

February 2025

TADS Newsletter

Website - www.tadshistory.com

**Next Meeting - Monday 10th February 2025 at 8 pm, at
Baughurst and Heath End Village Hall, Heath End Road,
Baughurst RG26 5LU.**

‘Spitfire Production in Tadley’

by Richard Brown

Did they really make Spitfires in Tadley? Why was the Spitfire aeroplane so important to Britain? Why was it produced in sheds and garages spread around central Southern England? What was built in Hangar 5, Tadley? What happened to Hangar 5? Are there any Tadley Spitfires left?

Richard of TADS Project Group will tell us the intriguing tale that answers these questions.

(Everybody welcome - visitors £3.00)

If you wish to stop receiving the Newsletter please email Richard Brown or notify Carol Stevens or a Committee member.

*Comments, queries and suggestions to Richard Brown (0118) 9700100,
e-mail: richard@ilexind.plus.com or Carol Stevens (0118) 9701578*

www.tadshistory.com

Future TADS events:

Monday 10th March 2025 in Baughurst & Heath End Village Hall:

It's not all beer and skittles.

By Sue Ellis

TADS Last Meeting 13th January 2025

Basing House

by Alan Turton

Alan is a very well known local historian who has spoken to TADS several times. He was curator of Basing House for 20 years, so who better to speak on the subject.

There is known pre-history in the area including the Battle of Basing between the Saxons and Danes in 871 AD. It was after the Norman Conquest of 1066 that building on the site of Basing House began with a motte and bailey castle (a large earth mound with a wooden fort on top), and a nearby large house. In time the property passed by marriage to the Paulet family.

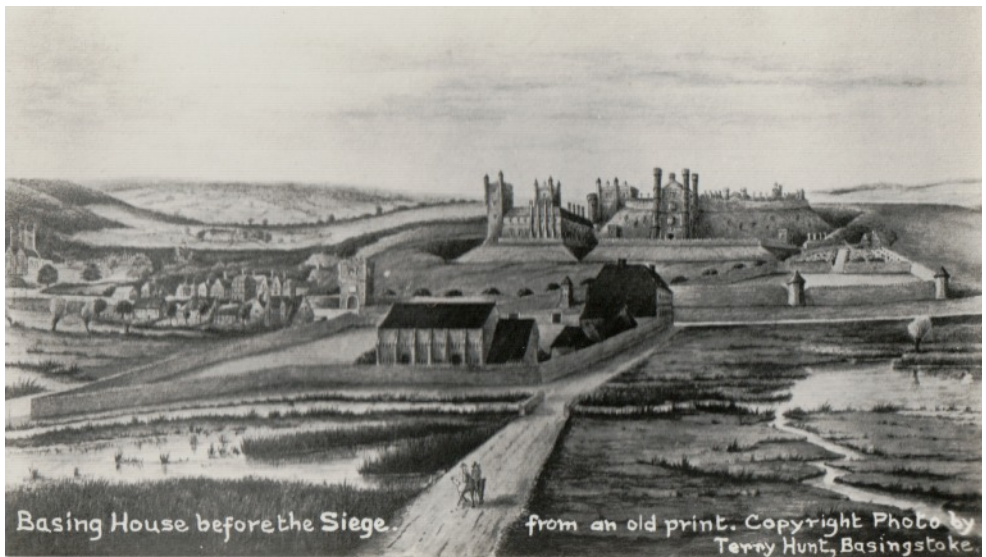
William Paulet, born 1477-85, and married in 1515 became an associate of Cardinal Wolsey and gained the Royal post of 'Keeper of the Green Cloth' responsible for organising royal journeys and assisting in the administration of the Royal Household. He built Basing House and was given a 'Licence to Crenellate' by King Henry VIII, the last such licence ever issued. The house was visited by Henry. The Great Barn of Basing, which still exists, was built in 1535/5 (dendro dated) the same time as the Mary Rose warship. Paulet also owned and developed Netley Abbey near Southampton and Thomas Cromwell's House in London.

William was also Governor of Portsmouth and witnessed the sinking of the Mary Rose in July 1545. He was so close to the King that he was one of three people trusted to sign documents on behalf of the King. Under the young King Edward VI he continued in the post of Lord Treasurer. With the accession of Queen Mary I, despite the change in religion back to Catholicism, William remained in favour and Mary and her husband Phillip of Spain spent their

honeymoon at Basing House. With the reversion to protestantism Queen Elizabeth I also visited Basing in 1560 and 1569. The house built by Paulet was massive and second in size only to Hampton Court. It had a well, the Great well, which was 60 ft deep and 15ft across.

William Paulet died in 1572, by which time he was Marquess of Winchester and was known as the 'Willow of Basing' for his ability to sway with the times and survive all the changes of politics and religions, where many others like Cardinal Wolsey and Thomas Cromwell had met very bloody ends. He is commemorated in Old Basing Church.

The last visit by Queen Elizabeth I was in 1601 when she arrived with 200 people and stayed 2 weeks. The French Ambassador also came and he had a retinue of 400 who had to stay at The Vyne. Royal visits were a good way of going broke! And the visits continued with King James I coming in 1603.



Camden's Britannia records that quite a lot of the house was pulled down in the early 1600s.

In 1642 the English Civil War broke out and John Paulet the 5th Marquess of Winchester took the Royalist side. The house was attacked by the Parliamentarians in 1643 but was not taken. It was further fortified during the war. In 1644 Basing House was held under siege for 55 days and ran short of supplies. The siege was relieved in September and again in October.

The last siege ended on 13th October 1645 it was attacked with big cannons and it fell to the besieging forces of Oliver Cromwell. About 100 people were killed and many taken prisoner. The Marquess was taken to the Tower of London but later released. Cromwell gave the house to the local people encouraging them to rob it of bricks, stone, and timber for building. Later some of the walls were pulled down and part of the site became a vineyard. It was mostly left as a ruin and after the Restoration of Charles II the family moved to the much smaller, newly-built, Hackwood House, south of Basingstoke. (Sounds like a cunning plan to avoid more royal visits). In the late 1700s the site was further degraded when the Basingstoke Canal was built through part of it. The canal bridge forms the modern entrance.

The ruins of the house are now in the care of Hampshire County Council and managed by the Hampshire Cultural Trust. Occasional excavation has revealed features that had long been hidden, such as a fireplace found in 2013.

Thank you Alan for a very interesting talk about a place close to your heart. But also for coming at about four hours notice after Roy Larkin, the scheduled speaker, was taken ill.

Richard Brown



A modern aerial view of the ruins of Basing House. The Great Barn is in the foreground. The main entrance is centre left.

TADS Archives

Thank you to those who made suggestions, these are being followed up, but so far we have not found a new home for the archives. In the interim we are going to have to use a commercial store at £119 per month. This is obviously not viable for the longer term. If anyone has any suggestions we can investigate please contact Carol or myself. Contact details are at the foot of page one.

A visit to Ufton Court

Carol is arranging a visit to grade one listed Elizabethan Ufton Court on Friday 21st February (Half-term for the occupants). At the moment we do not know if it will be morning or afternoon or how many will be able to go. If you are interested, places will be on a 'first come first served basis'. Please contact Carol or myself. Contact details are at the foot of page one.

Richard Brown



An historic photograph of Ufton court

What's on? Events which may be of interest.

Milestones Museum The website to buy admission tickets can be found at: <https://www.milestonesmuseum.org.uk/>

15-23 Feb. Play Days: old style **Games at the Museum** during half-term.

The Willis Museum and Sainsbury Gallery

15 – 23 Feb: **Nami's Trail** *A free half-term trail for children based on the art of Nami Ralph.*

23 Feb 2 – 3.15 pm Sunday afternoon talk – **Southampton Boy Evacuee** and WW2 Blitz by David Stiles. *David Stiles gives his personal account of growing up in wartime Southampton, the terror of the intensive bombing of the city and his experiences of evacuation to the nearby countryside. An eyewitness to Britain in wartime.* (Followed by tea or coffee and cake) £7.00 and must be booked. To book go on-line at www.hampshireculture.org.uk/willis-museum, or call in, or phone 01256 465902.

Friends of the Willis Museum (7.30pm at the museum, non-members £3.00 and please book by telephone on 01256 465902)

20 Feb **Stratfield Saye House** – a virtual tour by Richard Bennett & Brigadier Michael Aris. *This virtual tour of the house covers the history of the house and its development.*

Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society (7.30 at Church Cottage, Basingstoke)

3 March. **Bluestone, Bones and Bombs.** Excavations at Boles Barrow on Salisbury Plain 2024 by Richard Osgood MBE, Senior Archaeologist with the Ministry of Defence.

***TADS annual membership is £20 per person.
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