BUCKLEBURY IN 1851

One of the on-going projects of the Bucklebury History Group is to seek information on people and places based on the census taken in the village in 1851 when the population was 1209. Some of the information that is being looked at in this period will be supported from Parish Church and Chapel records, public records for births, marriages and deaths and other categories such as Will & Probate, which all help in piecing together our understanding of the people who lived in our village in that period.

Sometimes research on individuals rewards us with some very interesting detail – take **Benjamin Butler** who was living with his wife at Westrop Green. Benjamin gave his age as 60 at the time of the census (born cir 1791) and his birth place as Frilsham. His wife, **Ann**, was aged 58 (born cir 1793), birth place given as Bucklebury.

The occupation of Benjamin was given as Pensioner, which is long before any state pension was in place and therefore this prompted some more research. This is what was found: The public records held at Kew record office revealed Benjamin Butler born FRILSOME, Berkshire (this is almost certainly a mis-spelling of Frilsham), served in the Royal Waggon Train and was discharged aged 25. No exact date given but records cover the period 1809-1817 and the records refer to the Royal Hospital, Chelsea, Soldiers' Service Documents. So Benjamin was a Chelsea Pensioner.

This again prompted more research. The Royal train controlled the supplies for the army and Military Transportation. The first unit formed was The Royal Wagon Corps, which was established in 1799 until 1802. This changed to the Royal Wagon Train in 1802, and this unit served during the Napoleonic Wars in the Peninsular and at Waterloo. It was disbanded in 1833 as part of peace time economics.

A further document held at Kew Record Office revealed information from a Muster Roll of 1812.

Private Benjamin Butler of the Royal Wagon Train, whose company was supporting the 13th Light Dragoons in Belgium and who were on the move on the 16th July 1812, but were engaged in battle by the 17th & 18th at Waterloo. The Battle of Waterloo, headed by The Duke of Wellington, took place on the 18th June 1812. Benjamin Butler was there and was awarded 'The Waterloo Medal' along with 39,009 other service men. This list is effectively a roll call of Wellington's army and is held at Kew R.O. London.

After Benjamin's discharge, probably about 1816, he is recorded in 1841 in The Slade, Bucklebury aged 50. It is difficult to determine accurately when he left Bucklebury or when he returned, or indeed what prompted him to do so. The 1841 census records, which are rather scant on information, say he was married to Anne.

Anne is **Anne Brunston** daughter of **John Brunston** and **Letitia Ford**. She was baptised at St Mary's Church, Bucklebury, 28th October 1792 and married Benjamin also at Bucklebury Church the 22nd July 1818, six years after the Battle of Waterloo. They had seven children between 1819 and 1834 all born in Bucklebury.

One of Benjamin's daughters, **Letitia Butler**, born in 1828 married **William Fisher** in 1867 at St Mary's, Bucklebury. He was a Bricklayer and this family continued to live in The Slade, Bucklebury.

No baptism record has been found for Benjamin in the 1790s. Butler baptisms have been found at Frilsham between 1715-1720 and marriages took place there in 1811 and 1820 but no Benjamins.