

NEWSLETTER

Updating Hampshire's History

No. 17

Spring 2021

VICTORIA
COUNTY
HISTORY



Hampshire

Online Resources in Difficult Times



The National Archives has made available a range of digital records to download free of charge while the national lockdown continues. Downloads are subject to a daily and monthly limit and fair usage. The records include wills before 1856 from the Prerogative Court of Canterbury and some military records both personal and regimental from both World Wars.

Hampshire Record Office is closed but the detailed catalogue of all the documents it holds is available online. Descriptions of poor law documents are particularly full, giving for example, the working history of individuals in settlement cases, valuable to local historians and genealogists. Some historical sources are displayed in full in the catalogue, for example, the centre of the settlements depicted on each tithe map of the mid-19C. A full transcription of the wills and inventories for certain places studied by the **VCH Hampshire** group are displayed: Cliddesden (33), Farleigh Wallop (15), Newnham (32) and Upton Grey (36). Steventon (30) will soon appear. These documents reflect the work and possessions of ordinary people from c1500.



Popham Census Research

The excellent and interesting work done by new volunteer, Nancy Rickman, has now been put online in the **On History** blog on the **Institute of Historical Research** website:

<https://blog.history.ac.uk/2020/12/popham-recreating-a-victorian-village-via-the-census/>

Regular readers will remember our piece on Nancy's work in our Autumn 2020 newsletter.



National Library of Scotland

Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba

This is a valuable source of old **maps** particularly during lockdown when the Hampshire Record Office is closed and paper maps are not accessible. We use them a lot in our parish researches for following the growth of settlements, location of now lost buildings, road development and field boundaries. Searches can be done by place and mapmaker; you can select different scales including Ordnance Survey 1", 6", 25" and if you are lucky they will range from the 1st edition 1871 up to 1945. There is a facility to overlay satellite images or to lay the images side by side. As is always the way, though, you can nearly bet your parish will be on the edge of four maps! *Jennie Butler*

The Value of Ancestry and Find My Past



Famous for tracing individuals, these sites are essential in our researches for records of complete parish censuses. Detailed

demographic analysis can be made by creating spreadsheets of the data for the decades 1841-1911 and the 1939 National Register. Changes in total population, age, gender balance, new house builds, size of farms, occupations and migration from elsewhere in the country can all be plotted. This information forms a major part of our texts on 19C and 20C economy, social structure and even boundary changes. The 1921 data will be released next year adding to our knowledge. *Jennie Butler*



During lockdown I have been making considerable use of the online **British Newspaper Archive** - monthly subscription £12.95. Although it is by no means comprehensive with respect to newspapers covering the Basingstoke area (for example it only provides access to the **Hants and Berks Gazette** for the years 1892 to 1910 inclusive) it is still an extremely valuable resource and aid to research. Other relevant papers include the **Hampshire Advertiser** (1823-1940), **Hampshire Chronicle** (1772-1909) and **Reading Mercury** (1770-1958). *Roger Ottewill*

Peter Higginbotham's site, **The Workhouse**, <http://www.workhouses.org.uk>, is not only an encyclopaedic repository for information on the English Poor Law system, but also a portal for other local history information.

<https://le.ac.uk/history/outreach/besh/historical-research/trade-directories>

This site has downloads of 18C and 19C **historical trade directories** searchable by county and parish. As well as featuring occupants from land owners to trades people, descriptions of the parish are included giving population, church, school, postal services, train and bus services. *Jennie Butler*



1540 – 1835. Details of the careers of the clergy drawn from 50 archive depositories.

Searching by diocese and then by parish reveals the successive rectors or vicars for each parish and some of the curates. It is very useful for local historians and for genealogists. Individual career history can be displayed. If a rector or vicar is absentee a quick check on his career history shows if he held another parish at the same time. The database covers all of England and Wales and bishops appointed to overseas posts. *Jean Morrin*

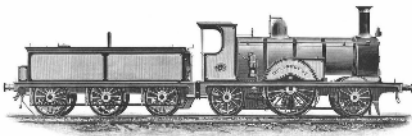
A library card isn't just for books ...

It provides access to the Digital Library, including: **The British Newspaper Archive**, **Find My Past**, **Access to Research**, **Encyclopaedia Britannica**, **Oxford English Dictionary**, **Oxford Dictionary of National Biography** and much more



Hampshire
County Council

19th Century Excursions



As well as the 'Cheap Pleasure Excursions' from Basingstoke that the Great Western and London and South-Western railway

companies provided, a number of organisations in Basingstoke chartered special trains so that their members and their friends could enjoy a cheap day out.

The Oddfellows' trips included a visit to the Crystal Palace at Sydenham in 1857 and Bournemouth in 1882. When they went to the Isle of Wight in 1883 the Oddfellows and their friends numbered 430. The Mechanics' Institute also visited the Isle of Wight for their excursion in 1871.

The annual excursions for the pupils, parents and other friends of the British School included visits to Netley in 1867, Windsor in 1870, Portsmouth and Southsea in 1882 and the Isle of Wight in 1883. In most years, when their special train returned to Basingstoke, the Mechanics' Institute Band was waiting to provide musical accompaniment as the children and adults marched back into town.

The Parish Vestry organised cheap annual Parochial Excursions. In 1892 over 600 parishioners went on the Parochial Excursion to Portsmouth and Southsea. Some of the larger employers arranged excursions for their employees. In 1893 the Basingstoke Corporation staff's annual outing took them to Bournemouth by train and then by boat to Swanage. Gerrish Ames and Simpkins' annual excursions included a trip to Hastings in 1898. In 1899 they went to Portsmouth and then by boat to Brighton.

Bob Clarke

Queen Victoria Detrains in Basingstoke 1848

The Queen, family and entourage leaving Windsor for Osborne on the Isle of Wight experienced the inconvenience of different gauge railways forcing them to cross the platform and change trains from the Great Western to the South Western railways at Basingstoke. Occupying four carriages and arriving at noon the party was received by the Earl of Malmesbury and the chairman of the South Western Railway. The platform was dressed with a crimson cloth and marquee even though the transfer took only five minutes. A newspaper reported that 'the quiet town of Basingstoke seemed not to be much moved by this transit of royalty'. Being a fairly regular occurrence, there were only a few stragglers from the town to wave flags and cheer as the train moved off.



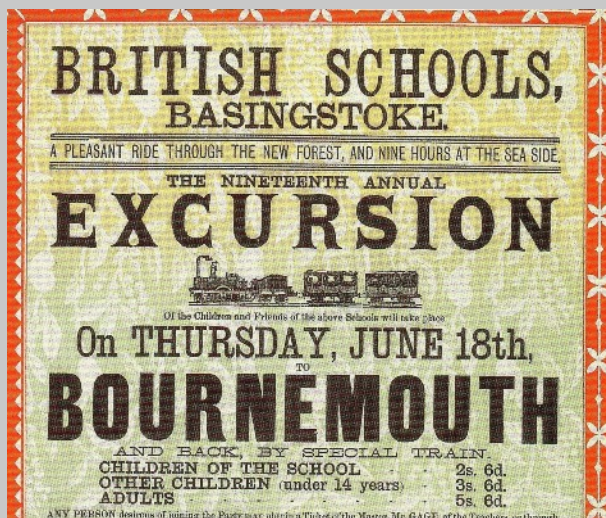
Jennie Butler

A Visit to Nately Scures Church



On 23 July 1883 members of the North Hants Archaeological & Field Club went on an excursion to South Warnborough, Andwell Priory, Basing House and the churches of Greywell and Nately Scures. The latter was described, in one report, as a 'curious little church' and in another as a 'miniature edifice'. Shown around by the rector the Revd W M Fletcher, as well as the 'fine Norman porch', the 'curious carving of a mermaid' and other architectural features, the visitors were able to view 'the ancient records'. These attracted 'considerable attention' since they contained the signatures of members of old Hampshire families, such as the Tylneys, Jervoises and Gilbert White (vicar of Selborne, and grandfather of the naturalist) and references to legislation 'intended to foster the woollen trades [and] by which it was enacted that all persons should be buried in woollen cloth' (quotations from *Reading Mercury*, 28 July 1883, and *Hampshire Chronicle*, 28 July 1883).

Roger Ottewill



Poster for the British School's excursion to Bournemouth in 1885. 140 children accompanied by 110 adults enjoyed their trip to Bournemouth. In the evening, when their special train returned to Basingstoke at 9.30, the Mechanics' Institute Band played the party into town.

The Solent Queen and Duchess of Albany

The 29th United Annual Excursion of the Hants Friendly Society was held in July 1892. Special trains brought over 1,100 members and friends from a large



number of branches, mainly in North Hants, to Portsmouth and Stokes Bay where they boarded 'two special fast saloon steamers' the **Solent Queen** and the **Duchess of Albany**. Visits to Ryde and Spithead were included in the itinerary. Although the weather was sometimes inclement, the excursion seems to have been a great success and 'the railway arrangements' were described as 'admirable' (*Hants and Berks Gazette*, 16 July 1892).

Roger Ottewill

Getting Out of Basingstoke Workhouse

As the workhouse reached into the 20C, it had stopped being a place for punishment and discouragement of poverty. Most of the residents were elderly, chronically sick or disabled, and others were orphaned or disabled children. Most of them were permanent and institutionalised and valiant attempts were made to make their lives a little more interesting.

Mrs Raynbird, an early lady guardian, arranged a month's 'holiday in the country' for children in 1901, at a cost of 5/- per child per week. It was so successful that it continued every year and often involved trips to the seaside, which many children had never seen. For adults who were able, there were outings to local parks with picnics. Later there were coach tours and visits to the cinema and theatre – these often sponsored by local businesses.

Barbara Large



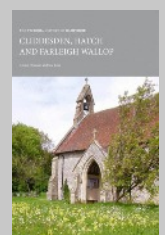
Mapledurwell



Steventon



Medieval Basingstoke



Cliddesden, Hatch and Farleigh Wallop