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Contents

Leper Hospitals in Berkshire <i>Pat Preece</i>	3
The Abingdon Rural Sanitary Authorities 1872-1914 <i>David N. Axford</i>	11
Doctor in the Dean <i>Susan Poad</i>	22
Building Slough: building control records of Slough <i>Lisa Spurrier and Ellie Thorne</i>	29
The Berkshire Bibliography, 2009 <i>David Cliffe</i>	44

Berkshire Local History Association

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Leper Hospitals in Berkshire

Pat Preece

The publication of Carole Rawcliffe's book, *Leprosy in Medieval England*, in 2006 inspired me to investigate the provision of treatment for lepers in Berkshire. Information about leper hospitals (or leprosaria) is limited. What follows is an introductory survey of knowledge about the whereabouts of the hospitals in the county and the life of the patients in them.

The Romans brought leprosy to Britain: the first evidence of the disease in a skeleton was found in a fourth-century cemetery in Dorchester, Dorset.¹ In the medieval period there seems to have been an outbreak of the disease and there are various theories about its cause, one being that general health was poor at this period so the bacilli could take hold, another that it was imported by the Crusaders returning from the east.

Many of the lepers in the medieval period would have undergone an informal examination locally, at first to determine that they were suffering from the disease. Later in the period there were experts to whom the patients might have been referred. Apparently at Kings Lynn in 1376 there was a special jury selected for their knowledge and there were probably others.² The disease could possibly have been kept secret until the face was affected and it seems likely that many lepers stayed at home until the disease was obvious and possibly continued to stay there with the connivance of relatives. Some may have taken to the road as beggars and slept where they could. There were only a limited number of hospitals and those that existed could only take a small number of patients.

In Berkshire, Abingdon, Hungerford, Newbury, Reading, Wallingford and Windsor had recorded such hospitals, but our knowledge of the number of lepers existing at any time is very little. Little is known about the hospitals that are recorded, so it is possible that there were other small sanctuaries connected with local churches or small abbeys and nunneries, of which there is no record.

One thing many of the leper hospitals had in common was a dedication to St Mary Magdalen, but it is difficult to determine why. It could be in reference to Mary Magdalen's washing of Christ's feet, for one of the less usual penances that priests might require to be performed was to wash the feet of a leper. In Berkshire, the hospitals at Abingdon, Newbury, Reading and Wallingford all had this dedication. The leper hospital at Windsor was dedicated to St Peter and at Hungerford there were probably two, one to St

Lawrence and another to St John.

Some of the leprosaria were attached to monastic houses, probably staffed by monks or nuns. Others were independent religious foundations, which were financed, at least partly, by donations from local people. The staffing of these hospitals is unknown, although when the one at Wallingford was disbanded and sold in 1577 there was reference to 'minsters, chapplins, or incumbents of the late free chappel or hospitale'.³

The most important building in all the hospitals was the chapel, where the daily office of prayer was maintained. In some of the institutions the beds of the very sick had a view of the altar. The hospital was sometimes called a Lazar house with reference to Lazarus, who, although he probably did not have leprosy, has been equated with it. The raising of Lazarus from the dead was the greatest of Christ's miracles and Guy de Chanliac, a medieval physician, consoled his patients by stating that Christ 'had loued Lazar the leprouse man more than other men'.⁴

The hospitals were usually situated at the edge of the town, not only for fear of infection but also because of the reference in Leviticus that the leper should dwell 'without the camp'.⁵ Many of the leprosaria were sited within easy reach of bridges: Carole Rawcliffe cites at least nine. She says 'with its promise of a safer transition to paradise for both patron and patient, the leprosarium in turn represented a spiritual bridge', and this would probably have been emphasised by the serving religious.⁶ Apart from the spiritual side, the traffic over the bridge might have provided a source of charitable donations and the arches may have given shelter.

Most of the hospitals were within easy reach of water if not of a river. In the Old Testament, Naaman, the captain of the Syrian army, was a leper and was healed by bathing seven times in the Jordan.⁷ The discovery of immersion tanks at the site of the hospital of St John in Oxford is indicative and certainly the lepers were bathed in tubs with herbs added to the water.⁸ It seems likely that other forms of treatment such as ointments and herbal remedies may have been used, along with some extraordinary compounds, including such favourites of the medieval physician, mercury and lead, and phlebotomy. There was always hope of a miracle so some must have gone to various shrines including Canterbury, where the shrine of Thomas Becket was supposed to have had miraculous cures.

The Leper Hospital at Reading

This is the best documented leprosarium in Berkshire thanks to it being part of Reading abbey and its cartulary having survived. We can gather something of the life of the lepers within its walls.

The hospital was founded in the early 1130s outside the gate of Reading

abbey by Abbot Ancher.⁹ According to Hurry, the foundations of the hospital were found when the Reading Assize Courts were erected. The excavators found that the leper house measured 110 feet x 50 feet; the largest room in it was 60 feet x 45 feet, this probably being the chapel.¹⁰ These foundations would have been within the abbey precinct: in the description of the foundation it says that it was 'in confinio Radyng ecclesie'. These remains would have been next to the Holy Brook and near to its bridges. In 1249 William de Monterville gave the abbey 12 acres lying behind the leper hospital.¹¹ The grant appears to indicate that the hospital was outside the abbey wall, but all other indications are of it being within the abbey confines. However, in 1479 an inquiry by Edward IV found 'moreover an other chapell ther was on the est side of the towne callid Mary Magdelyn chapell and lyelod therto to releve therin sycke folks, as lazars and a house for them to dwell in besyde wt feyn londe pertheynyng therto'. From this it sounds as if the hospital was outside the walls and presumably the land referred to was at least partly the 12 acres given by William de Monterville. However, Abbot John Thorne had demolished the hospital in the 1470s and taken the income from it.¹² It may be that by that time the need for a leper hospital had ceased as leprosy was in steep decline by that period.

It is thought that only male lepers were admitted to the abbey leper hospital: they were addressed as 'our brothers' by the monks and appeared in their list of paupers called the bede roll. They seem to have taken the same vows as the monks, including chastity. They were supplied with a hood, tunic and cloaks with two woollen vests and underlinen. The hood or cape was to contain three ells of cloth and the tunic and cloak two and a half ells (an ell was approximately 45 inches in length). Each inmate received ten yards of linen yearly when required and one yard of serge for stockings or more probably gaiters, which would have been protection for ulcerated legs. The abbey 'sartorius' or brother in charge of abbey clothing also presented them with leather girdles at Michaelmas and shoes at Easter.¹³

It is probable that owing to the ulceration of the skin it was important that the clothes were washed and there is mention of a laundress. However, the leper men were warned that a laundress would be a temptation, so there were orders banning them from the laundry and these appear with the rules on sexual continence.¹⁴ The laundress received board and 2s in alms every year and washed the sheets, clothing and long linen tablecloths supplied by the monks. The hospital was supplied with 15 yards of linen for covering the tables and when they gave out a new cloth the old had to be returned.¹⁵

The Abbot supplied each leper with half a pound loaf, a measure of grain and half a gallon of middling ale. This was increased to one loaf and a gallon of ale daily. The Abbot also granted the lepers 5d a month and more on feast

days from which they could buy extra relishes. Meat was eaten, indicated in rules on forfeits for the disobedient. Milk must have been available because the abbey provided dairy cows.¹⁶

There were various rules for lepers. No one was allowed to leave the house without at least one other leper. If a leper wanted to go out he had to have permission from the master of the hospital. Any disobedience, lying, wrath, pride or noisy behaviour might be punished by the loss of a meal: the forfeited portion would be placed in the middle of the common table and shared out amongst the others. The guilty one had to sit apart, possibly on the floor, and eat bread and water from a bench without a tablecloth.¹⁷ If there was proof of adultery the leper would be turned out. The inmates were to rise at the first ringing of a bell and on the third ring were to enter the chapel and so their day started. Alms given by the roadside were to be given to the common purse.¹⁸

One gets the impression that on the whole the abbey treated their lepers well, although strictly.

Hungerford Leper Hospital

The first reference found to a leper hospital at Hungerford is in 1199 when one is mentioned in a perambulation of Savernake forest. Apparently there were two: one for the 'leprous sisters' of the church of St Lawrence, which is first found mentioned in 1228, and a male hospital dedicated to St John.¹⁹ Both the leprosaria seem to have belonged to the abbey of Bec in France. Norman Hidden cites a number of references apparently to a leper hospital in the bounds of Savernake Forest.²⁰ He came to the conclusion that one hospital must have been on the Hungerford to Marlborough road somewhere along the Kennet below Smitham bridge. Another site he favours is that of the former hospital of St John (not leper) in Bridge Street, where a bridge crosses the Kennet behind the Bear Inn. This was possibly the male leprosarium. It seems to fulfil some of the criteria for a leper hospital – water and a bridge. Was the female hospital below Smitham bridge?

It is probable that both the hospitals were the equivalent of a chantry chapel with buildings for a small number of inmates dependant on the charity of donors and passers by.

Windsor Leper Hospital

A leper hospital known as St Peter Without Windsor was probably founded at the beginning of the thirteenth century.²¹ It was for both male and female

patients and was at least partly maintained by the king. The Testa de Nevell states that 7s a year was paid to the lepers out of the fee farm, the gift of King Henry III. In a charter of 1251, Henry III granted the hospital 120 acres, a part of Windsor Forest. Carole Rawlinson states that it was common for land held by hospitals to be worked by the inmates, and this was probably, at least in part, what happened at Windsor. A chaplain was appointed to say mass daily for the souls of King John, Queen Elizabeth, Queen Eleanor, and the king's children.

In 1290, Robert de Cancell was granted custody of the hospital by the king, possibly being a warden, or was he the chaplain? John de Chapelas was appointed for life as custodian in 1327, and then John Harden was appointed chaplain in 1382 to have custody for life 'of the hospital called le Spital'. He was followed by two others and then in 1390 Richard II granted custody to Laurence Hunt, who was probably a layman, as the grant said that the wardenship of the hospital was to be held by a layman. Leprosy was becoming rarer by then and in 1462 the leprosarium ceased to exist and the site was granted to Eton college.²² The college records unfortunately have nothing about the buildings.

The site of the hospital exists, still called the Spital, half a mile south of Windsor, with the Park Pale passing nearby. The Ordnance Survey map shows a stream near and according to local information there are also many springs near the site. This water may have been used for the bathing of the lepers.

Abingdon Leper Hospital

This was named after St Mary Magdalen and again very little can be found about this hospital. It is thought to have been by the bridge over the river Ock on the east side of Abingdon and probably at that time actually outside it. Again we have the river for the water and a bridge. No foundation date is known, but it was probably before 1336, and the sex of the inmates is not known. It is thought to have become an institution for the poor, as, after the dissolution of the monasteries, it was said to have been maintained by a townspeople's charity.²³ The likelihood is that the hospital originally may have been founded and administered by the monks of Abingdon abbey, but there is no firm authority for this.

Newbury Leper Hospital

Little is known about this leprosarium, except that it was for female lepers and was dedicated to St Mary Magdalen. There was another hospital

dedicated to St Bartholomew, but there is no mention of lepers in connection with it, so where the male lepers were looked after is unknown. The site of the hospital has not been identified, but it seems possible that it was north of the town near to where St Mary's church is now, not far from the river Lambourn. The name was changed in 1375 to House of the Blessed Mary and probably became St Mary's Almshouse in 1604.²⁴

Wallingford Leper Hospital

This had the common dedication to St Mary Magdalen: as it was at the end of the old bridge it was considered to be in Berkshire and was under the control of Wallingford.²⁵ The first reference to it was in 1142 when Queen Matilda gave it lands in Benson and she may have been the founder.²⁶ The hospital had royal attention when Wallingford castle was visited. Henry III in 1227 granted full protection to the tenants and property belonging to it. So it seems probable that the leprosarium had property that would have provided an income.²⁷

The position of the hospital can be ascertained from two Reading charters of 1220 where it is described as 'next to the crofts nearest the hospital of Crawmers'.²⁸ The crofts still can be seen as long narrow small fields, and there is a housing area called the crofts, on the south side of the street in Crowmarsh almost opposite the church. It is interesting that most of the south side of the street was in the old parish of Newnham Murren, but the boundary left the road just before the site of the hospital, so it was in Crowmarsh; was this to accommodate the leper hospital so that it was in Crowmarsh, which has sometimes been considered to be part of Wallingford.

The leprosarium was within a short distance of Wallingford's ancient bridge, which must have provided a place for the lepers to beg. The river provided water for bathing and, as there was a fishery nearby, fish to be added to the diet particularly on Fridays.

As was usual grants and donations would have maintained the hospital. It is not known whether the Priory of the Holy Trinity in Wallingford had anything to do with the hospital, but it seems possible. A thirteenth-century grant tells us that the hospital took in both sexes and in the grant a John Huberd of Wallingford gave one acre in the north field of Newnham Murren to 'the leprous brethren and sisters of the hospital of St Mary Magdalene of Crawmersse'.²⁹

The hospital was run by a master who was also the chaplain. One of them was Miles, who was given one cartload of wheat in 1316, presumably to be ground at one of the watermills locally.³⁰

In 1282 an oak had been given for making shingles for the roof of the chapel. It seems likely that the leper hospital may have resembled a small

abbey with a chapel (with a good roof!) and living quarters for the male and female lepers, which may have been of wooden construction. It is known that there was a farm attached because after the dissolution of the monasteries there is a description of the premises that were being transferred in 1556. There were, apart from the religious house, meadows, 'feedings' – presumably pasture – stables, barns, a dove house, orchards, gardens, land – probably arable – and 'comens'.³¹ The church that is on the other side of the road is dedicated to St Mary Magdalen and some think that this was the hospital's chapel, although this is very unlikely as it seems to have been used as a parish church from early times. In the transference of 1556, the reference to the 'religious house', presumably meaning the chapel, seems to indicate that the chapel was with the hospital buildings. It seems likely that long before the hospital was sold it had ceased to be a hospital for lepers.

To sum up, very little is known about most of the leprosaria of medieval Berkshire and how they operated. The references to the one laundress and the various grants of farmland, for example, are tantalising hints of life at these hospitals. Nevertheless sufficient can be gleaned to show that care for the lepers did form a distinct part of the charitable support for the sick, administered through the abbeys and independent religious houses of the county.

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The Abingdon Rural Sanitary Authorities 1872-1914

David N. Axford

After the Local Government Board Act 1871 and the Public Health Act 1872 brought together various Government offices to form a single major ministry to oversee most of the activities of local government, Rural and Urban Sanitary Authorities were set up throughout the country with obligatory sanitary duties. These duties included the compulsory appointment of local/district Medical Officers of Health for the first time.

In urban areas improvements were gradually made in the four fields of public health law – sanitation, nuisances, sewers and disease. Alan Alexander describes how, under pressure from the Medical Officer, the borough of Reading set up a Sanitary Committee, the streets were progressively improved, water supply was provided by the construction of a new reservoir and the sewage farm was successfully developed.

The ‘Great’ Public Health Act of 1875 was a consolidation and codification of all the previous legislation, laying down, in clear, comprehensive terms, the public health functions and duties of the local authorities. It remained the essential basis of all public health activity for the next 60 years. In the same year the Artisans’ and Labourers’ Dwellings Act enabled local authorities to replace insanitary housing by compulsory purchase and replacement.

Abingdon Poor Law Union was formed on 1 January 1835, the very first union to be declared under the new Act, comprising 14 parishes. However, the union was enlarged from 6 October 1835 to include a total of 38 parishes. Its operation was overseen by an elected Board of Guardians, 41 in number, representing its constituent parishes.

Rural Sanitary Authorities (RSA) were broadly based on the Poor Law unions, and Abingdon RSA comprised the parishes in Abingdon Union, excluding Abingdon borough. See the list in Table 1 and the map at Figure 1 for the area covered. It can be seen that this extensive area included some 38 parishes both in Berkshire and Oxfordshire throughout the 22 years in which the RSA operated.

At its first meeting on 2 September 1872, the Board of Guardians of Abingdon Poor Law Union met at the Union Workhouse (see Figure 2) and formally constituted themselves as the Abingdon Rural Sanitary Authority while continuing to be called the Abingdon Union. Following an address by

Mr J. J. Henley, Inspector of the Local Government Borough, in the presence of a deputation from the Abingdon Urban Sanitary Authority (USA) headed by the Mayor of Abingdon (J. Tomkins), they elected J. S. Bowles as chairman, appointed a clerk and formed a committee of five ex-officio and ten from the existing elected guardians to carry out the enactments of the Public Health Act 1872. In February 1873, Dr W. T. G. Woodforde was appointed as the Medical Officer of Health (MOH) for both the Abingdon Rural Authority and the Abingdon Urban Sanitary Authority (which covered the town of Abingdon). In May 1873, again jointly, the Rural and Urban Sanitary Authorities appointed a Nuisance Inspector, Edward Mudd of Sittingborne, Kent, for three years at £120 per annum (full time). In July 1873, a District Register [registrar] of Deaths and Births was approved to provide returns to the County Medical Officer of Health, and the District Medical Officer was asked to affix a star (*) to each new entry on the weekly return to the Board of Governors and instructed that a copy of the new (starred) entries should be copied to the County Medical Officer by the Clerk. At the same time it is noted that the 'late Inspectors of Nuisances should act as Supernumerary aids to Mr Mudd at £5 per annum'.

After this active start, Mudd, the new Nuisance Inspector, began to make inspections. Unlike Dr Woodforde, Edward Mudd was resident in Abingdon. He asked for finance for official forms to serve on owners of nuisances and to purchase 18 gallons of carbolic acid and 6 cwt of carbolic powder. He reported a Mr Caudwell, with a family of ten in his small cottage in Drayton, to the County Medical Officer. However, having visited only 11 villages (out of the 40-odd in the district) by mid-September 1873, it was decided to delay serving any notices until after the harvest.

At this time fever was widespread and the District Medical Officer was asked to look at the water in Drayton, Marcham, Kingston and North Hinksey where typhoid was endemic. He complained in January 1874 that, although the Caudwell family had been removed, they had been replaced with another family of eight. He noted that the Act asked for 300 sq ft per adult, whereas this cottage only consisted of a total 1200 sq ft.

The Authority did little in the next few years but collect the small mandatory receipts from each village. However, in 1877 the problems of water supply and drainage in Steventon became too great to ignore. The clerk was asked to organise and cost a scheme to provide Steventon with a water supply. The Authority found that it would have to borrow £1,000 and that this could be done at 4 per cent per annum over 30 years. A Drainage Sub-Committee (a sub-set of the top members of the committee) was established, and discovered that the owners of the 71 properties adjoining the Abingdon Urban Sanitary Authority did not want the expense of joining

the urban drainage scheme.

During 1878 it was decided that a new water works was needed at Steventon, and a site on Great Western Railway land was chosen. The immediate result was a claim by the railway company for £355 in compensation to be paid for the land and a request that their company house at Steventon should be supplied with water free of cost. Unsurprisingly the Authority rejected this claim out of hand. Mudd suggested that the land of his friend, J. B. Barrett, on the other side of the road, might be available, and, following some negotiations between £100 and £50, the purchase of Mr Barrett's land was formally agreed in March 1879 for the sum of £70.

Nothing financial was easy, but in October 1879 the Local Government Board approved the Authority's application for a loan of £800 at £2 10s per cent per annum from the Public Works Loan Commission to pay for the Steventon Water Works, confirmed by Parliament and the Treasury. The land on Steventon Common was then enclosed for the water works.

In July 1878 the responsibility for highways was transferred to the Authority. The Thames Conservancy requested the Authority to prevent sewage flowing into the brook at Shippon and into the Thames on their border at west Abingdon, with little response.

On 17 November 1879 it was decided to look at a new set of bye laws for the Authority, based on those produced earlier in the year by the Windsor Union Rural Sanitary Authority. In December a draft of 'similar' bye laws was produced for the parishes of St. Helens and St. Nicholas without the Borough, Abingdon and for Sutton Wick. However, the Local Government Board threw the draft out in February 1880 and produced its own 'model' bye laws instead. The problem was then passed to Dr Woodforde, to produce a revised version, which was eventually approved towards the end of 1880.

By the end of 1880 it was agreed that drainage for Marcham Road and Spring Road, Abingdon, could be obtained by connecting them to the Abingdon urban sewers provided certain conditions were met and provided loans of £500 and £600 could be obtained. It is worth noting that the Clerk's figures show that the almost 40 parishes covered by the RSA provided rates of only £235 in 1878. In 1881 a loan of £700 was eventually achieved for the Marcham Road and Spring Road drainage, and the same year it was recorded that there was insufficient water at Steventon Water Works for the six new Great Western Railway cottages built to house railway workers. Part of the cause of this may have been the great waste of water at the waterworks because of taps left open, noted in the September Minutes.

In February 1882 a withering report from the District Medical Officer, Dr

Woodforde, on the conditions of premises at Steventon is appended to the Minutes. It is worthwhile noting some of his points:

The block of cottages has one privy (full and foul), house slops are thrown into an open channel in front of each cottage, which flows into an offensive pool in the adjoining field. Cottages are unsound and dilapidated, rain comes in through defective roofs, walls are separating from rotten posts. ... On the side, a small farmyard with dung liquid up below bedroom window. ...

These conditions have been brought up before and NO effective steps have been taken.

This is followed by a set of recommendations for improvements, including:

‘Also for cottages in Radley Road (previously complained about) 15 WCs with no water supply. Drain going to uncemented, unventilated cesspits 100ft to the rear. ... SMELL... Drinking water from wells inside the houses, some only 35ft from the cesspit. ... Need for new sewers and connection to the urban sewers. ... If there is no change, it is recommended that the boundary be changed to include this area in the Borough urban district’.

The Rural Sanitary Authority decided to refer the question to Abingdon Borough, and in November 1882 the Urban Sanitary Authority agreed to undertake the sewage for these properties, but not to change its boundaries. In July 1883 the Public Works Loan Commission agreed to a loan of £650 to start the works to connect the sewers to those of the Urban Sanitary Authority. A further £750 loan was requested for drainage works in September 1883.

A Royal Commission was set up in 1882 to report on sewage disposal into the Thames. The River Pollution Act in 1876 had attempted to regulate the admission of effluents (sewage and manufacturing waste) into rivers and streams, but the Thames Conservancy Board (set up by a local act in 1857) did not have sufficient powers to enforce its wishes until a further River Pollution Act was passed in 1893. Indeed, according to Anthony S. Wohl, ‘water pollution seemed the unavoidable price to be paid for all the social and economic benefits of industrial and urban growth’.

In January 1884 the District Medical Officer provided another long and comprehensive report, including much emphatic underlining, concentrating this time on contagious disease, namely outbreaks of scarlet fever in Dry Sandford, where two children had died; on a case of diphtheria brought into

the area from Oxford; and on the urgent need for a cottage hospital. He complained bitterly that house owners were not bothering to connect up their properties to the new sewers that were being provided. The Committee agreed in principle to all his recommendations, and asked for more details on the work needed, but no specific action was taken for the next two years.

In August 1886 the Medical Officer had been analysing water samples at Radley, Milton and Appleton, ‘all of which are unfit for drinking.’ The Committee on the other hand was mostly worried about money. Tenders to connect houses to the new sewers came in at 5s a yard in November 1886 and, when the Clerk reported that water rates in Steventon were not being paid, they instructed him to cut the water off. Complaints and petitions followed. On 13 December 1886 a Deputation of Ratepayers from Steventon attended a Board meeting and presented a petition claiming that the system of levying water rent was unjust and that, in their opinion, all expenses should be confined to the Sanitary rates only. The following week the Board decided on no change to the rate. In April 1887 a letter was read out from E. A. Preston, a member of the Board, complaining that the Inspector of Nuisances, Mr Mudd, had connected several houses to the water system without giving notice to the owners who, thus, were not asked to pay the water rate. Mr Mudd had asked the late Clerk to say to certain houses that Mr Preston had demanded that the water rate should be paid. However the late Clerk refused to do this, and Mr Mudd had then asked another member, R. S. Langford, directly to write the letter. It was pointed out that Mr Mudd should have obtained the landlords’ signatures before connecting the private houses to the water system. The Board decided that a new Agreement should be obtained from all the consumers of water in the area which would have to be signed, otherwise they authorised that water should be cut off. Despite these various accusations of improper conduct, Mudd was re-appointed in July 1887 at £125 per annum plus £5 for surveying work. In 1888 the Committee rejected a proposal to drop the water rate from 1s to 6d by seven votes to four.

From this point on the Authority appears to have suffered from internal disagreements. Dr Woodforde reported on unfit water at each meeting; the Local Government Board queried the Authority’s attempts to apply ‘urban powers to prevent nuisances’ under Sections 157 and 158 of the Public Health Act 1875 to various villages; and the Inspector of Nuisances was the subject of various new complaints concerning his dealings with Mr Goldsmith, a tradesman in disinfectants. He was initially suspended by the Chairman, and, after asking for all the details, the Local Government Board eventually suspended him formally. On 17 June 1888 the Local Government Board reported that Mr Mudd had written to them saying that if they were not satisfied with his work they should ‘get someone else’.

At this time the Local Government Board also criticised the Authority for not inspecting sufficient boats under the Canal Boats Act (only eight boats in 20 months), work that Mr Mudd should have been carrying out.

In August 1889 a new Inspector of Nuisances was appointed (D. J. Dixon) and the Local Government Board, which was apparently monitoring the situation, brought the Infectious Diseases (Notification) Act 1889 formally to the attention of the Authority. In 1890 the Medical Officer reported on the bad situation at Steventon and Marcham, and demanded that the National School at Marcham be closed due to the close proximity of the well to the cesspit. In December 1890 a farm at Sandford on Thames, Oxfordshire, was found by the Medical Officer to be 'sodden with sewage' and 'ground coated with green scum.' Despite a new Public Health Amendment Act in 1890 and the Infectious Diseases Prevention Act 1890, both of which were adopted by the Authority in February 1891, little appears to have been done to improve the situation. The Medical Officer and Inspector of Nuisances were busy dealing with enteric fever in Sutton Courtenay, and the Committee of Visitors of Littlemore Asylum sent a letter in March 1891 concerning the offensive smell coming from the Oxford Sewage Farm in the Headington Rural Sanitation Authority, reporting it a 'nuisance' which was also affecting Sandford on Thames. An application by Dixon for an increase of salary for all this work was turned down unanimously.

In May 1890 James W. Kimber, who had been a Committee member from the time when the Authority was set up in 1872, took over as Chairman of the Committee on a permanent basis. Under its new Chairman the Authority seems to have found the work of the Medical Officer unhelpful, and in 1891 began to complain that his annual report was received late. The Authority asked that the report should be presented in February, but it did not arrive until August. This seemed to spark Dr Woodforde into action as he demanded the closure of cottages and houses in November 1891, and again in March, April and May 1892. There were then complications about his salary for looking after the combined district (both Rural and Urban Sanitary Authorities) and he reacted by proposing the need for a new 'infections' hospital for the joint districts. 1892 also saw the Medical Officer demanding the closure of a school at Drayton and requesting that there should be prosecution for the non-notification of scarlet fever there.

In 1893 the two authorities set up a joint sub-committee to think about the possibility of a Joint Infections Hospital and Disinfection Apparatus by setting up a sub-committee.

In December 1894 the Rural Sanitary Authority's responsibilities were taken over by the new Abingdon Rural District Council (RDC), which was

responsible for the Berkshire parishes in the old Sanitary Authority area (see Table 1 and Figure 1). The Oxfordshire parishes formed Culham Rural District Council. The Chairman of the Sanitary Authority (James W. Kimber) became the new Chairman of the new council, and also took the chair of the Sanitary Sub-Committee. The RDC also had responsibilities for highways and other matters not associated with health and sanitation, which therefore took a position of lower importance than before. A new Code of Duties was imposed on the Inspector of Nuisances who had to act as Surveyor for highways as well as for health and, in his words 'do everything.' In June 1895 it was decided that the Sanitary Committee should meet 30 minutes before the main council meeting – a sure sign of the lower status and importance given to its activities. In July the Inspector of Nuisances, J. Dixon, left the area without saying goodbye – probably due to having to take on two full-time jobs for no extra pay! Another Inspector of Nuisances was appointed, J. B. Warren at £85 per annum.

From this point on the council concentrated on the highways, railways and structural matters, which involved considerable sums of money. Only the Medical Officer's reports and the complaints from the Thames Conservancy show that nuisances, water and accommodation unfit for human use or habitation, and occasional outbreaks of diphtheria and other infectious diseases, continued to occur in the area. In October 1896 the Medical Officer made another request for a Joint Isolation Hospital (now with Abingdon Urban District and Culham Rural District Councils); but a decision was deferred until the Berkshire County Council could consider the proposal. It was then passed to a further sub-committee comprising the same people as those who had previously deferred the matter. Dr Woodforde began to take a more pro-active role, and by September 1897 an application for such a hospital was made to the Local Government Board.

Meanwhile reports of sewage in the ditches at Radley College, unfit water at Milton and raw sewage at Marcham reached the Board. In April 1898 typhoid broke out in Sunningwell and the Medical Officer asked the council to fit up the school, which had been abandoned as a result of the epidemic, as a temporary Isolation Hospital. After some hesitation the council agreed, and Sunningwell School became the new isolation hospital with two nurses, a medical officer, and eight beds, under the supervision of Dr Woodforde. The Local Government Board made a provisional Order to form the new Abingdon Joint Hospital District in May 1898.

Throughout the early 1900s up to the start of the First World War the same team remained in place with Kimber remaining in the chair of both the Abingdon Rural District Council and its Sanitation sub-Committee. Steventon's Water Works and village water continued to be a problem, and

in April 1908 there was a stoppage of water there due to a bad ditch 'in and around Mr Kimber's property'. The minutes became very formulaic at this date, and it becomes difficult to know what was (or was not) going on. In 1910 Dr Woodforde retired, and his deputy, Dr. G. J. Cattell, who had been paid by the Authority since June 1908, was appointed formally to succeed him.

Kimber, the longstanding chairman, died on 11 November 1914. Shortly before his death a letter dated 30th October 1914 was received from the Local Government Board which had put in its own independent Inspector, Dr. Wilkinson, to report on the state of the Abingdon Rural District. This letter brought the attention of the Authority to a very unsatisfactory report. Amongst other statements it reports that:

In many of the villages in the Rural District the water supply is derived from surface wells which in many instances are in close proximity to privies, and, consequently, very liable to pollution, as is evidenced by the results of recent analyses of samples of the water. As regards the larger villages of Marcham, Cumnor and Radley, the Board are advised that the provision of a proper piped supply of water free from all risk of pollution, is of urgent importance in the interests of the health of the inhabitants. In the other villages steps should be taken to ensure the purity of the supplies, especially in the parishes of North and South Hinksey, and Wytham, where there appears to be danger of pollution to local supplies from the overflow of cesspools. The Rural District Council should exercise careful supervision over the arrangements for the disposal of sewage from private residences above the waterworks at Sunningwell and Wootton; and it would be best that the cesspits at the houses above the intake of the Wootton supply should either be thoroughly water-tight and cleansed so as to avoid any overflow from them or that the effluent from the cesspits, if it is to be distributed over the soil should first pass through a suitable filter.

It further says that:

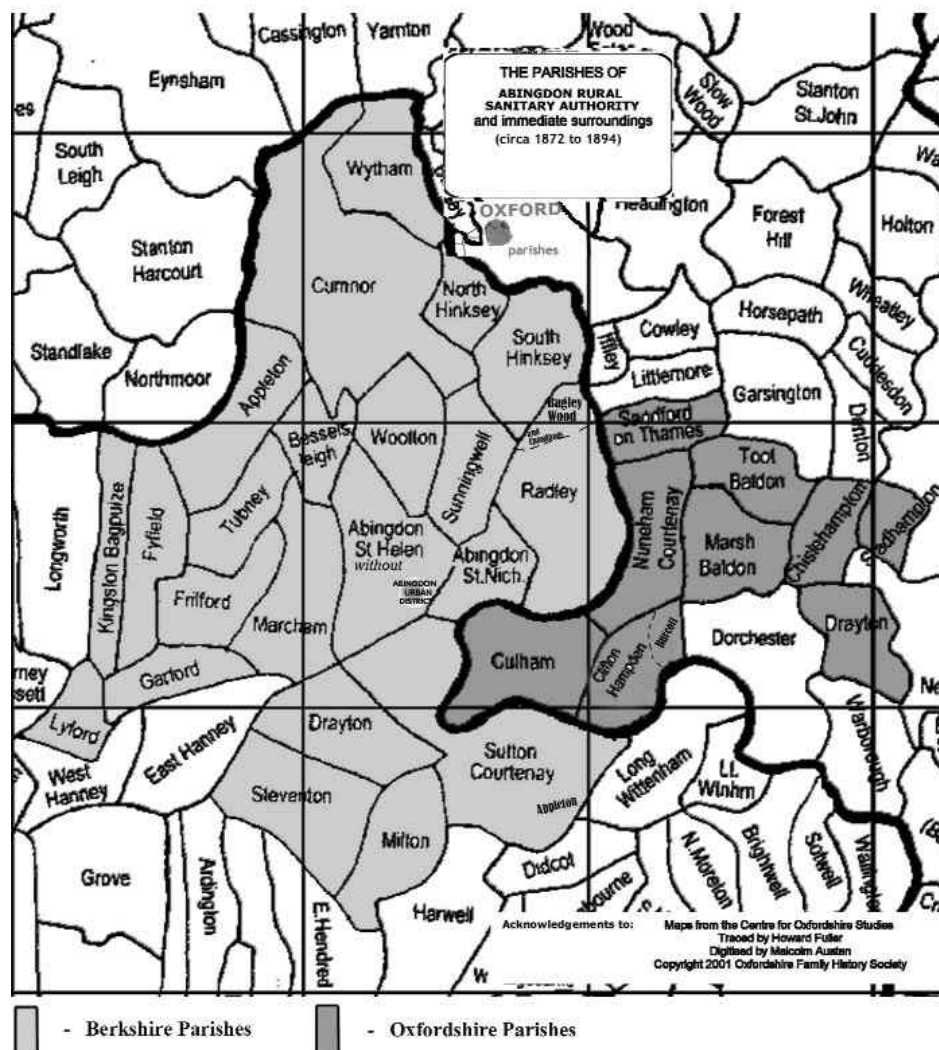
Considerable nuisance and inconvenience must arise from absence of a proper system of scavenging in Marcham. According to the Inspector's Report offensive material is allowed to accumulate in the vicinity of dwelling houses until it will be conveniently removed by owners or occupiers to farms or allotments, whilst in many instances occupiers have not sufficient garden ground to dispose of their refuse with the result the precincts of some of the houses are in a very insanitary condition. The

Board must urge the council in the circumstances to undertake or contract for the removal of house refuse and cleansing of all privies, pail closets, etc., in the village without delay.'

It would appear that, despite all the meetings and all the pressures from successive Inspectors of Nuisances and Medical Officers over the years from 1872, conditions in the rural villages of this part of Berkshire outside the Borough of Abingdon were still nowhere near up to an acceptable standard.

In conclusion, it seems that despite the great successes in improvements to public health in towns and cities due to the legislation enacted between 1842 and 1875, and the further amendments and improvements concerned with water supply and river pollution in the ensuing years, the implementation of the legislation at local rural levels was more difficult and could be held back by the influence of local owners in positions of power. Abingdon Rural Sanitary Authority was more concerned not to spend ratepayers' money than with real health issues. The same small group of local property owners transferred en-bloc as members of the Rural District Council with no change in chairman or attitude. The one real achievement of the new body – setting up the Joint Infectious Diseases Hospital – was forced upon it by an outbreak of diseases, the pleas of the Medical Officer and the fortuitous availability of a suitable vacant building. Throughout most of the period it was the activity and dedication of the Medical Officer, Dr W. T. G. Woodforde, that produced some results, and he was kept on a low salary (£125) per annum by this Authority throughout the period. He was certainly a maker and shaker in Berkshire. In the 1899 Kelly's Directory he is to be found living in Spencer's Wood, Reading and acting as Medical Officer of Health for the Berkshire combined Sanitary Authority, and specifically mentioned for Abingdon, Easthampton, Newbury and Wallingford Rural District Councils as well as for Abingdon, Maidenhead and Wallingford Urban District Councils. The fees for all this activity must have enabled him to have a suitable way of life. Only in the latter years (after the setting up of the hospital) was he granted a deputy in Abingdon, who, later, was able to take over the task of making life for the rural poor more healthy.

Table 1 List of parishes in Abingdon RSA 1872 to 1894



<i>Berkshire</i>	
Appleford	Milton
Appleton with Eaton	North Hinksey
Bagley Wood	Radley
Besselsleigh	St Helen Without, Abingdon
Chandlings	St Nicholas Without, Abingdon
Cumnor	Seacourt
Draycott Moor	South Hinksey
Drayton	Steventon
Frilford	Sunningwell
Fyfield	Sutton Courtenay
Garford	Sutton Wick
Kingston Bagpuize	Tubney
Lyford	Wootton
Marcham	Wytham
<i>Oxfordshire</i>	
Baldon Marsh	Drayton St. Leonard
Baldon Toot	Nuneham Courtney
Burcot	Sandford on Thames
Chisle (Clifton) Hampden	Stadhampton
Culham	

After 1894, only the Berkshire parishes were the responsibility of the Abingdon Rural District Sanitary Committee.

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Fig. 1 Parishes of the Abingdon Rural Sanitary Authority 1872-94

Doctor in the Dean

Susan Poad

The *Maidenhead Advertiser* of Wednesday 1 January 1941 records that 'to the great regret of many people in Cookham and Cookham Dean, the death took place on Christmas Eve, at his residence Lynwood, Cookham Dean, of Dr Robert Harry Shepard, at the age of 74 years ...'. We learn in the same article that the funeral was held at St John the Baptist Church, Cookham Dean on a Saturday afternoon and that at the graveside the choir sang 'Sun of my Soul'. Undertakers G. Hooper & Son supplied an 'Oak coffin with moulded base plinth and moulded lid. Waxed polished and fitted with 8 Brass Handles...'.¹

This article, together with the undertaker's bill for £23 8s od, are among a wealth of material handed to Maidenhead Heritage Trust by The Revd John Copping (to whom it had been entrusted by the late Mrs Zoe Shepard) on his retirement in 2003. The material ran to hundreds of unsorted papers, including bills, and several ledgers. It was entered into the Trust's records on 6 April 2005 as The Dr Shepard Archive.



Dr Shepard, from his passport

The bulk of the archive relates to Dr Shepard's professional and private life in Cookham Dean. Papers include a splendid certificate issued by the Committee of Her Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council on Education, Science and Art Department, South Kensington, proclaiming that on 23 May 1884, aged 15 years, Robert H. Shepard obtained a First Class in the Elementary Stage of Inorganic Chemistry. The Wellcome Foundation provides the information that Robert Harry Shepard of Clare, Cookham, obtained registration on 11 August 1894 as MRCS Eng and LRCP London. On 21 March

1910, Certificate no. 16695 shows that R. H. Shepard, Esq., MRCS had registered with The Practitioner Limited, with entitlement to various benefits.

According to his passport, Robert Harry Shepard was a British citizen born in London 1 June 1869, was 5ft 8 1/2in in height, brown-haired and brown-eyed; and a medical practitioner.² His Merchant Navy Continuous

Certificate of Discharge adds that he had a fair complexion. Dr Shepard served as a surgeon from 13 February 1901 to 8 May 1904, with a continuous record of being of very good character.³ His first ship was *Japan* and his last *SS Borneo*. On 13 October 1915, Robert Shepard offered himself to the War Department as a Surgeon to His Majesty's Forces. His offer was accepted by the Surgeon-General of the Army Medical Department, his temporary rank of Lieutenant in the Army entitling him to 24s a day, excluding travelling expenses; and the use of a government horse and forage 'when necessary'.

Dr Shepard's Berkshire practice in Cookham Village, Cookham Rise and Cookham Dean (called collectively The Cookhams) from the 1920s to his death in 1940 predated the introduction of the National Health Service in 1948. He practised initially at his private address Ferndale, High Street, Cookham Village and from at least 1923 onwards at his home Lynwood, Church Road, Cookham Dean, continuing to see patients at Ferndale. Household accounts suggest a resident nursing assistant at Lynwood, with The Thistle Hand Laundry & Cleaning Works listing entries on 2 and 26 October 1926 for '1 white overall Nurse' and a nurse's nightgown.

The sketch map below shows the geography of The Cookhams, an area of 5,475 acres in 1921. The population was 5,848 in 1921 and 6,741 in 1931. This was a huge list of patients for one man but a medical centre did not exist and no other practitioners are listed until Vaudrey Mercer, MB, BCh, physician and surgeon in 1948.

Dr Shepard was of course not entirely alone. In 1923 professional support was present in four Medical Officers of Health, plus the School Health Officer and School Nurse, based in the county town of Reading. By 1931 there was a Medical Officer, James Patterson MD, four miles away at Maidenhead Town Hall. Also in Maidenhead were two hospitals: the Union Workhouse founded in 1836, later to become St Mark's Hospital, and the Maidenhead Hospital (later St Luke's) founded in 1879 with eight beds, expanding in 1908 to include an X-ray unit, modern equipment and more beds.

Dr Shepard treated cuts and bruises, syringed ears, inoculated against influenza, lanced abscesses, issued medical certificates and presided at the home delivery of babies: the routine treatment offered by a local doctor. He prescribed medicines ordered locally or from a London supplier. An order from brewers Nicholson & Sons Ltd, Maidenhead, states that on 6 January 1928 'Very Early' one bottle of brandy at 17s was supplied, firmly 'for illness'! The introduction of the revolutionary sulphonamide drug in the late 1930s would have been a boon to Robert Shepard and his medical colleagues.⁴ Purchase of medication, dressings and equipment was at Dr Shepard's own expense but pre-NHS patients were billed for their treatment.

Three neatly handwritten ledgers (the first dating from 1920) detail Dr Shepard's daily round. The bulk of the entries is for visits to patients at 10s 6d a time, day or night. Surname and title are meticulously entered, whereas a visit to a servant costs 5s and is recorded merely as 'Maid'. Ear-syringing cost £1 1s 0d in March 1920 and 'Gas at Dentist' was 15s. In October 1920, two patients received influenza vaccine for £1 1s 0d, whilst in October 1923, it cost 10s 6d to vaccinate both 'Miss Joan & Master Courtenay'. In October 1934 a 'bad debt' of 10s 6d was recorded against a gentleman at Formosa Fishery.

Whilst Dr Shepard took a great interest in motor cars, his first recorded mode of transport, at 14 years of age, was a bicycle manufactured by Timberlake's, a Maidenhead company. Dashing cars clearly appealed to the doctor, his first driving licence being issued in 1911, prior to delivery on 8 May 1911 of a 15hp 'two seated tub body, purple with black and white lines' Darracq 2-seater motor from A. W. Heybourn & Co, Motor Supplies, 11 High Street, Maidenhead.⁵ Heybourn's invoice, giving the cost at £150, shows an excellent photo of the premises. For his Austin 7, purchased for £156 12s 4d in 1926, Dr Shepard used the services of Donald Stevenson & Co Ltd, Automobile & Aeronautical Engineers of Maidenhead (the same visionary designer of model aircraft, Stevenson of Bray Aerodrome).

Despite a succession of motor cars, as late as 1926 the doctor was availing himself of car hire offered by the Hare & Hounds Residential Inn at

Cookham Dean (now The Inn on the Green). Five shillings took him on 20 February to Marlow Hospital, 3s on 20 March to 'Cookham & Fetch'. Perhaps his magnificent motors were purely for recreational use!

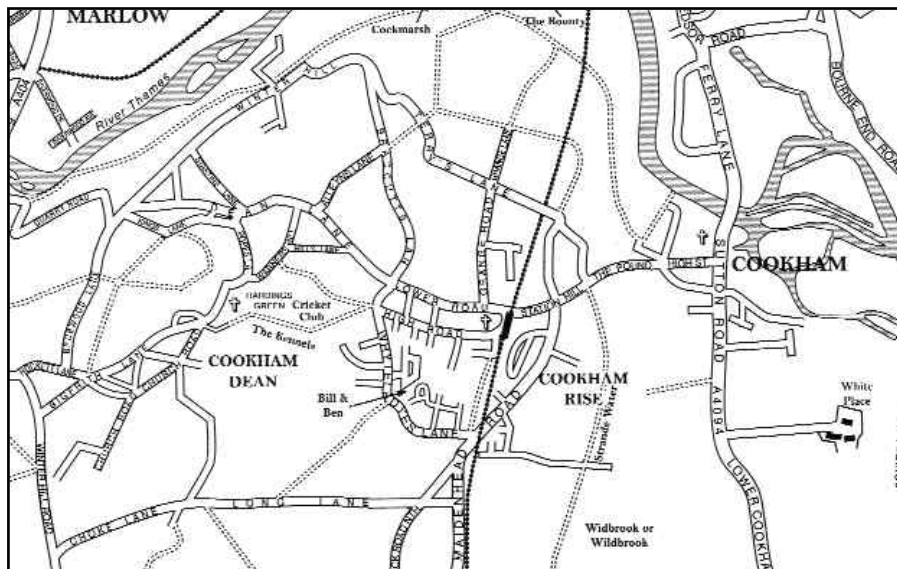
On 28 July 1924, Robert Harry Shepard, the 54-year-old bachelor son of the late Revd James William Shepard (and cousin of illustrator Ernest Shepard) married 26-year-old Zoë Kennedy in St Luke's, Chelsea. A pencilled bill from Vestry Clerk C. Hindes shows expenses of £13 19s 1d, £5 5s 0d being for decorations. The marriage certificate describes the bride as 'Zoë Kennedy (otherwise Bishop), spinster', a somewhat confusing entry yet apparently legally acceptable.⁶

Zoë was born in London in 1898 to a Mrs Kennedy, nee Gosling, second wife of Edwin James Kennedy. His first daughter Maude had been born in 1883 and despite the age difference of 15 years the half-sisters Maude and Zoë seemed close and spent much time together, especially after the death of E. J Kennedy in 1915, and long into Zoe's widowhood. As well as moving frequently in London, the Kennedy sisters stayed often in the West Country, as many bills between 1917 and 1923 testify.

Tenancy agreements referring to Maude as 'The Landlady' suggest an income from letting accommodation; one such provides a clue to Zoë's other surname, Bishop. An account book dated 16 February 1914 shows an arrangement between Maude Kennedy and a Mr S. O. Bishop. It is possible that Maude, now presumably the guardian of 16-year-old Zoë, saw in her tenant a suitable partner for her orphaned half-sister. At any rate, a bill of 3 April 1917 is addressed to Mrs Zoë Bishop. In 1918, however, a bill is directed to 'S. Bishop Esq., dec'd'. It appears that Zoë not only married very young but that she was soon widowed – perhaps then reverting to her maiden name of Kennedy. Searches have not revealed a Bishop-Kennedy marriage certificate, yet for reasons unverified Zoë was using Bishop as her surname at the time of her marriage to Dr Shepard.

Mr Sydney Bishop is believed by Rev John Copping, who knew Zoë well, to have been a tea planter: papers relating to tea estates in Tokai and Dolaguri, Assam, are to be found in the archive, scientific reports from the Indian Tea Association still being proffered to Zoë Shepard in 1934. It would seem that Zoë was left with independent means, able both to choose her own social circle and where she wished to live. As receipts show, she chose both Hare Hatch and Wargrave, within easy striking distance of Cookham Dean. The archive holds mementos of attendance at Ascot and Henley: could these society venues have been the background for the Shepards' courtship?

Dr and Mrs Shepard had one child, a daughter Miranda, who died on 29 June 1926, aged 9 months. A bill from Philip Wigg, carpenter and undertaker of Cookham, dated 3 July 1926 records the heartbreaking details





Dr Shepard's Austin 7

of a 'child's oak coffin . . . padded and lined . . . with swansdown, silk and lace'. The little girl is buried in the churchyard of St John the Baptist Cookham Dean, opposite her parents' home Lynwood, her grave bearing the inscription 'But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot and she returned unto him in the Ark'. A monument with two cherubim on a decorated block once adorned the grave. This can now be seen inside the church porch: two marble cherubs above a brass memorial plaque to Zoë Shepard and Maude Kennedy bearing the words 'WITH LOVE TO ALL CHILDREN'.

The large collection of bills and receipts in the archive offer an intriguing glimpse into the life in a small Berkshire country village of a professional gentleman from the 1920s and 1930s. They show the type of food enjoyed by the Shepard household and the convenient provision of local produce, for instance at the neighbouring Jolly Farmer public house or at Carmonta Bakery opposite. Beautifully illustrated bills show that 'The Jolly' landlord, L. Hollyer, was a Registered Cowkeeper & Dairyman, able to supply Lynwood with fresh dairy produce, as well as six bottles of stout per week. The collection of bills also testifies to an ample choice of butchers, bakers and fishmongers from Cookham Village or Marlow, and suggests the food in fashion at that era. There was plenty of mutton, 'sets' of brains, sheep's head, veal, offal and occasionally rump steak; fish in its proper season – sole after sole then plaice after plaice; fancy pastry as well as wholemeal bread; and both ice and ptarmigan available from the fishmonger.

From time to time, as in an elegantly handwritten letter of 21 July 1924

from 6 Romanlea, Cookham, the doctor's professional bills were paid off by instalment, the writer enclosing 20s on account and promising to 'do my best to clear the a/c in a week or two'. Sometimes, as in a note in the same year from Victoria Cottages, Cookham Dean, the patient could only offer 5s 'off of my account'. And conversely, Dr Shepard himself occasionally had to be reminded of an overdue bill, as when his Coal Merchant & Cartage Contractor of Cookham Dean humbly writes on 3 September 1928, chasing a bill for £5, 'Dear Sir I must asked you let me have it as it some time a go since you had it yours faithfully G Wicks'.

The Shepards appear to have lived comfortably. All the trappings of life the doctor's profession would supply are recorded in receipts for antique furniture, porcelain, pictures and rugs. Postcards were ordered, showing off Lynwood; the couple's status was recognised by the many calling cards. London and local stores supplied fine clothing. In keeping with village life, the Shepards had a dog, acquired in the year following their child's death: on 10 February 1927, a dog licence was signed by Mr Copas – a very well known name to this day in Cookham Dean. Both Dr and Mrs Shepard had a good social life, with evidence of attendance at Ascot and Henley and membership of Maidenhead & District Lecture Society. Mrs Shepard enjoyed amateur dramatics, as shown in a poster of Tuesday 18 June (1943) 'In Aid of the COOKHAM "WELCOME HOME" FUND', when she starred in an award-winning production by Cookham Dean W. I. of 'The Princess and the Charwoman'.

The garden at Lynwood was well cared-for, with quite a sum annually spent on seeds, plants, bone-meal and manure. There are bills from Sutton & Sons, The Royal Seed Establishment, in typescript as early as 1929, alongside a handwritten receipt in the same year from a Mr Harding of Hill Grove, Cookham, for a 30-rung fruit ladder costing £2 5s od. Maybe the ladder was needed for picking some of the famed Kaffir cherries of Cookham Dean. And could this be the ladder from which Dr Shepard fell 'two and a quarter years' before he died, injuring himself quite badly?

Many mourners listed in the *Maidenhead Advertiser* of 1 January 1941 have still-familiar surnames in Cookham Dean: Simmonds, Glenister, Deadman. And as the newspaper put it, 'He was held in high respect by all with whom he came into contact'. Mrs Shirley Hawkins, born in her grandmother's house in School Lane, Cookham Dean, summed up Robert Harry Shepard's pivotal role in village life when she said, 'Ah, Dr Shepard – he brought me into this world'. Maidenhead Heritage Trust is fortunate indeed to have inherited documents that so vividly bring his life into being.

References

- 1 *Maidenhead Advertiser* 1 January 1941
- 2 Passport no 49237 of 9 September 1935
- 3 No 108653 issued by the Board of Trade
- 4 Sulphonamides were the first antimicrobial drugs, paving the way for modern antibiotics. The first trade name was PRONTOSIL, trialled at Bayer AG in 1933 and patented in 1933.
- 5 Licence to Drive a Motor Car or Motor Cycle No 5335
- 6 The marriages recorded in July, August and September 1924 show Bishop, Zoë, marrying Shepard in Chelsea (Vol. 1a, p. 974).

Note: Some of the records in the Dr Shepard Archive contain information about identifiable persons, and access to them is restricted.

Building Slough: Building control records in Slough, 1880-1948

Lisa Spurrier and Ellie Thorne

The records of building control in Slough, 1880-1948, were transferred to Berkshire Record Office in 2001, and catalogued between 2003 and 2008 by the authors of this article, which aims to provide an overview of the system and encourage further research.

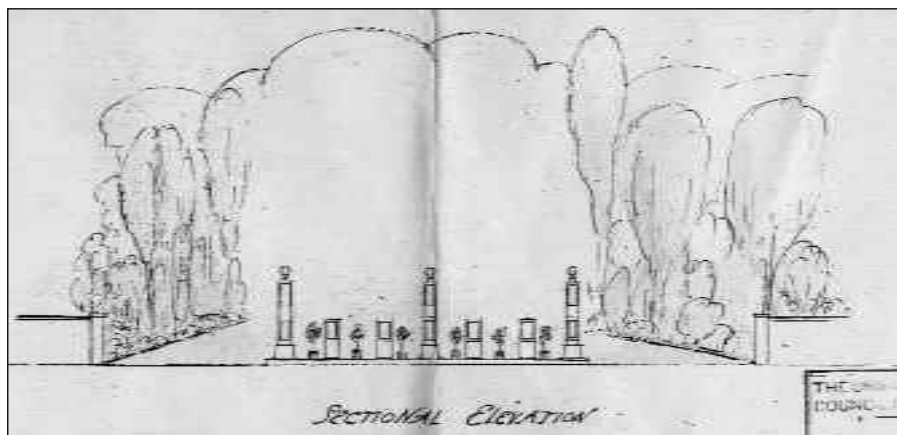
The Public Health Act 1848 and the Local Government Act 1858 first permitted local authorities to pass bye-laws to regulate building, by requiring all prospective developers to submit plans for approval, one copy of the plans being retained by the council. A model or standard form of such bye-laws was established in 1877.¹ Slough Urban Sanitary Authority adopted a byelaw of this kind in December 1879, and exercised these powers from January 1880. The record series is unaffected by changes in the council (which became an Urban District Council in 1894 and a municipal borough in 1938). The records comprise registers of applications, and files of plans and supporting papers. The registers record the decision made by the Highways and Buildings Committee.² From July 1899 the files include 'notices of intended new buildings'. These forms give the location and a brief description of the premises, name and address of the owner and either the architect or the builder, materials to be used for the building and roof, etc.³ From the 1930s the files include copies of the 'permission' or refusal sent to the applicant.⁴ Correspondence and occasionally specifications may also be included.⁵ Some files are missing, but at least some of these relate to applications which were refused, or superseded by altered proposals. In such cases, the earlier papers were often filed with later ones for the same site.⁶

Work had to be completed within three years of approval being given (subsequently reduced to two years). It is not always clear whether it was indeed carried out, as, unlike some other local authorities, it was not the custom of Slough to issue certificates of completion before c1947.⁷

By the turn of the century Slough was a growing urban community, with many new roads constructed for residential development.⁸ From a fairly early date speculative builders bought plots of land and built one or more houses for resale or letting. Other houses were commissioned by owner-

occupiers. Architect Bernard Royce, who designed many buildings in Slough, sold at least one site to a developer, who noted plaintively, 'we have to pay a very big price to Mr Royce for the building site.'⁹ Sometimes owners of adjoining plots would work together, using the same architect and builder.¹⁰

Larger scale developers laid out sections of Slough from the later 1920s, including building and naming the roads, sometimes choosing names with personal associations. One of the first big developers was Henry Heath of Richmond, Surrey, who named Richmond Crescent in 1927, and originally proposed the name of Richmond Road for what eventually became Carmarthen Road.¹¹ When Philip Ellis and A. C. G. Everard developed the Finefield Estate in 1928-1929, they chose names including Ellis and Everard Avenues.¹² In 1929 F. W. West named his building development (off the Bath Road) the Westlands Estate.¹³ Other developments took their name from a house formerly on the site; for instance the Beechwood Estate (off Windsor Road) comprised 80 maisonettes on the site of a house called Beechwood.¹⁴



Petrol station on the Finefield Estate, 1928 (BRO, S/SB2/2445)

The quality of the roads was as important as that of the buildings lining them, and plans of new developments include detailed sections of the proposed new roads as well as the estate layout. In 1936 the council would only agree to adopt the proposed concrete roads on a development at Salt Hill if the developer agreed to pay for a Clerk of Works to supervise construction, and the roads were finished off in good condition, with an approved bituminous dressing and granite chippings.¹⁵

Planned estate layouts were sometimes changed and even if the changes

were minor, they needed to be resubmitted for approval. The layout for Leeds and Carmarthen Roads had to be revised in 1929, because the architect reported that the plots had been measured inaccurately (due to the use of a wet tape which shrank), reducing each building plot by three inches and the site as a whole by 10 feet. One house was now dangerously close to a tree.¹⁶ By the early 1930s developments included a mixture of residential and other property; for instance, the Manor Park Estate included a doctor's surgery.¹⁷

The earliest references to flats is in 1917, with the conversion of 61 and 63 Hencroft Street.¹⁸ The first purpose-built flats were in London Road (a block of just two) in 1927.¹⁹ Flats remained relatively unusual, either conversions of large houses or built above shops, until the early 1930s, when larger purpose-built blocks began to appear.²⁰ The Baylis and Salt Hill Estates were pioneers in the large-scale inclusion of flats in their developments, emulated by the Croft Hill, Manor Park and Woodlands Estates by 1935.²¹ In 1936 the speculative builders Hearmon Bros received permission to convert 2 Clifton Grove into one-room apartments for single people, each with its own sink – early examples of the 'bedsit'.²² Flats were sometimes regarded as undesirable; in 1936 plans to convert a house in Huntercombe Lane into two flats concerned the Slough and Eton Joint Planning Committee, which felt that not only was the house unsuitable for this, but that 'the reduced accommodation it is proposed to provide would attract an unsuitable type of tenant and tend to lead to lower amenity standards' in the area. Developer H. R. Lawley reassured the committee that he was planning on setting a high rent (15s per week) to ensure a good quality of tenant.²³

The proliferation of cars is reflected in the plans in several ways, not least the increasing proportion of houses with garages, and the adding of garages to existing houses.²⁴ By the 1940s this was the most common type of application.²⁵

The Housing Act 1919 permitted councils to subsidise the erection of houses for the poor. Even subsidised, such housing was generally of a lower quality in terms of design and construction as well as size and amenities. In 1930 the Seven Cities Housing Trust, self-proclaimed 'specialists in low-priced houses for the poorest class', was refused permission for workmen's flats (built from concrete) in Furnival Avenue.²⁶ In 1931-32 a hostel for 600 girls working on the Trading Estate was built at the corner of Farnham Road.²⁷ There was a major debate over the building of 120 'workmen's houses (for owner-occupiers) in Salt Hill Way in 1934 by Salt Hill Estates Ltd. The council surveyor, Alan Bromly, suggested various changes to the plans, particularly disliking garden paths to reach the back doors. Architects Rix & Rix responded, 'We sympathise with your point of view ... but we find

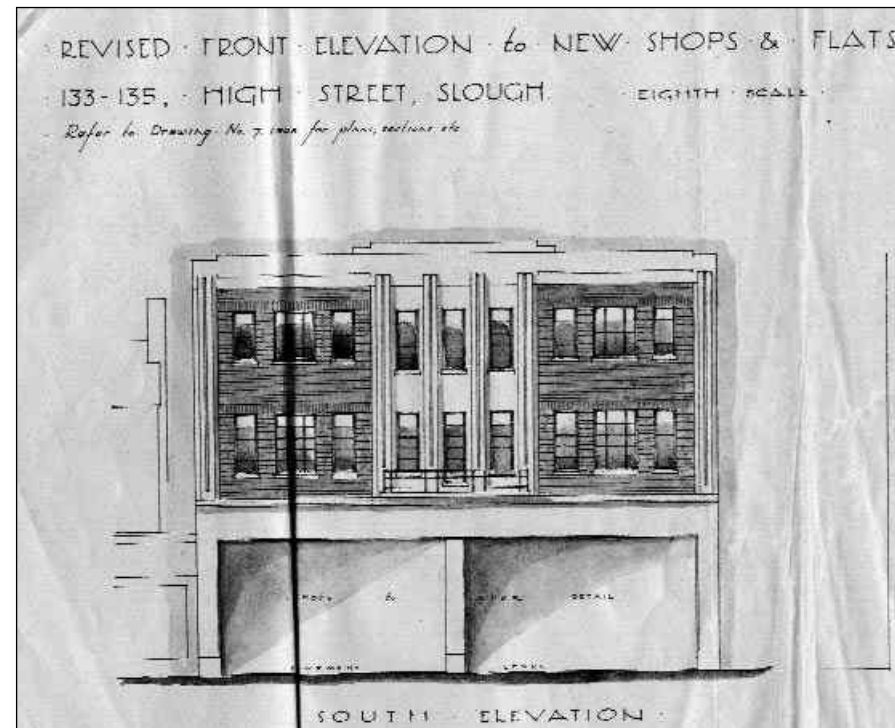
that passages through the houses would entail an extra cost which would not only make the scheme impossible financially, but would nullify our clients' desire to provide houses for the working classes ... at the lowest possible rates.' J. H. Sayner, the Planning Officer, suggested ways in which a covered passage might be added to the design at little extra cost, but the architects insisted this would make the entire scheme 'financially unworkable', and also make the houses less desirable to potential purchasers, who wanted outside access to cars and motor bikes. The council also asked the developer to plant a fast-growing hedge to shield the 'amenities of the middle class houses' in the vicinity.²⁸

Official buildings required approval as well as those built by private individuals. The plans for casual wards at Eton Union Workhouse, in Albert Street, Slough, in 1900, show individual sleeping cells for the vagrants, with far greater provision for males than females.²⁹ Cippenham Isolation Hospital was designed with separate blocks for diphtheria, scarlet fever and typhoid.³⁰ Buckinghamshire County Council built or improved various schools following the Education Act 1903.³¹

The town's increasing population had new leisure requirements, reflected by applications for premises such as a skating rink in the High Street, 1909.³² The first cinema was proposed in 1910, when the Theatre Contract & Finance Co Ltd, a London firm, applied to build what they described on the notice of building as an 'electric theatre' (altered from 'cinematograph') at 144 High Street, initially planned as a temporary warehouse structure.³³ Darvill's furniture depository in Chalvey Road was converted into a 'cinematograph theatre' in 1912.³⁴ The Palace Cinema was built in the High Street in 1919 and extended (possibly for sound) in 1937.³⁵ The arrival of sound resulted in the building of a 'loud speaker room' at Slough Cinema Hall in 1930.³⁶ More cinemas were built in the later 1930s.³⁷ Some leisure-related buildings were provided by employers; for instance in 1933 Aspro Ltd built a squash court and gym for employees at their factory.³⁸ Many new churches were built and existing ones enlarged.³⁹

By 1929 (largely thanks to the industrial development on the Trading Estate) the *Daily Mail* called Slough 'the hardest working town in Britain'.⁴⁰ The rapid pace of development (both industrial and residential) was starting to concern others, with a foreign newspaper like the *New York Herald* complaining that Stoke Poges Church, subject of Thomas Gray's poem 'Elegy In A Country Churchyard', was 'in danger of being imprisoned by new buildings'.⁴¹ A famous indictment came in 1938 with John Betjeman's poem 'Slough'.⁴²

Well-known high-street names began to make their mark in Slough in the 1920s.⁴³ The question of shopping facilities concerned developers. In



Revised elevation: shops and flats in Slough High Street, 1937 (BRO, S/SB2/4981)

1936 Henry Heath was building 93 houses on a large site in Langley Road which had been semi-derelict for some years. He argued that prospective 'house owners could not be reasonably expected to travel three-quarters of a mile or more to the nearest shops in Langley Village.' The committee was unpersuaded by this argument, thinking existing provision adequate, and allowed only a few shops in the inner part of the development, on sites which did not impinge on 'the existing middle class houses in Langley Road which do not belong to Heath. As a *quid pro quo* for the shops, he offered to dedicate a three-acre site for a public recreation ground (the committee noted this was land unsuitable for development as it could not be sewered), and to give the highway authority land needed to widen Langley Road free of charge.⁴⁴

The art of town planning began to be prized in the 1930s, and a Town Planning Scheme was drawn up for Slough in 1931.⁴⁵ An application to build 12 houses in Upton Road in 1933 was rejected because the area (formerly farmland) had been scheduled as public open space.⁴⁶ The decision whether

to allow a hairdresser's salon on the Haymill Estate in 1933-4 was determined by 'how far north up Windsor Lane shops should be allowed.' The developer had agreed verbally that shops should only be built on the southern half of his land, but he subsequently tried to line the whole of Windsor Lane with shops. Sayner, the Planning Officer, warned that 'the door will be opened to unlimited commercial development to the detriment of the residential properties opposite.'⁴⁷ Small, cheap houses were generally not approved in areas dominated by larger or more expensive ones. In 1932 a villa in Downs Road was refused permission because the plot was too small compared to adjacent houses; the owner was advised to purchase additional land to enlarge the plot, but in the end the issue was fudged by allowing him to count half the width of the road as part of the plot for the purpose of calculating the density.⁴⁸ In 1936, Sayner suggested that unless a 'firm stand' was taken, 'the mixing up of different classes of properties by filtration of this sort will lead to a serious injury of amenities.'⁴⁹ When A. T. Ricketts' application for two houses in Merton Road was rejected in 1936 due to insufficient space between the walls and the edge of the site, he commented, 'the plots are not wide enough to abide by this rule, unless we make the houses so very small. You will no doubt agree it is a shame to build small houses in a road like Merton Road.'⁵⁰

Mistakes were made: in 1933 the committee accidentally granted permission for Edwin Bishop to build a bungalow in Lake Avenue – on land intended to be the site of a new road. The council surveyor withdrew permission, but was overruled by the committee.⁵¹ In 1936 the committee refused a 60-house development at Salt Hill – only for it to be surreptitiously resubmitted unchanged the following month, and permission granted.⁵²

From the 1930s Buckinghamshire County Council had to approve the building line where sites adjoined county roads, since this might affect future road improvements.⁵³ In 1932 Slough tried to persuade J. A. Simons to sign an agreement limiting the council's future liability to pay compensation in the event of Windsor Road being widened, in return for permitting a new façade on his drapery shop. He refused to do so unless the same stipulation was applied to the owners of the adjoining Grapes Hotel, which had recently had a new front.⁵⁴ From c.1934 HM Office of Works had a veto over applications for property within a three-mile radius of Windsor Castle, although in practice this was seldom exercised, and could not always be enforced.⁵⁵ For instance, in 1935, Henry Pusey, developer of the Salt Hill Estate, firmly refused to change the colour of the render he wanted to use, notwithstanding representations from the Officer of Works; nothing could be done as the houses in question were not in direct view of the castle.⁵⁶

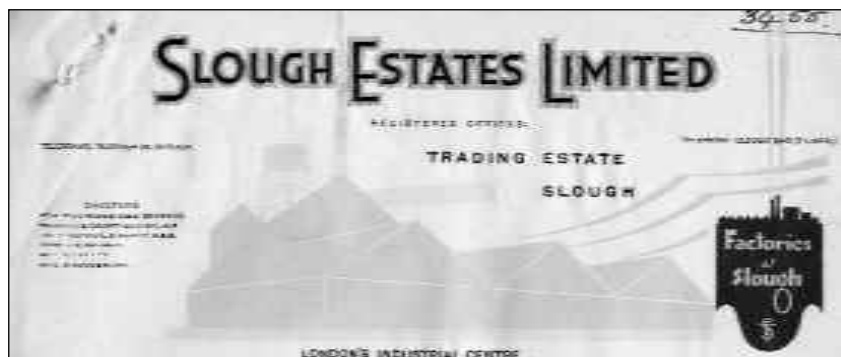


Plans and elevations of houses in Burnham Lane, Windsor, 1937 (BRO, S/SB2/5069)

Slough Trading Estate extended from Farnham Road on the east to Burnham Lane on the west, and was bounded by the main Bath Road on the south.⁵⁷ It was built on the site of Cippenham Court Farm, purchased by the Slough Trading Co (later Slough Estates Ltd) in 1920.⁵⁸ Its first construction activity came with the erection of houses for its labourers, followed by factories to be let on long (up to 999 years) leases.⁵⁹ The basic layout was established at the start, with streets named after major towns and cities throughout the country (e.g. Northampton Avenue, Sheffield Road).⁶⁰ Basic factories were erected by the landlord, as what the company's historian describes as 'glorified sheds', internal fitting being left to the tenant.⁶¹ Plots were marked out by hand by the company's surveyor and (unqualified) architect, W. H. L. Price, who was responsible for almost the whole of the development up to his retirement in 1948.⁶² His successor stated that the company's directors 'knew very little about the business of building factories and ... just left the whole thing to Bill Price'. Price also had a small private practice, although the vast majority of his applications were for the Trading Estate.⁶³ Initially factories were earmarked for particular tenants, but from 1927 the company began to build speculatively.⁶⁴

The Trading Estate had its own power station.⁶⁵ Some of the most important early tenants were Aspro (from 1926) and High Duty Alloys

(1927).⁶⁶ The confectioner Mars rented an existing factory in Dorset Avenue from 1932.⁶⁷ A community centre was built on the Trading Estate in 1937, including a crèche for working mothers.⁶⁸ It was converted into an industrial health care centre (later the nucleus of the pioneering Slough Occupational Health Service) in 1947.⁶⁹ The committee claimed not to give the Trading Estate special treatment: in 1933 they loftily informed Bill Price and factory owner Intertype Ltd that 'deposited plans must take their turn', however urgent they might be.⁷⁰ In 1934 they warned they would no longer approve temporary buildings; Price threatened to appeal to the ministry if applications were refused.⁷¹



Slough Estates Ltd letterhead, 1933 (BRO, S/SB2/3455)

Another large industrial site where new buildings were frequently erected was the large factory site in Wexham Road where Dulux paint was manufactured.⁷² Sometimes questions were asked; for instance in 1933 the committee wanted to know what a proposed factory in Langley was to manufacture before they granted permission.⁷³

Not all buildings were designed by architects, and in some cases the plans are rather rudimentary, particularly those for drainage applications.⁷⁴ The drainage plan for 14 Mason Road, Cippenham, 1937, is annotated with the (accurate) comment that the submitter is 'no draftsman'.⁷⁵ Plans for one pair of houses on the Crofthill Estate (by builders Chennells Bros) were rejected because they were not drawn to scale, to the extent that the ground floor appeared to be only seven feet high, the bottom of the foundations above ground, the entrance doors two feet wide, and there were no gutters.⁷⁶ In 1931 one applicant, James Morgan, assured the committee, 'as this is for my parents I will see that everything is of the best', implying it would not otherwise have been the case.⁷⁷ Other buildings were frankly shoddy. Three houses built in Connaught Road in 1934 were experiencing subsidence by

1952 due to being a cheap, poorly built property.⁷⁸ Distinguished architects rarely troubled Slough, but the great Edgar Lutyens designed alterations for the Hon Cecil Baring's mansion, Beechwood, in 1925, and the conversion of a stable there into a chauffeur's cottage in 1927.⁷⁹

Architect Herbert Stribling, who designed a large number of houses in Slough, and was a member of the architects' advisory panel which assisted the committee in making its decisions, wrote in 1933 to complain about the design of buildings on the plot next to one for which he was submitting a plan (at the corner of Alpha Street and a proposed new road through the Council allotments): 'the buildings on plot no. 7 together with numerous wooden sheds and tin signs are to say the least an eyesore and I have endeavoured to design on plot no. 6 a building more suitable for a corner plot.'⁸⁰

Langley-based developer G Wrightson-Ibbs, who wanted to build a flat-roofed concrete house in the latest style in Bath Road in 1935, complained to the council (who thought it out of keeping with the area), 'It is useless to employ 1st class architects [as] the only houses your Committee will approve are of houses which are being erected in thousands all over the district'.⁸¹ Writing in 1934 to one recalcitrant applicant, James Bott, the committee noted, 'in the great majority of cases the local builders have welcomed the advice given by the Panel, and it is much to be regretted that you have so far declined to co-operate.'⁸² Sometimes an applicant would take note of the reasons for refusal and submit more acceptable proposals, e.g. in 1936 Salt Hill Estates and their regular architects Rix & Rix wanted to build 38 houses in what was to become Oakfield Avenue, Cippenham. Their initial plans were rejected for too great a density, but approved on amendment.⁸³

There were no specific requirements for the format of plans, and they were submitted in a variety of media, including blueprint paper, linen, watercolour sketches on good drawing paper, mechanical copies of the same, and tracing paper. As early as 1934 the committee complained that tracing paper plans were liable to crumble when dried out.⁸⁴ This problem has only worsened with time, leaving some plans too fragile for consultation.

Development was occasionally forced on property owners. The Housing Act 1935 required houses unfit for human habitation to be reported.⁸⁵ In Slough, the Sanitary Inspector ordered wash-houses and WCs to be replaced at 149-159 Windsor Road in 1936, and Henry Rich had to demolish 189 High Street, Langley, and alter 191.⁸⁶

There were some flagrant instances of work being carried out without the requisite permission. In 1930 A Williams was authorised to build ten houses in Leeds Road West (later Whitby Road), but he and his builder Mr Bishop then erected flats without applying for permission for the changed design.

This was not discovered by the authorities until 1949.⁸⁷ In 1933 architects Edward and Charles Bowyer and owners/speculative builders E. Stevens & Son, both regular applicants who should have known the rules, were permitted to use asbestos tiles for a domestic garage in Langley Road, as the tiles had already been delivered to the site, 'on the understanding that in future permission must be obtained before work is commenced or materials delivered.'⁸⁸ On being informed that alterations to his shop at 21/23 Windsor Road infringed the regulations, J. A. Simons wrote in February 1931 to say:

The person that informed you the shop front is being built up in brick work has a very vague idea of common sense. All that is being done is a framing of brick work on edge 2 [inches] to give an ultra modern effect. I notice the Council are opposing me in everything I do, so much so that I am not even treated with a grain of justice or even a sensible business proposal. Under the circumstances I have abandoned the idea of rebuilding Nos. 3, 5, 7 & 9 Windsor Rd premises, but intend to put an expensive shop front in the whole length. I shall also purchase any adjoining premises I can procure in order that the Council cannot possibly set the premises back except at enormous expense.

It was decided not to ask him to redo any work already completed.⁸⁹ In 1933 the Planning Officer demanded firm action be taken where an applicant had started work converting cottages to shops at Salt Hill without permission and in contravention of the Scheme for the area (although in this case the committee disagreed).⁹⁰

The approval system broke down almost completely during World War I. Very few approvals were issued, c.1915-1919; many of those which were approved were omitted from the register of plans; other applications were accidentally given duplicate numbers; and so on.⁹¹ Nearly all the applications during World War II were affected by the war, although the number of applications dealing directly with war-related building was relatively small, and the system continued to operate efficiently. The number of plans received dropped dramatically, and the types of application changed from a fairly even split between residential, commercial and industrial development to a prominent bias towards industrial alterations and improvements.⁹² Ongoing developments came to a halt; for instance work stopped completely on the Langley Dell Estate, which had been gradually infilling an area south of the Bath Road since 1937.⁹³

The first application for an air raid shelter was made in 1938 by High Duty Alloys Ltd for their factory in Berkshire Avenue.⁹⁴ The firm produced aircraft components during the war. In June 1940 a massive explosion at the

factory killed six and injured forty.⁹⁵ Although the firm made several applications around this time none related to this incident. The next air raid shelter application was not until May 1939, for a garage incorporating a subterranean air raid shelter, at a cottage in Montrose Avenue; this was one of very few applications for a shelter for a private house.⁹⁶ Most air raid shelters in Slough were large ones, normally for 48 people, provided by employers on the Trading Estate for their staff. For example R Malcolm Ltd applied for a 48-person surface air raid shelter next to their factory at 601 Bath Road in 1942.⁹⁷ Slough Trading Estate was seen to be particularly under threat due to the number of factories involved in war work, and from 1939 it was surrounded by a smokescreen to protect it from enemy action. This must have been effective as the estate experienced little bombing and there were no post-war applications for rebuilding due to bomb damage on the estate after the war.⁹⁸

Other war-related building work on the Trading Estate included shelters for Home Guard units, decontamination and first aid centres, and firewatchers' huts (the latter permitted only on a temporary basis and ordered to be demolished in 1951).⁹⁹ One of the most common types of application during the war was for ladies' lavatories in factories.¹⁰⁰ This was due to the increase in the number of female employees during the war, and also because the Factory Act 1941 banned toilets from opening directly onto the factory floor.

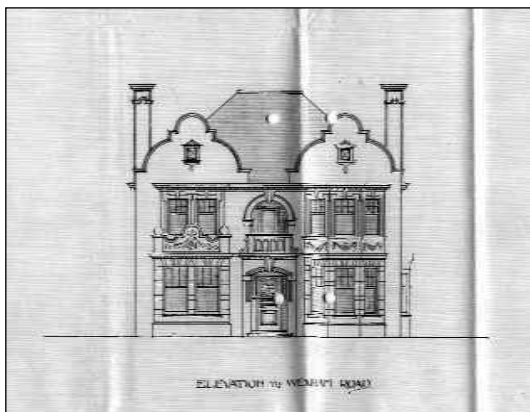
Elsewhere in Slough, an application for nineteen war emergency homes on Ramblers Lane was refused because the proposed density massively exceeded what was allowed (sixteen houses per acre rather than the six permitted).¹⁰¹ A blood transfusion laboratory was approved at Slough Social Centre in 1940, followed by a Communal Feeding Centre in 1941.¹⁰² A temporary wartime nursery was established in 1942 at Baylis Court Senior School for the babies and small children of women engaged in war work.¹⁰³ The Navy League took over Grenville Hall and applied for extensions for a dormitory, recreation room, officers' quarters and wardroom.¹⁰⁴

Edward Gardner Thorp, engineer to the South Bucks ARP Joint Committee, submitted many applications for war-related buildings, several of which he then rejected in his position as borough engineer! Many plans were rejected at this time, often when the building had already been erected. However refusal orders were rarely enforced as the council did not want to impede essential war work. The most commonly rejected applications were those for wooden sheds in factory yards to house factory equipment and supplies while most of the factory itself was requisitioned for the war effort. The council refused these on the grounds that the sheds would act as fuel in the event of bombing, but rarely enforced the decision as it would be counter to the war effort. Enforcement notices for wartime infringements were not

issued until 1951. Few of these actually resulted in a structure being removed, in most cases a new application being approved.¹⁰⁵ The case of William Pilgrim's application for a garage or shed at the rear of a house on 247 Farnham Road in 1942 is particularly noteworthy for Pilgrim's response to refusal. He called the councillors 'thick heads' and 'nit wits' for not appreciating the additional costs of building work in wartime, and advised them to 'scrap all these belly-aching bye-laws until after the war.' He was in trouble again in 1944 for erecting a disused railway carriage in his garden (without even applying for permission) and using it for human habitation.¹⁰⁶

After the war the situation returned to normal amazingly quickly. The evidence of the building applications is that either Slough did not suffer heavily from bombing during the war or people could not afford to rebuild, as only three applications were submitted to rebuild bomb damaged premises, the first being 29 Langley Road, reconstructed in 1945 after suffering bomb damage.¹⁰⁷ Applications for housing estates which had been delayed by the war were re-submitted. One, the Winsor (later Windsor) Park Estate, off Wexham Road, is of interest for the solid-fuel heating system placed in each of its 192 houses.¹⁰⁸ Other interesting projects undertaken directly after the war included an application for a temporary stable behind a house in Baylis Road for 'housing child's pony during very inclement weather', and altered layouts of factories now released from war work, such as the layout of the Malteser department at the Mars factory (to kickstart export activity).¹⁰⁹ Some people wanted to demolish air raid shelters or convert them into sheds.¹¹⁰

The legislative framework for planning and building control was



House in Wexham Road, 1900 (BRO, S/SB2/924)

transformed by the Town and Country Planning Act 1947. Post-1948 planning applications do not survive for Slough, but the building control records for 1880-1948 offer a remarkable resource for local and architectural history.

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- 5 BRO, S/SB2 passim.
- 6 BRO S/SB2 passim, e.g. S/SB2/4824 incorporates application no 4755.
- 7 Confirmed in a letter of 1931 in BRO, S/SB2/2843. Certificates appear in the records from c. 1947; BRO, S/SB2 passim.
- 8 BRO, S/SB passim.
- 9 BRO, S/SB2/2834.
- 10 E.g. BRO, S/SB2/4163-4164.
- 11 BRO, S/SB2/2313, 2364.
- 12 BRO, S/SB2/2556-2597 passim.
- 13 BRO, S/SB2/2993.
- 14 BRO, S/SB2/4320.
- 15 BRO, S/SB2/4560.
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- 17 BRO, S/SB2/3166.
- 18 BRO, S/SB2/1717.
- 19 BRO, S/SB2/2307.
- 20 Examples include BRO, S/SB2/2264, 2284, 2291, 2299-2301.
- 21 BRO, S/SB passim.
- 22 BRO, S/SB2/4736.
- 23 BRO, S/SB2/4512.
- 24 BRO, S/SB2 passim.
- 25 BRO, S/SB2 passim.
- 26 BRO, S/SB2/2710.
- 27 BRO, S/SB2/3162.
- 28 BRO, S/SB2/3819-3820.
- 29 BRO, S/SB2/934.
- 30 BRO, S/SB2/3151.
- 31 BRO, S/SB2 passim, e.g. S/SB2/1415, 1447.
- 32 BRO, S/SB2/1496. Permission was temporary for 21 years.
- 33 BRO, S/SB2/1515, 1761.
- 34 BRO, S/SB2/1610, 1617.
- 35 BRO, S/SB2/1756, 4930, 5095.
- 36 BRO, S/SB2/2671, 2796.

37 There were cinemas in Farnham Road (later the Ambassador) in 1935, Windsor Road (the Granada) in 1937-1938; and Bath Road (the Commodore) in 1938; BRO, S/SB2/4251, 4417, 5084, 5419.

38 BRO, S/SB2/3706.

39 E.g. BRO, S/SB2/1011 1140, 1245, 1424, 1834, 1853.

40 Cassell, Long Lease!, p. 59.

41 Cassell, Long Lease!, p. 62.

42 supply ref here

43 E.g. BRO, S/SB2/2306 is for Woolworth's store in the High Street, 1926.

44 BRO, S/SB2/4678.

45 BRO, S/AC1/3/21.

46 BRO, S/SB2/3744.

47 BRO, S/SB2/3795.

48 BRO, S/SB2/3150.

49 BRO, S/SB2/4561.

50 BRO, S/SB2/4730.

51 BRO, S/SB2/3805.

52 BRO, S/SB2/4560.

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63 Cassell, Long Lease!, p. 103. An example of a private commission undertaken by Price is BRO, S/SB2/3503.

64 Cassell, Long Lease!, p. 56.

65 Cassell, Long Lease!, p. 39.

66 Cassell, Long Lease!, p. 56.

67 Cassell, Long Lease!, p. 69.

68 Cassell, Long Lease!, p. 77.

69 Cassell, Long Lease!, pp. 101-102.

70 BRO, S/SB2/3806.

71 BRO, S/SB2/3990.

72 BRO, S/SB2 passim.

73 BRO, S/SB2/3643; it was for static transformers and electrical apparatus.

74 E.g. BRO, S/SB2/3352, which is particularly amateurish.

75 BRO, S/SB2/5123.

76 BRO, S/SB2/4905.

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78 BRO, S/SB2/3931.

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86 BRO, S/SB2/4555, 5101.

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94 BRO, S/SB2/5583.

95 Cassell, Long Lease, pp. 84-85.

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98 Cassell, Long Lease, pp 83-91; S/SB2 passim.

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100 E.g. BRO, S/SB2/5945, 6040.

101 BRO, S/SB2/6127.

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103 BRO, S/SB2/6172.

104 BRO, S/SB2/6135.

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Museum of London Archaeology, *Imperial House, 67 Alma Road, Windsor: an evaluation report*. Museum of London. Price not given

Park United Reformed Church, 1908-2008: 100 Years of Christian Service. The church, price not given. (Reading)

Ronald and Margaret Pugh (editors), *The Diocese Books of Samuel Wilberforce, 1845-1869*. Berkshire Record Society, vol. 13. 0954871626

The Royal Berkshire Militia: Return of Volunteers, 1854. Transcribed by the Eureka Partnership. The Partnership, £4.00

The Royal Berkshire Regiment: First Volunteer Battalion Nomination Roll, 1892. Transcribed by the Eureka Partnership. The Partnership, 2009, £5.50

Geoff Sawers, *A Ladder for Mr. Oscar Wilde*. Two Rivers Press, second edition, £4.00. 9781901677621

Eric Saxton, *Educating the Ilsleys: a history of local schools, 1805-2008*. East Ilsley Local History Society, price not given. 1905291168

Rosalind Schaschke, *Holy Trinity, Bracknell: the early years*. The church, price not given

Clare Sherriff, *Boathouses*. Unicorn Press, £25.00. 9780906290972 (contains many examples of boathouses along the Thames)

Adam Sowan, *A Much-maligned Town: opinions of Reading, 1126-2008*. Two Rivers Press, second edition, £8.95. 9781901677614

Richard J. Stacpoole-Ryding, *Maiwand: the last stand of the 66th (Berkshire) Regiment in Afghanistan, 1880*. The history Press, £19.99. 9780752445373

Daniel Talbot, *The Scarlet Runners: a Social History of Queen Anne's, Caversham*. Third Millennium Publishing, 2008, £53.50. 9781903942918

Theale Local History Group, *Theale in Old Photographs*. The Group, £5.00. 095478152X

Andy West and Mark Bradley *Decade of Dreams: Reading F.C's First Ten Years at Madejski Stadium*. Breedon Books

Rupert Willoughby, *Reading and its Contribution to World Culture*. The author, £8.99. 0953442853

Christine Wooton, *The history of Radley Church of England Primary School*. Radley History Club, price not given. 0954276157

Books: over the county boundary

Buckinghamshire Church and Chapel Registers. Transcribed by the Eureka Partnership. The Partnership, 2009, £5.00

Buckinghamshire Provisional Cavalry, 1797. Transcribed by the Eureka Partnership. The Partnership, 2007, £4.50

F. G. Cockman, *The Railways of Buckinghamshire from the 1830s: an account of those that were not built, as well as those which were*. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, 2006, £5.00

Stanley Freese, *The Watermills of Buckinghamshire: a 1930s account by Stanley Freese, with original photographs*, edited by Michael Farley and others. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, 2007, £12.99

David Kidd-Hewitt, *Buckinghamshire Stories of the Supernatural*. Countryside Books, £8.99. 9781846741180

David Thorpe (editor), *Buckinghamshire's Industrial Heritage*. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, 2007, £5.00. (Contents: the industries section from vol. 2 of the V.C.H.; Paper Mills in Buckinghamshire; Brick Makers in Buckinghamshire; Buckinghamshire Industrial Occupations and Industries, 1841-1951)

Journals

Bullnose Morris Club Magazine, No. 272, December 2008-January 2009. (Includes 'Walter Launcelot Creyke' by Robin Barraclough. Creyke joined the Dewe Brothers to form the Speedwell Motor Company of Reading in 1902.)

Family Tree Magazine, September 2008. (Includes 'A Eureka Moment' by Katie Amos, about the family of W. H. Timms, the Reading artist)

SOAG Bulletin [South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group], No. 62. (Includes 'A "New" Roman Road east of the Thames from Benson to Pangbourne')

The Stanford Historian, No. 13, Autumn 2008. (Includes 'The Roads of Stanford in the Vale,' and 'The Architecture of St. Denys' Church')

Twyford and Ruscombe Local History Society Journal, No. 60, winter 2008. (Includes 'Ninety Years on – Memories of Twyford and Ruscombe in the First World War Era'; 'The Hurst Road'; 'Twyford and District Age Concern, 20th

Anniversary'; 'AnnoDomini 1608'; and 'Station Road Shops, from Gas Lane to Brook Street')

Twyford and Ruscombe Local History Society Journal, No. 61, summer 2009. (Includes obituaries of John Finch and Barbara Stoney, and a reprint of the first edition of the Journal, summer 1977)

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What we are

The only museum and visitor centre covering the whole of the Vale of White Horse and adjoining downland. Runner up in 2004 for Best Small Visitor Attraction in the whole of South East England. An independent registered museum and registered charity, founded on, and committed to, community involvement.

Where we are

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10.00am to 4.30pm Monday to Saturday, all year round (except Bank Holidays). Special openings on Sundays, Bank Holidays and evenings for groups or private bookings, with or without catering. How about Sunday lunch at the museum with a private viewing?

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