

Ongar Millennium History Society Newsletter

August 2016

Well, I am sitting here listening to the combine harvesters outside of my window which implies that summer is heading into early autumn. We are hoping that you, the members will have some interesting ideas for our Autumn newsletter. Please have a think about anything you might have found interesting. It is open to all – have you been on a visit to a stately home or garden, or have you been to an interesting talk which others may enjoy?

Are there any budding genealogists out there who would like to write about their family history? We all like to hear interesting stories from other people's lives. If you think you would like to submit an article, your editor would be very thankful!

Don't forget our AGM which is coming up on 20th September at Ongar Library at 7.45pm. Please join us for drinks and nibbles. Frank Knights will also display some of his local finds. We look forward to seeing you there!

The committee are looking for new members to join the OMHS committee due to recent resignations. We need a new Chairperson, and a Venues Secretary to organise venues for our meetings. If you feel you would like to join us, please talk to any committee member.

Jenny Main

Ongar Millennium History Society AGM

20th September 2016

7.45pm at Ongar Library

Wine and nibbles

**Followed by a talk by Frank Knights
on his local finds through metal detecting.**

Committee members

Chair	Vacancy	Vice Chair + Newsletter	Jenny Main
Treasurer	Kathleen Jenkins	Venues Sec.	Vacancy
Secretary	Sandra Dear	Membership+Speaker Sec.	Lorna Vaux
Archive	Ron Huish		

A Local Ongar Man

c. 1510



In the church of St. Mary the Virgin in High Ongar, hung as a mural, is a brass of a civilian dated 1510. It is a small brass and shows the figure of a man.

Sadly, the inscription is lost so we do not know who he was but it is possible to imagine what life may have been like for him.

At first sight it is interesting for its clear representation of the costume of a civilian living at this time. He wears a long furred gown with full hanging sleeves, possibly trimmed with fur. As armour was dying out hair was worn at shoulder length and shoes were now round toed not pointed.

Not far from High Ongar is St Laurence Priory Church at Blackmore.

In 1518 Bessie Blount gave birth to her son, named Henry, after his father Henry VIII at Blackmore. Stories are told that the 'High' in High Ongar comes from the fact that Henry stopped at the church on his journey to see his son at Blackmore.

The east window in the church depicts the arms of Henry VIII and Jane Seymour, his third wife. Perhaps the man in the brass witnessed all these events during his lifetime. We will never know but the brass is clearly reliable evidence of what people in Ongar would have looked like at this time.

Stories in Brass (2)

Anne and her six sons

Here lyeth Anne Napper late the wyfe of
William Napper gent and daughter to William
Shelton esquire who departed VIII April 1584

In token of whose vertuus lyffe

And constant sacred love

And that her memory should remayne

And never hence remove

Her husband in his tyme of lyffe

This monument did leave his wyffe



On the wall of the nave in St. Margaret's Church hangs a brass to Anne Napper who lived in the parish of Stanford Rivers in Elizabethan times.

Anne was the daughter of William Shelton who lived at Ongar Park Hall.

Anne married William Napper a gentleman from Pucknowle in Dorset and we can see from the brass that they had six sons. Anne and her sons are shown kneeling. She wears a Paris cap and a long gown with a girdle around her waist. This was a typical costume for a lady living in the country.

The boys wear high ruffs around their necks and at the edges of their sleeves. They too, have short girdles around their waists.

Three of the children George, John and Robert were born in Stanford Rivers as their names can be found in the Parish registers. The brass is a reminder of the large families people had in Elizabethan times.

The timber framed east wing of Ongar Park Hall is medieval in origin. It is still possible to follow the footpath across the fields from Toot Hill to see this wonderful old house.

It seems that Anne and William enjoyed country life while living at Ongar Park Hall and that William travelled to the City of London where his financial interests lay.

Anne and William experienced many changes in religion during their life. Anne may have been too young to understand them but life under Mary a Catholic and then Elizabeth a Protestant must have had some impact on their lives.

Anne would have taken her children to St. Margaret's Church to worship there.

On reading the inscription brass Anne was a very much loved wife who devoted her time to her husband and family.

She died in 1584.

After her death William in his deep sorrow left Stanford Rivers and returned to Dorset. In the church at Pucknowle stands another brass to William Napper, but that is another story.

Gemma O'Donnell

The Thread of Patronage

On the side of Greylands in Ongar High Street is a stone tablet, placed there to record the position of the property boundary line. It bears the additional information ' T M Baynes Architect' and 'J Gerry Builder' and the date 1843. Their client was Frank Dobson Potter, one of the local surgeons, and his new home was provided with an integral consulting room, and a waiting room allowing separate access for his patients from the High Street. This side door has survived, but the lead speaking tube, which ran up to the doctor's bedroom and was used for summoning assistance at night, was removed during a recent restoration.

Thomas Mann Baynes (1794-1854) is recognized as a widely travelled and prolific watercolour artist, engraver and lithographer who specialized in topographical and landscape views. However, as an architect, no other buildings have been attributed to him. Before his commission he had had some tenuous link with the town and must have been sufficiently well known to Potter, at least, to be entrusted with the design of his new house and surgery. His first known association with Ongar was in 1839 when he painted a watercolour of 'a view near Ongar'. This was sold at Bonham's in 2006 though unfortunately no image is available.

At an unknown date – but possibly pre-dating his design for Greylands - he produced an engraving of the façade of the Ongar Academy (now Central House) which was still being used on the school's promotional literature in 1875, long after Baynes' death. It has been suggested that Baynes might have been the architect as well as the illustrator but there is no documentary evidence to support this, and there is nothing distinctive about the design of the former school building to suggest that he might have been responsible.

He did have a subsequent association with Ongar. In 1845 he exhibited, in the 'architectural drawings' section of the annual Royal Academy exhibition, a design for a mausoleum surmounting Ongar's castle mound. This was a grandiose structure in the 'Greco-Italian' style with a central dome and four transepts, commissioned by the executors of the highly eccentric will of Robert Mitford (1784-1836), a former civil servant in the East India Company. The clause relating to the construction of mausoleum had been challenged by his relatives, resulting in a delay of several years before the Court of Chancery ruled that the will was valid, and the executors were instructed to carry out the testator's instructions. The Mitford family had links with the town through marriage into the Boodle family, but they had never owned the castle. It is not surprising that the owner refused permission for the construction of what a contemporary described as 'certainly an extraordinary architectural project for one of a private nature'.

Baynes was the London-born son of James Baynes who was a watercolour painter and drawing master resident in London's Soho for most of his professional life. His son, Thomas Mann Baynes, was also Londoner with no known connections with Ongar or Essex, and he lived for much of his adult life at 41 Burton Street, not far from St Pancras railway station. The link between architect and patron is often obscure and there is a possible explanation for his two architectural commissions in Ongar which was, at that period, a small and rather decayed market town not yet linked to London by railway.

A near neighbour of Baynes, living at 45 Burton Street, was Thomas Wilson (1764-1843), a major benefactor of the Congregational church, a director of the London Missionary Society and a founder council member of University College, London. He had acquired property in Stanford Rivers (including the Hall, though he did not reside there). Writing in 1819, he noted 'the village of Stanford Rivers has frequently occupied my thoughts. I pay £190 tithe a year to a clergyman who only reads a sermon on a Sabbath morning. The village, which is three miles from Ongar, contains no Sunday school, and few children will go as far as that place. The labouring people are very ignorant, and have very little means of instruction.' He went on to explain that, encouraged by the Rev. Isaac Taylor of Ongar, he intended to use a cottage he owned on the turnpike road as a Sunday school in the afternoon, and for preaching in the evening, serviced by students from the Hoxton nonconformist academy. The project was successful and within a year two anonymous donations (one of which may have come from Wilson himself) enabled a purpose-built chapel to be erected. Wilson was a man with considerable funds of money and beneficent goodwill. In spite of his critical comment about the rector, he remained on friendly terms with him and even purchased a pew in the parish church for the use of his Church of England tenants. Such cordiality between the established church and the nonconformists was not usual.

Thus a close neighbour of Baynes in London had strong links with both Stanford Rivers (as a landowner) and with the local nonconformist community (including the talented family of Rev. Isaac Taylor of Ongar, writers, educationalists and artists). Most of the known architectural commissions in nineteenth century Ongar were linked in some way with the Taylor family. James Medland (Ongar Congregational chapel) and I C Gilbert of Nottingham (Ongar cemetery chapel and Congregational Sunday school) were related, and Fothergill Watson of Nottingham (the Budworth Hall) had been a former junior partner of I C Gilbert. The local connection with the Wilson family continued well into the twentieth century. Thomas Wilson's grandson had married a daughter of Isaac Taylor of Stanford Rivers, and their son, Geoffrey Remington Wilson, was the Ongar GP who died in 1943.

It seems probable that it was Thomas Wilson who introduced Baynes to the Ongar area in general and to the local surgeon, Frank Dobson Potter, in particular.

Sources:

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Wilson, J, 1846 *Memoir of the Life and Character of Thomas Wilson Esq*, London

www.bonhams.com/auctions/14133/lot/62 (accessed 29/6/2016)

www.marchmontassociation.org.uk/pdf/BurtonStreet.pdf (accessed 29/6/2016)

Considerable assistance in compiling this note has been received from Anne Padfield and Robin Gilbert.

Michael Leach

Reverend William Philp and the Old Rectory, Shelley

In an earlier issue of this newsletter we gave a brief mention of the old Rectory at Shelley and Rev. Philp. We can now provide a fuller story.



There is a pedestal tomb with a large cross on a kerbed double plot in Shelley churchyard. It bears the inscription "In loving memory of William Philp (priest) 32 years rector of this parish born March 14th 1848 died March 16th 1927 also of Margaret Catherine Barker Philp dearly loved wife of the above born Feb 17 1864 died July 30 1945".

Reverend William Philp lived in the Old Rectory soon after his appointment as Rector of Shelley in 1895. The rectory was a timber-framed building dating from the 16th century, if not earlier. For a short time from about 1754 Thomas Newton, brother-in-law of the then Rector of Shelley, James Trebeck, and later Bishop of Bristol, used the rectory as a retreat and is said to have written his *Dissertation on the Prophecies* there. Later the house was altered and enlarged. Henry Soames, Rector of Shelley from 1812 until 1860, was said to have spent considerable sums on it by 1835 and then in 1861 the house was again restored.

A photograph, taken in 1905-1910, shows a four-gabled building with a central porch occupying a 32 acre site. It was situated to the north of St. Peter's Church, within walking distance.



William Philp was ordained deacon in 1873 and held curacies at St. Sampson, Devoran, Crowan, Melksham, Withecombe-Raleigh, Dawlish, St. Stephen (Upton Park) and Hornchurch. He was appointed Rector of Shelley in 1895.

Two years later on 3rd June 1897 he married Margaret Catherine Barker Lucy from Sydney, Australia when he was 49 and she was 33 in the Parish Church in Southwark, London. They lived in the Rectory together with Margaret's younger sister, Mary Anne (Marian) Lucy. They are shown in the photograph taken in 1905 with Margaret on the right and Mary Anne on the left.

William had been married before. His first wife was Ellen Mary Gould who he married on 23rd January 1877 at St. Finbaarus Church, Fowey. They were together for just thirteen years when on 13th December 1890 Ellen died at Forest Gate, London.



His life was not without incident for at the Ongar Petty Sessions on 8th January 1910 Rev. Philp was summoned for assaulting Evelyn Galloway, daughter of Martin Galloway of Shelley Hall, and Bessie Brimsden, nurse to Mr Galloway. The Chairman of the Bench considered that the charge was proven. When he asked if anything was known about the defendant he was told that as recently as June 1909, Rev. Philp had been before the Court on a charge of assaulting Arthur Mansfield, gamekeeper to Mr Galloway and bound over to keep the peace for three months.

On this second occasion Rev. Philp was bound over in his own surety for the sum of £50 to keep the peace for twelve months. The Chairman added that if another occurrence of this nature came before them they will deal with it very differently.

Now, a few words about an advowson to help explain why the rectory was unoccupied after William Philp's death. An advowson is the right to nominate a person to be parish priest (subject to episcopal approval), and was often originally held by the lord of the principal manor within the parish. Rev. Philp purchased the advowson in late 1899 which coincides with the death of his father, so he may have used part of his inheritance. An advowson was regarded as real property and could be bought, sold, or bequeathed. A benefice generally included use of a house, i.e. a vicarage, parsonage or rectory, as well as the income from the glebe and tithes, which would provide for the living expenses of the incumbent.

After a short illness, Rev. Philp died on Wednesday March 16th 1927 just a few days short of his 79th birthday. He was rector of Shelley for 32 years. He had no children. On his death the advowson formed part of his estate and the right of a new rector to live in the rectory was delayed while the probate was being settled. So, when appointed the new rector, Rev. J.S. Barrass, lived at *Nottage* in Fyfield. Rev. Barrass became Rector of Shelley with Ongar in 1933 and since then the two parishes have shared one Rector.

On Thursday 1st September 1932 a fire destroyed the Old Rectory which had been unoccupied following the death of the Rev. Philp (photographs below). Traces of intruders were found in the

house and it is thought that they may have accidentally caused the fire which the Epping Brigade fought until late in the evening.



Margaret Philp died at Lindsell Villa, Shelley on 20th July 1945, leaving £4969.3s.7d to her younger sister, Mary Anne Lucy.

Acknowledgement:

We wish to thank David Taylor for the photographs of Shelley Rectory and the Philps family.

Keith Snow, Kathy Wenborne and Stan Ball

Dates for your diary

- Further OMHS events are to be announced
- Epping Forest District Museum events include a series of talks and Tea & Chat sessions, see their web site for details
- The OMHS AGM will be at 7.45 PM on 20th September at Ongar Library. Frank Knights will also display some of his finds on the evening

Further events will be announced in future newsletters and on the website. Have you looked at our website? The site is regularly updated with future events, so this is where you will hear the news first. The address is <http://www.omhs.org.uk/> or just type OMHS into a search engine.

Newsletter Contributions

We always welcome articles for the newsletter. If you have anything that you would like to contribute, please submit to the editor or through the website before the end of October 2016 to be in time for included in the next edition of the newsletter