

Forest of Dean Parish Records Project Progress

The Forest of Dean transcription project has now been running for just over two and a half years with a total of 500,000 records having been added to the database. The project currently covers 54 parishes in Gloucestershire, namely:-

Abenhall, Alvington, Ashleworth, Awre, Beachley, Blaisdon, Blakeney, Bream, Bromsberrow, Bulley, Christchurch, Churcham, Cinderford St.Johns, Cinderford St.Stephens, Clearwell, Coleford, Corse, Drybrook, Dymock, English Bicknor, Flaxley, Hartpury, Hasfield, Hewelsfield, Huntley, Kempley, Lassington, Littledean, Longhope, Lydbrook, Lydney, Maisemore, Minsterworth, Mitcheldean, Newent, Newland, Newnham, Oxenhall, Parkend, Pauntley, Preston by Ledbury, Ruardean, Rudford, St. Briavels, Staunton, Staunton by Newent, Tainton, Tibberton, Tidenham, Tutshill, Upleadon, Viney Hill, Westbury & Woolaston.

together with 15 Herefordshire border parishes, namely:-

Aston Ingham, Bishopswood, Goodrich, Hope Mansell, Lea, Ledbury, Linton, Little Marcle, Much Marcle, Ross on Wye, Upton Bishop, Walford, Welsh Bicknor, Weston under Penyard & Whitchurch.

7 Monmouthshire border parishes, namely:-

Chapel Hill, Chepstow, Dixton, Llandogo, Penalt, St. Arvans & Tintern.

And 2 Worcestershire border parishes, namely:

Longdon & Redmarley D`Abitot

In addition to these Church of England records, all of the Gloucestershire Forest of Dean non conformist records are being added to the database, together with the non conformist records from the Herefordshire and Monmouthshire border areas.

It is estimated that when the project is nearing completion in about 12 months time, the database will contain around 650,000 records.

For Gloucestershire the filming of parish and non conformist registers is now complete, apart from the post-1812 registers of Ashleworth & Hasfield and 4 very early non-conformist registers, which are only available on microfilm. The only records remaining to be transcribed are 17 pre-1812 parish registers, and it is hoped that the majority of these will be added to the database before the end of September.

For Monmouthshire we have been working closely with Mike John and have copied most of the available transcripts of border parishes from his website. We have discussed the possibility of adding Monmouth to the

database, and I have agreed with Mike that we will help him transcribe these records as soon as they are available as digital imagery.

Progress on the Herefordshire border parishes has been slower, with 28 Church of England and 9 non-conformist registers still to photograph. Hopefully we can complete the filming of these during the Autumn and complete the transcriptions by Spring 2009.

When all the parish registers have been filmed we will start photographing the pre-1812 Bishops Transcripts starting in Gloucestershire. My plan is then to send out the parish registers, the BTs and the current transcripts to volunteers, so that they can be checked and updated with any additional information which is in the BTs but not the parish registers. I have been running a pilot project for Newland with one of our volunteers, this is proving to be very successful and has resulted in a number of additional entries along with numerous corrections to the original transcript.

I am also planning to add some of the early 20th Century registers to the database and will be filming baptisms up to 1920, marriages up to 1940 and burials up to 1960. A quick count for Gloucestershire suggests this will add another 80 registers (i.e about 50,000 records).

There are also 13 Gloucestershire registers which are still held in the churches, so I am hoping to find volunteers who will make contact with the Ministers and arrange to visit the churches to photograph these. The parishes concerned are Abenhall, Beachley, Bulley, Churcham, Corse, Flaxley, Maisemore, Minsterworth, Rudford & Tainton.

It's good to hear that so many researchers are benefiting from the database, let's hope the transcribers will keep up the good work.

Graham Davison
Project Coordinator

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