

# NEWSLETTER

Updating Hampshire's History

No. 1

Spring 2013

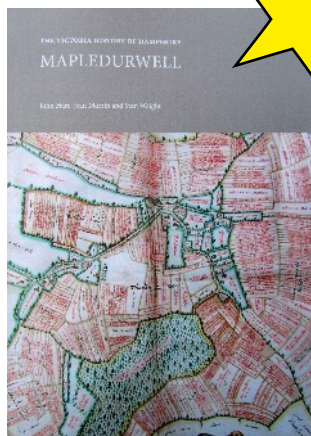
VICTORIA  
COUNTY  
HISTORY



Hampshire

Welcome to our first Newsletter, to keep you informed of activities in  
the VCH Hampshire project

## FIRST BOOK PUBLISHED !



**MAPLEDURWELL** This volume, the first in a new series of the Victoria County History of Hampshire, takes account of changes in the village and in historical writing since the first edition a century before. It is based on extensive study of the rich documentation that survives from its long ownership by Corpus Christi College, Oxford and Winchester College. There is perhaps no such thing as a typical Hampshire village but this volume provides an exemplar for historians elsewhere in the county working on their own villages and it should be of much wider interest than to those who know the village. It shows us something of the changes that have taken place in many Hampshire villages: the medieval open field agriculture so graphically illustrated in an estate map of 1616, the enclosure of the arable in 1797, the change from a C19 community of farmers to a commuter village with one working farm. Many of the attractive timber-framed houses date from the village's period of prosperity in the later C15 and C16, when the cloth industry was flourishing in the Basingstoke area. Throughout, the quality of the documentation allows light to be shed on some of the village families over many generations. *Fully illustrated, 85pp.*

*John Hare, Jean Morrin, Stan Waight, Mapledurwell (The Victoria History of Hampshire) London 2012*

Copies can be purchased for £7 plus £2 postage and packing. Cheques for £9, made out to *Hampshire Archives Trust* and your name and address, should be sent to Dr Jean Morrin, History Dept, University of Winchester, Winchester, SO22 4NR.

The new **VCH Hampshire** project began in 2008 at the suggestion of VCH headquarters in the Institute of Historical Research, London. The aim of the project is to research and write parish histories of Hampshire in the modern style, as the original volumes, which were completed by 1912, considered only the leading families, the Church of England and charities. Hampshire is the first completed county to undertake a revision in this modern style which includes the social, economic and religious history of the ordinary people of the parish.

The Hampshire project employs volunteers led by professional historians. Work at present is concentrated in the Basingstoke area because of the transformation of the urban area by town development since the original volumes were published. Two new

**Red Books** are planned: one on Basingstoke and the other on the surrounding rural parishes to the east and south, including Old Basing and Steventon. Work takes place in Basingstoke Discovery Centre, Hampshire Record Office and the National Archives. Parish walks enhance the study of buildings and street layouts.

Parish histories are first published on the Hampshire section of the website: <http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/hampshire>

Short articles relating to Basingstoke and the surrounding parishes and transcribed documents, such as census and probate documents studied for the *Mapledurwell* book, are published on the VCH Explore website: <http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/explore/>

*George England, Basingstoke, left £34,056 in 1771. He was Superintendent of the East India Company with connections in Bombay - his wife declared £1,376 of jewels. Using any calculation, the modern equivalent is tens of millions!*  
**Wills Reading Group**

*When the inventory was taken of the belongings of Lawrence Smith, the cleric of Upton Grey, in 1708 the appraisers were meticulous, even listing a lock on the stable door. We hope they secured it before the horse bolted!*  
**Wills Reading Group**



### CLIDDESSEN WALK

Sue Lane

On a cold but sunny day in early February eight members of the VCH group met at the pond in Cliddesden to undertake an exploratory walk around the village. Starting in the Church Farm complex with its huge black barn, weatherboarded granary on staddle stones and imposing farmhouse, we soon attracted attention. An enquiry as to our 'doings' led to an informative conversation with Paul Beevers and access to his archive of photographs and records of Cliddesden on the web. What a find and what evidence of the value of walking the parish!

Two former chapels, a church, houses built from 1903 for the workers of the Basingstoke firm of Wallis and Stevens, fourteen listed buildings, an amusing mosaic of pigs and piglets (*pictured*) reflecting the transformation from pigsty on Manor Farm to commercial offices - there was much to interest and intrigue. Cold and hunger eventually drove us to the warmth and welcome of lunch in *The Jolly Farmer*. A very pleasant way to end a fascinating morning.

## THOMAS BURBERRY AND THE RISE OF THE BASINGSTOKE CLOTHING INDUSTRY

Victorian Basingstoke was transformed by the coming of the railways and by a group of innovative entrepreneurs who made it an important manufacturing centre. They grasped the railway's ability to bring in raw materials and to distribute the finished product at home and abroad. Three clothing factories and companies were created, and by 1901 this industry was the largest in town employing 18% of all working adults in Basingstoke (or even more dramatically 36% of working women). The new machines for sewing and cutting, and the larger market, helped to shift clothes-making from home or workshop to the factory.

Thomas Burberry is the best known of these clothing pioneers, creating factories, developing an improved waterproof material for outdoor use, which he eventually patented as Gabardine, as well as a company that still survives. His first factory employed 80 people within a few years of its opening in 1868. In 1878 two of his associates (Gerrish and Ames) founded a larger factory, close to

the station, for the wholesale manufacture of 'ready to wear' clothing, and by 1881 they employed over 200 workers. Meanwhile, at the earlier factory, Burberry worked with Mares (a new partner) on expanding the bespoke tailoring business. When Mares bought the factory in 1892, he built up a mass wholesale business and greatly enlarged its buildings. Finally, in 1892, Burberry created a third factory in which he concentrated on Gabardine products for the affluent outdoor sporting market. He soon developed a London base in the fashionable West End, and branches in Paris, New York, Buenos Aires and Montevideo. His company provided the trench coats for officers in the First World War and clothed pioneers in the Antarctic, on Everest and flying across the Atlantic.

All three factories lasted until the 1950s or 1960s, when company reorganisation or urban redevelopment led to their closure, and the end of a forgotten phase of the town's past.

*John Hare*

### Some words from Basingstoke's early cloth-manufacturing days

**Fustian** A rough fabric made from cotton and linen

**Holland cloth** A high quality, fine linen originally made in the Netherlands

**Diaper** Linen with a diamond patterned weave, a corruption of *d'Ypres*, the weave originating from there

**Kersey** A coarse, narrow woollen cloth, usually ribbed, named after the village Kersey in Suffolk

**Broadcloth** A weave of 2 yds width, fine and densely woven, hard-wearing cloth especially used for men's clothing

**Linsey** An inferior mix of wool and linen or flax

**Osnybrygg** A grade of linen named after Osnabruck, Germany

*Wills Reading Group*

**ARTISTIC LICENCE** Two of the Basingstoke VCH team have recently acquired a print from a steel engraving of 'The New Town Hall and Market Place, Basingstoke'. This building was new in 1833, as a result of the Market Act for the improvement of the Market Place. At last the old Town Hall that used to stand very inconveniently at the junction with Church Street had been demolished, as well as a pub and two houses which were now replaced by an elegant up-to-date building. Print A shows plenty of space for a gentle stroll with the dog, as well as surprisingly tall chimneys and fierce smoke. The mixture of people and activities in the better-known Print B seem more realistic.

*Bob and Barbara Applin*

Print A



Print B



## JANE AUSTEN AND STEVENTON

On the 200th anniversary of the publication of *Pride and Prejudice*, the formative role of Steventon in Jane Austen's career should be acknowledged. Early versions of *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility* and *Northanger Abbey* were written from 1796 to 1798 in Steventon, described by her nephew as 'the cradle of her genius' (J E Austen Leigh, *A Memoir of Jane Austen*, 5th edition, London 1883). Jane Austen spent her first twenty-five years at her father's parsonage in Steventon, where she was educated and informed by reading in his large library (which on his retirement contained 500 volumes, including historical studies and the works of Samuel Richardson), by performing amateur dramatics and by

conversations with family, her father's pupils and friends. Outside the parsonage, Jane Austen mixed with families and gentry whom she observed acutely, drawing inspiration for the characters and sentiments portrayed in her novels. She became very aware of aristocratic pride and condescension, social conventions and the limitations imposed by society on those of limited means. Her father encouraged her writing and she valued the role of clergy in society, few of whom were as foolish as Mr Collins. The Steventon parsonage was demolished soon after her death, so it is the cottage in Chawton, in which she only lived for her last eight years, where her memory is celebrated. A full VCH history of Steventon will be published later in 2013.

*Jean Morrin*

The late Professor Christopher Elrington on his retirement as VCH Director invited sponsorship for him to walk across all the historic counties of England in 3 months. It raised over £30,000 with which the Counties History Trust was founded. Our thanks go to its trustees who gave us £948 last autumn, enabling our first paperback history of Mapledurwell to be printed. All sale receipts will be used to build a revolving fund to make similar publication of other parish histories possible.

We continue to be grateful to Hampshire County Council for looking after the money we raise and for its book keeping. In addition, we are particularly glad to have just won one of its Culture & Community Activity grants. This £3,850, with our other reserves, will go a long way to underpinning the continuation of our volunteers' work in and around Basingstoke over the next two years.

Our management committee is now setting its sights on more ambitious fundraising to enable our work to continue beyond 2015. We will announce more about this at the celebration book launch at Mapledurwell on 12th March.

*John Isherwood*