

A Project Purley Publication

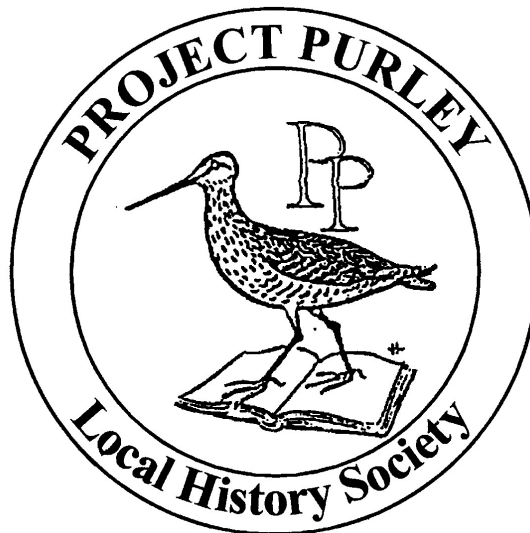
Sources for the History of Purley on Thames, Berkshire

Volume 1 Part 3

Items 39-61

Project Purley Publication 5

Reprinted September 2005



PROJECT PURLEY

Project Purley is the name adopted by the local history society set up in 1982 to study the past and present of Purley in Berkshire. The name was chosen to indicate a wider interest in everything to do with our parish than just local history. When the Queen's Silver Jubilee was celebrated in 1977 the Parish Council organised an exhibition and invited parishioners to loan their mementos of Purley. A remarkable collection appeared but no record was kept and the objects were returned to their owners later. However it stimulated an interest in the history of our parish and a church youth group, the Pathfinders, did some research. When Jean and Cliff Debney came to live in Purley they assembled a group of family history enthusiasts and began transcribing some of the available Purley registers and reconstructing old families. Around the same time a natural history group emerged and when the church was to be extended an archaeology group was formed under the leadership of John Chapman as the professional archaeologists did not have the funding to do a proper dig. In 1982 it was agreed to merge these groups and Project Purley was born.

Old documents, maps, photos, personal reminiscences and many other sources are being used to piece together the past of the people, places and buildings of the parish. Anything from earliest times to today is of importance and interest.

There are three levels to members' activities. First there are regular monthly meetings usually with a talk, but often during the summer taking the form of a walk-about. Second there are project groups where a few members get together as a team to work on a particular subject or facet. Finally there are the individual researchers doing their own thing but able to draw on the resources and experience of other members.

Over the years a vast amount of material has been collected and Project Purley has staged many exhibitions which have been received enthusiastically by the general public of the parish and beyond. Several of its members give talks to other societies and take part in wider activities such as those of the Berkshire Local History Association, The Berkshire Family History Association and the Berkshire Archaeological Trust.

For details of membership contact Jean Debney, 8 Huckleberry Close,
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Introduction

Sources for the History of Purley on Thames is a project started by Project Purley in 1986 to publish short documents, book extracts and letters relevant to the history of the Parish. The aim is to publish an A5 booklet containing a small number of transcripts or translations with three booklets plus an index forming a volume. The first volume was published between 1986 and 1989 but thereafter the project lapsed. We are now restarting the activity by first republishing the original four booklets and then, hopefully, publishing further volumes.

This is the third part of the first volume of Sources. A cumulative index is available separately as Project Purley Publication no. 4 covering sources 1-61

As far as is practicable an accurate transcript is provided plus, where necessary, a translation. In a few cases some additional notes are added.

The editor wishes to acknowledge the assistance of other members of Project Purley, especially of Jean Debney, who contributed material and proof read the typescript.

Edited by John Chapman

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39 Drowning of Henry Iremonger (1635)

Contributor John Chapman. From the 'Records of the Corporation of Reading' Volume III pages 278/9. Edited by the Rev J M Guilding (1896).

viiij Maii 1635 Coram Robert BENT, generoso, Majore

Henry IREMONGER complayned that his sonne Henry IREMONGER was bound apprentice to George MARTEN of Readinge, clothworker, and that this day fortnight he went awaye from his master, and is this daye found drowned in the river of Thames, nere to Purley in Berkshiere side, 3 or 4 myles from Reading.

40 Edmund Malyns pays 25 shillings (1336)

Contributor John Chapman from 'Feudal Aids' page 385. under 'Berks 1346'

Anno ix

Edmundus de Malyns dedit regi xxv.s pro relevio suo, videlicet pro manerio de Parva Purle in eodem comitatu, quod tenetur de rege per servicium quarte partis un f m.

(translation)

Year 9

EDMUND MALYNS gives to the King 25 shillings to relieve himself, with respect to the manor of Purley Parva in that County, which he holds of the King, of the obligation of one quarter part of a knights fee and service.

Note: The year 9 refers to the Regnal year of King Edward III 1327-1377) which should date it as 1336 not 1346 as given in the text of Feudal Aids.

41 William Gostwick reports on Dissenters (1706)

From 'Dissenter Returns' held at the Wiltshire Record Office, Trowbridge. Transcribed by John Chapman.

Purley June 17th 1706

Sir,

These are to certify whom it may concern. That on a parcell of Ground lying and being partly in ye Parish of Purley in the County of Berks & partly in ye parish of Whit Church in the County of Oxon, stands a good Mansion-house. In which the upper or East end of ye hall boarded at Bottom with what is built over it; And ye whole house besides lyes and is in ye parish of Purley & County of Berks afores^d

But ye lower or west Ends of ye Hall, being about three parts in fower of it, which is brikt at Botts & what is over it, lyes & is in ye Parish of Whit Church in ye County of Oxon afores^d.

Round about ye mansion-house appertaining to it & within a mile of it lyes and is an Estate in lands by Common computation two hundred pounds per annum or somewhat more, lying and being partly in ye parish of Purley, partly in ye Parish of Sulham in the County of Berks afores^d & partly in Whit Church in ye County of Oxon afores^d.

This said mansion house is at present unoccupied, Mrs Anne HYDE widow being lately dead and buried at Purley with ye Family. The said house and estate ar now descended to ye only son of ye said Mrs Anne HYDE, viz Francis HYDE, gent, a widower & a reputed

Papist, residing at present in ye parish of Burfield in Berks, not yet come to live in it but expected about Michaelmas next.

The said estate is lett to William LOADER living in ye Farm house near ye said mansion house who with all his family is of ye Church of England; as are all other inhabitants in and of ye parish of Purley aforesaid. The said Farme house occupied by ye said William LOADER is wholly in ye parish of Whit Church & County of Oxon aforesaid.

William GOSTWICK Rector

The marks of Samuel ELMS, John MARTIN, Churchwardens of Purley

42 Benjamin Skinner reports on Dissenters (1767)

From 'Dissenter Returns' held at the Wiltshire Record Office, Trowbridge.

Transcribed by John Chapman.

My Lord

After diligent enquiry I do not find one Person in this Parish who is either a professed or a reputed Papist.

I am with great respect,

Your Lordships most obedient son and servant

B SKINNER. Purley Berkshire

September 12th 1767.

43 Henry Wilder reports on Dissenters (1780)

From 'Dissenter Returns' held at the Wiltshire Record Office, Trowbridge.

Purley September 16th. 1780

My Lord In obedience to your desire, I herewith inform you that there is but one

Papist and no popish school within ye parish of Purley.

I am my Lord with all due respect

Your very humble servant

Henry WILDER Curate of Purley

44 James Manesty is Commended as Rector of Purley (1788)

From 'Letters of Commendation' in the archives of the Diocese of Salisbury held at the Wiltshire Record Office, Trowbridge.

To the honourable and right reverend father in God Shute by divine permission Lord Bishop of Sarum

Whereas the reverend James MANESTY MA hath notified to us that he is nominated to the cure of Purley in the county of Berks within your Lordship's Diocese & jursidiction & for that end hath desired of us a letter testimonial of his life & behaviour. We therefore whose names are underwritten do testify & declare from our personal knowledge of the life & behaviour of the said James MANESTY for the space of three years last past that he hath during that time lived piously & honestly nor hath he at any time as far as we know or believe written taught or held anything contrary to the doctrine or discipline of the church of England. In witness whereof we have hereunto set our hands this 16th July in the year of our Lord 1788.

Francis WILSON Rector of Sulhampstead

J ROBINSON R of Burfield

Thomas KNAPP Rector of Englefield,

Note: the letter is addressed to Shute BARRINGTON, Bishop of Salisbury. James Manesty was not successful, yet

he acted as curate of Purley throughout the tenure of John COOPER and was the father of Purley's longest serving rector Charles MANESTY. James is buried in Purley churchyard.

45 John Cooper is commended as Rector of Purley (1788)

From 'Letters of Commendation' in the Wiltshire Record Office, Trowbridge.

5th May 1788 Mr COOPER's testimonial on his institution to Purley

To the Right Reverend father in God, Shute by Divine permission Lord Bishop of Sarum.

We whose names and seals are here unto subscribed and set do humbly certify your Lordship that we have personally known the life and behaviour of John COOPER, Clerk, Master of Arts, Rector of Bix in the county and diocese of Oxford for the space of three years now last past that he hath during the said time been of good and honest life and conversation faithful and loyal subject to his Majesty King George the third and hath not (so far as we know) held written or taught anything but what the church of England approve of and maintains.

In witness wherof we have hereunto set our hands and seals this fifth day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty eight

Francis ROWDEN Rector of Cuxham
?

James RELTON vicar of Shirborne

The submission of this testimonial are clergymen of my diocese & I believe worthy of credit E. Oxford

E. Oxford is Edward SMALLWELL, Bishop of Oxford 1788-1799 The

middle signature is not decipherable.

46 House for Rent (1776)

From the Berkshire Mercury of May 20th 1776.

To be let pleasantly situated at Purley, Berks four miles from Reading about 200 yards from the turnpike from Reading to Oxford and about half a mile from the River Thames. A well built sashed bricked house in good repair containing 2 parlours, a butlers pantry and kitchen on the ground floor with a brew house adjoining. Three bed chambers, a dressing room one light and two other closets on the first floor, two bed chambers and others for servants on the attick story, a wine vault and good cellars, proper conveniences for wood coals etc, stabling for 3 horses, a garden, orchard and close adjoining the premises.

Part of the furniture is to be disposed of if agreeable to the tenant.

Further particulars may be had on the premises which may be viewed at any time being now inhabited.

The house in question is believed to be Purley Lodge

47 Warren Hastings rents Purley Hall (1789)

Extract from the Berkshire Mercury 4 May 1789 page 3

Mr HASTINGS has taken Purley Hall about five miles from this town for a temporary country residence until by the arrangement of his affairs he shall be enabled to build himself a house. Purley is a pleasant seat, the property of the Rev Dr WILDER

Warren Hastings had been Governor General of India and was awaiting impeachment. He rented Purley Hall

while he was preparing his defence against the accusations. The Purley connection is believed to have been made through the owners of Basildon Park.

48 The Materials from the Manor House are auctioned (1810)

Advertisement from the Berkshire Mercury April 16th 1810, Page 3.

Valuable Building Materials, Purley near Reading on the banks of the Thames

To be sold by Auction by Mr HAWKES on Wednesday April 25th 1810 @ 12 o'clock. On the premises in sundry lots to be taken down by the purchasers.

All the useful building materials of two substantial dwelling houses: The Manor House and Pond Cottage. Most conveniently situated for water carriage and within a very short distance of the Oxford Road about three miles from Reading.

Comprising a large quantity of excellent oak and fir timber, clean deal flooring, building and paving bricks, plain and pan tiles, marble and stone chimney pieces and steps, internal sliding and other sashes, pannel doors and shutters, wainscoting and several tons of lead pumps, spouts and gutters, ranges, stoves, beaufets and other valuable features.

To be viewed six days previous to the sale when catalogues may be had of Hawkes and Co, Land Agents, Reading and Mr REYNOLDS of Pond House who will show the same.

George REYNOLDS was the Steward of the Lord of The Manor of Purley Magna

49 The Churchwardens provide an Inventory (1677)

A transcript of the Presentments made by the Churchwardens in 1677. Berkshire Record Office (ref D/A 2 c 129/11)

1677

The presentments of Thomas BLAGRAVE Rector of the Parish Church of Purley and John GUTTERIDGE and Thomas BUSHNELL late Churchwardens of this said parish.

Item primis Our Church is in good repair
Item There is one great Bible for the Church

Item there are two Common Prayer books one for the minister and the other for the clerk

Item There is a register book in parchment and all other books convenient for the church

Item Our churchyard is sufficiently fenced with rayles

Item There is a decent font of stone standing in the said church.

Item There is a convenient table for the Communion with a communion cloth and cushion and all other things fitt and decent therewith

Item all other things are well in the said parish to the best of our knowledge

(signed)

John GUTTERIDGE)Churchwardens

Tho BUSHNELL)

The churchwardens had to report annually to the Archdeacon on the state of their church.

50 Lucy Huscarle Does Fealty (1354)

Extract from the Black Prince's Register folio 66. (transcript of translated and printed version)

Be it remembered that on 11 February Lucy late the wife of Thomas HUSCARLE did fealty to the Prince at Westminster and acknowledged thereby that she holds of the prince for life the manors of Bedyngton, Purle and Brightwell as of the honor of Walyngford for three knight's fees, by knight service and suit to the court there every four weeks, finding at her own costs two men-at-arms in the garrison of the said castle for 40 days, if there be war there. And thereupon she has a letter to Gilbert de CROSSEBY, keeper of the fees of the said honor.

And be it remembered that the said Lucy made her acknowledgement to Sir John de HALE, keeper of the prince's privy seal, in the chapel of Westminster.

51 Gilbert de Crosseby told not to Meddle (1354)

Extract from the Black Prince's Register folio 68d. (transcript of translated and printed version)

May 9, London

Order by advice of the prince's council to Gilbert de CROSSEBY the prince's yeoman and keeper of the fees of the honor of Wallyngford and St Walery, to remove the prince's hand clean from the body of the heir of Thomas HUSCARLE, and not to meddle further with the keeping and marriage of the said heir; as Lucy late the wife of the said Thomas has shown before the prince's council divers deeds whereby she holds

the manors of Bedyngton, Purlee and Brightwell, which are held of the prince in chief, for life, and the prince has learned that Gilbert has seized the body of the said heir, supposing him to be the prince's ward, whereas in fact the prince has no right to the said keeping and marriage at present by reason of the joint estate which Lucy has in the manors.

By petition endorsed.

52 Entry from Billing's Directory (1854)

Transcript of entry for Purley in Billing's Directory of 1854.

Purley is a small Parish and retired village, distant four miles from Reading, and in 1851 contained 220 inhabitants.

The Church is a very ancient structure, situate in a park, near which the greater portion of the houses formerly stood. The tower is composed of chalk, cased with brick, and contains six bells. The church contains some fine tablets and a beautiful antique font. The communion table is covered with a very old and curious tapestry. The Lord Chancellor is patron. Rev Richard PALMER M.A., Rector; Mr Thomas BURGISS Clerk. Service 11am and 3 pm.

The free school is supported by the Rector. Average number of scholars 30. Mrs. M HERRIDGE Mistress.

DIRECTORY

PALMER, Rev Richard MA Rector, Rectory

POPHAM, Alexander L Esq. Purley Park

STORER, Anthony Morris Esq, Lord of

the Manor

WILDER, Frederick, Purley Hall.

BURGISS, Thomas, Parish Clerk

GRIFFIN, Savery, Steward to Mr SHE-
RWOOD

HERRIDGE, Mrs Mary, Free Schoolmi-
stress

SHAKEL, Wm, farmer, Purley Cottage

SIMMONDS, John, blacksmith

*The 'old and curious piece of tapestry'
is undoubtedly the Elizabethan
embroidery sold to the Victoria and
Albert Museum in 1904 by the then
rector, John DUDLEY-MATTHEWS.*

53 Henry Malyns Complains about his Knight's Service (1316)

*Extract from 'Inquisitions Miscellane-
ous' preserved in the Public Record
Office. C Inq Misc File 77 (8)
(transcript from printed version, item
267 page 65)*

Writ to the Sheriff of Oxford and Berks
to extend the lands of Henry de MALY-
NES, who alleges that his name has
been wrongly returned into chancery as
of one having lands to the yearly value
of £50, and liable to take knighthood.
Windsor 10 July 10 Edward II (1316).

Extent before the bailiff of the liberty of
Radynge.

Radynge Saturday after St Luke.

Henry de MALYNES has lands and rent
in Little Porle of the yearly value of £4-
15s-8d; also lands in Oxford in the
honour of Walyngford.

Inquisition before the bailiff of the
honour of Walyngford,

William de DRAYCOTE, keeper of the
peace, being associated with him.
Ewelme. Friday after St Luke.

Henry de MALYNES holds a tenth part
of a knight's fee of the said honour, and
therein in Brotewelle a moiety of a mess-
uage and close worth 12d a year, a seve-
ral pasture worth 12d a year, wood

worth 12d a year, arable land worth 12s
6d a year and rent to the value of 66s 7d
a year; and in Henle a messuage worth
13s 4d a year; also lands in Hameldene
co Buckingham and in Little Purlegh, co
Berks.

54 Francis Freeling Rejects Penny Post for Purley (1810)

*From the Post Office Archives. POST
40 item 39R 1810. Transcribed and
contributed by John Chapman.*

17 May 1810

My Lords,

I have the honor to enclose a preliminary
report from Mr SCOTT on the suggest-
ion that a Penny Post might be establis-
hed in and around Reading & I am sorry
that Mr SCOTT's enquiries made on the
spot tend so much to confirm the fears I
mentioned at the Board to my Lord Chi-
chester that a Penny post would be very
difficult if not impracticable. The quest-
ion should not be prejudged & therefore
it will be better for your Lordships to
consider it when the new account of the
letters ordered by Mr Scott is obtained.
The delivery of Reading is very extens-
ive & the letters numerous, but they are
distributed into so many walks, no two
of which apparantly can be combined,
that it is to be apprehended the Penny
Post revenue on them could not be made
equal to the expense of effecting letter
carriers & unless we could give the inha-
bitants complete accomodation much

dissatisfaction would ensue.

Mr Scott has written a few separate lines which I enclose on the application of Mr BENYON which I am sorry to observe cannot be complied with unless the village of Theale should be included in a Penny Post walk.

All which etc

(signed)

Freeling

Francis FREELING was the Secretary to the Post Masters General to whom he is writing. He had commissioned Anthony SCOTT, the Surveyor of Posts for the District around Reading to report on the possibility of forming a Penny Post in the area. Although supported by many local inhabitants it was not thought it would pay its way. See also items 55-57 below.

At this time mail was delivered to a central office in Reading and owners of large houses would send a servant to

collect mail received and post outgoing letters. The penny post would have allowed letters to be delivered along a route leading to and from the main post office for which an extra penny would be charged. The messenger would call at major houses and also at a number of Receiving Houses en route. These latter gave the general public access to the mail service.

55 Residents of the Area Request a Penny Post (1810)

From the Post Office Archives, POST 40 item 39R of 1810. Transcribed and contributed by John Chapman.

To the Right Honourable the Post Masters General

The Memorial of the several Persons whose names are hereto subscribed, being Residents within or near to the several Parishes of Pangbourne, Purley, Whitchurch*, Basildon, Tidmarsh, Streasley in the County of Berks



A letter posted from Purley Hall to Stratford Essex bearing the Reading Penny Post imprint. In this case the fee should have been 10d not 8d as the clerk had forgotten to add the surcharge.

Sheweth

That your memorialists are much interested in having an early delivery of their letters, many of them being greatly connected with mercantile businesses in London, and having other Concerns with that metropolis and other parts of the kingdom - that by the present mode by which letters are conveyed to such of them as reside in and near to the aforesaid parishes, thro' the medium of the Post Office in Reading, great delay is occasioned by the manner they are now conveyed from thence, so that many have not an opportunity of answering their letters by return of Post, or of availing themselves of those advantages which an earlier delivery would afford them. And your memorialists humbly beg leave to state that a new turnpike road is made which unites the Reading Road with the Wantage Road, thro' the several Parishes of Streatley, Aston, Blewbury, Upton and Harwell to Wantage which is twelve miles nearer to the latter place than the road thro' Oxford by which the Wantage letters are now sent. The new road also passes within four miles of Ilsley which town has now to send to Newbury for their letters from whence it is distant nine miles.

That your memorialists humbly hope your lordships will please to take this memorial into due consideration and establish a direct communication by mail through the several parishes above stated to Wantage from whence if it proceeded to Farringdon which is only nine miles from Wantage, a more expeditious conveyance to and from Reading and the

counties of Gloucester, Worcester, Hereford, Monmouth and more distant counties would be obtained - and your memorialists beg leave farther to state their opinion that this proposed Line of Conveyance will not only sustain its establishment but add to the public revenue.

The above is humbly submitted to your Lordships consideration by

John Symonds BREEDON, Rector of Pangbourne

Rich^d BOSWORTH, Basildon Park

Geo OGLE, Basildon

Robert PIGOT, Whitchurch

Hugh MOISES, Rector of Whitchurch

Sam GARDINER, Coombe Lodge, Whitchurch

H RANDALL, Whitchurch

George LICHFIELD, Whitchurch

H KELSON,

S SMITH, Whitchurch

M RIOPLE, Pangbourne

Thos MORTON, Pangbourne

J MARTIN do

William TREW do

C W J PAGET ditto

Philip L POWYS Hardwick

S SHEPPHERD, Streatley

A HOPKINS, Tidmarsh

* County of Oxfordshire

This memorial was attached by FREELING to his letter to the Postmaster General given in item 55 above. The local residents were evidently concerned that their current postal arrangements were going to be declared illegal and were anxious to

retain what was a very convenient arrangement.

56 Freeling Recommends a Penny Post to Streatley (1811)

From the Post Office Archives, POST 40 item 86 of 1811. Transcribed and Contributed by John Chapman.

General Post Office

24 April 1811

My Lord

I have the honor to enclose two reports from Mr SCOTT on the delivery of Reading. No 1 proposes the establishment of a Penny Post on the Wallingford Road as far as Streatley about 9 miles which place a messenger can reach by quarter past nine in summer and quarter before 10 in winter. It will therefore be a great convenience to Purley, Pangbourne, and the whole string of villages to Streatley now served by a carrier who makes the letters subservient to his parcel business & does not reach any of the places till a late hour. Tis however this man that the inhabitants wish to have appointed the regular letter carrier and Mr SCOTT recommends him in conformity to their desires. If he fails in the performance of the engagement he is entering into with the office he must then make way for another.

Mr Scott's estimate of the expenses is £60-5s/10d per ann. which he has no doubt will be repaid and I presume your Lordships will have no objection to try the experiment for a year.

Mr SCOTT's Report No 2 states that the Streatley Road is the only one in which he can propose a Penny Post that would be advantageous to the Revenue or even

pay its own expenses, but that for the accommodation of the public the Postmaster is willing to deliver out letters to all the Country messengers at half past six in summer & 7 in winter this will enable them, if they will do it, to reach the ends of their walks sooner than they now do and I am happy to find if Mr BENYON pleases to have a pouch made up at Reading it can be delivered to any servant he would send for it to Theale at 8 in the morning or the Postmaster will do anything else in his power for Mr BENYON's accomodation.

Your Lordship's will recollect that a considerable time back Mr SCOTT made a full report on the Reading delivery and shewed the impracticability of establishing a Penny Post on a general scale.

All which is humbly submitted by

(signed)

F FREELING

Secretary (to) The Postmasters General

(endorsement)

I wish Mr Freeeling would be so kind as to communicate to Mr Benyon that part of arrangement which affects him

C

London 13 May 1811

The man referred to was the carrier GODWYN who had been carrying letters unofficially for the Reading Postmaster since around 1790. C is believed to be Lord Chichester, one of the Postmasters General.

57 Anthony Scott Reports the Arrangements for the Streatley Penny Post (1811)

From the Post Office Archives, POST 40 item 86 of 1811. This report was appended to the letter Freeeling wrote

(item 56) recommending the establishment of a Penny Post to Streatley. Transcribed and Contributed by John Chapman.

Reading April 20 1811

Dear Sir

I beg to acquaint you that I have made the necessary arrangements preparatory to the establishment of a Penny Post from Reading to Streatley (upon the Wallingford Road) and it will be ready to commence the middle of next week should the plan of it meet the approbation of my Lords the Postmasters General. The messenger is to leave Reading every morning at half past six o'clock during the summer months and at seven during the winter. He is to proceed to Purley delivering the letters as he goes along - from thence to Pangbourne which he is to reach at 8 o'clock (1 past in winter) He will then cross the Bridge to the Receiving House at Whitchurch; return to Pangbourne, reach the road thro Basildon, delivering the letters therein; and arrive at Streatley by a quarter past nine in summer and at a quarter to ten in winter. Letters for Mapledurham may be left at Purley, those for Sulham on the left also Tidmarsh at the Receiving House at Pangbourne - Gatehampton at Basildon and Goring and Aldworth at Streatley. From my own observations and from what I can learn from Mr WHITE I have reason to believe that this post will do more than pay its expenses independently of the convenience that must arise to the Country near which it is to pass by the letters being received two hours earlier than at present. The messenger will depart from Streatley at

four in the afternoon so as to get back to Reading by a quarter after seven.

Mr SIMEON and several other gentlemen having spoken in very high terms of the honesty, sobriety and punctuality of the person who has for upwards of 20 years conveyed the letters and parcels to Streatley; and many of them feeling averse to any arrangement which should tend to deprive him of the means of subsistence. I have engaged him as the messenger to be employed and I beg to recommend that he be paid at the rate of 20 shillings a week which I think is as little as we can give him considering the good character he bears, and that he will have twenty miles of errand daily to go over. My estimate of the expenses of this post is as follows:-

To a foot messenger for conveying the letters to and from Reading and Streatley daily 20/- a week or per annum £52-0-0

To pay a Receiver at Pangbourne £2-2-0

To a do at Whitchurch £1-1-0

To a do at Streatley £2-2-0

For crossing the Bridge to Whitchurch
365 days at 2d per day
£3-0-10

Making together the yearly sum of £60-5-10

I adjoin a sketch of the messengers route and am Dear Sir

Your faithful and obedient servant

Anthony SCOTT,

(to)

Francis FREELING Esq

(Appended is a map showing route from Reading to Streatley with principal residents named as follows:-)

Purley - A STORER Esq

Sulham - Mr SHERSON

Mapledurham - BLUNT Esq

Purley Hall - Dr WILDER

Pangbourne -

Whitchurch - Mr GARDNER Mr SIMEON Mr PIGOT

Tidmarsh - Mr Hopkins

Basildon Park - Sir F SYKES

Gatehampton -

Goring -

Streatley -

Mr White is John Skeat White who was the Reading Postmaster at the time.

58 Scott Reports on Postal Arrangements for Other Areas (1811)

From the Post Office Archives POST 40 item 86 of 1811. Transcribed and Contributed by John Chapman.

Reading April 23rd 1811

Dear Sir

In addition to my report of the 21st Instant I beg to observe that I am convinced we could establish no other Penny Post from Reading than the one to Streatley that would be at all advantageous to the Revenue or that would pay its own expenses. Mr White has very obligingly offered as an accommodation to the public to despatch the different Country messengers at half past six in the summer and at seven in the winter which will be half an hour earlier during the former six months and an hour during the latter. Thus the letters are delivered

within the Town of Reading by this means it appears to me that the principal advantages to the public of a Penny Post will be obtained. The arrangement too will I hope by the means of affording convenience to Mr BENYON (who upon making the usual allowance to the Postmaster) can have a pouch made up at Reading and sent by the Woolhampton messenger to Theal whence he will arrive in summer by 8 o'clock in the morning and if a servant is sent to meet him, Mr BENYON may procure his letters at Englefield House by half past 8 o'clock should any other mode however be preferable to Mr BENYON and he will communicate it to Mr WHITE every possible attention will be paid to his wishes.

I am Dear Sir, your faithful and obedient servant

(signed)

Anthony SCOTT,

(to)

Francis FREELING Esq.

This report was appended to Francis Freeling's letter; item 56 above. It was written mainly because of the representations made by Mr Benyon of Englefield House who was pressing for a Penny Post to Woolhampton which would call at Englefield.

59 Freeling Recommends the Streatley Penny Post be made Permanent (1813)

From the Post Office Archives, POST 40 item 200 of 1813. Transcribed and

contributed by John Chapman.

General Post Office

23rd July 1813

My Lords

It is satisfactory to receive the enclosed Report of Mr SCOTT of the result of such Penny Posts in his District as have been established one year.

Your Lordships will perceive that Mr SCOTT makes his estimates on the letters outwards only. The result of the Reading and Streatley Penny Post is a gain of £42-15-3 on these letters only Inwards for the year amount to £14-3-0 more.

In the case of Staines and Ashford the gain is £8-19-0 on the letters outwards and £22-6-0 on the letters inwards

In that of Newbury and Woolhampton the gain is £7-13-4 on the letters outwards and £26-16-0 on the letters inwards.

Brighton and Rottingdean £65-0-0 on the letters outwards and about £12 on the letters inwards and altho' the result of the Ripley and Woking Penny Post is a deficiency of £2-2-4 on the letters outwards there is a gain of £10-9-0 on the letters inwards which shews that the expence is more than covered - Your Lordships therefore may fairly order that as well as as others to be made permanent.

All which is humbly submitted by

(signed)

F FREELING

The Royal Mail had a monopoly on the carriage of letters and charged according to the distance between the Post Towns as measured along one or

other of the Post Roads which radiated from London. Within towns the local postmaster used to provide messengers to deliver mail but in the country areas local carriers used to make an arrangement with the Postmaster who would bundle the letters into a parcel, which was legal for the carriers to carry. The carriers then charged an extra penny on the normal postage for the service and the carrier and postmaster split the proceeds between them. As the volume of mail increased at the start of the 19th century the Royal Mail realised that they were losing potential revenue and introduced the concept of a Penny Post which would make the carrier an employee of the Royal Mail and thus the carriage of letters legal. This Penny Post system continued until 1839 when it was abolished as part of Rowland Hill's reforms. His Penny Post was quite a different system from the one mentioned in the items above.

60 Court Baron of Purley Magna (1786)

From Additional Manuscript 28672, Page 179 in the British Library. Contributed and transcribed by John Titterton. Note that the majority of the original document is written as continuous narrative, the paragraphing and punctuation is introduced by the editor to aid reading.

MANOR OF PURLEY MAGNA IN THE COUNTY OF BERKS

General Court Baron of Robert MACK-RETH Esquire, Lord of the said manor, holden at the House of John EMMONS lately called or known by the name or sign of the Red Lyon within and for the said manor, on Monday next after Saint Luke's Day, to wit on the twenty third day of October, in the twenty sixth year of the reign of our sovereign lord, George the Third; by the Grace of God of Great Britain, France and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith and so forth

and the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and eighty six. Before Matthias DEANE Gentleman, steward there

Homage and Suitors

John SHERWOOD)

) sworn

Thomas MARTIN)

At this court the homage present: That it is necessary to perambulate the said manor and descriptively to ascertain the Boundaries and limits thereof and to record such boundaries and limits on the Rolls of the Court of the said Manor. And do therefore request the steward of the said manor to permit such perambulation to be now made by the said homage and that the said steward will attend them on that occasion. To which the said steward on behalf of the Lord of the said manor consented and agreed.

The homage aforesaid, accompanied by the said steward, did therefore proceed on such perambulation and went from the place where the said court was then holden, along the said manor until they came to a place in the road to Reading called the Warren Shaw when they began the said perambulation namely at a beech tree in the said shaw on which a mark or cross was cut

and then proceeded along the middle of the Turnpike Road towards Reading 'till they came within about sixty yards of a certain place called the Roebuck and then across the corner of a field called Broom Close at the corner of which close, the said homage caused to be driven into the ground a post marked on

two sides thereof with the letters PM from thence up the left hand side of Broom Close towards Tilehurst and through or along the left of Upper Hides Field to the east corner thereof into a field called Westwood Fields in which field near the ditch another post marked as before was driven into the ground.

from thence along the south side of Upper Hides Field, Purley Coppice, Brown Yard Field, Parsonage Pike Close, Kernham Close and Jurdon's or Simmonds Pightle to a place called Purley Cross where an Old Oak Pollard appears to be marked with a cross and near which place another post marked as before was driven into the ground

and then by the south side of Purley Cross Close, across Elms Pightle to the extent of the left hand corner thereof from thence round the left of a close called Eleven Acres Harry Jar's Close to the gate leading to Long Lands from thence down the left hand side of the said Harry Jar's Close and down the left hand hedge adjoining two closes called Harry Jar's Closes to the corner of a close in the parish of Whitchurch called Lower Harry Jar's where another post marked as before was driven into the ground

and from the said post last driven to a gate leading into a lane called Blaze Ground Lane from thence into Upper Warren Close where another post marked as before was driven into the ground

from thence in a line by the right of Blaze Ground Lane to a quicksett hedge

between the two Warren's Closes through the gate thereto the distance of about ten poles from the Turnpike Road where another post marked as before was driven into the ground

from the last mentioned post to and round a figure with a dial thereon from thence to and through the south part of the dwelling house of Purley Hall and out at the west door thereof

from thence to the distance of about fifteen yards below the road leading from Purley Hall into the Turnpike Road and down the said road on the right hand towards Pangbourne to a barn called Marsh Barn and through part of the said barn about one bay thereof on the outside of which another post marked as before was driven into the ground

and then round the said barn so as to include a cart house and dwelling house belonging to the Reverend Mr BREDON occupied by POCKOCK called Marshes Farm and from thence through the middle of the garden belonging to the said farm into a ground called Rye Ground and down the left side of the said ground under the hedge and adjoining to Down Field to an elm tree about the middle of the said field in the hedge marked with a cross

and from thence along the said field to Emmetts Meade near a pollard oak and then across the ditch into Emmetts Meade up the hedge into the road

and from thence in at the gate opposite Old Mans Lane down by the hedge on the left hand side to an elm tree near to which stake stands marked on one side

the letter P and on the other with the letter W

and from thence by the left hedge down to the corner and over the hedge by Lady Platt Close into New Mead at which another post marked PM was driven into the ground

from thence along the hedge on the right in New Meade by Lady Platt Coppice into a meadow called Charley Mead and from thence across the said meadow bearing to the left to a post marked in the same manner as the last mentioned post driven into the ground in Charley Mead

and from thence in a direct line from the said last driven post to another post marked in like manner close on the bank of the river of Thames and driven there by the direction of the same homage

and from thence into the river Thames to the extent of the half stream where they are of the opinion and do accordingly find and present that the royalty of the said manor of Purley Magna commences half stream in the River of Thames

from thence downwards towards Reading continuing the half stream the whole way and including the New Cut and Mapledurham Pound down to the second gate under a wood called Warrens Shaw where another post marked in like manner was driven into the ground

and from thence on a direct line up to the said tree in Warren Shaw where the said tree is marked with a cross being the place from whence the said homage commenced their perambulation

The homage aforesaid presents: That it

appears to them that near the bridge at the upper end of Charley Mead there is an acre of meadow land by computation in the Parish of Purley and which they apprehend to be within and part of this manor

The homage aforesaid further present: That the said perambulation herein before described doth set forth and ascertain the extent, boundaries and limits of the said manor of Purley Magna according to the best of their knowledge, information and belief.

The homage aforesaid further presents: That they have been informed and understood that Philip Lybb POWYS Esq claims a manor called Purley Little Manor within the said manor of Purley Magna but the said homage do not apprehend that the said manor of Little Purley extends beyond the present property of the said Philip Lybbe POWYS in the said Parish of Purley

The homage aforesaid further presents: That there are several estates consisting of cottages and small parcels of land thereto belonging within the said manor now or late in the several occupations of widow SIMMONDS, John GREEN, John NEWBURY, William GUTTERIDGE, Widow DENCH, William LOOKMAN, Benjamin HUMPHREYS and widow HAINES which were formerly let on leases for lives which the said homage are informed are fallen unto the lord of the said manor by the death of the person or persons on whose life or lives the same was or were held

The homage aforesaid also find and pre-

sent: That the following Quitrents are annually due and payable to the lord of this manor by the following persons for the following estates namely John George LIEBENROOD Esq for his house and land the annual sum of four shillings; John SHERWOOD one of the said homage for Pond House the annual sum of two shillings

The homage aforesaid also present: There is a certain pond on the waste of the said manor in Purley Street called Hackmoor Pond

the homage aforesaid further present: That in their opinion the greatest part of the dwelling house and outhouses of John EMMONS and all the garden thereto belonging and also the cottages and gardens thereto belonging in the occupation of Joseph LAMBOURN and William SHERMAN both being in the roads leading to Pangbourne within this manor and parish of Purley were formerly inclosed and taken from the waste land

(in large hand at foot of page)

From one end of this manor to the other by the manner is two miles three furlongs and thirty one poll

(On the reverse of page 181)

Manor of Purley Magna in the county of Berks

General Court Baron held 23rd October 1786

Robert MACKRETH Esq, Lord of the Manor

Matthias DEANE, Steward

61 Biography of Anthony Morris Storer 1746-1799

Extract from the Dictionary of National Biography Volume XVIII. The article was written by W P Courteney around 1898.

STORER ANTHONY MORRIS (1746-1799), collector and man of fashion, born on 12 March 1746, was elder son of Thomas Storer of Westmoreland Jamaica (d Golden Square London on 21 July 1793 aged 76) who married Helen, daughter of Colonel Guthrie. Anthony was at Eton from about 1760 to 1764 with C.J.Fox and Earl Fitzwilliam and some sets of Latin verse by him are in the 'Muses Etonienses' His 'sense and good nature' while at school are lauded by the fifth Earl of Carlisle in 'Verses on his Schoolfellows' 1762. About 1765 he proceeded to Cambridge, probably to Corpus Christie College, and was a close friend there and at Eton of Lord Carlisle but left without taking a degree.

Storer then blossomed into the gay world of London, becoming conspicuous as the best dancer and skater of his time, and beating all his competitors at gymnastics. He excelled too as a musician and conversationalist. Like most of his school friends he was both a man of fashion and a whig in politics. During 1778 and 1779 he was in America with Lord Carlisle and William Eden (afterwards first Lord

Auckland). He visited Carlisle when lord-lieutenant of Ireland in 1781, and through his interest succeeded Benjamin L'Anglois as a commissioner of the board of trade on 26 July 1781. Meanwhile he sat in the House of Commons as

MP for Carlisle from 1774 to 1780, and subsequently - from 1780 to 1784 - for Morpeth. Much of his time was passed with the family of Lord North, and in August 1782 he was a medium of communication between that nobleman and Fox. He enlisted under the 'coalition' and in September 1783, greatly to the indignation of Gibbon, who was also an aspirant to the office, he was sent by Fox to Paris as secretary of the legation. On 13 Dec. 1783, when the ambassador, the Duke of Manchester, came home, he was nominated as minister plenipotentiary, but six days later his friends were ejected from office. His connections with politics then ceased. He had by that time quarrelled with Carlisle, to whom he revoked a bequest of all his property, and did not seek re-election for Carlisle's borough of Morpeth after the dissolution of 1784.

In September 1781, according to Horace Walpole's testimony, Storer was seized with a passion for collecting books and prints. These expensive tastes and the love of cards kept him in comparative poverty until his father's death. In 1786 he was reading the Latin and Greek writers half the day with Dr. Edward Harwood, whose 'View of the Classics' was greatly improved, in its fourth edition, from Storer's library. He was desirous in December 1787 of entering the diplomatic service, and in April 1793 he languished for employment; but his father's death in the last year brought him an ample fortune. He purchased Purley Park, between Pangbourne and Reading, and, with the advice of Humphrey

Repton, expended a considerable sum in improving and ornamenting the grounds. His health was bad; he had been very ill in the winter of 1787-8, and he did not live to complete the house for the estate. But the sum of £20,000 was set aside by his executors for that purpose, and the present mansion, 'a large square stone building' was erected from the designs of Wyatt. He died 'of a deep decline' at Bristol Hotwells on 28 June 1799, and was buried at Purley, a monument by Nollekins, with a Latin inscription, being erected to his memory in Purley church. His fortune was left to his nephew Anthony Gilbert, the only son of his brother James, who had married the Hon Elizabeth Thomas, daughter of the first Lord Carysfort. The only other legacy was the sum of £1000 to James Hare.

Storer was elected F.S.A on 11 Dec 1777, and became a member of the Dilettanti Society on 18 April 1790. His library was rich in old classics, rare books of history and travels, and antique bindings, and it contained two undoubted Caxton's and 'Les fais du Jason'. Many of his books were illustrated with prints by himself and drawings by various artists, his copy of Granger being amplified into many large folio volumes. He left his complete library, with the exception of such works as they already possessed, to Eton College, and he also gave the college his beautiful collection of prints. Many sprightly letters by Storer are printed in Jesse's 'George Selwyn' (vols iii and iv) and in the 'Correspondence of William Eden, Lord Auckland'

Mathias, among others praises his literary attainments (Pursuits of Lit Dialogue iv)

Storer's portrait, a full length with an engraving in his left hand, was painted by Sir Martin Archer Shee. It remains at Purley, the property of Major Storer. Another portrait of Storer hangs in the college library at Eton.

Refs

'Life of Caxton' 1863 ii 19, 88, 94

Britton & Brayley 'Beauties of England and Wales' i 175

Gentleman's Magazine 1799 ii p626; 1800 ii p689

Gibbons Letters ed 1896 ii pp67-8, 86 -7
Notices of Society of Dilettanti p123

Leslie & Taylor's 'Sir Joshua Reynolds' ii pp 124, 146

Eton Loan Collection 1891 pp 3, 5, 6

Notes & Queries 6th ser. vol iii

S.v Eton College Library

Walpole's Letters viii pp51-2, 125-6

Nichol's Literary Anecdotes ii 660, viii 657, ix 508-10

Jesse's Selwyn ii 129, iii 74-6

Rev K J Richardson's recollections ii 93-4

Information from Major Storer of Purley.

Project Purley Publications

These are published occasionally to document the work done by members of Project Purley. The editor would be pleased to hear from anyone who would like to be notified of Project Purley Publications as they become available.

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Other publications have been

- 1 **Sources for the History of Purley on Thames Vol 1 part 1** (items 1-23) (revised Aug 1988)
- 2 **Sources for the History of Purley on Thames Vol 1 part 2** (items 24-38) (Aug 1988)
- 3 **Monumental Inscriptions at St Mary's Church Purley Part C** (Feb 1989)
- 4 **Sources for the History of Purley on Thames Vol 1 Index** (revised Feb 1989)
- 5 **Sources for the History of Purley on Thames Vol 1 part 3** (items 39-61) (Reprinted and revised September 2005)
- 6 **Index Locorum to The Diary of Reading Corporation** (reprinted September 2005)
- 7 **Tour Guide to Purley Church** (1988)
- 8 **The Early History of Purley C of E School** by Rita Denman (1993)
- 9 **A History of St Mary's Church Purley** by John Chapman (1988)
- 10 **The Place Names of Purley on Thames** by John Chapman (Sept 1990)
- 11 **Project Purley Newsletters 1-11** (April 1996)
- 12 **Project Purley Newsletters 12-16** (April 1996)
- 13 **Purley on Thames at the Millennium** compiled by John Chapman (December 1999)
- 14 **Monumental Inscriptions at St Mary's Church Part C - Memorials in new churchyard**
- 15 **Sources for the History of Purley on Thames Vol 2 Part 4** (items 82-) In preparation
- 16 **Monumental Inscriptions at St Mary's Church Part B - Memorials in old churchyard**
- 17 **Monumental Inscriptions at St Mary's Church Part D - Cremation Memorials** (in preparation)