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Old and New

Number 15

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CONTENTS

Election Scandal at Windsor 3
Brigette Mitchell

Adult Singing Schools in Reading 1842 – 1845 13
Gordon Cox

W H Hudson in Berkshire 23
Dennis Shrubsall

Hungerford's Market in the Middle Ages 31
Norman Hidden

Effect of the Great Awakening on Reading 39
Ben Fulford

Berkshire Bibliography 1998 47
Margaret Smith

Contents of previous issues 51

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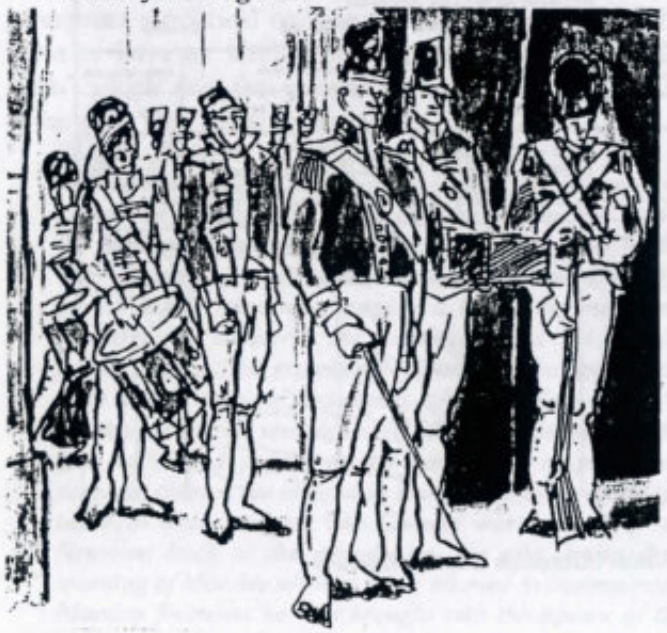
ELECTION SCANDAL AT WINDSOR

Brigette Mitchell

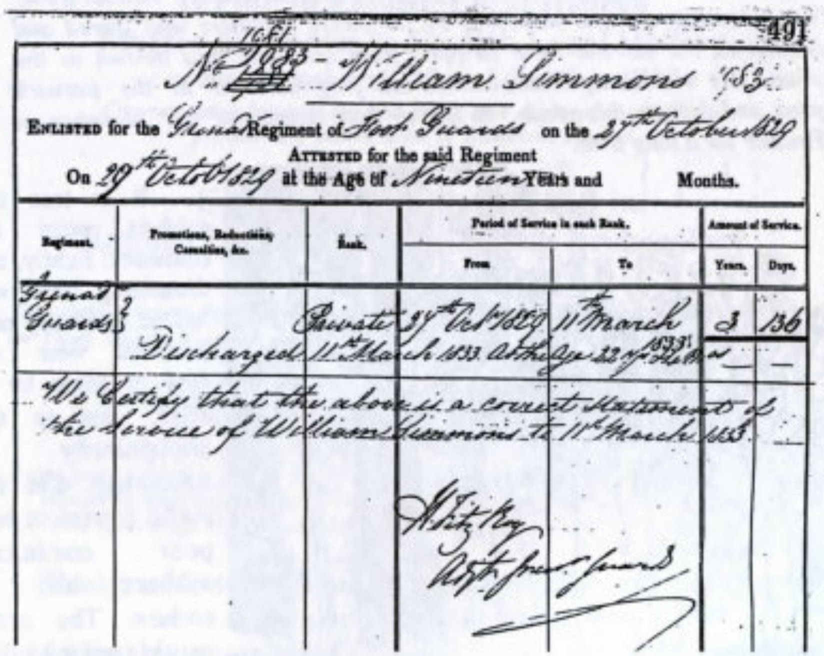
In 1833 Windsor with Clewer was a small but lively town of some 8,300 souls. It lay between the castle and the two barracks, and Windsorians were always interested in the goings on of these two establishments, on which many townspeople relied for their livelihood. Thus on 19th March 1833 they might have noticed in their local newspaper, the *Windsor and Eton Express*, a report about a soldier in the Sheet Street, or Infantry, Barracks, which today we know as Victoria Barracks.

> *On Monday a Guardsman in the Grenadier Guards stationed at the Sheet Street Barracks was drummed out of the regiment in accordance with the sentence of a Court Martial. The Guardsman was found guilty of a number of offences, including one of sleeping at his post and absence without leave. The drumming out was witnessed by the entire regiment who jeered and shouted as the buttons were stripped from his tunic and thrown to the ground. He was then pushed, carried and frog-marched to the barrack gates and left in the road. It is the first drumming out sentence in Windsor for a long time.*[1]



It is true that soldiers were not dismissed lightly, and drumming out was indeed relatively rare. Recruits were not easy to come by in 1833, due to the unpopularity of soldiering, and the awful treatment and poor conditions soldiers had to endure. The army would prefer to flog a man to within an inch of his life, which was then the

usual punishment for every misdeed, minor or major, rather than discharge him. Even a deserter was hounded down, returned to the regiment and branded with a letter 'D', to show him how much the army wanted and loved him, and to make sure he would not run away again! However, only a few months earlier the local paper had carried a story about Private R Hilton who was drummed out of the Grenadier Guards for desertion and robbing a comrade. He had been flogged three times before for different offences, each time receiving 500 lashes, and becoming more reckless as to what he did after each flogging.[2] What the paper did not report was that Private Hilton was not at liberty to go home after his drumming out, but was transported to New South Wales for six years, after his final humiliation in front of his comrades.[3]



William Simmons Service Record

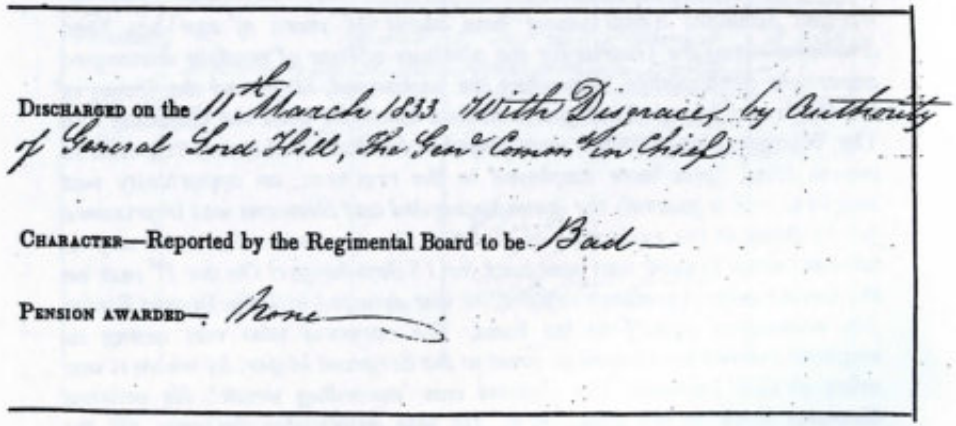
So why was a Windsor guardsman just banished from the army? There is no evidence that he was punished in any other way. Sleeping at his post or absence without leave were both serious enough offences, which were usually put right with a few hundred lashes or confinement in the 'black hole' (the lock-up cell in the guardroom), or both. There had to be wider implications to his catalogue of crime, or another reason altogether. Did most Windsorians know what was really going on, and were they impressed with the report in their paper?

Perhaps the answer can be found in an article published in a pamphlet called *The Working Man's Friend,* one of a number of radical news-sheets that made their appearance in England at this time. The Windsor newspaper did the honest thing by publishing part of this article two weeks later, to give their readers the benefit of judging for themselves. The article also tells us more about the soldier, including his name and what he was like. We learn that he was not only literate, but also interested in political and social reform. One must not forget that at that time common soldiers did not have the vote - they were not enfranchised until 1918 - and were not allowed to express a political opinion; few of them could read and write. Here we seem to have an intelligent, thinking soldier, not the usual 'scum of the earth' which was the general perception of enlisted men. We also get a completely new angle on the story:

> *William Simmons a tall young man about 24 years of age has been drummed out of the Guards for the glorious offence of reading unstamped papers. In consequence in reading the unstamped, he joined the Union of the Working Class and became a marked man! At least the* Guardian *and* The Working Man's Friend *were found in his box, and it was resolved to punish him.*[4] *Spies were employed in the regiment, an opportunity was sought to pick a quarrel: the scene succeeded and Simmons was imprisoned for 15 days. At the expiration of this time, he applied in the usual way to have his name erased: was sent back for 15 days longer! On the 2nd inst. on the day his second sentence expired, he was detected with the* Bonnet Rouge *[an unstamped paper] in his hand. The corporal who was acting as sergeant carried the obnoxious print to the Sergeant Major, by whom it was taken to Col. Lambert. The Colonel was 'exceeding wrath'. He ordered Simmons back to the guardroom. He was detained a prisoner till the morning of Monday without being allowed to communicate with anyone. On Monday forenoon he was brought into the square of the barracks. Four soldier tailors with a Drum Major surrounded Simmons and with pen*

knives cut off the lace, buttons and blue cloth from his coat. The peak was then torn from his cap and in this ragged plight he was made to march with two men behind and two before carrying his box, the drummers following and playing the Rouges March *to the top of Sheet Street in Windsor. He was left there in the. middle of the street. A crowd immediately gathered round and after hearing the real cause of his disgrace - after learning he had not committed theft or any other species of offence, but that his prosecution arose solely from his being a constant reader of* The Poor Man's Guardian *and* The Working Man's Friend *and recently of the* Bonnet Rouge, *they gave him 'three cheers for his courage, some money for his necessities and bade him hold fast to his radical principles. He has now the satisfaction of knowing, that in the town of Windsor, under the very noses of Royalty he possessed more sincere friends than the pampered ruffians who had tried to disgrace him.*[5]

Now we have two versions of the events leading up to Simmons' dismissal. His army records simply state: 'Discharged on the 11th March 1833, with disgrace, by authority of General Lord Hill, the General Commander in Chief'. They also tell us that Simmons came from Manchester where he had been a spinner, and that he had joined the Guards in October 1829, but they do not tell us the true reasons for his 'disgraceful' dismissal.[6] No doubt military authorities were still shaken by the national


DISCHARGED on the 11th March 1833 With Disgrace, by Authority of General Lord Hill, The Genl Comm.r in Chief.

CHARACTER—Reported by the Regimental Board to be Bad—

PENSION AWARDED— None—

Extract From William Simmons Discharge Papers

outcry caused by the flogging of Alexander Somerville in Birmingham, and did not want to cause another incident. Private Somerville had received 100 lashes in May 1832 for sympathising with political agitators and writing to a newspaper, although he was officially punished for. a trumped up charge of insubordination.[7] Simmons' case shows certain similarities, but we need to look at the political situation in England at that time and the recent goings-on in the Royal Borough of New Windsor to get at the full truth of the story.

In June 1832 the Reform Bill had enfranchised a large number of the property owning middle class, many. of whom were liberals and voted for reform. The government termed them 'radicals'. Thus the election of December 1832 turned out to be a lively affair. There was a great deal of unrest and reform agitation around the country; in Nuneaton and Sheffield the cavalry were called out to restore order during the elections. But soldiers in those days were not trained in the 'gentle art' of crowd control; scuffles ensued, and people were killed by the troops. The resulting enquiry gave a verdict of justifiable homicide.

In Windsor the elections did not go off without incident either, but of a less violent nature. The town had been a scot and lot borough since 1690. This meant that householders paying poor rates had the right to vote. The reforms of 1832 only increased the electorate marginally, that is from 498 to 516, which was mainly due to the fact that voting rights had been extended to the parts of Clewer Parish which lay close to the town of Windsor.[8] The town also continued to return two candidates to Parliament until 1868.

Windsorians had a reputation for being on the radical side. They had supported Parliament rather than their King during the Civil War, and were often critical of the Crown and government. In 1780, George III observed that Windsor's 'Corporation had ever been adverse to the Government', and insisted on nominating the town's candidates.[9] The struggle between Court and Corporation had been resolved by returning one candidate recommended by the town and one by the Crown. But the desire to be freed from nomination candidates remained strong in the town until Queen Victoria stopped Court interference in local elections in 1847.

Bribery, vote-buying and intimidation, however, remained a fact of life during elections for much of the nineteenth century. In 1802 a home-

grown candidate, Richard Ramsbottom, challenged government nominee J Williams by accusing him of 'bribery and, treating'.[10] Williams was unseated on a petition but was replaced by Andrew Vansittart. Richard Ramsbottom was finally elected in 1806, the last contested election in Windsor until 1832.

Between 1802 and 1832 Court and town lived in relative harmony, with one candidate nominated by government and the other one being a local man chosen by the town. In 1832 the two candidates were Windsorian brewer and banker John Ramsbottom and government nominee Mr E G Stanley.[11] Stanley was not very popular in the town. The local paper complained that he was an 'entire stranger' to the inhabitants of the town, and had no connection with it, but he could command the support of Windsor tradesmen who relied on the Court for their livelihood. The problem of open voting was that it left the electorate vulnerable and exposed. They could not afford to be seen voting with the 'radicals', even if their inclinations were with them. However, Stanley resigned shortly before the elections.

Some Windsorians were hoping at this point to. dispense with nominees, and called upon a Windsor citizen to come forward to represent their town. It was, however, rather late in the day, and the government already had their own man lined up, Captain Sir John Pechell of the Royal Navy. A group of electors made a last minute effort to avoid another government nominee in Windsor. On the Wednesday, five days previous to the election, 'a small but determined band, resolved to make a last struggle for the honour of Windsor'. They, wrote to John E De Beauvoir, an independent liberal politician.

Sir,

We the undersigned Electors of the Borough of New Windsor impress with a strong feeling of absolute necessity of having the free choice of our Representatives in the ensuing Parliament, and as an attempt has been made to introduce a candidate, whose only claim for our suffrages is that of being a nominee of His Majesty's Ministers we earnestly yet respectfully solicit you will be pleased to permit us to nominate you as one of our Representatives in conjunction with our respected and honourable candidate John Ramsbottom Esq. And from the assurance we have received of your independent and liberal political principles that you will in the

event of success support His Majesty's Ministers so long as their efforts may be directed to uphold a liberal Monarch and enlightened people. And as a proof of our sincerity we assure you that is the determination of by far the greater majority of the Electorate of this Borough, that your Election shall be conducted free of expense, by which we shall prove to the Nation, that under a reformed Parliament, New Windsor shall no longer be a Nomination Borough.

There followed a few more niceties and the signatures of the electors.[12]

De Beauvoir readily accepted the invitation, took the next coach to Windsor and by the following day had set up his committee room at the Star and Garter Inn in Peascod Street. On the day of the election the newspaper reported that 'the town was in a state of extraordinary bustle and the most feverish excitement, owing to there being three candidates in the field. - Political feelings were at their height with inhabitants on one side, and Corporation and Court influence on the other.' The newspaper report was careful to stress that the elections went off 'spirited but peaceful', and that the town was 'by no means in an uproar, as is the case at other places during contested elections'.

De Beauvoir was obviously the people's choice, but rumours were rife about Pechell's canvassing methods. Some electors claimed he had used undue influences, promises and threats, and induced voters to vote contrary, to their wishes. After the first day of voting Pechell came in third, The town was jubilant. The newspaper published a poem which began,

My Dear Jenny Noakes
such a terrible thing
The Windsor tradesfolkes are opposing the king
Yes opposing the king, or the same do you see
For Stanley sent down Mr Pea-Shell, how kind
On the very same day he himself had resigned
And yet as they declare it was no nomination
But 'the Highest Authority's' own commendation.

On the second day of voting Pechell began to catch up although each vote cast for him was greeted with groans and hisses. The result on 15 December 1832 showed Pechell's narrow win as the second Member of Parliament:

Ramsbottom	408
Pechell	231
De Beauvoir	204 [14]

According to the newspaper, Pechell's acceptance speech was drowned in yells, boatswains calls, whistles and hisses, and he withdrew to the castle after final plea of 'Gentlemen, for the last time, is it your pleasure to hear me?'

A petition signed by 155 electors was sent to Parliament. There had to be an enquiry into allegations against Pechell. These also implicated a member of the Court, Sir Frederick Watson, the Master of the Royal Household, who was accused of improper interference in the elections in favour of Pechell. Heated correspondence between De Beauvoir and Watson was published in *The Times* and the *Windsor and Eton Express*, and handbills were distributed in Windsor with accusations and denials by all parties. The accusations were strenuously denied and eventually dropped, but the government instigated its own witch hunt. The civilian canteen keepers at the two Windsor barracks were identified as 'notorious radicals'. In a letter sent from Windsor Castle to General Sir James Kemp at the barracks, Sir Herbert Taylor wrote:

> *I think it right you should know that the two canteen keepers here at the Cavalry and Infantry Barracks, Sanderson and Brown, are notorious radicals who not only gave their votes to Sir J De Beauvoir, their votes being in sight of the canteen, but signed the rascally petition against the return of Sir John Pechell in which they accuse Sir F Watson and-others connected with the court of using undue influence. These men might vote as they pleased, but you will perhaps agree with me that they are not the most eligible keepers of canteen at barracks in these times.* [15]

This is where Simmons comes into the story. The canteen keepers were no doubt dismissed. They were civilians employed by the military who had no other jurisdiction over them. The army could not possibly have tolerated them after this letter from the castle. Simmons, on the other hand, was a convenient scapegoat, He was identified as a radical, possibly influenced or encouraged by one or other of the canteen keepers. His regiment had to be seen to make an example of him in a very public way and show their disgust and disapproval, especially as *The Poor Man's Guardian* had just published an article boasting that the Grenadier Guards had been

'republicanized' by reading their paper.[16] As a potential political agitator Simmons had no place in the ranks of any regiment where he could possibly incite mutiny or insurrection, perhaps even ask for better pay and conditions. By drumming him out of the regiment he was publicly humiliated and disgraced, and conveniently got rid of, and by refraining from inflicting further punishment on him the army avoided another public outcry. The good people of Windsor, however, cocked a snook at the military by welcoming Simmons with open arms and giving him quarter where he had none in the army.

The pro-reform lobby used the events in Windsor to further their cause. A week after the election the following comment appeared in the *Windsor and Eton Express*:

> *The more the disgraceful facts connecting Captain Pechell's return for this borough become developed, the more the public opinion tend towards our Point of view ... the corrupt proceedings at the present election have made converts innumerable to the vote by ballot, which is now felt to be more than ever necessary to the proper working of the Reform Bill.* [17]

The Ballot Act was finally introduced in 1872.

References

1 *Windsor and Eton Express* (hereafter *WEE*) No 1079, 16 March 1833.
2 *WEE* No 1944, 21 July 1832.
3 Registers of service of the Grenadier Guards, Guards Archives, Wellington Barracks, and Muster Books of the Grenadier Guards 1832-33, Public Record Office, WO 12/1627.
4 *The Working Man's Friend* was one of a number of unstamped newspapers, mainly of a radical political nature, which were in circulation at this time for a few pence, and were of course quite illegal. Newspapers had to pay high stamp duties which made them too expensive for the labouring poor. The *Windsor and Eton Express* cost 7d until stamp duties were lifted in 1837 when the price was reduced to 5d.
5 An article in *The Working Man's Friend*, March 1833, republished in *WEE* 30 March 1833.
6 Registers of service of the Grenadier Guards, Guards Archives, Wellington Barracks, and Muster Books of the Grenadier Guards 1832-33, Public Record Office, WO 12/1627.
7 Alexander Somerville, *Autobiography of a Working Man* (1848) pp 249 – 300.

8 *A Copy of the Poll for the Borough of New Windsor 1832*, published by D Oxley, Berkshire Record Office.
9 Maurice Bond, *The Story of Windsor* (Newbury, Local Heritage Books, 1984) p 72.
10 *A Copy of the Poll for the Borough of New Windsor, July 1802*, printed by C Knight, Berkshire Record Office.
11 John Ramsbottom was the nephew of Richard. He was Member of Parliament for Windsor from 1820, after the death of his uncle, until his own death in 1845.
12 *WEE* No 1064, 8 December 1832.
13 *WEE* No 1065, 15 December 1832.
14 *WEE* No 1065, 15 December 1832.
15 Letter from Sir Herbert Taylor, Windsor Castle, to General Sir James Kemp, Windsor Barracks, Berkshire Record Office D/EZ 100/4.
16 *The Poor Man's Guardian*, No 92, 9 March 1833, pp 74-5.
17 *WEE* No 1066, 22 December 1832.

ADULT SINGING SCHOOLS IN READING 1842-1845

Gordon Cox

The nineteenth century in England has been called 'The Sight Singing Century'.[1] In the 1840s a sight-singing mania had gripped the country. Russell has identified a number of inter-connected reasons for this development.[2] Continuing industrialisation was producing an environment which was hostile and frightening to many middle-class observers who perceived large working-class communities which were intemperate, ill-educated and ill-disciplined. The establishment and development of singing classes became a moral crusade led by middle-class reformers seeking to use music as a force for social regeneration.

The purpose of this paper is to focus upon two men who came to Reading between 1842 and 1845 to preach this social and musical message: Joseph Mainzer (1801- 1851) and John Hullah (1812-1884).

The 1840s were key years in establishing Reading's transition into an industrialised town [3]: in 1840 the railway line to London had opened so that the capital was now only one hour and five minutes away; in 1841 Thomas Huntley set up in partnership with George Palmer which resulted in Reading's world-wide fame as 'biscuitopolis'.[4]

The town's musical life was in some respects distinguished. One of the local professional leaders was Mr Binfield who since 1806 had been closely associated with the triennial Berkshire Musical Festivals held in Reading, which included performances of such works as Haydn's *Creation* and Handel's *Messiah*. By 1842 Mr Bilson Binfield, son of the founder, was organising the festival and we are told its popularity caused 'every house in town and country to be filled with visitors'. [5]

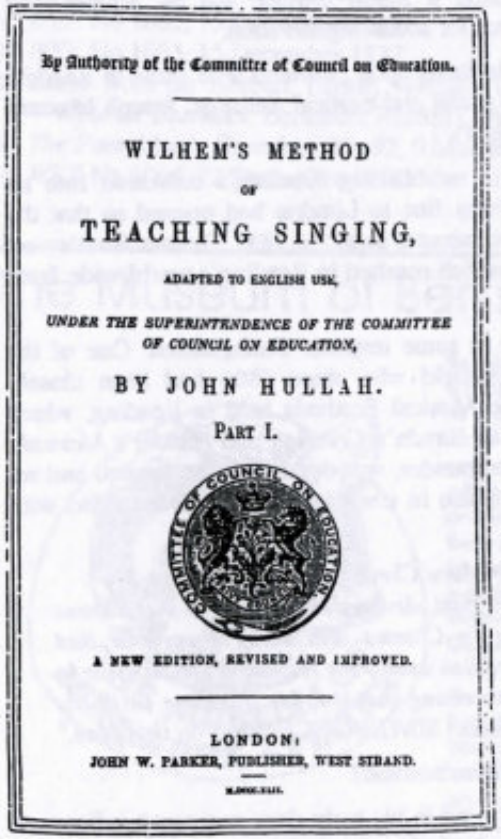
In the same year, 1842, the *Berkshire Chronicle* reported that

> *Mr Binfield, having for many years past, devoted much time to the various systems of teaching Part Singing in Classes and being convinced that Wilhem's Method, as adapted to English use by Mr Hullah is far superior to every other, has the honour of announcing that it is his intention (with the sanction of that Gentleman) to establish SINGING SCHOOLS on that plan.*[6]

Who was Hullah, and what was the Wilhem Method?

John Hullah was born in 1812, and in his early days was much influenced by his mother's musical gifts, and his father's democratic tendencies.[7] His education linked this connection between art and democracy. He only came gradually to a realisation of his vocation. In 1833 he entered the Royal Academy of Music and the idea formed of developing schools for popular instruction in vocal music. He visited

Paris to see for himself the work of the German musician Joseph Mainzer who had established singing classes for working men. However these had been disbanded due to political pressures by the time of Hullah's visit. Hullah decided instead to follow the work of G L B Wilhem, who had written a singing manual for use in the monitorial system. As well as holding classes in schools, Wilhem, like Mainzer, was also committed to spreading musical skills to as wide a spectrum of adults as possible, but particularly to working people.[8]



By Authority of the Committee of Council on Education.

WILHEM'S METHOD

OF

TEACHING SINGING,

ADAPTED TO ENGLISH USE,

UNDER THE SUPERINTENDENCE OF THE COMMITTEE OF COUNCIL ON EDUCATION,

BY JOHN HULLAH.

PART I.

A NEW EDITION, REVISED AND IMPROVED.

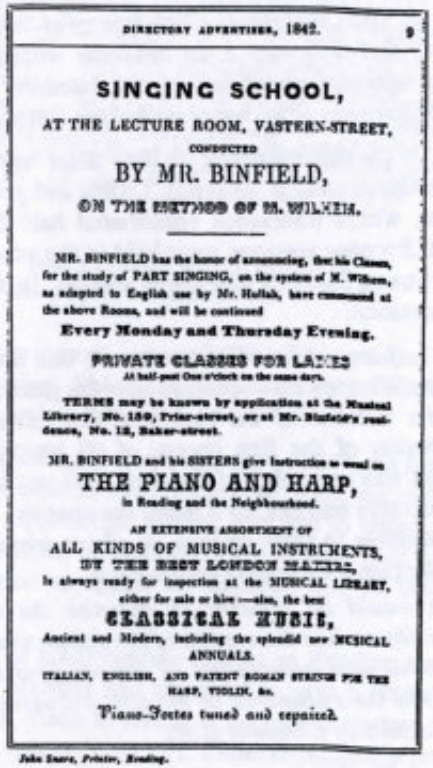
LONDON:
JOHN W. PARKER, PUBLISHER, WEST STRAND.

By 1840 Hullah had been taken up by the educational reformer James Kay [Secretary to the Committee of Council on Education], who requested that Hullah translate Wilhem's Method into English for school use. This became known as *Hullah's Manual* and was the basic text for his immensely successful Singing School for School Masters and School Mistresses at Exeter Hall in London.[9] Patrons included Prince Albert and the Duke of Wellington: such men secured powerful spheres of influence for Hullah.

When we consider Hullah's teaching we have to consider two aspects.[10] First he believed music could refine and civilise, principally through the process of sight singing. Individuals could be fashioned into productive members of the community by reconciling 'cotton spinning and counterpoint, husbandry and harmony'.[11] Second his vehicle for such sight singing was solfa and the fixed doh method. It has been well-documented. Each scale started on

a different rung of the ladder e.g. the scale of 'C' would commence on 'Doh' and the scale of 'D' on 'Re' etc. By maintaining the name and sound of a note, Hullah hoped to cultivate 'the memory of tone'- a sense of absolute pitch. But in practice it was difficult for pupils to acquire this sense. However, the early stages, based in C, were relatively straightforward - it was after that that difficulties reared their heads. A contemporary critic called the system 'diffuse, circumlocutory and superficial'.[12]

It was Binfield's intention in Reading to hold a course of 60 lessons on Mondays and Thursdays in the Lecture Hall at Vastern Street. The course fee was two guineas, but those involved in schools of instruction of the poor were admitted for half that price. Each pupil was expected to bring to the first lesson the first instalment of *Hullah's Manual*. One month after this announcement we read that because of demand there were to be the following classes: for Ladies, for Gentlemen, for the Middle Class, and the Working Class (at reduced rates), and for young children.[13]



DIRECTORY ADVERTISER, 1842. 9

SINGING SCHOOL,

AT THE LECTURE ROOM, VASTERN-STREET,

CONDUCTED

BY MR. BINFIELD,

ON THE METHOD OF M. WILHEM.

MR. BINFIELD has the honor of announcing, that his Classes, for the study of PART SINGING, on the system of M. Wilhem, as adapted to English use by Mr. Hullah, have commenced at the above Rooms, and will be continued

Every Monday and Thursday Evening.

PRIVATE CLASSES FOR LADIES

At half-past One o'clock on the same days.

TERMS may be known by application at the Musical Library, No. 159, Friar-street, or at Mr. Binfield's residence, No. 12, Baker-street.

MR. BINFIELD and his SISTERS give Instruction in vocal on

THE PIANO AND HARP,

in Reading and the Neighbourhood.

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Piano-Fortes tuned and repaired.

John Snare, Printer, Reading.

There was a feeling akin to religious revival. The new movement was undoubtedly popular, and many respectable inhabitants were reported to have joined the classes. It was hoped a choral society of great strength might eventually emerge.[14] New accommodation was found at the National Schoolrooms in Hosier Street, to cope with the increased numbers.[15] Outposts were being established in Henley and Wokingham.[16] Binfield went to Wokingham with the St Giles Choir from Reading to introduce the Method. This choir had only received 10 or 12 lessons itself in the Method, but was able to give a demonstration.

In June a public demonstration was held at Hosier Street by Mr Binfield, at which 300 participants from the classes were gathered together: the body of the

school was filled by pupils, the gallery with parents and friends. In November Binfield gave his sixtieth lesson to the principal class which sang pieces in 2, 3 and 4 parts.

It is clear from these accounts that Binfield played the central role in the development of all this singing activity. His use of *Hullah's Manual* presumably created a network for him, and also guaranteed inspections of the teaching from Hullah himself.

The *Berkshire Chronicle* was supportive of these developments:

> *we feel it a duty ... to advocate whatever tends to raise the moral and intellectual character of the humbler ranks of society ... where party differences or personal dissension cannot enter.* [17]

By the beginning of 1843 there were classes for ladies and gentlemen, for ladies alone, and for juveniles. Ladies and gentlemen had to meet the full cost of the course, whilst tradesmen contributed half the cost, and shopmen and mechanics 10/6d. Evening sessions were held in the schoolrooms, and daytime sessions at 159 Friar Street, Binfield's business address. In all there were 23 classes, including one for workmen.

Meanwhile another outpost, this time at Hartford Bridge in the parish of Hartley Wintney was opened under the patronage of Lord Calthorpe, Lady Mildmay and the Speaker of the House of Commons, A H Bradshaw. By June 1843 the completion of the first course of 60 lessons had been accomplished. The Vicar himself was a member of the class. 200 pupils were present on this final occasion: a considerable number for a small community. The Vicar reminded the pupils of their indebtedness to their patrons 'at whose expense they had received the instruction'. The *Berkshire Chronicle* commented:

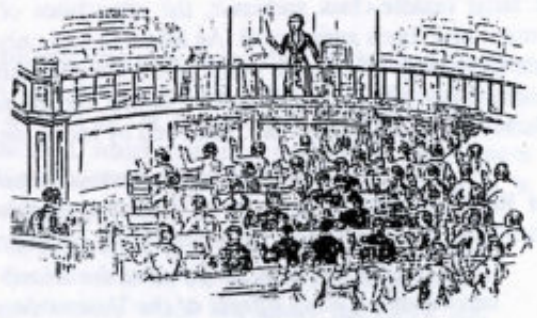
> *It would be difficult to describe the astonishment visible amongst the visitors when the results of the system were shown. It appeared incredible to those who were aware of the previous unacquaintance of the pupils with even the rudiments of musical knowledge, and many of them uneducated persons of a humble class.* [18]

By this time strains were beginning to appear in the Reading classes: the main criticism seemed to be the lack of individual vocal development. Mr Binfield, at the last lesson of the mixed class in Reading, defensively stated that the intention of the teaching was never to make fine solo singers, rather it was the aim of the instruction to promote a decent level of congregational psalmody.[19]

A similar warning was made before Hullah visited to hold a lecture: ticket holders should not expect a high quality finished product: instead they should

consider the short amount of time the pupils had been receiving instruction.[20] This was a reflection of a wider concern that if singing was to be of value to the individual, it just could not be solely confined to experience in large classes.[21]

Hullah's visit prompted much interest: the hall could have been filled three times. In the event 700 attended, and 171 took part in the musical proceedings, from Reading, Henley and Hartford Bridge. The Mayor presented a silver salver to Mr Binfield who had introduced the system to improve congregational singing. He had had to endure fears, doubts and sarcasms, but nevertheless had done his duty, although we might not 'at present see a great ... result'. The evening ended with music by Jeremiah Clarke, Croce, Horsley, Palestrina, and Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*. The occasion was reckoned a complete triumph for Mr Binfield.[22]



John Hullah with a group of his pupils at Exeter Hall in 1843

Apart from an announcement concerning future classes in 1845, no further references have been found; the classes appear to have fizzled out, a not uncommon fate of Hullah's teaching method.[23] As a postscript, Hullah had had to endure the tragedy of the gutting by fire of the Exeter Hall in 1860, the main London base of his activities. The *Berkshire Chronicle* carried an appeal for financial aid for Hullah, and asked readers to support it.[24]

But this is not the whole story of adult singing classes in Reading during the 1840s. No less a rival than Joseph Mainzer had appeared to give a lecture in March 1842. Reference has already been made to Hullah's hoped-for contact with Mainzer in Paris. Originally trained as a mining engineer, Mainzer became a priest, and his passion for music found an outlet in teaching and establishing choral classes.[25] With the political scene in ferment in the 1830s, he relinquished his priesthood, and at home was declared a political undesirable. Moving to Paris his classes were so large (up to 3000 strong) that the police insisted he disband them. Mainzer moved to England, although unable to speak much English. But he formed his classes, and by 1842 it was reported that 20,000 pupils were receiving instruction in his classes. In the year of his arrival in England he wrote *Singing for the Million*:

the phrase became his watchword.[26] His system was not very different from Hullah's being based on the fixed doh.

Right from the start the *Berkshire Chronicle* was cool about this foreigner extending his classes to England.[27] At the lecture, it was noted that whilst there was a large middle-class audience, the attendance of the masses was much less than might have been anticipated. As Mainzer had only been in the country eight months his knowledge of English was limited. He requested everyone in the room to sing the same note- 'sol' or 'G': About a dozen voices out of nine or ten hundred present, feebly responded to the call, followed by much laughter. [28]

Mainzer complained of the want of gravity, and intimated that his audience at Reading behaved with more rudeness than he had encountered in London or Brighton. The newspaper chauvinistically commented:

> *if the worthy lecturer had heard the hearty laughter which occasionally accompanied early efforts of the Vastern Street class, we fear his German notions of decorum and propriety would have been sadly shocked.* [29]

However it was announced that a class would be formed at the Town Hall, and Mainzer agreed to send down a professor from London, and would also keep in touch. In conclusion the reporter drew attention to 'an absence of that enthusiasm...which attended the illustration of Wilhem and Hullah's system by our accomplished townsman Mr Bilson Binfield'. Binfield's pupils had attended the lecture 'but they had no desire to substitute Mainzer for Hullah'.[30]

Three months later Mainzer had organised a 'Fête Champêtre' at Whiteknights Park,[31] which in its heyday had been a garden estate developed by the fifth Duke of Marlborough, but by 1842 was in the hands of a speculator and in considerable decline.[32] Mainzer's two classes in Reading totalled 600 pupils, but on this occasion 1000 attended. It was observed that Mainzer exercised 'extraordinary influence'. In fact the theatricality of the event was characteristic of him: the ladies arranged themselves on the north side of the slopes near the fountain, the gentlemen on the south side, whilst the band was at the bottom of the declivities. The choirs sang 'Praise', 'Temperance' and 'Psalm 107'.

After this occasion however numbers declined and for a time classes ceased.[33] Mainzer visited the town to reorganise his supporters: he was greeted by 500 of them. They sang, 'The Village Chimes', 'Liberty' and a simple 'Labour Song' which Mainzer wanted to send to every factory in the country. As Mainzer had made a financial loss on the venture, the terms for future sessions would be 1/-, and 6d for those unable to afford this. It was noted that Mainzer was more successful in Reading with the humble classes and dissenters, whilst Hullah had thrived on the upper classes and churchmen.

Mainzer appointed Mr Corrie, a London-based teacher, to take responsibility for the classes in Reading, with both an elementary and advanced group. Some months later an advertisement appeared from Corrie advertising the opening of singing lessons 'on Mainzer's and Wilhem's systems as taught by Hullah'.[34]

It seems probable that the singing classes sponsored by Hullah and Mainzer in Reading had ceased by 1845. In their brief existence they had engendered great enthusiasm for singing in choirs, as well as for the skill of sight singing. Their downfall was a result of a flawed method, which promised much in its early stages but then proved impenetrable. This comment from one of Mainzer's pupils in Gloucestershire in 1842 sums up the feeling of eventual disenchantment:

> *Our class romped through the diatonic scale of C major ... It was beautiful and so easy! But one fatal day the little man on the platform bade his pupils take up an exercise in the 'signature' of which one sharp appeared. Ah, miserable sharp! ... Discouragement deepened more and more as it gradually appeared that while the names of the notes remained unchanged, each might represent three different sounds. This was too bad. The old enthusiasm began to wane, attendance became irregular; Mainzer was apparently a fraud .*[35]

This combination of a flawed method and an over-reliance on two charismatic figures, in hindsight, led to the eventual demise of singing classes in Reading in the 1840s. All was not lost however. For eighteen months between 1843-44, John Curwen (1816-1880), the great promoter and evangelist of the sight singing method, Tonic Solfa, lived in Reading in convalescence with his father, who was the minister of Castle Street Congregational Chapel.[36] During this time he completed and published at his own expense his first important primer on the new method, *Singing for Schools and Congregations*.[37] The educational effectiveness of this method, compared to that of Hullah and Mainzer, lay in its foundation upon the 'movable doh': the tonic of the new key was always 'Doh'. As soon as the book appeared he began to test its contents on an experimental class of seventy children from four Sunday schools in Reading. This was to herald the start of a new era: Curwen's Tonic Solfa under its banner 'Easy, Cheap and True' swept the country and the Empire[38]. It is within that wider context that we have to view the specific, more problematic efforts of Hullah and Mainzer.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the staff of the Reading Reference Library, for their help, and Nicholas Bannan who encouraged me to present this research in publishable form.

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Ethel Williams

W H HUDSON

W H HUDSON IN BERKSHIRE

Dennis Shrubsall

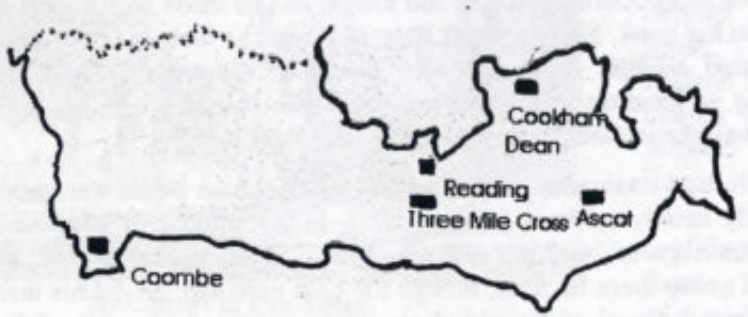
He loved birds and green places
and the wind on the heath, and
saw the brightness of the skirts of God.[1]

W H Hudson (1841-1922) was both a great naturalist and an accomplished author. When he died *The Times* pronounced him 'unsurpassed as an English writer on Nature', a remarkable achievement indeed for one born to American migrants in turbulent nineteenth century Argentina, and brought up - without benefit of formal education - among the gaucho stockmen on its vast cattle and sheep breeding plains known as the pampas. [2]

In 1874, influenced by his father's English ancestry, and encouraged by an association with the Zoological Society of London, Hudson left Argentina and came to live in England. His relevance to Berkshire - and the importance of Berkshire to Hudson - is threefold, and can conveniently and succinctly be expressed as Cookham Dean, shepherd 'Caleb Bawcombe' and Ascot, each representing a separate episode in his life.

Cookham Dean

None of Hudson's books published during the first eighteen years of his English residence was about the subject for which he eventually became



justly famous, namely the English countryside, its wildlife and its people.[3] Marriage to an unsuccessful boarding house keeper compelled him to live in London, and poverty denied him access to the rural countryside except for occasional weekends and infrequent holidays.

Essentially an out-of-doors man, physical intimacy with nature was a necessity for Hudson's mental well-being. In 1892 this yearning for the outdoors became intolerable, and while seeking a temporary rural retreat close to London, he stumbled by chance on the little village of Cookham Dean in a loop of the River Thames some three miles north of Maidenhead. He spent the whole of June and some days in July rambling in and about Cookham Dean, rejuvenating himself and collecting subject material for the *Birds in a Village*, a book which he described as his 'first about [British] bird life with some impressions of rural England'.[4] He lodged in Midway Cottage, a mere ten minutes' walk from a splendid view of the River Thames from Winter's Hill and the welcome solitude of Quarry Wood.[5] During these weeks, he also put the finishing touches to the manuscript of a book on Patagonia.[6]

Hudson's introduction to Cookham Dean was not entirely without hazard. Anxious to become acquainted with the locals he sought out the village's only public house and succeeded in allaying their suspicion of him - a stranger - by buying beer for all. During the subsequent free flow of conversation Hudson, in all innocence, asked if there were badgers thereabouts, whereupon the conversation became strained. Later he learned that 'badger' was a derogatory name bestowed on Cookham Dean residents by those of neighbouring villages and towns, and he made no mention of the incident in his book. Sixteen years later, however, he included it in a revised and re-titled edition.[7] Hudson never published the name of the village, describing its location merely as 'not more than twenty five minutes' walk from a small station less than one hour by rail from London."[8]

Hudson retained a great affection for Cookham Dean, and he visited it regularly each year from 1894 to 1897. In the autumn of 1896 he went there in the hope of 'walking off' a bad cold. Though unsuccessful, he did not regret going there because, though the cold persisted, so did his memory of the 'flame colour' of the old cherry trees and the 'red gold' of the tall beeches in Quarry Wood.[9]

Sixteen years later he took his ailing wife to Furze Platt, between Maidenhead and Cookham Dean, for fresh air and sunshine. For seven weeks they lodged at Thistle Grove, and on the day following their arrival, Hudson - now in his seventies - rode his bicycle to Cookham Dean. He disapproved of the 'nasty red brick villas' that were mushrooming in the District 'in which people who go up to the city live and play tennis in their gardens'.[10] But he approved, and frequently rambled in, the extensive overgrown common known as the Thicket which lay to the west of Maidenhead.[11]

Shepherd 'Caleb Bawcombe'

During the Easter week of 1901 Hudson and his wife went walking in the attractive green and wooded country between Reading and Basingstoke. Their first couple of days was in the nature of a pilgrimage to the villages of Three Mile Cross and Swallowfield because of their association with the Hampshire born writer, Mary Russell Mitford (1787-1855). Her book, *Our Village*, written during the thirty or more years she was living at Three Mile Cross, had given him great pleasure - not because of her knowledge of the countryside which he considered meagre, nor for her portrayal of countryfolk which failed to impress him - but because of her own 'delightful personality' which, he said, 'manifests itself and shines' through the pages.[12] Hudson's interest in Mary Mitford was shared by his friend and confident, Mrs Emma Hubbard of Kew[13] who, when a young

'My Cottage in *Our Village*'
Drawn by E Havell. Print published 1st June 1840

woman, had visited Miss Mitford - then living at Swallowfield - and sketched her.[14]

In his essay 'By Swallowfield' in *Afoot in England* Hudson describes how he and his wife walked from Reading to Three Mile Cross, then to Swallowfield, and then back to Three Mile Cross where they spent the night. On the following day they headed southwards, sauntering along country lanes and through woods and villages, until, just across the county boundary in Hampshire, they came to Silchester. Here, alongside the common, they found lodgings in a house called The Pines. In this house Hudson met an old infirm shepherd named James Lawes who, under the pseudonym of Caleb Bawcombe, was destined to become the central character of what is arguably his finest book.[15] But for Hudson's Berkshire pursuit of memories of Mary Mitford that book might not have been written.

Five months later, after twenty seven years of genteel hand-to-mouth residence in England, 'the originality of his writings on Natural History' was recognised by the award of a £150 annual Civil List Pension.[16] He had not asked for it, nor had he expected it, but lack of funds had limited the extent to which he could travel, and he told a friend that 'this sure and sufficient income really makes a vast difference'.[17] Such, however, was his integrity, that in 1921 when his books were earning sufficient to satisfy his modest needs, he resigned his pension.[18]

Ascot

In June 1904 Hudson met Lady Margaret Brooke, Ranee of Sarawak and wife of the second white Rajah, Sir Charles Brooke GCMG. Captivated by Hudson's book, *Green Mansions*, she contrived, through a mutual friend, to meet him.[19] After many years spent with her husband in Sarawak the Ranee was living apart from him in England, her principal residence being Grey Friars, a large house situated in a 'highly aristocratic neighbourhood' among pine woods just off the Brockenhurst Road at Ascot.

Hudson and the Ranee became great friends and remained so until his death in 1922.[20] He was frequently her guest at Ascot, and in the summer of 1914 when she found him sick and alone in his London flat she had him conveyed to Grey Friars where, with servants to wait on him and a new doctor to treat him, he stayed for three months.

The Ranee was away from Ascot during much of this period, so Hudson wrote to her frequently. In one of his letters he told her that, while sitting on her veranda, he had been reading and correcting the proofs of his

Grey Friars Ascot

book, *Birds and Man*.[21] Moreover, although he does not name it, the locale of the first chapter of his *Book of a Naturalist* entitled 'Life in a Pine Wood: People, Birds, Ants' is undoubtedly the Ranee's sixty acre private pine wood at Grey Friars.[22]

Other Occasions

The foregoing three episodes are not the sum total of Hudson's visits to, and rambles in, Berkshire. Of the remainder two others are notable. The first of these occurred in November 1901 when he took his bicycle to Newbury and lodged for two nights at the Temperance Hotel where he met Joseph Elliott, a shoe shop proprietor and former Newbury mayor who took him walking to Donnington Castle. [23] From Newbury Hudson rode his bicycle to the foot of the downs at East Woodhay and, despite his sixty years and erratic heart, pushed it to the crest almost one thousand feet above sea

level. At the highest point he saw and wondered about the tall foreboding gibbet marking the boundary between the parishes of Combe and Inkpen where a Woodhay carrier and a Combe widow had been hanged for murdering the carrier's wife. Later that day, over luncheon in the Combe rectory, the vicar (most probably the Reverend George Pearson) told Hudson the entire gruesome story of events surrounding the gibbet - a story which Hudson subsequently included in Chapter IX of *Afoot in England*.[24]

Set in the huge hollow basin of a chalk hill, and consisting of 'a tiny church, a haunted manor house, a picturesque farmhouse and parsonage and a few thatched cottages', Hudson considered Combe 'one of the most out-of-the-world and charming little villages in England'.[25] Years later the rectory was purchased by the daughter of Hudson's Newbury acquaintance, but when invited to spend a few days there he declined regretfully.[26] Sadly the rectory is no longer standing, having been replaced in 1927 by dwellings appropriately named Vicarage Cottages.

In December 1901, the month following his Newbury-Combe excursion, Hudson took the train from London to Reading where he alighted, recovered his bicycle from the guard's van, and set out to cycle to Silchester to see his old shepherd. On his way he paused to admire the mellow old-world charm and tranquillity of the village of Shinfield, untouched by what he termed the 'blight' of Reading which had affected most villages in close proximity to that 'biscuity place'; he paid tribute to the Shinfield squire's success in resisting it. In his few hours spent in Shinfield, Hudson was delighted to meet, and converse with, a resident whose father had been acquainted with Mary Mitford and had told him much about her.[27]

Conclusion

In addition to their status as classics of the English countryside perhaps, with the passage of time, Hudson's writings provide fertile pastures for the local and social historians? But be that as it may, Berkshire can confidently claim the credit for providing the significant part of the subject matter for his first English nature book, pointing him in the direction of the material for his best, and supplying him with care and a refuge at a time when he sorely needed it.

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BERKSHIRE RECORD OFFICE AFTER 1 APRIL 1998

On 1 April 1998 Berkshire County Council was abolished and its functions were taken over by six new Unitary Authorities. Shire Hall has been sold to the engineering firm Foster Wheeler. How will this affect Berkshire Record Office and its users?

- Berkshire Record Office will remain on the same premises until the year 2000 and will continue to offer a county-wide service on behalf of the six Unitary Authorities. The opening hours will remain unchanged. There will still be public parking and buses will continue to run to and from Reading station.
- The postal address is Berkshire Record Office, Shinfield Park, Reading, Berks RG2 9XD. The **new telephone number** for enquiries and bookings is 0118 901 5132. The new fax number is 0118 901 5131.
- Access to parts of the building other than the Record Office, including the restaurant and shop, will be restricted. Visitors are advised to use local pubs (for which a car will be necessary) or to bring their own sandwiches and drinks.

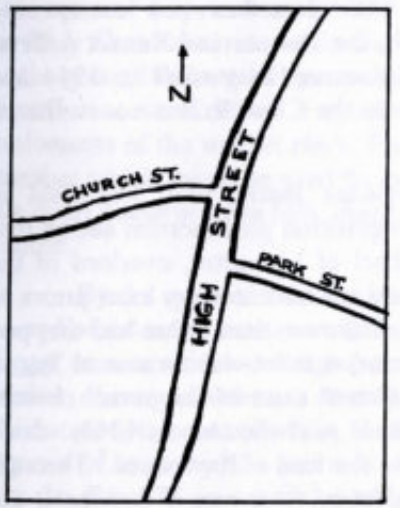
In 2000 we hope to be moving into a new purpose-built building closer to the centre of Reading. In the meantime, it's business as usual!

HUNGERFORD'S MARKET IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Norman Hidden

A definitive account of the origin of the town of Hungerford has yet to be written. The name does not occur in the Domesday Book of 1086, though other parts of what was later to become the parish of Hungerford appear, such as Eddington north of the river Kennet and Standen in the south. The clear implication is that Hungerford did not exist in 1086. Yet within a century it seems to have developed sufficiently to possess its own 'community of burgesses' and a common seal.[1] Such sudden development may have coincided with a sweeping new town lay-out which occurred during the lordship of the Earls of Leicester and for which the lord would undoubtedly have been responsible.[2] The new lay-out offered burgesses a form of tenure which gave them much greater freedom from their feudal superior than they had had in the past. In return the lord hoped to benefit from an increase in the town's commercial prosperity, particularly through his right to the market tolls.

This new lay-out moved the town away from the church and sited it along a north-south (Oxford - Salisbury - Southampton) trade route. Within the town, running southwards from the river Kennet, this road was known as the High Street (*alta strata*). It was crossed midway by another, and more ancient, road which ran east to west (present day Park Street and Church Street). It was at the intersection of these two routes that the townsmen erected a market cross and set up their market place.



The Intersection

In the 12th century markets sprang up throughout the kingdom, and local merchants benefited from the protection afforded by the lords, as

the weekly market brought in folk from many miles around, often on foot. These weekly markets were a great and exciting event in the community's life, both in an economic and in a social sense.

A record of a case in the Berkshire Eyre, that is, the king's court of itinerant justices, in the year 1248 may illustrate some of these points.[3] William, son of Henry, is alleged to have dug two dikes (*fossa*) in Shefford which impeded Geoffrey of Oakhanger from going to Hungerford market as conveniently as he had been wont to do. Geoffrey clearly regarded such an obstruction to his market-going as a serious matter; and so did the justices who ordered the dikes to be destroyed and awarded Geoffrey damages. At the same time the references to Shefford and Oakhanger show the attraction of the market for the residents of such outlying rural areas.

Two members of the jury of this Eyre, who came from Hungerford, were named Mercator, that is, merchant. This was a period in history when names were occupations and occupations became names, so clearly the merchant influence was strong even in such an otherwise basically rural society. Wealthy merchants may have travelled some considerable distance to do business or even settle in such a thriving small market town. In his history *The Jews of Oxford* Cecil Roth describes this enterprising community as extending its activities along the Thames and Kennet valleys, and quotes instances of these Oxford traders in Hungerford in 1244 and 1253.[4] Indeed, in 1278 there is a reference in the Close Rolls to one of them as a local man, 'Meyr de Hongreford'.[5]

As far back as we have knowledge market day was held in Hungerford on Wednesdays. In 1296 an inquisition post mortem shows that the tolls of the market belonged to the Earl of Lancaster, overlord of the manor of Hungerford.[6] In 1341 these tolls were estimated by local jurors to be worth 40 shillings per annum. In 1394, however, their value had dropped to 23s $10^{1}/_{2}$d.[7] In addition to the weekly market there was an annual fair in August on the feast day of St Lawrence, patron saint of the parish church. This fair is mentioned in another inquisition post mortem in 1361, which shows the tolls of the fair likewise going to the lord of the manor.[8] Through the marriage of Blanche, a female descendant of the house of Lancaster the overlordship passed to her husband John of Gaunt, with whose name the town's history is so closely associated.

The town has claimed for several centuries that John of Gaunt granted it various rights and privileges, the charters for which were unfortunately lost. From this uncertainty there developed a confusion over such matters as fishing rights and who should receive the market tolls. Later attention has focussed so invariably upon the issues of the inhabitants' fishing rights that 15th century uncertainty concerning the market tolls has been much overlooked. In the Ministers' accounts of 1431/2 and again in 1487/8 the townsmen had to re-iterate their claim to exemption from rendering market tolls to the Duchy of Lancaster, 'inasmuch as they allege themselves excused by charter'.[9] By 1487/8 it was not so much the market toll receipts which concerned the townsmen but the wider freedom which the lost charter had given them.

The centre of the market was marked by a cross (also called the high cross or the holy cross). At some date a market house was erected there and this was where the tolls were collected. The soil of the roadway where the tolls were collected belonged to the lord and therefore a rent was payable to him for this particular use. We find in the Ministers' Accounts for 1431/2 and subsequently an item of 1d rent paid to the lord from 'the site of the Cross in the middle of the market there'.[10] In a town rental circa 1470 there is an entry of 1d *per domo Sti. Crucis in medio vill*, that is, *for the house of the Holy Cross in the town centre.*[11] The usual plan for a market house was for the ground floor to be open to the street on three sides through arches, but closed at one end where a small room housed the various measures and implements of the market clerk. Frequently the building included a an upper chamber which might be used for one or more of a variety of purposes, such as a court house or town hall, chaplains school house, or simply leased for an income.

By the reign of Edward VI the Cross House may have been nearing the end of its useful existence. It was then still leased, 'in the tenure of Roger Tuggy' at a rent of 4 shillings per annum.[12] Within a year of the same date another document refers to 'lez Standynges' in the town market place, of which one tenement called the Cross House was assessed at 7s. 4d. rent, but because of its decay this rent was reduced by 3s. 4d.[13] In 1552 a town survey lists the Cross House at its usual quit rent of 1d; in 1591 it was leased by Philip Seimor at a rent of 20s. p.a. with a quit rent raised to 2d.[14]

seven stalls, two held by Nicholas Baker, two by the farmer of the lands of a newly dissolved priory, one by a chantry and two by John Aley.[19] In the 1573 town rental there are no references to stalls, nor are there in any subsequent survey. This does not mean that the market had ceased but probably reflects the stalemate in town and manorial administrative relations which followed the loss of the town 'charters'.

Ministers' Accounts do not usually record the occupations of the stall holders, though we have reference to the (anonymous) tanners and to John Baron the 'bocher' (or butcher), whose stall had previously been held by John Bocher. Indeed the surnames of the 1431 stall holders may give us a fair indication of some of the trades flourishing - fisher, butcher, draper, weaver (Webbe), tanner are among them. One of the most interesting entries is that which relates to 'le travers' - a word which would seem to mean 'the workshop'.[20] It is first found in a manorial court roll for 1480 where it is recorded that Thomas Bukland alias Smith paid 2d. quit rent for a 'travers' 8 foot by 3 foot in the High Street for shoeing horses (*ad equos ferrandum*). The site was 'facing the lord's hospice' and had been granted to Thomas in 1466. In 1552 this was one of Nicholas Baker's two stalls. Hungerford's market did not cease to exist after the Middle Ages, but its nature changed in that instead of being the most important single economic activity, the drive behind all the others, it became more of a supplement to other activities - instances for example of tanning, fulling, dyeing, brewing, fishing, sheep-farming frequently occur - most of which could sustain themselves even without the market's added benefits. In the early seventeenth century, once the town achieved settlement of its long-disputed borough status the market enjoyed a notable resurgence; its later role in the 17th, 18th, and 19th centuries is a subject which may well repay further study.

Today there is nothing that remains of the old market - the Cross House in the middle of the street has been demolished, the stalls temporary or permanent have gone, no sparks fly from the shoesmith's 'travers'. Only the configuration of the street itself may remind us of these past centuries. The 'cross', made into a little jink in the road by the not-quite-perfect intersection of the High Street and the east-west road, remains. The width of the High Street at this point (disguised though it is by car parking, so that the traffic way seems far narrower than it really is) helps us realise that a market

house could have stood there and still allow a roadway to slip by on either side.

The continuing width of the street, both to north and south, reveals where the numerous stalls may have crowded on the road and onto the pavements.

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EFFECT OF THE GREAT AWAKENING ON READING

Ben Fulford

The 'Great Awakening' or Evangelical Revival, born into the 'irreligious environment' of the eighteenth century, had a significant effect on the churches, trade, educational and welfare provision of Britain; effects that persist into our largely post-Christian society. While the existence and importance of the movement, both here and across the Atlantic, which spanned around 100 years, is undisputed, the precise nature of its effects, and their value to society, its causes and sociological make-up remain the subject of lively debate. In examining a little of the earlier history of the Revival in Reading, I have begun to sketch out that history while addressing some of those issue mentioned above, in the local context of the town.

The central feature of the Revival, and the one from which I will approach all its aspects, is its basic message of salvation from sin and new life by the atoning death of Christ, through repentance and an active trust in him; the message of the 'new birth'. Put thus in its simplest form this message is shared in common by all proponents of the Revival, and drove them; it was their primary motivation, both in direct evangelism, and in all other realms of evangelical endeavour, where they could share the love of Christ shown to them.

To set the Revival in context, it is useful to look briefly at the religious life of eighteenth century England. In the previous century, Puritanism had dominated the Church, and the movement was divided by issues of what doctrine and what form of church government was best. Besides the great change, upheaval and schism brought about by the church settlement that followed the puritan era, English intellectual life and religious attitudes were undergoing a more significant development. Gone, largely, was the earnestness of the puritans - such 'enthusiasm' was now unfashionable, and the prevailing tone of sermons was moralistic, without the former concern for the salvation of the soul, although some bishops were concerned at the lack of doctrinal framework behind such preaching.

Among the lower clergy, High Church views (a priestly ministry, a sacrificial element to the Eucharist, baptismal regeneration, apostolic succession, etc.) were dominant. The intellectual climate that produced

Deism was affecting the theology of leading churchmen, partly as a reaction to the threat the latter posed; opinion ranging along the spectrum between Christianity whose 'touchstone was reason in a moral context'; the revelation traditional orthodoxy and the extreme of Deism, a position no churchman actually held.[1] 'Latitudinarianism' was far less extreme and produced a Christianity whose 'touchstone was reason in a moral context'; reserving the revelation of Scripture primarily for those areas where reason could not give an answer.[2] Here the Trinity, and a penal substitutionary atonement (Christ dying in the place of sinners) were embarrassing; God was essentially benevolent, man essentially good, and popularly it was held that Christ's death and righteousness 'topped up' your own efforts. These same trends affected dissent as they did the Establishment, and the former also suffered from the imposition of legal limitations, that led to an attitude of introspection which no doubt contributed to the stagnation seen amongst such congregations.

Into this prevailing climate burst what was, in effect, an energetic renewal of the old puritan evangelicalism on the one hand, and a new movement, of heterogeneous origins centred around and springing from the overarching person of John Wesley. The two movements were closely linked; the Calvinistic Methodists, for example, moved from one movement to the other, and shared the insistence on the authority of Scripture and on man's need for a personal salvation through Christ's death. Methodism affected the Church of England to some extent, but was forced into virtual, and later actual, dissent; the other, more Calvinistic movement affected the Establishment through individual ministers, and also the dissenters.

Both of these movements reached Reading,[3] but it was the more Calvinistic that amongst Baptists, Independents,[4] and Anglicans took firmer hold in the latter half of the eighteenth century, giving rise to great church growth in the numbers attending (usually accompanied by the building of new galleries), increased evangelism and evangelical co-operation, in which the activity and influence of the minister of the church were highly important. A good example of this is the development in the history of St. Giles' church.

William Talbot, one of the earlier evangelical Anglicans of the era was appointed to the parish in the 1760s, and the congregation displayed its

St Giles Reading, 1802

subsequently strong evangelical leaning when his replacement proved to be adamantly opposed to that position. The congregation consequentially was close to splitting when that minister was converted through the friendship of Talbot's wife.[5] W B Cadogan gained a wide reputation, and pastored a 'large, educated and convicted congregation,' despite a limited oratory technique. Upon his death and replacement by another unsympathetic minister, the congregation eventually displayed its strong evangelical identity in choosing to secede from the Establishment, removing themselves from St. Giles in order to preserve that identity. It was an identity they shared across the denominational divide, and that divide was put aside in order to further evangelical work. Not only did the seceders receive support from the other evangelical nonconformist congregations, they also joined with them in evangelistic work under the umbrella of the Evangelical Society.[6] The British and Foreign Bible Society was another focus for co-operation. An interesting attestation to the strength of this evangelical presence is the length to which the Deist, John Man, goes to complain about them in *The Stranger in Reading*.[7]

Evangelicals and Society

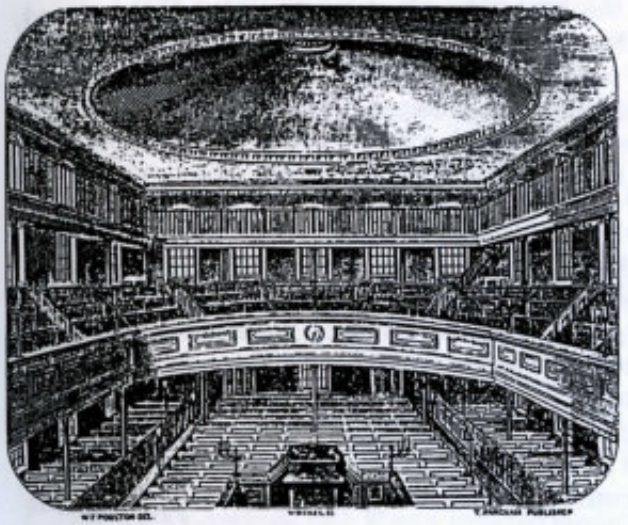
We have seen that a substantial, committed Evangelical population became established in Reading, co-operating with one another, and whose Evangelicalism was more important than the denomination to which they belonged. However, Evangelicals were not, on the whole, content merely to meet together and worship; they were a missionary body, which tried to influence and improve the society and community around them. In addition

to the activities of the Evangelical Society, the Baptists and the seceders in Castle Street also planted churches elsewhere in Berkshire. There was a branch of the British and Foreign Bible Society, which distributed Bibles to Reading workhouses, Sunday and charity schools, to Danish prisoners of war, and even attempted to place a Bible in every home in the town. Concern for overseas communities and the progress of the gospel in foreign lands can be seen in the establishment of a branch of the non-denominational (if Congregational in origin) London Missionary Society, and the support shown by the Baptists for their own still fledgling Society.[8]

Education was another means of spreading the gospel and of improving society, and Reading was among those towns where the Sunday School system was quickly introduced: St. Giles had two by 1788, the Baptists one by 1811, and the Independents in 1796. The contribution of the Evangelicals to education in Reading, and to the education movement is difficult to assess. Before their emergence, Reading had a small number of charity schools, and a boys' free grammar school. During the Revival, there appear to have been three developments in education in Reading: the appearance of Sunday and other church schools, an increase in the number of charity schools, and the coming of the schemes such as the National Plan in 1811. The influence of the Revival may have been felt in all three.

The Sunday schools provided basic education for what Archibald Douglas called the 'lower classes,' instructing them in reading and writing alongside, or by means of, religious education.[9] As the charity schools were very restricted in the number of pupils they could take in and the grammar schools still the preserve of the local gentry families, the Sunday schools provided a vital service for the children of the poorer classes, who, as contemporary Parochial Returns to Parliament point out, were always 'desirous of having more sufficient means of education'.[10]

In terms of charity schools, Reading already possessed a Blue Coat School, but in 1782, a Green Girls School was founded by a group of aldermen. The three Reading vicars, including Cadogan, were trustees, and among the aims of the establishment of the school was that the girls might be 'trained up in the principles of religion,' the general hope being to see them become apprentices or domestic servants. It is difficult to know how far the Revival influenced this action, but the least we can say is that Evangelical



Interior of Broad Street Independent Chapel in 1851

clergy (and presumably laity as well, amongst the subscribers) lent their support to it. Broad Street Independent Chapel set up its own girls' school, with a similar purpose in mind: to educate those of the poorer classes, for whom a Sunday school education was not sufficiently vocational. The school had a good reputation, and was keen not to make an issue of denominational distinctions between pupils, which made it popular.

As regards private schools, Reading had many, but these, by their very nature were only available for the few that could afford their fees. Reading School, however, was a free grammar school, and in theory open to anyone who could meet the requirements. Obviously, in practice this would still favour the more comfortably off who could obtain sufficient elementary schooling. Here the effect of the revival can be discerned not in providing a greater availability of education, but in improving the character of the school; one of the school's most influential headmasters, Dr Valpy (1781-1830), was both a member of the Bible society, and the father-in-law of the son of Mr French of the Castle Street congregation, both of which mark him out as an Evangelical or at least as sympathetic to that party. He not only rebuilt the school, enlarged its reputation and increased its intake of boys, but also, although a strict disciplinarian, tried to make it more humane, reacting against the known barbarity of Eton.

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This article is based on an 'A'- level research project and was written when the author was seventeen years old.

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CONTENTS OF PREVIOUS ISSUES

VOL	TITLE
1	A Shocking Incident at Theale
1	The County Banks of Berkshire
1	Project Co-ordination
1	Sites and Monument Record.
1	St Mary's Church Thatcham, The Churchyard Surveyed
1	Early Photographs of Berkshire
1	Autumn Meeting at the BRO
1	An Arborfield Tale
1	Petty Crime in Berkshire
1	Is This A Roman Road ?
1	Inns, Taverns and Alehouses in Berkshire, 1577
2	Berkshire Regicide
2	Vicar of Bray
2	Sites and Monument Record
2	The Brightwell
2	The Hamlet of Little Hungerford
2	Two Cinemas
2	Nurse Children in Berkshire
2	Berkshire Buildings
2	Shaw House
2	Wokingham Enigma
2	Chestnuts
3	Longmoor – a Vanished Settlement
3	Daily and Domestic Life in 17th Century Reading
3	The Rise and Fall of Stedes
3	A Story of Country Folk
3	Hungerford High Street Buildings Project
3	A New Workhouse for Reading
3	Growing Up In Binfield c.1800
4	The Langley Desperadoes
4	How Paper Making Came to Colthrop
4	Woodley Aerodrome: Exciting Discoveries
4	My Ladye Nevells Booke
4	The Mercers of Maidenhead
4	The Bricklayer's Contract
4	Domesday 1986
4	Photographic Collections
4	Industrial Archaeological Gazetteer
4	Name Indexes
4	The Consultative Committee for Museums in Berkshire
4	The Barns Campaign
4	Barns in East Berkshire
4	Listed Buildings Survey
5	Reading Cemetery: A Private Enterprise
5	A Visit to the Aerary
5	Twyford's Friendly Societies
5	The 1522 Muster Roll for West Berkshire
5	The History of a Hungerford House
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6	Mortimer's Photographic Index
6	Tithes Disputes in Tudor Berkshire
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6	Peasant Farming in the Vale of the White Horse, 1660-1760
6	Local History Theses in Reading University Library
6	The Book of Wargrave: Local History in Hardback
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7	A Baby Clinic for Eton Wick
7	Alfred's Wayte
7	The Turner Returns
7	The Borough Surveyor's Year
7	The Later Lollards of West Berkshire
8	Here to Help; One Hundred Years of Social Service

VOL	TITLE
8	Comings and Goings in Tudor Berkshire
8	Parliamentary Enclosures of Bray
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8	Women's Employment in West Ilsley 1851-1881
9	The Chalvey Stab Monk
9	Foundlings at Nurse in the Burghfield Inspection
9	Windsor Borough Records
9	Buscot Coppice Bradfield
9	Marriage – 1838 Style
10	The History of King Street Mortimer Common
10	Grazeley Manor Farm: a Survey 1800-1980
10	A Hermit of Medieval Wargrave
10	Berkshire's Overseers Project
10	Religion, Leisure and Adult Education in Reading 1892
11	The Gentlemen Danes: the story of Danish/Norwegian prisoners of war in Reading 1807-1814
11	The Great Western Railway comes to Purley
11	"Local Knight wins a King's Ransom"
11	A Moment in Time – the Berkshire Camera of Horace Nicholls
11	Milestones on Old Roads in the Thames Valley
11	Berkshire Record Society
11	The Berkshire Gardens of Gertrude Jekyll
11	Piety and Charity in a Berkshire Village 1520-1710
11	Closed until ……
12	Ephemera and the Local Historian
12	The Rise and Fall of a Tudor Family: Essex of Berkshire
12	Petty Criminals, Publicans and Sinners
12	The Age of the Clothier; Entrepreneurial Ambition and Achievement in Reading 1500-1650
12	District Nursing in Berkshire 1914
12	The Kitchener Battalions of the Royal Berkshire Regiment 1914-1918
12	Winkfield Marriage Horizons 1754-1899
13	The Kitchener Battalions of the Royal Berkshire Regiment – progress report
13	Church Houses in Berkshire
13	Records of the Boards of Guardians in Berkshire
13	The Contribution of Berkshire to Wartime Agriculture
13	Osier Growing and Cultivation in the Kennet Valley Area
13	Women and the Reading Woolhall in the Seventeenth Century
13	Purley During the Second World War [essay competition entry]
14	Map for the Bagshot Heath Manoeuvres 1752
14	The Bucklebury Woodlands and their Management in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries
14	The Royal Berkshire Regiment – Kitchener Battalion Project
14	An Introduction to Nonconformist Records for Berkshire
14	Early Schools in Langley Marish
14	A Swiss Visitor in Berkshire
1-14	Berkshire Bibliography
1-10	Editor's Newsletter

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