

Essex Journal

AUTUMN 2006

A REVIEW OF LOCAL HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY



NUNS AT BARKING ABBEY

R. MILLER CHRISTY

OLIVER CROMWELL AT SAFFRON WALDEN

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ESSEX JOURNAL

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EDITORIAL	36
OBITUARY – Miss Eileen Ludgate	37
NUNS AS PATRONS AND ARTISTS: cultural activity at Barking Abbey Terri Barnes	38
OLIVER CROMWELL and the Army Debates in Saffron Walden	42
R. MILLER CHRISTY: Essex Naturalist and Antiquary – Part III W. Raymond Powell	48
THE ERITH BROTHERS Robert Erith	53
BOOK REVIEWS	61
FORTHCOMING EVENTS and PLACES to VISIT	65

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The Chairman is Mr. Adrian Corder-Birch M.I.C.M., F.Inst.L.Ex., one of the Congress representatives, the Hon. Secretary is Mrs. Marie Wolfe and the Hon. Treasurer, Mrs. Geraldine Willden.

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Notes to contributors

Contributions and correspondence will be welcome and should be sent to the Editor. He does not guarantee that material will be published. He would be grateful if all material for the next issue could be with him not later than February 2007. Contributors are requested to limit their articles to some 2,500/3,000 words (other than by prior agreement with the Hon. Editor). Illustrations should, if possible, be camera-ready.

Editorial

In our last issue I wrote an anxious piece about the future of the *Essex Journal*. Our reading of the financial position, as it then was, gave quite a lot of justification for my 'doom and gloom', and I have been encouraged by the numerous expressions of concern, suggestions and – of course especially welcome – offers of financial support we have received as a consequence. It is pleasant to know that one's efforts are valued!

We – that is, our two active sponsors, the Friends of Historic Essex and the Essex Congress for Archaeology and History – have also had numerous discussions and, with the very generous financial help which they and others have given, we now see clear light ahead. We expect to recruit other bodies concerned with Essex history to strengthen our body of sponsors. With the help we have received and foresee receiving we shall be able to employ newer technology which will reduce our overheads. This will not be allowed in any way to reduce the standards of quality, both of content and of production, which we have set ourselves in the past – indeed we hope rather to improve the quality of the *Journal*.

We now look forward with great confidence to a renewed *Journal*: details of our plans have still to be finalised, but considerable progress has already been made. We foresee, hopefully in the course of 2007, that we shall be able to relaunch the renewed *Journal*. It will then, we trust, become evident that we have made a great step forward in its production and quality. The other thing we shall need, to go along hand in hand with this, will be a vigorous drive to increase the circulation

of this fine new product. This is vital to the *Journal*, both because it deserves to become better known among serious Essex readers and also in order that, without any diminution of standards, it may become a seriously attractive vehicle for advertisers.

★ ★ ★

A new face among Record Office staff is that of Stuart Warburton, who has taken over from Miriam Stead as Heritage Development Manager. He comes from Walsall, where he was, among other duties, the Curator of the much-admired New Walsall Museum. He will head the museum officers and the heritage education and outreach team, including responsibility for publications and marketing.

★ ★ ★

Heritage Sampford Project

By the end of July 2006 all the administrative and financial procedures of this Project, which Ken Neale explained in the Spring 2004 issue of the *Journal*, had been completed, and it was decided to bring it to its formal conclusion. In the course of its four years (2002-6) 163 fields in the Sampfords, comprising all but one of the farms in the villages, had been searched by 225 registered supporters and participants, 752 'volunteer' days had been worked and 28 Bulletins and other publications issued.

The project has laid the foundations for more rewarding archaeology in the villages and a plan for such a sequel is under consideration. It is planned to

publish a comprehensive final report in a high quality format in the course of 2007. This will be generously illustrated with photographs, maps and Martin Angel's excellent artwork. It will demonstrate clearly the success of the project in all its objectives. In the meanwhile interested readers can access the website, www.thi.org.uk, which contains all the bulletins, now considerably enhanced and expanded. These have also been placed in the National Archives (formerly the Public Record Office). The website will continue to be maintained by Intrade (Cambridge).

The participants would wish to place on record the debt they owe to their main supporters: above all to William Wall of the Countryside Agency and his staff for their courtesy, positive advice and encouragement, the Essex archaeologists led by Paul Gilman who gave excellent advice and professional guidance, Carolyn Wingfield of the Saffron Walden Museum and the other experts consulted on specific aspects. Thanks go also to the project officers, field workers, typists and other helpers for their hard work. All have helped to make the project the success it was. It has been described by others as 'a model, 'a phenomenon' and 'exemplary'. Coming, as these comments did, from people of authority and high professional standing, such tributes were a great encouragement. The local landowners and farmers were highly cooperative and helpful in all aspects of the fieldwork. Without that response the work could not have been carried out. The result was a tribute to a remarkable community effort in the Sampfords.

Flattening and Recording the Last Will

It was a case of the last will, and what a testament to the devotion of the Essex Record Office's team of volunteers as the final will in the Record Office's huge collection was finally recorded in August.

The wills project began in January 2002. The Record Office's total of 69,869 wills, ranging over many centuries were almost all in rolls, as originally put into record, and their details (Dr. Emmison's great work on those of Elizabeth 1st's reign apart) unrecorded. These wills are of great value to social and local historians, and above all to family historians, as Dr. Emmison's work has shown, but it was necessary to flatten and record them for this value to become accessible to those who could take advantage of them. With the financial help of the Friends of Historic Essex, and the practical work of a team including many members of the Friends, this task has now been completed, and family historians will be much more readily able to trace their Essex ancestors.

Fascinating items have been found during this work, including:

A will belonging to one Edward Jones dated 1759 and which is written in Essex dialect. Edward lived in Retel

(Writtle), left much of his estate to his navy and niece (nephew and niece), and entrusted his soul to all mercy god.

Braintree resident John Sparrowhawk's will from 1716, which included a revealing list of every item in his household, including 15 cheeses, 2 warming pans and 2 kinderkins (a kind of barrel).

Another where the writer appears to have become so bored with waiting to take down its terms that he or she drew a large doodle in the corner.

The volunteers have all enjoyed their experiences of working with the wills so much that they that they are now moving on to a new project recording the names of those who worked or travelled on ships registered in Essex ports in the 19th cent.

Celebrating the conclusion of the task, the County Council's Executive Member for Heritage said 'The volunteers involved in recording the many thousands of wills held at the Record Office have done an amazing and very worth-while job, which will reap rewards for those who study the county's history, and for those researching their family history at the Record Office. I congratulate them on their hard work'.

Obituary

Eileen M. Ludgate (1924-2006)

Eileen M. Ludgate, who died at the age of 81 on 19 July 2006, pioneered the serious study of history in the two villages, culminating in the publication of her two books, *Clavering & Langley: the first thousand years* (1996) and *Clavering & Langley: 1783-1983* (1983). Together these form a chronology of the villages to which she was devoted.

A former teacher and head of history at Skinners School, North London, Eileen and her sister Joan first bought their house in Clavering in 1958, and was quickly involved in village life, particularly Clavering Church. She joined the Parochial Church Council in 1971, became its secretary in 1980 and a churchwarden from 1990-2000. Her knowledge of history was put to good use when she raised the funds to save the important 17th century Barlee monuments in the church, and the ancient brasses.

In the early 1970s Robert (Bob) Wood staged a local history exhibition for the Essex Record Office exhibition in the village school, and so much interest was shown that Eileen agreed to form a group to study village history. She then organized the Clavering & Langley Local History Group for 19 years from 1976-94 and brought a succession of excellent speakers to the village, such as Oliver Rackham, Rowland Parker and Tom Williamson. There were also outings, workshops, summer lectures in church and other events.

Interweaved with this was the undertaking of a comprehensive research project at the E.R.O. and other repositories, interviewing elderly residents of the village,

taking photographs, recording gravestones, analyzing (with the help of the late Adrian Gibson) the many timber-framed houses and many other activities. Visiting the E.R.O. sometimes two or three times a week (a round trip of over 40 miles) all the wills were transcribed, the parish registers, the maps, deeds and many other documents and these were used for her books and a series of village history exhibitions.

Eileen served as vice-chairman of the Essex Archaeological & Historical Congress in 1982-3, and Chairman the following year. The 1983 AGM was held in Clavering with Adrian Gibson and Bob Wood giving lectures. Both became personal friends and continued to contribute to the gathering of village history. Through bringing Adrian to The Bury manor house, for instance, it was discovered that it was not 17th century as it looked, but actually a rare medieval aisled hall of national importance.

Not the least of Eileen's many qualities was the ability to teach and communicate a passion for history and, as Local History Recorder, to help others who came to her with innumerable queries. Two other history groups have built on the foundations of the former Local History Group in Clavering. Her contribution to our knowledge of Clavering history was huge and, coupled with her friendship and unending interest in people, both past and present, she has left to Clavering and Langley a lasting legacy.

Jacqueline Cooper

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Runner-up: Great Bentley

Class 4 (Ruggles-Brise Trophy)

Winner: Stondon Massey
Runner-up: Hempstead

Class 5 (Braybrooke Trophy)

Winner: Langley
Runner-up: Foulness Island

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Great Tey	Theydon Bois
Kelvedon	White Notley/Faulkbourne
Manningtree	Writtle

Best New Entries

Steeple Bumpstead



Imaginative Reconstruction of Barking Abbey as it was in the 15th cent. by Sir Charles Nicholson Bt.
(courtesy of London Borough of Barking and Dagenham).

Nuns as Patrons and Artists: cultural activity at Barking Abbey

By Terri Barnes

*The essence of communal life is regularity,
but no human being can subsist without
a further ingredient of variety.¹*

It has long been known that art was produced in monasteries, particularly during the Middle Ages. The atmosphere of the monastery and, in the case of Barking, its abbey church, could be rich sources for artistic influence. But with so much time spent praying and running the household, the regular (and what at times all but the most spiritual must have felt excruciatingly monotonous) life begs the question: did the nuns at Barking Abbey pursue any sort of cultural or artistic activities in their precious moments of leisure? And if so, how did they perceive those activities? Surely, the idea of occupying one's self in creative activities purely for enjoyment is a more recent phenomenon. But did this have to mean the vestments nuns embroidered or books they read were viewed purely as necessary, even mundane, elements in their lives? Could they not have found joy in those objects or tasks? Can we really believe that the nun who possessed a precious Book of Hours did not also covet it as an object of beauty, even though its main purpose was to aid in her daily devotions? Did the cloistered nuns of the middle ages conceive of a life enriched by art the way we do now? Answers to such questions are difficult to find at Barking Abbey because so little evidence about the nuns' personal lives survives. However, by examining the evidence for cultural activities and objects there, it is possible to propose what those things meant to its nuns.

In Pre-Reformation England, monastery churches were adorned with stained glass, textiles, painted designs, illuminated manuscripts, sculptures, and metalwork. Visiting even the relatively few of their churches and other buildings which survive it is difficult for visitors to appreciate just how ornate church interiors were, particularly Benedictine houses like Barking Abbey.² After the Reformation, Roger Martyn, a Suffolk churchwarden, lamented in a detailed description the decoration that had been lost from his parish church. It had contained gilded images of Christ's Passion and the Holy Trinity, various paintings of saints and apostles, and gold stars on the ceiling.³ Martyn's description is important for understanding how an English parish church was decorated and also how crucial that ornament was to the religious experience of its parishioners. If such decoration existed in a parish church, we can only imagine how beautiful the interior of an important and wealthy abbey church like Barking would have been, and how influential it was in the lives and devotions of its nuns.

Decorating spaces and objects of worship has a long tradition in the Christian faith. The early Christians used art in the catacombs in Rome to glorify Christ and venerate their dead. By the later Middle Ages, Gothic cathedrals had become vast spaces with interior heights that soared toward the heavens and were filled with sculpture, paintings, and multi-coloured light emanating from stained glass windows. The church interior represented a slice of heaven on earth. The images

depicted in its sculptures, paintings, and windows helped educate the faithful in Christ's life and teachings, encouraging emulation. Patrons also expressed piety and charity through church adornment. A family chapel built into a church, or money given for a stained glass window reminded parishioners of the convictions of the donor's faith and their generosity in the name of God. Though writers like Ruskin no doubt exaggerated this, craftsmen involved in building the churches probably viewed their labour as an expression of faith. The importance of expressing devotion by beautifying and maintaining holy spaces and objects cannot be overstated, and it is reasonable to assume those living the monastic life would have felt likewise: this is shown by the way in which the early austerity of such orders as the Cistercians was not sustained.

In female-only monasteries throughout Europe, cultural activities such as needlework, weaving, painting, reading, and copying devotional books were common.⁴ Writing and copying was widely practiced by nuns, and indeed there were nuns at Barking Abbey who translated Latin texts into vernacular works. In the late-twelfth century, Clemence translated a *Life of St. Catherine of Alexandria* from Latin into French verse, and in the 1160s an anonymous nun at Barking translated Aelred of Rievaulx's *Life of St. Edward the Confessor* from Latin into Anglo-Norman verse.⁵ But it was imagery, whether in the form of manuscript illuminations, textiles, stained glass, paintings, or sculptures that cloistered women saw as crucial to aspects of their devotional life and practice. Pilgrimages, and the indulgences gained through them, were important elements in Catholic worship, but cloistered nuns were not allowed to journey outside convent walls. They therefore relied on visual imagery within their monastery and church to aid them in this practice.⁶

Though the imagery took many forms, the connection between women and the textile arts is probably the oldest. No textiles produced at Barking Abbey have survived, but interesting archaeological evidence for textile production in the abbey's early period has been uncovered. During an excavation of the abbey site in the mid-1980s, artifacts associated with spinning were uncovered such as spindle whorls of bone, clay, and glass, loom weights, bone rods for a vertical loom, pins of various sizes, and numerous bone combs. Fragments of gold thread were also found, probably used for making ecclesiastic garments.⁷ Winifrid Sturman has suggested there is no evidence the nuns at Barking made their own vestments, arguing they purchased them instead.⁸ However, her study was completed twenty-five years before the recent excavations, so she had no way of addressing this new evidence that textile arts were practiced at Barking at an apparently luxurious level. The abbey's account book includes entries for both purchase of material and payments made for repair of vestments, so perhaps nuns were both creating and mending them as needed.⁹

Also, in 1990, a glass furnace and very high quality finished glass pieces were uncovered dating to the abbey's Anglo-Saxon period. Most of the remnants

found were reticello glass rods, which were made by twisting coloured glass rods together and used to decorate glass vessels. Eighty-one rods were combined to create the finest surviving fragment.¹⁰ Kenneth MacGowan, in his article on the dig, cautions that because no slag (waste product from glass manufacture) was found at the site, it cannot be assumed glass was being made there. But he adds there is no doubt glass was being worked into art objects at or near Barking Abbey. Though these objects were discovered on land that was part of the abbey's original land grant, they may have come from workshops that supplied the abbey, rather than shops in which the abbey's nuns worked, so the question of their direct involvement remains open.¹¹ Nonetheless, they are interesting remnants of life in the abbey community, and certainly point to the fact that objects of beauty were either made or in use there. If nuns did not take part in actual production, it is certainly possible they had responsibility for overseeing the workshops on abbey grounds, thus ensuring the objects they required were produced. Instead of being artists, the nuns may have acted as patrons.

Dramatic procession could also be seen as a cultural outlet, for it had become an important part of civic and religious celebrations by the fifteenth century. In monasteries there were processions of many types: liturgical, funereal, celebratory, and for greeting the bishop.¹² Evidence of Barking Abbey's Easter procession of the Harrowing of Hell survives in its *Ordinale and Customary*.¹³ The fourteenth-century abbess Lady Katherine de Sutton was alarmed at the boredom and depression overtaking her nuns.¹⁴ Perhaps it was caused by the monotonous routine of religious life, but it may have been worsened by the Black Death which had recently ravaged England, killing many monks and nuns. To combat this melancholia, Katherine commissioned the Harrowing of Hell. It was based on the dramatic account in *Matthew 27* vv. 51-3, and the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, where Christ breaks down the gates of hell to free prophets and patriarchs from Satan.¹⁵ The procession started in the abbey church, with the abbess, nuns, and the clergy solemnly proceeding from their choir stalls toward the westwork to a side chapel. Everyone carried an unlit candle symbolising burial and exorcism.¹⁶ The priest then went to the chapel with two deacons carrying a cross and censer, followed by more priests and two boys holding lighted candles. As they approached the chapel door, the antiphon *Tollite portas* (Raise the gates) was spoken three times from inside the chapel, and the priest and entire convent began to sing for the souls' release from hell. After cries for help, the next antiphon signalled the souls had been released. The group sang as they left the chapel and proceeded through the choir to the sepulchre with palms and candles, symbolising their victory over Satan.¹⁷ The procession's progress from a cramped, quiet, and dark chapel to a brightly candle-lit church with voices lifting to the heavens must have been something to behold and a moving experience that lifted the spirits of all involved.

Singing and music were also important cultural activities for nuns at Barking Abbey. Evidence for this is found in the surviving hymnary with music from the late-fifteenth century, which includes three hymns for Saint Ethelburga, Barking's first abbess, and Saint Erkenwald, the abbey's founder, and also in the organ the nuns purchased from a London contractor in 1519.¹⁸ The importance of singing at Barking is reflected

in the fact that the abbey had an office of precentrix. The nun who was precentrix helped to care for the abbey's religious ornament and vestments, but more importantly she supervised the nuns who sang in the choir. Barking had a special group of nuns who performed choral duties while the rest of the household was engaged in daily chores.¹⁹ This was a common practice among the Benedictines, who viewed their choral duties as important to their devotional practices. Those nuns with an ear for music no doubt found them enjoyable as well. At the very least, they could take comfort in the fact that they were obeying Saint Benedict's mandate to sing wisely and intently in the service of God, for singing was considered a form of prayer and an expression of reverence toward God.²⁰

Monastic cultural activity, however, does not have to be limited to artwork, drama, or music. If we accept that certain objects and activities in life may provide a sense of enrichment, then learning and the creation or possession of books certainly must be included. Monasteries in Britain had a long history of learning and manuscript production; however, those traditions began to decline in the nunneries when Gregorian reforms were implemented in the late-eleventh century. By the early 1400s in many English nunneries, particularly the smaller houses, the nuns had stopped using Latin and French due to lack of knowledge. But this was not necessarily the case at Barking Abbey. It attracted noble and aristocratic women for most of its history, so the odds were higher that its nuns had more education than those in smaller, poorer houses.²¹ Barking's nuns may have been exceptional in their acquisition and use of books in Latin almost to its dissolution in 1539.²² Additionally, Saint Aldhelm attested to the intellectual abilities of Barking's nuns when he wrote *De Virginitate* for them in a complex Latin, which he knew they could read because he provided Old English or more understandable Latin translations only for the most difficult words. He wrote that he hoped the treatise would be pleasing to their intelligence. The nuns corresponded with him in what Aldhelm referred to as "extremely rich verbal eloquence." He further praised their learning, stating that their wisdom enabled them to scrutinise ancient laws, to examine the Gospels, the stories of chroniclers, the rules of grammarians, and the rules of metrics.²³

The intellectual sophistication of Barking Abbey nuns leads us to the largest amount of surviving evidence of cultural objects or activities there – its collection of manuscripts and books. A key element in the daily life of a Benedictine nun was the amount of time the Rule required her to spend reading.²⁴ The Rule also charged the two eldest sisters with ensuring all who were supposed to be engaged in their daily reading were doing so. Those who were not were rebuked and if caught twice, punished.²⁵ Saint Benedict must have felt strongly that reading was an activity that enriched the soul. Depending on the time of year, nuns read for two to three hours each morning, with more time spent on Sundays.²⁶ Furthermore, after meals when the nuns were required to retire to their beds and lie quietly, they could choose to read so long as it did not bother others.²⁷ Choosing to read certainly indicates they found it enjoyable. Evidence for the importance of reading is also found in Barking Abbey's librarian (an office not found in most nunneries) and annual system of book lending. On the first Sunday in Lent the librarian spread all the abbey's books on a carpet in the chapter house. She then

read out the names of each nun and the book they had borrowed the previous year. If the book had been read completely, the nun returned it and received another. If not, she received a penance, for the Rule required the book to have been read from start to finish before its return to the abbey's library.²⁸ Clearly, in a Benedictine nunnery, books mattered.

David Bell has recently catalogued Barking Abbey's surviving library, providing us with a list of fifteen manuscripts and twenty-nine books.²⁹ Mary Erler has further supplemented Bell's list with an additional manuscript.³⁰ These surviving texts probably represent only a fraction of the library's original size.³¹ We are fortunate to have so many extant texts for Barking, particularly those with nuns' inscriptions (indicating pride of ownership), for they help us to understand what the nuns were reading and perhaps copying. However, the list of books is not without problems. It comes down to us from William Pownsett, who was the abbey's final steward from 1537 to 1539. It appears in his personal inventory, taken after his death in 1554, as *Certainne bookes yn the Abbey of Barkynge*. His executor accounted for them as "Also soche bookis as the testator lefte in thabbey of Barkynge at his deathe."³² These headings raise the question: Were the books Pownsett's or the abbey's? As the abbey's last steward Pownsett certainly could have taken the nuns' books to save them from being looted or destroyed at the dissolution. But he could not have left the books *in* the abbey at his death, because by then the abbey had been destroyed for thirteen years.³³ One of the surviving manuscripts is the abbey's *Ordinale and Customary*, which had been codified by the abbess Sibyl de Felton and given to the abbey in 1404. It is inscribed with her provision that the book be used by future abbesses for guidance in the abbey's daily administration.³⁴ No doubt this book was intended for, and probably never left, the abbey's library. A copy of *The Cleansing of Man's Soul* and various manuscripts in French are also inscribed as belonging to Sibyl Felton. Another manuscript is inscribed in two places as belonging to Martha Fabyan, who was among the last nuns pensioned at the dissolution.³⁵ It seems highly unlikely they would have inscribed books of Pownsett's as their own. Among the books were also legal treatises that have intrigued historians, but it must be remembered that Barking Abbey was a large and wealthy landholder frequently involved in legal disputes with tenants. The abbesses and their stewards would certainly have needed, and not infrequently, to consider matters of law and to refer to pertinent legal authorities.

Barking Abbey also possessed various books recounting saints' lives (*vitae*), including that of the first abbess, Ethelburga. It is often through mention of Ethelburga and/or her immediate successors, Saints Hildelitha and Wulfilda, in the text or inscriptions that books can be identified as having belonged to Barking Abbey, since these female saints were not widely venerated throughout England, but more characteristically in Essex.³⁶ The remaining devotional texts include works from Augustine, Jerome, and Erasmus, and a book on the lives of the desert fathers, which was a staple in monastic reading and considered particularly appropriate for women.³⁷ There was a Latin Bible and an English Bible (probably Wycliffite), which the Crown had given the nuns permission to use in the early-fifteenth century. This allowance was made for the larger, more educated nunneries to aid in the nuns' understanding of the Vulgate.³⁸ Finally, among the

printed books on the list are some interesting non-religious works which were fairly common in monastic libraries, such as writings by Virgil, Cicero, and Aristotle. Also included was a copy of Aesop's *Fables*, and although it does not survive, a copy of Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* was recorded as having been in the abbey collection in the sixteenth century.³⁹ In addition to these works, it also seems reasonable to suggest the nuns may have owned instructional texts as well, possibly ranging in subject matter from cooking to medicine, for Saint Benedict's instructions in his Rule would have made those texts practical and necessary.

A large, varied library at Barking Abbey also seems probable when we remember that the nuns generally came from families wealthy enough to own books. But whatever the library's scope, the important point is that books and manuscripts were extremely important cultural objects that were frequently circulated between the laity and the religious, particularly by women.⁴⁰ The fact that the nuns cared for and preserved them over centuries so that subsequent sisters could benefit from and appreciate them, is a significant indicator of just how precious they were. The texts instructed and enriched the generations of nuns who read, copied, and circulated them. The Rule is clear regarding the importance of reading for elevating the soul, and the nuns at Barking, with so many books to choose from, could rest assured they were doing their part to live up to Saint Benedict's ideal.

Though art objects could run the risk of conflicting with Benedict's prohibition of personal possessions, most nuns probably viewed the items discussed here as communal property that was necessary to their monastic life and that benefited all the sisters in the house.⁴¹ Books and images were read as aids to devotion, vestments were embroidered for the Mass, decorative glass was spun into sacred vessels, and hymns were sung as a form of prayer. Clearly, each object or activity had its own special purpose. Creating, owning, or enjoying these items did not jeopardise adherence to their Rule, but rather was necessary for fulfilling their religious obligations. The nuns at Barking Abbey likely acknowledged the beauty of art objects and cultural activities, but their appreciation for and sense of fulfilment from them was born out of reverence for God and their faith, and not out of the objects or acts themselves. To them, creativity was not dangerous but an act of worship in itself.

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 10. MacGowan, p.178.
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 12. Penelope D. Johnson, *Equal in Monastic Profession: Religious Women in Medieval France* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p.140.
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 14. Faulkner, p.141; Power, *Medieval English Nunneries*, pp.293-4.
 15. *The Gospel of Nicodemus* is one of the apocryphal gospels of early Christianity. The term *Gospel of Nicodemus* is of medieval origin. The Harrowing of Hell play performed at Barking is based on the third part of the gospel only. See Young, *The Drama of the Medieval Church*, vol. I, p.149. See also George J. Reid, *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, vol. I, "Acta Pilati", 15 September 2003, <<http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/01111b.htm>>.
 16. Faulkner, p.146.
 17. Faulkner, pp.148-9.
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 24. See Fox's translation printed in Collet, pp.140-2.
 25. See Fox's translation printed in Collet, p.142.
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 33. R. Sharpe, et al, p.14.
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 37. Erler, p.126.
 38. Margaret Deanesly, *The Lollard Bible and Other Medieval Biblical Versions* (Cambridge: University Press, 1920, reprinted 1966), chapter thirteen, especially pp.334-7; Sturman pp.287-8. Barking's English Bible does not appear in David Bell's research as a surviving text. Therefore, it may not have survived the dissolution, has been lost, or has yet to be uncovered.
 39. Barbara Newman, "The *Cattes Tale*: A Chaucer Apocryphon," *The Chaucer Review* 26:4 (1992), pp.411-13.
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 41. See chapter thirty-three of the Rule regarding property in Fox's translation printed in Collet, p.128.

Oliver Cromwell and the Army Debates in Saffron Walden¹

By Jeremy Collingwood

Introduction

Over the doorway of the Sun Inn in Church Street a plaque records that Oliver Cromwell used the 14th century Old Sun Inn as his headquarters in 1647. This is misleading if not erroneous. Sir Thomas Fairfax was the Commander in Chief of the New Model Army. It is possible that Fairfax based himself in the Sun Inn when the Army was quartered in and around Saffron Walden during the first half of 1647. We know that Cromwell was one of the Parliamentary Commissioners sent to Saffron Walden to try to resolve the growing disaffection within the Army and its increasing alienation from the Presbyterian majority in the House of Commons. Fairfax entertained Cromwell and his fellow commissioners, so that there may well be substance to the tradition that Cromwell did in fact stay in the Sun Inn. But Cromwell came not to fight a war but to stem a potential mutiny.

The New Model Army

The New Model Army was formed in April and May 1645 and consisted of ten cavalry regiments each with

six hundred men, twelve foot regiments of twelve hundred men each and a regiment of one thousand dragoons, that is mounted infantry armed with muskets. The total force consisted of over 21,000 men. The Army was not disbanded at the end of the First Civil War in 1646, partly out of fear of intervention from Scotland, and partly because Parliament had unfinished business to put down rebellion in Ireland. Fairfax had moved the Army from Nottingham because he claimed that it had run out of provisions in that area. However the Army was not particularly welcome in Essex. On 11th March 1647, certain gentlemen of Essex petitioned the House of Commons objecting to the quartering of soldiers in the County, reminding Parliament that when the young men of Essex had enlisted for military service, Essex had been promised exemption from the billeting and quartering of soldiers. Parliament was so nervous about the loyalty of its Army that Fairfax was commanded not to approach within 25 miles of the Capital.

By May 1647 the Army was in a state of serious discontent over pay. In 1646 soldiers in York had mutinied pointing cocked pistols to the chest of

Major-General Poyntz and shouting, 'Money, money, money.' The situation had deteriorated to the point where infantry regiments were owed eighteen weeks arrears of pay and some cavalry regiments forty-three weeks. It was calculated that a total of £300,000 was owing to the New Model Army.¹

Cromwell was unwell at the beginning of 1647. He appears to have been disillusioned with Parliament. As a soldier he felt that the achievements of the Army were being short-changed. As an Independent in religion, who believed strongly in freedom of conscience², he distrusted the parliamentary majority and feared that it was moving towards the restoration of the King with Presbyterianism as the state religion. 'What had been a glorious outing of crusaders in the cause of the Lord had now relapsed into something much more like a pack of hounds squabbling over the meat of power'.³

Meeting on 21st March 1647

On 21st March 1647 Parliamentary Commissioners had met officers at Saffron Walden to encourage recruitment for the Irish campaign. The intention was to raise an Army of some 12,600 men for Ireland, to keep a garrison force in England, and to disband the remainder of the New Model Army. But the officers responded with demands for answers on future pay, past arrears and indemnity for past actions. The common soldiers, increasingly radicalised by militant elements inspired by John Lilburne and his Leveller movement, pressed their own demands for payment of arrears, exemption from future service, indemnities for past service and compensation for the widows and orphans of servicemen. In those days such demands by the common soldiery smacked of revolution, and even Cromwell, fearing mutiny, was alarmed. He intervened in the Commons and placing his hand on his heart swore that the Army would consent to disbandment if its legitimate demands were met. Lilburne, who was held prisoner in the Tower, but remained in active contact with the Army, was enraged and accused Cromwell of thwarting the soldiers' petition and of being led astray by Sir Thomas Vane and Oliver St. John (Cromwell's cousin) those 'two unworthy earthworms'.⁴

Parliament reacted angrily to the petition by accepting a resolution from Denzil Holles, a leader of the Presbyterians, that the soldiers' petition tended to put the army into a distemper and mutiny, and that those who continued to promote the petition would be treated as enemies of the state and disturbers of the public peace. Sir Philip Skippon was elected as Field-Marshal of the Army in Ireland and Sir Edward Massey as Lieutenant-General of Horse. Cromwell was not included, as the intention was to place the Army firmly under Presbyterian control. The distrust and militancy in the Army can be judged from a document dated Walden 4th May 1647 and believed to have been written by Edward Sexby, a soldier elected by his regiment as an Agitator (a term which then hardly bore its present significance) or Agent, and one in regular contact with John Lilburne. Sexby speaks of the 'mutuall provocations and Declarations in Parliament put forth to engage us in bloud, and for ought wee yet to entangle us in stronger chains, and to clapp upon our necks heavier yokes of servitude'.⁵ Accordingly the Army should not be disbanded until it had been fully and properly paid and an Act of indemnity passed by Parliament. At the same time some officers and regiments were making clear that

under no circumstances would they consider service in Ireland.

In a paper entitled *An Apology of all the private soldiers in Sir Thomas Fairfax his army to their commission officers*, the soldiers called on the officers to stand by them in resisting Parliament's demands:

The Lord put a spirit of courage into your hearts that you may stand fast in your integrity that you have manifested to us your soldiers; and we do declare to you that if any of you shall not, he shall be marked with a brand of infamy for ever, as a traytor to his country and an enemy to this Armie ... We have been quiet and peaceable in obeying all orders and commands, yet now we have just cause to tell you, if we be not relieved of our grievances, wee shall be forced to that, which we pray God to divert, and keep your and our hearts upright.⁶

Meeting on 15th April

On 15th April Parliament's new proposals were presented to 200 officers of the Army gathered in St. Mary's Church, Saffron Walden. They made clear their objections to the change in command and cried out to the commissioners, 'All! All! Fairfax and Cromwell and all we go.' The next day they signed a petition to the same effect. The Army knew that it had military might on its side, and that so long as it resisted disbandment it could press its other demands on Parliament. Parliament also recognised that, distrustful as it was of the intentions of the Army, it would have to negotiate, and that only Cromwell had the influence to bring a resolution of the impasse. Accordingly Cromwell, who had even considered going abroad to serve with the army of the Protestant Elector Palatine, was recalled to Parliamentary service. His fellow commissioners were parliamentarians with military experience. They were Henry Ireton (who was married to Cromwell's daughter, Bridget), Charles Fleetwood (who later married Bridget on the death of Ireton) and Major-General Skippon.

On arrival in Saffron Walden the Commissioners sent out the following letter to the colonels and chief officers of the respective regiments:

Sir,
Wee desire you upon receipt hereof forthwith to reparaire hither your selfe, with some Commission Officer of every Troope in your Regiment, to give unto us the best accompt you can concerning the present temper and disposition of the Regiment, in relation to such discontentes reported to be among the Souldiers; and to receive from us an accompt of such things as wee are appointed by the honourable House of Commons to impart to the Army, concerning the care of that House for their Indempnity and Arrears; you are with the said Officers to be here with as much speed as possibly you may, but at farthest faile not to be here on Thursday next.

We remaine

Your assured friends

P. Skippon.

Oliver Cromwell.

H. Ireton.

Walden, May 3d, 1647.⁷

That night there was great excitement in Saffron Walden about a possible surprise attack. Lieutenant-Colonel Jubbes brought intelligence that Colonel Middleton of the Auxiliaries had given orders to the captains under his command to rise against the Army



Fig. 1. Reproduction of Saffron Walden townscape before rebuilding of the church spire in the 19th cent. (courtesy of E.R.O.).

that same night. Jubbes put his own regiment on the alert. Skippon, Cromwell and Ireton came together and sat up late into the night. A News Letter from Saffron Walden reported that Captain John Reynolds of Cromwell's own cavalry regiment 'came in and informed them that the horse kept guards, feareing they should be surpriz'd; the soldiers in the Towne were much nettled at the news ... and every man provided powder and bullett and kept guards with their swords drawn at the street corners, and durst not be knowne what was the reason they stood there: the other promised not to go to bed that night, but this day all is very still and quiet.⁸

Meetings on 6th and 7th May

When the meeting of officers was convened in St. Mary's Church on Thursday, 6th May, there was a poor attendance and the meeting was deferred till the next day. On Friday 7th May, some 30 cavalry officers and some 150 officers of foot regiments were present. Skippon opened the proceedings by stating that the Commissioners had come down from London to 'quiet the distempers' of the Army. After the various votes of the Commons had been read and copies handed out for each regiment, Skippon continued by stressing the importance of the Irish campaign. He emphasised that

he himself would have preferred not to go to Ireland, but in accepting the command he hoped to encourage officers and soldiers to enlist. Colonel Hammond responded by saying that they would as freely go with Skippon as any officer, but that their preference was for Fairfax and Cromwell. Then Colonel Butler demanded to know whether Parliament was prepared to increase its offer of six weeks' arrears of pay. The Commissioners replied that they were unable to give any assurances about pay.

Other officers wanted to know what Parliament meant by 'distempers' in the Army. When the Commissioners stated that their brief required them to report to Parliament on the particular grievances of the different regiments, the officers asked for time to consult with the men. The Commissioners then decided to adjourn the meeting for eight days⁹ to allow this consultation. In the meantime they declared that they would remain in Saffron Walden and would be available to receive reports from any regiments who were ready before the next meeting. Before the meeting broke up Captain John Clarke of Colonel Whalley's regiment asked that a petition signed by five officers of the regiment should be read out. The petition made it clear that, contrary to printed reports that the regiment had volunteered for service in Ireland, this was untrue and not their intention. As the petition was addressed to the Commissioners, they declined to have it read out

Meeting on 15th May

A further meeting was convened at Saffron Walden Church on Saturday 15th May, 1647. Major-General Skippon, who took the chair, opened the meeting with these words:

Gentlemen, Fellow Souldiers and Christian Friends,
Wee are heere according to appointment at our last meeting in this place, to receive from you an accompt how you have improved your utmost endeavours with your severall Regiments and Companies, to make them sencible of the care of the Parliament for them expressed in those votes that you have received from our hands concerning indempnity, arreares, and auditing of your accompts; and also to receive an accompt from you how you finde the temper of your severall Regiments, and this is the businesse for which wee are mett together at this time; and wee hope [you] have so Christian like, so judiciously, soe impartially, soe faithfully discharged your duties, as wee shall receive a very good accompt from you in relation to these things.¹⁰

Lieutenant-General Cromwell then said, that what 'the Major General exprest was the sence of them all'. Colonel Whalley at this point spoke up to say that the common soldiers requested an adjournment of some three to four hours to confer together and one of the troopers who was present in the Church said, 'They are not all the grievances of the Souldiers; they desire soe much time before they returne that they may answer other grievances'. After the Commissioners had put their heads together Skippon said that they were prepared to allow an adjournment, but he urged all speed, told the soldiers to make their representations through their officers, and added that 'you will soe represent and soe adjutate thinges as may become your Christian profession, and as may become sober minded men, as may become servants to the publick.'¹¹

And so the debate continued. Much of the discussion centred around procedure, as most officers had brought written reports. When a trooper presented a return from his regiment, Colonel Sheffelde protested that the meeting was one for officers, but Skippon thought it expedient to receive the return. Skippon was prepared to allow a short adjournment to five o'clock on the following afternoon. But he then produced a letter just received from the Earl of Manchester sitting as Speaker of the House of Lords in Derby House. The letter stated that the House of Commons had that very day passed an Act of Indemnity 'large and full', and had also increased the amount of arrears payable by a fortnight both to those being disbanded and those volunteering for Ireland.

Meeting on 16th May

When the meeting reconvened in St. Mary's on Sunday 16th May, Skippon reminded it of its purpose and re-iterated the importance of regiments committing themselves for service in Ireland. 'I pray that there may be an orderly proceeding amongst you in what you have to doe or say, if any man desire to speake lett him be heard without interruption. Lett all things be done discretely, fairely and orderly.'¹² Colonel Whalley reported that the 'officers according to your commands have repaired to their severall regiments. ... They have conven'd heere at the head quarters, mett together and declared their greivances in writing, which greivances are the greivances of all or the greatest part of the Army.'¹³ When the submissions from the various regiments were received, matters became acrimonious and Skippon was soon having to urge officers to 'heare one another with sobrietie... Gentlemen, if it please you, these acclamations might be forborne; for we are desirous to heare every one speake and according to our trust to deal impartially.'¹⁴

John Disbrow (or Desborough), a major in Fairfax's regiment of horse told the meeting how he had acted.

According to your commands I repaired to the Regiment upon Monday last. I went from one division to another. I told them what you were pleased to represent unto us ... To that end I was commanded to come to them to represent the Parliament's votes to them, which I read to each division, first to one, and then the other. They told me mee there was noe unquietnesse amongst them... But withall told mee that there were diverse things which lay upon them as Greivances ... I did then believe, and doe still, that they are very sober things ... but itt is that which lies both upon souldiers and officers that wee have now represented to you ... not mutinously intended and what is fitt to be answered and satisfied ...¹⁵

Colonel Whalley then stated that he had acted similarly to Major Disbrow. 'I find that both my officers and soldiers are not transported or carryed away by passion. Reason sways them ... I am confident that they will deny themselves in every thing, if there may be as reasonable a reason given why they may not goe on.'¹⁶ Colonel Hewson reported on how he had communicated Parliament's intentions to his regiment. 'I mov'd them about the Irish affaire; they seem to be utterly unwilling for to stirre in that untill such time as they had some satisfaction' (about their grievances)¹⁷. There then followed something of an altercation between Captain Francis White and Lieutenant-Colonel

Jackson both of Fairfax's Foot Regiment. Captain White alleged that Jackson had edited the grievances presented by White and had gone so far as to have him brought on a charge before the Major-General. Captain William Leigh supported White's version of events. It was then decided that the issue between the two officers would have to be resolved privately by the Major-General.

Other officers reported on their regiments. Further divisions came to light. One officer told how when Sir Hardresse Waller's regiment was brought to a rendezvous, Captain Daniel Thomas told the men that they were seditious, and had had their minds poisoned, so that they were enemies of the peace of the Kingdom, and that they would be forced to go to Ireland whether they liked it or not. Major Thomas Smith of this same regiment was alleged to have cried to the troops, 'Stand for your liberties and priviledges now and for ever.' Major Thomas Smith defended himself by saying: 'The word that was said was this; a corporal in Sir Hardresse Waller's regiment, a private souldier, comeing to knowe my advice, I said, "I hope the souldiers may have their libertie," The Lieutenannt Colonnell, heareing I did desire to knowe, lett him declare to the Lieutenannt Colonnell, whereupon the ... (?) in a mutinous manner struck me for defending my owne innocency.'¹⁸

The dispute between Captain White and Lieutenant-Colonel Jackson then reared its head again. Major-General Skippon attempted to pour oil on troubled waters.

Friends, I thinke itt is our desires that love and peace should be maintain'd amongst us, whether we bee of the one way or other. I am sure it is our duty towards God in conscience, and towards one another as Christians ... I am very sorrey to observe that there should be such a disagreement betweene you ... and therefore it must be my advice to you that you should leave personall things, and apply your selfe to those things that wee are mett about.¹⁹

The difficulty of obtaining reports from all the regiments was apparent. Colonel Okey of the Dragoons spoke of five troops of his regiment being quartered at some 120 miles distance, and five other troops being based at Holdenby in Northamptonshire, where they kept custody of the King. Similarly Captain Barton of Colonel Richard Graves' Regiment said that half of the troops had not been called together. Colonel Nathaniel Rich reported that he had taken it upon himself to edit out of his report some 'things not fitt, and impertinent and extravagant'. As to service in Ireland, 'wee who are horsemen are not very willing to crosse the seas, but wee must also desire that wee might further be made happie in haveing such a Commander as we could approve.' He stated that the commander appointed by Parliament (Sir Edward Massey) 'is a stranger to mee and to my regiment'.²⁰ Similarly Colonel Hammond speaking for his regiment said that as soon as they had satisfaction as to the indemnity and the arrears, 'they will then chearefully, faithfully and honestly, not out of any ends of their owne, but out of a cleere and candid sence, freely and chearefully venture their lives for the service of the Kingdome as they have hitherto done.'²¹

When Captain Rainborowe, supported by a lieutenant, brought up a resolution signed by at least 500 soldiers in Colonel Sheffield's Regiment, Colonel Sheffelde took issue with him, and later called for him

to be disciplined. So the day wore on. Lieutenant-Colonel Jackson, who had earlier quarrelled with Captain White and Captain Leigh, intervened to say that lest there should be any hard thoughts about the officers in Fairfax's Regiment, they had in fact dined together over the past two days and that Captain White's report was true in what he had written. Lieutenant-Colonel Grimes of Colonel Lambert's Regiment wanted to emphasise that there was no dissent in his regiment and that 'seven or eight men doe not make a dissent in the army'.²² It was Lieutenant Edmund Chillenden who made the suggestion that Colonel Whalley and some others should accompany the Commissioners to London to make their report to Parliament.

It was at this stage that Oliver Cromwell, who had chosen to stay silent throughout most of the debate, intervened with the approbation of Skippon. He assured the officers that the Commissioners would deal very faithfully 'through the grace of God' with the responsibility that they owed to Parliament and the Army, but that it would take time to read through all the reports. He reminded the officers that Parliament had agreed to pay a further two weeks of arrears to those going to Ireland as well as those being disbanded, and that a full act of Indemnity had passed the House of Commons. He told the officers to return to their regiments leaving a field officer and two captains from each regiment to remain in Saffron Walden. Finally Cromwell insisted on proper discipline and submission to parliamentary authority 'to worke in them a good opinion of that authority that is over both us and them. If that authoritie falls to nothing, nothing can followe but confusion.'²³

But the meeting did not immediately break up. Colonel Rich was anxious to impress upon the Commissioners the essential unity of the Army.

I could heartily wish that as the unanimity of this Army Officers and Souldiers is very well knowne, [during the war] which God be thanked is not now in the Kingdome [it] might be soe exprest at our conclusion, and wee desisting from further engagement in another Kingdome [be united] as it hath been formerly. I hope that though there may have been some extravagances spoken by some Officers or Souldiers of the Army, that it shall not be so represented to you, that those extravagancies are the acts of the whole Army.²⁴

Discussion then returned to who should go up to London to represent the Army to the Parliament. Colonel Whalley suggested that to ensure that untrue representations were not made to Parliament 'two of the Members of the House of Parliament, you being all members, that you would be pleased to take the paines to goe up to London, that soe you may be able in their behalf to represent their desires to the Parliament; and likewise to give the Parliament a cleare and true sence of what is their actings and doings here.'²⁵ The curmudgeonly Colonel Sheffield suggested that Whalley was speaking only for himself, to which Whalley responded, 'Sir, I did soe, yet I am sure it is most of their mindes. Does your conscience accuse you?'²⁶ Skippon then cut them short: 'I pray either speake with moderation or else be silent.'²⁷

Commissary Ireton then proposed with a note of impatience: 'That before this meeting do breake uppe that some officers be appointed to present the sence of the whole. I speake only to drawe that businesse to a

conclusion soe that you may be no longer deteyned.’²⁸ The meeting was finally brought to an end by Major-General Skippon:

Gentlemen, I shall cover all in as good language as I can, and in as good earnest as I can, and in all faithfulness that I can. Put an end to this discourse. I think the papers that you have given by the hand of Colonel Whalley will evidently manifest who they are that dissent. I think the papers on the other side will cleare itt; and therefore I beseech you in all earnestnesse that you doe nothing but what may tend to unitie, love and peace. And soe good night.²⁹

The Sequel

The sequel to the Saffron Walden debate may be briefly summarised. On 21st May Cromwell and Fleetwood reported to Parliament on the Saffron Walden conference.³⁰ They acquitted the officers of any conspiracy with the men. The officers had merely tidied up the soldiers' language which was full of 'tautologies, impertinences and weaknesses', and had persuaded them to moderate their charges. But the Presbyterians in Parliament no longer trusted Cromwell on the matter of disbandment. They were even then plotting to restore Charles to the throne so that he might bring in a Presbyterian form of church government. But the Army with its Independent tendencies stood in the way of such plans. So Parliament tried to disband the Army piecemeal. This was seen as a betrayal of the understanding reached at Saffron Walden. It justified the fears of the Agitators who saw Parliament's tactics as designed to set the officers against the soldiers. 'As soon as you have it (the arrears of pay) and you disbanded you may be prest away for Ireland, or hang'd in England, for prosecuting the Petition, or refusing to goe for Ireland. ... If you divide you destroy all.'³¹ The Army was now in no mood to disband.

The King was in custody at Holdenby Hall in Northamptonshire, and both Presbyterians and Independents were conspiring how they could seize the King for their own ends. He was removed from there by Cornet Joyce who claimed orders from Cromwell, although it seems that Cromwell's intention was to secure Charles in Holdenby. Joyce brought Charles by way of Hinchingsbrooke and Newmarket to a house at Childerley, NW of Cambridge. Meantime Cromwell hearing of a plot by Presbyterians to have him arrested and taken from his house in Drury Lane to the Tower, had made good his escape to Kenford Heath, just beyond Newmarket.

On 3rd June Parliament frightened by news of Joyce's operation, voted full arrears for the Army and expunged Holles's hostile resolution. But the breach and lack of trust between Parliament and Army was becoming irreconcilable. On 5th June, the Army issued a declaration against Parliament's stirring up of war. But it added, at Cromwell's initiative, a denial that the Army intended to overthrow Presbyterianism; it merely wanted liberty of conscience for all its members. It also set up an Army Council of Generals and senior officers with two commissioned officers and two other representatives of each regiment. Cromwell, Fairfax and Ireton were members. London was in disorder with large numbers of former soldiers, known as 'Reformadoes', pouring into the city and threatening Parliament. The Army moved in stages from Saffron Walden to Newmarket, to Thriplow

Heath, to Royston, to St. Albans, to Uxbridge, and then to Reading.

The die was cast when King Charles rejected Ireton's *Heads of the Army Proposals* for biennial Parliaments, a better distribution of parliamentary seats and free elections, and a powerful Council of State, with control of the armed forces and foreign affairs. Meantime in London the mob had invaded the Houses of Parliament and forcibly compelled Speaker Lenthall to rescind Parliament's control of the militia. Thereafter Lenthall and 60 Independent MPs fled to join Army. On 6th August 1647 the Army entered London and restored Speaker Lenthall. The following day the Army with 18,000 men marched through the City, with Cromwell riding at the head of the cavalry, and took up its position in Croydon leaving both Parliament and the Tower under guard. Thanks to the obstinate folly of the King and the short-sighted sectarianism of Parliament, England was about to undergo military dictatorship.

Conclusions

Those looking to the debates in Saffron Walden as a precursor to the Army debates at Putney may be somewhat disappointed. From 28th October 1647 the Army there debated the great issues of the future governance of England and various forms of manhood suffrage. Saffron Walden was much more concerned with dealing with the particular grievances of arrears of pay and concerns for a full indemnity for the military action taken by the Parliamentary Army. Overshadowing the discussions was a genuine fear in Army ranks that the King might be restored and retribution sought for those who had taken up arms against him. There was a deep mistrust that Parliament might do a deal with the King in which Presbyterianism would be enshrined as the state religion and Independents deprived of freedom of conscience. But there were also divisions in the Army between some soldiers and certain commanders, together with a general reluctance to serve in Ireland, and an unwillingness to disband and lay down the sword before the Army had secured its own interests.

But what the Saffron Walden debates do illustrate is the way that the Army was being radicalised and coming to realise the power which lay in its hands. There was a freedom of speech amongst the officers which transcended traditional rank and class. Also the common soldiers were beginning to have their voices heard, not merely through the medium of the officers, but through the Agitators or Agents. Two Agitators were elected for each regiment and these Agitators, increasingly affected by the egalitarianism of Lilburn and the Levellers, were learning how to communicate with the ranks by means of letters and pamphlets, and how to make their views known to the higher ranks of the Army. The Agitators were learning for themselves the elements of representative democracy.

Skippon was a gracious chairman but he knew little of procedure for such a debate. The result was a lot of repetition and time-wasting. Cromwell was mostly silent throughout the discussions but there can be little doubt that the officers were strongly aware of his brooding presence. At this stage his stock was high with the Army since he was the victor of Naseby and his Independent views were well known. But few could have foreseen that in the space of a little more than six years Cromwell was to become the Lord Protector of England. Cromwell it seems was the great opportunist rather than the great manipulator. He later told the French Ambassador who

had asked him for his real aims: 'None rises so high as he who knows not whither he is going ...'³²

References

1. Walker, Clement, *The Complete History of Independency*, 1640-60, 1660-1, p. 31.
2. Cromwell actually supported the Propositions signed between members of the clergy and the Roman Catholic community on 1st August 1647, which with certain conditions would have granted freedom of worship to Catholics in their own homes. However both the Vatican and Parliament rejected the accord. Later in 1655 Cromwell admitted Jews to England for the first time since their expulsion in 1290.
3. Antonia Fraser, *Cromwell: Our Chief of Men*, Weidenfield & Nicholson, 1973, p. 186.
4. Walker, *Independency*, p. 41; Lilburne, *Jonah's Cry*.
5. *The Clarke Papers* by William Clarke, Secretary to the Council of the Army 1647-49, Edited by C.H. Firth, with a new preface by Austin Woolrych, London 1992, Vol. I, p.23.
6. *Book of Army Declarations*, pp. 9-11: *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. xii.
7. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 20f.
8. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 22.
9. 'Tomorrow sennight', an archaic expression meantime tomorrow in seven days/nights time.
10. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 33-34.
11. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 34.
12. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 46.
13. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 46.
14. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. pp. 48,49.
15. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 50.
16. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 51.
17. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 51.
18. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 56.
19. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 58.
20. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 63.
21. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 65.
22. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 70.
23. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. pp. 72f.
24. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. pp. 74f.
25. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 76.
26. The conflict between Sheffield and Whalley lay partly in the fact that Colonel Sheffield, together with Colonel Butler and Quarter-Master General Fincher and some others had already undertaken to go to Ireland, and submitted their own petition to the Commissioners. Colonel Whalley was one of the eight officers (along with Colonels Hammond, Rich, Okey, Ingoldesby and Lambert, and Majors Disbrowe and Cowell), who were authorised to draw up a summary of the Army demands and grievances. Lambert told Fairfax, 'Betwixt them, and [us] is something past of heat and animositie, especially betwixt Cols. Sheffield and Whalley, but I hope will goe no further. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 82.
27. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 77.
28. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 77.
29. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 78.
30. *The Heads of a Report to be made to the Honourable House of Commons by Lieutenant Generall Cromwell and Colonell Fleetwood*. The written report consisted of the summary drawn up by Colonel Lambert and other officers on the grievances of the eight regiments of horse and eight of foot lying within the Eastern Association, together with a number of dissenting or diverging reports from various officers and groupings. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. pp. 94-99.
31. *The Clarke Papers*, ibid. p. 87.
32. Cited in Fraser, supra p. 206.

R. Miller Christy, Essex Naturalist and Antiquary – Part III

By W. Raymond Powell

The life and work of Robert Miller Christy (1861-1928) is being published in *Essex Journal* in four parts. Parts I and II have described his early life, at home in Chignal St. James (Essex), his schooldays at Bootham, York (1874-7), his months in Brighton (1878-9), his employment in Gibson's bank at Saffron Walden (1880-2), and his holiday at St. Moritz in Switzerland (1882-3).

By 1883 Bob Christy had dropped his first name, and was known as Miller Christy.¹ On 1 May he reported modestly: 'In London. Had a paper at Linnean Soc. on 'Methodic Habits of Insects when visiting flowers.' Sir John Lubbock i/c. It went off v. well.'² Afterwards Bob 'ran down to Buckhurst Hill' [the offices of the Essex Field Club]. This was probably the most important day of his life so far.

Canada and USA

In July 1883 Miller Christy went to Canada as an agent of Mr. Tuke's Fund.³ James Hack Tuke (1819-96) was a wealthy philanthropist and Quaker, originally from York.⁴ In 1882 he formed a committee to promote emigration from the distressed district of western Ireland. The first families were taken to USA in that year. Many more followed in 1883, including 1,854 to Canada, and Miller Christy was one of their escorts. His appointment to this responsible post at only twenty-two was due primarily to his Quakerism, but also, no doubt, to his strong character and powers of leadership. He left Liverpool for New York on 5 July 1883 on the Inman liner *City of Chester*. After calling at Queenstown, the ship had 553 passengers,

mainly steerage, and 145 crew (6 July). Next day, out of sight of land, Miller reported two or three *Porpoises*, a sail, and 'the going mad of a passenger with delirium tremens' (7 July). Then came a heavy gale which carried away the stern deck wheelhouse (8 July). Near Newfoundland banks Miller saw a *Seal*, *Porpoises*, *Whales* and *Stormy Petrels*. (11 July).

From New York Bob took the train to Chicago, via Buffalo, Niagara Falls, and Detroit (15-19 July). At Chicago 'there was nothing to see except fine business establishments.' There was no sign of the great fire of 1871.⁵ Continuing north via St. Paul, he reached Carberry (Manitoba), a small place west of Winnipeg, where he spent the next two months (22 July - 17 September 1883), before moving 30 miles west to the town of Brandon. His Diary has no entries after 28 September until 3 November when he sailed from Quebec on *S.S. Circassian*, bound for Liverpool.

During the Canadian visit Miller Christy renewed his friendship with Ernest Thompson Seton.⁶ Seton (1860-1946) had been born in England, but was taken to Canada at the age of five, and lived in the backwoods until 1870, when he went to school in Toronto. From 1879 to 1881 he studied art in London before returning to Canada, eventually as naturalist to the Manitoba government. He had met Miller Christy in or before 1881, and a few of his drawings appear in Christy's Diaries. In later years he became a distinguished writer, and founder of the well-known Woodcraft League of Canada and USA.

Miller Christy's Diary has many items on Canadian natural history. On one excursion he noted *Cacti*,



Fig 1. Broomwood Manor (courtesy of Dr James Bettley).

Bog Beans and *Pitcher Plants* (26 July 1883). In August, when the Diary gives only a summary, he observed that the *Quails*, *Nightingales*, *Whipperwills* and *King Birds* had gone, and that he and Seton had each shot an *Owl*. September was the open season for *Prairie Chickens* and *Ducks*; flowers and birds were declining fast; many *Buffalo Bones* were still visible, also *Buffalo Wallows*, six inches deep and two or three yards wide (1 September). Miller Christy twice observed 'a curious phenomenon' (8 & 16 September). The country to the north seemed 'lightly lifted up,' so that objects miles away became more clearly visible. Seton thought that this mirage occurred when 'the leaves of the water lilies [were] caught up by the air and whisked around, throwing up the surface of the water' (16 September).⁷ On the hills above Brandon *Silver Leaf*, alias *Silver Maple* or *Wolf's Willow*, abounded (17 September). Christy had a long talk with P.R. Jarvis, a local land agent, who had gathered *Buffalo Beans* in the prairie (28 September). On the same day a butcher in Brandon said he usually exported his mutton to USA, that he had some Manitoba lambs for \$7 each, and that sheep allowed to run loose on the prairie would be raced to death by wolves. *Striped Gophers* were common at Carberry; Seton saw one climb a tree (16 September).⁸

After visiting Canada, Christy spent two months at home, and a further three in the Brentwood area. Walking between Doddinghurst and Blackmore he observes the movements of *Honey Bees* (16 March 1884). Some of the *Oxlips* which he had planted last Easter have flowered (8 April 1884).

Early in 1884 Miller Christy paid another visit to America. It is unlikely that this was in aid of Mr. Tuke's Fund, although he saw one of Tuke's parties leaving Ireland some time between March and June,⁹ and he himself embarked at Galway on 14 April, bound for Boston (Mass.). But then followed a whirlwind tour, by rail, of USA and Canada (April - August 1884). By 10 June he had already covered 10,725 miles, averaging 250 miles a day, and spending more than two nights on the train for every night in a proper bed. He visited Ramsey (Ontario), St. Paul (Minnesota) and Yellowstone National Park (Wyoming). By 16 August, when he embarked at Quebec for England, he had travelled 16,500 miles.

One of Christy's biographers says that he spent this second visit to America in exploration and natural history study with Ernest Thompson Seton.¹⁰ This is probably true, though the Diary does not refer to Seton, and rarely to natural history. Such a hurried journey allowed little time for Christy's usual observations, but he seized opportunities when they arose. While the train halted for lunch at Ramsey he strolled up the line and gathered *Oxlips* (Sorrel) and 57 specimens of *Lithospermum Canescens* (White Gromwell) (29 May).

In Shroeders Museum at St. Paul, Christy saw a mule colt born three years earlier, which had lived only three days (13 June). It had one huge eye in the centre of its forehead, no nostrils, and a mouth above its nose. These abnormalities were thought to have arisen because its mother had been frightened by bright locomotive headlights.

Later Years

By 1884 Miller Christy's Diary is becoming scrappy, and sometimes has no entries for several months, (e.g. October - December 1886; June 1887 - April 1888). It is therefore difficult to trace his movements

and activities. On returning from America he seems to have remained at home until March 1887, except for trips to Saffron Walden (18 April 1885), Birmingham (29 May 1886), Teesdale (18 August 1886), and Paris (4-25 September 1886). Visits to several places in north Essex (15 January, 25 February., 5 & 9 March 1887), suggest that Miller Christy was staying in Saffron Walden.

About 1880 Christy had planted at home some seeds of *Sickle-Leaved Hares Ear* (*Buplerum Falcatum*) (from Norton Heath). Two of the plants are flowering (29 August 1884).¹¹ Christy picks 37 *Purple Loose Strife* (*Lythium Salicaria*) (30 August 1884).¹² He sees a late *Cuckoo* at Barnes Farm, Springfield (3 September 1884). *Skylarks* are singing as if in Spring; so is a *Yellow Hammer*, whose song is 'a little bit of bread & no cheese' (23 October 1884). Specimens of *Shells* (*Zonites Nitidulus*) have been found on the roof of an oven at Chignal (14 July 1885). In Birmingham market are young *Rooks* with spotted white chins (27 May 1886). At Skreens Park there are *Barbastelle Bats* in an old Oak Tree (21 August 1886). At the Marché Oiseaux in Paris, held on Sundays in the flower market beside the Hôtel-Dieu, many common birds are on sale, including *Nightingales*, *Whitethroats*, *Willow Wrens*, and especially *Blackcaps* and *Starlings* (4 September 1886). There are many young *Chestnuts* on the boulevard outside the Porte de Vincennes. (Ibid.) A *Hedgehog* could be seen walking through the snow at Castle Hedingham (15 January 1887).

Christy notes that Lindsell church has four bells, three with inscriptions (25 February 1887). An old house in Thaxted High Street has 15th century timbers, with the arms of Edward IV below the first storey windows (5 March 1887).¹³ Latchley Hall, in Lindsell, has a moat round the farm buildings (9 March 1887).¹⁴ The Red Lion inn at Stebbing is old and well-designed (Ibid.).¹⁵

On 27 May 1887 Miller Christy has been for some days at Winnipeg. His Diary adds: 'Whenever fire is prevented from running, young *Poplars* spring up in the prairie.' This is the only reference to Christy's third visit to Manitoba. He was back in England by 5 May 1888, and spent the rest of his life in Essex or in London.

During the 1890s he was living at Priors in Broomfield (Diary 17 July 1892; 26 August 1894; 9 September 1895), except for a brief excursion to the Continent (19 May 1895). Later he lived at Blue House, Chignal, the home of his brother Gerald¹⁶ (22 May 1905).

In 1912-13 Christy built Broomwood Lodge, Chignal, (see fig.1) to the design of his architect friend Fred Rowntree.¹⁷ It was intended 'to reproduce, in the purest possible form,' the early Elizabethan style. Parts of the house were copied from houses still existing in the vicinity. The chimneys and the carved oak staircase reproduced those of Priors. The front of the house was of timber and brick nogging, as at Moyns Park, Steeple Bumpstead.

The furniture of Broomwood Lodge was also in period style. The earth from the house's foundations was piled up in a long mound to protect the house and garden from the north wind (Diary 3 August 1919). The Essex Field Club had tea at Broomwood Lodge in 1913. The house was then 'far from finished,' and Miller Christy's Museum of Ancient Domestic Implements was still at Blue House.

Miller Christy lived at Broomwood Lodge throughout the First World War, but in April 1920 he put it up for

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Ground Floor: Lounge Hall about 17'9" x 13' panelled in oak. Open brick fireplace with canopy hood and beamed ceiling. Drawing Room, 21'9" x 16'3", with fireplace, beamed ceiling and door to Dutch garden at the rear of the house. Dining Room, 15'6" x 12'3" with open brick fireplace with canopy hood. Attractive beamed ceiling with raised Tudor Rose plaster decorations. Small Lobby with fitted wine cupboard and door to Cloakroom with pale blue tiled walls, pedestal washbasin and low flush W.C. Breakfast Room, 11' x 10'6" with red tiled fireplace fitted new Esso-Dura boiler and fitted shelves. Kitchen with fully cream and red tiled walls and floor. Leisure stainless steel topped sink unit. Deep pantry with tiled floor shelf. Door to cellar and wine store. From the Kitchen is a secondary staircase to the Maid's Room on the first floor.

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Oak boarded floors to sitting rooms, landing and bedrooms.

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Adjoining the house at the rear is a lean-to glazed conservatory and W.C. Behind the garden is an excellent brick and tiled detached building with leaded windows containing a large garage, apple store, workshop and large garden room. This building could be converted into a pleasant bungalow if required. Close to the house are 2 Greenhouses and a secondary timber garage.

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Fig.2. Broomwood 'Manor'. Sale catalogue c.1954(courtesy of E.R.O.).

sale.¹⁸ It was said to be (*see fig. 2*) built of 'Brick, Oak and Elm, with Brick Chimneys of Tudor design, copied exactly from examples of that period. All the bricks were specially made to Tudor size, shape and color.' Whether the house was then sold is not known. By 1921 Miller Christy had certainly moved to London (3 July 1921; 2 April and 3 June 1922). From 1923 his address was 38 Outer Temple, WC2.¹⁹ 'Broomwood Manor', so called, was occupied in 1922 by Charles C. Hodges, in 1933 by Philip K. Kimbal, and in 1937 by Vernon Ridley.^{19A}

About 1889 Miller Christy became a partner in the London printing firm of Hayman, Christy & Lilly.²⁰ In 1890 the firm printed his *Birds of Essex*. It was then based at Hatton Works, 113 Faringdon Road and 20 & 22 St. Bride Street, EC. From 1892 to 1898 it printed the *Essex Review*, of which Christy was a joint founder. During the First World War the firm was taken over by the government, and about 1918 Miller Christy retired from the business. In the early 1920s he suffered from ill-health, but in his last few years he became more active, notably in directing the excavation of the temple mound at Harlow.²¹

Publications – NON-ESSEX

As a writer Miller Christy was remarkably productive. His first publication appeared in 1881, the last in 1930. Of those 50 years there were only 7 in which his work did not appear in print.²² Altogether he published 225 items, of which 94 were books or articles of six pages or more, and 131 short notes of less than six pages. Eleven of the longer items and 14 shorter ones were concerned with natural history. The remaining 200 items were devoted to history or archaeology.

Two of Miller Christy's earlier books were inspired by his visits to Canada: *Manitoba Described* (1884)²³ and *The Voyages of ... Luke Fox of Hull and ... Thomas James of Bristol in search of a North-West Passage* (2 vols. Hakluyt Soc. 1894), which is said to have taken him at least six years to compile.²⁴ Another item relating especially to the New World is *The Silver Map ... a Contemporary Medallion Commemorative of Drake's ... Voyage of 1577-80* (1900). This examines the geographical results of Drake's voyage.²⁵ Two items on fire-making are of national interest. For the National Gas Congress Guide (1913) Christy wrote a *Catalogue of the Loan Collection of Ancient Lamps and Fire-Making Appliances*. He also compiled a *Catalogue of the Exhibits in the Bryant & May Museum of Fire-Making Appliances* (1926) and *Supplement* (1928).²⁶ One of his last publications was a history of *The Bull, Long Melford (Suff.)* (1928).²⁷

In addition to the above mentioned books are a few items, unrelated to Essex, in periodical journals. An account of 'Mr. Tuke's Fund' is mentioned above. 'A Scheme for Mapping the Distribution of Vertebrate Animals,' and 'Early Notice and Figure of the Great Auk,' appeared in the *Zoologist* (3rd ser. xvii (1893), 134-56; xviii (1894), 142-5).

DURRANT'S HANDBOOK FOR ESSEX

Most of Miller Christy's publications concern Essex. *Durrant's Handbook for Essex* (1887) is 'A Guide to the Principal Buildings, Places and Objects of Interest in each parish.' The 32-page Introduction treats many topics, ancient and modern, including Newspapers, Railways, and Hunting. Most of the parishes had been visited by Christy himself, and most of the churches by

Henry Corder. W.H. Utley had seen the book through the press. The editor might have added that, as his Diaries show, his excursions had been taking him to many places, particularly in central and west Essex, at least since 1875.

Durrant's Handbook is an up-to-date guide to the recent past as well as to antiquities. The town entries are especially valuable. Colchester, then still the largest town in Essex, has the main entry (pp. 77-84). Its features are described in a circuit, street by street. There are good accounts of the Castle and its contents (including the Harsnett Library and the Museum), the Town Walls, St. Botolph's priory, and the siege of 1648. Here, as elsewhere in the book the editor provides many precise dates, as for the Cattle Market (78), transferred from High Street to Middleborough in 1859; the Essex and Colchester Hospital, Lexden Road (79), built in 1820, and the Oyster Fishery (84), managed by a Company incorporated by Act of Parliament in 1871.

Chelmsford (pp. 62-8), the county town, was well known to Christy, since it adjoined his own village. The entry includes part of Springfield parish. It mentions the discovery (1870) in the Shire Hall, of many County Records, mostly of the 16th and 17th centuries, and states that a Report on them had been published by the Historical MSS Commission. There is also a detailed account of the contents of the Essex and Chelmsford Museum, founded in 1828. He notes that it was in 1887 that the Shire Hall clock was installed.

Saffron Walden (pp. 180-5), where Christy had worked for two years, is treated almost as fully as Colchester, and in similar style. There is a fine description of St. Mary's church, which has a 'lofty crocketed spire, 108 ft. high, erected in 1831, and containing 8 bells ... the peal was cast by Briant of Hertford in 1798, but two of the bells have since been recast. Every year on 17 June the bells are rung almost continuously during "Ringing Day", a field having been given for the purpose of paying the ringers, by ... Edmund Turner about 200 years ago.' Audley End mansion (184-5) is also fully described. Its library, 47 ft. long, contains 7,000 volumes.

There are substantial accounts of Castle Hedingham, Boreham, Thaxted, Waltham Abbey, and Epping Forest. The Frontispiece map of Essex (Quarter ix) shows parishes, manors, woodland, railways, and many other features. There are plans of Colchester and Epping Forest.

Durrant's Handbook was planned as a guide for tourists, including cyclists. The Introduction contains a section on cycling (30-1), which mentions the local cycling clubs, and states that the national Cyclists' Touring Club has arranged a fixed tariff at one of the principal hotels in most towns throughout the country. This is also indicated in the town entries by the letters C.T.C., following the hotels appointed, as at Colchester (The George), Chelmsford (Saracen's Head), Saffron Walden (Rose and Crown), Waltham Abbey (New Inn), Braintree (White Hart), Harwich (Three Cups), and Brentwood (White Hart). Places with hills dangerous to cyclists are listed in the Introduction, and further warnings are given under the places themselves. At Hadleigh there are two hills. The hill on the Benfleet Road should not be ridden, being steep, loose and dangerous. Bread and Cheese Hill, on the Southend Road, is loose and stony but may be ridden by experienced cyclists.

Note on Fred Rowntree

This note has been kindly provided by Dr. James Bettley, who is editing the new edition of Pevsner's *Buildings of Essex*.

Fred Rowntree (1860-1927) was born in Scarborough and educated at Bootham School, which is presumably where he met Miller Christy. He was articled to Charles A. Bury of Scarborough, and then worked as assistant to Edward Burgess, who did so much work in and around Saffron Walden (including the Friends' School; although this opened in 1879, Burgess made later additions, so perhaps Rowntree worked there under him). He had his own practice, first in Scarborough, and, from 1890, in London. From 1912 he was in partnership with his sons Colin and Douglas Woodville Rowntree.

Rowntree's work in Essex includes the Ogilvie School, Clacton (home for 'physically defected' children), 1911-12; additions to the Friends' School, Saffron Walden, 1922; Canfield Farm, Stebbing (restoration) and a very nice house in the Lutyens manner, called Lavender Leez at Little Leighs.

Acknowledgments

The Acknowledgements given in Part I of this article also apply in Part III. This article has been put onto computer disk by Helen Coghill, and has been read in proof by my wife Avril. Their continuing help is much appreciated.

References

- 1 To distinguish himself from contemporaries called Robert Christy.
- 2 See *Jnl. Linnean Soc.* xvii (1884), p.186.

- 3 For this paragraph see: Miller Christy, 'Mr Tuke's Fund' *Friends' Quarterly Examiner*, xxvii (1893), pp.134-56. *Oxford D.N.B.* (2004).
- 4 On 7-11 Oct. 1871: see *Haydn's Dictionary of Dates* (1898 edn.) p.226.
- 6 For this paragraph: *Who was Who*, iv, s.v. Seton, Ernest Thompson (1860-1946), whose *nom de plume* was Seton-Thompson.
- 7 For mirages, which can take different forms see *Oxford English Dictionary*.
- 8 The gopher was a burrowing or ground squirrel: *OED*.
- 9 Christy, 'Mr Tuke's Fund,' *Friends' Quarterly Examiner* xxvii (1893), p.149.
- 10 *E.A.T. NS.* xix (1930), p.139.
- 11 See also *Flora of Essex* (1974), p.111.
- 12 *Op. cit.* p.107.
- 13 The Recorder's House: *R.C.H.M. Essex*, i, p.313.
- 14 *R.C.H.M. Essex*, i, p.168.
- 15 *Op. cit.* p.285.
- 16 *EN* xiii (1914), pp.224-6.
- 17 *Ibid.* For Fred Rowntree see note at end of article.
- 18 *E.R.O. Sale Cat.* A192, 'Broom Wood Lodge'. This reference was kindly supplied by Dr. James Bettley.
- 19 *E.A.T. NS* xvi (1923): list of members at 1 Nov. 1923.
- 19A *Kelly's Dir. Essex*, (1922, 1933, 1937).
- 20 For this paragraph: *E.R.* xxxvii (1928), 62; *E.A.T.* xix (1930), p.139.
- 21 For the Harlow temple: *V.C.H.* iii (1963), p.139; U. Davison, 'Ancient Harlow: present archaeological evidence,' *Essex Jnl.* viii (1973), p.26; N.E. France and B.M. Gobel, *Romano-British temple at Harlow* (1985); R. Bartlett, 'Excavations at Harlow temple 1985-7.' *E.J.* xxiii (1988), p.9.
- 22 Those years were: 1882, 1883, 1886, 1889, 1911, 1916, 1929.
- 23 This is a rare book, and no copy has so far been traced.
- 24 Review in *E.R.* iii (1894), p.214.
- 25 *Bibliog. Brit. Hist. (1485-1603)*, ed. C. Reed (1959), p.272.
- 26 Review in *E.R.* xxxvi (1927), pp.48-9.
- 27 Review in *E.R.* xxxvii (1928), pp.46-7.

The Erith Brothers: their contribution to Architecture, Landscape, Archaeology and Historical Research in Essex

By Robert Erith

Many families can boast individuals who have made a distinguished contribution to the life of our County. However, it is perhaps exceptional for three brothers all to achieve the highest level of recognition in their fields and all to have left their mark on Essex.

Raymond, (1904-1973) an architect, was made a Royal Academician in 1964.

Felix, (1906-1991) a farmer, was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1968.

Edward, (1907-2004) a builders' merchant, was elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society in 1952.

Family Background

The Erith family is descended from yeoman farmers and country tradesmen, believed to have originated from Earith in Huntingdonshire. By the early 1600s they were copyholders, farming at Colt's Hall, Cavendish in Suffolk, at which property they were reputed to have lived for five generations.

In the 17th, 18th and early 19th centuries they were prolific in the Sudbury area. My four-times great-grandfather John Ereyth, was married at St Peter's,

Sudbury in 1754 to Sarah Heard by whom he had 22 children, of whom the eleventh, George, born in 1778 and baptised at Bulmer, moved to Hackney to seek work as a gardener. He died in Sudbury Union House in 1840.

His eldest son, George, was born in Hackney in 1808. By 1825, he was employed as a clerk by William Hobson, a substantial builder, and when Hobson retired in 1845, bought a wharf from him at Cambridge Heath and in 1847 founded George Erith & Son, Builders' Merchants.

His only son, Henry George Erith, born in 1836, worked in the business for 75 years, eventually dying while still Chairman in 1927 at the age of 91.

He had four sons, of whom my grandfather, Henry Charles Erith was the eldest. Charlie, as he was always known, was born in Hackney in 1867 and became a mechanical engineer, inventor and entrepreneur. In 1900 he married Florence May Laubenburg. They had five children, two girls and three boys, the subjects of this article. (*see fig.1*)

The elder daughter, Barbara (Baba), along with her cousin Betty Mallett, founded Littlegarth School in Dedham in 1940, which establishment is now a flourishing kindergarten and preparatory school with 300 pupils, located at Great Horkesley, Essex



Fig. 1. Barbara, Raymond, Felix, Edward and Sylvia Erith in September 1957 (courtesy of Lucy Archer).

and has educated many members of the Erith family, including the writer and three of his grandchildren! The younger sister Sylvia never lived in the County, but her younger son, John Graves, lives in Mistley and is currently Office Administrator of CPREssex.

The Erith brothers were all born in Hackney and brought up in Sutton, Surrey. They were high spirited boys, but on the whole they had an orthodox childhood in a happy and united family. Edward produced a fascinating memoir when in his nineties, recalling a forgotten world of servants, church every Sunday in best clothes, strict routines and endless pranks which were typical of many middle-class households before the first world war.

Raymond Charles, the eldest son, had the misfortune to contract tuberculosis at the age of four which led to twelve years of intermittent illness and left him permanently crippled in his left arm and lame in his left leg. This meant that most of his childhood was spent either at home, at his maternal grandparents' house near Birmingham or in a nursing home at Margate. With a lot of time on his own and to occupy his mind in a world which knew nothing of radio or television, he began to draw.

Even his earliest drawings show he was a perfectionist, with an attention to detail and accuracy of composition. His only formal education was four terms at Arden House prep school at Henley-in-Arden, Warwickshire, some private tuition from a clergyman when at home and a smattering of languages from a succession of "mademoiselles". A bad fall at the age of twelve meant that he was bedridden for the next four years and it was during this period that his interest in architecture was formed. By 1920 he had recovered enough to lead a normal, active life although he always had to walk with a stick. For most of his life he was often in pain but he disguised this very effectively and disliked anyone making reference to his disability.

In 1921 he went to Italy with his mother, sketching wherever he went. Later that summer he began training at the Architectural Association (A.A.) and despite his lack of formal schooling, he was a most successful student, winning the Howard Colls, A.A. and Henry Florence travelling scholarships and Alec Stanhope Forbes prize over the next four years.

The prize money meant that he was able to travel in Europe with his sketchbook. He also went on a walking tour from Thaxted to Bildeston with Felix in June 1924, stopping at Clare and again at Cavendish to look at the tombstones of bygone Eriths and see the countryside which his ancestors had farmed. Writing about the tour fifty years later, Felix recalled them arriving hot, dusty and dishevelled at the Crown at Bildeston to ask for a room.

There was no-one in the public bar except an aged little man. Raymond said "is anybody about?" The old man did not answer but opened a cupboard door, revealing a staircase, and called up "Mrs 'Ubbard, there's quality come!" This remark took us both completely by surprise.

Thus encouraged, both brothers eventually came to live in the Stour Valley. Raymond drew inspiration from the landscape and its buildings for the rest of his life.

Once he had qualified, Raymond began to practice in London, being joined for ten years until the war by Bertram Hume. They had a number of commissions for commercial and industrial buildings as well as houses and in 1933 won a major international competition for the re-planning of an area of Stockholm.

At the A.A. it was fashionable to read le Corbusier and many of Raymond's contemporaries were attracted to the Modern Movement and thought it was out of the question to follow tradition. Raymond and his friends thought modernism was absolute nonsense, however, and over the years, he wrote frequently about the theory and practice of classical architecture, from which he never deviated. His writings have been edited by his

daughter, Lucy Archer, in her book and make compelling reading. He had hoped to produce a book himself, but being a busy, professional man, was never able to find the time.

In 1934 Raymond married Pamela, younger daughter of Arthur Spencer Jackson. Two years later they moved to Dalebrook House in Dedham. Other members of the family also moved to this unspoilt village where houses could be bought for a few hundred pounds each.

The first job Raymond had in Essex consisted of alterations to Meadowside, Alderton Hill, Loughton for his aunt, Maud Erith, in 1931. He also designed a small house, The Mead, Sparelease Hill, Loughton adjoining her garden. His first substantial commission in Essex, however, was Great House in Dedham, built for his father-in-law in 1937, which replaced a much earlier house with an 18th cent. front, burnt down the previous year. Great House was also designed with the same white Suffolk bricks and retained the original building line to preserve the character of the High Street. The working drawings were exhibited at the R.I.B.A. Festival Exhibition in 1951.

Other pre-war work in the County included alterations to Vinces Farm, Ardleigh for his brother Felix, lodges at Westwood Park, Great Horkesley and a lodge at the Chantry, Great Horkesley, a Soanean little building for a client who believed the Chantry was built by Sir John Soane. He was also commissioned to design the main gates, four cottages and two gate lodges for H.M. King George VI at Royal Lodge Windsor in 1939. These were constructed but, sadly, they were damaged by enemy bombing only a fortnight after being completed and greatly altered after the war when they were restored by another architect.

Once war was declared, Raymond wound up the practice and took the 150 acre Norman's Farm at Little Bromley for the duration. He loved the farming life and I remember him ploughing with a pair of Suffolk punches and pitching sheaves at harvest. The house had no electricity or telephone and much use was made of a pony and trap, often required to take his children and occasionally me as well, home from Littlegarth school in Dedham.

In 1945, he moved to Dedham House and resumed his architectural work which, because of stringent post-war building restrictions, consisted mainly of repairs and alterations, extensions and conversions. It was not an easy time and, as classical architecture was completely out of favour with his contemporaries, it was also lonely and often dispiriting. But he had the advantage of the lease of an 80 acre farm in Dedham which Maud Erith had given to the National Trust and this enabled him to continue his interest in farming and country life.

Essex commissions in this period included work in Dedham Church, a bungalow on Jupes Hill, a cottage in Bargate Lane, and a small house at Lamb Corner all in Dedham; a farmhouse in Kirby-le-Soken for Mr & Mrs John Eagle and a pair of cottages for Sir Philip Nichols in Lawford. Another interesting job was to restore Mistley Towers, designed by Robert Adam as part of his additions to an early 18th cent. church which was demolished in 1870. The towers were restored at a critical stage when there was a real danger of their collapse and now stand, as a delightful curio and landmark for shipping, overlooking the Stour estuary.

Raymond's love of the countryside and of the Stour valley in particular was a major feature of his life. He was



*Fig.2. Raymond Erith at Bridges Farm, 1959
(courtesy of Barry Swaebe).*

a founder member and first chairman of the Dedham Vale Society in 1938 and succeeded Sir Alfred Munnings as its President in 1949, a position he held until his death in 1973. He was actively involved in the many battles waged by the Society in keeping the Constable Country free from unwelcome development. In a passionate article published in *The Spectator* in January 1965 called *How to Ruin the Constable Country* he described the Vale as:

a countryside where for centuries nature has been harnessed but not exploited; a simple, self-sufficient countryside which for centuries was understood and loved. . . . The valley is threatened more and more every year by the dead hand of progress. . . but for the [Dedham Vale] Society, the Vale and particularly the village of Dedham would by now have become almost unrecognisable. The most difficult problem has been to resist the gradual encroachment of ugliness; one ugly house becomes an excuse for another: ugliness cannot resist ugliness. . . . If Dedham Vale is not worth keeping nothing is worth keeping.

There was at that time a proposal to build large numbers of new houses in Dedham, Stratford St Mary and East Bergholt, approved by the local planning authorities but later called in by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government. The battle was won by the Society, the houses were never built and the Dedham



Fig.3. Wivenhoe New Park, built 1962-4 (courtesy of Lucy Archer).

Vale was finally designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1969.

By the mid-1950s, Raymond's workload was picking up and he was no longer dependent on his local practice although he continued to the end of his life to build cottages and small houses in Essex and Suffolk. A number of major commissions established him as the leading classical architect of his day. Foremost amongst these was the reconstruction of Numbers 10 and 11 Downing Street and the complete rebuilding of Number 12. This was an enormously complicated project, bedevilled throughout by labour disputes at a time of union militancy.

Raymond believed in the unobtrusive accuracy of restoration work. He wrote:

I do not intend to leave my mark on the additions in Downing Street, nor on No.12. I attach no importance at all to originality or modernity . . . I shall however make No.12 look like a separate building. If at the same time I can do something to unify and give more vitality to the buildings as a whole. . . I shall feel I have succeeded.

Other major work during this period included the Library and the Wolfson residential buildings and new entrance gate at Lady Margaret Hall and the Provost's Lodgings at the Queen's College, all in Oxford, extensive work at Ickworth, Suffolk for the National Trust, new buildings such as the Pediment at Aynho and the Folly in Herefordshire, work on a number of large country houses and the complete rebuilding of Jack Straw's Castle, a large new weatherboarded pub on Hampstead Heath.

Raymond's most significant commission in Essex came in 1961 when Charles Gooch, having sold his family seat, Wivenhoe Park, to establish Essex University, required a new country house nearby. Raymond described Wivenhoe New Park (*see fig.3*) as a plain house in which proportion plays a vital part and which follows the supremely economical type of plan and construction general throughout the Veneto in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Assuming one wants a solidly built house it provides more bulk for less money than anything else I know.

In 1962 Quinlan Terry joined Raymond's practice as a pupil and became his partner in 1969. After Raymond's death in 1973, the practice continued to be known as Erith and Terry until 2003 when Quinlan was

joined by his son and the name changed to Quinlan and Francis Terry.

In 1976, Quinlan wrote an account of life in Raymond's office in Dedham High Street which is reproduced in Lucy Archer's book. A few snippets follow:

His office was like a master-builder's workshop in a group of timber framed Tudor cottages. . . . The drawing boards were all antiquarian size on low tables. Erith was insistent that each board should be placed under a window so that the drawings could be prepared in good daylight. All working drawings were to antiquarian size and there were strict rules on hatching for brickwork and stonework. . . . The drawings were prepared in 3H pencil, ruling and mapping pen. . . . Erith had incredibly sharp eyesight; he drew superbly and expected the same standard from all of us. He was not charitable to anyone who drew an eighth scale drawing with 4½in. brickwork measuring 5in. on his ivory edged scale. The assistants, usually about six in number, were all local and most of them stayed with him for a great number of years. They succeeded in so far as they were willing to apprentice themselves to him irrespective of their previous qualifications, which he regarded as of marginal value. This apprenticeship took about ten years. . . . The books were an essential part of equipment. Most frequently in use were Palladio's *Quattro Libri*, the 1825 Paris edition of Palladio's works, the 1832 Venice edition of Sanmicheli's Works, Letarouilly's Five Books, as well as more standard works on the Orders and measured drawings of ancient Rome.

The official working hours were 9.00 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. but it was unthinkable to arrive after 8.50 a.m. and considered bad form to leave before 6.00 p.m. If you stayed beyond 6.30 p.m. the work would continue less formally over a glass of sherry in Erith's drawing room across the road. . . . no drawing ever left the office without his real and practical imprimatur.

Raymond served on a number of professional committees and had lectured and taught at various points in his career. From 1948 onwards he had submitted a series of superb drawings to the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition and continued to exhibit for many years thereafter. In 1959 he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy. He became a full Academician five years later and was actively involved in the Academy's affairs for the rest of his life. In 1960 he

was appointed to the Royal Fine Art Commission and served on it for thirteen years. He was also on the Council of the National Trust.

A fine example of Raymond's simpler work is the series of houses, later added to by Quinlan Terry in Brook Street, Dedham. (see fig. 4)

Raymond's last major country house was the beautiful King's Walden Bury in Hertfordshire, built for Sir Thomas and Lady Pilkington using the module of the Venetian foot (14 inches) to give it a more generous and Italian scale. Although it was inspired by Palladio, the design had a tendency to the baroque. The development of the character of the house illustrates a point Raymond made to a client:

. . . It is the building itself, and not the architect that makes the design. Perhaps that sounds absurd but what I mean is that the architect can never make a preconceived idea into a genuine design, i.e. one in which the doors, windows and all the other parts are quite naturally where they ought to be. . . one may, if one is lucky, arrive at a simplicity which is in some way beautiful because it is unresisting and which is, I am sure, pleasing to the gods. . . I won't say this simplicity is architecture but I am pretty sure it *is* the framework.

The 1970s saw only three jobs executed in Essex. The first of these, my own house Shrubs Farm, Lamarsh, was almost doubled in size. It is a good example of Raymond's alteration work, where the blending of old and new is barely perceptible. The front of the house is original (1843) but the back, with its matching bargeboards, is new. Substantial alterations were made in 1972-3 at Greenstead Hall, Halstead for Mr and Mrs Christopher Blackwell. Drift Cottage, Southfields in Dedham, a new single storey building with an unusual porch was completed in 1974. His final work in Essex was the addition of an attached small house at Westgate House in Dedham for Mr and Mrs Christopher Davies and Lady Eleanor Campbell-Ord, designed in harmony with the original.

Raymond died suddenly on 30th November 1973 at the age of 69. He was at the height of his powers as an architect and had no intention of retiring. At the time of his death he and Quinlan Terry were working on a new

Bahai temple for the Universal House of Justice in Tehran. It was never built, due to the Islamic revolution, but would have had a dome larger than that of St Paul's Cathedral.

His memorial service was held at St Mary's Church on Paddington Green, which he had restored only a few months before. The address was given by his friend Sir John Betjeman. It included these remarks:

There will be many who remember Raymond Erith's drawings in the architecture room in the Royal Academy Exhibition. They were so distinctive and precise in execution, so strong and practical, so un-flashy they stood out from all other architectural drawings. . . He belonged to the Palladian school of thought and to the late eighteenth century.

He did not at all belong to the world of big business and tower blocks and prestige buildings. He was highly suspicious of shibboleths connected with functionalism. He liked things local and polite.

His delight in his work shines through his buildings as it does through this church.

There have been three retrospective exhibitions of Raymond's work at:

The Royal Academy of Arts, London	1976
Gainsborough's House, Sudbury, Suffolk	1979
Sir John Soane's Museum, London	2004
(the centenary of his birth)	

Felix Henry, the second son, was educated at Clifton College near Bristol where he studied classics and enjoyed cricket. On leaving school, his father secured him a position as a clerk in a marine insurance firm at Lloyds and he stayed there for thirteen years. In 1933 he married Barbara, daughter of The Ven. Archdeacon Sydney Charles Hawken.

He very much disliked the City, however, and when in 1936 he received a modest family windfall he decided to farm. In 1937 he acquired Vines Farm, Ardleigh in the Tendring Hundred consisting of 150 acres of lightish flat land, where he was to spend the rest of his life. Knowing little of agriculture, he spent a year training at Writtle Agricultural College.



Fig. 4. Houses in Dedham – built by Raymond Erith, 1967, 1969 and 1972 (courtesy of Lucy Archer).

Farming was just emerging from a terrible depression and this recovery was greatly assisted by the outbreak of war so that Felix, in a reserved occupation was required to remain on the land. He immersed himself in agricultural life, being active in the Essex National Farmers Union, writing frequent articles for the farming press and carrying out his duties as an air raid warden.

The farm had an ancient International tractor, but most work was still done with four Suffolk Punches. Felix grew seeds for Abbotts' Nurseries, as well as the normal rotation of wheat, barley and oats interspersed with break crops such as sugar beet and turnips. There was also a herd of Aberdeen Angus beef cattle, a flock of Suffolk sheep, Essex pigs, chickens and two or three Jersey "house" cows to ensure that the family and all the farm men had plenty of milk, cream and butter. Even in the war, there were six men working on the farm including a farm foreman, who also drove the tractor, two horsemen, a cowman and two labourers. The farm made a modest profit most years! No one under the age of 60 can remember that vanished world when everything in farming was done at the pace of a carthorse. In 1950 there were reckoned to be over 100,000 Suffolk Punches working in East Anglia. By 1960 they had almost all gone; they are now rarer than the Giant Panda with less than 100 breeding mares in this country.

In early 1955 the last horseman retired and Felix decided to sell his horses and buy two Ferguson tractors. He also bought a single furrow reversible plough which cut 30 cm. deep into the soil, so disturbing for the first time some 10cm. of sub-soil. It was this ploughing which brought to light so much of the archaeology on Vinces Farm.

In September his senior tractor driver, Frank Brand, who had seen programmes on television by Sir Mortimer Wheeler about archaeology, noticed shards of pottery in the Long Eleven Acres field turned up by the plough. His other tractor driver, Earl Brinkley, who lived opposite, thought they were old flower pots from Abbotts' nurseries but Felix was not so sure. He took them in to Colchester Castle, where M.R. Hull, the curator, identified them, the first item proving to be a fragment of a vase from a Roman kiln, later realised to have been nearby. Shortly afterwards thicker and coarser fragments were uncovered which dated from the Bronze Age, between 1000 and 500 BC. Clearance of the soil where Bronze Age pottery was prolific revealed a cluster of cremation urns. I was working for my father on the farm at that time and remember well the excitement of uncovering the first significant group of urns, all inverted with the bottoms smashed by plough action. Curiously enough, the area where the pots were found always had the reputation of being somewhat spooky and Earl Brinkley, in particular, "did not hold with disturbing the old folk".

Felix evolved his own method of locating and excavating the site. He (or one of his farm workers) would follow the tractor, carefully watching for signs of urns being turned up by the plough. It was no easy task to spot the brown, gritty pottery in the soil. In a letter to I.H. Longworth (later his collaborator in documenting these finds), Felix describes how he followed the plough in the bitter winter of 1959/60, no mean feat on the exposed and windswept Ardleigh landscape:

I am glad it is all done now as I had to walk behind the plough every working day for six weeks.

When pottery was spotted, the tractor driver was sent to plough another field for the half an hour or so it took to excavate the urn. A small trench was dug around the pot. Soil was carefully cleared away, leaving only some 7.5cm. of earth clinging to the walls of the vessel: this was the last to be removed, after which the pot was tied with string to prevent the wall from collapsing. The urn was measured in the ground and then transferred to a potato tray for excavation of its interior in the greater comfort of a farm shed. The position of each urn was indicated by sticking a cane in the ground; data for each vessel was logged on egg record cards, many of which still survive in the site archive at Colchester Museum.

Felix also undertook the conservation of the urns. The pieces of pottery were washed carefully and when dry, he would glue them together like a jigsaw puzzle and the pots would be miraculously restored. Although technical advice and some practical assistance was provided by Colchester Museum, the Bronze Age cemetery was excavated in its entirety by Felix with one or two of his farm men and occasionally by my brother Philip, my sister Caroline and myself. By 1960, just over 100 urns had been retrieved from a cemetery contained within an area some 250 by 50 metres. Thus Felix almost single-handedly in the early stages and with the help of the Colchester Archaeological Group later, uncovered one of the largest sites of its kind in England, a remarkable feat for a working farmer.

All the material from his excavations was presented to Colchester Museum and Felix was one of the greatest single benefactors of the museum since the 1939-45 war. His Bronze Age urns are on display there as well as in London and Cambridge.

Felix only thought of himself as an amateur but was conscious of the need for prompt publication of the evidence. At the suggestion of Professor Grahame Clark at Cambridge, I.H. Longworth, then a research student, was asked to help Felix with the work of publication of the cemetery. Collaboration between the two men was harmonious and productive. It was Longworth who completed the published report to a professional standard and who put the cemetery in its national context (*Erith & Longworth: 1960*) but the contribution of Felix himself should not be overlooked: even the drawings of the urns were his own work. This aptitude for draughtsmanship was a talent he shared with Raymond.

From 1957 to 1966 Felix represented the Essex Archaeological Group of which he was chairman from 1961-63, on the Museum and Muniment Committee of Colchester Council. A letter of his gives a sorry picture of civic life:

I am now on the Colchester Museum Committee. It seems to consist of town councillors anxious to get away as soon as possible and terrified of spending rate-payers' money on 'cultural activities'.

His own services to archaeology were recognised in 1968 when he was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, a rare honour for an amateur.

The national importance of the Bronze Age cemetery has deflected attention from the other fieldwork undertaken by Felix and the Colchester Archaeological Group at Ardleigh. An extensive late Iron Age settlement and cremation burials of the same date were discovered. With P.R. Holbert, Felix excavated a Middle Iron Age roundhouse and enclosure just north of Vinces Farm



Fig.5. Felix Erith (left) with Frank Brand (right) during the excavation of the Bronze Age cemetery at Vinces Farm, c.1958 (courtesy of Robert Erith).

itself. Nor was the Roman period neglected. A kiln was uncovered in 1955 and discoveries of shard dumps with wasters established Ardleigh as the site of a significant rural Roman pottery industry. Traces of earlier, Neolithic implements and later, Saxon pottery and a well were also found on the farm and altogether, excavations continued for some 25 years from the first discovery. A number of finds were the result of aerial observation of crop-marks in dry summers, but at least one of the ring-ditches (surrounding yet more vanished Bronze Age barrows) was spotted from the vantage point of a combine harvester.

Felix was particularly interested in local history. He was an active member of the Parson Woodforde Society and went on a number of their expeditions. He had a deep love of Essex and East Anglia and after moving to Essex he seldom ventured outside this area.

In his forties he began an interest in bell ringing which took him into many church towers. He became Captain of the Ringers at Ardleigh and also at Great Bromley. It was whilst he was in the tower at Ardleigh that he came across a large chest which had not been opened for many years.

In it was a list of every parishioner in the village compiled by the Rev John Kelly, vicar of Ardleigh in 1796, in the event that the village might be overrun by a French invasion or caught up in the fighting. There were other village records, overseers accounts and rating books as well. Over a period of twenty years Felix used these and other sources to build a fascinating account of village life over 200 years ago in his *Ardleigh in 1796: its farms, families and local government* first published in 1978 when he was 72. It is a comprehensive account of the population of the village, an exceptional glimpse of rural England a half century before the census records were begun. The grandchildren of most of the families mentioned were still living in Ardleigh at the time of the 1881 census, and *their* grandchildren were for the most part still in the parish when Felix started farming, indeed men from four of the families worked for him. Now they have almost all gone and the rural continuity is no more.

Dr Paul Sealey in his chapter on Felix in *The Archaeology of Ardleigh, Essex*, wrote of him:

Without the sustained and intelligent interest Felix took in Ardleigh, a whole chapter in the archaeology of Essex would forever have remained blank: his example makes one wonder what has been lost elsewhere through ignorance, apathy and greed. As Felix commented: 'in the last few years, when nearly every acre in the country has been ploughed deeper than ever before, one might expect to hear of numerous new finds. Actually, hardly any have turned up, and one must conclude that those which have, have not been recognised.'

Felix thought of himself as being incredibly fortunate to have been able to have such splendid finds on his own property and therefore indulge at home in what became a life long interest. He enjoyed Latin tags so the inscription we put on his gravestone reads:

*FELIX QUI POTUIT DELECTAM DUCERE
VITAM*

Happy (Felix) he who was able to lead a chosen life.

There are two other monuments to Felix: one is a bronze medallion (a rather poor likeness) in the Millennium garden of the Ardleigh recreation ground. The second is his hat which hangs, with hats of other tower captains over the past three hundred years, high in the tower of Great Bromley church.

Edward John, the youngest son, went to school at Marlborough where he was a contemporary of John Betjeman and described himself as 'making fairly rapid progress to the Upper Fifth and being caned fairly regularly by prefects'.

He had to leave school early as his father experienced financial difficulties during this period and in 1925 joined the Dunlop Rubber Company as self-styled

'personal assistant to the personal assistant to the personal assistant to the Managing Director!'

In 1926, he was invited by his Uncle Arthur to join Erith & Company Ltd (Builders' Merchants), which was based in Leytonstone. He became Company Secretary in 1929 at the age of 22 following the deaths of his grandfather, the Chairman and his Uncle Arthur, the Managing Director. He undertook the preparatory work to enable the company to go public in 1934.

In 1933 he married Maud, daughter of Luke Booth of Rio de Janeiro and bought Elces, a one time wooden framed farmhouse in Chigwell. There he became interested in local history and accumulated a lot of information about the parish, and later also the neighbouring parish of Woodford. This led him to join the Society of Genealogists, of which he was the longest serving member at the time of his death in 2004.

In 1940 he applied for a commission in the Royal Artillery and was posted to the 10th Anti-Aircraft (Z) Regiment R.A. in the Midlands. After his regiment was disbanded in 1946, he was put in charge of a German prisoner-of-war camp at Chelmsford and was finally demobbed in the rank of Major and awarded a Territorial Decoration.

He returned to Erith & Co but found little to do as all materials were rationed and salesmanship had become a lost art.

In 1947 he answered an advertisement for an Assistant Archivist at the Essex Record Office and rather to his surprise was taken on. His first task was to visit every parish in the County and inspect and list their registers and other records. At the same time he was charged with trying to persuade the parish Incumbents to deposit them with the Record Office. He was responsible for producing the Chigwell section of the Victoria County History of Essex and also wrote articles for the *Essex Review*, notably one in four sections published throughout 1953 on *The Scotts of Woolston Hall*, and several other shorter ones in 1948/9.

Edward joined the Woodford Historical Society in 1945 and was elected its president in 1949, from which office he had to resign on leaving the district. He remained a Vice-President, however, until his death. This led in 1950 to the publication of his book *Woodford, Essex 1600-1836 A Study of Local Government in a Residential Parish*. This represents Part X of the Proceedings and Transactions of the Woodford and District Historical Society. Of this, a review printed in *Notes and Queries* (O.U.P. 23 December 1950) says:

The Woodford Historical Society is responsible for issuing a splendid study of local government in a residential parish between 1600 and 1836; the author, as well as the Society, is deserving of high praise. Woodford may now be regarded almost as part of London; its growth has been so rapid that it is hard to believe that it was once a village in rural Essex with its overseers, parish constables, beadle, surveyors and other officers responsible for maintaining certain standards of conduct. It is from the records of these men that Mr Erith has compiled a most readable book which, incidentally, serves as a model, showing how parish documents should always be related to manorial archives and to the records of the Court of Quarter Sessions and other official bodies. This book is an important contribution to economic, social and parochial history, and ought to enjoy a much wider appeal than its title would suggest.



Fig. 6. Edward Erith, 1966
(courtesy of Perdita Erith).

With the publication of *Essex Parish Records 1240-1894* in 1951, Edward's work as an archivist in Essex came to an end. This, together with the publication of his book on Woodford, led to Edward being elected a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society at the instigation of the Essex County Archivist, Dr Frederick Emmison, in 1952. He later became a Life Fellow and a life member of the British Records Society.

Throughout this period, Edward had remained a non-executive director of Erith & Co and in 1951 he returned to the company on a full-time basis, moving eventually to Berkshire as a consequence.

He became Chairman and Managing Director in 1966 and finally retired in 1977 although he remained Honorary President until the company was acquired by Graham Group plc in 1995. The company is now part of the French multinational St Gobain Group and its branches, of which there were over 50 at the time of the takeover, now trade as Jewsons.

On his retirement at the age of 70, Edward was able to complete the research he had started many years previously on Robert Knight, Cashier of the South Sea Company. Together with the late A.R.J. Ramsey, he published a booklet under the auspices of Woodford Historical Society, (Transactions XVI: 1987) *The True and Lamentable History of Robert Knight, Esquire and the South Sea Bubble together with The Rise and Fall of the House called Luxborough*.

The story of Robert (Bob) Knight is a fascinating study of how vast fortunes could be made in the early 18th cent. City of London. Almost all but the insiders eventually lost money in a way which reminds us of similar financial hysteria from tulip-mania to the dot-com boom. The magnificent Palladian house built by Bob Knight in 1717 was contemporarily described as the finest in Essex. It lay in Chigwell parish in what is now a triangle formed by the River Roding, the railway and the M11. After being seized and sold for the benefit

of South Sea creditors, it changed hands numerous times before being pulled down in 1800, the materials being said to have netted over 10% above the original cost of the building.

As a result of Edward's work, the author of *The South Sea Bubble*, John Carswell, had to revise his second edition. Carswell paid the following tribute to Edward in his preface:

My gratitude extends also to drawing my attention to the work of Mr E.J. Erith published by the Woodford Historical Society. . . Mr Erith unearthed much extremely valuable material about the background, career and family of Robert Knight. When extended by other research on the leads Mr Erith provided. . . Knight becomes a far more important figure, the equal of the usually accepted leader of the South Sea Company, Sir John Blunt, if not actually its genius.

In 1982 at the age of 75, Edward acquired his first personal computer and offered his services to the Society of Genealogists. He indexed several Parish Registers including those of St James's Spanish Place, the church attended by many members of the French aristocracy who had escaped the revolution. He also undertook a thorough research into his own ancestry and produced a detailed record stretching back to the early 1600s of all the Erith families in the country.

Edward died at the great age of 96 and retained his interest in local history and genealogy almost to the end.

Acknowledgments:

Most of the information about Raymond is taken from *Raymond Erith, Architect*, by his second daughter, my cousin, Lucy Archer, published by the Cygnet Press in 1985 and, although now out of print, available from Heywood Hill, 10 Curzon St., London, W.1. I am indebted to her for allowing me to draw so heavily on her work. The book was published to critical acclaim and presents a beautifully produced and illustrated account of Raymond's work and his theory and practice of architecture.

For details of Felix's archaeological work I am obliged to Dr. Paul Sealey F.S.A., for his permission to quote at length from his chapter 'Felix Erith, Farmer, Archaeologist and Historian' which forms part of *The Archaeology of Ardleigh, Essex: Excavations 1955-80* by N.R. Brown, published by the Essex County Council Heritage Conservation Planning Division Report No.90, 1999.

I could not have written about Edward without the help of his daughter, my cousin Perdita Erith, who assembled much of the

information I have used, and which I acknowledge with grateful thanks. This includes a few brief biographical notes assembled by Edward shortly before his death.

I must also thank my cousin Tommas Graves for permission to make use of his privately produced work *Allan Graves and the Erith family*.

Your Contributors

Terri Barnes, M.A. of Portland, Oregon, took her B.A. degree at Portland State University in 1999: she followed this up with a master's degree and a thesis on 'A Nun's Life: Barking Abbey in the late Medieval and Early Modern periods'. She has been to England to see what Barking is now like.

Jeremy Collingwood worked for nine years in Government service in Zambia. On return to England he worked with the Director of Public Prosecutions as a barrister. He trained for the Anglican ministry and after ordination he held incumbencies in Bristol and Guildford. He is now in pensioned ministry and lives in Saffron Walden. He is married and has three daughters and five grandchildren.

Robert Erith, T.D., D.L. is the eldest son of Felix Erith. He was born in 1938 at Ardleigh, Essex and was educated at Littlegarth, Ipswich School and Writtle College. After a career in the City he became a non-executive director of a number of companies including Erith plc, of which he was Deputy Chairman for 12 years.

He married in 1966 Sara, daughter of Dr. C.F.J. Muller and has three sons. He farms at Shrubs Farm, Lamarsh, where he has lived for the past 40 years. He was High Sheriff of Essex 1997/8, and a Deputy Lieutenant since 1998. He has been President of the Dedham Vale Society since 2003 and is a Vice-President of CPRESSEX. He is a Fellow of the Royal Philatelic Society, London.

W. Raymond Powell, M.A., F.R.Hist.S. was Editor of the *Victoria County History* for Essex from 1951 to 1986. He published his biography of *John Horace Round* in 2001. He now lives in Norwich.

Book Reviews

TITHE AND OTHER RECORDS OF ESSEX AND BARKING. By Herbert Hope Lockwood. *Essex Record Office*. 2006. ISBN 1 898529 24 8. 156 pp. Illust. £9.99 (inc. p.& p.) from the E.R.O.

We have had to wait a long time for this book, and very sadly this reminder of Bert Lockwood's academic ability and knowledge of Essex history has not appeared until after his death. It is evidence of what we have lost.

There have been a number of excellent local studies of the impact of tithe on social and economic life in rural communities. But none of which I am aware has managed to encompass, as this study does, the intrusive aspect of the always contentious tithe in such depth and with such impressive command of the detailed evidence.

The Tithe Redemption Commission was formed out of the then Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries as a consequence of the Tithe Redemption Act of 1936, which was eventually to resolve this chronic problem. These functions were inherited from the responsibilities of the old Land Commission relating to land tenure, enclosure, the enfranchisement of copyhold and tithes. All were ancient, complicated and fraught with social and political implications. I joined the Tithe Redemption Commission in 1939. Conspicuous on the wall was a notice which said something like this:

Tithe is a complex subject. The more you learn about it the less you know of it. Only those with a profound ignorance of tithes profess to speak about the subject with authority.

Whether one should take this as encouragement to learn or as a cause for fear we never could tell. But the wise man who penned it would have needed to qualify his conclusions had he lived to read Lockwood's book, whose conclusions are based on meticulous research and impeccable scholarship.

The contentiousness of tithe dated from many years back. Long before the period dealt with by Lockwood the validity of tithe, based on alleged scriptural authority, had been the cause of constant animosity towards established churches, by no means exclusively in England. Alcuin, the 8th cent. scholar and confidant of Charlemagne, had said that 'faith comes of free will, not of compulsion...it is the tithes that have undermined the faith of the Saxons'. John Selden in his *History of Tythes* (1617) remarked acidly 'Abraham paid tythes to Melchizidec, what then? It does not follow that I should pay them' and 'it is ridiculous to say, the tythes are God's part and so the clergy must have them'. All this incurred the displeasure of the King and the ecclesiastical establishment, and Selden was threatened with imprisonment.

Lockwood's study is not focused so much on these more general aspects as on the local and practical incidence of this much hated tax. But, as is so evident, tithe was a constant political anomaly and a painful burden on the relationships between local clergy and their parishioners. It was only finally eliminated in 1996, when the redemption process set in motion by the 1936 Act was completed.

There is an uncommonly vast corpus of tithe documentation in the E.R.O. and local sources with particular reference to Barking. It is this which Lockwood has explored and exploited with great skill. He not only describes the contents of this remarkable collection but employs the material in clear relation with Barking's particular circumstances, personalities and events. That Barking is important in the economic and ecclesiastical life of the county adds another factor to the book's significance. At the technical level the study interprets with great clarity the ways in which the tithe circuits were organised and administered. Most usefully, Lockwood demonstrates how researchers can exploit this potential, but also recognise the limitations of the tithe records, especially in their use collaterally with other archival documentation. The technical aspects of such research, especially as regards the location of relevant references and the organisational implications of the material, are clearly set out. In doing so Lockwood has established a reliable pathway into this difficult territory that future researchers will find invaluable.

It is perhaps ironic that a much-hated and despised levy, the cause of so much rural distress and strife, should have become treasured as one of the richest strands in the practices of historians, genealogists and those engaged in place- and field-name studies. Almost all of these make considerable use of tithe archives in their work, but few understand the obscure origins or complicated mechanism of the subject. Now that Lockwood has remedied this deficiency for them, its use will be made easier. In particular they can now fully comprehend the use of tithe documentation not only for basic information but also in the validation of other, sometimes less valuable, contemporary records.

The special status of Barking is a major factor in this study. There was the Abbey, there are the parish church

of St. Margaret's and the Ilford Hospital, all of them important participants in the local tithe scene. That makes for special local characteristics deriving from these bodies' prestige and authority. But here as elsewhere tithe practices, like manorial arrangements, were subject to the ambiguities of local variations. This in no way reduces the value of this study to researchers: indeed it is fortunate that these factors have in this way enriched the quality and scope of local tithe documentation. Barking is fortunate, too, in that it has attracted the interest and labours of a fine succession of historians, from Letheuillier to Oxley, O'Leary and now Lockwood. Through them Barking's historical studies have gained the reputation of being among the best in the county.

Finally, the book has the great merits of informative and carefully compiled appendices, notes and indexes. The text, although containing much detail and no frills, is written with style and clarity. It is presented in a handsome format and, thanks to a grant from the Friends of Historic Essex, very attractively illustrated. One must be grateful that, having at length published this book, the Record Office have done Bert Lockwood proud - and that its cost is so moderate.

Kenneth Neale

★ ★ ★

THE DAGENHAM MURDER: the brutal Killing of PC George Clarke, 1846. By Linda Rhodes, Lee Sheldon & Kathryn Ablett. *London Borough of Barking & Dagenham*. 2005. ISBN 0900325372. 332 pp. many ill., inc. 6 colour. £9.99: postal sales (postal charge extra) from Barking Central Library, IG11 8DG

Police history is a comparatively recent addition to the specialist historical disciplines that have evolved since the 1960's. Many such approaches have centred on the importance of ordinary individuals in the overall scheme of history, and this book provides an account of the life of Police Constable George Clark, an ordinary Metropolitan policeman who was brutally murdered while on duty in Dagenham in May 1846. Described by *The Times* as 'a truly mysterious affair', enquiries into the murder extended over many years, with several inquests during which a lot of circumstantial evidence and speculation was reported and taken up by the national press. The three authors have set out to examine the murder case 'as logically and dispassionately as possible using all the surviving sources'. They provide a full list of their impressive range of sources at the end of the book.

First comes the earlier life of Clark, born in Bedfordshire, who joined the Police at the age of 19 in 1845 and was initially posted to Arbour Lane in the East End of London. Although the Metropolitan Police had been established in 1829, it was only in January 1840 that its territory was extended into Essex, when thirteen Essex parishes in the Waltham and Becontree hundreds received their first detachments of Metropolitan policemen. This was shortly before the Essex Constabulary was set up under the 1839 County Police Force Act to serve the remainder of the county. George Clark was transferred to Dagenham, one of the thirteen parishes, and was murdered there in May 1846,

a mere six weeks after he had been transferred there from Arbour Lane.

We are given much more than an account of PC. Clark's murder. There are biographical details of many of the police officers in the area, as well as of witnesses who came forward at various times. The sometimes conflicting evidence give to the successive inquests is also described, as efforts were made by detectives to identify the murderers and mount a prosecution. There is also interesting material about other crimes committed in the district, including attacks on other police officers.

The concluding chapter reviews again the masses of evidence to try to ascertain why an apparently likeable and respected young officer should have been hacked to death. Had it been a case of mistaken identity, enemies from his previous station, or members of a corn-stealing gang? No one was ever charged with the murder, though three Dagenham police officers were convicted of perjury and served time in the notorious police hulks.

Various investigations into PC Clark's murder generated a considerable amount of complex evidence from many sources, as well as details of many witnesses. The addition of a time-line of events and of a reference table of the principal 'characters' would have been a useful addition to the book and saved the occasional confusion that this reader suffered in keeping track of the 'characters'. Any account of what was a twelve-year investigation has to deal with a vast mass of detail, but there were a number of places where more editing would have made the story line clearer. But in support of this comprehensive text there are many black-and-white photographs and maps from all around Dagenham, and a very effective use of some coloured plates, including portraits of the Rev. Thomas Fanshawe, Vicar of Dagenham, and of the two first Metropolitan Police Commissioners. Local readers will find plenty to interest them in the accounts of events in Dagenham when it was little more than a country village, and readers with policemen ancestors who served in the area will also find some valuable factual material.

This well-researched and attractive book is a useful addition to local police studies, and a credit to the Borough, whose active and informed support for its local history is an example to neighbouring authorities. It will complement the existing memorial to PC George Clark in Dagenham churchyard and his entry in the National Police Memorial in The Mall unveiled by the Queen in May 2005.

Maureen Scollan

★ ★ ★

PAGLESHAM NATIVES. By Mark and Rosemary Roberts. *Published by the authors.* 2006. ISBN 0 9516370 3 7. 150 pp. many illust. Copies for sale from the authors at Springvale, Beach Road, St. Osyth, Essex CO16 8SB.

The parishes in that little corner of Essex 'behind' Southend but also on the wrong side of the Crouch 'behind' Burnham have not figured at all largely in Essex records. Apart from Benton few have written of their history until Mark and Rosemary Roberts, herself a native of Paglesham, produced their little local histories, of which this is the most substantial.

Paglesham's chief claim to fame was its oyster fishery, smaller and less famous than Colchester's, but fully worthy of its chapter in Harvey Benham's *Essex Gold*. But unknown to him several of the families of the prosperous leaders of this industry in Paglesham, and particularly the Wiseman family, had left behind them copious records of their work and of Paglesham life, especially in the 19th. cent. These have been the chief source from which the Roberts have been enabled to write this fascinating account of their village and their life.

The outcome is a most fascinating account of the lives of this small group of closely-knit and inter-married, but certainly not always harmonious, leading families: the larger-than-life personality of J.F.T. Wiseman (always so known) and the benefactions of Zachary Pettitt, the successful incomer to the community. The numerous extracts from their letters and diaries give authenticity and show the personalities of their writers. But inevitably we have loose ends which cannot be resolved, not least because some things were better left unwritten. It is a reasonable guess – but remains no more than that – that the families' prosperity in the earlier years of the century owed much to the smuggling which their location and their business so greatly facilitated. The 1870's were boom years for their lawful business: this owed much to Fred Wiseman's active part in the politicking at national level to keep the oyster business effectively closed to incomers. Disraeli's effusive letter of thanks to Wiseman shows that even then offers of free lunches of oysters to 10 Downing St. gained their reward. Sadly also the records stop short with the turn of the century, and the more recent years of the industry's decline receive only cursory treatment.

All in all the Roberts' book sheds a most fascinating light on a part of the county which few of us know and which is too easily overlooked. The natives of Paglesham, of both the human and the mollusc species, have gained a chronicle worthy of their great interest, and delightfully presented with many illustrations including a cover painting by the writers' artist daughter.

Michael Beale

★ ★ ★

FOLKLORE OF ESSEX. By Sylvia Kent. *Tempus.* 2005. ISBN 0 7524 3677 5. 192 pp. many illust. £14.99.

This book is one of a national series on Folklore, and it certainly puts Essex on the map. Essex has a wealth of interesting traditions and legends, which have been well illustrated in eleven chapters ranging from 'Foodlore' and 'Calendar Customs' to the 'Witch Country' and 'Legendary Folk'.

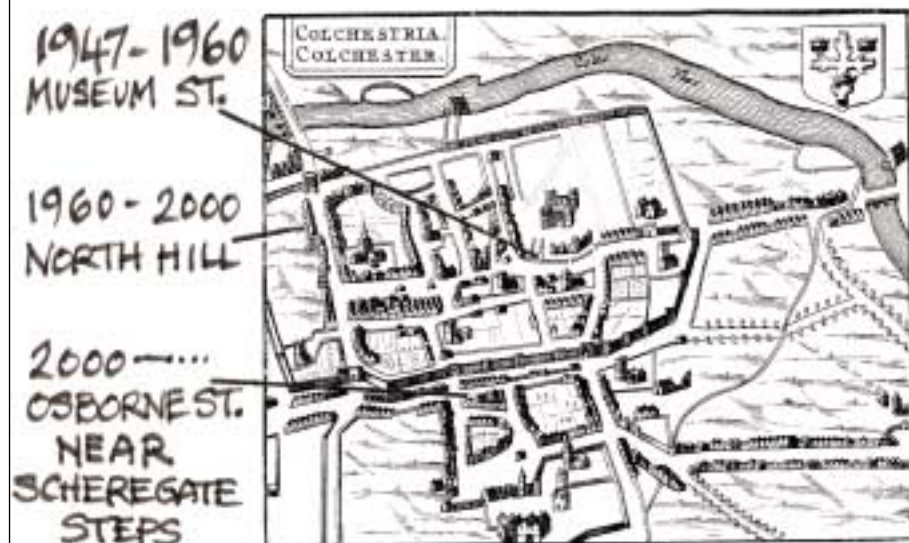
Folklore will be a popular read, but many of the old traditions have not been referenced or attributed to individuals. The earliest reference in the bibliography is to Philip Morant's *The History and Antiquities of Essex* of 1768. The Essex Record Office has a wealth of articles and papers with much earlier source material. The topics are always difficult to collate, but it would have been useful to have a map or a grid reference system so that the sites could easily be identified and assessed.

A well-illustrated, well-presented book which is bound to appeal to the general public.

Anne Brooks

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ESSEX CHURCHES. By David Stanford. *Frances Lincoln*. 2006. ISBN 0 7112 2643 1. 112 pp. many ill. 25.5 cm x 27 cm. £14.99. to be published 2 November.

Stanford, a photographer, recently produced a successful picture book of Suffolk churches, and has followed this up by one of 59 Essex churches. His is a wilful selection, and all the better for that: most of the obvious favourites do not appear and his quirky choices include some little-known gems. The book's great merit is in his superb photographs, sometimes just one of the outside, often several, both internal and external. The supporting text is also very personal, and perhaps owes too much to the spirit of Arthur Mee, but it is informative, it does not grate, and on a quick run-through I have noted no obvious errors.

In spirit it is a book for the small coffee-table, and of wonderful quality for its modest price. Absolutely a superb Christmas gift.

Michael Beale

The Editor regrets having to hold over several other reviews received owing to pressure on space.

THE MID-ESSEX BEAGLES 1953-2004. By Peter Bostridge. *The author*. 2006. 128pp. many ill. £20.00 (plus £3.00 p&p) from Mrs. C.J. Porter, Elm Cottage, Laindon Common Road, Little Burstead, Billericay, Essex CM12 9TJ

An account of the fifty years of this beagle hunt and pack, and of its long-serving Master, Phemie Angus, who dedicated her life to the pack, taking great pride not only in her hounds' performance in the field but also in their breeding. She is truly an Essex personality: she became Master at the time of the hunt's foundation in the bleak days of the early post-war period, and saw it through right to the time of the legislation against hunting.

OTHER BOOKS RECEIVED OR NOTED

BARKING A HISTORY by Sue Curtis. *Philimore*. 2006 ISBN 1 86099 224 2. 1282pp. ill. Price £15.99.

NEW HALL and its SCHOOL by Tony Tuckwell. *Free Range Publishing*. 2006 243pp.

ESSEX: HISTORY YOU CAN SEE by Robert Hallmann. *Tempus*. 2006 ISBN 0 75243 971 5. 126pp. ill.p. Price £12.99.

Forthcoming Events Further Studies

UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX

Department of History, Centre for Local History
(www.essex.ac.uk/history/local_history)

M. A./Diploma in Local and Regional History.

The History Department runs M. A. and Diploma schemes in Local and Regional History. These concentrate on the history of Essex and Suffolk but also explore some of the wider issues surrounding the subject. Schemes comprise taught modules, a Summer School, and a dissertation, and can be taken full-time in one year or part-time in two, or by credit accumulation over 3-5 years. Much of the teaching is done in the evening.

For further details contact the Graduate Secretary, History Dept., University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ (Tel: 01206 872302) or e-mail gsechist@essex.ac.uk or look at the History Dept. website (<http://www.essex.ac.uk/history/>).

Opportunities for Future Study at University Level

Both the University of Cambridge and the University of East Anglia have substantial continuing education programmes covering the same range of subject areas as the Open Studies programme. Their courses are run at a large number of venues, many of which may be accessible to students formerly studying with the University of Essex. They also offer a range of general and subject-specific Certificates and Diplomas which may offer routes to continue an interest in a particular topic. The University of Cambridge also runs a range of weekend residential courses at Madingley Hall.

Both institutions would be pleased to send information on their programmes and details can be found on their websites.

University of Cambridge

University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education
Madingley Hall
Madingley
Cambridge CB3 8AQ

Tel: 01954 280280 www.cont-ed.cam.ac.uk

University of East Anglia

Continuing Education
University of East Anglia
Norwich NR4 7TJ

Tel: 01603 593266 www.uea.ac.uk/contedu

New Modular Courses for Certificate in Local History

The History Department has redesigned this certificate on a modular basis. Each module will last 10 weeks and will be available both to those who wish to gain a Certificate and to those who wish to attend for general interest only. A seminar approach of discussion and study will be followed. The following modules will run in the first two terms of 2007, all at University of Essex.

The History of Colchester (tutor Andrew Phillips) Monday evenings from January 2007. The aim of this module will be both to consider the history of Colchester from the Iron Age to the present and to set that growth against the wider picture of urban growth in Britain and Europe. Original documents will also be used to consider the 'how' as well as the 'what' of historical study.

Introduction to the Archaeology of Essex and East Anglia (tutor Howard Brooks). A weekday evening (not yet decided) from January 2007. The course will look at the methodology and theoretical background of archaeology based on findings in Essex and East Anglia and examine how this information is disseminated via academic and popular publications. There will be a Saturday field trip.

Family and Community in Colchester and Essex (tutor Paul Glenister). A weekday evening in summer term. This course analyses the lifecycle and experience of ordinary people living in Essex in the 19th cent., reconstructing both family and community life, following a different theme each week. Original sources like the census, newspapers, letters and diaries will be studied.

Further details from the History Department (details as above).

ESSEX PLACE-NAMES PROJECT.

The Tenth Annual Essex Place-names Seminar will be held in Maldon on Sat. 18 Nov. at 2.00pm. The guest lecturer will be Mr. Edward Martin of the Suffolk Archaeological Service, who will speak on *The making of the East Anglian Landscape: field-systems and their social context* and there will be talks by Local Recorders. Tickets £5.00 (payable to E.S.A.H.) from the Project Coordinator, 27 Torbryan, Ingatestone CM4 9JZ - please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

Museums and Places to Visit

Colchester Museums

CASTLE MUSEUM
High Street Colchester
Tel: 01206 282939

Open Monday-Saturday 10.00am-5.00pm, Sunday 11.00am-5.00pm (last entry 4.30pm). Admission £4.00 adults, £2.80 concessions, family tickets available at cheaper rates.

Largest Norman Keep in Europe, superb Roman displays, hands-on activities and daily tours of the Roman vaults, castle roof and Norman chapel. Saxon, Medieval and prison displays. Many special attractions and events for children.

HOLLYTREES.
High Street, Colchester
Tel: 01206 282940

Opening hours are the same as the Castle Museum. Admission free, but charges are made for some activities. Hollytrees' museum shows how the lives of Colchester people, including the past inhabitants of Hollytrees House, have changed over the last 300 years. Discover how technology has transformed our domestic lives and play with Victorian toys. There will also be a doll's house of Hollytrees showing the furniture and building as it was in 1881.

NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
All Saints Church, High Street, Colchester
Tel: 01206 282941

An interesting perspective on the local natural environment from the Ice Age up to today. Admission free. Same opening hours as Castle Museum.

TYMPERLEYS CLOCK MUSEUM
Trinity Street, Colchester
Tel: 01206 282943

A fine collection of Colchester-made clocks displayed in this restored late 15th century house. Admission free. Same opening hours as Castle Museum, but closed on Sundays.

BRAINTREE DISTRICT MUSEUM
Manor Street, Braintree
Tel: 01376 325266

Open Mon-Sat. 10.00am-5.00pm. Enquire for Bank Holiday opening hours. Admission £1.00 (50p concessions) to residents in Braintree District; £2.00 (£1.00 concessions) to those outside.

THE VESTRY HOUSE MUSEUM
Vestry Road, Walthamstow, London E17 9NH
Tel: (020) 8509 1917

This is the Community History Museum of the London Borough of Waltham Forest, only a few minutes' walk from Walthamstow shopping centre and set in the former workhouse, built c. 1730. It contains the Local History Library and the Archive for the Borough.

It is open Monday-Friday 10.00am-1.00pm and 2.00-5.30pm Saturdays 10.00am-1.00pm and 2.00-5.00pm. Could those wishing to consult the Archive please make a prior appointment by telephone.

THURROCK MUSEUM SERVICE
Central Complex, Orsett Road, Grays RM17 5DX
Tel: 01375 385484

Open Monday to Saturday (Bank Holidays excepted) 9.00am-5.00pm. Admission free.

Southend Museums

CENTRAL MUSEUM
Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 6EW
Tel: 01702 215131

Open Tuesday-Saturday 10.00am-5.00pm. Entry free. An Edwardian building housing displays of archaeology, natural history, social history and local history, telling the story of man in his changing environment within the south-east Essex area. The 'Discovery Centre' will include four sections: historic photographs of south-east Essex through a computer base, a video microscope for coins and natural history and topic tables for schools.

Southend Planetarium is situated on the first floor of the Central Museum. Shows from Wednesday to Saturday, at 11.00am, 2.00pm, 4.00pm. Please telephone for bookings and further details. This is the only Planetarium in south-east England outside London.

PRITTLEWELL PRIORY MUSEUM
Priory Park, Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea
Tel: 01702 342878

Open Tuesday to Saturday 10.00am-1.00pm and 2.00-5.00pm. Entry free.

The remains of a 12th century Priory with later additions. It now houses displays of natural history, medieval religious life and a nationally important display of the history of radio and television. Adequate car-parking within the grounds.

CHELMSFORD & ESSEX MUSEUM
and ESSEX REGIMENT MUSEUM
Oaklands Park, Moulsham Street, Chelmsford CM2 9AQ
Tel: 01245 615100. Fax: 01245 262428

For times of admission etc. please see inside front cover.

Special Events and Exhibitions 2006
14 Oct. - 10 Dec. *Essex 1945-1975*. A special exhibition from the Essex Sound and Video Archive.

SAFFRON WALDEN MUSEUM
Museum Street, Saffron Walden, Essex CB10 1JL
Tel: 01799 510333

The Museum is open on Mondays-Saturdays from 10.00am-4.30pm, and on Sundays and Bank Holidays from 2.30-4.30pm. Cost of admission £1.00: discount tickets (retired etc.) 50p: children (18 and under) free.

THOMAS PLUME'S LIBRARY

Thomas Plume's Library, Market Hill, Maldon (registered charity no 310661) is a remarkable example of an endowed public library, founded by Thomas Plume, Archdeacon of Rochester, in 1704. It contains about 7,000 books, the considerable majority of them brought together by him, on the upper floor of the disused church of St. Peter's and represents the library held by a scholar of his day. The Trustees and the Friends of the Library make it their business to maintain the collection and, so far as possible, replace the relatively few which the ravages of time and of borrowers have caused to be lost from the original lists.

It is open free for visits and reading from 2.00 to 4.00pm on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, and from 10.00 am till noon on Saturdays. It may be opened at other times by previous agreement with the Librarian. For reasons of safety there are not permitted to be more than about eight people together on the library floor at one time.

County Historical and similar Societies

ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

2007 Programme

- Sat. 10 March *Essex Cloth Industry in 15th and 16th century* talk by Dr. Jennifer Ward. 2.30pm. Christ Church, Coggeshall.
- Sat. 21 April Visit to Broadoaks Manor, Wimbish. 2.30pm.
- Fri. 23 May Morant Lecture. *Marketing the Essex Seaside: a Retrospect* by Mrs. Shirley Durgan. 7.15pm. Methodist Church, Maidenburgh St., Colchester.

For information please contact the hon. Membership Secretary (Miss Ann Turner, 1 Robin Close, Great Bentley CO7 8QH) or the hon. Excursions Secretary (Mrs. Pat Ryan, 60 Maldon Road, Danbury, CM3 4QL - Tel: 01245 222237).

ESSEX SOCIETY FOR FAMILY HISTORY

2006/7 Programme - Chelmsford

Meetings are held monthly (except in August) at the Essex Record Office, Wharf Rd., Chelmsford. Parking nearby. Research Room and bookstall opens from 10.30am. Computer Group meets at 10.30am. Tutorials 12.30pm. Main meeting at 2.30pm., with a short break for tea, for which donations invited.

- Sat. 21 Oct. *A Nest of Hornecks - Dr. Johnson's London* by Moira Bonnington.
- Sat. 18 Nov. A talk by Roger Errington (ONS Adoptions Branch).
- Sat. 16 Dec. *The Courtauld Dynasty* by David Possee. 2007
- Sat. 20 Jan. *Poverty, Porridge and Pavola* by Audrey Gillett.
- Sat. 17 Feb. *Smuggling in Essex* by Graham Smith.
- Sat. 17 March to be announced.
- Sat. 21 April *Circus Life and Circus Families* by Robert Bartlet.
- Sat. 19 May to be announced.
- Sat. 16 June *Researching and Accessing the Warner Archive* by Ann Wise.

In addition to the meetings at Chelmsford the North-West Essex Branch holds monthly meetings at Bell Cottage, South Rd., Saffron Walden at 8.00pm on the second Thursday of the month. The North-East Essex Branch holds meetings at the Cardinal Vaughan Hall, Priory St., Colchester on the first Saturday of the month at 2.15pm (doors open 2.00pm). The South-East Essex Branch meets at The Avenue Baptist Church Hall, Milton Road, Westcliff-on-Sea on the first Saturday of the month at 2.45pm (doors open 2.00pm). The West Essex Branch holds meetings at St. John's Arts and Recreation Centre, Market Street, Old Harlow normally on the first Saturday of the month at 2.30pm.

For further information please contact the hon. Secretary, Mrs. Ann Church (Tel: 01206 863857).

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION

Essex Branch 2006/7 Programme

- Sat. 4 Nov. *Queen Henrietta Maria* by Prof. Barry Coward (President of the Historical Association).
- Sat. 2 Dec. *Liberal Landslide 1906: Recovery and Triumph 1895-1906* by Prof. Chris Wrigley.
- 2007
- Sat. 13 Jan. *Essex History from 17th to 20th cent.* by Dr. James Bettley, architectural historian currently revising *Essex Pevsner*.
- Sat. 3 Feb. Members' Meeting - short talks by our members.
- Sat. 3 March *Wartime Life in Clacton and the Clacton V.C.H. Group Project for Schools* by Dr. Chris Thornton, Essex V.C.H. and University.
- Sat. 13 April *Imperial Liberty? Colonial Liberty? Civil War?: Aspects of the American Conflict 1763-83* by Emeritus Prof. Peter Marshall.

Unless otherwise stated, all meetings will be held in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford, and will commence at 2.30pm. Could those attending all meetings in the Committee Room please arrange to arrive at the Atrium 15 mins. early for security reasons.

Visitors and prospective members warmly welcomed: a £2.00 donation is requested.

Enquiries to the hon. Sec. Mrs. Barbara Windsor, 11 Butlers Close, Broomfield, Chelmsford CM1 7BE. Contact point for visits: Marguerite Fuke, 165 Wood St., Chelmsford CM2 8BJ (Tel: 01245 358255).

ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL CONGRESS

2006/7 Programme

- Sat. 4 Nov. **Archaeological Symposium** at Saffron Walden. 2007
- Sat. 19 May **Annual General Meeting** at St. Barnabas Hall, Thorley (by kind invitation of the Bishops Stortford Historical Society). 10.00 for 10.30am.

For further information please consult the hon. Secretary, Mrs. Pauline Dalton, Roseleigh, Epping Rd., Epping CM16 5HW. (Tel: 01992 812725/ email: pmd2@ukonline.co.uk) or the hon. Assistant Secretary, Mrs. Wendy Hibbitt, 2 Green Close, Writtle CM1 3DX (Tel: 01245 421653/ email: wendyhibbitt@hotmail.com).

THE FRIENDS OF HISTORIC ESSEX

- Sat. 14 July **2007 Annual General Meeting** at The Maltings, Mill Lane, Great Dunmow. 2.00pm.

For details of membership please see back page.

THE FRIENDS OF ESSEX CHURCHES

Study Days for 2007 will be on Wed. 2 May and Sat. 1 Oct. The churches to be visited have still to be selected. Further information from Mrs. Marion Scantlebury, Parvilles, Hatfield Heath, Bishops Stortford, Herts. CM22 7AT (Tel: 01279 731228).

Annual minimum membership subscription: £15 individual, £25 family. Holds annual September Bike Ride in aid of Essex Churches, and other events. Hon. Membership Secretary: Keith Gardner, Pink Cottage, Curtis Mill Green, Stapleford Tawney, Essex RM4 1RT (Tel: 01708 688576/ email: keith.gardner@care4free.net).

ESSEX SENIOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

2006 Programme

- Tues. 7 Nov. *The Agricultural Depression of mid-Essex c.1870-1901* by Neil Wiffen.
- Tues. 5 Dec. *Essex and the Peasants' Revolt* by Herbert Eiden.

The Society meets at 10.30am in the Lecture Theatre of the Essex Record Office. The meetings are open and free to all but a charge of 50p. is made for tea/coffee and biscuits.

ESSEX GARDENS TRUST

For further information please consult the hon. Secretary, Lance Lepper (Tel: 01245 400284) or the hon. Membership Secretary, Vanessa Stopford (Tel: 0208 674 1416 - Email: v.stopford@ukonline.co.uk).

THE FRIENDS OF THOMAS PLUME'S LIBRARY

2007 Programme

- Sat. 24 Feb. **Concert.** United Reformed Church Hall, Maldon. 7.30pm.
- Sat. 19 May **Annual General Meeting.** United Reformed Church Hall, Maldon. 7.30pm.

The Friends of Thomas Plume's Library (reg. Charity no. 1098311) was formed in 1987 to support and assist the Trustees of the Library in all aspects of the preservation and conservation of books and accessions to the Library. Enquiries about membership should go to the hon. Membership Secretary, Mrs. Mary Wells, 34 Beeligh Rd., Maldon CM9 5QH (Tel. 01621 841057).

WEST ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

2006/7 Programme

- Mon. 13 Nov. *Under the Bandages: the Science of Mummies* an illustrated talk by Paul Clifford from the British Museum.
- Mon. 11 Dec. *From Montagu House to the Great Court: a history of the British Museum* an illustrated talk from Robert Gwynne from the Museum.
- 2007
- Mon. 12 Feb. *The Bible as History* an illustrated talk from Dr. Jonathan Tubbs from the British Museum.

All meetings, unless otherwise stated, at 7.45pm in the Sixth Form Unit, Woodford County High School, High Road, Woodford Green. For further details please telephone: 020 8989 9294.

Help to support the
Essex Record Office
by joining the
Friends of Historic Essex

You will:

- Have the opportunity to be involved in special projects in the Record Office, such as helping to preserve some of the vital raw materials of Essex history.
- Receive regular newsletters and free copies of 'Update', the Record Office bulletin of accessions.
- Receive a discount on Essex Record Office publications.
- Meet other people with historical interests at occasional talks and seminars especially geared towards new researchers, and at other special events.

Join the Friends of Historic Essex, and help support one of the best county record offices in England.

Please send your cheque for *at least* **£10.00**
(but a larger amount is especially welcome)
to the Hon. Membership Secretary:

Mr Peter Durr
Membership Secretary, Friends of Historic Essex
2 Thatched Cottages, Church Lane,
Little Leighs, Chelmsford CM3 1PQ