

The Aims of the Project

- To produce a book about the rise and fall of market gardening.
- To produce a DVD entitled “The Last Market Gardener” in order to capture market gardening on film before it’s too late.
- To transcribe the 1911 census for Badsey and Aldington and place it on the Badsey website (www.badsey.net).
- To produce an outside mural at Badsey First School, based on the occupations and land-use in the Parish at the time of the census 100 years ago.
- To create adequate storage facilities for the growing archive (market gardening tools, photographs, documents) which The Badsey Society is accumulating; to hold annual archive evenings when the contents of the archive will be on display and to allow more accessibility.
- To hold historical exhibitions at Badsey Flower Show, Evesham Asparagus Festival, Bretforton Fleece Inn Asparagus Auction.
- To hold a series of walks and talks and readings from some letters written by Badsey schoolchildren in 1933 about living in a market gardening community.

VISIT THE BADSEY SOCIETY STAND AT

*BADSEY FLOWER SHOW
Saturday 24th July, 1.30 – 5 pm*

*Display of market gardening implements, excerpts from the 1911 census,
profiles on market gardening families*



HOW YOU CAN HELP

- Are you descended from a market gardening family? If so, do you have any relevant photos or documents we can borrow?
- Let us know if you know of a possible place for an Archive/Museum.
- Let us know if you have any particular skills which may be of relevance to this project.
- Join the Badsey Society – only £2 per person.

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**THE BADSEY
SOCIETY**



THE LAST MARKET GARDENER NEWSLETTER 1 – JULY 2010

We are delighted to announce that The Badsey Society has been awarded a grant of £21,700 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for our project, “The Last Market Gardener”. From now until July 2012, we shall be producing a quarterly newsletter for the whole village to keep you informed of what is going on. Our first major event will be our market gardening exhibition at Badsey Flower Show, so please come and visit our stand. And if you are descended from a market gardening family and have photos or documents that we have not already seen, we would love to hear from you (see contact details at the end of the Newsletter).

The project focuses on a 140-year period in the history of Badsey and Aldington when market gardening was the main occupation in the parish. The project begins around 1871 when the first market gardener was recorded in the Badsey census and takes us up to the present day when there are very few people left in the village still involved with market gardening. The idea for this project came from two main directions. The late Tony Jerram, the first Chairman of The Badsey Society, was very involved with the asparagus and plum DVDs which we produced. It was he who came up with the working title of “The Last Market Gardener” for a third DVD. Unfortunately, Tony’s untimely death in 2008 put this on hold, but we now feel that we would like to bring his idea to fruition and, with the skills of Will Dallimore and his team, this should be possible. At the same time, Terry Sparrow has been doing research over the last few years about market gardening in the area and has begun writing a book on the subject.

With the recent publication of the 1911 census, we have been able to see that nearly 80% of households in the village were engaged in market gardening. A major focus of the project will be to look in more detail at who the market gardeners were and where they lived. It was boom-time in Badsey a hundred years ago, when many villagers were able to transform themselves from being an “Ag Lab” to a market gardener who was master of his own destiny; 80 new houses sprung up between 1901 and 1911, reflecting the new-found wealth. And also, with all the knowledge gained about the parish of 200 years ago through our Enclosure Map project, it seemed like a logical extension to study a later period in the parish’s history. As Will Dallimore, in Churchillian mode, said at the Enclosure Map End of Project evening, “Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning.” We have much still to learn about Badsey’s history, and we hope that you will join us on our voyage of discovery.

In each quarterly Newsletter we will update you on the project’s progress and profile a different market gardening family and a different new housing area.

THE KNIGHT FAMILY

For around 200 years, Knight was the commonest name in Badsey. At the time of the 1911 census, there were 14 households occupied by Knights, all engaged in market gardening. Here we can see Valentine Orson Knight, who lived with his wife and four children at Blenheim Cottage on Old Post Office Lane. On the back of the photo is the caption: "July 24th 1936, Asparagus bud over 6 feet long, 3 inches wide, 5 distinct tassels on the tip, grown by V Knight, Badsey". Valentine was then aged 74; he died the following year at Blenheim Cottage.

Valentine was the seventh generation in his family to live in Badsey, tracing his heritage back to Joseph Knight who moved to Aldington at the end of the 17th century, but Valentine was the first of his branch to become a market gardener. He was also the last of his branch of the Knight family to live in Badsey.



Also descended from this branch of the family was Joseph Knight (Valentine's second-cousin-once-removed). Joseph's grandfather had been a tenant farmer at Glebe Farm and had earned sufficient money to buy property in Badsey (cottages in Chapel Street), which were then passed down to his children and grandchildren. Joseph spent much of his adult life in Offenham and was a market gardener by 1881. In 1888 he bought an acre of land at Badsey and built a house, Ivy House, on the corner of Chapel Street and Badsey Fields Lane.

Charles Knight, who lived at Summerfield Cottage on Badsey Fields Lane, also traced his heritage back to Joseph Knight who came to Aldington in the 17th century. Charles' father, Richard, had begun life as an "Ag Lab" but was a market gardener by 1881; Charles himself had become an Ag Lab on leaving school but was then a market gardener by 1891. Charles' son, William, and wife lived just round the corner at Lindwood Villas. Then there were the cousins whose surname was Knight, but who were the children of Dinah Knight (née Malin) by her partner, George Hartwell.

Edwin Knight was the head of another branch of the family. Edwin lived at Silk Mill Cottages and had become a market gardener working on his own account by 1901; his eldest and youngest son worked for him. Another son, John Edwin, lived at Fair View Cottages on Brewers Lane and a son, George, lived at Belmont Terrace. Edwin's brother, William, lived at 31 Brewers Lane, and William's son, Thomas, lived in a new house on the High Street. They were all engaged in market gardening.

Finally, there was another family of Knights who had moved to Badsey from Stanton in the late 1880s. John Knight and his partner, Kate, and their large family lived in Field Cottage on Mill Lane. John was a market gardener but worked for another person. In subsequent years, yet more Knights moved to Badsey from neighbouring villages.

If you would like to find out more information about the Knights and other market gardening families, please visit our stand at Badsey Flower Show.

BOOM-TIME BADSEY

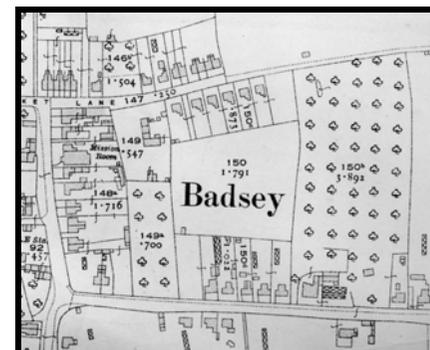
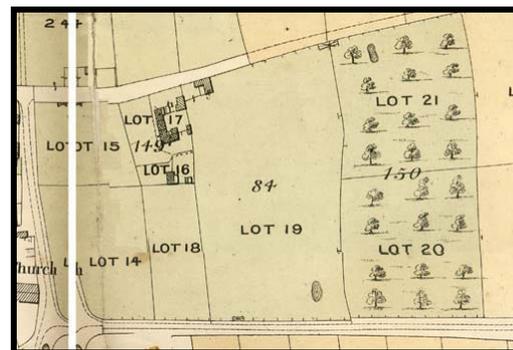
In 1871, when the first market gardener appeared on the scene in Badsey, the population of Badsey and Aldington was 634 (487 in Badsey and 147 in Aldington). Forty years later, the population had more than doubled, and many new houses had been built, the whole of the growth being seen in Badsey. Aldington's population remained almost the same (149), but Badsey now numbered 1,127 inhabitants. There were a number of factors which contributed to this increase, but an important sale took place in June 1890 which enabled more people to become landowners in Badsey. The map below shows Brewers Lane, Chapel Street and Badsey Fields Lane in 1890. The map to the right shows the picture just a few years later.

VALE OF EVESHAM.
BADSEY, Worcestershire.

Particulars, Plan, & Conditions
of Sale of
FREEHOLD
LANDS and HOUSES,
To be offered for Sale by Auction,
In 82 Lots as within, by

MR. E. G. RIGHTON

AT THE
CROWN HOTEL, EVESHAM,
ON
Monday, 30th June, 1890,
AT THREE FOR FOUR O'CLOCK, P.M., TO THE MINUTE.



Why was the land put up for sale? At the time of the 1812 Badsey Enclosure Act, one of the largest landowners was Thomas Byrd (1753-1835). By the end of the century, Thomas' grandson, William Byrd (1841-1902), had serious financial problems having over-stretched himself. The Byrd estate was entailed, which meant that it had to remain in the Byrd family and not be sold but, because of the financial problems, a disentailing assurance was enrolled in the High Court of Justice in 1889, which enabled the land to be sold rather than be passed on to William's eldest son. Money was still owing and William Smith, the Trustee, put all the land up for auction in small parcels on 30th June 1890. Within a few years, houses began appearing on the land. In the next three Newsletters, we shall look in more detail at the new housing developments along Badsey Fields Lane, Brewers Lane and Chapel Street.

Our Growing Archive

Thanks to you, the people of Badsey and Aldington, we have gradually been acquiring a number of artefacts and documents. But we desperately need someone where to store (and possibly to display) our growing archive. It is vitally important to preserve our heritage for the next generation. Do you have anywhere you would be prepared to give or to rent? If so, please contact Jane Neill at the contact number on the back.