

Local History Study - Rushall Farm in Bradfield, Berkshire: 1241 - 2004

1241 document

We've found records for Rushall Farm as far back as 1241. By studying the historical records - the census, school log books, Workhouse records, Tithe maps, Kelly's (like Yellow Pages) - we can build up a vivid picture of who lived where and when at Rushall Farm, what their lives were like and who played an important part in them.

census

In your local history study, you can still actually see some of the buildings where they lived and worked, the schools they went to, the Workhouse where some were born and died and the gravestones of the wealthier people on the census, or follow the route the cottage children took to school each day and find out why they didn't always go

Rushall Farms and Bradfield

And the modern Rushall Farm is there for you to study how farms have changed over time.



This is part of the first document we have found that mentions Rushall. It was written on September 6th, 1241, 'in the 25th year of the reign of King Henry III, son of King John.'



It is hard for us to read because of the shape of the letters and because it is in Latin - the language used then for legal documents.

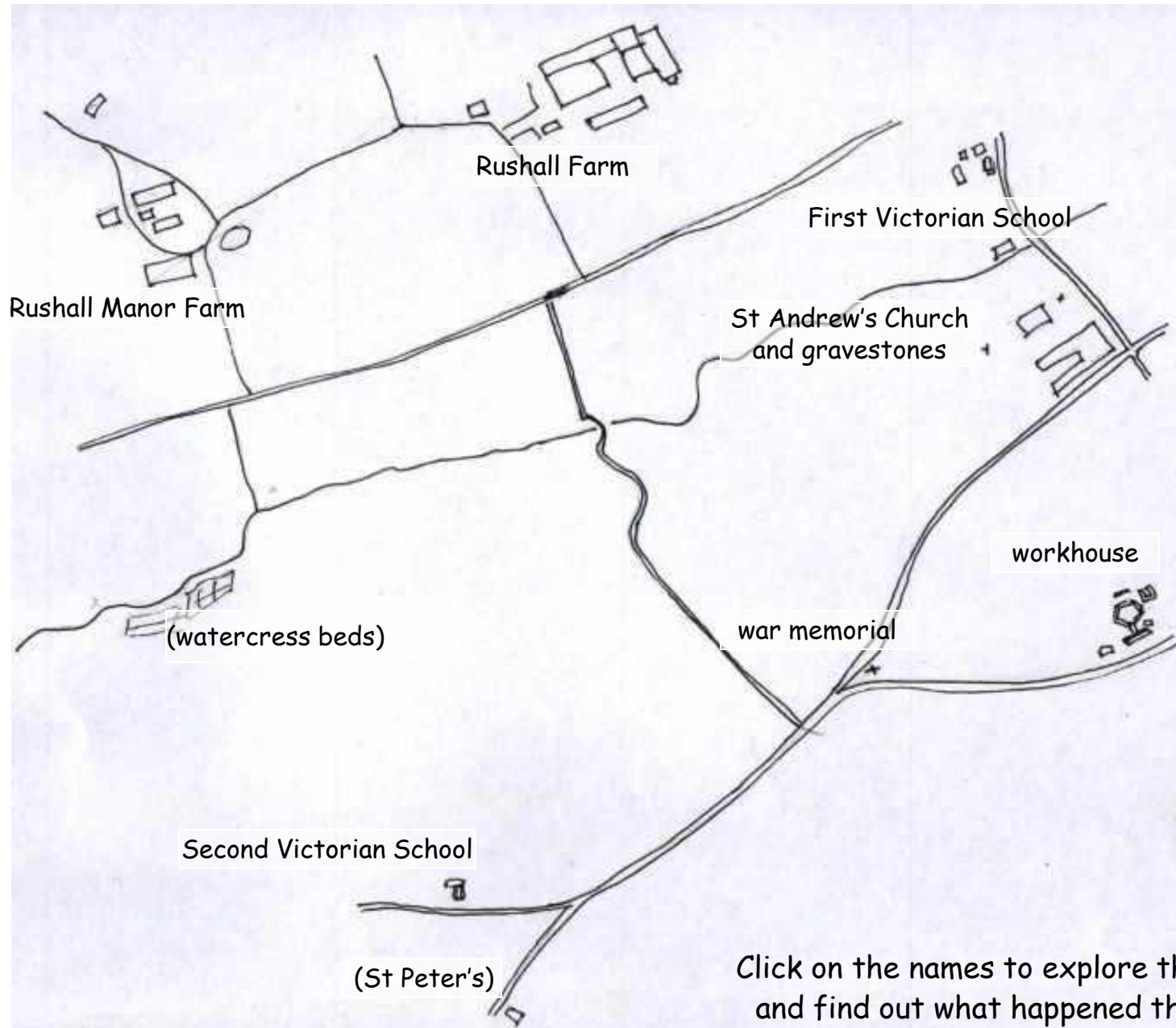
It is about 'Richard of Rushall' and who owns some land.

The word Rushall, spelt 'Ruffehalt' is on the 3rd line down, 4th from the right.

'Bradefeld' is on the line below, about 3 words further left.



Rushall Farms and Bradfield



This is an aerial view of Rushall Manor Farm in 1974.



The farm must have looked much like this in Victorian times. Today, only the Black barn, stable, granary and cart shed are left. The house was knocked down soon after this photograph was taken and some of the sheds collapsed in the big storms in 1990.



The Black barn was there in the 1700s. It was thatched originally (it is too steep for tiles.) Then it was roofed with tin sheets just after the First World War and now it has been thatched again. The lean-to at the front is Victorian. Inside the barn you can see many of the original timbers cut from a suitable curved branch in Rushall Copse. The more recent ones are straight and machine cut.



This was a threshing barn. The doors are high on one side for the cart to be pulled in, piled high with grain on the stalk, from the rick yard. The smaller doors on the other side open so there is a through draught to 'winnow' the grain - blowing the chaff away from the heavier grains. Later, artificial wind machines were used. Then threshing machines, and today Combine Harvesters do the job when the corn is cut.



You can see the date 1806 inside this granary, with the original wattle and daub panels. Grain stores were built up on staddle stones to keep the rats out. Rats cannot climb past an overhang. The steps to the door at the front folded up to keep rats out too.



The granary was used to store the 'seed corn' - the seeds used to sow for the next year's crop. They were very valuable. No seed - no food next year. So the grain was kept locked up, near the farmhouse.

Today seed corn is bought in from specialist suppliers, to get the best seed.

Grain for food was stored on the stalk in ricks, also up on staddle stones and thatched to keep the rain off. This was threshed as needed.

Today the combine harvester separates grain and stalk as it cuts. So modern grain stores have to be much bigger.



This stable has been here since at least the 1830s. Hay was stored upstairs - tossed in through the opening at the end and then down into this hay rack. The horses could easily reach it - they could only just get in through the stable door by bending their heads down. Their collars rubbed the top of the door frame as they pushed in. The manger was used to feed them oats and chaff -all from the farm.



mechanisation comes to Rushall

Rushall Farm was combined with Home Farm (in Bradfield village) in the 1890s. The horses were then usually kept at Home Farm except when they were working long hours at harvest time.

The stables were used for the bailiff's pony and later for keeping pigs. There were 6 farrowing pens here for the sows to have their piglets.

Now children use the stable on their visit to the farm.



Shire horses had been very important at Rushall. William Cumber farmed Rushall from 1914. He farmed several farms at the same time over the years. (Rushall belongs to his grandson today.) He worked a farm in Wiltshire and bred shire horses there. Each year a few 4 year olds were sent to Rushall to be trained to pull in harness, then they were sold to Youngs, the brewers, to pull beer carts .

William Cumber



William Cumber bought the first tractor for Rushall in 1947. Before that the horses were used to pull everything - ploughs, harrows, drills and hay carts.

He bought a lorry that year too. Before that farmers got together to send 100 cows with 3 drovers and 2 dogs on the 2 day journey on foot to the Wiltshire farm.

Only a few years later, there was only 1 horse at Rushall, there was a combine harvester and they used an aeroplane to spray the crops.



Cart sheds were built with open fronts so that the horses could be easily attached to the shafts of the carts to pull them out from under cover and to back them in.



The cart shed was usually built facing out of the winds so that the roof and three sides gave good cover for the wagons.

The machine shed at the new farm is built to the same design and faces the same way but is much bigger for today's big tractors and machinery.

(Can you see the granary and black barn down the hill?)



This is all that remains of the Rushall Manor farm labourers' cottages. You can find the names of the people living here in the census returns.

Look how many were living here in 1881? It was only a 2 roomed cottage, with no upstairs and a steep thatched roof nearly to the ground. It must have been very crowded. The family would have slept on straw on the floor in the bedroom. There was no room for beds even if they could have afforded them. The lodgers - all working on the farm - probably slept with the animals. You can still see the fireplace in the kitchen and the 'copper', where water was heated to wash clothes.

How do you know this photograph was not taken of the family in 1881?



Find out the names of the children who lived here (in the census returns) and then see if you can find them in the Log Book extracts (you'll find these from the Victorian school page). What does it say about them?

The children had jobs to do before they went to school - collecting wood for the fire, and water. They were lucky, there is a well just outside so they did not have far to go.

They did not wash very often. Perhaps once a week and their hair twice a year. When their clothes were washed they stayed in bed until they were dry because they didn't have any others.



We can find out who was living in this house by looking at the Census returns. The census will tell us their ages, names and occupations and where they were born. From these we can learn a surprising amount about life in Victorian times.

Administrative County of <u>Berkshire</u>		The undermentioned Houses are situate within the Boundaries of the										Page 11			
Civil Parish		Municipal Borough		Municipal Ward		Urban Sanitary District		Town or Village or Hamlet		Rural Sanitary District		Parliamentary Borough or Division		Ecclesiastical Parish or District	
<u>Breadfield</u>								<u>Breadfield</u>		<u>Breadfield</u>		<u>Reading</u>		<u>Breadfield</u>	
No. of Schedule	No. of HOUSE	ROAD, STREET, &c., and No. or NAME of HOUSE	HOUSES (1) (2) (3) (4) (5)	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON-DITION Marriage	AGE last Birthday of	PROFESSION or OCCUPATION	Employed	Employed	Employed	WHERE BORN	(1) Deaf and Dumb (2) Blind (3) Lame, Tame, or idiot		
58		Rushall Cottages 1		Charles West	Head	M	27	Gayde Keeper		X		Bucklebury			
				Mary A	Wife		23					"			
				Annie	Daughter		3					"			
				Mellie			1					"			
				Emily			2					"			
59		Rushall Farm 1		Caroline Clark	Visitor		14					Berkshire, Bucklebury			
				Isabel A. Chaplin	Head	M	28	Farmer		X		Wilt., Great Hill			
				Francis J.	Wife		29	Farmer's wife				Wilt., Baywater			
				Victor L.	Son		8	Son				Wilt., S. Mearston			
				Robert J.	"		2	"				"			
				Beatrice F.	Daughter		8	Daughter				Berkshire, Breadfield			
				Francis Chiddon	Servant	S	17	Son, Domestic				"			
				Isaac St. Albans	"	S	17	Son, General Serv.				Reading			
60		" Cottages 1		William Pacey	Head	M	41	Shepherd		X		Burgfield			
				Emily	Wife		42					Wilt., Wootton Bassett			
				William J.	Son	S	18	Postal Messenger		X		"			
				Emily	Daughter		11					Berkshire, Breadfield			
				Edith	"		9					"			
				Ernest J.	Son		7					"			
				Herbert J.	"		7					"			
61		Lower Farm 1		William Greenhills	Head	M	57	Farmer & Watercress Grower				"			
				Amelia	Wife		52					Wilt., Enghfield			
				Amelia	Daughter	S	19					Wilt., Catpils			
62		Rushall Cottages 1		Charles Mills	Head	M	45	Labourer		X		Berkshire, Breadfield			
				Emily	Wife		42					"			
				Tom Mason	Boys	S	18					Wilt., Aldbourne			
				Ernest Hambley	"	S	16					Berkshire, Breadfield			

1851 census

1861 census

1871 census

1881 census

1891 census

1901 census

Introduction

Rushall Manor Farm

A Census has been taken every 10 years in the UK since 1801. Which details were recorded changed a lot in 1851 and again in 1901. The detailed records are kept secret for 100 years so the most recent available are from 1901.

The Census is normally taken in March or April so that fewer people are away on holiday. It records where people are that night. The Census today has far more questions.

Click on the year to see a copy of what is on the Census for Rushall. (To see the original documents and more detail, open the Presentation on 'The Census at Rushall'.) Look at the size of the families. What jobs people do. Who has servants? How old are they when they start work? Who would you like to be? Are families and life very different today? Look at who is farming Rushall.

1851 Census Return for Rushall Farm and Cottages

	Name of House	Name and surname of each Person in house on night of 30 th March 1851	Relation to Head of family	Condition	Age of Male	Age of Female	Occupation	Where born
142	Rushall	Charles Witherington	Head	Married	78		Retired Farmer	Bradfield, Berks
		Mary Charles	Housekeeper	Widow		48		Aldbourn, Notts
		Mary Ann Ford	Servant			23	General Servant	Silchester, Hants
		Cornelius Shallon	Groom		18		General Servant	?, Hants
		James Hibzzeh	Servant	Unmarried	26		Agricultural Labourer	Siley, Herts
		Thomas Ford	Servant		16		Agric. Lab.	Bucklebury, Berks
		James Cole	Servant		16		Agric. Lab.	Bradfield, Berks
143	Rushall	George Woodley	Head	Married	44		Farm Bailiff	Didcot, Berks
		Martha Woodley	Wife			44		East Hagbourne Berks
		Alfred Taylor	Lodger		16		Agric. Lab	Beedon, Berks
		Thomas Woodley	Son		16		Agric. lab.	East Hagbourne
144	Rushall	James Stevens	Head	Married	38		Agric. Lab.	Bradfield, Berks
		Sarah Stevens	Wife			40	Field Labourer	Bradfield, Berks

1861 census for Rushall



1861 Census Return for Rushall Farm and Cottages

No. of house on list	Name of House	Name and surname of each Person	Relation to Head of family	Condition	Age of Male	Age of Female	Occupation	Where born
72	(Rushall Cottages)	John Allison	Head	Married	43		Hurdle Maker	Berks,Bradfield
		Sarah Allison	Wife	Married		39		Berks,Englefield
		Emma Allison	Daughter			11	Scholar	Berks,Bradfield
		Charlotte Allison	Daughter			6	Scholar	Berks,Bradfield
		Elizabeth Allison	Daughter			3	Scholar	Berks,Bradfield
		Caroline Allison	Daughter			10months		Berks,Bradfield
73		William Lay	Head	Married	46		Shepherd	Berks,Streatley
		George Lay	Son		11			Berks,Blewbury
		Charles Lay	Son		9			Berks,Blewbury
		Henry Lay	Son		7			Berks,Blewbury
		Richard Lay	Son		5			Berks,Blewbury
74		George Nickless	Head	Married	44		Carpenter Journeyman	Hants,Basingstoke
		Eliza Nickless	Wife	Married		39	Laundress	Berks,Tilehurst
		Eliza Nickless	Daughter			12	Scholar	Berks,Bradfield
		Richard Nickless	Son		11		Scholar	Berks,Bradfield
		Mary Anne Nickless	Daughter			8	Scholar	Berks,Bradfield
		George Nickless	Son		2			Berks,Bradfield
		Anne Harris	Servant			14	General Servant	Berks,East Woodhay
75	Rushall Farm	Edward Barnes	Servant	Married	41		Gardener	Dorset,Luckett Minster
		Elizabeth Anne Barnes	Servant	Married		40	Housekeeper	Dorset,Wareham
76	(Rushall Cottages)	Dan Blackford	Head	Married	39		Carter	Berks,Leckhampstead
		Elizabeth Blackford	Wife	Married		36		Berks,East Ilsey
		William S Rumbots	Nephew		2			Berkhampstead
77		Charles Wooton	Lodger	Unmarried	22		Carter	Berks,East Garston
78		George Butler	Lodger	Unmarried	19		Agric.Lab	Berks,Bucklebury
79		George Lailey	Lodger	Unmarried	19		Fogger	Berks,Stanford Dingley
80		David Hearn	Lodger	Unmarried	21		Carter	Berks,Bradfield
81		Moses Dicker	Lodger		14		Carter Boy	Berks,Mortimer

1871 census at Rushall



1871 Census Return for Rushall Farm and Cottages

No. of house on list	Name of House	Name and surname of each Person	Relation to Head of family	Condition	Age of Male	Age of Female	Occupation	Where born
62	Rushall	William Blackford	Head	Married	38		Agric. Lab	Berks,Leckhampstead
		Esther Blackford	Wife			38		Berks,Leckhampstead
		Martha A Blackford	Daughter			10	Scholar	Berks,Wantage
		William Blackford	Son		7		Scholar	Berks,Wantage
63	Blackford's House continued	Alfred Tame	Lodger	Unmarried	14		Agric Lab	Berks,Stanford Dingley
64		Thomas Tame	Lodger	Unmarried	19		Agric Lab	Berks,Stanford Dingley
65		Henry Stokes	Lodger	Unmarried	15		Agric Lab	Berks,Tilehurst
66		Joseph Dawson	Lodger	Unmarried	15		Agric Lab	Berks,Aldworth
67	Rushall	Henry Harriss	Head	Married	54		Farm Bailiff: Witherington	Hants,East Woodhay
		Sarah Harriss	Wife	Married		55		?
		Elizabeth Harriss	Daughter			11	Scholar	Berks,Bradfield
68	Rushall	David Hearn	Head	Married	32		Agric Lab	Berks,Bradfield
		Emily Hearn	Wife	Married		32		Berks,Woodley
		Charles Hearn	Son		8		Scholar	Berks,Bradfield
		George Hearn	Son		4			Berks,Bradfield
		James Hearn			2			Berks,Bradfield
69	Rushall Farm	Charles Witherington	Head	Married	37		Farmer of 400 acres employing 14 men + 6 boys	Berks,Thatcham
		Sarah Witherington	Wife	Married		32		Berks,Newbury
		Jane O Witherington	Daughter			7		Berks,Bradfield
		Charles J Witherington	Son		6			Berks,Bradfield
		Rhoda Witherington	Daughter			4		Berks,Bradfield
		Florence Witherington	Daughter			2		Berks,Bradfield
		Alice Witherington	Daughter			1		Berks,Bradfield
		Stephen Witherington	Son		4months			Berks,Bradfield
		Kate Bailey	Friend	Unmarried		22	Not known	London
		Anne Philips	Servant	Unmarried		26	Domestic Servant	Berks,Hungerford
		Ellen Anne Hall	Servant	Unmarried		19	Domestic Servant	Stevenage
		Elizabeth Sawyer	Servant	Unmarried		21	Nursemaid	Berks,Enbourne
		Eliza Sawyer	Servant	Unmarried		55	Domestic Servant	Berks,Hungerford

1881 census at Rushall



1881 Census Return for Rushall Farm and Cottages

No. of house	Name of House	Name and surname of each person	Relation to Head of family	Condition	Age Male	Age of Female	Occupation	Where born
56	Rushall Cottages	Jesse Judd	Head	Married	41		Farm Labourer	Berks,Langford
		Jane Judd	Wife			40		Berks,Langford
		Laura Judd	Daughter			14	Servant (Domestic)	Berks,Langford
		Edwin Judd	Son		12		Scholar	Berks,Langford
		Ernest Judd	Son		7		Scholar	Oxfordshire, Mapledurham
		Alice Judd	Daughter			3		Oxfordshire, Mapledurham
		Kathleen Judd	Daughter			2		Berks,Bradfield
		Lizzie Judd	Daughter			3month		Berks,Bradfield
57		Richard Giddingd	Lodger	Unmarried	16		Farm Servant	Hants,Hurstbourne
58		George Wells	Lodger		13		Farm Servant	Berks,Bradfield
59		George Hamblin	Lodger	Unmarried	15		Farm Servant	Berks,Bradfield
60		John Hutchins	Lodger	Unmarried	15		Farm Servant	Berks,Bradfield
61	Rushall Cottages	Henry Aldridge	Head	Married	23		Farm Labourer	Oxfordshire, Mapledurham
		Martha Aldbridge	Wife	Married		25		Oxfordshire,Goring
		Edith Aldbridge	Daughter			2		Oxfordshire, Mapledurham
		Clare Annie Aldbridge	Daughter			11month hs		Berks,Bradfield
62		John Wells	Head	Married	48		Shepherd	Berks,East Ilsley
		Jane Wells	Wife	Married		30		Berks,Bradfield
		Charles Wells	Son		10		Scholar	Berks,Bradfield
		Amy Amelia Wells	Daughter			3		Berks,Bradfield
63	Rushall Farm	Joseph Jonah Frampton	Head	Married	38		Farmer of 300 acres employing 5 men& 4 boys	Berks,Longford
		Elizabeth Anne Frampton	Wife	Married		41		Berks,Newbury
		Louisa Frampton	Daughter			6		Oxfordshire,Checkendon
		Frederick Frampton	Son		4			Berks,Bradfield
		Caroline Highbriard	Mother's help	Unmarried		18	Domestic Servant (Mother help)	Berks,Reading(StMary's)

1891 census at Rushall



1891 Census returns for Rushall Farm and Cottages

No. of house on list	Name of House	Name and surname of each Person	Relation to Head of family	Condition	Age of Male	Age of Female	Occupation	Where born	
58	Rushall Cottages	Charles West	Head	Married	22		Game Keeper	Berks,Bucklebiry	
		Mary A West	Wife	Married		23		Berks,Bucklebury	
		Annie West	Daughter			3		Berks,Bradfield	
		Nellie West	Daughter			1		Berks,Bradfield	
		Emily West	Daughter			2weeks		Berks,Bradfield	
		Caroline Clark	Visitor			55		Berks,Bucklebury	
59	Rushall Farm	Leslie A Chaplin	Head	Married	28		Farmer	Berks,Bucklebury	
		Florence E Chaplin	Wife	Married		29	Farmer's Wife	Middlesex,Bayswater	
		Victor L Chaplin	Son			3		Wilts,S Marston	
		Robert J Chaplin	Son			2		Wilts,S Marston	
		Beatrice F Chaplin	Daughter			8months		Berks,Bradfield	
		Frances C Liddard	Servant	Single		16		Nurse	Berks,Reading
		Susan H Allwood	Servant	Single		17		General Servant	Berks,Reading
60	Rushall Cottages	William Povey	Head	Married	41		Shepherd	Berks,Burghfield	
		Emily Povey	Wife	Married		45		Devon,Woodcote	
		William J Povey	Son			15		Postal Messenger	Devon,Woodcote
		Emily Povey	Daughter			11		Berks,Bradfield	
		Edith M Povey	Daughter			9		Berks,Bradfield	
		Ernest E Povey	Son			7		Berks,Bradfield	
		Herbert H Povey	Son			3		Berks,Bradfield	
61	Lower Frogmore	William Greensfields	Head	Married	54		Farmer and Watercress Grow er	Berks,Englefield	
		Amelia Greensfi elds	Wife	Married		54		Sussex,Catfield	
		Amelia Greensfields	Daughter	Single		19		Berks,Bradfield	
62	Rushall Cottages	Charles Mil ls	Head	Married	43		Labourer	Berks,Yattendon	
		Emily Mills	Wife	Married		41		Berks,Bradfield	
		Tom Deacon	Boarder	Single	18		Labourer	Wilts,Aldbourne	
		Ernest Hamblin	Boarder	Single	16		Labourer	Berks,Bradfield	

1901 census at Rushall



1901 Census Returns for Rushall Farm and Cottages

No. of house on list	Name of House	Name and surname of each Person	Relation to Head of family	Condition	Age of Male	Age of Female	Occupation	Where born
1	Lower Frogmore	William Greensfields	Head	Widower	64		Farmer	Berks,Englefield
		M ?asie Greensfields	Daughter	Single		28		Berks,Bradfield
		Annie Lewendon	Servant	Single		18		General Servant - Domestic
2	Rushall Farm	James Wells	Head	Married	40		Carter on farm	Berks,Cholsey
		Sarah Wells	Wife	Married		38		Berks,South Moreton
		Martha Wells	Daughter	Single		16		Berks,South Moreton
		AlbertWells	Son		14		Ordinary agricultural labourer	Berks,South Moreton
		Edwin Wells	Son		9			Berks,South Moreton
		Alice Wells	Daughter			4		Oxon,Caversham
		Fred Wells	Son		2			Oxon,Caversham
3	Rushall Farm	John Chapman	Head	Married	23		Carter on farm	Hants,Litchfield
		Fanny Chapman	Wife	Married		21		Berks,Oare
		Flossy Fisher	Niece	Single		15		Berks,Oare
4	Rushall Cottage	Charles West	Head	Married	32		Game-keeper	Berks,Bucklebury
		Mary A West	Wife	Married		33		Berks,Bucklebury
		Annie G West	Daughter	Single		13		Berks,Bradfield
		Caroline E West	Daughter			11		Berks,Bradfield
		Emily H West	Daughter			10		Berks,Bradfield
		Edith K West	Daughter			8		Berks,Bradfield
		Alice M West	Daughter			5		Berks,Bradfield
		Mary A West	Daughter			3		Berks,Bradfield
5	Bridge House	Florence H West	Daughter			1		Berks,Bradfield
		Thomas G Wilson	Head	Single	26		School Master Clergyman (Church of England)	Norfolk,Barmingham
		Lucy H Hions	Boarder	Single		41	Lady-Matron	Oxon,Steeple Aston
		Frederick G Hamilton	Boarder	Single	26		School Master	Surrey Mortlake
		Zacahry N Brooke	Boarder	Single	18			Surrey,Lutton
		Claude B L Yearsley	Boarder		15			Leicester,Sutton Bornington
		Alexander B Dickson	Boarder		15			Bucks,Cadmore
		Donald P McDonald	Boarder		15			London,South Hackney
Reginald M J Mastin	Boarder		14			Essex,Colchester		
		Donald P G Gray	Boarder		14		Devon,Holsworthy	



This was Rushall Farm in 1994



It looks much the same today.

The farmer's house is back up the road to the left.

How is it different from Rushall Manor farm? Think about what the buildings are made of? And their size? What is used to work the farm? Any other differences?





This big shed is used to house the sheep waiting to have their lambs in the winter and early spring. It is easier to look after them and help with the lambing if they are inside and not in the fields. They are fed silage and good food to give strong healthy lambs.

From April to January, when the sheep are out in the fields, the shed can be used to store machinery, timber, wool and grain.



Most buildings can be used for storing crops - grain or hay or straw when they are first harvested and there is not enough room for them in their 'proper' place.



You can see the machine shed is open at the front for the tractors to reverse in and pull out the machines when they are stored there. Have a look at the cart shed at Rushall Manor and see how they compare.



The grain store was built in 1981. Most of this farmyard was built in 1975. Inside the grain store are 16 bins which can each hold 50 tonnes of grain such as barley and wheat.



In the grain store the grain is cleaned and dried and kept free from birds and rats so it can be stored until the price is good rather than just being sold right away.

How is the granary at Rushall Manor different? Why is it smaller?



This was the first Victorian school in Bradfield. It was built by the Rev. Stevens. The Log Book starts in 1866 but this school had been here for a few years before that and Stevens had organised a school in the village since 1848. The school was sold when Stevens went bankrupt. Local children continued to go there until 1933. It is now the art room of Bradfield College.



Rev Thomas Stevens

Log Books

This is the school that the children in Rushall Cottages in the census returns went to. Look up their names on the census and then see if you can find them in the Log Book entries.



School logs were introduced in 1862 for the Head teacher to keep a record of the number of children in school, reasons for not coming, what they were studying and any events of importance. Teachers were paid partly according to how many children they taught so they needed to be able to show the numbers.

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October 1868

Friday 23rd So wet in the morning that most of the children were away - those that are here were not kept the stipulated time in school and therefore were not marked on the Registers - the day in fact being treated as a holiday.

Attendance of Girls for 3½ days	255	25.56	220.57
" Boys " " "	275	27.50	225.74
" Whole School " "	530	53.00	446.31

Monday 26th Weather fine but small school - so many absent gathering acorns after the hard wind.

Tuesday 27th

Wednesday 28th

Thursday 29th

Friday 30 th Attendance of Girls	350	Average	35.0
" Boys	357	"	35.1
November " Whole School	707	"	70.1

Monday 2nd The Rev. F. B. Hinde visited - Admitted Stephen Lovey

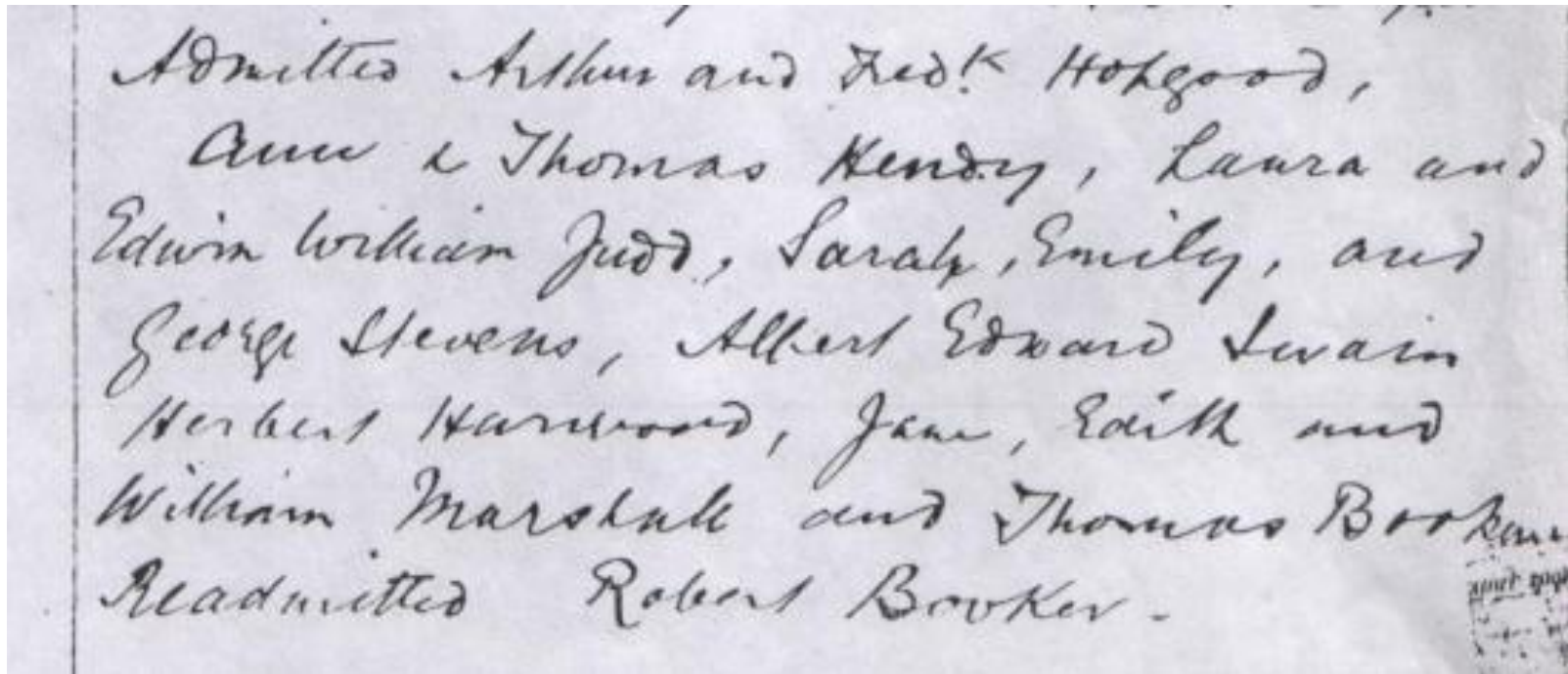
Tuesday 3rd

This page of the Bradfield School log book was written by the Head Teacher, Mr Kneebone, in October 1868.

What reasons are given for not coming to school? Do you miss school for the same reasons?



These are the names of some of the children admitted to school in October 1880. Can you see any of the names in the census for the cottages?



Admitted Arthur and Fred^l Hogood,
Anne & Thomas Kendry, Laura and
Edwin William Judd, Sarah, Emily, and
George Stevens, Albert Edward Swain
Herbert Harwood, Jane, Edith and
William Marshall and Thomas B...
Readmitted Robert Booker.

The handwriting is different - a new Headmaster. The one before him died of scarlet fever, caught from the children. One of them died too.



This entry is from 1869. Some more reasons for missing school. And more
Rushall Cottage children.

Oct 25 Several second class boys had leave to
go frightening birds from the newly
sown corn - for a few days
26 As yesterday
27 The three Blackfords home sick
28 The three Snells and Charles Patey are
still suffering from fever and unable to
attend school.

To find out more about the log books and the Rushall Cottage children
(names from the census), you'll have to open the Power Point presentation
'Log books and Rushall'.



St Andrews church - near the first Victorian school and Bradfield College.



The church was enlarged by Thomas Stevens to honour his dead father. Several of his family are buried inside.

In the churchyard you will find the graves of many people whose names you have found on the census who owned or farmed Rushall. Where are their workers buried? (look at the workhouse information)

Charles Witherington

Blackall Simonds



This is the grave of the Charles Witherington you will see on the 1851 census return as the retired farmer of Rushall Farm. There is a row of Witherington family graves here, in the part of the graveyard up on your left before you reach the church.



The inscription reads:

In Memory of
CHARLES WITHERINGTON
who Died
April 19th 1852
AGED 79 YEARS



This is part of the large grave of Blackall Simonds and some of his family, at the far end of the churchyard. Blackall Simonds was the first pupil at Bradfield College. The Simonds family were brewers in Reading and the new 'public schools' like Bradfield, educated the sons of these newly wealthy families. He bought Rushall Farm between 1892 and 5 (dates from entries in Kelly's directory of the village). When he died in 1905, his brother inherited and also took his name to become George Blackall-Simonds. This causes a lot of confusion for the historian, to be sure which brother someone means.



'Bradfield House' is mentioned 3 times on the grave. And each one is a different house.

It is another sort of fact which makes history research complicated.

Blackall Simonds' grandfather lived in Bradfield House - which was the 'Great House' up behind Rushall which burnt down after 1836 (the date on the grave) and before 1847 (the date of the Tithe map) Blackall Simonds named his house in Bradfield (which is now the headmaster of the College's house) by the same name. Later his brother, George Blackall-Simonds built a new Bradfield House near Rushall Farm.



This is a photograph of the Reverend Thomas Stevens 1809 - 1888.

For 123 years the head of this family was both the Squire and the Parson of Bradfield. Thomas was the second son so started a career in Poor Law reform. He had a lot to do with setting up the Workhouse in Bradfield. But his elder brother died so he had to become a priest to keep the job (and the money) in the family.



When his father died in 1842, Thomas enlarged the church in his honour, and founded Bradfield College to provide a choir. He also ran the Workhouse, very harshly. He had an ice block and mineral water business, a large frozen meat store and was a homeopathist and farmed with the most modern techniques, such as the first steam plough in the County.

He was always short of money. He finally went bankrupt at the age of 72. He owed £160,000 and he only earned £2-3000 a year. The Rectory, Manor and lands, including the school were sold to Dr Watney.



This war memorial was designed by George Blackall-Simonds who owned Rushall Farm. He was a well known sculptor - there is a statue of a falconer by him in Central Park, New York. His son was killed in the First War and is one of the names on the memorial. When George Blackall-Simonds died, his nephew inherited the farm and took the Simonds name to become Mr Shea-Simonds.

Dr Watney who bought Bradfield Lord of the Manor rights from Thomas Stevens also lost his son and heir in that war and his name and many local peoples' are there. The names of villagers killed in the Second War were added after that. There are far fewer dead in the Second War. Do you know why?



During the Second World war many women worked on the land so that the men could go and fight. They were called Land girls and several worked at Rushall and Home Farms.

German prisoners of war also helped on the land at Rushall.

In the school log book you can see the problems with food production during the Wars:

September 7, 1913. Gave boy leave to dig mother's potatoes because father and 3 brothers in army.

September 9, 1918. School closed for blackberry picking. (This happens 8 more times - there was a shortage of fruit needed for vitamins)

September 23, 1943. 11 boys loaned to Mr White, Malthouse Farm for potato picking.



Bradfield Union Workhouse, built 1836.

Workhouses were built to provide food and shelter for people who were ill or unemployed. But Parliament did not want people to be lazy or farmers to pay low wages because they knew the Parish would help out. So they decided in 1834 that anyone needing help had to live in the workhouse rather than getting bread at home. And they made them very unpleasant so that people would not want to go there. Husbands and wives were separated in the different wings and could see each other briefly on Sundays. Children over 5 were split from their mothers. The paupers were buried, using their beds as coffins, in unmarked graves in the church next to the Workhouse.



It was impossible to save on a farm worker's wages so many ended their lives in the workhouse. Soon there were so many that the old were allowed aid at home and only the able bodied families forced in. Several workers at Rushall were born and died in the workhouse.

After the Second World war, the building was a hospital for old people. But often they did not want to go because it seemed like the same shame of the workhouse.

Today only the front remains and there are now expensive new houses on the site.



How do we help the old, sick and unemployed, today?

Bradfield Southend School: 1866 - today.



This school was built in 1866 by Mr Benyon, a local landowner, on his own land and at his own expense for the children of the area because of arguments in the village about who should run the school. The first school was still there and used until 1933.

The people whose children went to the Village school wanted a Board school, where they would have a greater say in what happened.

The local landowners thought a church school was better. Their sons went to schools like Bradfield College, not to the local village school.



William Cumber (1878 - 1974) was the tenant farmer at Rushall Farm and Home Farm from 1914.

The owner, Mr George Blackall-Simonds, kept the farmhouse at Rushall for his gardener and gamekeeper to live in and rear pheasants.



The Cumber family had a butcher's shop in Theale from 1670 and rented a farm nearby to hold cattle from the 1840s. But William Cumber wanted to farm in a bigger way. At the beginning of the 20th century, he rented farms in Kingsclere and Market Risborough and got there by taking his motorbike on the train. He worked land at Beenham, and then in Wiltshire. He bought that farm in 1972. His son, John, bought Rushall in the 1970s.

The farms often work together. Nowadays, John Bishop is the farm manager at Rushall, for the younger William Cumber. And Rushall is an organic farm.

