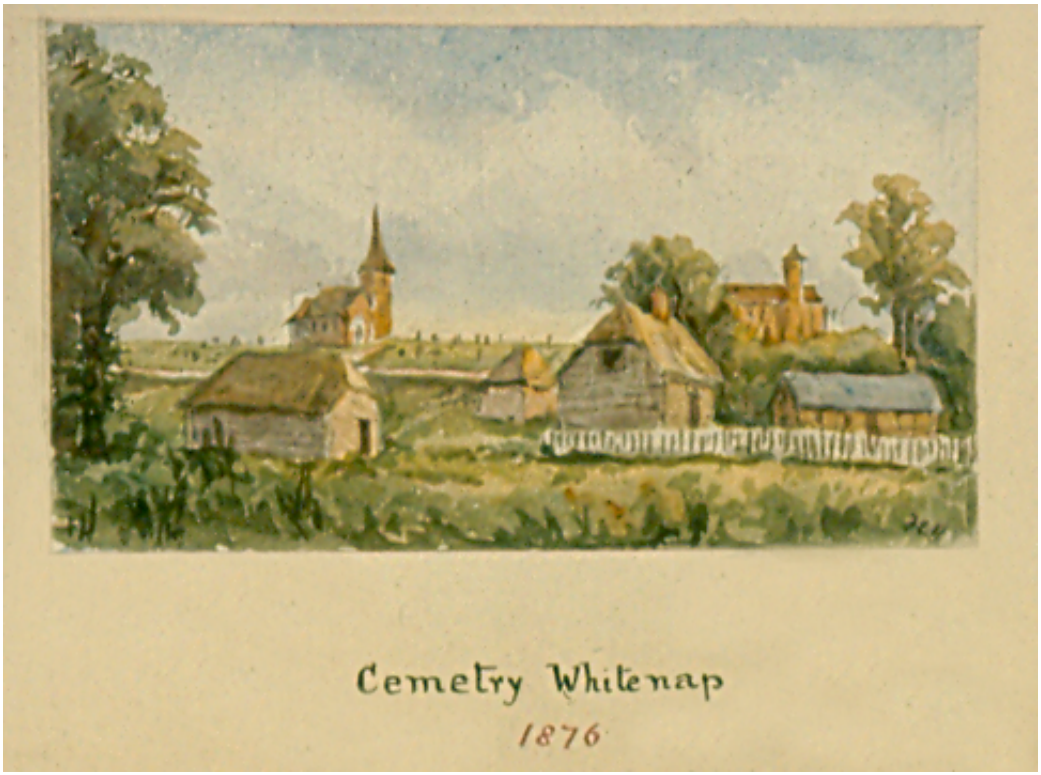
Romsey Local History Society

[LTVAS Group]



Newsletter Autumn 2025

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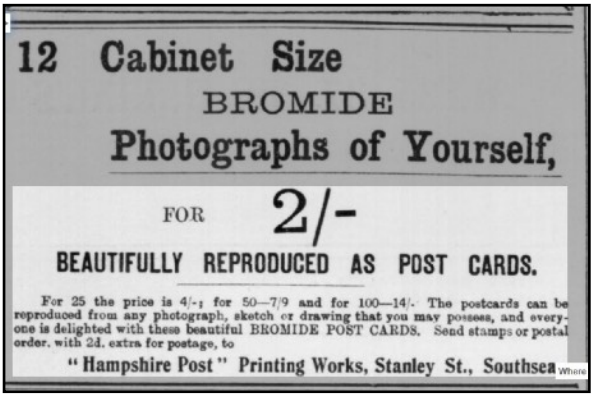
A visit to Botley Road Cemetery by the Local History Society led by Phoebe Merrick in 2022. See article on the Burial Board page 21.

Picture Postcards the forerunner of Instagram?
Waterworks Cottages, Timsbury **by Ronnie Munday**

These days we are so used to chronicling our significant family events, holidays and social gatherings on Facebook and Instagram, but who knows if those records will be available in 120 years time to give a pictorial story of our day to day lives. A recent discovery of a postcard for sale on ebay revealed the story of the inhabitants of one cottage in Timsbury.

It seems that as early as 1906, people wanted to send their images of themselves to friends and family in physical format by post card as indicated in this item from the Hampshire Post and Southern Observer 1906 advertising reproductions of photgraphs for use as postcards.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BROMIDE
Photographs of Yourself,
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BEAUTIFULLY REPRODUCED AS POST CARDS.
For 25 the price is 4/-; for 50—7/9 and for 100—14/-. The postcards can be reproduced from any photograph, sketch or drawing that you may possess, and everyone is delighted with these beautiful BROMIDE POST CARDS. Send stamps or postal order, with 2d. extra for postage, to
"Hampshire Post" Printing Works, Stanley St., Southsea

The postcard, featuring two charming families outside their houses, appeared on ebay and purported to show "unknown cottages marked up as Lee near Romsey postmarked at Romsey 30 July 1906". The entry was reposted on the Romsey Revisited Facebook page and eagle-eyed contributors were able to identify the houses as being Nos. 1 & 2 Waterworks Cottages, New Road, in Timsbury. In fact, one of our own History Society members lives in one of the cottages today!

The cottages were erected by South Hants Waterworks Company in or around 1893/94 for the workers of their newly established waterworks site in Timsbury. A matching pair of cottages were erected on an adjacent plot in 1896 but in the past 30 years or so another house has been built between the two pairs.

The original postcard was obtained via a successful bid on ebay and we were able to read the message on the reverse. This read:-
My dear <P>
No doubt you think me very bad not to have written you but I find so little time for letters and there as(sic) been so much illness about here

Hooping (sic) cough and now Scarlet Fever just up the Hill. We are all well as you will see by the other side. This was taken just as we are. our babe gets on fine. Hope all are well love. J H.
It was written to a lady in Croydon.

Postcard of Waterworks Cottages, New Road, Timsbury

We have now been able to establish which cottage "JH" belonged to Julia Hurford's family appears at 1 Waterworks Cottages in the 1911 census. The occupants were listed as

- Frederick Hurford aged 34, Engineering Stationary, working at the Waterworks (worker on the stationary steam engine pumping the water)
- Julia Hurford aged 39
- Winifred Hurford aged 8 and at school
- Violet Hurford aged 5 and at school

Clearly, the baby on the knee of the lady on the left hand side of the image is Violet, and Winifred is standing alongside with a doll's pram or tricycle.

Next door at No. 2 Waterworks Cottages the family has proved impossible to identify as yet. We can trace the family living there in 1911 who were:- Henry Jacobs aged 36, Stoker, working at the Waterworks, his wife, Caroline aged 26, and daughter, Doreen aged 1. However, that cannot be the same family as depicted in the 1906 postcard as Henry

and Caroline Jacobs did not marry until after 1906. If anyone can identify the inhabitants of No. 2 we would be grateful to hear from them.

Sadly, Julia Hurford appears to have died of TB in November 1917 when the family had already moved to Combs in Suffolk where Fred was recorded as working as a Stationary Engine Driver in Stowmarket in 1921. The elder daughter, Winifred aged 15, then died just a year later in September 1918, also of TB. Happily, Frederick seems to have married again as there is a Mahala Hurford living with him 1921. Then in 1939 he appears to have moved to Beverley in Yorkshire and was still living with Mahala and recorded as an Electric Power Stationary Driver.

Violet married Harry Crossland, a draughtsman in Suffolk, in 1929 but we have not been able to trace the family further. Hopefully, she went on to have descendants who are posting on Facebook and Instagram today.

!907 postcard of Timsbury Waterworks loaned to the Society by Edward Jewell

Christian Ministry in the Romsey area during World War II

Phoebe Merrick

Scope of Study

In reporting local matters from 1939 to 1945 inclusive, the years of the Second World War, the *Romsey Advertiser* carried many references to clergy, both those employed locally and visitors from elsewhere. This work consists of a study of the people who were employed as clergy in the area that had been covered by Romsey Rural District Council. (RDC)[1] until that body was merged with Stockbridge Rural District Council in 1931. The study area consists of the civil parishes of Ampfield, Awbridge, Chilworth, East Dean, Lockerley, Melchet, Michelmersh, Millbrook, Mottisfont, North Baddesley, Nursling and Rownhams, Plaitford, Sherfield English, Timsbury, Wellow, East and West Tytherley, Romsey Extra, and the Borough of Romsey.

Although the work is primarily local, data on the relevant Church of England bishops is included. The *Advertiser* is undoubtedly the only source in which all these people can be found. Other sources would include material of the individual church such as minute books of administrative meetings, and possibly newsletters, if any were published during the war, given the extreme shortage of paper.

There is no systematic naming of leading Roman Catholic personnel. For example the Reverend Mother of the Soeurs de la Sagesse is never named, although occasionally referred to.

This study only considers paid clergy within the study area. There were other clergy, often retired, who lived in the area and participated in pastoral work, and there were clergy who held posts outside the area, but who conducted services or delivered sermons or other talks at events within the area. Both the Salvation Army and the Baptists had women in ministerial roles unlike the other denominations.

Denominations

Romsey had, of course, been Catholic until Henry VIII broke away from Rome in 1534. Thereafter the Church of England followed the vagaries of English government religious theology, which are not described here. By the 17th century, there were many Roman Catholics in England but not in Romsey and district.

In the 17th century, an Independent Chapel was established that was the forerunner of the Congregational Church that is now the United

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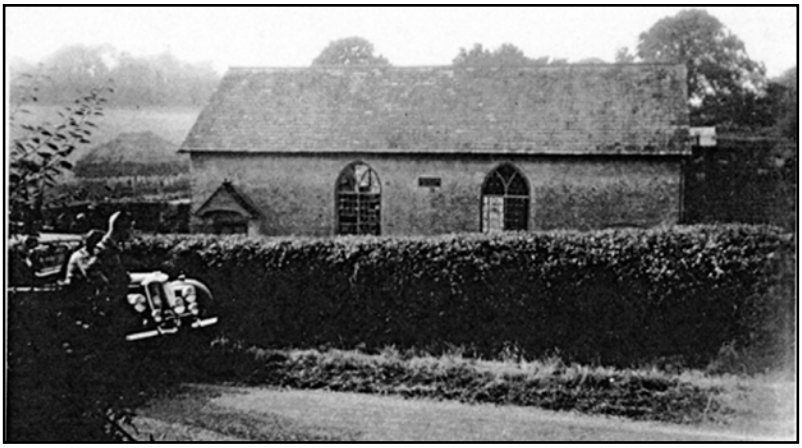
1 That council was merged with Stockbridge RDC in 1931.

Reformed Church. This church started off in Church Street, later moved to Abbey Water, where their burial ground is now to be found, and in 1804 they built a new church on the other side of the road. They replaced this building with their present one in 1886.

In about the middle of the 18th century, the Baptist church was established in Romsey, first in Middlebridge Street and from 1810 in Bell Street. An Ebenezer Baptist Chapel was built in Chapel Lane, Lockerley in 1761. It was deliberately burnt down in 1967 by its congregation, being surplus to their requirements, although it was probably one of the oldest Baptist chapels in the country.



Ebenezer Chapel, Lockerley

At the end of the 18th century Romsey saw Quakers in a building on the junction of Narrow Lane and Abbey Water. Tom Slater says that this building stood where the caretaker's house of the Congregational Church was later built. Their community dwindled and they ceased to function as a group. Their building was taken over by the Sandemanians who were a Unitarian church. They were there from before 1820 to at least 1851.

The 19th century saw the establishment of two Methodist churches in Romsey, and others in villages. Both Primitive Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist were represented. The Wesleyan Methodists' first church was in Banning Street, south of the Bricklayers Arms. In 1881 they built a new church in The Hundred, a little way east of the junction with Palmerston Street. The Banning Street premises was taken over by the Salvation Army, who later moved to Latimer Street. After that, this building had a spell as a laundry and was demolished before 1960.

The Primitive Methodists built their first church in 1845 in The Hundred opposite Alma Road. In the 1890s they built a new church in Middlebridge Street which is now the home of the Elim Church. Their former church has had a series of industrial and retail uses and is currently (2025) a pharmacy

In 1891, a Roman Catholic Sisterhood, Les Soeurs de la Sagesse, acquired land to the west of the site owned by the Congregational Church and included what was then a water mill powered by the western branch of the Fishlake. They were followed to Romsey by the Montfort Brothers, a related order, who built a junior seminary adjacent to Botley Road and Halterworth Lane in 1911. This school, which closed in the 1970s, had a number of ordained clergy on its staff, but it was not until the latter half of the twentieth century that a formal Catholic parish was established locally. It is dedicated to St Joseph. The small Catholic community in Romsey worshipped in the chapel of the Sisterhood and their parish offices are part of that complex. The Catholics also have a church dedicated to St Andrew in North Baddesley.

If there were any local groups of Jehovah's Witnesses or similar Brethren during the war years, they received no publicity in the *Romsey Advertiser*.

Administrative structure of each denomination

Each religious denomination has its own administrative and financial structure and much use has been made of the denominations' own descriptions of their structures available on the relevant websites. Each congregation needed to be financially self-supporting and only the finances of the Church of England are discussed here as they differ from the rest historically. Congregations were also expected to contribute to the regional or national structure of their denomination.

Anglican or Church of England

The parishes of the Church of England covered nearly the whole of England. One or two, usually small places, were extra-parochial and therefore lacked church or paid clergyman. In the area under consideration, both Dunwood and Melchet had come into this category. The rest of the area was divided into parishes, each with its own church and clergyman, although by 1939 there was some amalgamation. The two churches in Wellow, St Margaret's in East Wellow and the lesser church called the Church of the Good Shepherd which was in Canada in West Wellow is an example.

Groups of parishes came under the immediate supervision of rural deans who have certain administrative roles and act as the link to the

relevant bishop. In the Diocese of Winchester there were two suffragan (or junior) bishops, Basingstoke and Southampton, who undertook pastoral and administrative roles in their dioceses and were answerable to the Bishop of Winchester. The Bishop of Southampton was responsible for the Romsey area.

The financial arrangements for the Church of England had been based on tithes, which until the 1830s were given in kind, but afterwards in cash. They were compulsory for those lands or properties to which they related, irrespective of the religious persuasion of the owner of such property. For centuries they had been based on an assessment of one-tenth of the land owner's crops.

Tithes were subdivided into greater and lesser tithes. Greater tithes were based on more valuable crops and the recipient, if the local clergyman, was called the rector of the parish. Often the greater tithes went to a lay impropriator or to another branch of the church, such as a body associated with the cathedral. The lesser tithes were normally the perquisite of the vicar, or perhaps a curate, and made up the majority of his church derived income.

With the ending of tithes, there was a reorganisation of the income of individual clergymen. The wages of clergy are known as stipends and are technically payments for expenses rather than wages. After the reorganisation in the 20th century their incomes no longer depended on the amount of tithe that came to the parish but on a more equitable and regulated system. After the cessation of tithe payments the stipends of vicars and rectors was based on a standardised scale, although sometimes augmented by gifts from parishioners. The Church of England was and is a major landowner and the income from this estate goes some way to paying for its running costs, but parishes have heavy responsibilities to raise the necessary funds from which they are expected to make payments to their diocese for the general running of the Church. The work of the vicar of Romsey was historically supported by one or more curates or assistant priests, who also receive stipends.

A few notes on the structure of other denominations found in the Romsey areas follow. The list is arranged alphabetically.

Baptist

The Baptist Union is now (2025) organised into thirteen regional Associations according to the church's website. Such associations are the equivalent of Anglican dioceses. Romsey was in the Southern Baptist Association. The Associations were sub-divided into Districts and until his retirement, Rev. E. F. M. Vokes had been secretary of the local Northern District of which he then became President.

Congregational

Each Congregational Church was independent. These linked together into Areas and a national body, but neither of these bodies had jurisdiction over the individual churches.

Elim Foursquare Gospel

In Romsey, this church has had a number of names, but the significant feature is that it is part of the Elim Pentecostal Church network, which is part of the Evangelical alliance. The first Elim churches were founded in 1915, and the Romsey congregation acquired the Primitive Methodist church building in Middlebridge Street when the two branches of Methodism merged in 1927 and the Primitive congregation joined the Wesleyan congregation at their church in The Hundred. The origins of the Elim Church in Romsey are not discussed in this article because it preceded the war by more than a decade.

Methodist

Unlike the Congregationalists or the Elim Pentecostalists, the Methodists have something of a 'top down' structure. The church is run nationally, sub-divided into districts which are themselves broken down into circuits – one of the clergy in the relevant circuit being responsible for the oversight of all their churches of that circuit. Locally the minister of the Romsey church also holds the post of circuit minister. The north-western part of the area under discussion lay within the circuit of Salisbury. Until well after the war, Methodist ministers were expected to move every four years. The increasing employment of their wives in secular jobs made this very unpopular and the practice has since been discontinued.

Roman Catholic

The structure of the Roman Catholic church is very similar to that of the Church of England, but since there was no parish in Romsey during the war, the structure of the Roman Catholic church will not be discussed.

Salvation Army

The Salvation Army gives its ministers army ranks. Locally the congregation was in the charge of a Captain, who would have been paid, but the reports in the newspaper do not make it clear what was the financial status of the local lieutenants. The Salvation Army is a national (and international) organisation, and the local corps are ultimately controlled centrally. Their places of worship are known as 'Halls'.

Village Non-Conformist Congregations

So far the structure of the various churches in Romsey has been outlined. Most villages had at least one nonconformist congregation, which one depending on the history of the relevant community. Worshippers who were not provided for in their own village would attend a church in a neighbouring settlement.

Thus there were the following village chapels or churches with paid ministers who are mentioned in the *Romsey Advertiser* between 1939 and 1945.

Baptist: North Baddesley. Neither the Baptist church on Lockerley Green or the Ebenezer Baptist Chapel at Lockerley are mentioned. Therefore, there is no record of a paid minister in charge at either place by the mid-twentieth century.
Congregational: Braishfield and Awbridge, Sherfield English
Methodist: Lockerley, West Tytherley

There had been other chapels or religious meeting places in the area, particularly in the late 19th century but these had largely gone out of use by 1939.

Relationship with each other

Whereas there had been hostility in the 19th century between the Anglicans and the rest, by 1939 the clergy of the area were much more united, although it took several decades until the town became tolerant of the Catholic Sisterhood. There are accounts of clergy preaching in each other's churches and attending joint events together. When a new incumbent was installed, several of them would attend the relevant service. There was less co-operation between the Church of England and the rest, but, in particular, on civic occasions clergy of several denominations would participate. Only the Roman Catholics remained totally separate.

One feature that was striking within Romsey itself was that leading members of the community would make their large gardens available for nonconformist events, such as children's sports days or social events, even though they themselves were not adherents of the particular denomination involved.

Individuals: Clergy wives: Harris and the Baptists

In the 1940s and before, the wives of clergymen took substantial roles in the work of their religious community and this was expected of them. Thus the wife of the Anglican vicar ran the local Mothers' Union in the

parish, in the role of Corresponding Member. The wives of the Baptist and Methodist ministers were important in the administration of women's groups, although they were not usually the office holders. The wives were also expected to take a major role in other activities of their church. Thus, congregations expected and got two workers for the price of one.

There is one case where a minister does not seem to have got on with his congregation and he left Romsey within a year. The Rev. William Harris came to Romsey from Upminster in Essex with his wife. It must have been difficult for him because his predecessor, Rev. E. F. M. Vokes was still in the district and active in Baptist affairs. Furthermore, several of Vokes' relations lived in Romsey and played major roles in running the Baptist Church. Harris failed to fit in and this is apparent by the relatively small number of reports of his activities that appear in the *Romsey Advertiser*. In April 1943 he moved to a church in Norwood, south London.

Harris was replaced by Rev. Gilbert Uden who was obviously popular with both his congregation and within the community. It is not possible to discern whether Harris broke the link with Vokes thereby making it easier for his successor or whether Harris was simply unable to adapt to local conditions. Mrs Harris does not seem to have been much more popular either.

Summary

During the years of the war, Romsey and the surrounding district was served by about 40 clergy. This article has sought to identify them and their roles within their places of worship.

Table 1 Number of paid clergy in each denomination

Anglican	28		Elim Foursquare Gospel	1		Congregational	4
Baptist	4		Methodist	3		Salvation Army	5

A full list of the names and posts of clergy, alphabetically by place can be found with this article on the Society website : https://www.ltvas.org.uk/

Romsey Burial Board **by Barbara Burbridge**

General Background

In the early years of the 19th century churchyards were becoming increasingly overcrowded and unhealthy. Growing populations and an increasing demand for burial sites to meet all beliefs led to the emergence of public cemeteries.

An extra dimension to this new form of public cemetery came in France with the 1804 opening of *Pere Lachaise* cemetery in Paris. This was set out in an attractively landscaped style with a picturesque design.

This new concept of cemetery filtered through gradually into this country, as several influences came to bear. Firstly, the end of the Napoleonic wars allowed many new ideas, aesthetic and technical, to spread from the countries of Europe. Then, in 1828, came the repeal of the Test Acts, which meant that dissenters could begin to play a part in local government, while the 1835 Reorganisation of Local Government widened the voting franchise to include many more men (though women had to wait nearly another 100 years before any got the vote).

Unsurprisingly, it was the dissenters who sponsored the first public cemetery in this country; this was the Rosary cemetery in Norwich which opened in 1819 and set a pattern for many other towns. This introduction of public cemeteries was spurred on by the rapid population growth in large industrial towns such as Manchester and Birmingham.

St Bartholmew's cemetery in Exeter, opening in 1837, seems to have been the first to be supported entirely from public funds. This recognition for the use of public funds for new cemeteries was fuelled by an horrendous cholera epidemic in 1830-2. Progress was still slow, however, until another widespread cholera epidemic in 1848-9 brought everything into sharp focus

The first Public Health Act was passed in 1848, creating the General Board of Health. Amongst other matters, the cause of cholera was finally identified as contaminated water.

More locally, from 1841 onwards, there were moves afoot to establish Southampton General Cemetery (now known as Southampton Old Cemetery) as a public cemetery. As the decision was to separate and use land from Southampton Common, owned by Southampton Town Council on behalf of the town, this would require an Act of Parliament. The act was duly passed in 1846, allowing for the required 15 acres to

be annexed from the Common, 10 acres to be laid out immediately with a further 5 acres to be held in reserve.

While waiting for Parliament to approve the proposals, the Council set aside public funds to finance the work and began to seek possible designs for their acreage. They were impressed by the *Garden Cemeteries Movement* as inspired by the *Pere Lachaise* cemetery in Paris and particularly by the concepts promoted in this country by John Claudius Loudon (1783-1843). They approached Loudon, who was then staying on the Isle of Wight in hopes of improving his health, and invested £37 for him to design their new cemetery. Unfortunately, the Bishop of Winchester objected to his design, declaring that the dissenters' chapel was depicted too close to the Anglican one. In any case, Loudon died in 1843 the same year as the publication in *The Gardener's Magazine* of his definitive essay *'The Principles of Landscape Gardening Applied to Public Cemeteries'*.

Southampton Town Council then held an open competition for the work and the contract was awarded to William Rogers. He was a local nurseryman and councillor. The resulting layout allocated areas to specific groups - consecrated land for Anglicans; unconsecrated land for dissenters and agnostics; and a small area set aside for those of the Hebrew faith. In 1856, another area was dedicated to Roman Catholics. As demand grew a second Act of Parliament was passed in 1884 and this annexed a further 12 acres of land from the Common. Romsey took note of developments in Southampton, and councillors would eventually seek advice from their Burial Board.

Nationally, meanwhile, Parliament determined on a series of Burial Acts between 1852 and 1857 under the auspices of the Home Secretary. These acts established a national system of public cemeteries. Parish vestries were to appoint Burial Boards responsible for the interment of the dead of the parish and charging expenses to the Poor Rate; for setting regulations; and for fixing fees and charges for grave plots. The pattern of allocating areas for varying beliefs was to be embedded in law.

<u>Romsey</u>

An additional factor in Romsey's response to all these movements was the presence of the third Lord Palmerston MP, who, coincidentally was Home Secretary in the 1850s; his country home was at Broadlands Park on the southern edge of Romsey. Lord Palmerston was an enthusiastic promoter of good health practices on a personal as well as public level. Along with the fashion of the day he had his urine tested regularly and

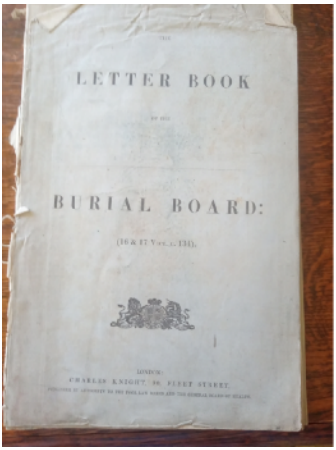
wore linen underwear. In addition he was concerned with the welfare of the townspeople of Romsey, firing off advice to the Mayor and Corporation, warning of the dangers of typhus and similar diseases caused by poor hygiene.

However, despite the urgings of Lord Palmerston, Romsey was slow in acting and it was the Burial Acts that finally spurred the local civic authorities into obligatory action. The Abbey churchyard was declared closed and future burials were to be at the new public cemetery that opened at the Botley Road site in 1857. In separate areas there were two chapels, one in Gothic style for the Anglicans and the other to an Italianate design for dissenters; both were the work of London architect Robert Lower, son of a Romsey man. A keeper's cottage was built by the main entrance. There was to be a Burial Board for regulating the cemetery and this was to be administered jointly by Romsey Infra and Romsey Extra.

Early View looking northwards up Whitenap Hill with Italianate-style Dissenters

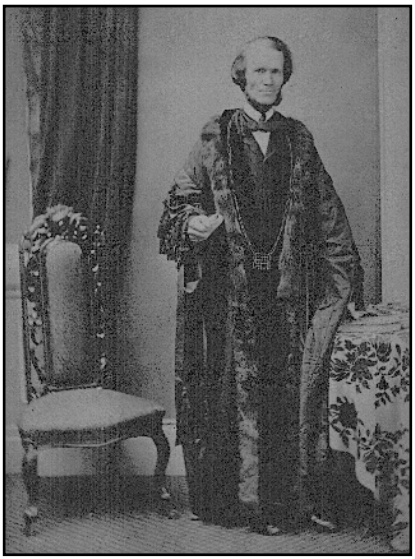
The rest of this article is based on the surviving records of the Burial Board as found in the archives of Romsey Town Council.
See End Notes for further information.

The earliest records for the Botley Road cemetery are in the Letter Book of the Burial Board and run in two blocks of entries, the first from 1855-57 and the second from 1884-94. Letter books were the carbon copies, the computer backups of an earlier age. The one used by the Romsey Joint Burial Board was commercially produced by Charles



Knight of 90 Fleet Street, London. It is in ledger foolscap folio format in thick off-white paper. The front cover is pre-printed in large lettering but the space for filling in the Board's name was left empty. The inner pages were for handwritten entries. Unfortunately, the Romsey letter book is in poor condition, the front cover and inner leaves having become separate from the thread with which they were sewn together. It is, regrettably, the only formal record book of the Board to survive.

The letters in the first block were very neatly written and undersigned by C.L. Lordan as clerk to the Board. These letters were initially concerned with identifying suitable land for a new public cemetery, now obligatory under the Burial Acts of the 1850s. There seem to have been two possible serious contenders: one was at Cupernham, possibly where Cupernham primary schools now stand, and the other on Fleming land at the lower part of Whitenap Hill to the left of Botley Road as it leaves Romsey on the way to North Baddesley.



Christopher Legge Lordan

Eventually three acres of land at Whitenap Hill were purchased and developed as Botley Road cemetery. It was ready for consecration and opening in early 1857. Paths were laid out for easy access to the chapels and main sections while the landscape was softened by the addition of a few trees.

The intense and high-powered negotiations during this development period were deemed particularly important and this first letter book was set aside for some 27 years before the next tranche of entries. Presumably, other letter books were brought into use but as yet no trace of them has been found. So, it is necessary to look to other papers to fill some of those 27 years. Unfortunately, the surviving records for this

period contain only intermittent papers, ranging from an unevenly cut-out strip of paper to more formal paperwork.

The earliest entry post opening of the cemetery is dated 1857. This is the long sliver of paper some half an inch deep. It contains the family's request for the wording proposed for a long stone wall around a grave with posts at the four corners

> *Augustus Betridge who departed Life August 31st, 1857, aged 67*
> *Blessed are the Dead whitch [sic] believeth in the Lord*

Then, in 1858, two letters were received. One was from C.G. Harris at Rownhams parsonage, seeking advice about memorials in Rownhams churchyard and enclosing an advertisement for grave markers from Harden's of Warminster. It is not clear whether the uncertainty at Rownhams was for aesthetic or economic reasons. The other was from Broadlands agent, Mr Kendle, discussing with Christopher Legge Lordan, as Burial Board clerk, concerns about the dryness of the Palmerston family vault.

After a pause of some 11 years there is a 1869 receipt from Charles Knight of 90 Fleet Street, providers of the Letter Book that had been put into use in 1855. This receipt, for a burial register book and a minute book, was to prove of crucial importance in years to come and the fact of its survival was fortuitous.

After yet another 11 years an advertising letter of 1880 was never to prove of lasting significance. From a West Bromwich firm, it was simply touting the advantages of yet another style of grave marker at 2s 6d each. Eventually, Test Valley Ironworks (next to the British School by the Alma Road junction) gained the monopoly in Romsey as the source of cheap iron grave markers.

Much more interesting in this same year of 1880 were two items regarding a man called William Brown. The first is a letter from Mr Brown headed 'London, Tuesday'. It makes clear that he has had an interview in London with a Romsey representative and has been asked to send a letter of application for the post of cemetery keeper to the members of the Romsey Burial Board. In his letter William Brown informs the Board that he is 36 years of age and has been working for the previous nine years in a carriage factory. A family man, he has a preference for the country and outdoor work. He would keep the cemetery in the manner expected and would ensure that his children would not interfere with the keeper's lodge or be offensive in the cemetery.

William Brown obviously made a favourable impression because the records also contain a formal contract of employment, also dated 1880, and signed by both Mr Brown and Christopher Legge Lordan as clerk to the Burial Board

In 1881, a rather scrappy note on a small piece of paper is headed 'Lordan and George' and features a report on the monuments and tablets used in the Southampton cemetery. It also briefly describes the procedures and charges of the Southampton Burial Board, probably reflecting an ongoing respect of Romsey members for the Southampton Board. The report, perhaps a draft, ends with the initials WBG and CLL, standing for William Bentley George and Christopher Legge Lordan.

Typical of regular letters of complaint about graves from the families involved, is a surviving exchange of letters with the Barwick family in 1882. The Barwicks were clearly upset about a broken cross on the grave of a family member and offended that they were expected to pay five shillings for repairs by Mr Ellery, stonemason of Bath House in Romsey's Middlebridge Street.

In 1884 the Letter Book sees the beginning of the second tranche of letters and the first two entries shed light on why its reuse had been decided upon. They are addressed to Charles Knight of 90 Fleet Street, London, the printers who had produced the Letter Book being used. The tone of the letters suggests that Romsey Burial Board had wished to purchase some replacements for books now completely full up but had been refused as Knights claimed outstanding unpaid invoices.

John Frederick Osborne 1885.

In response, John Frederick Osborne, the new clerk of Romsey Burial Board, triumphantly produced the 1869 receipt for a burial register book and a minute book. Indignantly, Mr Osborne continued to use the original Letter Book for the next ten years. His hasty scrawls, sprawling across the page, ignoring margins, are a contrast to the neat entries of Mr Lordan.

The members of the Burial Board must have kept a close watch on the conduct of their cemetery keeper. In 1890 they responded to J. Robinson about Brown's removal of some turf, though it is not clear where exactly this problem arose. Mr Brown – still in post after ten years – merely claimed that, believing Lord Mount Temple to be lord of the manor, he had gained his permission to act and he, Mr Brown, wished to continue this practice.

William Bentley George 1892.
A member of one of Romsey's leading non-Conformist families.

In October 1890, the Letter Book records that a letter was sent to G. Wheeler, junior, endorsed the need for the cemetery keeper to see the receipt for a grave fee before admitting a corpse to the cemetery.

This rather haphazard succession of entries in the Letter Book continued and in September 1891 an entry to an unnamed recipient advises about the introduction of new rules and charges now in force. It states that no deviation could be made.

1892 saw more variety in the Letter Book entries. It seems that the Board must have been pleased with the overall work of their keeper and William Brown must have been delighted to receive a letter informing him of a rise in his wages from 12 shillings a week to 16 shillings – all on the stern proviso of good work.

And another change of mood with a courteous letter to Mr Bentley George. Did he wish to purchase the three vacant sites opposite his family vault, or should they be offered for sale.

Still in 1892, an entry to Cllr Goulding refers to the Barwick complaint about the broken gravestone, pointing out that the complainant was not a resident of Romsey.

In January 1893 William Brown received another letter clarifying that there would be an extra gratuity of £2 per annum for grass cutting but no further gratuities.

Jan 1893 Letter book to William Brown emphasising that wage increase did not allow for further gratuities. He was to receive yet another letter on the same subject in the following year. Presumably, the cemetery keeper was not above a little private work in the cemetery. And he was confident enough to approach the Board on two occasions that year. The first acknowledged his wage increase and assuring that extra gratuities were only earned for work requested and paid for by relevant families. The second featured two very practical matters. He requested SW water to be laid on to the lodge because its current water supply was too close to graves. He also would like 'a grass cutting machine' to assist him in his work.

As 1893 progressed there was a flurry of letters about family graves. Those writing to the Board ranged from a poor widow in Kent's almshouses to a solicitor. A clue for why the Board suddenly received this influx of letters, retained in records, may be found in an indignant letter from the solicitor, Mr G.S. Goddard. He refers to a circular issued by a Mr Moyle, presumably on behalf of the Board and demanding further payment for his father's grave. He and his brother, station master at Shepperton, Middlesex, were angry about this. Another persistent complainant was Fred Feltham of Rose Villas, Gloucester. He was prepared to go to a solicitor 'to fight it out'. These individuals were confident and erudite but there were others who were puzzled, upset and worried by demands received.

Complainants whose letters have survived include Eliza Scammell, the poor widow in Kent's almshouses, who can only afford to pay for her husband's grave; J. Smith of Sherfield who does not wish to keep the grave of J. Smith, late of Broadlands; Sarah Rowe of 3 Palmerston Street who wished to keep the grave of her husband but would like to sell the second grave back to the Board; and William Allen of Woodley who declares he had paid perpetuity fees for one of two but does not want the second.

The Letter book responses to these complainants claim that, while the fees for interment have certainly been paid, those for the purchase of the ground in perpetuity have not. The implication is that some Board member or official (perhaps Mr Moylel) had officiously combed the ledger entries for fees and charges paid or unpaid. The Board seemingly did not contemplate the possibility that any clerical errors had been made in this respect.

A final Letter book entry was to a Mr Harrington concerning charges/ fees for Roman Catholic grave sites.

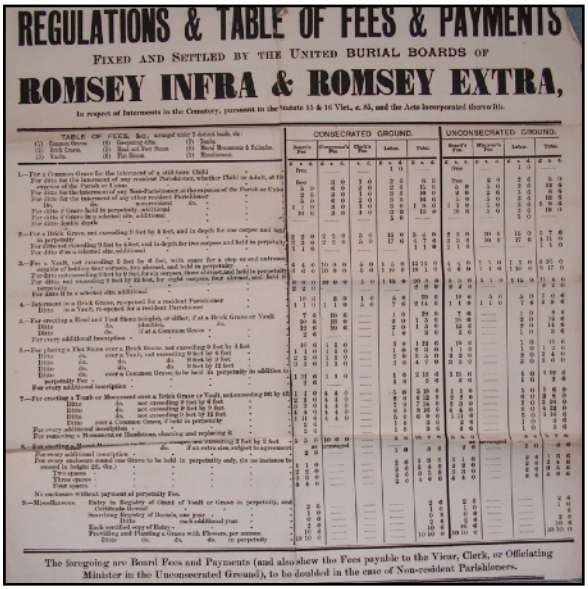
As the 19th century was ending and the 20th began the Botley Road cemetery became seriously short of space. The need for more areas of Whitenap Hill to be taken into the existing cemetery became urgent and an undated typed report described all new sections included the consecrated areas for Anglicans, the unconsecrated sections for dissenters and agnostics and the area designation as X set aside for Roman Catholics. The regulations were to comply with government decree and authorised by H. H. Asquith, Principal Secretary of State. Regulations ordered the fencing and drainage of the cemetery; the keeping of a register of graves; rules about the size of graves and conditions of family vaults; and the details of burials for juveniles.

One of the two copies of this report bears very faint pencil annotations, apparently reading 'Wm Pinnick and ?Scanlan proposed and seconded' and 'CARRIED'.

A significant document is the 1912 Annual Accounts of Romsey Extra for a loan taken out by the Board on 19th December 1901 for the cost of the new NW area of the cemetery. This loan was shared with Romsey Infra. These accounts were followed c1920 by a newspaper cutting re the AGM of the Burial Board held in Romsey Town Hall Council Chamber with C.T. Waters as mayor. The newspaper reported a deficit shared by Romsey Infra and Romsey Extra, indicating that the annual accounts were still being drawn into the red some 20 years after the original loan had begun to place a strain on the Board's finances.

A curious assortment of snippets of information is dated in the early decades of the 20th century. There is a 1915 list of graves concerning labour charges and the undertakers involved for September of that year. Attached to it is a slip containing the list of gravediggers for the period. Paperwork of a more official nature survives from 1917 with Alliance Assurance Company Ltd: Workmen's Compensation (War Addition) Act, 1917, Policy W213521 per A. Zillwood esq. and addressed to the Joint Burial Board Committee. 1922 is the date on a typed letter of appointment naming George Herbert Tanner as a new member of the Burial Board, the only such appointment to survive in the records. It is addressed to Montague Chandler, yet another to be named as clerk to the Board; and with it was a letter concerning a grave for a Russen family member who has, in fact, been buried in London

Then much useful information is found in a series of posters, published in 1885 and printed by *Romsey Press, Lordan*, large enough for posting on public view.



REGULATIONS & TABLE OF FEES & PAYMENTS

FIXED AND SETTLED BY THE UNITED BURIAL BOARDS OF

ROMSEY INFRA & ROMSEY EXTRA,

In respect of Interments in the Cemetery, pursuant to the Statute 15 & 16 Vict., c. 85, and the Acts incorporated therewith.

TABLE OF FEES, &c., arranged under 3 distinct heads, viz:

(1) Common Graves. (2) Re-opening ditto. (3) Vaults.
(4) Brick Graves. (5) Head and Foot Stones. (6) Wood Monuments & Railings.
(7) Vaults. (8) Flat Stones. (9) Miscellaneous.

	CONSECRATED GROUND.			UNCONSECRATED GROUND.		
	Rector's Fee.	Minister's Fee.	Clerk's Fee.	Labor.	Total.	Rector's Fee.	Minister's Fee.	Labor.	Total.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1.—For a Common Grave for the interment of a still-born Child	free			1 0		free		1 0	
For ditto for the interment of any resident Parishioner, whether Child or Adult, at the expense of the Parish	free	3 0	1 0	2 6	6 6	free	3 0	2 6	5 6
For ditto for the interment of any Non-Parishioner, or Stranger, at the expense of the Parish or Union	5 0	6 0	1 0	3 6	15 6	2 6	3 0	1 6	7 6
For ditto for the interment of any other resident Parishioner	2 6	3 0	1 0	3 6	10 0	1 0	1 0	3 6	5 6
For ditto, &c., unprovided &c.	5 0	6 0	1 0	3 6	15 6	2 6	3 0	3 6	9 0
For ditto if Grave held in perpetuity, additional	10 0	3 0	1 0	2 6	16 6	5 0	2 6	2 6	10 0
For ditto if Grave in a selected site, additional				5 6					
For ditto double depth									
2.—For a Brick Grave, not exceeding 9 feet by 4 feet, and in depth for one corpse and half in perpetuity	2 2 0	2 2 0		5 0	11 6	5 6	5 0	10 6	21 0
For ditto if exceeding 9 feet by 4 feet, and in depth for two corpses and half in perpetuity	3 3 0	3 3 0		5 0	12 6	7 6	7 6	10 6	25 6
For ditto if in a selected site additional	1 1 0					2 6	2 6		
3.—For a Vault, not exceeding 9 feet by 4 feet, with space for a step or and entrance, capable of holding four coffins, two abreast, and held in perpetuity	5 5 0	10 10 0		5 0	11 6	11 11 0	5 5 0	5 0	21 6
For ditto exceeding 9 feet by 4 feet, for six coffins, three abreast, and held in perpetuity	8 8 0	16 16 0		5 0	11 6	16 16 0	8 8 0	5 0	30 6
For ditto not exceeding 9 feet by 12 feet, for eight coffins, four abreast, and held in perpetuity	10 10 0	20 0 0		5 0	11 6	20 0 0	10 10 0	5 0	35 6
For ditto if in a selected site additional	2 2 0					4 4 0			
4.—Interment in a Brick Grave, re-opened for a resident Parishioner	1 1 0	1 1 0		2 6	4 7	2 2 0	2 2 0	5 0	9 4
Ditto in a Vault, re-opened for a resident Parishioner				5 0		2 2 0	2 2 0	5 0	9 4
5.—For erecting a Head and Foot Stone (upright, or either, if at a Brick Grave or Vault	7 6	10 6			1 0	7 6			1 0
Ditto do. (laid flat) do.	10 6	15 0			2 0	10 6			2 0
Ditto do. if at a Common Grave	12 6	20 6			1 0	12 6			1 0
For every additional inscription	2 6					2 6			
6.—For placing a Flat Stone over a Brick Grave, not exceeding 9 feet by 4 feet	10 6	1 1 0			1 0	1 12 6	10 6		1 0
Ditto do. over a Vault, not exceeding 9 feet by 4 feet	1 1 0	1 1 0			1 0	2 2 0	1 1 0		1 0
Ditto do. do. do. 9 feet by 6 feet	1 11 6	1 11 6			1 0	3 3 0	1 11 6		1 0
Ditto do. do. do. 9 feet by 12 feet	2 2 0	2 2 0			1 0	4 4 0	2 2 0		1 0
Ditto do. over a Common Grave, to be held in perpetuity in addition to perpetuity Fee	1 11 6	1 1 0			1 0	2 12 6	1 11 6		1 0
For every additional inscription	2 6					2 6			
7.—For erecting a Tomb or Monument over a Brick Grave or Vault, not exceeding 9ft by 4ft	1 1 0	1 1 0			1 0	2 12 6	1 11 6		1 0
Ditto do. not exceeding 9 feet by 6 feet	1 11 6	1 11 6			1 0	3 3 0	1 11 6		1 0
Ditto do. not exceeding 9 feet by 9 feet	2 2 0	2 2 0			1 0	4 4 0	2 2 0		1 0
Ditto do. not exceeding 9 feet by 12 feet	2 12 6	2 12 6			1 0	5 5 0	2 12 6		1 0
Ditto over a Common Grave, if held in perpetuity	1 11 6	1 1 0			1 0	3 3 0	1 11 6		1 0
For every additional inscription	2 6					2 6			
For removing a Monument or Headstone, cleaning and replacing it	5 0	10 0 0				arranged	arranged		
8.—For erecting a Wood Monument over a Grave, not exceeding 9 feet by 3 feet	40	arranged			1 0	3 6	arranged	1 0	3 6
If an extra size, subject to agreement									
For every additional inscription	2 6								
For every enclosure round one Grave to be held in perpetuity only, (in no instance to exceed in height 3ft. 6in.)	1 1 0				1 0	3 3 0			1 0
Two spaces	1 11 6				1 0	4 4 0			1 0
Three spaces	2 2 0				1 0	5 5 0			1 0
Four spaces	2 12 6				1 0	6 6 0			1 0
No enclosure without payment of perpetuity Fee.									
9.—Miscellaneous. Entry in Registry of Grant of Vault or Grave in perpetuity, and Certificate thereof	2 6				2 6	2 6			2 6
Searching Registry of Burials, one year	1 0				1 0	1 0			1 0
Ditto do. do. each additional year	0 6				0 6	0 6			0 6
Each certified copy of Entry	2 6				2 6	2 6			2 6
Providing and Planting a Grave with Flowers, per annum	10 6				10 6	10 10 0			10 10 0
Ditto do. do. in perpetuity	10 10 0				10 10 0				

The foregoing are Board Fees and Payments (and also show the Fees payable to the Vicar, Clerk, or Officiating Minister in the Unconsecrated Ground), to be doubled in the case of Non-resident Parishioners.

These are multiple copies of the Table of Fees and Regulations, for the cemetery and showing Dr Buckell as chairman of the Joint Burial Board of Romsey Infra and Romsey Extra during the clerkship of J.F. Osborne, but heavily altered in 1922 to update everything for the enlarged cemetery. So, they span the last 15 years of the 19th century and the first 22 years of the 20th century. By the time of the alterations, the chairman of the Board was William Bentley George (perhaps the nephew of the earlier one) and Montague Chandler of Abbey Water as the Board's clerk. Some of the amended posters have large areas of stuck-on sections to display latest fees etc. The whole set of posters is now kept together in a contemporary dark green folder.

After these posters there are just two set of papers in the town hall archives. The first, dated 1925, concerns the redemption of tithes and charges for the extension to the Botley Road cemetery. These papers include correspondence and application forms relating to land taken into use as cemetery and apparently provoked by letters sent out by Mr Chanler. The second set, dated 1932, features Precepts & Adjustments of the Burial Board with the adjustments allocating the proportion of expenses for Romsey Infra and Romsey Extra.

Although no further records are found in these archives, the Botley Road cemetery continued in use until 1983 after which new burials were to be at the Woodley cemetery. Both chapels were deconsecrated and, along with the keeper's lodge, have since been put to various uses.

End Notes

- C.L. Lordan: Christopher Legge Lordan was a central figure in Romsey business and civic life. He was a printer and postmaster. A long-term councillor he was mayor in 1866 when the present town hall was opened and the initials C.L.L. above the entrance door are his. His private residence was Luzborough House (now a gastro-pub).
- W.B.G.: The initials stand for William Bentley George. There were two of that name, uncle and nephew, of the George Brewery family. At the time this was probably the elder of the two and he was probably reporting in his role as chairman of the Burial Board.
- John Frederick Osborne: Newly appointed to succeed C.L. Lordan as Clerk of the Burial Board, led a very busy life. He owned a private school bearing his name in Church Street (Abbey Walk now occupies the site). He was also a councillor, serving time as mayor of Romsey.
- Dr Buckell: Chairman of the Board during the clerkship of Mr Osborne, Dr Buckell lived in Park House, on the west side of Palmerston Street. The house was named during its brief spell as Park Road.

Further Information: A *Friends of Botley Road Cemetery* existed for a few years and did some very useful work on digitising many records.

There is now a complete plan of the cemetery and the numbered grave plots and an alphabetical list of those buried there. This is available from Romsey Local History Society in Romsey Town Hall Basement every Monday 10am-12 noon.

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A Farewell to W H Smith **by Mary Harris**

After 102 years, W H Smith has disappeared from Romsey Market Place. However, these premises continue to be used as a stationers as they have been for more than 233 years, now under the name of TG Jones.

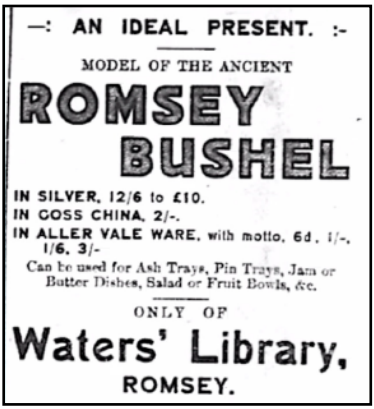
The premises are old, timber framing is visible through the old carriage or cart entrance to the east. There are Yorkshire style sideways sash windows along the east wall.

William Chignall

The first reference to a stationers here is of J H Hollis, Romsey's earliest known printer, trading in 1792. Both he and J S Hollis were postmasters in the 1790s. They were followed by William Sharp and then John Gray, who were also printers. In 1842 William Chignall bought the business. His advertisement before the coming of the railways stated that his was the only establishment supplying daily London papers which arrived by mail coach at 4pm.

From 1854 he also published and printed the *Romsey Chronicle*, one of Romsey's two local newspapers. William Chignall started a lending library in conjunction with Mudies of London who supplied the library books. After William Chignall's death in 1884 his daughter Mary continued trading until 1902.

Then Charles Waters purchased the business. He sold books, newspapers, and souvenirs of Romsey as well as continuing the lending library.



Ceramic model of the Romsey Bushel loaned by Karen Anderson

Waters was mayor of Romsey in 1919. On Waters' death in 1923 W H Smith purchased the premises and ran the business until 2025.

W H Smith's was founded by Henry Walton Smith and his wife Anna in Little Grosvenor Street, London. In 1828 they opened their first travel retail store at Euston Station. The business continued to expand and operated a chain of high street, railway station, airport, port, hospital and motorway service station shops selling books, stationery, magazines, newspapers, entertainment products and confectionery. Five generations of Smiths continued to run the company until the last Smith retired as chairman in 1972 and the last family member left the board in 1996.

W H Smith continued in Romsey Market place as a stationers and newsagents throughout the 20th century until 2025. In the 1940s newspapers were sold from a foyer counter in the front of the shop which was open to the wind and the cold. Assistants wore coats and mittens to keep warm. This continued until after the Second World War.

W. H. Smith's distinctive enamelled hanging signs depicted a newsboy crying his wares against a bright red background. The newsboy sign was designed for W H Smith in 1905 by the artist Septimus E. Scott (1880-1966).

This sign still hangs outside No. 17 Market Place. However, a close look at the 1942 photograph of the Romsey shop shows that a different sign was in use then.

W H Smith in 1942

A Stroll Through History: Barge Canal Walk a Great Success
by Thérèse Moriarty

More than 40 people joined the Society's Barge Canal Walk on a warm summer evening this July, making for a well-attended and engaging event.

The walk featured an informative talk about the canal's origins and its short journey through time. Mary Harris explained how, in the late 18th century, several prominent individuals - mainly from Andover - were eager to establish a canal linking Andover to the sea at Redbridge via Romsey and construction of the canal was completed by 1794.

The group was intrigued to peer over the barrier at the junction of Southampton Road and Romsey Bypass to see the where the remaining water from the canal still joins the Tadburn Lake upstream of Fox's Mill.

The canal never achieved commercial success, and by the 1850s, it had become only marginally useful. Eventually, the Andover Canal Railway Company took over the canal and constructed a new railway along

much of its route. However, this section between Timsbury and Romsey remains as a watercourse.

Our walk took us along a short section of canal tow path from the Plaza Theatre and past the old Romsey Signal Box where we were able to see how the waterway is being sensitively managed for wildlife.

Society members about to set off on the walk along the Barge Canal in July.

A lively discussion followed the walk, with many attendees contributing thoughtful questions and insights. It was good to hear that a number of people had found out about the event from the society's Facebook page "Romsey Local History Society".

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Society News 2024-5

Evening and Afternoon Talks. 2025 again provided a wide ranging programme from 'Petra and the Nabbataeans' to Barbara Burbridge's fascinating memories of a childhood in Southampton in World War II. Unfortunately, Phoebe Merrick has been unable to host all the Friday slide shows this year but hopes to be back regularly this Autumn. Julia, our programme secretary, has a full and interesting programme arranged for next year.

Monday Morning workshops have continued to be busy with regular researchers and visitors. We have had several overseas visitors, descendants of Romsonians now living in USA and New Zealand. The two American families were descendants of the Emerys who travelled to Massachusetts in 1635.

Third Thursday Zoom Chats are producing useful information contributed by participants. Topics covered have ranged from John Read, the builder, to markets and fairs, waterways and bridges, Latham's bankruptcy and the 1907 pageant.

SORP (Survey of Romsey Project) The SORP group has worked on a number of issues, tanneries in Middlebridge Street, revising the text of *Middlebridge Street on Show*, and terraced buildings in Romsey. We hope to have posters on more shops in central Romsey ready for next year's Romsey Festival.

Some recent donations to our archives:.
We continue to receive donations of postcards and photographs of the Romsey area in the past including several of villages around Romsey. We have also received donations of books on how to research local and family history and some old booklets on Strongs Brewery and tied pubs.These books are available for members to borrow. Several paintings have been accepted into the Town Hall Archives.

Queries
We receive a large number of queries on aspects of local history through our email address and through visitors to the Town Hall basement. Many queries are about family histories but others about houses where families lived in the past. Some of these are easily answered but some require research and provide very interesting results. We have discovered a little of the history of Romsey Bowling Green, that part of one of the huts from Romsey Remount camp is still in use as a store at Bramshaw Village Hall and that several members of the Moody family emigrated to New Zealand.

Archaeology
During this year Romsey Abbey have given the Saxon spearhead which was found near Greatbridge in the late 19th century to the Hampshire Cultural Trust for safekeeping. We have made a number of visits to Chilcomb House to look at locally found artefacts and we are also looking again at the records of the excavations which were done before the present Waitrose Supermarket was built. Some members of the society have been helping with the sorting of the debris from the KJH fire in order to locate artefacts which were in the display cabinets.

Revision of *'So Drunk He Must Have Been to Romsey'*
Much extra research has been done on Romsey's pubs and it has been possible not only to bring some of the stories up to date but to extend some much further back in time. We now have to check the text and revise the introduction ready for publication in the Spring. We aim to launch the new book in March 2026.

Town Hall Archives. Much work has been done cataloguing and conserving the papers, pictures and artifacts held by Romsey Town Council. All the material on permanent display in the Town Hall has now been listed and described so that queries about them can be answered. It is intended that a series of items from the archive store will be displayed in turn.

Wellow History Society
Sadly, Michael Sleigh, who has been a very important member of both the Wellow and Romsey Societies, died on 17th February. Michael's knowledge of the Wellow area was very useful when we were researching the Saxon period in the Lower Test Valley area and his contribution to the Saxon project was much valued. Both societies will miss him greatly. The Wellow Society is now working on Michael's unpublished history of Wellow.

Important News:
1. We will be using membermojo to deal with our membership in future.
2. We will be submitting a new constitution to the AGM in November which will allow us to become a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation).
Details of these and their significance are in the annual report.

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