

Berkshire Record Society

General Editor's report to the AGM 2009

Properly speaking, this report relates to the calendar year ending on 31 December 2008. However, as usual I shall take the opportunity to bring you up-to-date with progress since the beginning of 2009.

During 2008 we issued two volumes: the Diocese Books of Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, 1846 and 1854, edited by Ronald Pugh and published jointly with the Oxfordshire Record Society, and the first part of Jeremy Sims' edition of the minutes of the Thames Navigation Commission, 1771-1790. These are both substantial works and shed important light on significant themes in Berkshire's history - the religious revival in the Oxford Diocese in the mid-nineteenth century and the improvement of the Thames at the end of the eighteenth. (The second part of the Thames Commission minutes appeared shortly after the year's end).

Work is in progress on a number of volumes. The next to appear will be Kate Tiller's edition of the Berkshire returns of the religious census of 1851, which will complement both the Wilberforce Diocese Books and Lisa Spurrier's edition of the Berkshire nonconformist meeting-house certificates which we published in 2005. Work is also advanced on Joan Dils' edition of the Tudor churchwardens' accounts of St Laurence, Reading, Harry Leonard's edition of Robert Lee's diaries, 1735-1744, and Margaret Yates' edition of Berkshire feet of fines. We hope at least one of these will appear during 2009.

Work has commenced on the new index of Berkshire probate records, 1508-1652. Thanks to the generous support of the Marc Fitch Fund, the Berkshire and Oxfordshire Family History Societies and the Berkshire Local History Association, together with funds of our own and support from Berkshire Record Office, we were able to appoint an indexer, who started work in October 2008. Good progress is being made. We hope to issue this during 2010.

Work is also in progress on a new edition of the Historical Atlas of Berkshire. This will be both revised and enlarged, with a number of new articles. Many contributions have now been received, and discussions are in hand with designers and printers. We hope this too will appear in 2010.

Peter Durrant
March 2009