

NEWSLETTER

Updating Hampshire's History

No. 7

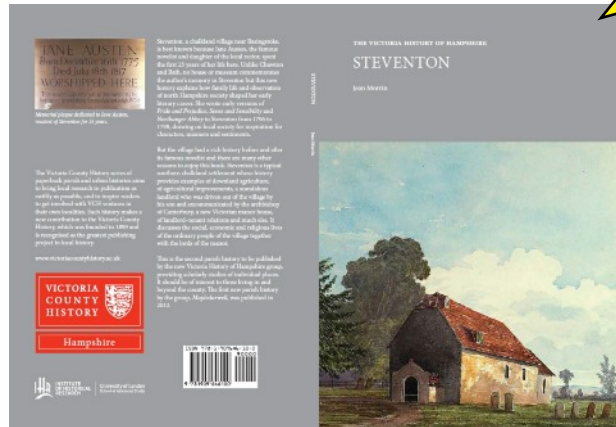
Spring 2016

VICTORIA
COUNTY
HISTORY



Hampshire

STEVENTON NEW BOOK LAUNCH



VCH Hants second publication, by Jean Morrin with John Hare, *Steventon*, will be launched at Steventon church on Saturday 10 September.

Wrong telephone boxes!



K2

An advantage of publishing 'work in progress' on the **VCH** website was found when a sharp-eyed reader noticed a wrongly dated photograph of Cliddesden pond because of the style of a telephone kiosk in the background. Pat Rampton, chair of the local W.I., pointed out that the kiosk shown (K2) had not been in production before 1924. The familiar red telephone box was designed by

Sir Giles Gilbert Scott as a result of a competition held that year. The original kiosks (K1) were made of concrete without full height glazing.

The mistake has now been corrected - thanks to a reader!

Sue Lane



K1

TRANSPORT around BASINGSTOKE

Basingstoke owes much to its location on a main route to the West Country. Pack horses, waggons and stagecoaches all passed through. It was the terminus of a canal and is an important railway junction. Today the M3 and A303 are important vehicle routes.

The line of the Basingstoke Canal

Derek Spruce

Bus
Station



Basing
House

Last Barge to Basingstoke



The last recorded barge to reach the town's wharf was on 18 February 1910. William Carter the owner of the canal feared that if a barge did not reach the terminus within five years the canal could be seen as abandoned and the land revert to the previous owners. Carter persuaded A J Harmsworth, the only barge master operating on the canal to float a barge through to Basingstoke. He chose the narrow boat, appropriately named 'Basingstoke', loaded with a token load of five tons of foundry sand for Wallis and Steevens for the attempt. They left Ash Vale on 11 November 1913 and made slow progress through the vegetation



clogged waterway until they got to Up Nately. Beyond this the water level through to Basingstoke was so low that a dam had to be built to allow the level to rise. An attempt to carry on was made on 8 December but it only proved possible to get to Basing wharf where the cargo was unloaded and taken by cart to Wallis and Steevens. This attracted the attention of several national daily newspapers, who featured some light-hearted articles, and an early newsreel feature.

In November 1913 William Carter won a High Court ruling that removed the threat of closure of the canal so Harmsworth's endeavours lost their urgency.

Derek Spruce

VCH Hampshire Work in Progress

The group is researching the history of Basingstoke and its neighbouring parishes.

Since our last newsletter we have placed a section on Basingstoke inns, breweries and public houses 1600-2015 on the Hampshire section of the **VCH** website, <http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/counties/hampshire>

We have also added four inventories from Newnham 1587-1598, 18 wills and 20 inventories for Nately Scures 1543-1620 and histories of Congregationalism in Ellisfield and Old Basing to the Explore website, <http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/explore>

The Explore website is used to publish short articles about interesting local people, places and themes, and transcriptions of documents used for research.

Bob Clarke



Earl of Dartmouth and the Early Canal

William Legge, the second Earl of Dartmouth had his main estates in the West Midlands and Shropshire but he inherited land in Basingstoke and elsewhere in Hampshire and Sussex. He owned North and West Ham Farms and other land near the canal in Basingstoke totalling 636 acres. At his seat at Sandwell in Staffordshire he was one of the proprietors of the Birmingham Canal which became very profitable carrying coal from local mines, including his own, to Birmingham. This success may have been a factor in his wholeheartedly supporting the Basingstoke Canal venture. He was only one of four who bought the maximum number of shares allowed (£4,000) in the initial subscription. He sold land to the company for Basingstoke wharf and lent the canal company money.

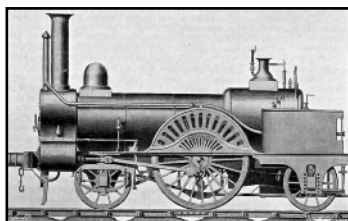
In 1797 he commissioned fine estate plans of his southern properties from Thomas Bainbridge of Gray's Inn, London, and in notes attached he was told that *"The Basingstoke Navigable Canal is now completed but it is not likely to pay Interest for the large Sums of money expended"* – an early warning that the canal was not to be a commercial success. He died in 1801 having enjoyed a huge income of £14,000 a year. He had also been President of the Board of Trade at the time of the disastrous war of American Independence.

By 1874 later Earls of Dartmouth had sold all their land in the south of England.

Derek Spruce

"Terrible Explosion at Basingstoke Station"

The up-goods train left Southampton station on the night of Friday, 9 October 1857 at nine o'clock. Having a heavy load, and the wind blowing strong, considerable time was lost. It did not arrive at Basingstoke station until ten past one in the morning, where it stopped to take on water. The fireman, Henry Farrell was in front of the engine oiling it and the driver, Reuben Thoroughgood, was attending the fire when the boiler of the engine exploded. The door of the engine struck Henry Farrell and he was thrown 45 yards up the line where he was found



LSWR locomotive, 1855, 'Crescent'

with his skull, together with part of his face, completely blown off. His cap was found some 50 yards further on. Reuben Thoroughgood was blown a considerable height in the air and landed on the roof of the refreshment room about 40 yards behind the engine. No one was able to explain why the explosion happened.

Bob Clarke

M3 Archaeology

Before the work on the motorway began, the Willis Museum made plans for a rescue excavation at Common Plantation (just south of Junction 6) and secured some funding for clearing the topsoil. Barbara Applin led a team of volunteers and pits and ditches of a late Iron Age/early Roman enclosure were discovered, with pottery, animal bone and other finds illustrating the way of life of the inhabitants. Shortly afterwards, further south during the groundwork for the motorway, more Roman evidence was uncovered near the Wheatsheaf at North Waltham. There were insufficient resources to do more than partial recovery at these sites; later stretches of the motorway were better served by a fulltime professional team and more funding. The evidence of Basingstoke's past which was recovered is nonetheless valuable.



Roman bronze jewellery



Imported Roman pottery

Mary Oliver

Hook Railway Station

The London & South Western Railway opened in 1839 but trains ran non-stop from Winchfield to Basingstoke. Following local petitions land was made available in Hook for a station which opened in 1883. There was a general holiday to celebrate the occasion. Bunting decorated the



village, cannons were fired over every train that stopped, a band played and over 100 dignitaries and villagers sat down to dinner in an adjacent paddock.

A large goods yard was built on the site now occupied by the car park, creating the need for a signal box. Other buildings included a station master's house, waiting rooms - one for ladies only - coal store, lamp room, clerk's office etc. Twelve staff were employed: station master, two booking clerks, parcel porter, goods foreman, two porters, three signalmen and two lamp boys to tend to the 70 lamps. Over 300 tickets were sold in the first week - Third and First Class. As well as passengers, livestock was frequently carried including a lion and four cubs on one occasion.

House building in the village increased after the station opening, including desirable residences - one occupied by Thomas Burberry - as well as artisan cottages. In 1904 Loaders Mill cocoa processing plant was built beside the railway with goods being delivered and despatched by train. This site is now occupied by Tesco.

Jennie Butler

The photo on the right, taken prior to the development of Basingstoke's Hatch Warren estate at Kempshott, shows the ruts made by vehicles in Kempshott Hill before the road to Winchester and the west country was turnpiked. The present A30, which presumably is on the line of the turnpike, is beyond the hedge line.

Bob Applin



The M3 near Basingstoke

The M3 arrived at Basingstoke in June 1971, at first reaching only Junction 3 at Lightwater and not being completed to Sunbury until July 1974. The aim of the London-Basingstoke motorway, as it was also known, was not just to banish Staines, Egham and Virginia Water from the route to London, but also to link with the point (the Wheatsheaf) where the A33 and A30/303 - the major roads to the South and South West - diverged. The motorway also by-passed the Basingstoke by-pass and left many old coaching inns without their raison d'être. Part of the disused Basingstoke Canal also disappeared, while short stretches of other roads were re-routed to simplify accommodation bridge provision. The M3 did not reach the M27 near Southampton until 1995.

The M3 set the southern limit for Basingstoke's expansion. But its overall effect on local boundaries was greater, especially between Black Dam (Junction 6) and Dummer (Junction 7) where the motorway effectively became the parish boundary. Farleigh Wallop, Cliddesden, Winslade and Dummer were all affected by this, and further east Mapledurwell, Greywell, North Warnborough, Newnham and Hook all suffered similar changes. The M3 also became the boundary of several parishes in the Fleet area and around Chandlers Ford.

Andrew Howard

