

# Tadley and District History Society projectnews

Hospital Sunday, May 1922 – outside *The Fox and Hounds* public house, Mulfords Hill, Tadley

## Issue one

December 2002

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## About us

Tadley and District History Society (TADS) was founded in 1984 for people with an interest in local social history, and in the broader scope of history and natural history. Monthly evening talks are held on the third Wednesday of each month, except August, at 8.00pm in St Paul's Church Hall, Tadley. Meetings are open to visitors.

TADS is a member of Hampshire Archives Trust and The British Association for Local History.

TADS's projectnews is published three times a year by Tadley and District History Society. If you would like to receive regular copies, please contact Alan Cooke, Distribution Officer, at Tadley and District History Society, PO Box 7264, Tadley RG26 3FA, United Kingdom; telephone: 0118 981 4006; web: [www.tadleyhistory.com](http://www.tadleyhistory.com)

Comments and/or articles for possible inclusion in future issues of projectnews are welcome – please contact Carol Stevens; telephone: 0118 970 1578.

Copy date for the next issue of projectnews is 19 February 2003.

Welcome to Tadley and District History Society's new publication, projectnews, a newsletter aimed at publicising the Society's project and research work. projectnews will be published periodically in addition to the society's regular monthly newsletter.

## Heritage Open Days: Pamber Priory

We realised that the decision to open Pamber Priory Church to the public had been a good one before the doors were even officially open on the Friday. Whilst in the throes of setting up the display and plugging in the video etc visitors were arriving, keen to see the interior with its unusual features.

With the permission of Queen's College Oxford and co-operation of churchwarden David Cullum we belatedly registered Pamber Priory Church with the Civic Trust, organisers of the Heritage Open Days weekend. It is England's biggest and most popular voluntary cultural event, attracting in excess of 800,000 people to the four-day event. It offers a unique opportunity to explore the sometimes hidden, often curious, interesting places that are not usually open to the public. Heritage Open Days was established in 1994 as England's contribution to European Heritage Days in which 47 countries now participate.

The church was open on three of the four days and attracted in the region of 200 visitors. Most were 'locals', visiting for the first time or re-living schooldays, weddings, funerals in times when churches were able to leave their doors unlocked. Visiting Americans and Swiss signed the



register alongside people from Winchester and Southampton.

With the aid of Marie-Claude Lelliott's excellent video on the priory it was easy for people to put the church in context with the 12<sup>th</sup> century priory building and the chant of 'Mediaeval Carols' by Opus Anglicanum set the mood.

A pleasingly successful event, and one which we hope to repeat in 2003 with perhaps the addition of two other local 12<sup>th</sup> century Grade I listed churches; St Peter's, Tadley and All Saints', Monk Sherborne. So – watch this space.

Above: exterior of Pamber Priory Church. Left: interior of the church.



## Jean Pocock's Tadley memories...

Following publication of *Around Tadley – people and places* we received several letters either adding or correcting information. Amongst these letters was one from Jean Pocock (néé Lowe) which we publish here.

My grandparents, John & Emily Lowe, moved with their family in 1904 from Stadhampton, Oxfordshire, having bought the grocery store at the corner of Broadhalfpenny Lane and Silchester Road from a relative Mr Urban Rose.

My father, Yorke, the youngest member of the family, in his turn after leaving school at Caversham, also worked in the shop. In August 1916 he married Effie Newey who was the Commanding Officer at Tadley Salvation Army Corps. On marriage to a non-officer she had to resign. She went to live in her home town Birkenhead and Yorke resumed war service as a despatch rider in France. After his demob in 1919 they set-up home at *The Firs*, Newtown (now Franklin Avenue) where I was born. My father resumed work in the shop which became known as *Lowes Corner*.

In 1925 grandfather retired – the contents of the shop and excess house furniture were sold at auction by Messrs Gribble Booth & Shepherd and I have a somewhat worn 'Catalogue of Sale'. After living at *The Firs* for a brief period my parents and I moved next door to *The Rowans*, and it was to this address that my grandfather moved on vacating *Lowes Corner*, which was purchased by three ladies – Mrs Farris, Miss West and Miss Pollack (or Pollock). We took up residence at the shop opposite 'The Fox & Hounds', previously owned by Mrs Blake and the two businesses were amalgamated.

I attended Tadley School and well remember Mr and Mrs Miller, Miss Creeth and Miss Saunders; later going to Fairfields for a short while and then the High School in Basingstoke.

In 1945 my parents retired and sold the business to Mr Whatmore, who at that time was a Salvation Army Insurance Agent. He lived in Winchester Road, Basingstoke and covered the Tadley area. We



**A recent photograph of The Treacle Mine, previously Lowes Corner**

moved to Reading as I was then employed by the Great Western Railway. My interest in Tadley was maintained through my occasional visits to Annie and Len West who lived in Swains Road, sadly both now deceased. Annie worked for my parents and looked after me during my early years.

*Lowes Corner* became a hotel where I once stayed and I later called again for a meal after it was re-named *The Treacle Mine*. I was amazed to see over the bar a

during the war when she returned to nurse her sick mother.

I am a little mystified regarding the bottom picture on page 47 of *Around Tadley – people and places* (see below). If the two ladies are the 1898 officers they must have returned for a special event, possibly the opening of the Hall. In those days officers were moved on to other Corps at regular intervals of 6, 12, or 18 months. My mother became an officer in 1908 and was regularly moved around the Scottish Division prior to Tadley.

As previously mentioned the book revived many memories. There were no public telephones and we were often asked to phone Dr Beale, or people would ask my father to take them to the surgery in Aldermaston. We were also asked to pass on messages from distant relatives. No electricity either, and I think it was 1926/27 when heavy snow and blizzard caused an oil tanker



**The Salvation Army Band in full strength. It has not been possible to positively identify any member of the group. However, could the two ladies, centre front, be Captain Edith Griffin and Lieutenant Alice Inham who, in 1898, arrived from London to form the corps?**

photo of my grandfather, father, and two ladies who at sometime in the early 1920s had been officers at the Salvation Army Tadley Corps. One was Nellie Mayes who eventually married Bert Bowman and lived alongside The Green. The other, Millie Bichard, came from Guernsey and was interned there

to be ditched at Sherborne. My father collected as many oilcans as would fit into his van, and somehow managed to reach the tanker and return with the essential paraffin for lighting and cooking. It was a full day's job.

In the early 1930s he fitted out a van as a mobile shop, and three

times a week visited his customers who were hop-picking around Alton at Coldrey, Bentley Street, Hill Farm, Issington and Binsted Wick. The pickers finished work around 5 pm, and it was well after mid-night when he returned home.

I recall when the Yanks arrived – some were intrigued by the village shop and would call to see if they could buy something to send home, offering a handful of coins saying ‘take what you want’ – my mother gave many a lesson on English coinage.

When ‘something was going on’ folk from outside the perimeter boundary wanting to come to shop, were given a paper by the duty sentry which we had to rubber stamp to prove where they had been. Norman Longmate’s book, *The GIs – The Americans in Britain 1942–1945*, makes reference to Jean and her family: ‘A young woman (Jean Pocock) who helped her parents to run the village shop at Mulfords Hill, within the perimeter of the great American camp at Aldermaston, near Reading, went

to the door to see off a group of GIs who had come for supper. The family had asked their guests to return for Christmas dinner the next day, and the GIs had promised: ‘You’ll be hearing from us soon.’ The family learned what they meant when awakened at midnight by the sound of music coming over the tannoy. It was ‘Christians Awake’, followed by ‘Silent Night’ sung as a solo by one of their recent guests, a unique and public Christmas greeting.

## Florence Davidson – mysterious early local historian

Who was Florence Davidson? Ongoing research since the publication of *Around Tadley – fact and fable* has revealed that she was born in the United States of America but spent most of her adult life in the south of England. She wrote prolifically about the history of North Hampshire; her *History of Tadley* remains one of the most comprehensive accounts of the village to date. Although a great deal of what she writes about Tadley is mentioned in other local histories, eg Daniel Benham’s *Some Account of the Village of Tadley in Hampshire and The Independent Church There* (1862), her history is successful because she writes as if she knows all the places and people to whom she refers.

Florence Alexandrina Greig Davidson (1857–1955) was born in Brooklyn, USA and was the youngest of 5 daughters born to Mary and William Jarvis Davidson. By 1881 Mary was aged 60, widowed and residing with her daughters at Burlington Villa, Shirley, Southampton. At that time, Lucy, the eldest, was 36 years of age, and all the daughters were recorded as unmarried in the 1881 census return. Four of the girls remained spinsters until their respective deaths. No further information on Lucy has so far been researched.

Florence’s first known publication, ‘King Alfred’s Winchester: the Ancient Capital of England --’, was an article for *The Englishwoman’s Magazine* reprinted in 1899 with illustrations by Warren & Son, printers and publishers of Winchester and which sold for the princely sum of 4d. At this time she was living with her mother and sister Lillias in Festing Road, Southsea.

By the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Florence had developed quite an interest in the history of North Hampshire, probably due in part to the fact that Lillias had a country

house in Pamber Road, Silchester known as ‘Cole Byron’. Jack Lambden (1904–1999), who lived near ‘Cole Byron’ as a boy, recalled that, with other local lads, he would go there to weed Miss Davidson’s garden for which they were paid. This is supported by a reference in *The Book of Silchester* (1915) by James Thomson (p 150) ‘...Miss Lillias Campbell Davidson and Miss Amy McLaren, both well-known authoresses, have country houses in Silchester’. It would seem certain that Florence spent much of her time in this area between 1907/8 and 1915 when she wrote a succession of local histories.

The first *Monk Sherborne – a History of the Parish and Priory* was published in 1909 by C.E. Symonds, Basingstoke, having appeared prior to this as notes of parish history in the *Monk Sherborne and Pamber Magazine*. It was later included in the 1914 *Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society Journal* entitled ‘The History of the Benedictine Priory of Monk Sherborne’.

There quickly followed two further local studies: *The History of the Quakers in Baughurst* (part I in 1911 and part II in 1915) and *The*

*History of Tadley* (1913) published by C.E. Symonds, Basingstoke. Her most extensive local work was entitled *The History of Silchester Hants, its Manor and Church*. Probably begun in the early 1900s, this lengthy manuscript undoubtedly occupied much of her later life. References within the manuscript dated 1930 would support this. The 193 page typescript document was deposited at Reading Library, its catalogue date is March 1954, 13 months before her death. It is a rough draft which we believe was never published.

The Davidson sisters each lived to a venerable age: Lillias died on 1 March 1934, aged 80 years; Jessie died on 7 May 1936, aged 88 years; Charlotte died in 1944, aged 94 years.

The four younger sisters remained close throughout their lives, all residing in Hampshire. However when Florence died in April 1955 age 98 she was living in Exeter. Her occupation then as throughout her life was ‘of independent means’. At this time nothing is known about William Jarvis Davidson, and his wife, who provided so well for their daughters.

## 100 years ago – Hants and Berks Gazette, Aug–Nov 1902

Date	Page	Village	Topic
2 August	4	Brimpton	<b>Sale of Blacknest Estate</b> 7 lots (inc Blacknest House, Lower Built Place, Tanhouse Cottages).
2 August	3	Tadley	<b>Cricket Match</b> v Old St Michael's – names of players.
2 August	7	Tadley	<b>Coronation Committee meeting</b> held in the Board School. Resolution to celebrate the coronation on Saturday 9 August was passed and a sub-committee formed (see 9 August entry below).
16 August	6	Tadley	<b>Wedding</b> William Kemp married Sarah E E Savage at St Mary's Church; peals from old village bells.
16 August	5	Tadley	<b>Tadley School</b> parent, Annie Stacey, warned about Ivy's absences.
16 August	8	Various	<b>Edward VII coronation celebrations</b> (see 9 August entry in national and international section). [C]
23 August	5	Silchester	<b>Wedding</b> Caroline May Cooper married J C Bell.
23 August	7	Baughurst	<b>Reading Temperance Prize Band</b> held a concert in James' Meadow.
6 September	6	Aldermaston	<b>Attack on Keyser's gamekeeper</b> His wounds were stitched in the Tadley surgery.
20 September	5	Silchester	<b>Volunteer Church Parade</b> K Company (Basingstoke) Cyclists [mounted infantry attended. [C]
20 September	5	Pamber	<b>Report on the postponed local coronation events</b> (see 9 August entry below). [C]
4 October	6	Tadley	<b>Harvest Festival Services</b> St Mary's and St Saviour's Churches. Offering to Royal Berkshire Hospital.
11 October	1	Baughurst	<b>Sale of 90 acres of valuable ripe underwood by auction at 'The Dragon Inn', Baughurst.</b> [C]
11 October	7	Baughurst	<b>Jumble Sale</b> £15 raised towards clearing the debt on a new school piano purchased last winter. [C]
11 October	7	Pamber	<b>Harvest Thanksgiving</b> Band of the Pamber Heath Church Lads' Brigade played; 'some two dozen people were unable to gain admission due to room being crowded to excess'. [C]
11 October	8	Tadley	<b>Cricket Club</b> wind-up match on recreation ground, and 'a capital dinner' at 'The Fighting Cocks'.
18 October	6	Baughurst	<b>Ebenezer Mission Hall Harvest Festival.</b>
18 October	6	Baughurst	<b>Primitive Methodist Chapel</b> band played – funds to Circuit.
25 October	6	Pamber	<b>Petty Sessions</b> Noah Pike and Thomas Rawlings fined 5s each for driving carts with no lights. [C]
1 November	8	Ramsdell	<b>Waif Saturday</b> collection by children outside school £1.1s.3d to Dr Barnado's Homes.
1 November		Ramsdell	<b>Mothers' Union</b> lecture with slides by vicar – attendance 60.
8 November	3	Tadley	<b>Tadley, Baughurst and Ewhurst Conservative and Unionist Association</b> Mr Faber MP had a hearty welcome from the members at a smoking concert held in the Parish Room, Tadley. [C]
8 November	6	Pamber	<b>Wedding</b> Edith Mears married Harold Melmoth at Pamber Church (Priory).
22 November	5	Silchester	<b>Silchester excavations</b> Dinner for the workmen at close of season's work; Mr Mills Stephenson FSA was in charge of dig. [C]
22 November	8	Pamber	<b>Death of Mrs Hall</b> mother of Misses Hall, teachers at local school. Funeral held at the 'Old Priory'.

Articles marked [C] have been copied and archived by TADS for reference

## 100 years ago – national and international, Aug–Nov 1902

Date	Topic
18 January	United States Commission chooses Panama as the site for a canal.
4 February	In cricket, England score 769 runs in a single test innings in Australia!
24 February	Post Office opens its telephone system to subscribers.
23 March	British schools, primary and secondary, to be taken over by county councils and the larger urban councils.
26 March	Cecil John Rhodes died, aged 48. English by birth, he was noted for the creation of Rhodesia in 1895.
9 April	London's Underground Electric Railways Company is incorporated.
26 April	In football, cup finalists Southampton are beaten 2-1 by Sheffield United.
31 May	Treaty of Vereeniging brings the Boer War to an end.
4 June	In horse racing 'Ard Partick' wins the Derby.
5 July	At Wimbledon, H Doherty beat A Gore in the men's singles and M Robb beat C Sterry in the ladies' singles.
12 July	Arthur Balfour becomes Conservative Prime Minister.
9 August	King Edward VII crowned in Westminster Abbey. The coronation was originally arranged for 26 June, but was postponed until today following a successful operation on the King for appendicitis on 24 June.
10 December	First Aswan Dam on Nile completed.
Literary works published during the year included Chekhov's play <i>Three Sisters</i> , Joseph Conrad's novella <i>Heart of Darkness</i> , Rudyard Kipling's children's book <i>Just So Stories</i> , Henry James' novel <i>The Wings of the Dove</i> , Arthur Conan Doyle's thriller <i>The Hound of the Baskervilles</i> , H.G.Wells' novel <i>First Men on the Moon</i> , Beatrix Potter's children's story <i>The Tale of Peter Rabbit</i> .	
Song hits of the year included 'Bill Bailey Won't You Please Come Home' and 'In The Good Old Summer Time'.	