



# Wheathampstead History Society

Bulletin no. 24, November 2019

## News and events

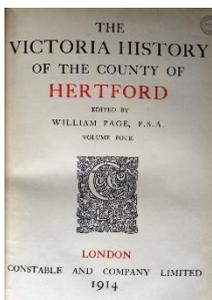
- Andy Chapman will give a talk about **Brocket Hall** to the Lemsford Local History Group at 7.30 on Thursday 21 November at the annexe to St John's Church in Lemsford.
- On Friday 29 November, Kris Lockyear will talk about **Verulamium: busy places and empty spaces** at the Welwyn Archaeological Society meeting (and AGM) at 7.45 pm at the United Reformed Church, Church Road, WGC (opposite Sainsbury's).
- The AGM of the Friends of St Helen's will be held at St Helen's School on Saturday 30 November at 2.30, followed at 3.30 by a talk by Brian Legg **Wildlife at Heartwood**.
- Our **Christmas party** will be on Wednesday 18 December at the Mead Hall. There will be a fish-and-chips supper and entertainment. Ruth will send an email asking you if you plan to come and to place your order.

## Notes and queries



We have recently acquired a full set of the *Victoria History of the County of Hertford*. Given to us by the Stockport County Library, there are four volumes plus an index volume. Volume Two is in its original binding.

The Victoria County History (known as the VCH) was founded in 1899 with the aim of writing the history of every county in England. The first volumes were published more than 100 years ago, some are in progress and the rest are still planned. The project is based at the Institute for Historical Research but is driven by local County Trusts and their members, most of whom are volunteers. The website at [www.british-history.ac.uk](http://www.british-history.ac.uk) has a powerful search facility for its enormous library of historic documents.



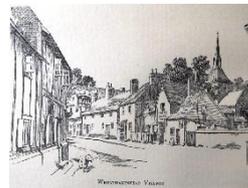
The VCH of Hertfordshire was completed in four volumes between 1902 and 1914, with the index following in 1923. Many different authors contributed and the entire History was edited by William Page. The Institute recognises

that these volumes need to be updated.

Volume One, about 400 pages, starts with a section about the natural history of the county,

including geology, climate, botany, zoology, birds and reptiles. This is followed by the early history (eg Early Man, Anglo-Saxon) including a transcript and discussion of the 1086 Domesday Book. The section on 'Sport' lists cricket and football but also staghounds, coursing, pugilism, cockfighting and bullbaiting.

Volume Two has 515 pages about schools, ancient earthworks (including Devil's Dyke), agriculture, and the topography of the hundreds



of Dacorum (including Wheathampstead) and Cashio. Each topography includes a description of each parish in the hundred in question, together with a history of each manor. Volume Three (510 pages) covers the topographies of five more hundreds and their parishes in the north and east of the county.

Volume Four has the topography of Edwinstree hundred together with an account of the Celts and Romans, the social and economic history of the county, its industries (including straw plaiting, hat and bonnet-making, paper-making, bell foundry), its ecclesiastical history and descriptions of its abbeys, priories and hospitals.

There are hundreds of line drawings, engravings and photographs in these books. Part of Volumes 2 and 4 and all of Volume 3 are online at [www.british-history.ac.uk/search/series/vch--herts](http://www.british-history.ac.uk/search/series/vch--herts)