



## ***Account of Purley on Thames***

### **Chronicles 1870-1879**

#### **1870 33/34 Victoria**

On the 5th October the rebuilt church was dedicated by the bishop of Oxford at a special service. There was a large congregation and the singing was led by the choir of St Giles Church in Reading. Afterwards the guests were entertained to lunch by Major Storer who was one of the churchwardens. The rebuilding had been supervised by G E Street ARA, the diocesan architect and the work had been done by Messrs Wheeler of Reading at a cost of around £2000. (ref 8-8/10/1870)

#### **1871 34/35 Victoria**

Dinah Green was appointed Sub-Post-mistress for Purley, a post she held until 1884.

Elyham House was renamed 'Belleisle Farm' presumably named after the Storer family estate in Jamaica (ref 1 - 9/80)

The Band of Hope and Temperance Fete was held in the grounds of Purley Hall on 28th June. A special train was laid on to bring visitors from Pangbourne Station (ref 1-8/81)

At the census the population of Purley was found to be 194 (ref 26-ii-242)

The Reverend Richard Palmer presented a silver flagon to the church.

#### **1872 35/36 Victoria**

A new white festival altar frontal was presented to the church by Mrs C B Storer at easter (ref 10-3)

The Imperial Gazeteer for this date gives the following statistics about Purley: Area 877 acres, Real Property £2135, Population 193, Houses 39; Value of church living £359 (ref 36)

#### **1873 36/37 Victoria**

The organ, built by Mr Holditch, was completed and erected in the church. It was presented by Mr Wilder. To accommodate it the vestry had had to be extended northwards by about five feet. The previous footings were found during the excavations of 1982 but it is fairly certain that the extension was ordered before the new vestry was built (ref 10-3)

Work started on the building of the new school provided by the rector out of monies left him.

Mrs Leila Downing Fullerton recorded "Church Walk raised from farm gate owing to constant flood"

In February C G Clutterbuck was moved from being in charge of the Purley Ferries to take charge of Folly Lock. J Collins took over responsibility for the Ferries (ref 43-227)

On 20th March an oak belfry screen was presented to the church by Mrs C B Storer. (ref 10-3)

In a national register of landowners there were four residents of Purley registered as owners of land

in Berkshire. The Hon R F Boyle of Purley Lodge owned 21 acres, The Executors of the late Mr Sherwood owned 7 acres, Major Storer of Purley Park owned 561 acres and Frederick Wilder of Purley hall owned 1165 acres (ref 174)

### **1874 37/38 Victoria**

The Reverend Richard Palmer died at Holme Park on 25th October. He was buried at Sonning on October 30th (ref 10-3)

### **1875 38/39 Victoria**

When the Shillingford, Wallingford and Reading Road was turned from being a Turnpike into an ordinary road, the surplus funds were shared out by the several towns and villages along its route. Purley had 2486 out of 28092 yards of road and got £41/15/5 out of £472 (ref 122-18/12/1875)

Charles Henry Travers was inducted as Rector of Purley (ref 22)

The new church of England School was completed and opened on Feb 9th with a short service at 3.30 pm conducted by the Rev C H Travers and Rev C H Pearson It was supported by voluntary contributions and had places for 55 children. It was examined by Her Majesty's Inspector Mr Du Port on 15th March who granted a half holiday in the afternoon. In his report dated 23rd April the inspector noted 'I would recommend the managers to have separate paths to the boys and girls offices and a barrier or partition to prevent access from one office to the other' It was re-examined by the Diocesan Inspector on 28th April (ref 1-9/81; 167)

John Davenport, Clerk of the Peace for Oxfordshire, made a detailed report on the boundary of Whitchurch, particularly the bits to the south of the Thames. The report had arisen because of difficulties experienced by the Oxfordshire Magistrates in exercising jurisdiction in an area virtually controlled by the Berkshire Magistrates.. It was concluded that even though rates had been paid to Oxfordshire, that part of Whitchurch south of the Thames never had been part of Oxfordshire and was and had always been part of Berkshire. (ref 118)

There was a very heavy fall of snow on Feb 24th which greatly reduced attendance at the school (ref 167)

On 21st September there was a small attendance at the school because many children had been taken to a fair in Reading (ref 167)

On 25th October Mrs Leila Downing Fullerton recorded 'The highest flood even known here, rather higher than the great flood of 1852 '(ref 1-6/80)

### **1876 39/40 Victoria**

The Roebuck Ferry house was condemned by the Berkshire Health Authority and a new house ordered at a cost of £50.

### **1877 40/41 Victoria**

Mr Sherwood of Purley died on 15th April aged 41.

## **1878 41/42 Victoria**

## **1879 42/43 Victoria**

The rector Charles Henry Travers and his churchwardens Thomas Barnes and A M Storer fixed new fees on 14th April. They included: Burial - rector 1/-, Sexton 3/6 etc These were recorded in a table of fees which was found when the church was spring cleaned in May 1976 (ref 1-7/76)

Purley Lodge was bought by the Hodgkins who moved from Worcester and brought most of their staff with them including Henry Leith who came to live in Purley Lodge Cottage. (ref 13)

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