

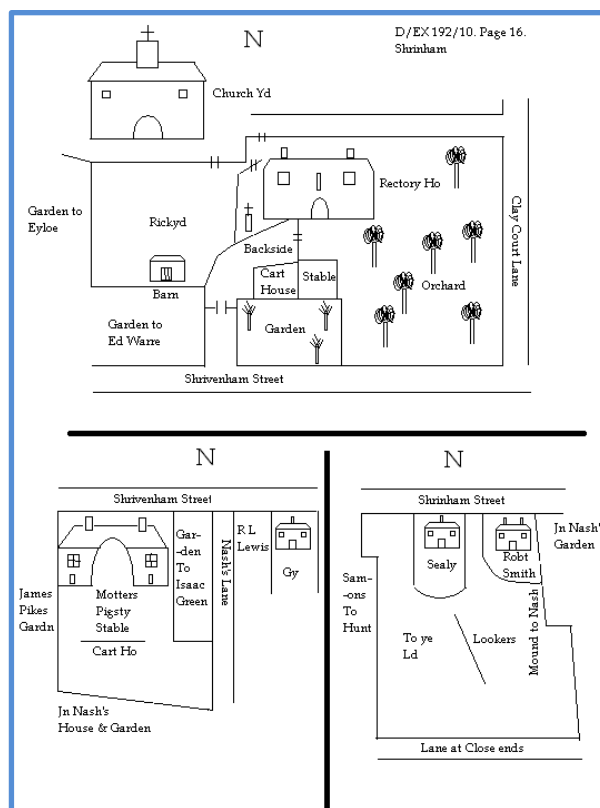
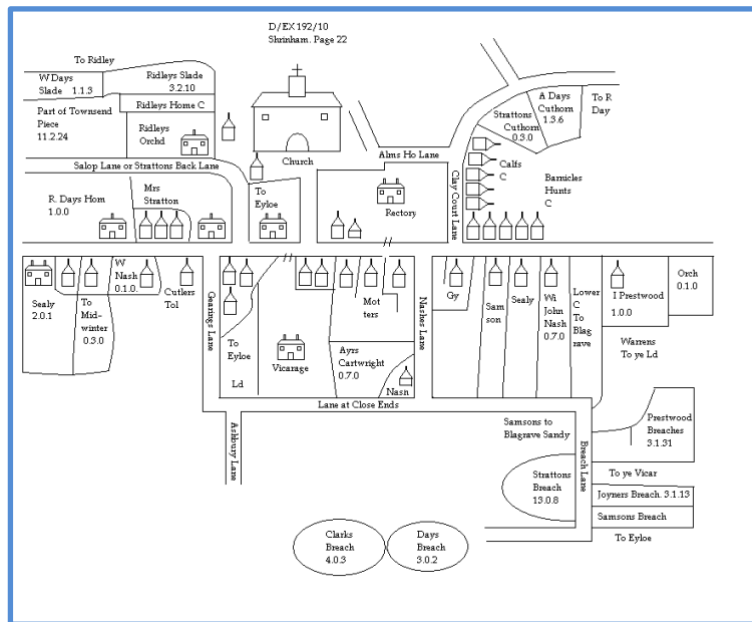
Shrivenham House

The history so far, by Neil B. Maw



The location of Shrivenham House and the huge size of the ground that it occupies, must make it the primary dwelling in the village. And being so close to the parish church must also enhance its status and justify the assumption that historically, it would have been owned by a person of high social standing. A close second could have been the Manor House, standing as equally close to the church, but now demolished and replaced by modern Manor Close. It's possible that these two locations could have been the administrative centres for two of the principal manors in Shrivenham – Salop and Rectory. Of the former we have no documentary evidence that might identify it as such, but the latter we do have some. At the dissolution of the monasteries by King Henry VIII, the site of the Manor or Rectory of Shrivenham was held by William Pleydell of Coleshill, under a lease to himself and to his sons, made by the Abbot of Cirencester Abbey in 1535. And after the dissolution the Pleydell family held on to it. (VCH Berks, Vol 4, p.531 – 543). Within the Pleydell Papers at the Berkshire County Archives, there is a, '*Quarto Survey Book.*' (D/Ex192/10). The book is dated between 1730 – 1753, and contains little maps that are sketched as simple line drawings, and we can only assume that they assisted in the collection of rents and tithe

payments. Two of the drawings clearly depicts Shrivenham House and one has it sectioned on its own, but both name it as, 'Rectory.'



The Pleydell family were well known in Coleshill, but the name was also well represented in Shrivenham in the 16th and 17th centuries. Oliver Pleydell occurred at the top of the

Hearth Tax list of 1662, subordinate only to John Wildman. He paid for seven hearths. Could those hearths have been within the house that occupied the Shrivenham House site today? At the moment we cannot confirm it. It came into the possession of the Barrington Estate, or Manor of Beckett, by progression, and it was the diligence of William Lord Viscount Barrington (2nd) for all the manors to have been brought within Beckett. As the estate came out of its 20year period of being in trust in 1814, Rectory Manor was with the Barringtons. (VCH Berks, Vol 4, p.531-543).

The earliest confirmation that we have for the name of an occupier was from the tenure of George Merryweather, who was the new Beckett Estate Steward, brought in by George Barrington, the fifth Viscount, in April 1815. Within the Letters of George Merryweather, (published by SHS in 2020), there is much talk of Lady Effingham who took up residence in Shrivenham in 1818. We only know that it was Shrivenham House that she moved into, by the flurry of work that had to be organised before her arrival. In letter No 54, dated 19th June 1818, Merryweather noted, *'Your Lordship said the £500 to be expended in fitting up the house for Lady Effingham was to be defrayed out of the £10,000 taken upon Moses Akerman's and other farms. (Mortgaged).'* And in April 1819, a note in Merrweather's accounts that refer to Lady Effingham, *'now living in The Rectory.'* (BCA D/EX52/E1). Lady Effingham was related to Rev. Edward Berens, the Vicar of Shrivenham 1804 -1859.

The Memoires of Augusta Barrington (Published by SHS in 2020), provided more information when on page 27, she wrote of Shrivenham House that it was, *'originally a farmhouse, altered and improved by a Lady Effingham.'* She continued by adding that, *'It was the home of my parents from 1824 until 1832.'* Here she is referring to William Keppel the sixth Viscount who commissioned the removal of the old Beckett House and the building of the new one. (See Beckett & The Barringtons published by SHS in 2020). The Viscount and his family lived at Shrivenham House that was nick-named, *'Fangs'* by the Barrington children, until part of the new house was ready for habitation in 1832. (Memoires of Augusta Barrington P.22). Dowager Elizabeth Barrington, the widow of the late George Lord Viscount Barrington (5th), having moved out of Shrivenham House that was granted to her by the Will of her husband, then returned. She had agreed to move to Watchfield House whilst work on the new Beckett House was carried out. She died in March 1841 and was interred in the family vault at St Andrew's Church. (See SHS N799 for more details on the vault). The first regular census took place in June of

1841 and as might be expected, some of the Dowager's grandchildren were at Shrivenham House at the time.

Barrington	Caroline	Independant	40
Barrington	Charlotte	Independant	35
Barrington	Henry	Independant	30
Byle	Elizabeth	Servant with the Barringtons	45
Cuthbert	Mary	Servant with the Barringtons	25
Dowlin	Mary	Servant with the Barringtons	20
Haines	Mable	Servant with the Barringtons	30
Hamble	Sarah	Servant with the Barringtons	20
Cox	Francis	Servant with the Barringtons	20

Census of 1841


Augusta Barrington mentioned that after the death of her grandmother, Shrivenham House was kept on by her aunts. There is a curious entry on the Tithe Survey of 1844, that listed the occupier of Shrivenham House as, Captain Felix Venus Smith. We can find no information on him and he is not mentioned by Augusta Barrington. Her brother, George Barrington, who would become the 7th Viscount, married Isabel Morritt in the Spring of 1846, and for a time resided at Beckett. But the following year he moved into Shrivenham House and remained there until 1851, when he moved to London and from there abroad. Augusta continued with the tenancy of Mr & Mrs Van Notten Pole, during which time, the north part of the house caught fire and was completely gutted. A newspaper article described that the fire, *'commenced in the upper part of the premises, it was supposed, from the ignition of a bond timber in one of the flues, and obtained so firm a hold that it was impossible for the domestics to stop it. In less than two hours afterwards the whole place was burned to the ground, the walls alone remaining.'* (John o' Groat Journal 16th April 1852). Whilst sounding very dramatic, the report is misleading and leads the reader to think that the whole house was destroyed, but it was only the northern range of the house that was damaged. The new western part built in 1834 by Elizabeth Barrington was unscathed. Augusta also wrote an interesting point that the rebuilding of the damaged part of the house was commissioned by her father William Keppel the 6th Viscount.



Above. It was the northern part (on the left) that was destroyed by the fire of 1852. Below. The western wing, built by Elizabeth Barrington in 1834, was not damaged



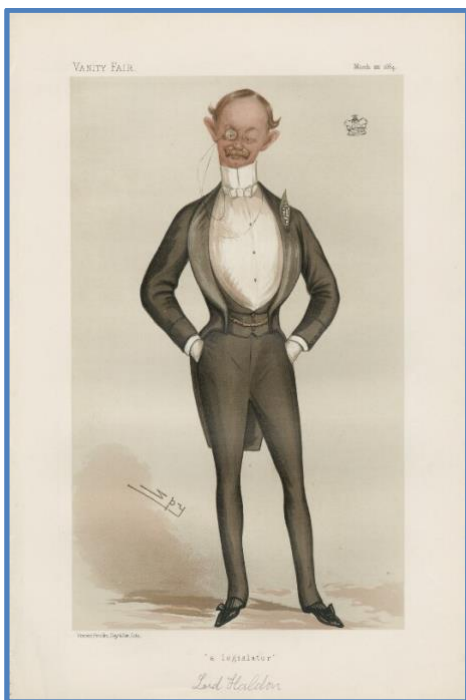
After the Van Notten Pole's, the next tenant was G. Glyn. We can only presume that this man was George Glyn, who went on to become the first Baron Wolverton. He was a banker with interests in the railways, a partner in the family firm of Glyn, Mills & Co. (Info from Wikipedia). Why he was at Shrivenham has not yet been discovered. The newspapers provided details of a tragic incident that took place within his household whilst he was there. On 27th March 1854 an inquest took place at Shrivenham on a newly born infant, the child of Sarah Baxter. She was in service with Mr Glyn as a kitchen-maid, and had given birth to a child that she had allegedly tried to conceal. The details were quite gruesome but it seemed most likely that the child was dead at birth. 20year old Sarah Baxter was committed for trial at the next assizes. (Berks Chronicle 1st & 15th April 1854). But at the assizes in July, the judge interrupted the learned counsel for the prosecution, stating that there was no evidence about to be produced that Sarah Baxter had intended to conceal the birth, and directed the Jury to acquit her. (Berks Chronicle 15th July 1854). The Hon. W.B. Portman was in residence in 1857, but perhaps honourable might not be an appropriate title. There were two items in the newspapers that refer to Mr Portman. The first was dated 7th February 1857, when a large notice appeared in the Berkshire Chronicle giving details of the bankruptcy of the Hon. Edwin Berkeley Portman. Confirmation that it was the same person appeared in the text that listed his many addresses, one being Shrivenham House. Later that year the same newspaper reported, *'an extensive robbery took place on Sunday night last at Shrivenham House.'* The details portrayed rather suspicious information that suggested the break-in was carried out by someone from within the house. (Berkshire Chronicle 28th Nov 1857). The next tenant was described by Augusta Barrington as, *'old Mr Joseph Murray.'* The census of 1861 confirmed his tenure and a newspaper article of the same year described the marriage of his son, George, to Miss Augusta Deane of Alresford, Hants. (Hampshire Chronicle 7th Sept 1861). He was still there in 1863 according to the Dutton Allen & Co Directory.

<div>  Record Transcription: </div>									
1861 England, Wales & Scotland Census Shrivenham House, Shrivenham, Faringdon, Berkshire & Oxfordshire, England Learn about this record set									
Household Members ⓘ									
First name(s)	Last name	Relationship	Marital status	Sex	Age	Birth year	Occupation	Birth place	
Joseph	Murray	Head	Married	Male	74	1787	Land Owner	Scotland	
Grace	Murray	Wife	Married	Female	71	1790	-	Scotland	
George Joseph	Murray	Son	Unmarried	Male	27	1834	Land Owners Son And Holder Of Bank Shares And###	Scotland	
Frederic Aug	Franter	Servant	Unmarried	Male	31	1830	Butler	Gloucester, Gloucestershire, England	
Christian	Robertson	Servant	Unmarried	Female	45	1816	House Keeper	Scotland	
Catherine	McEwan	Servant	Unmarried	Female	37	1824	House Maid	Scotland	
Eliza	Knapp	Servant	Unmarried	Female	19	1842	Kitchen Maid	Shrivenham, Berkshire, England	

Alfred Sartoris Esq, of Warnford Park, Bishop's Waltham, Hants, married the Hon. Mary Frances Barrington, the daughter of William Keppel Lord Viscount Barrington (6th) at Shrivenham Parish church on 28th October 1856. (Bath Chron 13th November 1856). Around 1864, the couple moved in to Shrivenham House whilst they were waiting for their new house to be built at Abbotswood, in the Cotswolds of Gloucestershire, which was completed in 1868. Later that year another marriage took place involving a Barrington girl. On 7th October 1868, Constance Mary Barrington, daughter of George Lord Viscount Barrington (7th), married Lawrence Hesketh Palk, who would become the second Baron Haldon. With Shrivenham House available after the Sartoris' left, the Palk's took up residence. The census of 1871 showed a large number of people at the house, mainly made up of servants.

Palk	Lawrence H	24	Shrivenham House
Palk	Constance	24	Shrivenham House. Wife of Lawrence- daughter of 7th Viscount Barrington
Palk	Lawrence	1	Shrivenham House. Son of Lawrence
Palk	?	0	Shrivenham House. Son of Lawrence. 7 months old
Cotton	Augusta	21	Shrivenham House. Visitor to Shrivenham House
Hilton ?	Jane	31	Shrivenham House. Cook
Scott	Mary	41	Shrivenham House. Servant
Anger ?	Isabella	29	Shrivenham House. Lady's Maid
Stannard ?	Ann ?	21	Shrivenham House. Lady's Maid
Lorne ?	Jamina ?	25	Shrivenham House. Housemaid
Marham	Sarah	17	Shrivenham House. Nursery Maid
Rice	Sarah A	16	Shrivenham House. Kitchen Maid
White	Daniel	28	Shrivenham House. Butler
Poole	Robert	21	Shrivenham House. Footman
Chivers	?	26	Shrivenham House. Coachman
Derby ?	?	17	Shrivenham House. Groom
Palmer	George	23	Shrivenham House. Servant

Apparently, unlike the rest of his family, Lawrence Palk had no real interest in politics or the military. What he excelled at was being a gentleman, a dandy, being among the Victorian aristocracy of London. It was this reputation that gained him a caricature in the society magazine, *Vanity Fair*, (see below.)



Courtesy of the National Portrait Gallery. Lawrence Hesketh Palk: NPG D44166. Constance Mary Palk (nee Barrington): NPG 21711

But it was that side of his character that his wife Constance did not approve of and by the end of the 1870s, their marriage was coming to an end. In the summer of 1880, Constance Palk left for a trip to Italy and Egypt, leaving her husband and marriage behind. She filed for divorce in 1882 on the grounds that Lawrence was having an affair, which he denied. The following year, Lawrence became the second Baron Haldon upon the death of his father, and to avoid the scandal of a divorce, he came to an agreement with his estranged wife and the lawsuit was dropped.

It was another Barrington family member by marriage, who moved in to Shrivenham House after the Palks left in 1880. Georgiana Liddell, the youngest child of the first Baron Ravensworth, had married John Bloomfield, the second Baron Bloomfield. Before her marriage, Georgiana had been maid of honour for Queen Victoria. Upon the death of her husband in 1879, she moved to Shrivenham to be near her sister Dowager Elizabeth Barrington, widow of the 6th Viscount. In the short time she was in Shrivenham she showed her benevolence by offering to pay £150 for the old church organ, much above what it was worth, in order to provide a good start to the fund for the purchase of a new one. (Swindon Adver 18th December 1880). Sadly, her sister Elizabeth died in 1883, and Georgiana moved to Bramfield House near Hertford for the rest of her life.



The elegant Georgiana Liddell (Lady Bloomfield) dressed for a Ball in 1843. Picture from Wikipedia

The census for 1891 below, listed that Walter Bulkeley Lord Viscount Barrington (9th) and his family were in occupation, and with the lack of any evidence to the contrary, we assume that they moved in after Lady Bloomfield.

Barrington	Walter B	42	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) J.P. William Viscount Barrington
Barrington	Mary Isabella	43	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) Wife of Walter
Barrington	Violet M	18	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) Daughter of Walter
Barrington	Rupert E.S	13	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) Son of Walter
Barrington	Percy E	6	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) Son of Walter
Power	Elizabeth	42	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) Servant - Cook
Evans	Margaret	46	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) servant - Ladies Maid
Williams	Amie	27	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) Servant - Housemaid
Metcalf	Emma	19	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) Servant - Nursery - under housemaid
Burt	Ruth	20	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) Servant - Nursery Maid
Saunders	Bessie A	22	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) Servant - Kitchen Maid
Hudson	Frederick	14	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) Servant - Page
Scott	George M	31	Dower House. (Shrivenham House) Servant - Footman


Walter Barrington was liked and respected by the local people and his passion for cricket was always evident during the summer months. It was his second wife Charlotte, who organised an, '*American Fair*,' to aid the funds of the Cricket Club during the summer of 1891. It was unusual and very successful.



At Easter the following year a big wedding took place at St Andrew's, Shrivenham with the bride being Walter's daughter by his first marriage, Violet Mary Barrington. She married Mr John Charles Evelyn Hope Brooke of Brackley, Northants. Even though it rained it did nothing to spoil the festivities of the occasion with marques set up on the lawns of Shrivenham House, next door to the church. (Faringdon Adver 30th April 1892).

By 1893 the Viscount had left and the house was placed, *'To Let for the Hunting Season.'* (Sporting Gazette 14th October 1893). The next tenant was Mr Francis F. Daniell, who appeared to be a country sports person. He appeared in the winners listings in the Lechlade Horse Show in 1895. (Wilts & Glos Standard 20th April 1895). The following year a newspaper clip announced the birth of his son. (Morning Post 24th April 1896). A month later he advertised a Deerhound and Borzoi dogs for sale, *'both beautifully bred and grown.'* (Field 2nd May 1896). But from then we hear nothing more of him.

The census of 1901 listed Justina C. Milligan, 56 years of age and of independent means. The listing below suggest that it was just herself and her servants. She was in residence earlier as a newspaper item noted that she had written a letter to the Clerk of the Parish Council, offering to pay for a water cart. (Faringdon Adver 13th May 1899). And it may be that she took over the tenancy immediately after Francis Daniell.

<div>  Record Transcription: </div> <div> 1901 England, Wales & Scotland Census Shrivenham House, Shrivenham, Faringdon, Berkshire & Oxfordshire, England Learn about this record set </div>							
Household Members ⓘ							
First name(s)	Last name	Relationship	Marital status	Sex	Age	Birth year	Occupation
Justinn C	Milligan	Head	Single	Female	56	1845	Of Independen Means
Amelia	Mills	Servant	Single	Female	36	1865	Ladys Maid (Domestic)
Ethel Rose	Davis	Servant	Single	Female	28	1873	Cook (Domestic)
Laura	Bennett	Servant	Single	Female	31	1870	Parlour Maid Domestic
Emma	Edwards	Servant	Single	Female	21	1880	Housemaid (Domestic)
Amelia	Holway	Servant	Single	Female	25	1876	House & Kitchen Maid
							Belgravia, London, England
							Cirencester, Gloucestershire, England
							Gloucestershire, England
							Silverstone, Nottinghamshire, England
							Skenfrith, Monmouthshire, Wales
							Ightham, Kent, England

The tenure of Justina Milligan was to be quite a lengthy one. She seemed to have come from a wealthy family. Upon the death of her brother, William Milligan, in April 1906, a newspaper article noted that he was the son of the late Major Milligan. In his Will he left estate valued at £74,000. After some minor legacies, he left the remainder of his estate in trust for Justina and his other sister Alice for their lives. (Glos Citizen 22nd May 1906). The census

of 1911 showed that sister Alice had moved in with Justina, and between them they had several servants. (Below).

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
1	Justina C. Milligan	Head	66	single	
2	Alice Milligan	Sister	64	single	
3	Isabel Hope Hume	Visitor	50	married	
4	Amelia Mills	Servant	46	single	
5	Ellen Chesterman	Servant	28	single	
6	Mary Tombs	Servant	29	single	
7	Edith Ingram	Servant	30	single	
8	Gertrude Chappon	Servant	19	single	
9					

In February 1918, Alice passed away. The small article that appeared in the newspaper, noted that she had been in delicate health for some time, but gradually her condition worsened. It added that she was well known for her kindness and generosity. (Faringdon Adver 16th February 1918). Her Will that was published later that summer, revealed that she left estate valued at £17,000. After some small legacies to various people, the remainder went to her sister Justina for her life. (Faringdon Adver 15th June 1918). Justina Charlotte Milligan died in 1927 and was buried in St Andrew's churchyard on 9th November, aged, 'about 83.' There appeared in the newspaper in 1929 an advertisement for a sale on the premises at Shrivenham House, a large amount of quality furniture, the '*contents of the residence.*' But even though it doesn't provide the name of the owner, it's highly likely that it was Justina Milligan's executors. (Faringdon Adver 28th June 1929).

We are aware of the next tenant by means of a newspaper article concerning a matter in the Court of the King's Bench, London. Wealthy Calcutta Tea Merchant, Alexander Douglas Gordon, was trying to fend off his wife's creditors for £963. He claimed he gave Mrs May Gordon no authority to buy dresses and jewellery on credit against his name, and that the £200 per month allowance was adequate. Mrs May strongly denied that the allowance was adequate, and that the goods were necessities suitable to her station in life. (Daily Mirror 15th December 1931). Two years later, a young lady by the name of Katherine Grizel Clarke Kennedy, aged 17, of Shrivenham House, appeared in Swindon Borough Magistrates Court, for

driving her Talbot Coupe of 14 horse-power, '*in a manner dangerous to the public.*' She was fined £2 and her licence was suspended for six months. (North Wilts Herald 6th January 1933. The Driving Test was introduced in the UK on 1st June 1935).

It was the beginning of 1937 when Lord & Lady Gifford moved in to Shrivenham House. Lady Gifford had begun recruiting staff at the end of 1936 when she advertised for a, '*Good Cook.*' (North Wilts Herald 11th December 1936). They had come to Shrivenham because Lord Gifford had a lot of family in the area and he was then of an age to enjoy a graceful retirement. But it was not to be as tragically, but a few weeks after arriving, Baron Gifford died.

AGED PEER'S DEATH.

**Baron Gifford, of
Shrivenham House.**

FORMER MILITIA OFFICER.

Baron Gifford, the fourth holder of the title, died on Friday at Shrivenham House, Berkshire, aged 79.

He succeeded in 1911, his brother, who won the V.C. in the Ashanti Expedition of 1873-74.

The new peer is a nephew, Lieut.-Commander Charles M. E. Gifford (retired), secretary of the Royal Prince Alfred Hospital, Camperdown, Sydney (N.S.W.). He is 36 and is an hon. A.D.C. to the Governor of New South Wales.

The late Peer was formerly an officer of the South Gloucestershire Militia. He was twice married. His first wife, who was the daughter of John Osborne, Q.C., and the widow of Thomas Booth, of West Ashby Manor, Lincolnshire, died in 1913, and five years later he married Anne Maude, daughter of the late Colonel Aitchison, of Drummore, Musselburgh, by whom



LORD GIFFORD.

he leaves a daughter, the Hon. Serena Mary Gifford.

Lady Gifford continued to live at Shrivenham House with her daughter Serena, and busied herself with goods causes. She became Commandant of the new Red Cross in Swindon, and was publicly acclaimed for so doing. (North Wilts Herald 28th July 1939). The following year, Serena married Mr Patrick de G.V.G. Warren, younger son of Mr Guy de G. Warren, general manager of the Midland Colliery Owners' Indemnity Company. The ceremony was held at St Andrew's, Shrivenham, and although a happy occasion, it was not a huge affair on account of the Second World War that had just begun. (Derby Daily Telegraph 1st October 1940).

Mr. Patrick Warren and the Hon. Serena Gifford



Lord Gifford dies North Wilts Herald 5th February 1937. The Hon. Serena Gifford marries, The Bystander, 9th October 1940

The following year, a short article in the newspaper announced that the, '*People of Shrivenham and Red Cross workers throughout this part of the country will be sorry to hear that Maude Lady Gifford, is giving up her residence at Shrivenham House in order to be near her married daughter at Sturminster Newton, near Yeovil.*' (North Wilts Herald 30th May 1941).

The information of the next tenant was provided courtesy of Antony Alderson of Bristol, a family descendant of the Barringtons. In a copy of the lease dated 24th June 1941, we learn that at that point in time, the house was still in the possession of the Barringtons. The agreement was between the Right Hon. William Reginald Shute Barrington (10th Viscount) and Henry Deacon of Goring-on-Thames, Director of the British Sugar Corp Ltd. The terms were an annual rent of £210 for seven years.



We have no information as yet as to how long the house was leased by Henry Deacon. Living memory of several local people suggest that there then followed a succession of high-ranking military officers in residence, usually the Commandants of the nearby Royal Military College of Science. The whole of Beckett Park, including Beckett House, had been sold to the Ministry of Defence in 1937.

A newspaper article of 1955 confirmed local memory, when it reported on the tragedy that befell Major-General E.H.Q. Cobb, aged 52, who died after a fall. He was the Commandant at the college, resided at Shrivenham House and had slipped at the top of a staircase whilst wearing shiny slippers. The inquest also heard the information that a golf ball was present at the staircase and may have been a contributory factor. A verdict was recorded of, '*Accidental Death.*' (Birmingham Daily Post 30th March 1955).

And that is as far as we can go at the moment. The current owners and occupiers are Roger and Alison Davis, and the property is completely private. If any reader has further information or would like to comment on any of the above, please contact us on:

info@shrivenhamheritagesociety.co.uk

