

No:74



Sherington Historical Society

Newsletter



December 2011

www.mkheritage.co.uk/shhs

Special dates for your diary

Tuesday 11th January

Members' Meeting. Please come for a low key evening archiving and chat.

Tuesday 24th January

January Jolly - the Society's New Year outing. This year we are going to The Chester Arms in Chicheley, 7.00 pm for 7.30 pm. The cost will be £25 per person for members and £30 for a member's partner. This cost will include the first drink. If you'd like to come along but haven't given your menu choice yet, please contact a member of the Committee.

Tuesday 14th February

Fall in love with Sherington again. For your delectation, a cinematic extravaganza, or some much loved films, to show how we all used to have a good time.

Tuesday 13th March

Annual General Meeting. If you would like to help out, then please put your name forward for the Committee. Sheila Quinn is standing down from the Committee in 2012, so if you would like to put your name forward for the Secretary's position, please let a member of the current Committee know. If you don't want to commit to becoming a member of the Committee, then come along to the AGM anyway and give us any suggestions or thoughts you may have for future meetings or about the Society in general.

Our Tuesday monthly meetings start at 8.00 pm unless otherwise stated.

News Snippets

The Open Day on Saturday 1st October was a great success. Members and non-members came along from far and wide to see the exhibition on Sherington Families. Howard Dalton came from Poole in Dorset and brought along his video camera. He made a 20 minute video containing interviews with Caroline Leslie, Philip Smith

and Mary and Peter Mynard. The video is on the Sherington Historical Society website - you can access the video from the website homepage.

Our October monthly meeting was the very enjoyable talk by Ann Leaver on “The Clatter of the Stagecoach”. Ann told us about the history of the stagecoach in this area and gave some very interesting meanings to common sayings, such as “falling off the wagon”.

The November meeting consisted of a few members giving a short talk on their chosen subject. There were some fascinating stories from members who have been researching their family histories. Pearl Teasdale told us about her family - The Alabasters - this story is on page 4. Caroline Leslie talked about her ancestor, Norman Leslie. Her article on this appeared in December’s SCAN. Sheila Quinn talked about her family, The Linksons and The Old Bailey. You can read her story on page 6. June Drew read some extracts from Juliet Nicholson’s book “The Great Silence” - a fascinating social study of the period during and after The Great War. Philip Smith played some interesting audiotapes of extracts of interviews with Rabby Brookes (recorded in 1980) and Joe Watts (recorded in 1978 when Joe was in his 90s). It was a very enjoyable evening and it went so well that we intend to put on another “Members Can Talk” next year.

On page 7 of this newsletter you’ll see a letter from a gardening magazine written by John Shann of Newport Pagnell, who writes about the allotment rules in Sherington in 1847. Thanks to Peter Watts in Crofts End, and to his uncle Maurice Watts, now in Norfolk, who sent this onto Peter. Peter passed the article on to Celia Wing to add to the Society’s archive.

On page 8, there are some extracts from the Parish Magazine in 1893 for Sherington. We’ve included the sections for November and December so you can see what they were writing about at the same time of year as now, but 118 years ago! It was interesting to see that they were having a Jumble Sale in aid of Church funds.

The pictures on page 10 and 11 are from the Buckinghamshire Stained Glass website and show some of the windows in St Lauds.

Ian Collinge has sent a reminder to members that he is always interested in any ideas anyone has for improving or extending the website. If you have any thoughts please contact Ian direct on history@sherington.org.uk. The website continues to attract lots of visitors - it had 4,214 hits in November.



We had an email from The One Show asking about the tree that was planted on The Knoll in 1937 for King George VI's coronation. Philip spoke to a director of the programme who was researching the story and told her that he attended the tree planting ceremony, but the tree did not survive as it was watered with salt water by some young vandals who

were visiting Knoll Cottage. Unfortunately, despite Philip's best efforts, the story that featured on The One Show didn't include the photo or had any mention of Sherington.

The publication of A.C. Chibnall's book, "Sherington Fiefs and Fields of a Buckinghamshire Village", has been delayed for months - it was due to have been published in June. The good news is that Cambridge University Press tell us they now have a definite publication date of 26th January 2012. You can order your copy directly from their website or through Amazon. It will be a paperback at £14.99.

The Committee wishes everyone a happy New Year.

The Alabaster Family

I first learned I was part of the large Alabaster family in 2008. My nephew's wife, Patricia De'Bell, who lives in Canada, and I were both researching my maiden name of De'Bell. We both got stuck in the mid-nineteenth century, so Patricia asked me (via e-mail) what I knew about my paternal grandmother. I replied with the information that she was born Amelia Lillian Haines in 1873. Patricia decided to go down the Haines route and found Amelia, then her mother, who I had only heard referred to as "Grandma Haines". I did not know my great-grandmother's Christian name or her maiden surname, but Patricia did some more digging and came up with Virtue West Alabaster. Neither of us had come across that name before, but Patricia decided to do a bit more digging and found the "Alabaster Society" on the internet.



Amelia and Samuel De'Bell

The Alabasters have an interesting history which has been researched by various members of the Alabaster Society. The Alabaster name is derived from the word for a crossbowman or crossbow maker, i.e. “arblaster” or “arbalestier” – hence the family shield showing a crossbow.

The earliest complete records go back to Nicholas Shaxton (1485-1556), who had been Bishop of Salisbury. Hadleigh in Suffolk is recognised as the Alabasters’ home and the society has a gathering in this beautiful town every three years. I was very privileged to be able to attend the Ninth Alabaster Gathering in Hadleigh this year. Whilst Bishop of Salisbury (during the reign of Henry VIII) Nicholas Shaxton was arrested because of his continuing tenuous links with catholicism. In July 1540 King

Henry declared a general pardon for nearly all prisoners, and Nicholas benefited from this pardon which had special conditions attached to it. Nicholas had to promise to refrain from preaching and he was unable to visit London, Oxford, Cambridge or the diocese of Sarum. After the pardon Archbishop Thomas Cranmer sent Nicholas to Hadleigh for his own protection. He was able to do this because Hadleigh was a “Peculiar Parish” in that it was responsible directly to the Archbishop of Canterbury rather than to the bishop of Norwich. Nicholas Shaxton’s sister had married into the Alabaster family and her son, Thomas, accompanied Nicholas to Hadleigh. After Shaxton left Hadleigh, Thomas Alabaster continued to live in the town and from him we (the Alabasters) are all descended.

Now a little bit about my immediate ancestors: Virtue, born in 1853, was the second child of Henry William West Alabaster and his first wife Eliza Gray. Henry and Eliza had one other child (a small family in Victorian times), Horace Robert, born 1850. There was no record of Eliza’s death when Henry William West Alabaster took on a second wife, Elizabeth Lee, and had (at least) six children with her. Henry’s first two children had the surnames of “West Alabaster”, but the second group of six children were known as “Alabaster West”. Recent research has shown that it is possible that Henry William took on a third bigamous ‘wife’ – but that’s a story still to be told!

The photo included in this article is of my grandparents - Amelia was the first child of Virtue West Alabaster.

Pearl Teasdale

The Old Bailey and the Linksons

I am researching my maternal grandmother's family line, Linkson. During the middle 19th century they lived in Spitalfields, east London and many, including my great-grandmother, were City of London flower sellers.

I looked on the Old Bailey website (www.oldbaileyonline.org) and actually found four cases involving members of the Linkson family between 1840 and 1856! The second case was on the 21st August 1843 when George Newton was accused of stealing "a reticule containing 2 sovereigns, 1 shilling, bunch of keys, spectacles, apron and a handkerchief" from Lydia Linkson, my great-great-grandmother. Lydia appears to have been quite a feisty lady and at the time of the robbery had been widowed for a year. She gave chase through the City streets and managed to restrain her assailant until a policeman arrived. George Newton aged 18 was found guilty and sentenced to six months confinement.

On the 27th February 1840 one of Lydia's sons, 15-year-old William, pleaded guilty to stealing a tart value 1d from George Kingsford. He was sentenced to be confined for three months and to be whipped.

In 1856 another of Lydia's sons, John aged 22, pleaded guilty to theft from The Boar's Head public house in Cannon Street. Together with George Wilson he was tried for attempting to steal money from the pub, and John, who pleaded guilty, was sentenced to nine months' imprisonment. George Wilson was found not guilty

In May 1845 Margaret Burke pleaded guilty to stealing a £5 bank note from the house of Robert Linkson in the St. Leonard's area of Shoreditch. Margaret was confined for twelve months.

I found the text interesting but was rather puzzled by the inconsistency of the sentences not always matching the crimes!!!

Sheila Quinn

Allotment rules were tough back in 1847

RULES and regulations governing allotments have changed a lot over the years.

I found a copy of some for plots let to the inhabitants of Sherington, Bucks, dated October 1847, which included 17 different regulations.

These included:

- The land is to be let for the term of one year only; when, without notice, it falls into the hands of the landlord, and possession will be given on the 11th of October in each year to approved tenants.
- The Land is to be cultivated in the following manner - namely, one third, and no more with potatoes; one third, and no more, with wheat, barley, or any other kind of grain; and the remaining third, with cabbages, peas, beans, carrots or any other green crop.
- No occupier, who is at work for any employer, will be allowed to work upon his land after six o'clock in the morning, or before six o'clock in the evening, without special permission from his employer.
- Any occupier convicted before a magistrate of poaching, or any other act of dishonesty; or proved, by evidence to the satisfaction of the Rector, to have committed any act of dishonesty, shall be dispossessed of the



A more relaxed approach to growing at this site

occupation of his land, and his crop be taken at a valuation.

• Every occupier shall attend public worship at the Parish Church at least once every Sunday; and should he neglect to do so, without sufficient cause, he shall be dispossessed of his land.

• If any occupier shall become a drunkard, or a frequenter of public houses, or in any respect a disorderly person, he shall be dispossessed of his land.

• No occupier is to work on his land on the Lord's Day, or remove the produce after eight o'clock in the morning of that day.

• If any dispute arise respecting the meaning of the above rules, or any other subjects connected with the occupation of the Land, the affair is to be referred to

the Rector, whose decision shall be absolute and final.

John Shann

Newport Pagnell, Buckinghamshire

★ Star Prize
The writer of this week's star letter wins £25 worth of seeds from Mr Fothergill's.

A-Z Flower & Vegetable Seed Catalogue 2010

www.mr-fothergills.co.uk



Parish Magazine Extracts (1893)

November 1893

A class for instruction has been opened at the School on two evenings in the week, under the excellent management of Mr Collett. It is likely to be most useful to the lads who have left school. There is a widespread error that when a certain standard is passed nothing more is needed, whereas that is only the beginning, and what has been learnt is quickly forgotten unless followed up by instruction afterwards. There are now 25 under such teaching.

Our Harvest Festival was held on Sunday, October 8, and was a great success. The parishioners seemed to vie with each other in the endeavour to make it so. Never were the decorations more beautiful, among which the screen, in which the ears of corn were entwined in a very graceful way by Mr Joseph Field and his helpers, was very prominent. The afternoon service was crowded, when a most excellent sermon on the folly and wickedness of unbelief was preached by the Rev J. B. Maul, of The Lodge, Newport Pagnell, and a collection made afterwards on behalf of the Northampton Infirmary and the Farmers' Benevolent Society - it amounted to more than £4. The musical portion won universal praise, and reflected the greatest credit on Mr Collett for the knowledge, skill and patience with which he had trained the

choir. We were glad to see so large and satisfactory a body of persons come forward to sing the praises of Almighty God and thank Him for His mercies.

Under the direction of the Education Board, new offices are about to be added to the School Buildings.

December 1893

Not much has occurred during the last month for us to record.

We notice with pleasure that the material laid down through our village, both towards Newport and also Olney, belonging to the unfortunate Tramway is in course of removal. It is singular to notice the same fate should overtake it which befel a projected railway many years ago. The latter was suddenly stopped when half finished. Newport and Olney must, we suppose, remain content without closer relations, unless, indeed, some enterprising individual should reappear with a 'bus. We are glad to know the County Council are taking the opportunity to make a good solid footpath between the two towns.

The Rector has begun a service of Bible reading and exposition at the schoolroom on Sunday evenings at six o'clock; it is already well attended.

A Jumble Sale in aid of the funds, and specially in order to provide what is needed for the full equipment of the School, will be held on the 24th. An account of this will appear in the Magazine for January.

St Lauds Church - Stained Glass Windows

The stained glass windows shown on pages 10 and 11 are from the Buckinghamshire Stained Glass website (<http://www.bucksstainedglass.org.uk/>). The website shows many stained glass windows from churches throughout Bucks. They give the following information about each window: the place and the location in the church, the number of lights, the maker and/or the designer wherever possible, the year of installation, the maker's mark (where it exists), the type of mark and if it is defined in the NADFAS marks catalogue, the authority for the attribution and the subject of the window and the dedicatee and the donor. The windows shown here are all from St Lauds, Sherington.



Left: In squint S. Maker: John Hardman, year: 1884. Type 1 light. Attribution: Order book 6 dated 7.5.1884. Subject: St Laud. In the south-west wall is a small window or "squint" pierced into the buttress of the Tower. Its unusual shape leads to the suggestion that it may have been a window for the dispensing of alms or bread to the poor or to lepers. It is so placed to provide a clear view of the altar from the church yard. The stained glass picture is of Saint Laud.

Right: East window. Type: 3 lights. Maker: Alexander Gibbs. Subject: Nativity; Crucifixion; Baptism. Comments: Sheep's wool looks like Alexander Gibbs.

Bottom right on page 11: S aisle E. Type 3 lights. Maker John Hardman Year: 1885. Attribution: Order book 11/404 dated 26.12.1884. Dedicattee: Alexander King, donor: her sister. Subject: Presentation in the temple..



Top left: S aisle S (C). Type 3 lights. Maker: Clayton and Bell, year: 1876. Attribution: AMA, RE, dedicatee: George Nelson and wife Georgiana Susannah, donor: her mother, Georgina Umney. Subject: 3 Maries; Resurrection; Peter and John. Comments: May be Hardman or Clayton and Bell. This is a close-up of one of the sections of the window.

Top right: N aisle N (W). 2 lights. Maker: Christopher Webb, Year 1926. Attribution: Faculty. Dedicatee: John Wellesley Taylor. Donor: Mother, sister and friends. Subject: St George; St Hubert. A close-up of the bottom left section of this window appears on the front page.





Sherington Historical Society

presents

For your delectation, a cinematic extravaganza,
or some much loved films,
to show how we all used to have a good time.

A film show

Fall In Love With Sherington Again

Sherington Village Hall

Tuesday 14th February 2012

7.45 pm for 8.00 pm



Refreshments available
Raffle

Entry: £1.00/£2.50 for members/non-members

Web: www.mkheritage.co.uk/shhs

Email: SheringtonHS@yahoo.co.uk