

NEWSLETTER

Updating Hampshire's History

No. 8

Autumn 2016

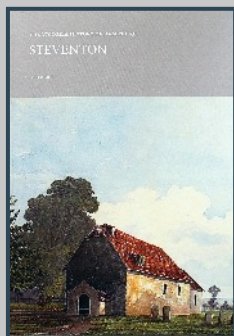
VICTORIA
COUNTY
HISTORY



Hampshire

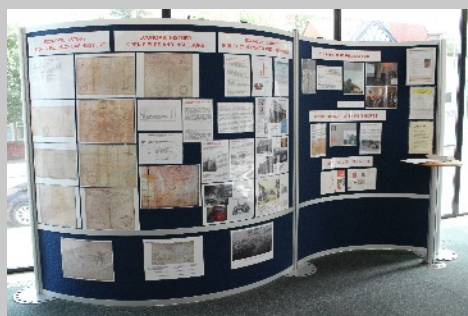


TWO VCH HAMPSHIRE EVENTS



VCH Hampshire's second publication, *Steventon*, by Jean Morrin and John Hare was launched in Steventon Church on Saturday 10 September.

VCH Hampshire's exhibition opened at Hampshire Record Office on 3 October, and will be in place until 6 January 2017.



The work of the **Hampshire VCH** volunteer project, started in 2008, is currently on display at the **Hampshire Record Office**. This features the research and rewriting of parish and urban histories in the modern **VCH** style. Each **VCH** topic is exhibited together with some of the sources studied and their analysis. All the posters have been written and designed by the team of volunteers. Reprographics at the **University of Winchester** has admirably printed and laminated each poster. **Do visit !**



VCH Hampshire Work in Progress

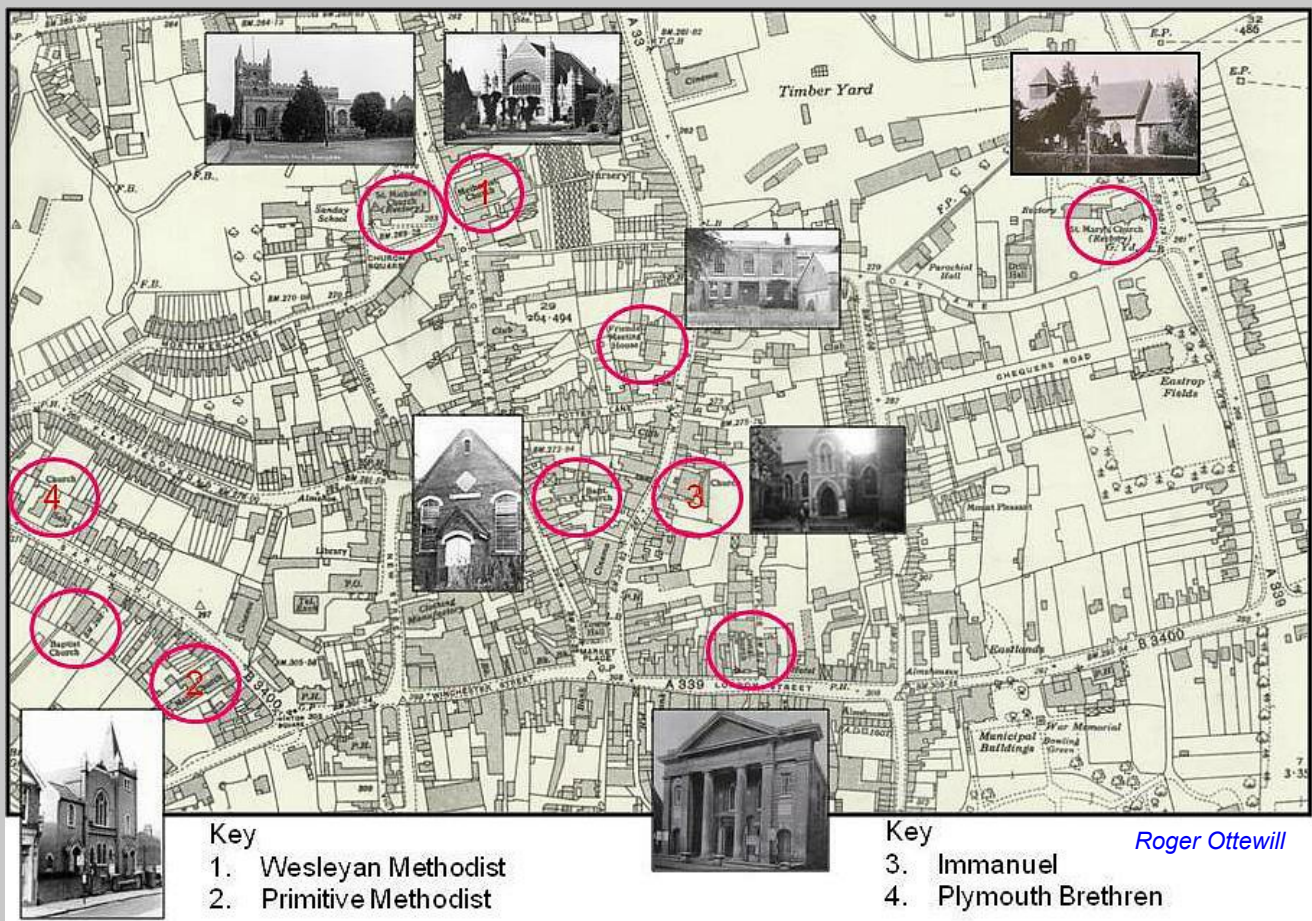
Hampshire VCH group is currently researching the history of Basingstoke and its surrounding parishes.

We have published *Mapledurwell* (2012) and *Steventon* (2016), and are due to publish *Medieval Basingstoke* in early 2017. The Hampshire section of the national **VCH** website, <http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/hampshire>, has draft sections about Basingstoke, including its medieval history, education, trade and industry, markets and shopping, railways and inns, pubs and breweries, as well as draft chapters of the histories of Cliddesden, Farleigh Wallop, Heriard, Nately Scures, Newnham, Old Basing, Tunworth, Up Nately and Andwell, and Upton Grey. Recently added are the religious history of Nately Scures and the medieval manorial history of Upton Grey; the religious history of Heriard will follow very shortly.

The **Explore** website, <http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/explore>, is used to publish short articles about interesting local people, places and themes and transcriptions of documents used for research. Articles include a study of timber-framed houses on the Hampshire downlands; Swing Riots and Cliddesden convicts; Basing House; Congregationalism in Ellisfield; the riots against the Salvation Army in the 1880s; transcriptions of 16th and 17th century wills and inventories; spreadsheets of census transcriptions; Sanitary Inspectors' reports from the 1860s with their graphic descriptions of privies that were 'constant sources of noxious effluvia' and why the impresario who organised the balls Jane Austen attended in Basingstoke was sent to Newgate for six months. Since our last newsletter we have added transcriptions of 16 wills and 24 inventories from Nately Scures 1621-1700 and a history of the Basingstoke Volunteer Fire Brigade to the **Explore** website.



RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY in BASINGSTOKE around 1900



CHURCH OF ENGLAND									
	Estimated Seating	Morning				Evening			
		M	W	Ch	Tot	M	W	Ch	Tot
St Michael's	1500	139	226	219	584	167	289	107	563
All Saints	150	...	...	...	---	27	69	24	120
Reading Road Mission	80	...	...	...	---	10	24	17	51
May Street Mission	200	...	...	...	---	12	26	18	56
Eastrop	170	47	56	46	149	59	89	16	164
TOTAL	2100	186	282	265	733	275	497	182	954
NONCONFORMISTS									
Congregational	600	101	130	154	385	171	224	91	486
Immanuel	270	26	33	31	90	29	48	16	93
Primitive Methodist	530	75	35	67	177	67	78	52	197
Baptist	150	26	21	8	55	30	25	5	60
Wesleyan Methodist	300	60	54	37	151	49	79	35	163
Salvation Army	350	38	22	58	118	87	95	52	234
Railway Mission	150	...	...	...	---	42	74	37	153
Essex Hall	140	20	26	24	70	31	25	18	74
Plymouth Brethren (Sarum Hill)	75	19	25	6	50	20	29	7	56
Plymouth Brethren (Southern Road)	60	10	12	2	24	9	16	7	32
Society of Friends	100	2	3	1	6	...	...	...	---
TOTAL	2725	377	361	388	1126	535	693	320	1548
ROMAN CATHOLIC									
Holy Ghost Mission	75	15	24	15	54	13	19	13	45
DENOMINATIONAL TOTALS									
Church Of England	2100	186	282	265	733	275	497	182	954
Nonconformists	2725	377	361	388	1126	535	693	320	1548
Roman Catholic	75	15	24	15	54	13	19	13	45
GRAND TOTAL	4900	578	667	668	1913	823	1209	515	2547

Key:

M = men
W = women
Ch = children
Immanuel = Countess of Huntingdon Connexion

Census of Attendance, 1903

Roger Ottewill

Hants and Berks Gazette, 21 March 1903

Churches and OS Maps

Churches and chapels were a significant feature of the built environment and were clearly indicated on Ordnance Survey maps. The accompanying 25 inch map and associated images illustrate the location of Basingstoke's churches and chapels in the town centre at the beginning of the 20th century. They provide some indication of what one would have seen on a walk around the town in 1910.

Newspapers and Churchgoing

During the 19th and the early years of the 20th century religion played a far greater part in the lives of individuals and communities than is the case today. Consequently, in Basingstoke and surrounding villages, church events were extensively reported in local newspapers and these now provide historians with many insights into church life. For example, in March 1903 the *Hants and Berks Gazette* undertook a census of churchgoing in Basingstoke, the results of which are displayed. These indicate the large number of places of worship, both Anglican and Nonconformist, and from them it can be estimated that approximately one third of the town's population attended a service at some point on the Sunday when the census was undertaken. They also highlight the fact that the majority of churchgoers were attached to one of the Nonconformist denominations.

Roger Ottewill

The Railway Mission

As befitted a railway town, in February 1893 a local branch of the national Railway Mission (founded in 1881) opened in Basingstoke. Its object was 'the spiritual and temporal welfare of railway employees and their families.' At the inaugural meeting, bright hymns were sung and addresses were given, followed by 'delightful testimonies from the railwaymen themselves.' Since railwaymen found 'it difficult to attend a usual place of worship', a key aim of the Mission was 'to hold meetings at a time when the greatest number were off duty' (*Hants and Berks Gazette*, 18 February 1893). Deriving support from leading Nonconformists, the Mission held services and sponsored affiliated organisations for children and young people – Sunday School, Band of Hope and Christian Endeavour - and a Women's Sewing Class. It also had its own choir and band. In 1900-01 it acquired a hall on the corner of May Street and Lower Brook Street. Erected in 1878 it was substantially enlarged and refurbished. For a time the Mission flourished, but after a few years declining interest led to its closure in 1912-13. The Hall, however, was purchased by London Street Congregational Church for £280. As the minister, Rev Rocliffe Mackintosh explained 'at bottom, it is not a matter of money, but of willingness and devotion to our Master' (*Basingstoke Congregational Magazine*, May 1913: 3). The premises were subsequently redesignated The Congregational Hall, May Street.

Roger Ottewill