



April 2026

TADS Newsletter

Website - www.tadshistory.com

**Next Meeting - Monday 13th April 2026 at 8 pm, at
Baughurst and Heath End Village Hall, Heath End Road,
Baughurst RG26 5LU.**

‘The Newbury Roman Cemetery’

By David Peacock

In the middle of the 19th century, a large Roman cemetery was discovered in an area now near Sainsbury’s in Newbury. Containing both cremations and inhumations, the cemetery was quickly destroyed with most items discarded and the whole discovery poorly documented. Local historian Dr David Peacock tells the story of the discovery and of the Roman pottery and other items which have survived.

(Everybody welcome - visitors £4.00)

If you wish to stop receiving the Newsletter please email Richard Brown or notify Carol Stevens or a Committee member.

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

www.tadshistory.com

Future TADS events:

Monday 11th May 2026 in Baughurst and Heath End Village Hall

A history of the University of Reading

By Ian Burn

TADS Last Meeting, 9th March 2026

The Real Wolf Hall by Ian Porter

Ian is an older style of speaker who does not use slides or visual aids, other than the odd picture to be passed around the audience. However he does have a great deal to say on his subject. This time he looked at the real characters of those featured in Hilary Mantel's Wolf Hall trilogy of historical novels: King Henry VIII; Thomas Cromwell; Anne Boleyn; and a few others.



King Henry was born at Greenwich in 1491, and grew up to be a 6ft 2in tall sportsman, scholar, linguist, musician, and religious man. Although a catholic he did embrace some protestant ideas, including ordering a bible printed in English to be placed in all churches. When his older brother Prince Arthur died, a young Henry married Catherine of Aragon, his brother's widow. He caught malaria aged 30 and thereafter had lots of illnesses. His prodigious appetite meant he may have been as much as 28 stone by the time of his death in 1548. He broke the power of the monasteries, but wasted the plunder on military adventures in France and the building of elaborate palaces such as Nonsuch.

King Henry is best known for his marital problems and Ian explained that these stemmed from the need to produce male heirs. His six wives had 13 pregnancies but only 3 or 4 children were born and this may have been due to Henry's own genetic problems. In addition it is thought he may have exhibited McLeod Syndrome, a male genetic disorder affecting men from the age of 30 to 40. His lifestyle would probably have made him type 2 diabetic, and he was almost certainly brain damaged in a severe jousting accident at the age of 44.



Thomas Cromwell was not as lowly born as Mantel portrays, said Ian. He served as a French mercenary soldier in France and Italy around 1500. He learned French, Italian, Spanish and Latin. In 1524 he was a lawyer in London working for Cardinal Wolsey and by 1533 was Chief Minister and known for working 14 hour days. He could be a witty and funny man. There is no doubt he was a superb administrator and in 1536 he instituted the Reformation and the dissolution of the monasteries. He did well out of the dissolution and acquired a large property empire including a huge house he built in London. The Reformation was not widely welcomed. In 1539 when Cromwell was absent from court with malaria, the Duke of Norfolk and others reversed many of the Reformation ideas.

Although Cromwell was made Earl of Essex in 1540, his enemies talked the King into turning against him and got him beheaded. Henry immediately regretted it. Ian said historian David Starkey described Cromwell as being like “Alastair Campbell with an axe”.

Anne Boleyn was educated in France. She was very able and well versed in many things. Brought back to the English court she proved to be brilliant, talkative and with a quick wit. Henry was enchanted but things did not go well after marriage, especially as she only produced a daughter, (Princess Elizabeth). Cromwell was at the centre of the plot to get rid of her on what were clearly trumped up charges. Henry was betrothed to Jane Seymour the day after Anne was beheaded.



Anne Boleyn



Anne of Cleves

Unfortunately, Jane died two weeks after giving birth to Prince Edward, Henry's only male heir who was never in the best of health and died at only 16 years of age.

The King needed another wife (and children). Unsurprisingly there was a shortage of volunteers. The mark fell on a foreigner, Anne of Cleves. It is said that her portrait flattered her, but at her first infamous meeting with Henry she must have been extremely travel worn after a long and rough sea passage from Antwerp and then on to London. The marriage took place but was annulled after six months as Henry could not consummate it. And so things went on.

Wolf Hall? It was Jane Seymour's family home near Burbage in Wiltshire. The house of that period has been built over.

Thank you Ian for your thorough and enlightening talk about a murky period of our island's history.

Richard Brown

Membership

Membership subscriptions are now overdue. Please note that individual membership is now £25.00 as voted for at the AGM. Subscriptions may be paid in person at a TADS Meeting or by other methods as given on the TADS Website. Please complete a Membership/GDPR Form at the time of rejoining.

Tadley Band 150th Anniversary Concert

The concert took place in Pamber Heath Memorial Hall on Sunday 15th March. Civic representatives joined an audience of 100 plus, to hear a selection of pieces played by the band. These were interspersed with 2 short talks by TADS Chairman Carol describing some of the history of the band. The band still attains a very high standard.



The Tadley Band in 1924

The great Pamber Heath sewage problem (part 3)

Following on from last month's item, the repairs have now been completed, although one of my spies said other potential problems have been identified. The photograph shows a digger being lifted over the houses. It is partially obscured by a large magnolia.



Royal Warrant

Having been granted a new warrant by the King, the Nash family of Mulford's Hill have updated the Coat of Arms on their house.



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

Milestones Museum The website to buy admission tickets can be found at: <https://www.milestonesmuseum.org.uk/>

With the Easter events just finishing the are no immediate special events.

The Willis Museum and Sainsbury Gallery

14 Mar – 28 Jun: **Bees!** Hampshire's Hive of History & Nature a new exhibition in the Sainsbury Gallery.

Hosted by the Museum Management (*Archaeology Gallery, second floor*)
26 Apr, 2pm - Sunday Afternoon Talk: **Beekeeping Through the Ages** by Chris Park (a founder of the Beekeeping Trust).

£7 including tea, coffee and cake. If able, please book online at: <https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/event/sunday-tea-talks-beekeeping-through-ages> - or drop into the museum.

Friends of the Willis Museum (*7.30pm at the museum, non-members £5.00 and please book by telephone on 01256 465902*)

16 Apr. **Spitfire Production in Tadley** by Richard Brown

Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society (*7.30 at Church Cottage, Basingstoke*)

11th May 2026. **Rural Settlement in medieval Hampshire** and beyond: from the fifth century to the fifteenth. Speaker: Prof David Hinton – University of Southampton

***TADS annual membership is £25 per person.
Correspondence to Tadley and District History Society,
c/o 5 Church Road Pamber Heath Tadley. RG26 3DP
Email: tadshistory@googlemail.com***