

Berkshire Record Society

General Editor's report to the AGM 2010

Properly speaking, this report relates to the calendar year ending on 31 December 2009. However, as usual I shall take the opportunity to bring you up-to-date with progress since the beginning of 2010.

During 2009 we issued one volume - the second part of Jeremy Sims' edition of the minutes of the Thames Navigation Commission, 1771-1790. This volume comprises the minutes of the numerous committees set up by the Commissioners during these years, and contains much valuable evidence for the works they undertook to improve the Navigation. As an appendix to the minutes we included the detailed accounts of John Treacher, surveyor to the Navigation, for the building of Days Lock in 1788-1789.

In the event our hopes to publish a second volume during the year were frustrated. Kate Tiller's edition on the Berkshire Religious Census, 1851, was still in preparation at the year's end. However, we are pleased to say that it will appear during 2010.

Our index to Berkshire probate records, 1508-1652, is now at an advanced stage. At the year's end we had extracted data from all 15,000 original wills and admons (with their associated papers) and had commenced work on the 9,000 pages of registers. This work has now been completed, and we are in the process of converting the data into book form. This project has received the generous support of the Marc Fitch Fund, the Berkshire and Oxfordshire Family History Societies, the Berkshire Local History Association and Berkshire Record Office, to all of whom we are most grateful.

Work was in progress on a number of texts. The next volume to appear is likely to be Harry Leonard's edition of Robert Lee's diaries, 1735-1744. Lee was a justice of the peace in east Berkshire and his diaries contain notes of his judicial business as well as of his social life and his work in managing his uncle's estates. Other volumes in progress include Joan Dils' edition of the Tudor churchwardens' accounts of St Laurence, Reading, Sabina Sutherland's edition of the church inspection notebooks of Archdeacon James Randall, 1855-1859, my own volume of Hungerford overseers' case papers, 1654-1834, and a further volume by Jeremy Sims on Berkshire turnpike records.

Work is also in progress on a new edition of the Historical Atlas of Berkshire. Many articles are now in place, maps are being drawn and a design for the cover has been prepared. We hope publication will be possible in 2011.

Peter Durrant
May 2010