



May 2021

## TADS Newsletter

Website - [www.tadshistory.com](http://www.tadshistory.com)

**Optimism that the nightmare  
is soon coming to an end.**

Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> May at 8 pm via Zoom

### **‘1752 and all that: the derivation of the modern calendar’**

**By Mark Bowman**

To align the calendar in use in England to that on the continent, the Gregorian calendar was adopted, and the calendar was advanced by 11 days: Wednesday 2 September 1752 was followed by Thursday 14 September 1752. The lower classes were not happy at ‘losing’ 11 days. This and other calendar changes, even fairly recently, have at times caused chaos and some very strange effects.

The log in details for the talk will be sent in a separate email.

*If you need help using Zoom, the TADS Website has information and a contact number.*

*Comments, queries and suggestions to Richard Brown (0118) 9700100,  
e-mail: [richard@ilexind.plus.com](mailto:richard@ilexind.plus.com) or Carol Stevens (0118) 9701578*

**[www.tadshistory.com](http://www.tadshistory.com)**

## **Future TADS talks**

**16<sup>th</sup> June 2021@ 8pm on Zoom**

### **‘The great Sandhurst to Sandhurst walk’ by Graham Harding**

Due to the on-going Covid restrictions this will be held via Zoom.

TADS Zoom Talk on 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021

## **Humour in Genealogy**

**By Chris Broom**

A native of Hackney, London, Chris Broom moved to Suffolk in 2013, having retired from his primary career 12 months earlier. His interest in genealogy originated with his father’s desire during the last year of his life to find out about his family background . Chris did not realise that an activity initially started as something that he could share with his father would result in five years of study with the Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies in Canterbury.

Drawing information from various sources such as Parish registers, the national census, wills, diaries, journals, newspapers, and even ecclesiastical court records, Chris aimed to provide some insight into the overlap between humour and genealogy research.

Parish registers were introduced on the fifth of September 1538. Thomas Cromwell, in the months before September 1538, had been on a tour of Europe where he realised that that the Europeans had already started to record births, marriages and burials. He returned to England and suggested to Henry VIII, that he should implement such registers.

In January 1813, the Act for the better regulating, and preserving of Parish and Other Registers of Births, Baptisms, Marriages and Burials in England, popularly known as the Rose Act, came into effect, the intention being to greatly facilitate the proof of pedigrees claiming to be entitled to real or personal property and be otherwise of great public benefit and advantage.

The early baptism records could be quite explicit. The first entry from Spilsby in Lincoln in 1813 involved Reverend Trollope baptising baby *Thomas, bastard-son of Dymoke Ward (Occupation Joiner) and Liddy Day (Occupation Whore)*. However, the second entry on the same day involved the same minister presiding over the baptism of *Lucy, bastard-daughter of John Goodrick (Occupation Publican) and the same Liddy Day (Occupation Whore)*.

Pronouncements by the ministers on their parishioners were common in early parish registers. One example had the comment, *Elizabeth Susan Smith, illegitimate, the father is supposed to be either her own brother or more likely the wanton preacher who was lodging in the family, the wolf in sheep's clothing*.

Registers show that age differences did not provide a barrier to marriage, in Seasalter in Kent, in 1744 *John Housden, widower, a young, gaped-mouth, lazy fellow married Hannah Matthews, an old toothless hag*, and in 1776, the 104-year-old George Harding, married his sprightly blushing bride, the 75-year-old Jane Darlington. George died at the age of 112.

Some marriages did overcome great disadvantages, Charity Morel, spinster, married Christopher Newsom, a bachelor. She signed a signature as Charity Morel, but Christopher Newsom simply signed with his mark. Even though she signed her own signature, Charity Morel was entirely without arms, so the ring was placed upon the fourth toe of the left foot, and she wrote her name in the register with her right foot.

Another example of overcoming adversity was the marriage of Thomas Tiles at St. Martin's Leicester in 1575 who was mute. *The said Thomas for the expressing of his mind, instead of words, of his own accord, used these signs. First, he embraced her with his arms, and took her by the hand, put a ring upon her finger, and laid his hand upon his heart, and then upon her heart, and held up his hands towards heaven, and to show his continues to dwell with her to his life. And he did it by closing his eyes with his hands and digging out the earth with his foot, pulling as though he would ring a bell with other diverse science approved.*

Moving on to the national census, supposedly completed by an army of literate enumerators, but perhaps they were not as literate as we are led to believe. Robert Goodman, head of family in 1881 living at 16, Acacia Gardens, Paddington.in Kensington was a male aged 52, having been born in Maidstone

Kent. His occupation was international playboy! Clearly the increasingly ridiculous entries, including giving the baby the occupation of *The boss* showed that our ancestors did have a sense of humour when filling in census forms. John Underwood and his family from Hastings in Sussex describes himself as bad tempered, his wife as having a long tongue, and his kids as quarrelsome, stubborn, greedy, vain, and noisy. Some strange occupations did, however, turn out to be genuine. Edwin Downer described himself as a drowner and William Parker described himself as a Knight of the Thimble.

References to pets in the census are more common than you than one might think, Peter Tabby, the cat who was described as a servant and who had an occupation as a Mouser. Another cat Tobit Crackit, a tomcat, aged eight, was married with 16 kids. He was a mouse fetcher and a thief. Wills also provide a wealth of interesting pet stories, for instance, *I bequeath to my monkey, my dear and amusing Jacket, the sum of 10 pounds sterling per annum to be employed for his sole and exclusive use and benefit to my faithful dog Shock and my cat Tibbs a pension of five pounds sterling.*

Names are a rich source of humour; the daughter of Arthur Pepper was born on the 19<sup>th</sup> of December 1882. She was given a given name for every letter of the alphabet. She was called Anne, Bertha, Cecilia, Diana, Emily, Fanny, Gertrude, Harriet, Implasia, Jane, Kate, Louisa, Maud, Nora, Ophelia, P ?, Quince, Rebecca, Starkey, Teresa, Ulysses, Winifred, Xenophon, Yeti, Zeus. Later names from the early 20<sup>th</sup> century are more recognisably humorous; Morris Dance, Al Fresco, Benny Fit and even Mini Skirt.

Finally, we get to ecclesiastical court records. Mr. Baker, the printer was brought before the courts for false printing of the Bible with errors in various places. For example, in the edition of 1631. In the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter of Exodus, he printed thou shall commit adultery. The Bishop of London said this was the most dishonorable thing.

Chris closed the talk by making a point of asking the audience, “What are you doing to record your own life?” You just need to capture the highlights maybe three or four sheets of A4 paper. Or you might want to devise a questionnaire to give to your kids or your relatives. What would they like to know about you? Where you went to school? What was your first job? Where was the first concert you went to? or What was your favourite book? Without wanting to sound as though he was preaching, Chris really would encourage people to record their own lives.

Steve Davidson

## **Meetings**

If you missed talk, with the talks being given using Zoom we have been able to make a recording and place it in the Member's area of the TADS website or lend it out on a USB memory stick. This was not the case with the last talk as Chris Broom did not want his talk recorded. So if you missed it you will just have to make do with Steve's excellent report.

With the easing of Covid -19 restrictions we are hopeful of getting back to meetings in St. Paul's Church Hall. We are looking at this being the September meeting.

The Committee

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## **An unusual and very unpopular TAX**

I recently became across the 'Ship Tax or Ship Money'. All taxes are unpopular but this one was in a league of its own. It was a non-parliamentary tax first levied in medieval times by the English Crown on coastal cities and counties for naval defence in time of war. It required those being taxed to furnish a certain number of warships or to pay the ships' equivalent in money.

Its use was very variable depending on the current state of international affairs. It was accepted as reasonable enough until the reign of King Charles I who was always desperately short of money. He realised that reviving Ship Money would be a way of levying another tax which was in the King's prerogative and not subject to approval by Parliament. Things did not go well. The King made it a general tax payable throughout the land. Those dwelling inland were not at all happy and objected that they would not get any benefit from defence by ships on the sea many, many miles away. That was even if the money was used to build ships.

The result was a protracted ding dong with Parliament and in the courts. It was a major factor in the events which led to the Civil War and the eventual execution of King Charles I in January 1649

Richard Brown

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# COVID-19 SIGNS IN PAMBER HEATH AND TADLEY



# **Planning Applications**

## **A Lidl food store for Tadley**

This Planning Application for a new Lidl store opposite Barclays Bank was rejected by West Berkshire Council against the advice of their Planning Officers, despite a lot of local support and no objection from Basingstoke and Deane Council. The Application came under West Berks jurisdiction because the boundary between the two councils runs along the Aldermaston Road at that point.

Lidl's have now appealed the refusal and residents can write to or email the Planning Inspectorate with their views by the 18<sup>th</sup> May. In view of the short time now left, here is just the email:

NSI.HAS@planninginspectorate.gov.uk

Please include the reference number:

Appeal Ref: APP/W0340/W/20/3265942 - Lidl Tadley

## **McCarthy and Stone sheltered living**

This application to build a sheltered living complex on the current Reading Warehouses site is also apparently going to appeal as the applicants and B&D Council cannot agree acceptable statutory offsets and affordable homes.

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## **Barclays Bank**

The Bank has issued notification that the busy Tadley Branch will be closing in July, presumably to save money and not for the convenience of its customers as the nearest Branch will then be in Basingstoke.

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## ***What's on? Events which may be of interest.***

Local sites, etc are beginning to come out of lock-down.

**Milestones Museum** will re-open on Friday 21 May. The website to buy admission tickets online and pre-book a day and time to visit is now open.

<https://www.milestonesmuseum.org.uk/>

**The Willis Museum and Sainsbury Gallery** will to open on Friday 28 May. Pre-booking for a day and time to visit the museum and gallery is now open. Classes, workshops and live performances are available to book at Hampshire arts centres.

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/willis-museum-and-sainsbury-gallery>

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*TAKE CARE AND STAY WELL*

***TADS annual membership is £20 per person.  
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