

27

# WOKINGHAM

## A CHRONOLOGY

Compiled by the Wokingham Society

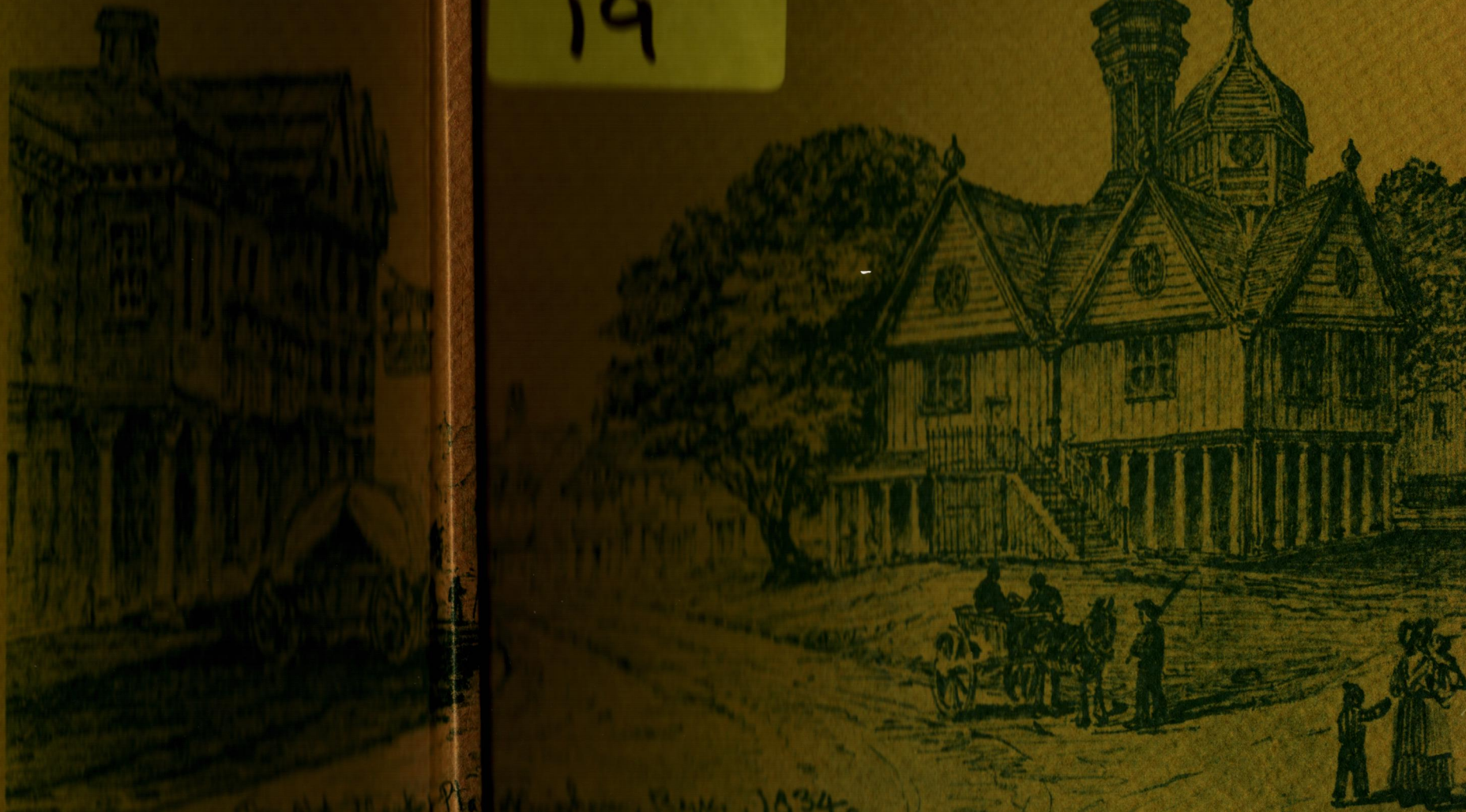
FSB  
19

THE WOKINGHAM SOCIETY was established in 1964, is affiliated to the Civic Trust and is a member of The Council for the Protection of Rural England and of The Berkshire Local History Association.

The Society's aims are to protect the essential atmosphere of Wokingham as a small historic country town; to monitor and attempt to influence future developments; to build up a documentary and photographic record of the Town's history; to foster the study of the natural history and footpaths of Wokingham and the surrounding countryside.

The Wokingham Society welcomes any new members and current details of Officers and activities may be found at the Wokingham Public Library, or at Town Clerk's office at the Town Hall in the Market Place, Wokingham.

The cover is reproduced from a copy made in 1885 by W. Sells of an impression of the Old Market Place, Wokingham drawn by Mrs. Earle in 1834.



The Old Market Place, Wokingham, Berks. 1834.  
Copied from the original by Mrs. Earle  
1885

# WOKINGHAM

## A CHRONOLOGY

Compiled by the Wokingham Society

## FOREWORD

---

This Chronology was compiled by members of the History Group of the Wokingham Society. There have been several accounts of aspects of the past of Wokingham, notably by Arthur Heelas, Canon Long and the compilers of the Victoria County History. This, however, is the first time that the principal established facts about Wokingham and its immediate neighbourhood have been set forth in historical sequence.

The question of recounting the archaeological finds in the district was carefully considered but this is work for a specialist and more suitable for a separate publication. A certain amount of research has been carried out into the Saxon and Norman periods but the evidence is not yet complete or conclusive. Accordingly, it was thought best to keep to irrefutable facts; the chronology proper starts in the 12th century. National events and personalities have been mentioned only insofar as they provide a framework for the history of the town.

A list of the distinguished men who have served as High Stewards of Wokingham is printed as an appendix, as are the sources from which the chronological facts are derived. Lists of Mayors and their predecessors until 1885, the Alderman for the year, have not been included as these are readily available at the Old Town Hall and the Public Library (Berkshire Archaeological Journal). Canon Long gave a list of Rectors and other Church officers in his work on All Saints' Church and these names are now inscribed on a plaque in the church. The old Charities of Wokingham have been fully described by T.A. Readwin in his Account of 1845.

The Chronology was compiled by the following members of the History Group: Shirley Colwill, the late Colonel William Horniman, Anthony Cross and Margaret Steer. The 20th century section was the work of Peter Griffin, formerly of the History staff of the Forest Grammar School, who was assisted by two of his students: Andrew Moth and Simon Tibble. The illustrations have been specially drawn for the Chronology by Ken Head.

We are most grateful to Miss A. Green, the County Archivist for reading through the manuscript and to Mrs. Dillnott for typing the successive drafts.

The long-term objective of the Society's History Group is the writing of a comprehensive history of Wokingham on the basis of the large number of facts it has unearthed. Unfortunately, we have not yet been able to find anyone both suitably qualified and with sufficient time available to undertake this work. It may be that the publication of this Chronology will bring to light the future historian of Wokingham.

ANTHONY CROSS  
President, Wokingham Society  
1977

### PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION

This edition contains new sections on the Market and the former industries of the town. The section on street names has been greatly expanded, and there is additional material on the Middle Ages. Conclusive evidence of the authenticity of the spelling "Wokingham" has also been included.

The publication of the first edition of the Chronology was greatly speeded up through the work of the late Desmond Driscoll, who re-checked the facts and made valuable suggestions as regards lay-out.

ANTHONY CROSS  
1984

## SOURCES

Acts of Parliament	
Bates, Ralph	Methodism in Wokingham
Berkshire County Record Office	
Bush Hotel Deeds	
Dictionary of National Biography	
Gornall, Martin	The Walters at Bearwood (Winning entry in Wokingham Society's Schools History Competition, 1968).
Heelas, A.T.	'Historical Sketch of Wokingham' (in Wokingham Library).
Heelas, A.T.	Contributions to Berkshire Archaeological Journal
Heelas, A.T.	Letters to 'Reading Mercury'
Kelly's Directory	
Long, Canon B. (late Rector of Wokingham)	'Records of the Parish Church and Parish of Wokingham'
Long, Canon B.	Public Lecture on History of Wokingham, delivered in Town Hall on 17th December 1930
Marshall, Dendy	History of the Southern Railway
Parish Church Records	
Perkin, Paul	Wokingham in the 18th century (Winning entry in Wokingham Society's Schools History Competition 1966)
Public Record Office, London	Charter Rolls, Patent Rolls, Fine Rolls, Calendar of Inquisitions, Calendars of State Papers, Lay Subsidies etc. etc.
Reading Mercury	
Sears, H.W.	History of Bracknell
Dean Swift	'Letters to Stella'
Victoria County History of Berkshire	
Wokingham Borough Council	Minutes, Scrapbook
Wokingham Times	

Fully referenced copies of this publication will be found in the Wokingham Library, the County Library and the Berkshire Record Office.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

FOREWORD	3
SOURCES	4
CHRONOLOGY	
1. Before the Conquest	7
2. Middle Ages	8
3. Tudor Period	11
4. The Stuarts	16
5. Georgian Age	23
6. The Victorians	28
7. Twentieth Century	34
APPENDIX	
A Wokingham or Oakingham?	39
B Wokingham in Wiltshire	41
C Population of Wokingham from the first Census of 1801	42
D Old Street Names	43
E The High Stewards of Wokingham	44
F Members of Parliament representing Wokingham after the 1832 Reform Act	45
G Vanished Industries	47
H The Market	49
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	
The 'Overhangs'	12
The 'Roebuck'	17
The Elms	24
The Town Hall	29
The Baptist Church	31
St. Paul's Parish Room	32
Peach Street	37

## BEFORE THE CONQUEST

---

The first recorded reference to Wokingham is not to be found until 1146 and the Chronology therefore starts at this point. There is, however, evidence of settlement in the immediate neighbourhood from early times. Thus, "Caesar's Camp", an Iron Age fortification, was probably constructed in the third century BC and a coin of Cunobelinus (15-40 AD) has been found there. Cunobelinus (Shakespeare's Cymbeline) was king of the Catauvellauni, a powerful Belgic tribe centred on Colchester.

Just south of Caesar's Camp, Wickham Bushes was a Romano-British settlement, possibly a posting-station on the road running from Calleva Atrebatum (Silchester), through Pontes (Staines), to Londinium (London). The Antonine Itinerary (3rd century AD with subsequent additions) gives distances from Clausentum (Southampton) through Calleva Atrebatum and Pontes to Londinium. Part of the stretch between Calleva and Pontes became known in the Middle Ages as the Devil's Highway, a name which still persists, and traces of the actual road may still be seen.

A hoard of 4th century gold coins was found in a field off Matthews Green Road.

Until 1885 the First Citizen of Wokingham bore the ancient title of Alderman. This Saxon designation ('ealdorman') suggests the existence of an organized pre-Norman community. (References before 1885 to "the Alderman" thus denote the equivalent of "Mayor").

There are numerous references in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and elsewhere to events – often of major importance – which may bear on the town or on its remote origins.

Thus, three 8th century documents make mention of the Woccingas or Uoccingas and, while the latest view is that the monastery to which they refer was in the Woking area, it may be of interest to note the documents here:

A Bull of Pope Constantine (708-715) refers to a monastery in the territory of the Woccingas under the control of Abbot Hedda. In 796 a charter of Offa, King of Mercia, granted his Earl (or Alderman) Brorda some liberties for his church "situate in a place which goes by the name of Uoccingas". Brorda's request for these liberties had been reported earlier in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle (entry for 775), which speaks of a "monastery called Wocingas".

The Domesday Book does not mention Wokingham but says that "Osmund, Bishop of Sarisberie, holds Soninges in demesne in right of his Bishopric" (that is, he could treat it as his own possession).

## MIDDLE AGES

- 1146 Pope Eugenius III confirmed the rights of the Church of Sarum to Bishop Josceline. Mention was made of "Sunnings, cum Duvesdeana (Dunsden) et Wokingham".
- 1177 Earl of Salisbury conducted an inquiry into the ownership of the Manor of Ashridge, to which the Wiltshire part of Wokingham belonged, when the Manor, together with the rest of the Hundred of Amesbury and the Abbey of Amesbury, was given to the Abbey at Frontefreux.
- 1189 RICHARD COEUR DE LION. THE THIRD CRUSADE.
- 1189-1193 **All Saints' Church.** Between these two dates the Chapel of Wokingham, later to be the Parish Church, was dedicated to All Saints by Hubert, Bishop of Salisbury. Reference to previous chaplains indicates that it was not a new chapel and there is evidence in the fabric of Norman work.
- 1217 An Inquisition (investigation) into church land whose ownership was in dispute was held by Adam, Dean of Salisbury.
- 1219 Agreement was reached on the dispute and from the details of it the following list of priests and deacons can be compiled: Alured; Robert; circa 1160 Godfrey; 1190 John; Stephen; 1222 Philip.  
The living in 1222 was held by Hamo, who farmed it out to Philip for ten marks per annum.
- 1219 **Market Charter.** A Market was granted to the Bishop of Salisbury, to be held "peaceably" every Tuesday.
- 1220 Visitations of the Dean of Salisbury.
- 1222 The Register of St. Osmund mentions the chapel, burial ground and font.
- 1227 Charter of Market confirmed.
- 1228 Evidence of a mill in Wokingham which belonged to Christian de Wudecride (Woodcra).y).
- 1258 A grant was made to Giles, Bishop of Salisbury, and his successors, of two yearly fairs at his manor of Wokingham, one to be held on the vigil, the feast and the morrow of St. Barnabas (10th, 11th and 12th June) and the other on the vigil, feast and morrow of All Saints (31st October, 1st and 2nd November).
- 1271 First mention of an ordinary Wokingham citizen; one John de Wokingham who had escaped from prison in Guildford.
- 1272-1327 REIGNS OF EDWARD I AND II.
- 1281 An Inquest was held to decide if it was against the King's interests for the Earl of Lincoln to cultivate 100 acres of Ashridge; it was decided that it was, as the King, Edward I, hunted through Ashridge Wood.
- 1294 An Inquisition was made at Wokingham after the death of Roger de la Beche to establish his heir. Roger rented meadows from the Bishop of Salisbury for which he paid 47 shillings yearly and did suit at the Bishop's court every three weeks. "Geoffrey, his son, aged 15, is his next heir".
- 1297 Justices of Assize in Wiltshire sat at "La Beche" in Wokingham in the Hundred of Amesbury. (During 15th and 16th centuries the Wiltshire court sometimes sat at Ashridge Manor; from the 17th to 19th centuries the Court sat at Beches Manor, Reading Road, Wokingham).
- 1316 "Villa de Wokingham cum Yeudon (Evendon) et Sandhurst" contributed one man-at-arms for the King's service. Note: the Bishop of Salisbury had to supply a certain number of men-at-arms.
- 1327-1377 REIGN OF EDWARD III. The Hundred Years' War against France began in 1338 (battles of Crecy and Poitiers).
- 1327 Parliament granted a tax to the King of the "twentieth of the moveable goods of every person in the realm, the clergy alone excluded". Fifty-seven names of Wokingham people appeared on the roll; John Mathew was mentioned and Geoffrey atte Beche was assessed for the largest sum among the residents of Wokingham.
- 1333 Justices of Oyer and Terminer (circuit judges empowered to hold criminal trials), at a temporary court set up in Wokingham to try some Wiltshire men who would not pay their rents, were attacked by the said men "so that they dared not proceed in the manner and the session was rendered almost entirely without effect".
- 1339 Market Charter confirmed.
- 1350 Edward III built a hunting lodge at Easthampstead.
- 1359 Thomas atte Halle of Wokingham, who had been outlawed, was pardoned because he had surrendered to the Fleet Prison.
- 1370 The approximate date given to part of the Church's West Porch.
- 1381 Easthampstead used by Richard II as a hunting box.
- 1383 A Wokingham bell, donated before 1383, can be found at Dorchester Abbey. Its quality suggests that it was not the earliest product of the Wokingham bell foundry, evidently well established by this date.
- 1383 A writ was issued for the arrest and deliverance to the Constable of Windsor Castle of Matthew Baily of Wokingham, butcher, who had resisted arrest for "trespass of vert and venison in Windsor Forest". (In forest law "vert" is greenery providing cover for deer).
- 1385 Payment was made to players and archers of Wokingham by the Mayor and Corporation of Reading.
- End 14th century Rebuilding of the Church of All Saints began and by the middle of the first half of the 15th century it must to a large extent have been rebuilt.
- 1400 A Steward of the Hundred of Sonning was appointed by the Crown during forfeiture of John Montague, Earl of Salisbury. This was the usual procedure in such cases. (The Steward of Wokingham was a different officer whose function, until the town became a self-governing borough in 1583, was to administer local laws and collect the market rents etc due originally to the Bishops of Salisbury, later to the Earls of Salisbury; see James I Charter of 1612 for the creation of the post of High Steward).
- 1401 Pardon of outlawry to Matthew Baily of Wokingham (see 1383) for not appearing to answer a merchant of Winchester regarding a debt of £4.
- 1434 Henry VI stayed at Easthampstead.

- 1436 John Hughson, born in the town of Delft in Holland, took up his abode in the town – the first recorded immigrant.
- 1443 The Chantry of St. Mary was founded by John Norreys and John Westende when Adam Moleyns was Dean of Salisbury. The chantry chapel was in the north chancel aisle of the church of All Saints and a priest was required “daily to say Masse, Mattens and Evensonge with other suffrages – (intercessory prayers) in the foundation mentioned with the parish church of Oykngham”.
- 1448 Roger Landen mentioned in the Eton College accounts. He owned the bell-foundry at Wokingham at that time.
- 1451 Eight almshouses at the east end of Peach Street were endowed by John Westende. The endowment makes the first known mention of the Alderman of Wokingham, over 130 years before the reference to the Alderman in Elizabeth I’s Charter. (The title is a Saxon one and thus points to Wokingham having had a viable form of self-government before the Norman Conquest).
- 1457 A pardon was granted at Westminster to John Cheyne of Wokingham, “husbandman”, of the felony of having lain with Alice, wife of John Hille of Aldgate, and of having stolen goods from the said John Hille – a blue gown, a gown with buckram and three silver spoons worth £5.
- 1459 Pardon to Roger Landen, bellmaker of Wokingham for not appearing before the justices to answer two citizens of London, one a stockfishmonger and the other an “Upholder”, as regards debts of 50 marks and £10 respectively.

## THE TUDOR PERIOD

- 1488 In the Fine Rolls mention is made of Richard Wattys of Wokingham, “yoman”, who is to have the “Farm of the subsidy and alnage – official inspection – of cloths for sale . . . in the counties of Oxford and Berks” – an indication of a Wokingham man’s involvement in the wool trade. John Michel of Wokingham, “bellfounder”, is also mentioned. (By the end of this century the bell-foundry had moved to Reading).
- 1488 A court with a view of Frankpledge – concerned with tithes – was held at Hertoke (Ashridge Manor) – among others the tithings of Beche and Buckhirst were represented.
- 1516 Ralph White. Further endowments of Almshouse founded by John Westende.
- 1517 Birth in Wokingham, of poor parents, of **Thomas Godwin** who became **Bishop of Bath and Wells**. Educated at the free school, he was adopted by Dr. Layton who paid for his education at Oxford. Godwin became a popular preacher, especially with Queen Elizabeth and was made Bishop of Bath and Wells in 1584. The Dictionary of National Biography says this of Godwin’s declining years: “He had been a widower for several years, but was misguided enough to marry a second time when ‘aged, diseased and lame of the gout’. Raleigh had been scheming to get the manor of Banwell from the Bishopric on a 100 years’ lease. He now told the Queen that Godwin had married a girl of twenty for her money. The Earl of Bedford warmly defended Godwin by saying that the Bishop’s wife was a widow and had a son over 40 . . . The Queen, however, took Raleigh’s part and, after sundry sharp messages from her, Godwin, to save Banwell, had to part with another manor (Winscombe). . . . Disgraced and broken in health, suffering from a quartan ague, the Bishop retired to his native air of Oakingham, where he died, aged 73, on 19 November 1590”.
- 1528 King Henry VIII visited Easthampstead Park “in search of greater game”.
- 1531 Queen Catherine of Aragon, at Easthampstead Park, received messengers from the King asking her to agree to a divorce.
- 1535 “Valor Ecclesiasticus”. A survey and estimate of the whole ecclesiastical property of England and Wales gives the annual value of the Rectory of Wokingham as £26 13s 4d and of the Chantry of St. Mary as £10 6s 5½d less tithes of £1 0s 7½d. The lessee was Edward Lose. (see also 1650).
- 1536-1539 **DISSOLUTION OF THE MONASTERIES**
- 1536 Certificate by the Commissioners of Chantries states that there remains in the custody of the incumbent of the Chantry at Wokingham “none besides a chalice weighing 10 oz.”
- 1538 Trial of Lord Montague and the Marquess of Exeter for treason.



"Jerome Ragland . . . heard Lord Montague at Okyngham — Bramshell crossed out — heth this summer wish himself and his son were over seas with six persons more whom he did not name". Lord Montague was a brother of Reginald (afterwards Cardinal) Pole who, after the accession of Mary I, became Archbishop of Canterbury in succession to Cranmer. Although loyal to Henry VIII, Lord Montague was deeply grieved at the dissolution of the monasteries and the repudiation of the Pope's authority. He and the Marquess of Exeter were found guilty of treason; they were executed on Tower Hill before the year was out (see also 1627).

- 1539 Peter Vannes, an Italian by birth, became Dean of Sonning.
- 1540 Visitation of Hurst by Dean Vannes made reference to Wokingham. There were complaints about Wokingham church. Certain persons "say on oath that the chancel is defective in the roofing over the High Altar and also in the Sedelia, by neglect of the Dean. That the Chancel suffers by defect of its glass windows and that it hath not a Bible in the said church according to the King's injunction . . . Russell testifyeth that Alicia Tanner took away some velvet altar cloths."
- 1548 Endowment of the Chantry of St. Mary granted to Richard Ward and William Planner. It included rent from land at Bray.  
Royal Commission seized at Wokingham 152 oz. of plate for the King's use. One chalice of 13 oz., four bells and a Sanctus bell were left.  
Alicia Larkington, a parishioner of Hurst, was condemned to walk in the Church procession at Wokingham with a 2 lb. candle in her hand to kneel before the High Altar at Mass, for being among those who had disgraced themselves by "profane talk, backbiting or dissolute manners".
- 1558 Gorrick Well. Tradition has it that Queen Elizabeth who frequently used Easthampstead as a hunting lodge, visited the well on three occasions. The well water, a strong chalybeate (mineral water impregnated with iron), was noted for its curative properties, particularly for eye troubles. The well, situated on Ludgrove estate, then known as Luckley, has been filled in.
- c. 1560 A bell foundry established by Thomas Eldridge. It may have been somewhere near Ashridge Farm. Bells were sent to Bray and Winkfield in 1565.
- 1564 Thomas Wolley's charity, a yearly distribution to occupants of Westende Almshouses.
- 1565 Edmund Bauchelor further endowed Westende Almshouses.
- 1573 **Archbishop Laud born in Reading.** His parents previously lived in Wokingham in Roth (Rose) Street.
- 1577 Certificate concerning Taverns and Alehouses. Two Innholders and sixteen Typlers (retailers of ale) were listed for the town.  
**SPAIN AND THE PLOTS AGAINST ELIZABETH.** The period between 1568 and 1584 was marked by a series of plots against Elizabeth and a growing number of raids on the Spanish Main, including those of Hawkins and Drake. Elizabeth was excommunicated in 1570.
- 1580 Musters in Berkshire: Certificate of Musters, Footmen (foot-soldiers).

	Sonninge	Ockingham
Selected Footmen	98	200
Corselets, furnished with Pikes, Swords and Daggers	10	22
Harquebuses, with Morions, swords and daggers	21	44
Bowes with sheaves of arrows, sword and dagger	9	38
Billes with Jacke sword and dagger	60	10
Billes with Almagne rivets, sword and dagger	19	22
Horsemen, Demi Lance		2
Light Horse	5	9
Captains of Hundreds	Humfree Stafferton	Richard Hide, gent.

Note: The above entry lists soldiers, with their weapons.

A corselet was a soldier wearing armour which covered the body. Harquebuses carried guns which were supported on tripods when they were fired; morions were helmets without visors. Billes carried halberds, which were a combined spear and battle-axe, and Almagne rivets was a light armour with overlapping plates sliding on rivets.

- 1583 Charter of Queen Elizabeth: the oldest surviving Charter. Wokingham was "a parcell of the Manor or Lordship of Sonning." The Steward of the Manor was an officer of the Crown and exercised some considerable authority in Wokingham. The Alderman (First Citizen) was to a considerable degree autocratic and had no Council associated with him. "He hath the government, ordering and direction of the town". There were two Constables, two Bailiffs and two Aletasters and these "have always been only under the correction of the Alderman." The Charter confirmed the privilege of holding the Court Leet, an old Saxon meeting held annually around Easter, at which the Alderman was chosen by the Steward of Sonning "out of certain persons . . . named by the Jury". The existence of ancient privileges is proved by the passage in the Charter which states "by all the time whereof no memory of man is to the contrary there have been enjoyed certain liberties, privileges, customs, as we are credibly informed".
- 1585 Probable date of the establishment of the silk industry, including the making of silk stockings, Flemish weavers having been driven out of their own country by religious persecution. (See also 1625).
- 1598 This was the time of the Irish national rebellion led by Tyrone, head of the O'Neilles.
- 1599 Footmen levied and pressed by warrant of the Privy Council for service in Ireland: William Piggott of Barkham; John Williams of Hurst; Clement Arrowsmith of Bienfield; Nicholas Hogg and Richard Finshe of Arborfield; Josias White, Henry Hayborne, Robert Ashbeye and Richard Grove of Ockingham.

These were armed and weaponed as follows (divided among the 100 men levied in Berkshire:

Pikemen, Pikes with Curats, Morions, helmets, sword and dagger.  
 Musketeers, with Morions, swords and daggers, restes, bandalers, scrues and bullet bags.  
 Calivers, with flasks and tuchboxes, morions, swords and daggers, scrues and bullet bags.  
 Holberts, with curates (probably cuirasses), morions, swords and daggers.  
 Also conduct money at 8d each a day for five days.

Note: Curats or cuirass was armour reaching to the waist. A caliver was a light harquebus, fired without a rest.

- 1600 The Board of Green Cloth considered a complaint of the inhabitants of Swallowfield, Ockingham and Hurst that they are particularly charged with hay, oats and litter for Her Majesty's stables in Reading, Windsor etc.

## THE STUARTS

- 1605 Will of Richard Young gave 25s. a year for distribution of bread during February.  
Petition of the inhabitants of Windsor Forest against claims made upon them by the Board of Green Cloth for wheat etc. contrary to the King's Charter freeing them from Purveyance (right of the Crown to receive provisions at a fixed price).
- 1606 Charity of John Planner. For apprenticing children born in Wokingham.
- 1607 John Norden's map of Windsor Forest. The Berkshire portion of the Forest was divided into three bailiwicks: Fynes, Finchampstead and Battles. These were sub-divided into walks, 16 in all, each of them stocked with deer and placed under the charge of a keeper; he was an important official and usually a gentleman of the Court. The nearest walks to Wokingham were Easthampstead, Sandhurst, "Bigshot", "Bearewood" and Binfield. Sir Henry Neville of Billingbere, who was to become the town's first High Steward, was the keeper of Binfield walk.
- 1612 **Charter of James I.**  
**The first Municipal Council.** This Charter refers to the "Charter of the Lady late Queen Elizabeth as by the Charter of diverse others Our Progenitors and Predecessors formerly Kings of England" confirming the existence of earlier charters. Wokingham was still a "parcell of the Manor of Sonning" but dependence on the Steward was removed and fines and profits of the Manor Court now went to the Town. The Charter set up a Common Council, consisting of the Alderman, seven Capital Burgesses and 12 Secondary Burgesses. The Alderman was elected annually, from Capital Burgesses, by the Common Council. The office of High Steward – "one very Eminent Man" – was instituted, and provision was made for a Recorder or Under Steward, an expert in the law; a Common Clerk and two Sergeants of the Mace.  
**The first Town Hall.** The Charter gave leave for the erection of a Guildhall (the building demolished in 1858) and a prison.
- 1618 Inquests of Assart Land (land taken from the Forest), purprestures (illegal enclosures), encroachments etc. in the parishes of Hurst, Wokingham, Cookham, Sunninghill etc. in the Forest of Windsor now occupied by Sir Henry Neville and others.
- 1622-1623 James I resided at Easthampstead in the summer.
- 1625 **ACCESSION OF CHARLES I**  
The ordinances – municipal bye-laws authorised by the James I Charter. There were separate oaths to be taken by all the officials, for instance: The Aletasters were "to take care that the assize of bread and beer be duly kept, and weights and measures duly weighed and measured". The Fleshtasters were "to take care that all such flesh, fish and other victuals as shall be brought and exposed to sale within this Corporation and Town be wholesome and fitting to be sold". The Leather Sealers were "to see that the leather brought and exposed to sale be well and sufficiently tanned and carried according to Statute". There were also bye-laws on silk knitting and Rules for electing the Alderman.



- 1627 Examination of Martha Long by Mr. Windebank, one of the Clerks of the Signet and the nearest Justice of the Peace to Wokingham. respecting a letter said to have been received from her daughter, Mary Montague, wife of Henry Montague of Wokingham.
- 1628 **The Trumbulls at Easthampstead.** William Trumbull was granted Easthampstead Park for his services at the Court of Archduke Albert of Austria in the Netherlands (1609-25). This was the first mention of the "house" and "mansion". Trumbull had to provide 200 deer for the Kings' recreation; the Trumbulls were released from this obligation by Charles II.
- 1628 Petition of John Whitlock, Alderman of Wokingham, and the rest of the Burgesses, concerning the company of Captain Mohun, of 55 soldiers, who were billeted in the town from 20 April to 20 July 1628. This cost the town £77 5s. 3d. and "they would like to be paid".  
Thomas Miller of Wokingham, mercer, sent for by the Council for disobeying a Post Warrant. Complaint made by Mr. Tyrwhitt.  
Distribution to "Six decayed tradesmen" under the will of William Thare.
- 1630 Petition of the inhabitants and commoners of Wokingham, Hurst, Barkham, Arborfield and Sindlesham to the Constable of Windsor Castle complaining that the Keeper had formerly enclosed 60 or 80 acres of land for "learing" (that is, for use as a pen) and feeding deer and "has now enclosed 100 or 120 acres more, converting the former into tillage. Pray that he may desist".
- 1633 Will of John Merrywether. Purchase of upper garments for the poor people of Wokingham.
- 1635 William Tuck of Oakingham Carrier. Receipt for 6s. paid by Edward Nicholas, Clerk of the Council and Secretary of the Admiralty, "for carriages carried this day".
- 1636 Assessment for Land Tax and Ship Money. Wokingham £50 for the latter. "Secretary Windebank will reside at his house at Haines Hill, Berks" (because of the danger of infection from the plague in London). A Stage was laid on from Staines to Wokingham and thence to Hartford Bridge (and return) while Sir Francis remained there." The Wages to be 2s. a day."
- 1637 Notes and Memoranda by Edward Nicholas about Ship Money. Wokingham, among other places, mentioned for enquiry or reduction.
- 1638 Assessments in Sonning Hundred for Ship Money. "Wokingham Town, Wokingham Parish, Arborfield with Newland and Sandhurst have paid all taxes equally in fourth part, but Sandhurst is unequal to the others . . . Shall not the value be considered in assessing the Ship Money?" (Sheriff of Berkshire to Nicholas).  
John Gooding and Thomas Martin, defaulters at Musters, were discharged by the Lord Lieutenant on promise of future good behaviour.  
John Hammond petitioned Secretary Windebank. He had a Title of descent from his father to a messuage and 14 acres of land in Wokingham, value £20 per annum, but by reason of poverty was not able to commence suit for recovery, the same being withheld by Paul Dawson, a servant of His Majesty.  
Endowment by Robert Ball – grants for the relief of the poor.
- 1642 **THE CIVIL WAR**  
Richard Whitlock charity.

- 1643 Archbishop Laud's will establishing Charity to provide marriage portions for three poor maids born in Wokingham.
- 1645 Execution of Archbishop Laud.
- 1645 The Lord General, the Earl of Essex, was desired by the Committee of Both Kingdoms to send Sir William Balfour to Ockingham for appeasing the troops there and persuading them to their duty.  
Battle of Naseby, 14 June. Richard Beaver raised two Troops of Horse to fight for the King. Monument in All Saints' Churchyard, and a description in Canon Long's "Records".
- 1646 Royal Warrant granting Wokingham and certain other parishes in the Forest exemption from purveyance and composition (commutation of obligations) for the King's Household. In consideration that the inhabitants preserve, maintain and encourage the "game of deer" in the Forest, the King instructs various high officers of State to free and exempt the inhabitants from all Purveyance, Victuals, etc. for his castle and stables at Windsor.
- 1650 Parliamentary Survey of the Rectory of Wokingham. Mr. John Bateman was the curate. He "preacheth twice everye Lords Daye and hath by his sallerie out of the Parsonage seaventie pounds per annum". The rent paid to the Dean was still £26 13s. 4d. but the value of the tithe had increased to £173 6s. 8d. In 1649 Mr. Bateman's name had appeared among sundry Ministers and lecturers upon whom augmentation (salary increase) was settled out of the proceeds of the sale of the Dean and Chapter lands. His allowance was £13 6s. 8d. paid every six months and also the Trustees for the Maintenance of Ministers, in 1655, made a grant of £23 13s. 4d. out of the tithes of Wokingham to the then incumbent John Bateman.
- 1655 Colonel Richard Neville, of Billingbear, a staunch Royalist and Cavalier who had fought in the Civil War, was elected and sworn as High Steward.
- 1656 Petition by the inhabitants of Wokingham, Hurst, Arborfield, Barkham etc. that "Brerewood –? Bearwood –, accounted part of the Forest, is Chase, not Forest and belonged to the Bishops of Sarum, under whom they enjoyed herbage – right of pasture – etc. as is proved by Records. An exchange being made, King James – had – allowed . . . Arrowsmith to erect a lodge and keep deer. Beg its demolition and annex proposals for improving the Forest."
- 1657 Augmentation advised by the Trustees for the Maintenance of Ministers: Minister of Wokingham, Co. Berks. . . . £30. Approved by the Protector, 13 April.
- 1660 **RESTORATION OF KING CHARLES II**
- 1661 George Staverton bequest for a bull to be baited in the Market Place on St. Thomas' Day (21 December).
- 1662 Act of Settlement. This enabled Parish Authorities to prevent a labourer moving into the parish even if he had a job, if he might at a future time become a burden on the rates. The man's own parish could not refuse to receive him.
- 1663 **Endowment of Lucas Hospital.** The will of Henry Lucas, Esq. provided a hospital for 16 poor single men. The Lucas Hospital is the finest building in

Wokingham, being the only Grade I building in the town in the Ministry list of buildings of architectural and historical interest. A list of Masters of the Hospital is to be found in Long's book on the Parish Church. Lucas also established the Lucasian Mattheistical Professorship at Cambridge.

- 1664 **The Curfew.** The will of Richard Palmer provided for the ringing of the Great Bell of the parish church at 8 pm and 4 am from September to March yearly "so that strangers happening to lose their way in the country might be informed of the time of night and receive some guidance in the right way" It was also intended to promote a timely going to rest in the evening and early rising in the morning.
- 1669 Death of Maj-Gen. Sir Richard ("Moses") Browne, Parliamentary general, M.P. and Lord Mayor of London. He was Major-General of the forces raised for the siege of Oxford in the Civil War and commander-in-chief of the forces of the three associated counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. With other Presbyterian M.P.s he was expelled from the House under Pride's Purge; he was deprived of his posts of Sheriff and Alderman of London and imprisoned for several years. Browne led the triumphal procession which brought Charles II back to London in 1660; he was liberally rewarded by the King for his services and was knighted. In 1660 he was also elected Lord Mayor of London. Richard Browne was the son of John Browne, alias Moses, of "Oakingham", and of Anne, daughter of John Beard of "Wokingham". John Browne's father was Richard Browne, also alias Moses, of Wokingham. The origin of the nickname Moses for three generations of Brownes has not been established.
- 1670 **The Highwaymen.** Claud Duval, the famous highwayman originating from Normandy, hanged at Tyburn. Reputed to have had a hide-out in Wokingham he frequently worked Bagshot Heath and was notorious, not only for his daring robberies, but also for his gallantries towards the ladies. Bagshot Heath was a notorious haunt of highwaymen and footpads, since the Forest provided a convenient refuge. Dick Turpin occasionally operated in the district. As the poet Gay wrote:  
 "Prepared for war, now Bagshot Heath we cross  
 Where broken gamesters oft repair their loss."
- 1673 Test Act passed. This required all persons holding office under the Crown to take the Sacrament according to the rites of the Church of England. Several Council members about this period protested against taking the oath, holding that it was an unlawful oath imposed against the laws and liberties of the kingdom. It was decided that each Alderman shall lay out £5 for the repair of the Market House (Town Hall) out of the tolls which he received during his year of office.
- 1674 Earliest surviving baptismal records in the Church Register.
- 1675 A lock-up house built at a cost of £4 9s. 10d. was contributed to in small amounts by individual members of the Corporate Body as the financial position of the town was unable to bear the strain of such a heavy charge!
- 1678 An Act for the encouragement of the Woollen Manufacturers and the prevention of the export of money for the import of linen. This required that all persons should be buried in woollen garments or shrouds. An affidavit that

the law had been obeyed had to be sworn before a Magistrate, or a curate other than the one in whose parish the burial took place. Several were sworn before the Alderman. The dates of the affidavits are frequently given in the Burial Register.

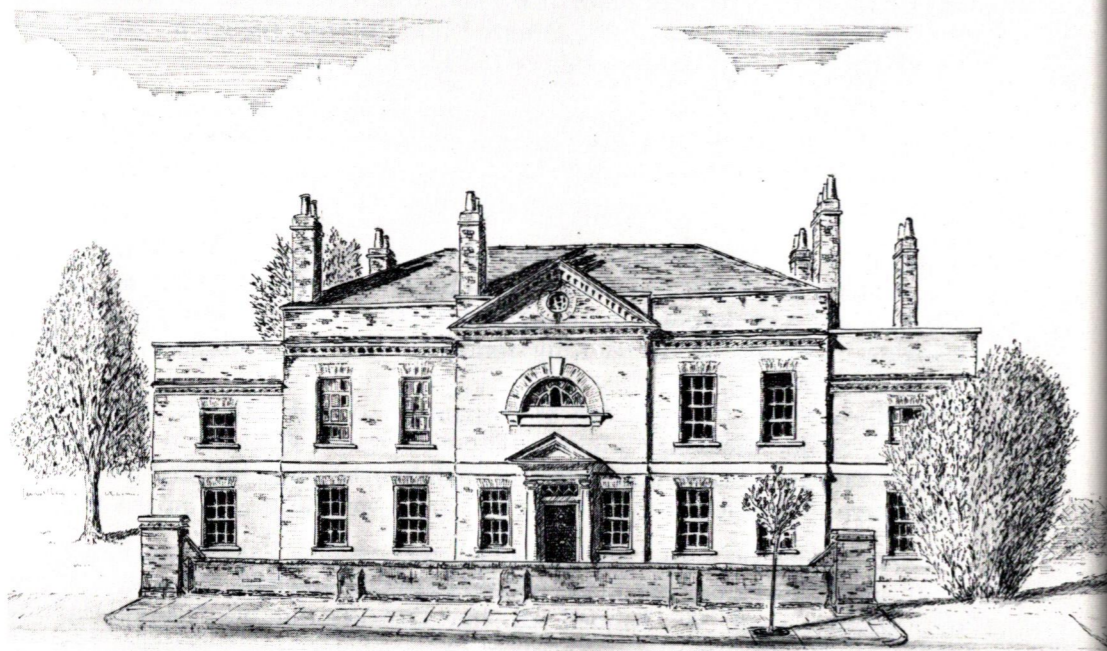
- 1679 A resolution was passed by the Council ordering the Alderman to pay £5 towards the upkeep of the Market House (Town Hall); the Burgesses were to see that he did so and that if he were to default they were to enter upon the toll of the market. In 1693 a similar resolution was passed, which points to the fact that some of the Aldermen tried to shirk their responsibility. It was the practice for Members of the Council who were aged and infirm to apply for their discharge; this was usually granted and seems to have become the only satisfactory way of leaving the body.
- 1685 Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, which had driven many Huguenots out of France into England.
- 1686 Abstract of the particulars of all the Inns, Alehouses etc. in England with their Stable rooms and bedding.
- |           |                     |    |
|-----------|---------------------|----|
| Oakingham | Guests beds         | 37 |
|           | Stabling for Horses | 53 |
- 1688 A Recorder, Thomas Staples, was discharged for "not having given his attendance as often as occasion required". Later, another Recorder was fined for the same reason.
- 1694 John Mogg, father of Molly, came to Wokingham.
- 1695 Robert Morden's map. Shows main road bypassing Wokingham. Warrant for Richard Hawes of Wokingham, and other gentlemen, to be Regarders of the Forest of Windsor.
- 1700 A new resident was refused freedom to trade and ordered to leave the town with his family within two months. In this year, or slightly before, the father of Alexander Pope the poet moved with his family to Binfield. Sir William Trumbull, living in retirement at Easthampstead, encouraged Pope to write "Pastorals". These were certainly published by 1706: Pope said that they were published when he was 16, i.e. c. 1704.
- 1702-1714 Queen Anne and her husband were passionately fond of hunting. When she became old and gouty she rode in a chaise with one horse. To make this style of hunting easier, she laid out the drives in the Forest. On 7th August 1711 the Queen hunted through the heat of the day until four in the afternoon and covered 40 miles. She "drives furiously like Jehu and is a mighty hunter like Nimrod". (Swift: "Letters to Stella").
- 1704 The Market House (Town Hall) was badly damaged by a wind-storm. The municipal funds were inadequate to meet the cost of repairs: £30. The money had to be borrowed from members of the Corporation and each Alderman, during his tour of office, had to pay £5 out of the tolls to these members until the debt was settled.
- 1711 The Council decided that the "hors faires" held on "All Sould's Day" and the Thursday before Shrovetide should be kept in Roth Street, also known

as Row Street (Rose Street) and not at the place called Shoot End, and the "hey faire" on 11th June should be kept at Shoot End as before.  
Bequest by Dr. Charles Palmer for maintaining school for 20 poor boys.

- 1713 "Maiden School" for 12 poor girls founded by bequest of Martha Palmer. These two bequests are the origin of the Palmer Schools.  
A special Council meeting was held to deal with traders' protest against "foreigners" (i.e. not 'freemen') settling and trading in the town. It was decided to fine them £5, to be levied by distress, and that a warrant be issued forthwith to the Sergeant-at-Mace to sell up their goods to pay the fine.

## GEORGIAN AGE

- 1716-1726 1st Duke of St. Albans (Charles II's son by Nell Gwynn) High Steward of Wokingham. He resided at Luckley House, the site of the present Ludgrove.  
Note: No evidence has been found in support of the local tale that Nell Gwynn once stayed in the house now called Little Court.
- 1716 Pope family left Binfield.
- 1719 Donnington Bradley, son of the Recorder Abell Bradley, elected Town Clerk and Clerk of the Peace in place of Richard Grape, deceased. He was the first Town Clerk to use a seal in the Minute Book; this had the acorn upright and his own initials 'D.B.' on each side of the acorn.
- 1720 Some of the newly-elected Secondary Burgesses did not respond to Sergeant-at-Mace's call to attend a meeting and be sworn in; they were threatened with fines if they did not attend the next meeting. At the next meeting John Coleman refused to be sworn in and was fined £20.
- 1723 A Jacobite in Wokingham. Thomas Powere of Wokingham, Clerke, was found guilty at Newbury Quarter Sessions of "treasonable practices against the King and Government in aiding and abetting the raising of forces for ye bringing in ye person called King James III (the Old Pretender) and other Treasonable Acts".  
The "Black Act", a special Act of Parliament to deal with the "Wokingham Blacks", made "blackening" a felony. The Wokingham Blacks were a notorious gang of poachers led by a local farmer, Will Shorter, who infested the Forest; they terrorised and extorted blackmail and eventually committed murder.
- 1724 Council decided on a 2/6d. dinner at Quarter Sessions. Each Council member summoned had to pay his 2/6d. whether attending or not. "The Remains of the Dinner shall be handed to the Officers for ye keeping of ye peace attending".
- 1725 All Council members without gowns and cloaks were ordered to procure them before the following Whitsun or be under penalty of the Bye-laws made for the purpose.
- 1727 Henry Nevill Grey, M.P. for Reading, became High Steward. The Council decided to celebrate the swearing-in day with a Handsome Dinner at John Mogg's house, the Rose. Each Capital Burgess had to pay 25s. and each Secondary Burgess 20s.  
**Publication of the ballad of "Molly Mogg"**. The ballad deals with the infatuation of Edward Standen, the young squire of Arborfield, with Molly Mogg, the daughter of John Mogg, landlord of the Rose Inn. It was composed in the Rose by the poet Alexander Pope, the poet and playwright John Gay, the writer Dean Swift and Queen Anne's physician, John Arbuthnot. The Rose in question is not the present Public House bearing this name, but was situated next to the Bush on the site now occupied by the Co-operative Society's store.
- 1727 John Mogg the Alderman of Wokingham.
- 1731 Several Council members were fined for non-attendance at meetings.



The Elms, Broad Street - Wokingham

1738 There was evident difficulty in filling vacancies on the Council. Traders applying for freedom to trade were pressed into the Council when their application was granted. Henry Winter, the wheelwright, was a case in point.

1742 William Cowdery fined £5 for refusing to accept office as Alderman.

1745 **JACOBITE UPRISING. THE YOUNG PRETENDER** ("Bonnie Prince Charlie").

Several residents summoned to be sworn as Council members refused and were fined 40s.

1749 A deed for the lease of the Bush Hotel mentions Rose Street for the first time. (Earlier Bush deeds referred to "Rows alias Row Street").

John Taylor's gift of silver Communion plate, weighing 205 oz., to "Church of Ockingham".

1756 An account of the number of beds and standings for horses in the cities, market towns and considerable villages in England and Wales showed that Wokingham had 28 spare beds and 78 standings for horses.

1758 New mace, costing £24 4s. 4d. Deficiency of £9 9s. 0d. made up by Recorder and eight other members of Corporation, "to be refunded as money comes in".

1759 **The Stage Coach arrives at Wokingham**

The Windsor Forest Turnpike Act provided for construction of turnpike road from Virginia Water, through Sunning Hill, "new Bracknowl" and Wokingham to "The Old Gallows" (possibly Reading Cemetery). Milestones and direction posts to be erected and road measured. Principal turnpike gates: Loddon Bridge, Copped Beach (Buckhurst Hill) and Blacknest.

Before the construction of the turnpike road, the road was "in a ruinous condition, narrow in many places and dangerous to travellers"; it was fit only for use by waggons. Coaches were able to use the new road and coach services to London (and from Reading to London via Wokingham) were started.

**Wokingham Georgian Houses.** Some of Wokingham's finest building were built in this period.

1761 Rocque's Map of Berkshire. Spelling of "Oakingham".

1774 Baptist Chapel built.

1781 Stag got away after five-hour hunt by Royal Buckhounds.

Note: George III, who loved hunting, completed the rides through the Forest (see also Queen Anne).

1785-1789 Erection of Beaver Monument in Churchyard by Benjamin Beaver.

1786 The Downshire family at Easthampstead Park. Mary, granddaughter of William Trumbull IV, married Arthur Hill, who succeeded as 2nd Marquess of Downshire.

1787 Tom Johnson beat Bill Warr for Championship of England in prize-fight at Wokingham. Purse: £200.

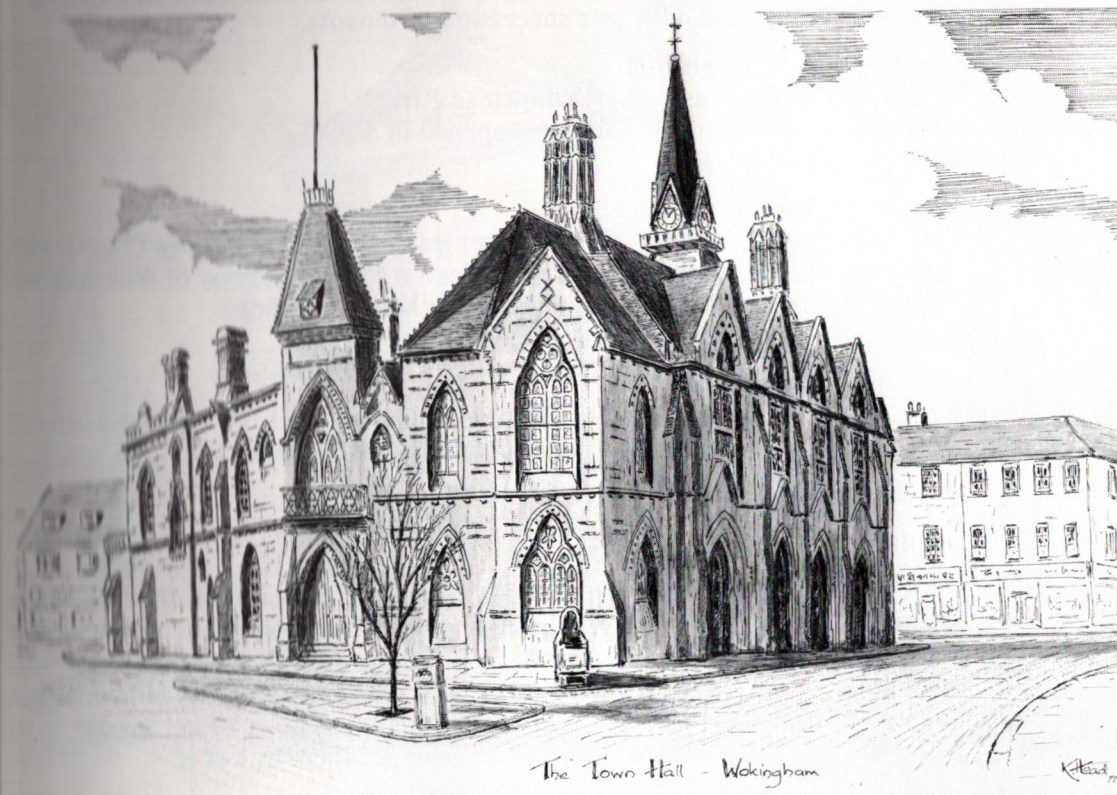
1790s William Heelas Snr. came to Wokingham. He lived at Buckhurst and farmed 200 acres. One son entered business as a wool factor in Reading; the other was a linen draper in the Market Place, Wokingham.

- 1793 The Council resolved that Councillors not attending Council meetings were to be fined 2/6d. for each meeting missed.  
Cricket match for 100 guineas a side between the gentlemen of Wargrave with Lord Barrymore and the gentlemen of Wokingham.
- 1794 Victims of the Christmas bull-baiting: Elizabeth North was found dead dreadfully bruised, the morning after the bull-baiting. At the inquest the Coroner found her "accidentally killed". A man had also been taken from the bull without hopes of life.
- 1795 33 Rose Street purchased for the "Maiden School".
- 1797 Bush Inn sold by Thomas Wilmott (Jnr.) to three brewers for £400. Over 60 years earlier, in 1734, Wilmott's father, also Thomas, had bought the Bush for £800. (There seem to be three possible explanations: Wilmott Snr. was heavily overcharged, the brewers were too smart for his son, or the Inn had declined drastically in the meantime. It is interesting to note that another coaching Inn in the Market Place, the Roebuck, also changed hands for £400 in the 1790s).
- 1801 **First National Census.** Population of Wokingham: 2,281  
Anti-bull baiting sermon preached by Rev. E. Barry of Reading.
- 1807-12 Building of Royal Military Academy, Sandhurst.
- 1808 Baptist Sunday School.
- 1813 **Act for inclosure of Windsor Forest**  
It took effect for Wokingham in 1817. The ancient savage forest laws were repealed, game was no longer protected to the same extent and the ancient forest ceased to exist in its old form. Much of the land was put under cultivation and the conifer plantations were started.  
Apparent end of silk manufacture in Wokingham.
- 1815 "Fowls constitute the principal commerce of the town". Oakingham "is particularly famous for fatted fowls, by which many people in that town and neighbourhood gain a livelihood". Fatted fowls on occasion fetched half a guinea or even 15s. a pair. (From "A Practical Treatise on Domestic Poultry" by Bonnington Moubray; the actual author was John Lawrence 1753-1839).
- 1816-17 Bearwood bought by John Walter II.
- 1817 Royal Horse Guards (the Blues) stationed in Down Street (Denmark Street)  
Cpl. William Emmett of the Blues, who served at Waterloo, was among the first trustees of the Methodist Chapel in 1820.
- During this period the Duke of Wellington regularly stayed at the Rose on his way to Stratfield Saye.
- 1819 Town Hall repaired at cost of £1,000, defrayed by public subscription
- 1820 Methodist Chapel established in a barn on the present Rose Street site ("The Barn Chapel").
- 1821 Bull baiting prohibited by Corporation.  
Bulls were still provided at Christmas and the meat distributed to the poor

- 1824 Caroline Bird daughter of Charles Bird Esq. of Matthews Green Farm, converted to Methodism. She carried out much religious work in the poverty-stricken homes in the over-crowded courts off Rose Street.
- 1825 Foundation of first Cricket Club.
- 1828 National School erected in Rose Street for 250 boys and girls.  
  
Test and Corporation Acts repealed. The removal of disabilities under these Acts meant that Nonconformists could hold municipal office; William Heelas Snr. was soon after elected to be the Alderman.
- 1830 Formation of Forest Association for Prosecution of Felons took place at a meeting in the Town Hall presided over by the High Sheriff, John Walter. A motion, passed unanimously, was proposed by the Marquess of Downshire and seconded by Robert Palmer, Esq., M.P. Each parish in the Forest Division formed its own police force of special constables to apprehend incendiaries setting fire to stacks, ricks, barns or buildings. This was the time of the "machine riots", due partly to labourers' dislike of newly-introduced agricultural machinery. The Association's meetings were held at the Rose. Selected figures: Wokingham Town: 102 specials; Binfield: 55 specials; Hurst and Ruscombe: 35 mounted and 55 foot constables. The Association was obviously successful, as there was little trouble after 1833. Note: The above has been abstracted from reports in the Reading Mercury from 5th to 26th April 1952 on the Association's minute book.  
Note: There was an earlier (1817-19) Wokingham Association for Prosecution of Felons.
- 1833 Last bull baiting in England. An Act of Parliament had consolidated an Act of 1827 (which banned the cruel and inhumane treatment of cattle) by including bull baiting. However a mob seized one of the bulls being kept for the poor (see 1821) and baited it. In this "sport" bulldogs would be set upon the beast one after another, and try to fasten their teeth in the cartilage of the bull's nose. When a dog succeeded he was acclaimed for a "pin".  
  
Agricultural Association established to encourage farm servants and labourers in husbandry.  
  
Caroline Bird married William Heelas, Jnr., a pillar of the Baptists.
- 1836 Wokingham ceases to be part of Salisbury Diocese. The parish of Wokingham, with the rest of the Archdeaconry of Berkshire, was transferred to the Diocese of Oxford.

## THE VICTORIANS

- 1837 Old Manor House of Evendons pulled down and building of present house started.
- 1840 Paddington to Reading railway line opened.  
Foundation of "The Tablet" by Frederick Lucas (a distinguished Wokingham inhabitant, according to the VCH). Born and educated as a Quaker, he was converted to Catholicism in 1839. He later became M.P. for Meath.
- 1842 Palmer Girls' School (Maiden School) amalgamated with National School. The building occupied by Charles Palmer Boys' School (already amalgamated with National School) in Down (Denmark) Street demolished; the materials were used to construct Infants' School (behind 33 Rose Street).
- 1843 Charles Kingsley, author of "The Water Babies" etc., became Rector of Eversley.
- 1843-1846 Dispute with Dean of Salisbury (as Rector) over repairs to All Saints. The Churchwardens petitioned Parliament in 1846. One architect recommended the Church's demolition.
- 1845 End of Wokingham in Wiltshire. The whole of Wokingham came into Berkshire.
- 1846 End of the Dean of Salisbury's "Peculiars". The ecclesiastical "peculiars" including that of the Dean of Salisbury's Peculiar of Wokingham, were abolished. The patronage of All Saints was transferred from the Dean to the Bishop of Oxford.  
St. Catherine's Church, Bear Wood, consecrated (built by John Walter the second.)
- 1847 Establishment of gas company.
- 1849 **The railway comes to Wokingham.**  
Opening of line from Reading to Guildford and then to Dorking and Redhill.
- 1850 The early days of commuting. An auction notice in the Reading Mercury of 22nd June 1850 concerning the sale of Bill Hill said that its "valuable farms" extended "from the Twyford Station, on the Great Western Railway (only one hour's journey from London) to the town of Wokingham". The vendor was John Leveson Gower, Esq.; the house was described as a "Modern Mansion".  
Workhouse built in Barkham Road, the present Hospital. (The old Workhouse was in Denmark Street. In 1927 it was used as decorator's paint shop by F. Dearlove.)  
Primitive Methodists ("the ranters") rented a room.
- 1853 Incorporation of Wellington College as memorial to the Duke.
- 1856 **A direct railway to London.** Railway from Staines reached Wokingham, with running powers to Reading over Guildford and Reigate line. The railway was built by an independent company under the Staines, Wokingham and Wokingham



Junction Railway Act.

**The Great Period of Public Building.**

- 1857 Primitive Methodist Chapel built.
- 1858 Demolition of old Town Hall, start of work on new one.
- 1859 Opening of Wellington College by Queen Victoria.
- 1860 Isaiah Gadd, an 18 year old draper's assistant from Gloucestershire, came to work at Heelas' in Wokingham; he was a pillar of the Methodist Chapel throughout his life. When he died, he was a merchant with three businesses - removals contractor, coal merchant and antique dealer. In 1888 Gadd bought Montague House and let it to a succession of tenants.
- Opening of new Town Hall.**  
Rebuilding of the present Easthampstead Park.  
Further restoration of All Saints (re-opened in 1864).  
Baptist Church re-built.
- 1863 Broadmoor Institution built.  
Publication of Charles Kingsley's "Water Babies". The boy sweep (Tom) who came down in the wrong bedroom was Seaward, a sweep's boy of Wokingham his photograph, as "First Citizen", is in the Mayor's Parlour.  
Creation of Parish of St. Paul.
- 1864 St. Paul's Church consecrated.  
Building of St. Sebastian's Church to serve the needs of the "Broomdashers" who cut brushwood from the common and made brooms.
- 1866 St. Paul's Schools opened.
- 1867 Building of St. Paul's Rectory.
- 1870 Wesleyan Methodist Church built. It occupied the site of the old Barn Methodist Chapel in Rose Street and of the Eagle Brewery which stood behind it. Torrential rain fell on the day of the stone-laying ceremony and the Baptist Minister, Rev. P.G. Scorey, offered the use of the Milton Road Chapel for a service, saying that he was usually anxious to get people into the water, but that this time his desire was to get them out of it.  
Bearwood "nearing completion" (John Walter III).
- 1871 Ecclesiastical Parish of St. Sebastian created (church built 1864).
- 1874-85 Local Government Board relieved Common Council of responsibilities under Public Health Act.
- 1875 Palmer Schools opened in Rectory Road.
- c. 1876 Heelas' of Wokingham operating Savings Bank.
- 1881 Drill Hall in Denmark Street built by Arthur Walter, son of John Walter III.
- 1882 Municipal Corporations Act.
- 1883 Inhabitants of Wokingham petitioned Privy Council for grant of Charter of Incorporation under 1882 Act.
- 1885 **The Victorian Charter.**  
**The last of the Aldermen.** This Charter established a Borough Council for





Wokingham with full municipal powers. The "Alderman" renounced his ancient Saxon title, the only one in the country, to become an ordinary Mayor. 1885 was a landmark in Wokingham's history as it also saw the end of the Wokingham Borough Court of Quarter Sessions and the vesting of the municipal charities (embracing nearly all the older charities) in seven trustees.

1887 Mayor's chain provided.

1889 Origins of Wokingham Club. In March a few cyclists including Arthur Heelas and Frederick Wells, brother of H.G. Wells, formed a Cyclists' Club which, in 1892 amalgamated with the Working Men's Club (of Peach Street) to form the Wokingham Club. The Market Place premises were purchased in 1910 by Mr. Howard Palmer, who had become President in 1901. The Club closed in the late 1950s. Fred Wells was an employee of Heelas' in the Market Place; his brother used to visit him in Wokingham.

1893 St. Paul's Parish Room, including clock tower, built.

1894 Creation of Civil Parishes of Wokingham Within and Without.

## TWENTIETH CENTURY

- 1901 Binfield Brick and Tile Works built.  
On the abolition of the Royal Buckhounds the Bucks and Berks Harriers were converted to staghounds with Sir Robert Wilmot, Bart. of Binfield Grove, as master.  
The London Open Air Sanatorium at Pinewood was built and equipped at a cost of £40,000 for the Metropolitan Asylums Board.  
Foundation stone laid of All Saints Church House, Easthampstead Road.
- 1902 The Garth Hunt adopted its present name to mark the retirement of Mr. Thomas Colleton Garth, who had been Master since 1852. In 1910 the Garth Hunt Kennels were moved to Bracknell.
- 1903 **Wokingham gets its own paper.** The first issue was published of the 'Wokingham and Bracknell Gazette', the predecessor of the 'Wokingham Times'. The founder was Francis Staniland, a missionary returned from Japan, who was horrified that the town did not have its own newspaper. The first issue was printed on a press in the basement of a little grocer's shop in Denmark Street, now the International Stores. Staniland, described by a contemporary as "a fiery little man", was everything – advertising representative, reporter, compositor and printer.
- 1904 The Wokingham Market, having "sunk almost into oblivion", was revived by Thimbleby and Shorland of Reading who held the tenancy until 1918. Police Station at junction of Rectory Road and Milton Road opened.
- 1905 East Berkshire Golf Club established.  
Sr. Guglielmo Marconi visited Wokingham and lunched at the Rose, lavishing great praise on Mrs. Churchman for the "splendid menu".
- 1905-1910 At least two Wokingham cycle dealers turned to motor car repairs: E.J. Chase, Motor and Cycle Works of Broad Street, an early A.A. agent, and E.H. Perkins, Motor and Cycle Works of Peach Street and Market Place.
- 1906 Wescott Road School built at cost of £6,000 for 400 children.
- c. 1909 A Mr. Farbrother, a journeyman carpenter, built an airship in a large shed in the Easthampstead Road. His project aroused considerable interest and local people subscribed a large amount of money. The "Wokingham Whale", as the ship was called, appears never to have been completed.
- 1911 Roman Catholic Church of Corpus Christi on the Terrace consecrated.  
The Town's celebrations for the coronation of King George V and Queen Mary included special church services, a fete and gymkhana at Starmead, and an ox roast and a dinner of two sittings at the Town Hall for 700 of the town's old people.
- 1912 A site was acquired for a "cinematograph theatre" in Broad Street. Soon afterwards the "Picture Palace" opened there at No. 10. It was later known as the "Savoy Electric Theatre" and survived until the second World War.
- c. 1912 Wokingham's first motor fire engine was acquired. It had been paid for by voluntary subscription.

### 1914-1918 FIRST WORLD WAR

The deaths of 217 men from Wokingham are recorded in the War Memorial in the Town Hall. Bearwood House was used as a convalescent home for Canadian servicemen. About 20,000 Canadians passed through Bearwood House during the war.

- 1919 Bearwood House sold by John Walter IV to Sir Thomas Devitt who made it into an orphanage and training college for the children of merchant seamen.
- c. 1920 Distinguished cricketers such as F.E. Rowe of Essex and A.C. MacLaren of Lancashire and England played for Wokingham Cricket Club at this period.
- 1920-1925 The Thames Valley Traction Co. Ltd. started to run a regular bus service through Wokingham daily at frequent intervals.
- 1924 The Statutes of Lucas Hospital were changed to allow the admission of married couples.
- c. 1925 Electrification of the Borough. The main streets were cabled and many houses connected. The electricity was supplied by the Yorktown and Blackwater Electric Co.
- 1927 **Extension of Borough.** The Borough of Wokingham and the parish of Wokingham Within were extended to include part of the parish of Wokingham Without. The number of town councillors was increased from 12 to 18.
- 1929 The first of a series of Carnivals at Wokingham to raise money for local charities.
- c. 1930 The 1st Wokingham Scout Group founded, with H.Q. at 33 Peach Street.
- 1930 Holt School opened. The first Headmistress was Miss G.M. Brown, M.A.
- 1935 Jubilee Avenue of 70 oak trees planted.
- 1936 Alderman Philip Sale J.P. became the Borough's first Honorary Freeman.
- 1937 Ritz Cinema opened.
- 1938 Wokingham Rural District Council negotiated the purchase of St. Paul's Rectory for use as Council offices. The purchase price was put at £3,500. A full-time assistant Town Clerk appointed. The Town Clerk himself was still a part-time official.  
Electrification of Railway. Full passenger services did not begin until 1939.

### 1939-45 SECOND WORLD WAR

One hundred and one names of men from Wokingham who died on active service are inscribed on the War Memorial.

- 1939 Wokingham Hospital. The Workhouse, or Union, which had hitherto been a Public Assistance Hospital, became an Emergency Hospital. In 1948 it became Wokingham Hospital.
- 1942 Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (R.E.M.E.) took over the site of the former Remount Depot at Arborfield.
- 1946 J.H. Elliston Clifton, Town Clerk of Wokingham since 1913, retired and was replaced by Mr. L. Goddard Smalley, the first full-time Town Clerk.
- 1947 Easthampstead Park a Teachers' Training College. A serious fire occurred at Easthampstead Park while negotiations for its sale by the Downshire

family to the Berkshire County Council were still in progress. Easthampstead Park was merged into the Berkshire College of Education at Woodley in 1969. The Park is now a comprehensive school.

Martin's Swimming Pool acquired by Corporation for £12,000.

- 1948 Wokingham and District Chamber of Trade set up with an Executive Council of 20 members under chairmanship of Mr. Stephen Sale.
- 1948-49 Intensive municipal housing schemes in Mylne Square, Barrett Crescent, Waterloo Road, Commons Road and Corfield Green.
- 1950 **The Parliamentary Constituency of Wokingham.** In March the first parliamentary Election for the new Wokingham Division was held. The Conservative candidate, the Hon. Peter Remnant, won the seat with a majority of 10,316.  
Rotary Club inaugurated.
- 1953 Grant of Arms to the Borough.  
St. Crispin's School opened.  
C.F. Taylor (Metal Workers) Ltd. occupied the first bay of their factory in Molly Millars Lane, the new industrial estate.
- 1954 Wokingham Branch of the County Library, in existence since 1924, was established under the supervision of a full-time librarian at Montague House.
- 1955 Division of town into electoral wards (Norreys, Evendons, Emmbrook, West, Wescott, Langborough). Three councillors were allocated to each ward.
- 1956 Norreys Hall Evangelical Church built. Open Brethren had held meetings in Wokingham since 1940 but this was their first permanent place of assembly.
- 1957 Woodley Hill Grammar School, established in 1945, moved to Winnersh and took as its new name the Forest Grammar School.
- 1958 Wokingham Town Football Club reached quarter final of FA Amateur Cup before losing away 3-2 to Crook Town.

#### **School Building in the 1960s.**

The following schools were opened in Wokingham between 1962 and 1970:

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 1962 | Keep Hatch Infants                             |
| 1965 | Embrook Secondary and Emmbrook Primary         |
| 1967 | Oaklands Infants and St. Paul's in Murray Road |

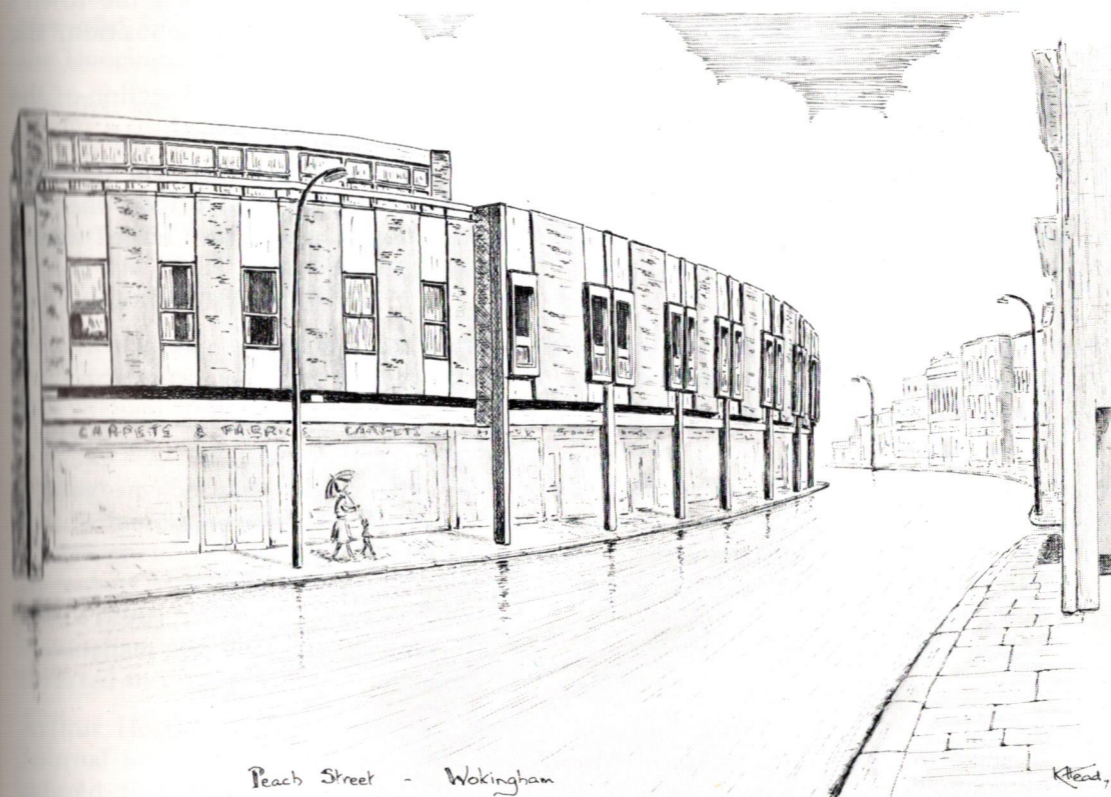
(the former St. Paul's School became the Walter County Infants School).

- |      |                    |
|------|--------------------|
| 1968 | Embrook Junior     |
| 1970 | Keep Hatch Junior. |

#### **Industrial Expansion in the 1960s.**

The following companies were among those established in or moving into Wokingham during the 1960s: Slumberland (1962), A.H. Johnson (1962), Sheetmets (1967), Duncan Lynch Precision Tools (1969). Radyne, now of Molly Millars Lane, were established in 1946.

- 1962 A ceremony to mark the completion of the 750th permanent post-war Council House dwelling at the Norreys Barn estate. (Between the wars 56 Council Houses had been built).
- 1963 Wokingham Society founded with Anthony Cross as Chairman.
- 1965 Opening of new Civic Offices in Wellington Road.



- 1968 Foundation of Wokingham and District Association for the Elderly (WADE)
- 1970 Consecration of new Catholic Church in Sturges Road.  
Wokingham Centre completed.
- 1971 Rose Inne gutted by fire.  
Opening of Holyport to Swindon section of M4 motorway which runs just to the north of the town.
- 1973 **Woosehill Inquiry.** This six-week public inquiry, by far the largest ever held in the town, was into an application to develop 325 acres of land in the Woosehill area, to house some 7,000 people, thus increasing the town's population by one-third. Despite almost unanimous local opposition, the application was granted.  
Opening of northern by-pass, with the completion of the final section of the A329(M) from the Wokingham-Twyford road to Amen Corner.
- 1974 **Local Government re-organisation – the end of the Borough.** On 1st April Wokingham Borough and the Rural District were merged to form the new District Council. The town of Wokingham now has a Parish Council with a Town Mayor.

## Appendix A

### WOKINGHAM or OAKINGHAM?

There is a fairly wide-spread misconception that the original name of the town was Oakingham and that Wokingham is a corruption. The exact reverse is true. Although supporters of 'Oakingham' point out that Wokingham is the "town of the Forest" and that the acorn is the town's emblem, Wokingham is in fact by far the older name and Oakingham (or Ockingham) was a corruption popular from the early 17th century to the mid-19th century.

The town's name is undoubtedly derived from the Uoccings, Uoccingas or Woccingas, a powerful Saxon tribe based on Woking in Surrey. Wokingham was the "ham" or place of the Uoccings.

The first known record of the spelling of Wokingham is in 1146 in the Papal Confirmation of the Rights of the Church of Sarum granted to Bishop Josceline. Wokingham, or minor variants, is used consistently for the next 500 years, e.g. in 1160 in the Register of St. Osmund, in 1241 in the Assize Rolls, in 1242/43 in the Testa de Nevill and in 1316 in the enquiry on Feudal Aids. The town's oldest surviving charters, of Elizabeth I in 1583 and James I in 1612, both used the form Wokingham, as did the earliest known illustration of the Corporation Seal (1623).

The first known example of an initial "O" was in 1517 in the return to the Commission on Enclosures. The chantry certificates of the Chantry of St. Mary (around 1548) have Oakyngham and Okyngham. Ockingham was used in the Muster Roll of Elizabeth of 1602.

'Okingham' became very popular early in the 17th century and the town was shown thus on contemporary maps which were beginning to be published much more extensively. Christopher Saxton's Map (1574) and Spede's Map of Berkshire (1611) used Okingham. In Robert Morden's Map (1695) Ockingham appeared. Rocque's Map (1761) and Pride's Map (1790) had the spelling Oakingham. In 1817, Langley's Map of Berkshire gave both Oakingham and Wokingham. In 1824, however, C. and J. Greenwood's Map of Berkshire reverted to the spelling of Wokingham.

Arthur Heelas, in researches published in the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Archaeological Journal in Spring 1928 (from which much of this information has been obtained) considered that the old map-makers were great offenders and made no effort to check spellings of place-names. During his researches Heelas found 36 different variants of the town's name, some of them used only once.

Compilers of gazetteers and encyclopaedias, faced with the dilemma of alternative spellings, gave variants. Thus Ashmole's "Antiquities of Berkshire" (published in 1719): "Ockingham, called also Wokingham". Later compilers differed about the more acceptable spelling. In 1813 Lyson's Berkshire in "Magna Britannia" had "Wokingham or Oakingham". The third edition of the New London Universal Gazetteer, published in 1827, reversed the order with "Oakingham or Wokingham". Confusion on a national level persisted until late in the 19th century. Lt.-Col. Cooper King's "History of Berkshire", published in 1887, had "Wokingham, Oakingham or Ockingham".

Strong support for the Wokingham version is found in the Parish records. The 1650 survey of the Rectory shows this spelling, while Oakingham is used in the Parish Registers for only a very brief period between 1722 and 1727. The last 'Oakingham' entry is heavily

scored out and Wokingham used from then on. There was, however, some local use of the variants (but not of Oakingham) beginning with 'O'. The Rev. John Whitlock, in letters to Rev. William Reynolds in 1642 and 1647, addressed them to him at "Okingham". The plate given to All Saints Church by John Taylor in 1749 bears the inscription "The gift of Mr. John Taylor to the Church of Ockingham." Official proof of the correct spelling is provided by the records of the Quarter Sessions from 1777 to 1852. These invariably have Wokingham. This record is thus an incontrovertible answer to the mistakes of the map-makers.

Incidentally, Ashmole did not himself include Wokingham in his 'Antiquities of Berkshire' as he considered it to be in Wiltshire. It was the editors of the book who inserted the entry. They had obviously never visited the area, since their knowledge of the local geography is more than awry. The entry states: "It (Ockingham) is bounded on the East by Easthampstead, on the West by Finchampstead, on the North by Barkham, and Southward by Hurst."

## Appendix B

### WOKINGHAM in WILTSHIRE

---

From the time that written records begin, Wokingham was subject to the ecclesiastical, and, for part of the Parish, the civil jurisdiction of Salisbury. This situation continued until the 19th century (see the Chronology).

Part of the Parish of Wokingham was in Berkshire and part in Wiltshire. The Berkshire portion, almost the whole of the town, was from 1220 onwards in the Hundred of Sonning. At the time of Domesday Book (1086) the Manor of Sonning, to which the Berkshire part belonged, was held by the Bishop of Salisbury.

The Wiltshire portion of Wokingham, which belonged to the Manor of Ashridge or Hertoke, was part of the Hundred of Amesbury, Wiltshire. The Manor was for a time held by the Earls of Salisbury. The Hundred of Amesbury included portions of Wokingham, Hurst, Shinfield and Swallowfield.

The Wiltshire area of Wokingham, about a sixth of the parish, was bounded by the Parish Church of All Saints and extended towards Bill Hill and Ruscombe. The Wiltshire connections are still commemorated in the names Wiltshire Road and Wiltshire Farm. The former division between the counties of Wiltshire and Berkshire was marked by a post in Cross Street, now placed at the corner of Rose Street and Wiltshire Road.

**Ecclesiastically** the advowson (right of presentation to a benefice) of Wokingham belonged to the "Peculiar" of the Deans of Salisbury, who exercised jurisdiction which elsewhere was that of the Diocesan Bishop. When Bishop Hermann removed the see from Sherborne to Old Sarum in 1078 by command of William the Conqueror, he left the Churches of Sonning and Sherborne to the Dean of Salisbury, "to whose peculiar jurisdiction" they thereafter belonged. Wokingham, Hurst, Ruscombe, Sandhurst and Arborfield were chapelries of Sonning and so formed part of the "Peculiar". The Dean of Salisbury was Rector and held the tithes; he appointed a priest, commonly known as the "Minister of Wokingham" to carry on the work of the parish.

Wokingham has belonged to a number of dioceses, as follows:

635-705	Dorchester
705-909	Winchester
909-1058	Ramsbury (sometimes referred to as Sonning)
1058-1078	Ramsbury united with Sherborne
1078-1217	Old Sarum
1217-1836	Salisbury
Since 1836	Oxford.

Note: The above facts have been abstracted from the VCH and Canon Long's book on All Saints.

## Appendix C

### CENSUS FIGURES

The first national census took place in 1801. Censuses have been held every 10 years since then, except during the war in 1941. The figures for Wokingham are as follows:

1801	2,281	1901	Wokingham Within	3,551
			Without	<u>2,451</u>
1811	2,365			6,002
1821	2,810	1911	Wokingham Within	4,352
1831	3,139		Without	<u>3,333</u>
1841	3,342			7,685
1851	3,752	1921	Wokingham Within	4,475
1861	4,144		Without	<u>3,698</u>
1871	4,652			8,173
1881	5,043	1931	Wokingham Within	7,294
1891	5,314		Without	<u>2,325</u>
				9,619
		1951	Wokingham Within	8,729
			Without	<u>2,914</u>
				11,643
		1961	Wokingham Within	11,392
			Without	<u>4,437</u>
				15,829
		1971	Wokingham Borough	21,069
			(H.M.G. description)	
			Wokingham Without	<u>8,374</u>
				29,443
		1981	Wokingham Town	24,184
			Wokingham Without	<u>10,012</u>
				34,196

Note: The Civil Parishes of Wokingham and Wokingham Without were created in 1894. Wokingham lost its Borough Status in 1974 (see page 38).

## Appendix D

### NOTES ON OLD STREET NAMES

Cross Street	used to be Rosemary Lane.
Denmark Street	was formerly (and logically) Down Street. Its name was changed when Princess Alexandra of Denmark came over to marry, in 1863, the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII).
Easthampstead Road	was called Star Lane until almost the end of the last century, being situated opposite the Star public house (the building which later housed the Wokingham Times). The railway crossing at the end of the road is still called Star Lane Crossing. Another name for the road in the 19th century was Shepherd's Lane.
Howard Road	was once Langborough Walk, being re-named after that great benefactor to the Town, Howard Palmer.
King Street	was at one time the name for that part of Wiltshire Road between Rose Street and the Ship public house.
Milton Road	formerly Nonesuch Lane, was re-named in honour of the poet in the mid-19th century.
Finchampstead Road	the road from the bottom of Denmark Street going south has had a number of names – Blackwater Road, the Brook (after the Emm Brook) and College Road (leading to Wellington College).
Luckley Path	was known by local residents in the early part of the century as Ifould's Path: Ifould had the butcher's shop on the corner which is now occupied by Bejams.
Molly Millar's Lane	first appears on a map of 1870.
Oxford Road	was Station Lane in 1864 and Havelock Road in 1877.
Queen's Terrace	was a row of cottages, with a notorious reputation, next to the Methodist Church.
Rances Lane	the Rance family were licencees at the nearby Plough for more than 80 years from the middle of the 19th century.
Rose Street	earlier alternative spellings were Rothe or Roth Street and Rows or Row Street. A deed of 1893 refers to "Queen Street, formerly Rose Street", possibly a temporary renaming to celebrate Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee. The narrow part of Rose Street at the Broad Street end was Row (and sometimes Roe) Lane until at least 1881.
Shute End	was shown in the Council Minutes in 1711 and in some 19th century directories as "Shoot End". This would give credence to the theory that the name is derived from the many springs of water here.
Station Road	was known as Barkham Road until at least 1895.
The Terrace	is first mentioned in 1864. Before that the houses there were described as being at Shute End.
Wellington Road	was known as Back Lane prior to the death of the Duke.
THE OLD MANORS	have gone but their names live still in existing street names which generally indicate their location – Ashridge, Buckhurst, Evendons, and Norreys. Beaches Manor, which was next to the Masonic Hall in Reading Road, is now remembered only by Peach (La Peche/Le Beche) Street.

## Appendix E

### THE HIGH STEWARDS OF WOKINGHAM

---

- 1612 Sir Henry Neville, Knt. Billingbere. Ambassador to the Court of France. A distinguished statesman of the reigns of Elizabeth and James I.
- 1615 Sir Richard Harrison, Knt. M.P. for Berkshire, also Sheriff for the County. Lived at Hurst House and East Court Manor, Finchampstead.
- 1655 Col. Richard Neville. Billingbere. A staunch Royalist and Cavalier who fought in the Civil Wars.
- 1678 Sir William Rich, Knt. and Bart. M.P. for Reading. Resided at Sonning.
- 1711 George, Duke of Northumberland. A natural son of Charles II by Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland. Title became extinct at his death.
- 1716 Charles Beauclerk, 1st Duke of St. Albans. K.G. A natural son of Charles II by Nell Gwynn. George I made him Lord Lieutenant of Berkshire. He resided for some years at Luckley House, Wokingham.
- 1726 Henry Neville Grey, Esq. Billingbere. M.P. for Reading.
- 1740 Charles Beauclerk, 2nd Duke of St. Albans. K.G. Governor of Windsor Castle, Warden of the Forest.
- 1786 Richard Aldworth Neville, 2nd Lord Braybrooke. Billingbere. Lord Lieutenant and Vice Admiral of Essex. Provost Marshal of Jamaica.
- 1825 Richard Neville Griffin, 3rd Lord Braybrooke. Billingbere. M.P. for Berkshire, before succeeding to the title.
- 1858 Richard Cornwallis Neville, 4th Lord Braybrooke. Billingbere. F.S.A.
- 1861 Charles Cornwallis Neville, 5th Lord Braybrooke. Billingbere.
- 1885 John Walter, Esq., M.P. Bearwood.
- 1895 Arthur F. Walter, Esq., Bearwood.
- 1911 Arthur, Marquis of Downshire. Easthampstead Park.
- 1919 H.R.H. Duke of Connaught and Strathearn. K.G.
- 1956 James Arthur Norman Butler, 6th Marquess of Ormonde. Cantley, Wokingham.
- 1973 Major John Wills. Allanby Park, Binfield.

## Appendix F

### MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT REPRESENTING WOKINGHAM AFTER THE 1832 REFORM ACT

---

Until 1885 the Wokingham voters were represented by the County members.

- 1831 Charles Dundas, of Barton Court.
- 1832 Robert Palmer, of Holme Park.  
Charles Dundas. (He was called to the Upper House as Baron Amesbury).
- 1832 Robert Palmer.  
Robert Throckmorton, of Buckland.  
John Walter, of Bearwood.
- 1835 Robert Palmer.  
John Walter.  
Philip Pusey, of Pusey.
- 1837 Robert Palmer.  
Philip Pusey.  
William Keppel, Viscount Barrington of Ireland, of Becke.
- 1852 Robert Palmer.  
William Keppel.  
George Henry Vansittart, of Bisham Abbey.
- 1857 Robert Palmer.  
George Henry Vansittart.  
Philip Pleydell Bouverie.
- 1859 Philip Pleydell Bouverie.  
John Walter, of Bearwood.  
Leicester Viney Vernon. (Died, replaced by Richard Benyon in 1860).
- 1865 Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Loyd-Lindsay, V.C.  
Richard Benyon.  
Sir Charles Russell, Bart, V.C.
- 1868 Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Loyd-Lindsay, V.C.  
Richard Benyon.  
John Walter.
- 1874 Richard Benyon. (Resigned in 1876 and replaced by Philip Wroughton).  
Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Loyd-Lindsay, V.C.  
John Walter.
- 1880 Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Loyd-Lindsay, V.C.  
Philip Wroughton.  
John Walter.
- After the Redistribution of Seats Act (1885), the county was divided into three divisions; Wokingham was represented under the Eastern division.
- 1885 Sir George Russell, Bart.

1898 Commander Oliver Young, R.N.

1901 Ernest Gardner.

After the Representation of People's Act (1918) county representation was further rearranged; Wokingham now came under the Newbury division. Ernest Gardner henceforth represented the Windsor division.

1918 William Arthur Mount.

1922 Brigadier-General H. Clifton Brown.

1945 A.R. Hurd.

In 1950 Wokingham was created a constituency in its own right.

1950 Hon. P.F. Remnant.

1959 William R. van Straubensee.

## Appendix G

### VANISHED INDUSTRIES

---

All the industries for which the town used to be noteworthy have disappeared. Some of them are commemorated by the names of present roads, such as Bell Foundry Lane, Kiln Rise and Tanhouse Lane. The first to go was the bell foundry which had moved to Reading by the end of the 16th century. The quality of a Wokingham bell in Dorchester Abbey, cast in 1383, indicates that the foundry was well established by this date.

Wokingham's most famous industry was the manufacture of silk and of silk goods, particularly stockings. The silk trade was brought over by Flemish weavers driven out of their country in 1585 by religious persecution. It is impossible to discover who started the silk industry in the town but it was thriving by 1625. One of the Council ordinances (by-laws) in that year observed that poor people "very obstinately" refused "either to work themselves or suffer their children to be put to work" in the trade of knitting stockings; the penalty for anyone out of work who refused to work in this trade or any other was committal to the house of correction. Seven years' apprenticeship was required before anyone could set up as a silk knitter. The silk industry in Wokingham had almost disappeared at the beginning of the 19th century, being unable as in the rest of the country, to compete with imports of French silk; directories for this time show only one person as being engaged in the silk trade. Extensive details about silk manufacture in the town, and its encouragement nationwide by James I, are to be found in the Victoria County History.

Other types of cloth were made in Wokingham in the 18th century. In an account of his travels around England published in 1754, Richard Pococke wrote of the manufacture here of serge, serge denim and baragons (defined by Gilbert White of Selborne as "a genteel corded stuff, much in vogue for summer wear").

In spite of the fame of the silk trade, leather was the town's most important industry for many years, particularly in the 19th century. There were 47 shoe-makers recorded in the 1851 census; one of them, George Meloy, employed 17 men at his Market Place premises; and the tanner, James Twycross, had 43 employees. This at a time when Wokingham had 3,752 inhabitants! Twycross and his sons were eminently successful, with establishments in Bradford, Rochdale and Melbourne, Australia; the Bradford branch employed 36 men. Leather obviously played a major role in the life of the town at least 130 years before this. In addition to the flesh-tasters and ale-tasters customarily appointed under the Borough Charters of those days, the municipal ordinances of 1625 provided for the appointment of two Leather Sealers "to see that the leather brought and exposed for sale be well and sufficiently tanned and curried according to statute". The Pin and Bowl deeds show that there was a tannery on the Emm Brook there as early as 1687. The later tannery, further down the stream in Tanhouse Lane, closed as recently as the mid-1920s.

Woolstapling, the buying of wool from the farmer and its grading and sale to the manufacturer, was another leading industry in the 19th century. James Twycross was a woolstapler as well as a tanner, which explains the Australian and North Country branches of his business. Three of the eight Capital Burgesses (Councillors) in 1851 were woolstaplers, two of them being the first members in the town of the Heelas family, who moved on to the drapery business and the sale of finished goods.

Brick-making came late – during the surge in building following the arrival of the railway. The brickworks of the area have been comprehensively described by Dr. Michael Dumbleton in a Bracknell Historical Society publication. Accordingly only the basic history of those in Wokingham is given here.

The firm of Thomas Lawrence & Sons, which started in Bracknell, was nationally, and even internationally, famous – supplying bricks all over the country. Lawrence's biggest yard was at East Heath; it ultimately covered 58 acres and at its peak was producing 10 million bricks a year. It supplied the facing bricks for Westminster Cathedral and had a tramway to the railway line which crossed Molly Millars Lane. Production ceased during the war and, although resumed on a reduced scale afterwards, the yard was closed in 1960 following a serious flood which caused extensive damage. There was left behind the 60 feet deep "Blue Pool" which was later to cause to much controversy.

There were two other substantial brickworks: the No. 1 Works of the Binfield Brick Company by the railway at Amen Corner Crossing, and the Toutley Works at the junction with Forest Road. The latter was requisitioned in 1940 and never resumed production.

A number of small brickfields and kilns were operating at the turn of the century, helping to meet the demand for bricks created by the expansion of the town. These were in Carey Road, Oxford Road (almost opposite the station), south of Bean Oak Farm in Plough Lane, and in Reading Road opposite the Rifle Volunteer.

The manufacture of bricks was suspended during the last war and the industry locally never really recovered, being, as Dr. Dumbleton states, unable to compete with larger brickworks using modern machinery and more economical raw materials and manufacturing methods.

Coach building was another leading industry in the last century. The Lush Brothers, whose father had started the business at the corner of Easthampstead Road and Peach Street in the early 1860s, had very distinguished customers for their carriages. They had at least three Royal patrons; the Prince of Wales, later Edward VII; Prince Christian of Denmark, who married Helena, one of Queen Victoria's daughters; and another exiled "Royal", the Empress Eugenie, wife of Napoleon III of France. The Lushes also fell victim to the march of progress, in their case to the motorcar. After 1924 their business is heard of no more.

Finally, the breweries. The first Wokingham brewery, which ceased operations in 1856, was between the Masonic Hall in Reading Road, and the Holt. It had a near monopoly of the local beer trade, owning every public house in the town centre except the Bush and the Ship. The second Wokingham brewery (Bakers, later Baker Powells) was on a much smaller scale. It was in Broad Street behind Western Fuels and Nicholas (No. 17), and closed after being bought by Brakspears in 1913.

The town's last brewery is still fondly remembered by older residents. It was Headington's Wellington Brewery and was situated off Denmark Street where the multi-storey car park is now. Ashby's of Staines bought it and closed it in 1920, apparently interested only in acquiring the Headington houses for the sale of their own beer.

## Appendix H

### THE MARKET

---

A market was held in Wokingham on Tuesdays for over 700 years. In 1219 a Charter was granted to the Bishop of Salisbury for a market to be held "peaceably" and this Charter was confirmed in 1227 and 1339. The Market at one time had a national reputation for fat fowls. A book published in 1815 (see p.26) said that Wokingham was "particularly famous for fatted fowls, by which many people in that town and neighbourhood gain a livelihood". They were obviously a great delicacy and very expensive, sometimes fetching as much as half a guinea, or even fifteen shillings, a pair. A report to the Board of Agriculture in 1813 has a graphic description of the cruel and revolting method by which the fowls were fattened: "They [the fowls] are put in a dark place and crammed with a paste made of barley-meal, mutton suet, some treacle and of course sugar, mixed with milk, and are found to be completely ripe in a fortnight. If kept longer the fever that is induced by this continued state of repletion renders them red and unsaleable, and frequently kills them". Great numbers of geese were also sold at this time, but their price was very different from that of fowls, ranging from 2/- to 2/3d.

The compilers of early 19th century directories and gazetteers unanimously wrote of the importance of Wokingham Market for the sale of poultry. Thus the Lysons, in their *Magna Britannia* published in 1806, said that the market was "Remarkable for its abundant supply of poultry, bought up by higlers for the consumption of the Metropolis". A higler was an itinerant dealer, mainly in poultry.

A great decline had taken place by the middle of the century however. Kelly's Directory of 1847 stated that Wokingham Market "was formerly the first market in the country (Kelly could have meant county) for the sale of poultry, but very small quantities are now brought for sale". This directory added that the market was now one for corn. F.A. Carrington, who became Recorder of the Town in 1858, considered that the building of the railway was in part responsible for the market's decline.

Later directories speak of the market as being "thinly attended" and "unimportant". According to Arthur Heelas, it sank "almost into oblivion". He goes on to recount that the market was revived in 1886 in quite a different, and more conventional, form, being a great success for a number of years with "a fine supply" of cattle, sheep and pigs. It was badly hit, however, by the institution of Bracknell Market and reverted to its old role of the sale of poultry, eggs, butter and vegetables.

Wokingham Market as such came to an end with the centralisation of markets during the war years of 1939-45, but poultry continued to be sold behind the Bush Hotel until the 1960s. And eggs, cheese and vegetables are still sold in the Market Place.