



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

### **Chronicles 1890-1899**

#### **1890 53/54 Victoria**

In May two more bronze spearheads were found in the Thames, this time opposite the Roebuck (ref 88-235)

There was a diphtheria outbreak in Pangbourne. As a result the Medical Officer of Health (Dr Woodforde) and the Inspector of Nuisances (Mr Bunce) were asked to inspect the cowsheds at Marsh Barn Farm (ref 11-1890-96)

The Bradfield Sanitary District levied a ½ d rate on a rateable value of £6807 for Purley. The amount of £14-3-7 was paid on 22nd July (ref 11-1890-103/117)

#### **1891 54/55 Victoria**

During the widening of the Great Western Railway, an isolated Saxon burial was found to the north west of the junction with Westbury Lane. A few beads of amber and glass were preserved, but it is believed that pottery and a circular brooch were also found (ref 26-I-246)

Bradfield Rural Sanitary District levied their rate in June which yielded £15-2-6 from Purley on a rateable value of £7260 (ref 11-1891-174)

At the census the population of Purley was found to be 180 (Ref 26-II-242)

Mr Bunce the Inspector of Nuisances and Surveyor resigned in June together with the other inspector. There were 39 applications for the two posts and the jobs were awarded to Mr CC Smith of Skipton and Mr I Larke of Skipton. Smith withdrew and two other candidates were invited to attend the next meeting at which George Stevens was appointed. He too withdrew as he had been given a £30 rise by his present employers. Eventually Thomas Windle was appointed at a salary of £180 as Inspector of Nuisances and £20 as Surveyor. A few weeks later the Local Government Board requested the salary for being Surveyor to be raised to £30 so the Board reduced the salary for the Inspector's job to keep the total at £200 which included all travelling and other expenses and which was not entitled to superannuation. It would seem that Mr Larke never did take up his position as Mr Windle appeared to be the only Inspector thenceforwards. (ref 11-1891-174/177/179/182/187)

The combined Unions of Berkshire decided to re-appoint Dr Woodforde as MOH for only 5 years rather than the 10 which was normal. His salary was £750 pa of which Bradfield paid £109. (ref 11-1891-190)

Plans for alterations to Holme Farm in Purley were approved for Mr Wilder. Presumably this was Home Farm Sulham (ref 11-1891-208)

#### **1892 55/56 Victoria**

Four fine urns and much broken pottery from the second century AD were found on 16th September in the Thames between Tilehurst and Mapledurham (ref 88-235)

A summary of a letter from the Local Government Board on the subject of influenza was printed and circulated to all schoolmasters, medical men, clergy, Guardians and Overseers in Bradfield Sanitary District. (ref 11-1892-224)

Plans for alterations to the Congregational Chapel in Pangbourne were passed on 10th May (ref 11-1892-244)

The Sanitary Board rate of 1/2d was set. Purley paid £15-2-6 on a rateable value of £7260 on 2nd August (ref 11-1892-260)

Precautions against Cholera were taken in August. (ref 11-1892-265)

### **1893 56/57 Victoria**

The new four track railway between Reading West Curve and Pangbourne was opened in July. It was several years before the final link to Reading Station was completed with four tracks.

The County Surveyor inspected 1m 3f 5ch of main road in Purley and £100 was offered to the Parish Surveyor towards the costs of maintenance. It was found to be in a satisfactory state of affairs. (ref 320 -7/1893-3)

The Sanitary Board rate call on Purley for June 1893 was for £14-16-10 on a rateable value of £7124)

400 copies of Dr Woodforde's pamphlet entitled 'Plain words about Cholera) were printed and distributed in September (ref 11-1893-331)

### **1894 57/58 Victoria**

Walter Crowe the lockkeeper died on 11th June. He was buried at Purley on the 16th (refs 12, 43-225; 27)

Francis Newcombe became lock-keeper at Mapledurham in June. He had previously been keeper at Godstow Lock since February 1894 (ref 43-103)

The Local Government Act of this year completed the Local Government reforms by establishing District and Parish Councils. Purley opted for an annual Parish Meeting rather than a Parish Council and was included in the area to be served by the new Bradfield RDC. It was to have one Guardian and Rural District Councillor who was to be re-elected in 1896 and retire in 1897. (ref 17-81)

Major Storer was elected the first Chairman of the Parish Meeting and Messrs P Symonds and T Pocock appointed as Overseers. The Reverend Matthew Powley was elected as the first representative on the newly formed Bradfield RDC. (ref 25)

By order of the Local Government Board, established under the Local Government Act, the Civil Parish of Purley was extended to take in parts of Whitchurch on the south banks of the Thames and 291 acres were later transferred to Purley.

Henry Haddrell, the village constable, married Elizabeth Bazeley, the daughter of Major Storer's coachman (William Bazeley) on 11th August. Shortly afterwards he was transferred to Sandhurst. He died in 1947 aged 77. (ref 1-8/82)

The highest ever flood was recorded at Mapledurham Lock in November at 4ft 4in. (ref 1-8/80)

The Water Orders Confirmation Act empowered the Tilehurst, Pangbourne and District Water Company to supply water in the parishes of Sulham and Purley and parts of the parishes of Tilehurst, Pangbourne, Tidmarsh, Whitchurch and Englefield. This was warmly welcomed by the Sanitary Board (refs 21; 320-1894-4; 11-1894-357)

The Sanitary Board Rate for 1894 was £14-16-10 on a rateable value of £7124 for Purley (ref 11-1894-377)

Plans for a new Primitive Methodist Chapel in Thames Avenue Pangbourne were approved in July (ref 11-1894-385)

### **1895 58/59 Victoria**

The first meeting of the newly formed Bradfield Rural District Council was held 1st January. Mathew Powley who had been appointed by the Parish meeting did not attend. It appointed a Mr Forester as District Surveyor at a salary of £220 pa. (ref 11-1895-416)

291 acres of Whitchurch Parish on the Berkshire side of the Thames were transferred to Purley Parish (ref 10-6)

J Collins died. He had been in charge of the Purley Ferries since 1873. He was succeeded by his son Oliver. (ref 43-227)

The first rate call for the new RDC was 5d which yielded £186 on a rateable value of £8927 in Purley (ref 11-1895-429)

### **1896 59/60 Victoria**

A dog-muzzling order for Purley was issued because of an outbreak of rabies (ref 320-1896-104)

James Blake was appointed Parish Overseer in place of P Symonds at the Parish Meeting on 24th March (ref 25)

When the County Surveyor inspected the main road through Purley he reported it was disturbed because the Water Company were laying pipes (ref 320)

### **1897 60/61 Victoria**

F Newcome exchanged jobs with Stephen Wooton who was assistant lock keeper at Richmond at his own request and dropped 30s a month in wages (ref 343-225)

At the Annual Parish Meeting K Baker-Boulton was appointed Overseer in place of J Blake. It was announced that The Reverend Matthew Powley had been re-elected as District Councillor and member of the Sanitary Board in the first poll for these positions held on March 30th. (refs 25, 320-1896-7)

Bradfield RDC decided not to provide an isolation hospital for the District (ref 320-18963)

A Jubilee fete was given at Purley Hall by the squire and rector of Sulham (the Reverend Wilder). There was music by the Tilehurst Band, a huge repast., dancing, racing, cricket and other amusements. There was a marvellous fireworks display in the evening (ref 8-3/7/1987)

Problems were being encountered on the Reading to Pangbourne road because of traction engines towing quantities of bricks from the Tilehurst Brickworks to Pangbourne where there was a large

amount of building. Although the roads were surfaced with crushed rocks the engines were severely damaging the surface. Eventually Berkshire County Council decided to take legal action and seek compensation (ref 320-1897-12)

### **1898 61/62 Victoria**

The County Surveyor was empowered to hire a steam roller to repair the Reading to Pangbourne Road (ref 320-1898-87)

### **1899 62/63 Victoria**

Frederick Wilder of Purley Hall died. He had been elected the previous year as Tilehurst's representative on Berkshire County Council (ref 320-1899-150)

Matthew Powley retired as Rector of Purley (ref 22)

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