

High Wych History 68

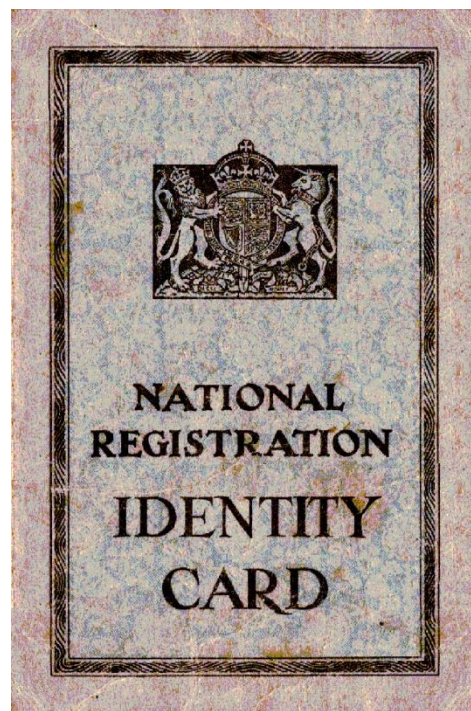
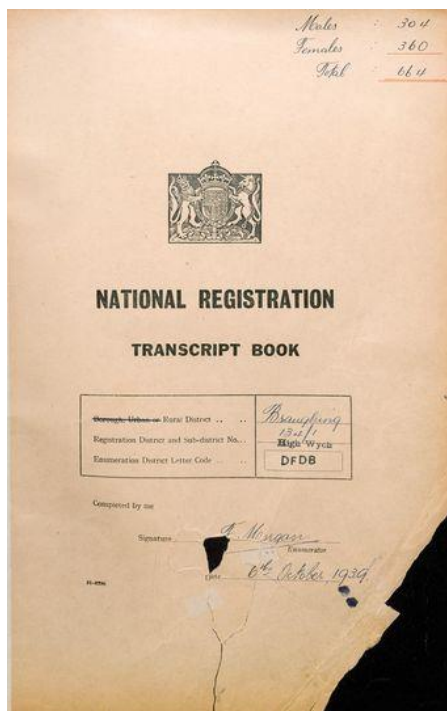
High Wych in 1939

Census information is an important resource for historians professional and amateur alike. That includes yours truly your High Wycombe historian. It tells us who lived where and (to an extent) what people did. For privacy reasons however information on people who may still be alive, i.e. less than 100 years old is not available to the public. So the oldest census we can draw on is the one from, 1911. I already look forward to 2021 when (more complete) information from the 1921 census will become available.

Recently however some information from the 1939 register has become available. As the 1931 census for England and Wales was destroyed by fire during the Second World War and no census was taken in 1941, the Register provides the most complete survey of the population of England and Wales between 1921 and 1951, making it an invaluable resource for family, social and local historians.

E.D. Letter Code.		Borough, U.D. or R.D.		Braughing		Registration District and Sub-District		High Wych 134/1		See INSTRUCTIONS.			
ADDRESS.		SCHEDULE.		SURNAME AND OTHER NAMES.		O. V. S. P. L. or F.		M. of F.		BIRTH.		PERSONAL OCCUPATION.	
		No.	Sub No.							Day.		Year.	
1		2	3	4		5		6		7		8	
The Village		121	1	Blake,	Edward J.	M.	24	Aug	89	S	Labourer - Nurseryhand.		
Post Office High Wych		122	1	Wright,	William H.	M.	22	Aug	63	M.	Lab. Farm, Ashes		
			2	Wright,	Edith A. E.	F.	5	May	94	M.	Unpaid domestic duties		
The Village		123	1	Leah,	William G.	M.	18	Aug	12	M.	Shedding worker.		
			2	Leah,	Flora	F.	3	Jan	19	M.	Unpaid domestic duties		
This record is officially closed.													
The Village		124	4	Jacobs,	Baroud	M.	16	Oct	31	S	Do		
			1	Springham,	Marion	F.	12	July	77	S	Unpaid domestic duties		
			2	Springham,	Alice	F.	4	Nov	61	S	Unpaid domestic duties		
Mill End, Village		125	1	Tyler,	Mary J.	F.	3	June	75	M.	Unpaid domestic duties		
			2	Tyler,	John M.	F.	13	April	59	S	Unpaid domestic duties		
			3	Tyler,	Charles J.	M.	25	April	01	M.	Army Sapper - Royal Engineer 310 Coy. 7th Bn. P. B. No. 205879.		
			4	Tyler,	Ann L.	F.	7	Nov	09	M.	Unpaid domestic duties		
			5	Tyler,	John M.	F.	28	Jan	11	S	Unpaid domestic duties		
The Village		126	6	Tyler,	Blanche M.	F.	19	Aug	13	S	Art. Dresser		
			7	Tyler,	Edith A.	F.	31	Oct	92	S	Nurse		
Broad Oak Village		126	1	Dixon,	James	M.	9	June	79	M.	Motor garage proprietor		
			2	Dixon,	Alice M.	F.	1	Aug	78	M.	Unpaid domestic duties		
			3	Dixon,	Richard	M.	31	Aug	11	S	Motor garage proprietor		
This record is officially closed.													
This record is officially closed.													
Hornby, Village		128	1	Barney,	Albert E.	M.	18	July	02	M.	Transmission Engineer, School Training in Distribution Trade.		
			2	Barney,	Alice H.	F.	17	June	04	M.	Unpaid domestic duties		
			3	Barney,	Margery	F.	29	Dec	01	M.	Do		
			4	Barney,	Mary J.	F.	18	May	33	S	At School		
Longdon, Village		129	1	Wood,	John P.	F.	23	May	64	M.	Unpaid domestic duties		
			2	Wood,	Hilda K.	F.	8	May	92	M.	Teacher - retired		
			3	Wood,	Constance	F.	28	Feb	94	S	Teacher - retired		
The Punglow, Village		130	1	Wilde,	Albert G.	M.	3	Nov	12	M.	Unpaid domestic duties		
			2	Wilde,	Alice	F.	16	Nov	11	M.	Unpaid domestic duties		
This record is officially closed.													
This record is officially closed.													
This record is officially closed.													
This record is officially closed.													
High Wych, Village		131	1	Wiggins,	Arthur M.	M.	10	Oct	77	M.	Clerk in Holy Orders		
			2	Wiggins,	Edna E.	F.	9	July	88	M.	Unpaid domestic duties		
This record is officially closed.													
The Village		132	1	Ball,	Reginald H.	M.	20	Oct	90	M.	Landmaster, C.C. 66th		
			2	Ball,	Hilda M.	F.	1	June	82	M.	Unpaid domestic duties		
			3	Ball,	Mary A. E.	F.	24	Jan	16	S	Chartered typist - unemployed		
			4	Ball,	Richard L. H.	F.	15	May	21	S	Do - Not previously employed		
The Village		133	1	Bird,	Catherine	F.	20	Nov	12	S	Domestic Servant		
			2	Bird,	Albert	M.	31	Aug	68	M.	Lawyer - retired		
			3	Bird,	Theresa	F.	23	Nov	84	M.	Unpaid domestic duties		

You may wonder why the Register was undertaken in the first place. I did! The main reason must have been the introduction of identity cards and, once rationing was introduced in January 1940, to enable the authorities to issue ration books. Information from the Register was also used to administer conscription, the direction of labour, and to monitor and control the movement of the population caused by military mobilisation and mass evacuation. After the war the Register was used to help with the setting up of the NHS. Hence the changing of a number of women's names: by 1948 Violet Ward had become Violet Linsell and Iris Oakley had become Iris Puncher.

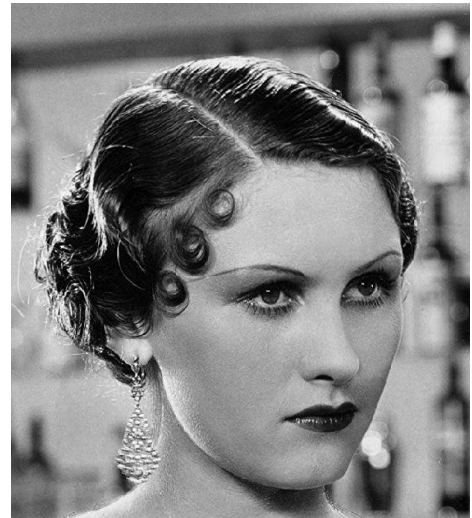


The National Archives website tells us that the 1939 Register was taken on 29 September 1939 only 4 weeks after Germany invaded Poland thus starting the Second World War. Enumerators went door to door then to collect information. In the case of High Wych this was done by a Mr. Frank Morgan who twelve years later became clerk to High Wych Parish Council. The information gathered by Frank Morgan gives us an interesting glimpse of what life was like in our village shortly after the outbreak of war.

Looking at the pages on the Register one immediately notices a great number of blacked out entries. 'This record is officially closed' it says on those. As we already mentioned records have to remain closed for 100 years. It seems however that these rules were not always adhered to. In fact some records are accessible that strictly speaking should not have been. There are a number of people on the register, children at the time, with birth dates from the early thirties.

Interestingly some of those children must have been amongst the 175 evacuee East End children that had arrived in High Wych only a few weeks before. Check an earlier High Wych History article for details! Eric Brandon, who stayed with Mr. and Mrs. Bush in Allens Green was obviously and East End evacuee child as was Joyce Betty Gold who stayed with Charles and Annie Franklin on High Wych Lane. The East End headmaster, a Mr. Reginald Ball was billeted with Mr. Huggins, the vicar.

304 Males and 360 Females were living in High Wych Parish at the time As now that included Allens Green. Leafing through the pages the impression you still get is of a static community still very much monopolised by agriculture and horticulture. Of the 304 males, 80 have jobs working on the land. Of the women 126 are mentioned as having 'domestic duties, not paid', in other words they were housewives. Five men were being mentioned as in military service; some young men may already have been away of course. With so many records blacked out the picture gets a bit obscured. Some young people on those records might already have been in employ.



Above you see two pictures from pre-war High Wych. On the left you see Percy Wilson Jr. and Ernie Blackaby. Young Percy, employed at the waterworks then, was the oldest son of Percy Wilson Sr. who tragically perished when a German warplane got rid of its last bombs over the fields next to Actons farm. Ernie Blackaby worked at Dixon's Garage and lived next to the Thatched Cottage in 1939 where filmstar Tamara Desni with her film producer husband Roland (Bill) Gillett lived. Desni, of German – Ukranian descent is pictured on the right. When Gillett and Desni got divorced it caused quite a scandal. Young lads such as Percy and Ernie must have been really impressed by such a glamorous lady!

With thanks to Peggy and Alison Holden, Janet van de Bilt and Ancestry co.uk. Contributions to and help with this continuing History of High Wych are (is) always welcome. Please get in touch. Contact me at theo@vandebilt.co.uk or phone me at 01279 725468