newspaper.

Having identified any particular newspaper - or more likely a number of newspapers in the case of Reading and Berkshire - then the next step would be to find out if these newspapers are indexed and available locally. A visit to your local reference library, or county record office, will soon provide the answer. A further check can also be made at the Newspaper Library at Colindale, which houses the nation's collection of newspapers.

Perhaps I should mention here some of the work currently under way on making access to newspapers, and their indexes, more easily available to researchers. Jeremy Gibson, who's done so much to help family historians, is planning to produce another of his valuable guides, this time on newspapers. He hopes to have his Local Newspapers before 1900 (A directory to holdings of original and microfilm copies by libraries and record offices) completed sometime in 1985. In addition, John Westmancoat, information officer at the British Newspaper Library at Colindale is compiling a list of newspaper indexes. So far he's collected nearly 500 titles which have been indexed to some degree or other, and he's quite willing to answer written enquiries on individual titles.

As an example of what's available take our own county, Berkshire. The Reading Reference Library has a large collection of local newspapers, including the Reading Observer and Reading Standard; a run of the Berkshire Chronicle from 1825 and another of the Berkshire Mercury, which had its origins in 1723. The library also has a collection of local newspaper cuttings, classified by subject, which it started in 1965. If you are interested in

more recent references some local newspapers, and most national ones, have cuttings libraries and it's often worth getting in touch with a newspaper to see what facilities they may have for referring to files.

So much for local newspapers, but what of the national press? While local newspapers can be invaluable in providing those little details which make the reading of family history so interesting, they often miss out the wider issues affecting communities and countries. Wars, strikes and disasters are just a few of the examples of the value of national newspapers in providing a unique background to events. Take, for example, one of my namesakes from The Times of 1862:

Sarah Gurnett was charged with attempting to commit suicide from Westminster Bridge. The evidence went to show that between nine and ten o'clock on Wednesday night last Samuel Hatswell heard cries of "Police" on the bridge. Proceeding to the spot, he found two men grasping the prisoner, who had climbed over the parapet, and was about to precipitate herself into the water when they seized her. She was struggling hard to get away from them, exclaiming, "let me go". Witness assisted the two men and got her onto the pavement. He then took her into custody.

She was perfectly sober.

Prisoner said she was very sorry for what she had done, and that she would never make another attempt on her life. She was remanded for a week.

It's not practical to search the pages of national newspapers looking for items which may be of interest to us. Fortunately there are

alternatives. Firstly, if we suppose our ancestor was involved in a battle or a disaster, it is possible to use Hayden's Dictionary of Dates to identify the period more precisely. Having narrowed down the field, it is then a practical possibility to either search page by page through a microfilm or newspaper file, or to turn to an index in an attempt to reduce the scope of search still further.

Only three newspapers currently publish indexes: The Glasgow Herald from 1907, the Financial Times and The Times. The Guardian does produce an index for its own use, but it's not published separately.

Although the Official Index to The Times began in 1906, an earlier index, by Samuel Palmer exists for the period from 1790 until 1941. While copies of this index can be found in many local libraries the index has been microfilmed making it more easily available.

Samuel Palmer began indexing The Times in 1867 but it wasn't until 1891 that he started indexing the back numbers from newspapers stored at the British Museum. The index itself leaves a lot to be desired. It's a curious mixture of practical, sensible headings and mysterious imprecise ones. Cross references are almost unheard of, indeed the rule seems to have been one entry for each news item. And the method of choosing index headings is often eccentric, if not to say esoteric, for example, a floating chapel which went adrift in the Severn is indexed under the heading of Disgraceful Act. References to the drought of 1842 are put under Present Dry Season, but there are as many references on the same subject under Weather. Two women who were sentenced, one for firing a pistol at a man and the other for stealing a horse belonging to Robert Owen, is indexed under

Rather Uncommon for Females. In another case a small boy who was sentenced for stealing a pie goes to Atrocious Act. Perhaps the most interesting of Palmer's indexing methods relates to the strange events in the 1850s when, after a snowstorm, mysterious "devil's footprints" were found stretching across the West Country, over rooftops, walls and barns. Palmer puts it under Unusual Occurrence, at least he got something right. If you are intending to use Palmer's index, then I would suggest you read through the whole of one index just to make sense of the indexing methods. Incidentally, The Times has recently produced an index covering the period 1785-1790, the first five years of the paper's existence. Compiled using modern indexing methods, it stands head and shoulders above Mr Palmer's efforts.

Before using Palmer, another word of warning. The entries are brief to the point of inaccuracy, so if you're looking for a death notice it might well be found under Deaths, Accidents, Suicides or Inquests. Bankruptcies is another portmanteau heading, Change of Surnames, Civil Actions and Next of Kin notices are others. In addition, Criminal Trials is used for sessions hearings while Police is used for police courts. Other useful headings are Naval and Military Intelligence and Admiralty Court. In some issues, particularly before 1837, what were once known as hatches, matches and despatches were indexed. These are particularly useful as they form a nationwide index of births, marriages and deaths before national registration began.

References to front page notices can be found in a quite different way. For over a century these notices were painstakingly entered into great index books in the

offices of The Times. In the late 1950s the Latter Day Saints micro-filmed the volumes and the films (with one or two gaps) cover the period from 1785 until 1933, a total of 99 rolls of microfilm.

Although the majority of people mentioned in the birth, marriage or death notices came from the middle and upper classes, occasionally people from the lower orders were mentioned due to long life or the unusual circumstances surrounding an event. Some of the details given in the announcements are quite brief, while others provide a wealth of information. And the notices are not confined to the British Isles. The front page of The Times was used as a means of keeping in touch with friends and relatives in the old country. As the nineteenth century progressed, more and more of the notices originate abroad. I have noticed, for instance, a large number concerning families living in the West Indies.

In the early years - from 1785 until 30 June 1830 - the notices themselves were copied into each individual volume, so the index references are to the copies of the notices. From 1830 this procedure was changed with the index referring the user back to the newspaper but instead of using the date as reference, the issues of the newspaper were numbered starting from the first issue in each half year. Fortunately for us, when the microfilm was made, the LDS filmed the relevant page of The Times and renumbered the copies, so finding individual references is relatively easy.

The indexes themselves are arranged in sections; either births, marriages or deaths for the period covered. Within these sections, the arrangement is alphabetical by surname of the individuals

mentioned. No given names appear, although on occasion a first initial is shown following the surname. For instance in the births section for January-June 1819 will be found:

Abbott, 147

The number refers to the page on which the announcement or extract appears. Additional references - if there were any - would follow and if the surname occurs more than once on the same page then the number would be given in parenthesis, for example:

Smith, 4, 17, 26(3), 57(2)

The index to marriages gives the surnames of both bride and groom in their alphabetic sequence. For instance, under A might appear:

Abbott - Sheppard, 11

then under S would be:

Sheppard - Abbott, 11

Sometimes, but not often, references are made in the index to titles as, for example:

Durham, Bishop of

Attorney General

To give a flavour of the kind of information which can be obtained from these notices, here are some sample references:

Baptisms:

Tuesday 16 January, 1810:

"On Thursday the infant daughter of the Duke and Duchess of Richmond was baptized at the Castle, Dublin, by the name of Sophia Lenox".

Tuesday 22 August, 1793:

"Last night a public baptism of eight children took place at the Foundling Hospital. It was very remarkable that one of them was baptized by the name of William Lushington".

Marriage:

Monday 29 January, 1810:

"On Saturday at St George's Hanover Square by the Revd W. Hodgson, the Reverend William Warrington to Miss Mainwaring, the only daughter of William Mainwaring of Hanover Square".

Deaths:

Tuesday 13 February, 1810:

"Died. In London Street, Fitzroy Square at the home of David Sutherland Esq. (her father-in-law) in the 24th year of her age, Miss Boetefeur only daughter of the late Henry Boetefeur of Billister Square".

Wednesday 8 January, 1794:

"Died on Tuesday last at Norwood, nr. Cobham, Mrs. Randall, wife of Mr. J H Randall, Coal Merchant".

Wednesday 14 August, 1793:

"Died. Last week in the workhouse at Whitehaven, Ann Bulger, age 93. She was married at the age of 19 years and had 21 children".

This last example illustrates how someone from the working class appeared in the pages of The Times. Indeed such items were much more likely to appear in the early years when these notices were inserted on their news curiosity value. It was not until much later, when the front page notices were paid for, that they in fact became advertisements. It's clear from these few samples that a great deal of worthwhile information can be found in these advertisements.

Court Circular (*continued*).

— QUEEN—Death of, Royal Geographical Society's Tribute, 31 *j* 12 *c*
 — Special Forms of Public Service, 30 *j* 8 *d*
 — Sympathetic References in the Law Courts, 24 *j* 13 *d*
 — Sympathy Abroad, 25 *j* 9 *b*—26 *j* 13 *c*
 — 29 *j* 11 *c*—30 *j* 9 *e*—31 *j* 12 *c*
 — — of the Ambassadors, 24 *j* 8 *b*
 — Touching Scenes at Osborne, 24 *j* 7 *a*
 — Tributes by Australasians, 29 *j* 5 *a*
 — Alexandra, Movements of, 25 *j* 7 *e*—23 *m* 10 *a*—25 *m* 5 *f*
 — Order of the 13 *f* 9 *f*
 — Throne, 14 *f*
 — Health of the, —
 — Illness of, 2 *j*
 — American 1
 — Arrival of 1
 — 10 *b*
 — Continental
 — Engagement
 — Feeling in the
 — 5 *a*
 — Letters on, 2
 — Messages from
 — 23 *j* 9 *a*
 — — Movements
 — — Official Bull
 — — Parliament
 — — Preparation
 — — Public Sym
 — — Visit of the
 — land, 21 *j* 5 *a*
 — — Prince of W
 — peror, 22 *j* 9 *f*
 — — Life and Reig
 Court of Common Co
 — 1 *f* 6 *b*—16 *f* 4 *d*
 — 18 *b*—29 *m* 10 *e*
 — Mourning, Lette
 Courtney (L. H.) on 2
 — on Parliament
 — on the Settlemen
 Cox (Harold) on Suga
 — (J. G. S.) on C
 Queen, 12 *f* 8 *a*
 Crace (J. D.) on App
 Crackanthorpe (—) o
 — 28 *f* 12 *e*
 Crawford (P. W.) on the Siberian Goldfields, 9
 — 11 *b*
 Crematorium, Opening of a, in Hull, 4 *j* 6 *c*
 Crete, Blonay, M. de, Funeral, 18 *f* 6 *b*
 — Miscellaneous News, 21 *f* 5 *e*—28 *f* 5 *f*—27
 — 15 *f*
 Crime in Liverpool, Annual Report, 6 *m* 2 *f*
 — and Punishment, Letter on, 4 *m* 12 *a*
CRIMINAL TRIALS:—
 — Abrahams, Barnet, for Murder, 8 *j* 2 *f*—6 *f*
 — 12 *f*
 — Allport, David, and another, for Attempted
 Murder, 6 *m* 12 *c*
 — Alvord, C. L., for Embezzlement, 17 *j* 3 *e*
 — Ambler, J. T., for Wounding, 20 *m* 14 *d*
 — Ashmore, Sarah J., for Murder, 12 *m* 11 *e*

Criminal Trials (*continued*).

— Arnold, J. T. B., for Embezzlement, 24
 — 13 *f*
 — Badham, Wm., for Embezzlement, 25 *f* 15 *a*
 — Baker, A. A. G., for Fraud, 29 *m* 13 *f*
 — Bill and others for Stealing, 10 *j* 2 *f*
 — Edwin Thomas, for Burglary, 8 *j* 2 *f*
 — Baldwin, Benj., for Murder, 16 *m* 17 *b*
 — Bardini, Salvatore, for Fraud, 21 *m* 14 *f*
 — Barnes, Henry, for Forgery, 5 *f* 12 *e*
 — Baston, Edw., for Perjury, 31 *m* 17 *a*
 — Bateman, Hephzibah, for Murder, 12 *f* 12 *d*
 — Bell, John, for Fraud, 5 *m* 13 *e*
 — Order, 26 *f* 14 *d*—27 *f*
 — 2 *m* 17 *b*—4 *m* 14 *a*
 — Sealing, 5 *m* 13 *e*
 — Fraud, 11 *f* 7 *a*
 — 4 *f* 15 *a*
 — Robbery with Violence,
 — Misdemeanour, 5 *f* 12 *d*
 — Misdemeanour, 22 *f*
 — Ring, 7 *m* 14 *c*
 — Embezzlement, 9 *i* 10 *a*
 — Attempted Murder, 14
 — Attempted Murder, 8 *f*
 — Unlawful Possession,
 — Bundling, 9 *f* 15 *c*
 — Fraud, 7 *f* 13 *f*
 — Attempted Murder, 2 *m*
 — Murder, 6 *m* 12 *c*
 — Bundling, 16 *m* 17 *c*
 — for Uttering Forged
 — Ring Stolen Property,
 — Indecency, 1 *f* 4 *f*—5
 — 12 *c*
 — er, 31 *j* 7 *f*
 — Manslaughter, 20 *m*
 — Stealing, 10 *j* 2 *f*
 — Misdemeanour, 27 *m* 14 *c*
 — Misdemeanour, 16 *m* 17 *d*
 — er, and another, for
 — Conspiracy, 9 *f* 10 *c*—11 *f* 14 *f*—12 *f* 3 *f*—13
 — 13 *c*—15 *f* 15 *d*
 — Cohen, Fred., for Abduction, 25 *m* 11 *f*
 — Cole, Ernest, for Dressing in Female Attire,
 — 16 *j* 10 *a*
 — Conlan, Mary Ann, for Bigamy, 28 *f* 12 *b*
 — Connelly, Jas., and others, for Unlawful
 Possession, 28 *j* 12 *b*
 — Connolly, Robt., for Stealing, 21 *f* 14 *d*
 — Conolly, Jas., and another, for Stealing, 21
 — 14 *d*
 — Craig, Thos., for Murder, 26 *f* 15 *b*
 — Crawley, Timothy, and others, for Robbery,
 — 9 *j* 10 *b*
 — Cronin, Michael, for Robbery with Violence,
 — 12 *j* 12 *c*

Maureen Braithwaite

We were pleased to welcome so many visitors to our Open Day last October and hope that many were inspired to take up the challenge of tracing their family trees. The excellent entries in the competition illustrated beautifully how much interest and enjoyment can be gained from putting together one's research. We should have liked to have seen exhibits from more of you, so why not start planning something to bring along next time?

Our congratulations went to Ann Willatts, Stephanie Harris, Polly Lawrence and Olive Butchart, who were presented with prizes of books by our President, Colonel Gordon Palmer. The entries were kindly judged by Dr Sadie Ward of the Museum of English Rural Life, Reading University.

Jean Debney and her band of helpers were kept busy on the bookstall which has expanded rapidly over the past months. A great deal of interest was shown in the computerised 1851 Census work, which, under the direction of Chris Bingley, will shortly lead to our first census publication. Well done, Chris, and those of you who are helping with the transcribing and checking associated with this enormous task.

P R O J E C T S R E P O R T :

M E M O R I A L I N S C R I P T I O N S

Irene Littleby, Projects Co-ordinator

In this and in forthcoming issues of the magazine I shall deal with the various projects being carried out by the Society, the progress being made and details of what help is needed.

The first project I shall cover is the transcribing of monumental inscriptions (MIs). As can be seen from the accompanying list, many of our churchyards' stones have already been transcribed, most of them about forty to fifty years ago. Nearly all of these transcriptions are held in the Reading Reference Library (RRL) where they form a part of the "Local History Recording Scheme". Many of them are written in exercise books or on loose sheets of paper, etc., and it is rather worrying to learn that since the last check, made about two years ago, eighteen of these transcripts have disappeared.

The aim now is to copy the MIs held in the RRL so that a typed version can be produced from which copies can be made for depositing in our own library, Reading Reference Library, the Berkshire Record Office and the Society of Genealogists. Help is now needed with this copying then with indexing and typing and finally with its checking, the first and last activities of course will have to be carried out in the RRL.

Help is also required for new transcription work on MIs in churchyards not so far covered. This is an on-going task with a degree of activity in some part or other of the county throughout the year. It will also be appreciated if members could let me know the whereabouts of any other transcriptions of which they are aware, or of any churchyards or burial grounds which have MIs which have not yet been transcribed.

Anyone interested in lending a hand with any of these MI activities should contact me at any of our meetings or at the address given on the back cover.

Berkshire Memorial Inscription Transcripts
Current Status and Locations of Known Copies

location	inscriptions to		date transcribed	known depositories		
Aldermaston	1965	1965	R	Cold Ash - planned	note 2	
Appleton	1929y			Coombe		1931 R
St Lawrence	1918c	1933	R	Compton Beauchamp		1910 R
Arborfield				- St Swithin's		1939 R
old & new church	1918c			Cookham, Holy T		1901 M
new churchyard	1928y	1928	R	" "	1920	1930 R
Ardington	1890c			Cookham Dean		
	1919y	1920	R	Prim Meth Chapel	1969	1982 R
uip - Charlton WI				Coxwell, Great		1928 R
Ashbury	1906c			Coxwell, Little	1918	? R
	1913y	1916	R	Cumnor*		
Aston Tirrold	1921c			Denchworth	1923	1926 R
and village	1926y			Didcot	1867c	
war memorial	1919w	1928	R		1938y	? R
Aston Upthorpe	1918c			- in progress	note 3	
	1921y	1925	R	Eastbury		1934 R
Avington		1926	R	Easthampstead	1976c	
Barkham	1930c				1980y	1982 BF
	1933y	?	R	Eddington	1953	1978 BF
Baulking*				Enborne, St Michael	1918c	
Bearwood - completed		1983			1930y	1930 R
Besselsleigh	1918c			Faringdon, All Saints		
	1933y	1937	R	& nonconf gravey'd		1935 R
Binfield	1897	?	B	Fernham	1912	? R
- cemetery	1924	1925	R	Frilsham - planned	note 2	
Bisham, All Saints		1942	R	Goosey - old disused	1756c	
Blewbury	1919c			church at Swindon	1916y	1938 R
	1931y	1939	R	Grazeley		1944 R
Boyn Hill - planned	note 1			Grove		1941 R
Bracknell	1932c			Hagbourne, East		1939 R
	1895y	1943	R	Hampstead Marshall	1918c	
- Cong'l Chapel	1927c				1928y	1930 R
	1877y	1944	R	Hampstead Norris*		
Brightwell	1918c			- planned	note 2	
St Agatha	1927y	1930	R	Hanney, West	1932	? R
Buckhold, Holy T	1981	1982	FBS	Hendred, East*		
Buscot*				Hermitage, Holy T	note 4	
Catmore*				- burial ground	note 4	
Caversham, 3 vaults		1956	R	Hungerford		
Chaddleworth	1759	?	R	- in progress		
Challow, East	1932	1934	R	Hurst - planned	note 5	
Challow, West	1932	1934	R	Ilsley, West		1944 R
Charney*				Inkpen	1922c	
Chieveley*					1924y	1931 R
Childrey		1934	R	Lambourn		1930 R
Chilton		1939	R	Letcombe Bassett	1887	1900 R
Cholsey				Littlewick		1941 R
St Mary's & WM		1934	R	Lockinge, East*		
Clewer parish church	1875	1930	R	Longcot	1914	1926 R

Lyford	1943 R	Stamford Dingley*		
Maidenhead		Stanford in the Vale*		
Wesleyan Chapel	1917 ? R	Stratfield Mortimer		
All Saints		Sulham	1937 1943 R	
- in progress	note 6	Sunningwell		
Mortimer West End		Swallowfield	1931 R	
- Indep't Chapel	1903 1910 R	Thatcham		
- St Saviour's	1980 1981 BI+	Bailey memorial	1941 R	
Morton, North	1918c	Tidmarsh	1943 R	
	1928y 1926 R	Tilehurst		
- Prim Meth Chapel	1925 R	- in progress	note 10	
Morton, South*		Touchen End, Bray	1977 1979 BF	
Moulsford	1935 R	Tubney	1939 R	
Newbury, Newtown Rd	note 7	Twyford	1940 R	
Padworth	1942 R	Uffington Chapel	1921c	
Purley	1942 1943 R		1916y ? R	
	note 8	Ufton Nervet		
Reading		Upton	1937 1938 R	
Bapt burial g'd		Wallingford		
Reading St Giles	1797 B	All Hallows	1929 R	
- churchyard		St Leonard	1930 R	
plus annex	1926 R	St Mary	1922 1930 R	
- church	1928 R	Bapt Chapels &		
- annex	1871 1975 BFI	burial ground	1931 R	
Reading St Lawrence	1797 B	Ind Chapel	? R	
	1887 1978 BFIS	Wesleyan Chapel	? R	
Reading St Mary	1797 B	Wantage	1893 1946 R	
	1946 R	Warfield	1952 1957 R	
Remenham	1924 1930 R	Welford	1936 R	
Ruscombe	note 9	West Woodhay*		
Sandhurst	1940 1977 BIW	White Waltham	1905 1930 R	
Shefford, East or Lt	1890c	Windsor	1900 1930 R	
	1888y 1926 R	- , Old churchyard	1983 F	
Shefford, West or Gt	1933 R	Wittenham, Little	1920c	
Shillingford	1913 ? R		1922y 1929 R	
Shinfield	1930 R	Wittenham, Long	1938 R	
Shottesbrooke	1930 1944 R	Wokingham:		
Shrivenham	1916 R	All Saints		
Sotwell	1908c	- in progress	note 11	
	1920y 1925 R	Baptist burial gd		
Sparsholt	1916c	- in progress	note 12	
	1923y 1938 R	Woolstone	1914 ? R	
Speenhamland	1875 1983 B	Yattendon*		

* indicates lost transcript

Notes:

- 1 Maidenhead Arch
- and Hist Soc
- 2 Iris Lloyd
- 3 Mr & Mrs Abery
- 4 NAFAS
- 5 Mrs Crabbe/
 Mrs Littleby
- 6 Georgina Baker
- 7 not yet deposited
- 8 Mrs Jean Debney
- 9 Mr B R Young
- 10 Mrs Avril Ison
- 11 Miss Gwen Hardwidge
- 12 Mrs Goswell

Repositories:

- B Berkshire Record Office
F Berkshire F H S
I Incumbent
M Maidenhead Public Library
R Reading Reference Library
S Society of Genealogists
W West Surrey F H S

Ralph Houlbrooke

From the point of view of the social historian, the most rewarding sort of family history is that which traces several branches of a family in order to chart, and if possible explain, their divergent fortunes. This interest was shared by several writers of the early modern period, even though they did not think of themselves as social historians. Some chroniclers of aristocratic families, such as John Smyth of Nibley (c1568-1641), in his classic account of the Berkeley family, showed a keen interest in cadet branches and connections by marriage. John Cannon (b 1684), son of a Somerset yeoman farmer, wrote a fascinating memoir of all the descendants of his paternal great-grandfather which illustrates in dramatic fashion the great range of occupations and social positions which a few generations of a family might encompass. A great uncle of Cannon's, who had arrived in London orphaned and destitute, ultimately became a substantial bargemaster, and one of his sons established himself as a Turkey merchant. Cannon's grandfather, who had started life as an agricultural servant, became a wealthy butcher and grazier. His eldest son, Cannon's father, farmed a copyhold estate; two other sons became butchers, and his daughters married two local farmers, a fellmonger and a miller respectively. Cannon's uncles spent the latter part of their lives in declining circumstances. Cannon's narrative (which covers many other relatives besides those mentioned here) leaves a strong and enduring impression of the vicissitudes of family life: of high infant and child mortality, of the risks of orphanhood, of very high though largely local geographical mobility, and of the divergent social mobility of various children of the same sibling group. What made some children fail and others prosper? Cannon's account gives all sorts of possible answers: the operation of inheritance customs, parental care or the lack of it, sheer good luck, the economic situation, but above all the still only partially understood element of personal character. Cannon was sure, for example, that some of his relatives owed their success to sobriety and industry, while others were dragged down by fecklessness, a love of company, or a wife's expensive taste in clothes. Cannon's **Memoirs** are in a relatively inaccessible unpublished manuscript. But the short family histories of the parish of Myddle (Shrops.), written by Richard Gough (1635-1723) and published in an inexpensive Penguin edition by David Hey, reveal the same sort of pattern and inspire similar reflections.

Today's family historian working on the pre-industrial centuries cannot usually hope to achieve a picture of his or her ancestors quite as intimate as the thumb nail sketches preserved by Cannon and Gough. Yet Alan Macfarlane has shown that the persistent researcher can cover a surprisingly broad picture of the ramifications of a family tree. His book **Reconstructing Historical Communities** (C U P, 1977) traces the descent of the Abbott family of Earl's Colne (Essex) through several branches and eight generations between the mid-sixteenth and the mid-eighteenth centuries. This was achieved by the method which Macfarlane has dubbed 'record linkage', essentially the collection of a large range of different sources in order to obtain the fullest possible picture of the lives of individuals and communities. In the book just mentioned,

Macfarlane concentrates on some of the most useful of these: parish registers, manorial rentals and court rolls, views of frankpledge, the records of litigation in a number of local and central courts, returns of taxpayers, wills and local population listings. These and other sources are further discussed in his most recent book **A Guide to English Historical Records** (C U P, 1983). So far, record linkage has not been used systematically in family histories. But other community studies which rely upon it include Keith Wrightson's and David Levine's **Poverty and Piety in an English Village, Terling 1525-1700** (Academic Press, 1979) and Dr Barry Stapleton's as yet unpublished study of Odiham (Hants).

Macfarlane's portrait of Henry Abbott of Earl's Colne (1564-1637) is a good example of the sort of detailed picture of an individual which can be pieced together by means of record linkage. Orphaned in early boyhood, Abbott owed his rise in the world to his marriage to a girl with land, almost certainly arranged by his benevolent guardian. Court records suggest that Abbott was, in his youth, a quarrelsome and unruly man who was at various times involved in feuds with both the lord of the manor and a vicar of Earl's Colne. But he achieved greater respectability with advancing years and succeeded in setting up and marrying his eldest son some fourteen years before his own death. Three of his six children survived to adulthood.

Parish registers and wills are two of the sources most obviously useful to the family historian. In recent years, demographic historians have 'reconstituted' individual nuclear families of pre-industrial generations by carefully recording the marriages, baptisms and burials which marked their formation, growth and dissolution. (The information is of course the same as that collected by many genealogists, but it is used for different purposes - the illustration of population history rather than the tracing of descents.) Family reconstitution has shown that during the pre-industrial centuries life expectancy was low compared with today's. In stark contrast with today, mortality was highest in the first year of life. Unavoidable disease, neglect and infanticide all played their part, no doubt, but so far research seems to point to the first as by far the most important of the three. Deaths continued at fairly high level throughout childhood, young adulthood and middle age. Young widowhood, remarriage and orphanhood were in consequence much commoner than they are today. Births were spread over the whole fertile period of a marriage, as we might expect, instead of being concentrated in its early years, as they are today. Yet the average number of children born during the span of a single marriage, though certainly larger than today's, were not as large as one might expect, due to a combination of different facts: a relatively late age at marriage, a relatively high risk of curtailment through the early death of one of the partners, miscarriages, and the spacing of births which was one of the effects of maternal breast feeding. Overall fertility was limited by two facts above all: first, the average age at marriage was relatively high for both sexes, namely in the middle or late twenties, because people typically had to obtain qualifications and material resources by means of service, apprenticeship or inheritance, before they could set up house. Secondly, a relatively high proportion of the population never married at all, if we can trust the calculations, based on the new technique of aggregative back projection, which form the backbone of E A Wrigley's and R Schofield's **Population History of England, 1541-1871** (Edward Arnold, 1981). Most reconstitution studies so far completed have been based on the registers of individual parishes. Yet only a minority of people

spent their whole lives in one parish, and the proportion of families which can be reconstituted by using the registers of a single parish is generally a small one. Migration in search of employment and advancement was one of the most important features of the early modern English social landscape: but a high proportion of this migration was local. The family historian, particularly if he wishes to follow the fortunes of various branches of his kindred, cannot afford to restrict his enquiries to a single parish: but study of the registers of a number of adjacent parishes may be very fruitful. One of the pioneers of multi-parish family reconstitution, Mr Stephen Taylor, has been at work for most of the past decade on a study of family formation and fertility in mid-Berkshire in the eighteenth century.

Wills constitute the second most obviously useful type of source material available to the family historian working on the early modern period. Unfortunately, only a minority of people made them, and wills themselves contain a number of pitfalls for the unwary. Those who lived long enough to see their children reach adulthood very often made provision for them long before their deaths. A child, and particularly a firstborn child, may appear to have been very poorly provided for in a will, simply because he or she had already been established in the world. For similar reasons, some children may not have been mentioned at all. Wills need to be read in the light of contemporary laws and customs, which influenced, though they did not necessarily determine, parental 'strategies' of provision. Primogeniture or partible inheritance, for example, might dictate the descent of property to one son or its division among a number of children. A testator could usually prevent such rules coming into force if he made his own arrangements in good time: but if he was content to let them operate, he might not feel it necessary to make detailed dispositions covering the property to which they applied. Economic factors, too, were important in shaping parental 'strategies'. More successful farmers tended to try to preserve their inherited holding intact, and to provide for younger children either with newly acquired or rented farms, or with cash portions. Less successful farmers who were unable to accumulate cash portions might have to divide their equipment and stock, or even their holdings, amongst their children. In some areas of the country, the division of holdings is found in close association with the development of rural industries, either because the operation of partible inheritance customs eventually forced people to adopt other means of making a livelihood in order to supplement dwindling incomes from land, or because the growth of another means of making a living itself encouraged partition. Wills have been used for the study of inheritance customs by a number of historians, of whom Joan Thirk, Margaret Spufford and Cicely Howell are the most notable. Margaret Spufford's **Contrasting Communities** (C U P, 1974), which is available in paperback, is a good introduction to the sources and the problems of interpretation they present. Cicely Howell's **Land, Family and Inheritance in Transition** was published by the C U P in 1983.

We need to encourage the two-way flow of ideas and findings between family historians and others. Family historians can learn a great deal from social, demographic and economic historians. On the other hand, broad-based accounts of families of the sort sketched here can be immensely interesting and valuable to an audience far larger than the relatives of the people whose lives they chronicle. We need large numbers of such case studies to throw further light on the complex patterns of fertility, mortality and social mobility in the 'World We Have Lost'.

David Cobb

(Contributor's warning : this item could entertain)

Sometimes in the course of family history research, one comes across someone with whom one can claim, at best, only the most dilute of relationships, but with whom one has a most definite affinity. How one wishes one could somehow connect this person to one's family tree.

A contact of mine in the States sent me a history of the 'Boston Cobbs'; not a wrestling hold, but descendants of an Oxfordshire blacksmith who fled persecution for nonconformist dissent and landed in Massachusetts in 1685. (There is a possibility that this emigrant was connected, but no later than the sixteenth century, with the Oxfordshire/Berkshire family of Cobbs which I am researching, but it is no more than a possibility.)

This book of the 'Boston Cobbs' is a very complete genealogy, the sort to make one very envious, and all owing to the forethought of one man. He was the original emigrant's great-grandson. Like his great-grandfather, he was a blacksmith, who (no doubt using the same brawny hand with which, it was said, 'he could lift a five-pail iron kettle with his little finger only') wrote out in the family bible 'in an excellent clear hand' a family tree of six generations, comprising everyone from his great-grandfather to his own grandchildren. He lived from 1735 to 1821, and married for the third time at the age of 75. Finally, he bore the same name as me: David Cobb.

Curiously, his home town in Massachusetts was Abington (named after Abington, Berkshire). As a sergeant (later lieutenant) with the Minute men in the American Revolutionary war, he marched to a skirmish at Braintree (namesake of the rural district in which I now live). He was one of three Cobbs of this family who fought in the Revolution on 'the other side'. (I suspect my own ancestors' sympathies were with George the Third, who actually honoured their home village, Dorchester-on-Thames, with a visit, to study the advanced farming methods then being practised there on the Davey farm.)

But when it comes to entertainment (the purpose, as I warned earlier, of this little ramble) David's great gift to posterity was his ninth child, Solomon (who else?) who had been preceded by Huldah, Hannah, David, Richard, Amos, Sarah, Elias and Cyrus.

Or rather it was Solomon's gift. As we see. David's taste, apart from the obligatory naming of Richard for his father, had been for Old Testament names. But Solomon spurned this, and sought his inspiration from classical Rome. He named his children according to a model plan which none of us with the approved nuclear family of 1.2 children is ever going to emulate. His first son was Lucius Marcus; the second Marcus Lucius. The third son was Junius Brutus, and there are no prizes for guessing the name of the fourth; yes, Brutus Junius. (Known familiarly, perhaps, as Luke, Mark, June and Brute?) If I tell you the fifth son was Caius Cassius, I have no need to tell you about the sixth. But Solomon also had two daughters. Are you on his wavelength? Yes, he went back to Lucia Marcia and Marcia Lucia!

Oddly (or sadly) enough, having perfected this symmetrical system, the master broke his own mould, and when his ninth child was born, had him christened Daniel Wells.

Perhaps Daniel Wells was a sensitive infant and quickly felt he was a misfit, for he died within a year.

Family History Research, Patrick Delaforce, Regency Press

When I first became interested in learning about my ancestors, I read what later became a minor classic of family history, Arthur Willis's *Genealogy for Beginners*. Using his own family as a guide the author takes us through the major record sources, rather like Philip Marlowe looking for a body.

The same idea has occurred to others writers since then, notably Don Steele, who successfully used Gordon Honeycombe's family for the television series and his book *Discovering Your Family History*. Now another book attempting the same combination has appeared - *Family History Research* by Patrick Delaforce. Unfortunately Mr Delaforce has not pulled off the difficult task of instructing while telling an entertaining story.

He has collected together thousands of references to Delaforces and thrown them together as if all the members of those families were connected. Yet we know from our research, that simply because we happen to share a particular surname is, in itself, no evidence that families are linked with a common bond, or ancestor.

If this was just a one-name study then we might be more charitable. The fact is that this book claims "that it's more than just a history of a small unusual Anglo-French family, it is also a serious work on genealogy and the fascinating art of family history research". And that is how it must be judged.

The author tells us that the Tanner MSS at the Bodleian state that de la Force is a common Guisnè name and that Boulogne was famous for false names and forged documents. Yet we are expected to accept unsubstantiated claims - no references are forthcoming from the text - that Delaforces were born or married at particular places and particular times during the early part of the seventeenth century. And that is after telling us that the Guisnè church records have only survived for 1668-1680. Horace Round, the father of critical genealogy, would turn in his grave if confronted with the lack of evidence in this book. It is no more than a list of unconfirmed facts without any real evidence that the families are connected. It may be the author has the references to back up his claims, but we, as readers, are not taken into his confidence.

The first 56 pages of the book attempts to explain the wide ranging sources available to family historians. We are taken at breakneck speed around the major reference libraries. For example, half a page is devoted to the British Museum Library and a whole page to the Society of Genealogists. We are also treated to a whole page listing all the Guild and Livery companies in the City of London, for what purpose is not made clear. The author does, however, tell us all there is to know about wills in half a page.

Part of the book - some 28 pages - is given over to "other family history sources". As an example of what might be found in this section we are told that "Black Death devastated population in 1348/49", or the address of the Mormon CFI library in Brazil, or "Burial registers consult the PRO at St Catherine's House for the post 1840 registers", or "Card, Great Index, see at Soc. of Genealogists - magnificent Lucky Dip". And that is just what this list contains - a lucky dip - you may find what you want or you may not; especially when trying to find a

particular reference in this 223 page book without an index.

If you happen to be interested in the Delaforce name then this book, and presumably volume 2 when it appears, will provide a fund of information which may help you construct a family tree, but it does not measure up to the kind of scholarship we have come to expect in recent years.

JG

The Family Tree Detective, Dr Colin Rodgers, Manchester University Press

What a pleasure to turn to a carefully researched book which fills a much needed gap on the family historians bookshelf. During the past ten years we have been bombarded with a score or more of textbooks on basic research methods. But as far as I am aware, Dr Rodgers is the first to take a step forward, beyond elementary research, onto the second level. If Don Steel and Arthur Willis form the O-level course, then Dr Rodgers has made a bold start on the A-level syllabus.

Much of what Dr Rodgers has to say about what to do if a marriage or birth cannot be found will not be new to the reader of the major genealogy magazines, but he has collected together the latest available research and presents it in a new and entertaining way. Often giving us insights into record sources we may have looked at long ago and discarded as useless.

The book is organised in a simple and easy to follow manner. The reader is taken through individual problems and given a number of alternative possible approaches to get over each dead end.

We are given the benefit of the author's many years of practical teaching experience and the book is a treasure-house of suggestions and ideas which will shed light in the darker recesses of many family trees.

JG

Genealogy for Librarians, Richard Harvey, Clive Bingley

Although this book is directed at qualified librarians in order that they may provide a better reference service for library users - like ourselves - who ask difficult questions on family history, Richard Harvey has produced an informative book for the general reader too.

The author, who is himself a librarian at the magnificent Guildhall Library in the City of London, takes us through record and library collections with disarming ease. Like a mountaineering instructor he points out the pitfalls and the correct paths, so that we can reach the peak, or more correctly, ask the right questions of librarians.

He explains with clarity the usual sources, St Catherine's House, Somerset House and the Public Record Office, and adds some out of the way records like coroners reports, vaccinations registers and criminal trials. There is a useful chapter on poverty, and to show how thorough Richard Harvey is, he has included a section on the modern social security system.

Richard Harvey has brought together, in one handy volume, the distillation of years of experience at the Guildhall. We can but hope that his expertise will percolate down to some provincial librarians.

JG

Extracted by Sue Matthews, checked by Jean Debney

The following extracts, taken from volumes 14 and 15 of the Hampshire Genealogical Society's Index to the 1851 Census, are printed by kind permission of the editor of the series: Sandra Smith, 12 Woodlands Way, North Boddlesley, Southampton, SO5 9HE.

Each entry has the following details (as illustrated by a sample entry):

SURNAME Christian or forename(s)
age
parish of birth
(within Berks)
folio
number

COX Jonathan 87 Ardington 51

Volume 14 - part of bundle number

HO 107/1670

transcribed & indexed by:

Sandra J Smith

and L Auckland

ST MARY'S EXTRA

BROWN	Mary Ann	57	Reading	46
CLARK	Moses	45	Cookham	24
GREEN	Thomas	60	Bledlow	46
PRINCE	Susanna	62	Hungerford	21

PUDDLE	Aaron	39	Sunninghill	24
	Thomas	10?	Bray	24
ROLFE	Harriet	15	Shalbourne	21

HOUND

BRIDGER	Mary	48	Welford	56
ROGERS	Isabella	11	Sandhurst	69
	William	10	Sandhurst	69

HAMBLE LE RICE

MINALL	John	26	Newbury	84
ROBINSON	Eliza	61	Ramsbury	78

BURSLEDON

DENHAM	Caroline	47	Windsor	95
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BOTLEY

DIGWEED	Mary A	24	Newbury	115
OUGHTON	Mary	88	Benham	119



NORTH STONEHAM

BEADON	M A (f)	74 Fulham	313 PHILLIPS Charles	16 East Woodhay	61
THORN	Martha	37 Newbury	310 WARNER Sophia	28 unrecorded	138

CHILWORTH - noneITCHEN STOKE

-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	BASTARD Elizabeth	
												53 Aldermaston 133
Volume 15	-	part of bundle number	RUSSELL Isaac									61 Ibsworth 133
		HO 9107/1678	SCOTT Mary S									20 Windsor 137

ROPLEYHETHERINGTON

<u>BISHOPS SUTTON</u>				Frances	39 Reading	20
				Richard	33 Reading	20
BROWN	Mary	60 Reading	123	Robert	37 Reading	20
MAY	James	45 Greenham	122	LAILEY Edward	30 Bradfield	30
				George	50 Stanford	
<u>BRAMDEAN</u>					Dingley	10

HOLDAWAY Mary	63 Newbury	50	<u>TITCHBORNE</u>	
PHILLIPS Charles	36 East Woodhay	51		
Lucy	34 Faccombe	51	SMITH Ann	60 Swallow-
WHITELAND				field 103
Sarah	36 Lambourne	50		

KILMESTON - noneCHERITONOVINGTON - none

ROUS	William	46 Sunninghill	77	<u>WEST TISTED</u> - none
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Q U A R T E R S E S S I O N S

John W Brooks

There were two principal Courts of Justice in England - the highest being the Assizes and the other the Quarter Sessions. Both were abolished in the Courts Act of 1971, to be replaced by the Crown Courts.

The records of the Assizes are in the Public Record Office (PRO), see Guide to the Contents of the PRO, volume 1, and the PRO's Lists and Indexes IV (List of Plea Rolls). Those for the county of Berkshire go back to 1225. However, since these records are all in London, and are often difficult to interpret, they can be put aside, except by those ardent family history researchers with lots of spare time.

On the other hand, the records of the Quarter Sessions are in the Berkshire Record Office, and what is more, they are all very easy to read, being in English and written in nice clear copperplate hand(s).

Before proceeding, it might be as well to give a rough idea of what is in each set of records. The Assizes dealt with serious breaches of the law, such as treason, murder, et cetera, whereas the Quarter Sessions

had cases of a somewhat minor nature, such as larceny, assault and battery, wife beating and family desertion. They also covered other matters such as constable elections, removal and settlement orders and complaints about the poor rate.

First a word about the long history of quarter sessions. The Courts of the Quarter Sessions can be regarded as something like a modern Magistrates Court, and normally dealt with local cases (which makes them very interesting as far as we are concerned). In the early days the courts were held four times a year, hence the term "Quarter", at Easter, Midsummer, Michaelmas and Epiphany. In later years it was held more frequently but still retained the name Quarter Sessions. These courts were certainly in being in 1361, when a statute mentioned Justices of the Peace, and in common with many English traditions, their origins have been lost in the mists of antiquity.

The people appointed to the task of judging at the quarter sessions were known as Justices of the Peace (JPs) (as they still are today). They were laymen, that is ordinary citizens without legal training, who were advised by the Clerk of the Court, who was a lawyer. JPs were normally people of substance such as vicars, landowners and farmers although the odd tradesman did get nominated occasionally.

The offenders were tried by a jury of twelve men, and one of the first duties of the quarter session, according to the records, was to swear in the jury. All the jurymen are named, often together with their occupations, and they appear to be yeomen, tanners, bakers, and the like, with the occasional gentleman. Very similar to the set-up today.

Next in the records come the convictions of the previous "Quarter", together with sentences. These have caused me to have another think about how the courts of the last half of the eighteenth century conducted their business. I had been brought up to believe that the sentences were draconic and heavy, with the wrongdoer being cruelly punished. Well, I haven't found anyone's being hanged yet, although these cases may be tried at the Assizes in London, nevertheless, quite a large proportion of the cases heard ended in discharge, and those found guilty were usually given a month's hard labour, or a whipping then discharge. In a case of rape (1760) where the accused was found guilty, a sentence of three months was passed on the offending party. For stealing, whether it be clothes, corn or cutlery, the usual sentence was one month, a whipping, then discharge (these chaps must have had good social workers on their sides).

The most severe sentence was that of being transported to the American plantations for seven years. In one example, a guilty prisoner was given the choice of the seven years or joining the army. He apparently chose the former. Nevertheless, in 1782, Edward Headington was released from Reading Gaol to join the army. Actually, he was sent to Africa for seven years, so he was between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea . . . I wonder what happened to him? It should be remembered that the American Plantations included not only the present eastern USA, but also Canada, particularly Nova Scotia. As the American Revolution progressed, after 1776, the prisoners were transported to Canada, and later to Australia.

Lots of the minor cases, which seem to include poaching and assault, were punished with a nominal fine, or at the most, a public whipping. One of the things which the clerks of the records put down in great detail are paternity investigations. Many a young man was hauled before the court, with his father standing surety, for getting a certain,

equally young, lady with child. I have checked on a few of these, and found that the couples eventually married, with a blunderbuss in the back of the groom or, more likely, the village constable's baton at the ready. (Joseph Harris of Northmore, Oxon, was accused of getting Betty Butcher with child. They were married at Sunningwell in 1782, by licence!) If the man was already married, then he had to pay the girl's parish a certain sum of money for maintenance, as well as getting a wiggling from his wife.

Every so often there is a statement to the effect that a barge containing malt has sunk somewhere in the Thames, with the consequential loss of the cargo. Then follows a list of names of those who owned the spoiled malt. It wasn't until I had covered a number of years that I realised that the malt owners had paid the excise tax on the cargo, and since it had been lost, they were claiming a rebate. The traffic in malt between Berkshire and London must have been very heavy, since not a quarter session went by without at least one barge being reported sunk. Claims were also made if the malt was destroyed in a fire (these instances check with some Sun Fire Insurance claims I have in my index).

A large part of the session's business was devoted to settlement and removal matters. In checking the orders against removal orders in parish chests, it seems at first sight that they do not tally. Some in the parish were not recorded in the sessions, and vice versa. Taking into account that lots of the parish records have been lost, one would expect the surviving ones to be found in the court records, but this is not the case. The reason, I believe, is quite simple. A removal order would only come before the court if it was contested by one of the parishes involved in it. It seems that most parishes accepted their "vagrant" families from the expelling parish on a quid pro quo basis, because it was probably less expensive in the long run. Litigation has always been expensive and uncertain. Often the disputes taken to court continue over a period of two or three sessions, lasting six months or more, and then end up with the word "quashed". The only people who appear to gain from all this were the legal gentlemen.

The swearing in of constables usually took place at the beginning of the sessions, and again there are long lists of Berkshire citizens, often with their occupations and abodes. If the person refused to carry out his duties, he was fined quite heavily, so it could not have been a very popular job. One particularly stubborn gentleman refused three times, and was fined three times. Perhaps he was a Quaker?

The constables served for one year, unpaid of course except that if they had to remove vagrants from their parish to another, then they claimed expenses, a fixed scale being laid down in the quarter sessions records.

At the end of each session, all these expenses were paid, including those of the various officials such as the gaol keepers of Reading and Abingdon, together with the workmen doing repair work in the prisons and Bridewells. The prison surgeon got his fees according to the number of visits, as did the prison chaplain. Gaol keeping seemed to run in families, the Prince family ran the gaol at Abingdon, whilst Joseph Clack and son had the Reading gaol in hand.

Other people mentioned included witnesses (who were paid expenses), JPs

being sworn in and those complaining about the poor rating (it was always too high of course!). Repair and maintenance of the highway concerned the court at each session, but since personal names were seldom mentioned, these records are of little interest to us, except when they occasionally name the unfortunate chap who was landed with the job of "Surveyor of the Highways". He was just a local citizen, not a qualified person (as we would regard a surveyor today), and his job was to see to it that their statutory three or four days of free work on the "mending of the highways" was carried out by each of the parish's inhabitants. Another unpopular job!

Lastly, something on the Quarter Sessions Records themselves, which, in the BRO consist of two separate sets.

Firstly, the Petition and Order Rolls, catalogued under Q/SRp 1, et seq. These begin in 1737 (any previous documents were probably destroyed by fire) and consist of a great variety of loose papers of every kind, covered with the dirt of ages. As their name implies, they are often rolled up, and since they are of all shapes and sizes they can be difficult to handle. Lots of them are in a poor state of repair, so the BRO are quite rightly reluctant to allow them to be inspected. Some have been repaired, and no doubt this will be an on-going process, but the sheer bulk of them would require much time and money to render them useable by the general public.

However, do not despair. The Sessions Papers, catalogued under Q/S01, etc., consist of large leather-bound volumes, starting in 1703, and continuing, presumably, through to 1971, although they are open to perusal to the mid-nineteenth century only. They are written in English and contain all the information in the Rolls mentioned above. They are really complimentary to each other, as the rolls hold the documents relevant to the various cases whilst the bound volumes have a report of each case, as in a newspaper.

The rolls have letters used in evidence, which are often abusive (and amusing to us now), signed statements on oath, actual settlement and removal papers, marriage licences, apprenticeship indentures and the like. There is one large gap in the sessions papers (between Q/S03 and Q/S04) for the years from 1750 to 1770. Fortunately the rolls cover the period quite nicely.

One major snag - as with many similar records - there is no index! To find anything in them appertaining to your own researches is very much a "lucky dip" situation. In fact you might not find anything if your family was not high enough in the social scale to have been a JP or Sherriff, or low enough to have been removed. You may find a juryman, or even a constable, but it would take considerable time and searching.

Since I have now more or less completely indexed the Berkshire marriages and Marriage Licences, I thought I might as well have a go at indexing these very extensive Quarter Sessions Papers. I have completed the first five volumes (Q/S01 to Q/S05) covering the years 1703 to 1749 and 1771 to 1786. I have also used the Roll (Q/SRp 1) which cover the years 1737 to 1775, neatly closing the gap in the volumes. Their information is now on cards in my new index, which has already expanded to something like 10,000 items, and is continuing to expand continuously. For this reason, I shall have to stop at around 1800 and leave the delights of further indexing to someone else. I do not want to be selfish and grab the lot for myself.

About that new index of mine. It is operational and can be used by members, but it might mean your doing some work yourself as I can only give a reference, consisting of year and volume, for a given name. Good hunting.

Guide to the Contents of the Public Record Office, volume 1, HMSO
Public Record Office, Lists and Indexes - no IV,
List of Plea Rolls of Various Courts, HMSO
The Local Historian's Encyclopedia, John Richardson,
Historical Publications - (Section D, part 4)
BRO Leaflet no 17, Assizes and Quarter Sessions
Village Records, J West, Macmillan

Liz Longhurst

The Christmas party was a good opportunity for members to get to know each other and to informally discuss their family history problems. We also had an excellent spread, co-ordinated by Jackie Blow and her helpers. In recognition of this and in thanks for all her hard work behind the scenes at every meeting, our Chairman, Cliff Debney, presented her with a bouquet. There was also a fun raffle. Lots of members brought along small wrapped gifts which the "winners" - about three quarters of us - had. It was an excellent opportunity for those of us who never win raffles to have this unusual experience!

It is very gratifying that interest in the Society continues to grow and we have double the number of new members compared with last season. The renewal rate is very high this year and our resumption of the sending out of reminders to lapsed members has already proved to be well worthwhile.

Happy Hunting everyone,

Liz

Pamela E Roberts

My great-great-great-grandfather, John Flory, was a publican in Abingdon in the early nineteenth century. From Townsend's "News of a Country Town", I found the following entry:

March 10, 1892: "On Wednesday evening last, died, in his 86th year, Mr John Flory, landlord of the Blue Boar public house in this town, Mr Flory was the oldest landlord in Abingdon. He was first licensed in 1783."

His father, Robert Flury, who had married Kezia Leaver in 1745, was a fisherman of Abingdon. He died in 1781; Kezia, two years later, and John must have started his life as a publican on his inheritance. He must have sold the following items mentioned in his father's will:

"I give unto my son, John Flury, all my punts, boats and fishing tackle of every sort and kind to be delivered to him one month next after my death. And I also give unto my said son, one load of white rods to be delivered to him within six months next after my decease."

Again Townsend's Extracts from "Jackson's Oxford Journal" relating to Abingdon states:

April 12, 1806: "On Monday 31st Ult. was opened by a deputation from Oxford, at Brother Flory's, the Blue Boar Inn, Abingdon, a Lodge of Odd Fellows, when a very numerous and respectable attendance took place, and the utmost harmony and mirth presided until a late hour . . ."

In the 1901 edition of Nutall's Encyclopaedia is the entry:

"Oddfellows - The name of several friendly societies. The Independant Order of Oddfellows, Manchester Unity, is the largest and most important of the number, its membership is over 665,000, and its funds amount to £8,000,000."

From the accompanying tree, it will be seen that John Flory had three daughters, the eldest of whom, Kezia, married John Wyatt, in 1800. I have Kezia's prayer book marked: "K Flory her Book Sept 2nd 1799", in which she recorded the births of her children and also a scrap of paper where she wrote:

"1832 my dear father dyed on Wensday March 7"

Her youngest child, Robert Wyatt, born in 1815, was my great grandfather. He lived in Abingdon until he was ninety and left an abundance of notebooks and letters that I am in the process of editing.

Robert Wyatt must have considered becoming a publican, like his grandfather, for in his notebook he shows that he was working as a servant to Ambrose Goswell in the Swan Inn, Compton, in 1835. Perhaps this job came to an end when Ambrose Goswell did away with himself on September

K. Flory

her Book

Sept 2nd

1799

K. F.

Prise Myatt Wyatt
the Daught of John and
Lucia Wyatt Bond
December 12 at half
past 2 in the afternoon
1800

Esther Wyatt Bond Jan^{ry} 23
at a 11 Clock in
the fore Noon
1804

John Wyatt Bond
September 29 at
half past 3 in the
afternoon 1806

William Wyatt Bond
December 1 at 4
Clock at Night
1809

1891 my Dear
Sister Eliza Dyed
December 11 at 10
Clock

1892 Unkul' Goldy
Died February 19

1892 my Dear
father Dyed on
Wednesday March
7

Thomas Wyatt Bond
March 25 at half past
4 in the morning
1812

Robert Wyatt Bond
May 4 at 10 Clock in
the morning 1815


20th, 1836, for Robert wrote:

"The most complete fool in Berkshire put an end to his existence by swallowing enough Arsenic to kill six people his name was Ambrose Goswell of Compton."

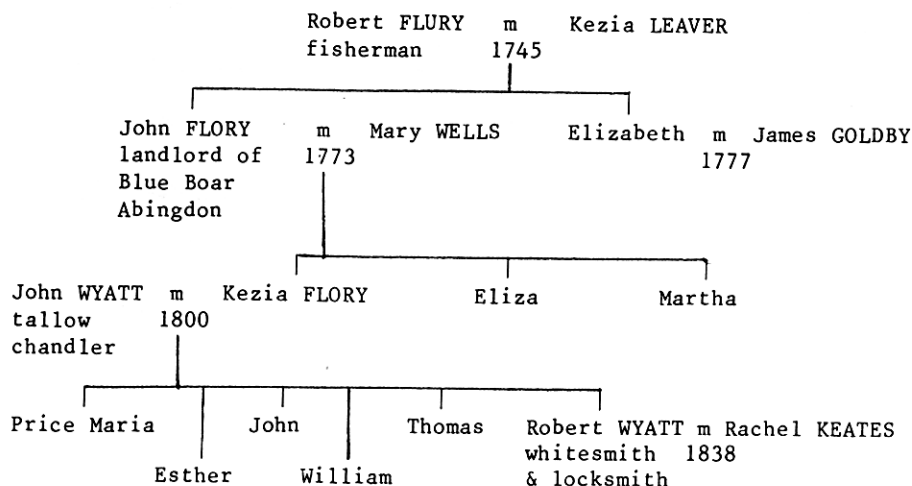
By 1841, Robert was employed by Mr T Fairbrother as a locksmith and whitesmith. He remained in his employ until 1867 when the business was taken over by Mr E L Shepherd, who retained the workmen: Jas Hartwell, Ed Hartwell, Robert Wyatt, John and James Lawrence, T King and Chas Mobins.

On January 12th, 1842, the Loyal Ivy Lodge, no 3039 of the Manchester Unity, was established in Abingdon. Robert Wyatt was one of the eighteen founding members. He made a list of the 277 members which contained two of his workmates : Edward Hartwell (166) and John Lawrence (14).

I imagine that part of the list was recopied by Robert in 1860 and put in the cover of an almanac for that year. There is a noticeable deterioration in Robert's handwriting as he years progressed and an error in enumeration, as there are two names for each of the numbers 235, 236 and 237. The list probably covers the years from 1842 to 1855, as I think that Robert went on working until he was seventy, when he was admitted to Twitty's Almshouse, where he went on living for another twenty years.

Shortly before Robert's death his youngest daughter, my great aunt, Emily Wyatt, was looking after her father in his almshouse room. She locked the door one day to stop him from getting up and lighting the gas. Aunt was astonished to find, on her return, that the old man was in bed with the lock in pieces on the counterpane. He had not forgotten how to use his locksmith's tools, although he was almost ninety!

ABINGDON FOLK



15 Robert Wyatt
 16 John Pretty
 17 John Smith
 18 Thomas Walker

A List of the Members
 of the Loyal Soc. Lodge
 No 3039 Manchester Unity
 Established Jan. 12 1842

19 E.
 20 Jo
 21 Jo
 22 Jo
 23 G.
 24 W.
 25 M.
 26 L.
 27 W.
 28 Th.
 29 W.
 30 W.
 31 W.
 32 Ch.

1 George Ivey -
 2 Fredrick Ivey
 3 Thomas Winchester
 4 Henry Sherman
 5 William Humphris
 6 Henry Dyer
 7 Joseph Gardener
 8 William Gardener
 9 John Dawson
 10 Jonathan Dawson
 11 John Alcock
 12 William Fisher
 13 John Fisher
 14 John Lawrence

ABINGDON DISTRICT

A List of the Members
of the Loyal Ivy Lodge
No 3039 Manchester Unity
Established Jany 12 1842

(The following is an alphabetic index of all the names
in Robert Wyatt's notebook - numbers 235 to 237 being
duplicated and number 181 having no name entered.)

Alcock, John 11	Brown (continued)	Drewe, Richard 195
Alder, John 67	R 236	Duffield, Thomas 94
Allam, G 272	W 170	Dyer, Henry 6
Allen, Nevil 26	Buckland, James 127	Henry 125
Anderson, Thomas 37	Bucknell, Wm 143	Eatswell, Edward 48
Austin,	Bullock, J 188	Edgington, David 251
George 118	Jas 271	E 239
James Battle 40	John 146	Evans, - 51
Bailey, J H 264	Burchell, 140	George 121
Baker, Henry 50	Butcher, John 222	John 274
Barnes, W 267	Butler, James 126	Rd 234
Wm 213	James 193	Thomas 176
Barratt, Thomas 132	Buxtone, Chas 168	Farnell, James 34
Basden, William 120	Carter, Edwd 134	Farrow, E W 19
Bates, John 123	William 27	Ferryman, G 244
Bayliss, Alfred 226	Chambers,	Fisher, John 13
Beasley, Francis 163	George Finch 83	Josh 147
Beckensall,	Chesterman,	W 232
G 224	Chas 253	William 12
William 75	William 59	Fox, Thomas 109
Beckett, Jas 265	Child, W 220	Francis, Wm 155
Becketts, Chas 248	Claridge, C H 165	Franscombe,
Beckinsall,	Clarke, John 129	Jeremiah 65
William 36	Conslable, Ben 113	Fuller, Stephen 93
Beesley,	Cook, Chas 172	Stephen 189
John Lyford 69	Cottle, Henry 85	Gardener, E Chas 27
W 179	Cox, Chas 16	G 277
Bennett, James 41	Henry 55	George 73
Benson, Robt 190	James 60	Joseph 7
Bexkett, William 89	James 80	William 8
Blagrove, Edwin 131	Craddock, Chas 217	Gibbons, John 225
Blanchard, Robt 142	Cresswell, William 29	Josh 243
Thos 46	Wm 175	Gould, Willm 145
Blay, Ambrose 64	Creswell, Thomas 38	Green, H 184
George 54	Dawson, James 103	Greenaway, E G 236
Bond, Willm 210	John 9	Walter 214
Bower, Josh 238	Jonathan 10	Groves, Jas 256
Box, John 141	Stephen 171	Hall, Henry 122
Brittan, Jonathan 200	Tom 245	Hallett, W 229
Brown, John 45	Denton, William 114	Hamburg, Alfred 106
Josh 144	Dipper, Noah 250	Hamilton, Heny 161

Harriss, W 204	Painton, G 156	Symonds,
Hartwell, E 166	Parter, James 78	Rich Seabrook 76
Hawse, Edward 117	Patience, Thomas 58	Tame, William 22
Hayward, Richard 95	Paulin, James 87	Taylor, George 23
W 201	Paxton, Thos 197	James 49, 68
Hearne, G 257	Payton, A 182	W 240
Heath, Amb 157	Peel, John Henry 100	William 24
Hester, Henry 116	Pether, Edward 115	Thatcher, Job 235
Hitchins, Wm 164	Phillips, William 72	Joseph 11
Holder, W 233	Pickett, George 56	Titchener, Thos 219
Holmes, Ben 160	Pitt, John 154	Trinder, Jesse 215
Daniel 70	John 237	Tubb, Daniel 137
Huckwell, Robert 136	Thos 262	John 97
Huggins, John 105	Thos Sargt 28	Tucker, George 81
Humphris, Rd 247	Pointer, G 230	J T 169
William 5	Poole, John 20	Turner, James 209
Ivey, Frederick 2	Preston, Charles 32	John 82
Fredk 139	Pretty, John 16	John junr 255
George 1	Pritchard, George 39	W 159
Michael 99	Puffitt, Mark 249	Vasey, H 191
Jackson, George 96	Thos 252	Wake, Richard 77
James, Hy 203	Pugh, James 90	Walker, Thomas 18
King, John 98	Radbourne, Thos 206	Wallace, G 153
Kirkby, W 260	Reade, W 199	Warrilow, Jas 186
Kirkpatrick, J T 71	Richards, James 79	Watling, Richard 202
Knight, G F 158	Ricketts, G 162	Welch, Luke 241
Wm James 61	James 33	Weller, Chas 128
Lambert, Robert 138	James 177	Westbrook, John 107
Langford, - 180	Robinson, George 63	Joseph 92
Lawrance, John 14	Rogers, J G 208	Thomas 91
Leach, John 276	John 74	William 84
Lee, Wm 242	Rulland, A 266	Westbury, C 268
Lendars, James 135	Rumble, John 237	Wiblin, John 52
Leonard, Chas 149	Sawer, Edwin 62	Wm 196
James 205	Seaton, William 30	Wigley, G 178
Lewington, George 47	Sheard, John 194	Wilkins, John 263
Lindars, William 88	Sherman, Henry 4	Willetts, Chas 198
Lye, James 53	Simpson, W 246	William, W 231
Malpas, Matthew 86	Sims, John 227	Williams, Ben 207
Maskell, John 104	Sired, H 228	James 35
Messer, Ed 273	Slay, B 259	Wiltshire, A W 185
Miller, Thomas 66	Smith, A 183	Winchester, Thomas 3
Mobbs, Ed 212	George 173	Windebank, A 258
Moss, A 269	John 17	Winter, William 42
Frank 211	Snell, John 124	Winterborne,
John 133	Snooks, Thomas 119	Robt G 151
Mouldy, Isaac 111	Stanmore, A 192	Woodbridge,
Job 221	Steane, Jabez 110	Bartlett 174
Mulcock, James 150	Stephens, George 44	C junr 235
Martin 25	W 216	Charles 43
Nalder, John 22	Steptoe, Edward 218	George 108
New, Richard 102	Wm 254	Wm 152
Newell, John 21	Stone, W J 261	Wyatt, Robert 15
Norris, Henry 101	Stratton, Henry 5	Young, John 130
North, John 270	Stubblehill, - 187	John James 148

Catalogues completed between 1 September and 30 November 1983 include:

Reference Details

- D/P 16 * Additional parish records of **Beenham** from 1813, including two nineteenth century registers.
- D/P 73D Records of St Catherine's Church, **Bearwood**, 1846-1981, including registers.
- D/P 109 * **Shellingford** tithe award, 1841
- D/P 130C * Additional parish records of **Midgham**, mainly twentieth century.
- D/P 149 } **Windsor** parish records from 1558, including registers and
D/P 149B } charity records.
- D/P 156 * Additional parish records of **Woolhampton** from 1842.
- D/P 174 Parish records of **St Mark's Church, Reading**, from 1889, including registers.
- T/A 50 Index to the **Wargrave** census, 1851 (compiled 1982)
- T/A 53 Transcript of the Berkshire section of the **Compton** census. 1676 (compiled 1983)
- T/F 47 Microfilm of parish registers (and other records) of **Aldermaston** (1854-1982),
- T/T 8 Survey of monumental inscriptions in **Mortimer West End Church** and churchyard (compiled 1980-1981).
- T/T 9 Survey of monumental inscriptions in churchyard at **Buckhold chapel**, Bradfield (compiled 1983).
- T/Z 28 Typed list of persons transported to the Swan River Colony, Australia, between 1851 and 1871 (compiled 1983).

* indicates additions to an existing catalogue section.

4 Caledonia St
Greenwood 6004
West Australia

Dear Editor,

I wonder if other members of the Society might be able to help me with references to my great-great-grandfather, Charles PREBBLE, (1797-1840). Although he was born in Kent he practiced as a Surgeon and Apothecary in Berkshire from 1819 to 1840. He married Ann FREW from Pangbourne and worked in East Hendred, Harwell and Appleford. The wording of his will suggests that he might have been planning to emigrate to South Australia prior to his somewhat untimely, early death. He and Ann FREW had three children, Charles, Agnes and Zillah. A short obituary in Jackson's Oxford Journal suggests that he had a wide circle of friends, doubtless known to ancestors of other members.

Yours sincerely,

Joan Breton-Coward
(née Prebble)

Dear Editor,

When you are lost and cannot find an ancestor, have you ever tried dowsing for them? It could be for dates, villages or name links, with a plum bob or just a button on cotton; it will not save researching but it might, just might, give a lead.

First, asking questions. To find a link between names, dates or of what material an article is made, hold the string of a plumb bob between finger and thumb, about three inches from the bob, give a quick twist of the wrist to make the bob rotate and then hold the hand still, think of the name, relationship, etc. For example: "is William R the grandfather of John Y?", "was Thomas alive in the 1700s?" (this one will need to be moved in 5 year steps, earlier or later, until a positive response is given, then stepped year by year) or "was Elizabeth, 1549, my grandparent?" For a positive response, the bob will start to swing back and forth while for negative it will continue to rotate.

Map dowsing can also be fruitful. To find the area from which, or to which, the family moved, use a rotating bob to indicate the points of the compass, North, South, East or West (as above) and also the distance they had moved by checking first in five mile steps to achieve a reading, then in single miles. On a large scale map the bob can be held steady over the map and you should feel a slight pull in the direction to move, when on target, the bob will move anti-clockwise for positive. Holding the bob still over a village, house or perhaps a church on the map, think of your question, for example "did they live here?"; The bob should rotate anticlockwise for positive, clockwise for negative. For some people it will swing back and forth for positive, side to side for negative . . .

Dowsing out of doors can be either with angle rods or with a "V" stick. The former are two metal rods each about fifteen inches long with a right angle bend about three inches from one end. With the short ends held in loosely clenched hands, the rods positioned so that the long ends point straight forward, about twelve inches apart and parallel to the ground, walk slowly back and forth over the area you are dowsing. A positive reading will make the rods swing over each other. Pipes and cables can also be found this way.

Dowsing using a "V" stick is my favourite way. Each leg is about fifteen inches long, the two end are held in tightly clenched hands, palms upwards, with the stick parallel to the ground. Walk slowly over the area to be dowsed; the end will move down for water and up for minerals.

Practice can be by way of a sort of party game; secreting a variety of coins and other objects under a cloth and then attempting to find specific objects. This has only been an outline of dowsing and some of its uses. It can be a very interesting technique to use (but I wouldn't rate it 100% accurate!) and one whose findings can sometimes lead to new avenues of research.

Yours sincerely,

Brian W R Foulke

EDITORIAL NOTE

Due to unforeseen production problems the MEMBERS' PAGES and the article by John Brooks on MARRIAGE LICENCES have both had to be held over until the next issue.

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