

Essex JOURNAL

A REVIEW OF LOCAL HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

Autumn 2010

DAVID WILLIAMS

DISCUSSES THE SIDNEY FAMILY,

CAROLINE WAKEHAM

EXAMINES THE COMING OF THE RAILWAY TO CHELMSFORD,

RICHARD MORRIS

RECOUNTS THE LIFE AND TIMES OF BARON ROOKWOOD

AND

NEIL WIFFEN

LOOKS AT PILLBOXES

PLUS REMEMBERING REVEREND SMITH OF BOREHAM,
BOOK REVIEWS
AND BERYL BOARD REVEALS HER 20 ANSWERS!



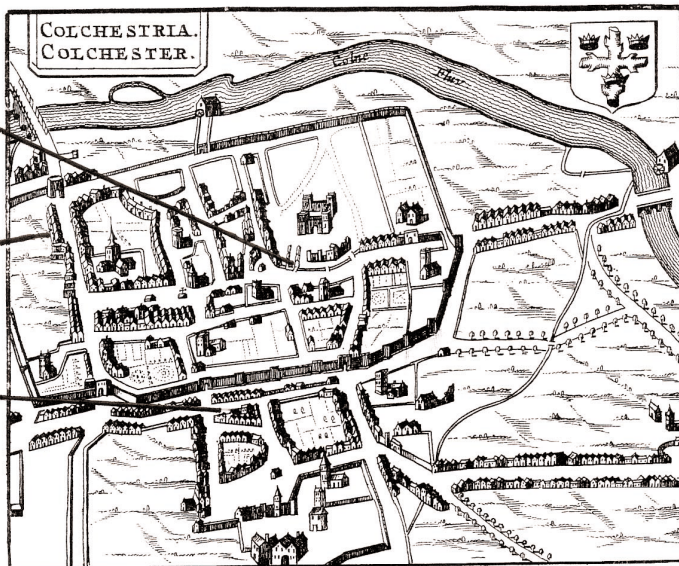
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Cover illustrations:

Extract of a letter from Gervase Locke to Humphrey Sidney. (Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office, D/P 235/28/1.)

A rather exposed FW3/28a anti-tank pillbox overlooking Croxton's Mill (SMR 10864), once screened by a hedge. (Photo, N. Wiffen.)

When I last wrote back in May we had yet to have an election. Looking back on events since, it has been a roller-coaster five months. Before the outcome I had a break in Cley, Norfolk. Children were dropped off, the weather was wonderful and the driving gentle. Our route, from Chelmsford to Sudbury, Bury St Edmunds to Thetford, Swaffham to Fakenham before reaching the coast on Tuesday 11th May was wonderful. We soon discovered the digital television in our hotel room and were transfixed by the comings and goings of the politicians as the political parties slowly ground their way towards a coalition agreement. I had a truly profound sense that I really was witnessing history in the making.

This ability for all of us to feel as if we have front-row seats to any and every major event that happens in the world, is a truly miraculous feature of our 24 hour rolling news services. I wonder, though, if it is all for the good? While we need all sections of society to be held to account by a vigorous, free and fair press, the very nature of 24 hour news and access to information must make it very difficult for those who make decisions on our behalf to act in a timely and rational way. Unelected, over-mighty press-barons and money men appear to have much influence over our accountable politicians. I suspect it was easier for FDR to do the right thing and create the New Deal in the 1930s or Atlee the Welfare State in the 1940s than it would be now.

As ever I feel that, as historians, we are very well placed to look to the past and take lessons from it to influence the discussion on our future. Indeed, it was only in our autumn 2009 issue that Ruth Costello described the formation of the Chelmsford Poor Law Union. Here was a joined-up, national response to an age old problem. Working together society would provide a solution to looking after the old, infirm and the downright unlucky. We are now witnessing a 'localism' agenda which appears to want to break up unified systems and replace them with, smaller, local solutions. Surely before the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 local communities were looking after their own poor with varying degrees of success. Why the change then? More efficient? More standardised? Surely a sign of a progressive and enlightened society is the provision of services to the community as a whole. What is dismantled now will be difficult to replace in future. Life will go on, and this storm will have to be weathered. The final two verses of in *Say Not the Struggle Naught Availeth* by A.H. Clough give hope:

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here, no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

And not by eastern windows only,
When daylight comes, comes in the light,
In front, the sun climbs slow, how slowly,
But westward, look, the land is bright.

Turning to this issue, the Editorial Board have agreed to a limited introduction of colour to the main body of the text. This is a result of the improved financial situation we find ourselves in. Let us hope that we can continue to introduce improvements.

Please let me know what you would like to see.

Meanwhile, David Williams discusses the Sidney family. It is always interesting to be reminded how cosmopolitan, adventurous and litigious our ancestors were. The port of Leghorn (Livorno) sounds very exciting and I wonder if Gervase Locke's son had too good a time there? Caroline Wakeham reminds of us of how our towns and communities were transformed by the arrival of modern transport links. How must our ancestors have felt as the railway advanced upon them? It is always refreshing to look again at something we take for granted.

It is great to publish an article by the prolific Richard Morris. What would commuters think today if they saw a fully dressed huntsman waiting for a train at Liverpool Street? Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson was certainly a product of his time.

It is sad, but inevitable, to have obituaries and it was a sad day when we lost Rev Smith of Boreham back in May. I had many delightful chats with him over the years in the ERO Searchroom. I was surprised that during the course of these he disclosed that he had trained as a paratrooper and had spent time in mining communities, convincing miners not to spend all their money on drink. So unexpected.

It is, however, with great pleasure to end this issue with Beryl Board's *EJ 20 Questions*. Beryl is a wonderful historian and a great raconteur, and it is a genuine pleasure to know and chat with her. As ever, there are always surprises to be had who would have thought that Beryl was born in Australia?

Finally, I offer up my own article on pillboxes. Seventy years have passed since they were built at a time of immense uncertainty. We should draw strength and inspiration from those who lived through such times. However bad it gets for us, in this new age of austerity, no one is trying to drop bombs on us. And strangely, perhaps the pillboxes echo a localist agenda. At a time when the Home Guard (Local Defence Volunteers) were mainstays of our security, could this system be used as a blue print for our future defence? Surely not - 'Stupid Boy!'

Cheerio, Neil



News from the Essex Record Office

As I write, winter is upon us and the year is drawing to a close, but this is no time for winding down. Instead we are in the final stages of planning next year's workshops, talks and conferences – and it looks as if 2011 will be our most comprehensive programme yet. To ensure that you receive a copy as soon as it is published, simply e-mail your details to Marilyn.Hawkes@essex.gov.uk. While e-mailing, you may find it useful to indicate that you wish to receive our monthly E-bulletin, a brief digest of news about the ERO and forthcoming events of interest. The E-bulletin was born of the necessity to reduce our postage and printing costs, and replaces our old newsletter, *Update*. This has proved to be a successful introduction and our E-bulletin now reaches as many people as *Update* ever did, and does so more regularly.

Space prevents me from listing all the collections and items that my archivist colleagues have catalogued this year, but I would like to highlight the papers of James Paroissien (1784–1827). Though short, his life was fascinating. Born into a French Huguenot family in Barking, in his early twenties an unfortunate love affair led to his leaving England for South America, where he pursued various careers, even acting as an envoy for the newly independent state of Peru. The collection is of international importance as Paroissien corresponded with most of the leading figures in the independence movement in South America, including Bernardo O'Higgins, Bernardo Monteagudo, San Martín, General Miller and Lord Cochrane. The ERO reference is D/DOb.

Yet though they catalogue, ever more items demand the attention of the archivists. The 13,000th accession has been received recently; this arrived in the post from an anonymous source. The document is the Letters Patent issued by George IV appointing Sir Nicholas Tindal as Lord Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas on 5 June 1829. So, the ERO's collection continues to grow, safeguarding a little more of our history every week.

Colleagues in the Searchroom have been busy too, between January and September of this year they

welcomed over 10,000 researchers to the Searchroom 'assisting' them over 78,700 times. As I am sure many of you are aware the archive assistants in the Searchroom are the first port of call for those using our facilities. Queries can range from simple family history topics, house history, village history or academic enquiries to questions about copying documents, how to use fiche machines or where items are in the ERO Library – these are all included in the number of assistances.

Our archive assistants to hand are often very busy and for those who would like a little more guidance with their family history you may like to note that the Essex Society for Family History are providing a Genealogy Help Desk in the Searchroom on Monday mornings. This is an extended pilot and has been well received by members of the public who have benefited from the guidance offered.

Selected sound recordings from the collection can now accessed via our new listening post. Chosen by the Sound Archivist, these highlights are themed and will change regularly. At the time of writing you can hear 'Memories and Music from the Golden Age of Cinema'. It couldn't be simpler to use, just pop the headphones on! The listening post can be found at the bottom of the stairs leading to the Searchroom.

The Heritage Lottery funded Community Archive project gathers pace in the south east of the county, with all six community groups now trained in oral history techniques and basic research skills, as well as having mastered their website software. I hope that in the next *Journal*, I will be able to include web addresses so that the groups' hard work can be seen.

Finally, our senior conservator, Keith Dean, has retired after working at the ERO for 33 years. Many people who have been on group visits to the ERO or have attended our open days and roadshows will remember Keith's fascinating demonstrations of document repair. We have welcomed Tony King to the post this autumn, and look forward to working with him.

Deborah Peers, Audience Development Officer
(Heritage Services)

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These are due **on 1st January 2011**. May we remind you:-

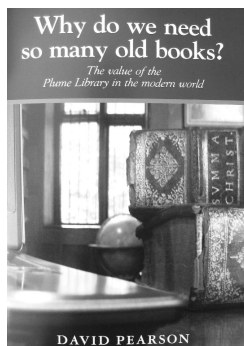
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Thank you all for your co-operation, and the Membership Secretary looks forward to hearing from you.

Jenepher Hawkins
Membership Secretary

News from the Plume Library

The Trustees of the Plume Library in Maldon are pleased to announce the publication of *Why do we need so many old books?: the value of the Plume Library in the modern world*. It is based on the 2009 Plume Lecture, which was given by Dr David Pearson, Director of Libraries, Archives and the Guildhall Art Gallery in the City of London. Dr Pearson has published extensively on aspects of book history, with a particular interest in aspects of the book as owned and designed objects. His lecture looked at some of the books in the Plume Library in a way that no one had done before. He demonstrated how much an individual volume can tell us over and above what is printed on its pages, and what can be deduced from the evidence of its ownership, binding, marginalia, and other inscriptions. In so doing he taught us all a great deal, and gave us many more reasons to appreciate this unique library.



Why do we need so many old books? (ISBN 978-0-9509905-1-4) is published as a 22-page booklet, with 20 colour plates, and costs £5, available from:

Thomas Plume's Library,
Market Hill,
Maldon
CM9 4PZ,
E. info@thomasplumeslibrary.co.uk

Please add £1 for postage and packing.

The Plume Lecture was established in 1975 and is given each year on a date close to the anniversary of Plume's death on 20th November 1704. This year's lecture will be given by Dr Alison Rowlands, Senior Lecturer in European History and Director of the Centre for Local and Regional History at the University of Essex. The title of her talk is

Witchcraft and Witchcraft Beliefs in England during the Lifetime of Thomas Plume, 1630-1704,

and it will take place on Saturday 20th November 2010 at 7.30 pm in the United Reformed Church, Market Hill, Maldon. There is no entry charge and advance booking is not necessary.

Dr James Bettley
Chairman, Thomas Plume's Trustees.

The Friends of Thomas Plume's Library are pleased to announce that on Saturday 17th October 2010 they made the first award of the Frank and Patricia Herrmann Award of £500 to Hannah Salisbury in the Plume Library. The Award will be made every two years for an essay of 3,000 to 4,000 words, written to a good academic standard on a book or books in the Plume Library, or to a subject appertaining to the books or Dr Plume.

Hannah's essay *A World of Heat and Clamour: the Life and times of an Essex Vicar*, in the view of our three judges met these criteria handsomely and was very well written. Her subject, Hippolito de Luzancy du Chastelet, converted to the Church of England from Roman Catholicism in 1675. His case caused a great stir in Parliament after he was forced to recant at knifepoint by a Jesuit. The King became involved and the Venetian Ambassador wrote about the case. Three of Luzancy's books were collected by Thomas Plume and are still in the library. Hannah recounted all these events and set Luzancy's life in the context of the religious and social struggles of the mid-seventeenth century. We congratulate her on producing this excellent, well-researched and well-written essay; she is a very worthy winner of the first of these awards to be made.

We are very glad that the essay is to be published in the next issue of the *Essex Journal*. A more formal occasion to mark this achievement, at which we hope Mr and Mrs Herrmann will be present, will be held later.

Full details of the Frank and Patricia Herrmann Award are to be found at:

www.thomasplumeslibrary.co.uk



**Pictured, left to right, at the presentation:
Erica Wylie, Plume Librarian, Hannah Salisbury,
Tony Doe, chairman,
the Friends of Thomas Plume's Library.**

David and Humphrey Sidney:

Stuart merchants and litigants -

Who Did They Think They Were? Part 1

by

David Williams

For 200 years from the 1660s, a family called Sidney lived in some style on their Essex estates at Margaretting, and later more modestly at West Hanningfield. This article and its sequel will look at their social and economic rise and fall, and at what can be discovered about their ancestry.

While researching an unrelated topic several years ago, I had occasion to look at the Essex Record Office's (ERO) collection of papers for the former Chelmsford solicitors, Copland & Sons, for the 1860s.¹ My eye was taken by some lengthy letters to one Charles Algernon Philip Sidney, of Church House, West Hanningfield. I soon found that they concerned Sidney's daughter, Clarissa, and her troubled marriage—to which I will return in my second article. Eventually I found myself tracing the history of this family back to its earliest Essex members and beyond.

On 16th May 1668, the Court Roll of the Manor of Margaretting² recorded the admission of David Sidney and his wife, Elizabeth, to the property known as Peacocks, comprising 24 acres, in the same parish. David was described as a merchant of Whitechapel, and when he enlarged his holding in 1670, as a gentleman of London. He appears to be the first member of this family to live in Essex, and later acquired land at Barking and Sandon (Fig. 1).

It seems likely that this David was the man, then described as a merchant of St Botolph's without Aldgate, who married Elizabeth Moore at Isleworth, Middlesex, in April 1667.³ Three sons of a David and Elizabeth Sidney, Humphrey, Thomas and David, were baptised at St Mary Matfellow, Whitechapel, in 1669, 1675 and 1679 respectively. Their parents' abode was stated as

'Goodmans Fields', the area roughly bounded today by Whitechapel High Street, Leman Street, Prescott Street and Minories, just outside the eastern boundary of the City of London. (Map 1) At least three younger children, Margaret (1683), Henry (1689) and Sophia (1695), were baptised at Margaretting, suggesting that the family moved permanently to their Essex estate around the early 1680s.⁴

Among the Margaretting parish papers at the ERO survives a letter of 1663 from one Gervase Locke to 'Humphrey Sidney, Merchant', at Leghorn, now known as Livorno, on the coast of Tuscany.⁵ Its survival there, though perhaps accidental, suggests that David (of Whitechapel and later of Margaretting) was the same David Sidney who, together with his brother and partner, Humphrey, is known, from some protracted litigation following Humphrey's death in 1676, to have traded at Leghorn from the late 1640s.

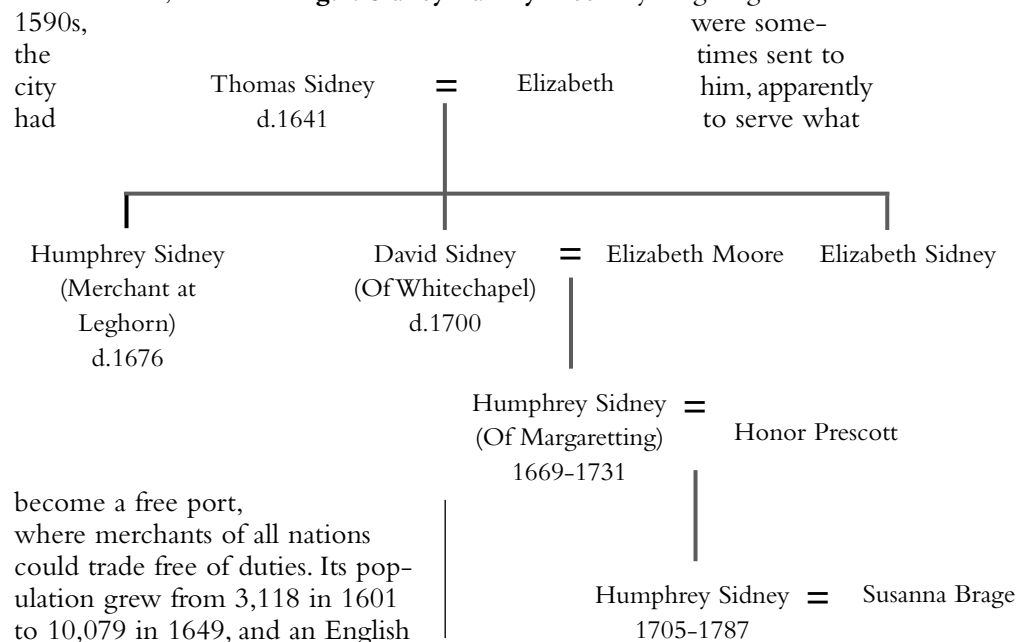
Leghorn was part of the domains of the Medici Grand Dukes of Tuscany. Under Ferdinando I, in the 1590s, the city had

merchant, Thomas Mun (d.1641) wrote that it was 'a strong and fair City, being one of the most famous places of trade in all Christendom'.⁶ The main trading currency there was the Spanish dollar or piece of eight, worth roughly five shillings, and the 20 or so English merchants resident there by the middle of the seventeenth century were the second largest group after the Florentines. The port gave access to the interior of Italy, but it was also, by about 1650, the commercial crossroads of the Mediterranean. Early exports from England included salted fish, cloth and grain, but later the English traders sent home silks, spices and coffee which came into Leghorn from the middle east.⁷

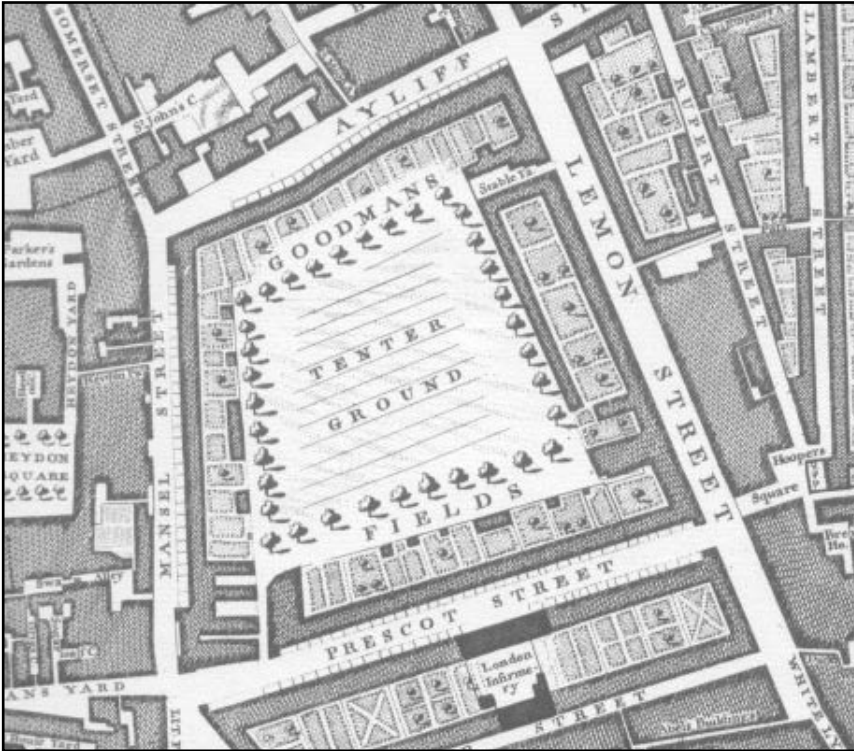
In the late 1640s, Humphrey Sidney became a partner at Leghorn with John Fairfax and Martin Lyster. They dealt with counterparties in London whose goods were shipped out and sold on. Humphrey became a prominent member of the local business

community, and young Englishmen were sometimes sent to him, apparently to serve what

Fig.1. Sidney Family Tree



David and Humphrey Sidney



Map 1. Goodman's Fields, Whitechapel
(Author's collection.)

might now be called internships, with all expenses paid by the 'intern', before attempting to launch independent careers. One such was Francis Williamson, a young cousin of Sir Joseph Williamson, Charles II's Secretary of State. He did not find his master an easy man to deal with. Writing in September 1664, he urged his cousin to persuade Francis's father to let him have more cash:

'[I] trespass upon your patience in imploring your assistance...My father...still feeds me with...fair promises for I have according to his promise expected to have seen bills of lading for the goods he sent me long since...to be sent me by the first good ship, but now find...I am much discouraged and have no comfort to proceed in business. Mr Sidney...has...been pleased to tell me that he understands not this manner of proceedings; he hath wrote to my father to dispose of me otherwise & if he doth not comply to pay him 200 dollars for my diet which is almost £50 sterling,

I believe he will deal none of the best by me...[He] looks upon none no further than his interest guides him"⁸

Francis was not the only young man to find a residency with Humphrey expensive. Gervase Locke's letter to Humphrey, mentioned earlier, suggests that Locke sent his son on a similar enterprise, only to find that it produced enormous bills (Plate 1); he had sent what he thought would be sufficient funds, but when these ran short Humphrey advanced moneys to the young man and then presented his father with the bill. In April 1673 Gervase sent the following protest to Humphrey:

'If you had observed my directions to lett him [Locke's son] have no more money (as I ordered you when I paid you \$122) without my order itt had beene better for you & mee, since which tyme you have lett him have & paid his taylor \$ 350 or thereabouts and why you should pass \$ 350 to my account for a levitation [increased contribution] to

the ration I know nott... How \$ 464...could all bee spent & mee not know of itt besides all that paid his taylor is a paradox to mee unless some fraude was used...I think the world will judge...I need not to have given \$600 with a boy to pay for washing his cloathes...[Locke's son] writes that by you & your damned cash hee is ruined & undon"⁹

One of the firm's clients was Francis Pargiter, probably¹⁰ an elderly merchant of St Ann's, Blackfriars, whose interests may have included trade with Russia through the Muscovy Company.¹¹ Pargiter seems to have remained a client until August 1676, when Humphrey died at Leghorn, intestate.¹²

The news of his death must have reached London by 25th September, when Pargiter appeared in person in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury (PCC), seeking letters of administration of Humphrey's estate, on behalf of himself and other creditors.¹³ He alleged that Humphrey's debts to them went back over 20 years, with Pargiter personally being owed at least £1,000; that they had tried to make him bankrupt in the courts in Leghorn, only to be foiled because Humphrey had been granted immunity by the Grand Duke; that Humphrey's brother, David, had already left for Leghorn and that if the court did not intervene he (Pargiter) and his colleagues would be cheated out of their just debts; and finally, that the brothers owned several ships that even as he spoke, were waiting in the Thames, ready to sail away, taking his and his co-claimants' property with them.

The PCC readily granted Pargiter letters of administration,¹⁴ but this was only the start of some ten years of procrastination, allegation and counter-allegation which kept the lawyers employed both in the PCC and the Court of Chancery, where Pargiter soon started a separate action, against

David and Humphrey Sidney

Sund. 17th of April 1663.

Humphrey Sidney

Yr letter of 8th 29th of Januar. last. w^{ch} was soe unplesant to y^e had not
 mynd. to answer it being noe way satisfactorie to my first desire & demand. Truly
 it is the youth. hats, neither boone. soe good a sonnet to you. nor a sonnet to me as
 might, but y^e have had observed my directions, to lett him have noe more money. (and
 to order you. when y^e p^r you y^e 122.) w^{ch} out my order. it had bene better for you
 & me, since w^{ch} you have lett him have. & y^e R^h Taylor of 350 or thereabouts
 & why you should pay 350 to my auct^r for a delivery to y^e nation. I know not. nor
 whether it will possibly be more w^{ch} out sad more expens. you might have sold
 our others to recover it. y^e have had not a mynd to buy. botz him & me. & have y^e ag^r
 p^r R^h Taylor. & of 475-8. & 1. could all be spent. & have not know of it. beside all y^e
 p^r R^h Taylor. is a p^radoc to me. unless some fraud was used, w^{ch} is often found
 practised, though it might not be w^{ch} yet private. for his p^rstitory & washing his
 clothes, & other things. I think, y^e world will judge y^e reasonable to be allow by you.
 to need not to have given. 600. w^{ch} a boy. to pay for washing his clothes. but
 I shall say noe more but desire you to lett me know y^e mynd. whether you
 will allow me 500. back of y^e auct^r. beside y^e ballance you make. w^{ch} I don
 shall satisfy me, though y^e had be ridon. I shall take some care how shall not
 be a further trouble to you. y^e not. I shall be w^{ch} soe much out of y^e way
 in a letter by me. though y^e have done amiss. I cannot quite desert him. I
 have had sufficient relation, of many passages, but I am not willing. yet to relate
 y^e has. I might. w^{ch} in 12 days past. have secured by self. & had soe much
 in my own hands. before the bill of 250^l. was pay^d. but had rather soe

Plate 1. An early case of the Bank of Mum and Dad? Gervase Locke writes in 1663 to Humphrey Sidney, the merchant of Leghorn, to complain (inter alia) about a tailor's bill for \$350 and a laundry bill for \$600, charged to Locke for the alleged board and lodging costs of his son, who was working in Sidney's business. (Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office, D/P 235/28/1.)

David Sidney and one John Ashby, allegedly a partner with the two brothers.

Pargiter launched his attack in Chancery with a Bill of Complaint¹⁵ in May 1677, describing the history of his relationship with the original firm of Fairfax, Lyster and Sidney, and later, after Fairfax and Lyster had died, with the Sidney brothers, Ashby and one Nicholas Wyles. Lawyers tended to throw every possible allegation into such a document, but even allowing for this, the 'charge sheet' appears formidable.

Pargiter claimed that the defendants had traded both on their own account and as agents or factors, and by 1650, Fairfax, Lyster and Humphrey already owed him £1,000, being the value of

consignments of goods entrusted to them for sale. He repeated his allegation that the Grand Duke (at the time Ferdinando II) had granted the defendants immunity when Pargiter tried to sue them in Leghorn. Moreover, the three partners: 'did then all of them in or about the month of September [1650]...withdrawe and conceale their persons and abscond and hide themselves and would not be seen nor spoke with by any of their creditors'. Later, after Fairfax and Lyster had died, he alleged that David Sidney, Ashby and Wyles had conspired to conceal the successor firm's ill-gotten assets from him and his co-creditors, 'all which was done by them only with a cunninge subtle and fraudulent intent and with

a designe to deceive'.¹⁶

Then, claimed Pargiter, followed attempts to compromise the debts for such derisory amounts as 1s.4d. in the pound (about 6.5%), which some creditors had accepted. But Pargiter, refusing to believe that the partners had, as they 'gave out or pretended...lost all their estates by some accidents and misfortunes', held out, and received a favourable judgment in England in 1656. But, he claimed, Fairfax and Lyster had simply ensured that all their assets were transferred off-shore, to Humphrey's hands, and Humphrey then invoked his state-sponsored immunity at Leghorn to resist all claims. Eventually, said Pargiter, Fairfax and Lyster had died and been replaced by David Sidney, Ashby and Wyles alongside

David and Humphrey Sidney



Plate 2. Cosimo III de Medici
(Author's collection.)

Humphrey, who:

'did in the concealling of his said estate much make use of the aforesaid John Ashby Nicholas Wyles & David Sidney his brother & divers others...and putt a great part of his said estate in their names and bought severall wares and merchandizes and severall ships...in their or some of their names & consigned great quantities of goods & merchandizes to them'¹⁷

Pargiter named the ships: the *Turkey Merchant*, the *Samuel* and *Jonathan*, the *New African* and others, all bought with the creditors' money and used by Humphrey to 'drive a very great trade' which continued 'for many yeares till or near the time of his death'. Humphrey had also invested this fraudulently (as Pargiter claimed) obtained fortune in houses and vineyards in Leghorn and Pisa, 'great quantities of plate rings jewels [and] household stuffe', all amounting to about £30,000.

Now that Humphrey was dead, claimed Pargiter 'the said Humphrey Sidney dying a bachelour & without any issue the said David Sidney his brother hath since his death seized and possessed himself of the greatest part of the said estate' and had himself obtained from the Grand Duke the same immunity enjoyed by his brother. He had also made away with the firm's books.¹⁸

Meanwhile, David had returned from Leghorn to find himself deprived of legal control of Humphrey's estate by the PCC's decision the previous year. In May 1679 he persuaded the PCC to revoke this and to concede administration to him. But by now, he had embarked on a strategy of minimal co-operation with Pargiter's lawyers in both Courts. By February 1684, nearly seven years after Pargiter had launched his Chancery action, Pargiter's lawyers had still not obtained the books and papers of the Leghorn partnership. John Ashby had simply told the Court that Humphrey and David had taken all the decisions and kept all the records.¹⁹ The Court had (in 1681) ordered²⁰ that all the records should be produced 'with all convenient speed' before two members of the English trading community at Leghorn, who were to take copies, but by early 1684 this had still not been done.

David's counsel had already cited ongoing separate lawsuits in Leghorn as excuses, but by now was reduced to falling back on the weather, claiming that his client:

'hath used all possible endeavours to give obedience to the said order and to that purpose at his great charge procured His Majesties [Charles II's] letters to the Grand Duke of Tuscany...for his leave to proceed therein...and endeavoured to dispatch a messenger on purpose to Leghorne to see the said commission executed and to bring back the said bookes papers and writings with him, but by the extremity of the late

frost the said messenger was forced to lose his passage in the Dover coach which he had hired for that purpose and to continue here'²¹

The Court gave David until Whitsun (about three months) to produce the papers on pain of being committed to the Fleet Prison. But his prevarications seem to have provoked Pargiter into action that caused even more delay. A few days after this order, on 1st March 1684,²² Pargiter's lawyers objected to a certain William Hodges, one of the 'commissioners' appointed by the Court, on the nomination of the defendant, to receive and bring back the evidence from Italy. Hodges, they alleged, was 'a scandalous person & of soe mischevious & troublesome a temper the plaintiff [Pargiter] cannot procure any commissioner to be joined with him'. They insisted on alternative nominations, but David's Counsel retaliated that Hodges was : 'an ingenious person of knowne integrity and reputation & that the plaintiffs designe by making these objections & cavells is to spin out the time soe that it will be impossible for the defendant to performe the conditions by the time limited'.²³

The Court rejected Pargiter's objections to Hodges, which rebounded to the extent that David was given another month to comply. Meanwhile, Pargiter's lawyers had interviewed a number of witnesses whose depositions cast light on business conditions at Leghorn, and on the mood of the times. The objections to William Hodges, for example, are illuminated by one of the questions asked of all the witnesses:

'Were not you at Leghorne when the defendant [David] arrived there after the death of his brother...and doe you not know have heard or doe believe that the said defendant changed his religion there, and what report had he their, was he accounted an honest

David and Humphrey Sidney

man or a dishonest or how otherwise. And what company did he keep there and of what religion?'²⁴

These were highly loaded questions so soon after the 'Popish Plot' of 1678, and the false claims of Titus Oates about a Catholic conspiracy to overthrow the King and install his brother, James, Duke of York. However, only one of the six deponents whose answers survive responded to this invitation to smear David's character; John Broking, a merchant of Bucklersbury in the City, said that he:

'hath bin credibly informed that [David] changed his religion or profest the Papist religion & ...that he became scandalous to all of the English nation that were protestants in regard of his accompanying himselfe with fryers preists Italians & some English that had likewise changed their religion & particularly one Wm Hodge a Papist'²⁵

To its credit, perhaps, there is no evidence that the Court was swayed by such hearsay allegations, and its attention was focused on proving the alleged debts. John Porter, a merchant living near the Tower of London, was shown two documents dated 1649 and 1650 which were claimed to be acknowledgements of debts due from Fairfax, Lyster and Humphrey Sidney to Pargiter; he compared the handwriting to some similar bills in favour of his late uncle, and said that: 'he verily believeth that the signs & subscriptions on the said two produced accounts are & were the usuall & proper forme or way of subscription of the said partnership'.²⁶ Another witness, Edward Gold, said that he had seen:

'an authentick copy of an inventory drawn out of the Leghorn Court of Justice signed by Pier Francisco Nonni Cavaliere della Consilio di Livorno &

authenticated by a publique notary which...this deponent believeth to be true having had experience & knowledge of the forms or handwritings of the said Nonni & notary publique duringe this deponents abode att Leghorn'²⁷

Gold added that the total value of Humphrey's assets shown on the inventory was \$150,000 'or at least \$80,000'. Several others confirmed that the Grand Duke (since 1670, Cosimo III de Medici, Plate 2) had granted to David, after Humphrey's death, an immunity similar to that of his brother, for use in several actions against the estate there, including one by a Jew called Moses Vigarena or Vigavcena, and agreed that \$80,000 was the approximate value of Humphrey's estate after payment of all debts. John Broking, who thought the amount was nearer \$100,000, had been appointed one of the official valuers of the estate by the Leghorn Court, along with another Englishman, Charles Harris, and Humphrey's cashier, Francesco Campagni, but testified that as soon as David arrived from England, all three of them had been relieved of their duties and then handed a discharge signed by David.²⁸

David himself, in one of his rare moments of co-operation, had submitted to the PCC, back in 1679, a purported inventory²⁹ of his brother's assets which put the total at a mere \$9,100, including shares in three ships (none of which were those named in Pargiter's Chancery pleas), but this excluded any real estate. It was also peppered with his customary excuses: two of the ships, the *Scandaroon* and the *Mediterranean*, had been taken by Algerine pirates; later,³⁰ he modified this by admitting that the pirates had seized only 'the cargo and tackling', leaving him with 'the mere hulls and some rigging only', and even then their sister, Elizabeth, had claimed that Humphrey had made a gift to her of the *Scandaroon*, so Pargiter could forget any claim to that. Furthermore, although he admitted that

he and Humphrey were joint owners of a house in Pisa, the contents were likewise not available to satisfy creditors, 'because one Elizabeth Gascoigne...pretending some gift of the same from the said deceased got the same into her possession before this respondent's arrival at Leghorn and still keeps and detains the same'.³¹

So David's excuses went on: a Jew called Mocatta owed the firm \$6,000 which was never likely to be paid, and the warehouse at Leghorn was full of goods belonging to third parties which were not David's to dispose of. And just in case Pargiter intended to ask for a list of their alleged owners, David added that: 'merchandizing and correspondency with merchants and the sort of goods they deal in being a great mystery and secrett and the discovery thereof the utter overthrowe of their trade, hee [David] is not bound by law to discover the same'.³²

By November 1684, his time was running out. Pargiter had by now reduced his claims to a debt of £800 due to himself and another of £300 in his capacity as executor of one Robert Ward. The Chancery Master (the assistant judge deputed to take evidence and report back with proposals to the Court) found that David had failed to produce any of the promised papers from Italy, and that his lawyers had failed even to attend the most recent hearings (one wonders if they were no longer being paid). He found it proved that Pargiter had consigned goods to the firm of Fairfax, Lyster and Sidney in 1649 and 1650 to the value of about £2,000 sterling, and had received nothing on this account; he also found, from the depositions of Broking and others, that Humphrey's net estate at Leghorn had been worth about £20,000.³³ He also found that the Ward debt had been proved, by a document that acknowledged that Humphrey had been indebted to Ward for 'for two and twenty packs of Muscovia hides', worth about £900. He advised the Court, therefore, to order David to pay

David and Humphrey Sidney

the full amount of £1,100 claimed.³⁴ Still David was not finished. He lodged a series of 'exceptions' (objections) to these findings, but on 12th December 1684 the Court found 'the said exceptions appearing to be frivolous and onely for delay', and gave judgment for Pargiter for £1,100, with costs of £191.³⁵ On 18th December, Pargiter claimed that 'the defendant Sidney abscondeth himselfe so that he could not be served personally with any order of the Court', and on Christmas Eve he persuaded the Court to declare David in contempt.³⁶

'despite my great age of 79 years'

That is where the records appear to end. Assuming that I am right in my identification of the defendant in this case with David of Whitechapel and Margaretting, the latter's evident standing and prosperity do not suggest that he ultimately defied the Court to the point of being bankrupted and imprisoned; Pargiter presumably got paid enough to satisfy him in the end. He may not have had long to enjoy his victory, because he appears to have died between 30th January 1686, when he made his Will, thanking God for his 'perfect memory despite my great age of 79 years', and 29th October of that year when probate was granted.³⁷ David's subsequent business life is unknown, but even after paying off Pargiter it seems clear that he must have inherited an estate of nearly £20,000 from Humphrey, in addition to whatever he had accumulated himself in England. He lived on at Margaretting until his death in August 1700, having left his lands there to his eldest son, Humphrey, along with other freehold lands at Writtle: the rest of his estate, including property at Sandon and Barking, was left equally to his other children.³⁸

There was a strange sequel some 250 years later. In 1954, alterations to Sandon Church were halted when a previously unknown brick vault was discovered beneath

the floor of the east end of the north aisle. It contained several lead coffins, one of them that of a child, and some fragmentary human remains. One of the coffins bore the inscription 'D S 1700'. The Vicar reviewed his burial registers and found that a 'David Sidney, Gent' had been buried there on 13th August 1700; his wife, Elizabeth, had preceded him in 1695, on the same day as their son Henry, aged (if this was the boy baptised in 1689) about six. The Vicar concluded that the merchant of Whitechapel and Margaretting had found his final resting place near one of his Essex properties, and he was probably right.³⁹ In my next article, I will look at the fortunes of some of David's descendants.

References

1. Essex Record Office (ERO), D/DDw B1/29, letter book of Copland and Sons, solicitors of Chelmsford, 1863-64.
2. ERO, D/DP M647, Court Roll, Manor of Margaretting, 1665-85.
3. Isleworth registers at the London Metropolitan Archives. The exact date is unclear but the Faculty Office allegation is dated 29th April 1667.
4. At least two other children, Mary and Charles, are also documented though their baptisms have not been found.
5. ERO, D/P 235/28/1, letter from Gervase Lock to Mr Humphrey Sidney.
6. See G. Pagano de Divitiis, *English merchants in seventeenth century Italy*, (Cambridge, 1997).
7. H. Blake, 'Why Livorno?', *Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology Newsletter*, Summer 2005, [pp.5-6].
8. State Papers (Domestic) of Charles II, TNA, SP 29/102, letter, 05/09/1664.
9. ERO, D/P 235/28/1.
10. Assuming he can be identified with the man of that parish whose will is mentioned below.
11. He may be the man mentioned in this connection in Pepys' Diary for 27th July 1661 & 16th September 1664. <http://www.pepysdiary.com/>, (04/10/10).
12. TNA, C 6/78/83, *Pargiter v Ashby and others* - this includes Pargiter's Bill of Complaint, mentioned below, which gives this as the approximate date of death. The exact date, according to Humphrey's Tomb in the English cemetery at Livorno, was 8th Aug.
13. The proceedings of the PCC are at The National Archives (TNA), PROB 28/59, 60 & 61. The PCC had jurisdiction over the estates of English subjects who died abroad.
14. TNA, PROB 6/51, f.73.
15. TNA, C 6/78/83.
16. *Ibid.*
17. *Ibid.*
18. *Ibid.*
19. Answers of Ashby dated 18th July 1677 to Pargiter's Bill, TNA, C 6/78/83. David Sidney's answers, if any, have not survived.
20. TNA, C 33/258, f.140.
21. TNA, C 33/262, f.322.
22. *Ibid.*, f.257.
23. *Ibid.*
24. TNA, C 24/1061 - containing all Pargiter's witnesses' depositions.
25. *Ibid.*
26. *Ibid.*
27. *Ibid.*
28. *Ibid.*
29. TNA, PROB 5/762B.
30. David's Answers to Pargiter's interrogatories in the PCC, dated 22nd May and 16th October 1680, TNA, PROB 25/3, ff.54&75.
31. *Ibid.*
32. *Ibid.*
33. At the usual exchange rate of 5s to the dollar, this implied that he accepted the witnesses' estimates of \$80,000.
34. TNA, C 38/219.
35. TNA, C 33/264, f.93 (judgment) and C 38/222 (costs).
36. TNA, C 33/264, ff.159&140.
37. TNA, PROB 11/385, will of Francis Pargiter, Merchant of Saint Ann Blackfriars, City of London, 29/10/1686. It cannot be proved beyond doubt that this Francis Pargiter was the Sidneys' opponent but the links are suggestive.
38. TNA, PROB 11/456, will of David Sidney, Gentleman of Margaretting, Essex, 20/08/1700.
39. S.H. Chase, 'Discovery of the Sidney Family Vault in Sandon Church', *Essex Review*, LXIV, 254, (1955), pp.80-82. The exact location of the Sidney property at Sandon is unknown; 140 acres in the parish were sold by David's son, Charles, to his siblings in 1714: ERO, D/DHt T15/13, deeds of Barking.

Chelmsford and the coming of the railway

by

Caroline Wakeham

Today, the steam train holds a special place in many people's imaginations. Summer holidays across the country are filled with trips to steam fairs and journeys on steam trains that have been restored to their former glory. They are special not only because of the feats of British engineering they reflect but also how they revolutionised our transport system. Railways brought the country closer together and helped to accelerate the Industrial Revolution by providing a faster mode of transport to deliver raw materials and export goods. By the 1840s schemes were developing nationwide for many new railway lines and while much has been written about railway lines in the key industrial areas of the country there has been little focus on how smaller communities accepted and adapted to this new mode of transport. One such community was Chelmsford where the railway arrived on 29th March 1843. This article will review the planning of the railway through Essex before discussing the impact that it had on the town in the immediate aftermath of its arrival.

The railway revolution began on 27th September 1825 when the Stockton and Darlington railway opened for business. This was the first public steam powered railway in the world, closely followed in 1830 by the opening of the Liverpool and Manchester railway. Chelmsford had to wait until 1843. The Eastern Counties Railway (ECR) has been described by the railway historian Jack Simmons as an 'exceptionally bad railway'.¹ It first proposed a scheme to run through the south-east corner of England in 1834 and in 1836 the scheme was authorised by a parliamentary act.² The original scheme was for a line to run from London to Cambridge and on to York and Edinburgh, but it was agreed that a line from London to Colchester, with plans to extend to Ipswich and Norwich was 'more

practicable and more profitable'.³ The length of the line was to be 125 miles, following the turnpike road and as the ECR promoted would skirt 'every town of importance' (Map 1).⁴ The company argued that the railway was best suited in this area as it was a rich agricultural area where agricultural and horticultural produce could easily be transported to London.

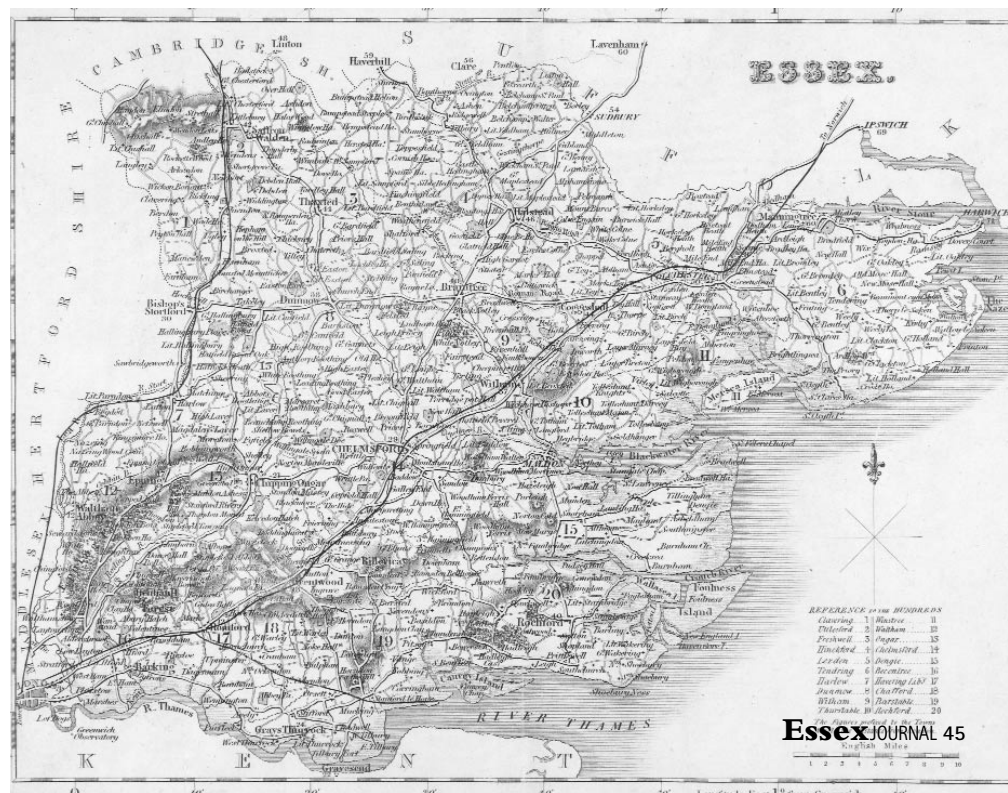
In order to finance the project shares were sold but despite the emphasis laid on potential profits support for the project came from outside the local area where railways already existed and were successful. Only one-twelfth of shares were purchased locally, with over a third snatched up by Liverpool's industrial merchants,⁵ who were quick to capitalise on new schemes after the success of existing lines. In Essex residents feared the loss of their rural idyll and were concerned with the consequences of a railway in the area. It was an outsider, George Hudson from York, who became the director of the ECR.

Nicknamed the 'Railway King', Hudson built up influence in the railway world through 'Tory politics

and business sense'⁶ and became the first non-engineer (he was a tradesman) to achieve fame through the railways.

The company found resistance from local traders in Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk who argued that the waterways served them well and as such there was no need for a railway.⁷ A series of public meetings were held in Colchester and Chelmsford by the ECR to allay these fears. The first, at The Cups Inn, Colchester, on 24th November 1835, saw the ECR put forth the advantages of the railway. The first was that the line was to be 'constructed with economy', as it interfered with no property or houses. The other positive aspect the ECR argued was that the proposed route 'runs through an easily undulating line of country, which [would] cause the expense of the construction to be very moderate'.⁸ There would be no expensive tunnels, the line running over viaducts, which would keep the cost down, and the bricks for the viaducts could be locally sourced. These arguments however, did not translate into reality very smoothly.

Map 1. The route of the railway through Essex, Fullerton's Map of Essex, c.1840. (Reproduced by Courtesy of the Essex Record Office, County Maps (A).)



Chelmsford and the coming of the railway

Acts of Parliament to promote a railway gave the railway company compulsory purchase powers to obtain the necessary ground it would need, at a fair price, to complete the railway. These proposals to introduce a railway line into an area were often met with resistance by rich landowners who owned a most of the land that would need to be sold for the scheme to go ahead. Chelmsford was no exception. There formed an array of angry landowners, opposed to the ECR plans, led by gentlemen of great parliamentary influence. One leading opponent was Lord Petre. His residence at Thorndon Hall was close to the proposed line and claimed the line would divide his farmland between Shenfield and Margaretting.⁹ His arguments show the ECR in contention over one of their main persuasions for the railway; that the line would be constructed successfully and would not interfere with property or private comforts. Petre's opposition caused the House of Commons to pass a second reading of the bill, but by December 1836, the ECR announced that all the land had been bought between Romford and Chelmsford and that work could commence. However, Petre accused the ECR of failing to pay him adequate compensation and was supported by the local courts for his refusal to allow workers onto his land. Petre demanded £20,000 for the land and £100,000 compensation, a sum which was equal to the ECR's total compensation costs along the whole line!¹⁰ The company fought this sum, arguing he should get no more than £20,000 as Petre's figure was 'enormously disproportionable to the real value

of the land,' although after much fighting in court, the ECR were ordered to pay Petre £124,800,¹¹ showing in this instance that whilst Petre finally relented, he did so with a fight, damaging the reputation of the railway company who exhausted their compensation fund for landowners on this one case.

It is as much thanks to the Mildmay family as to the dogged determination of the ECR that the railway was even laid through Chelmsford. David Jones declared that, '[the] ECR could lay track thanks in part to Mildmay land sale.' Thomas Mildmay's purchase of land in Moulsham and Chelmsford in the sixteenth century restricted development there until the 1830s when the family started to sell its land.¹²

475 acres of land for sale was broken down into 208 lots, advertised as an 'opportunity for investment or to builders...as suitable [land for] villas and cottage residences with paddock and ornamental grounds',¹³ grouped around a framework of a new road system which would lead to the new railway line.

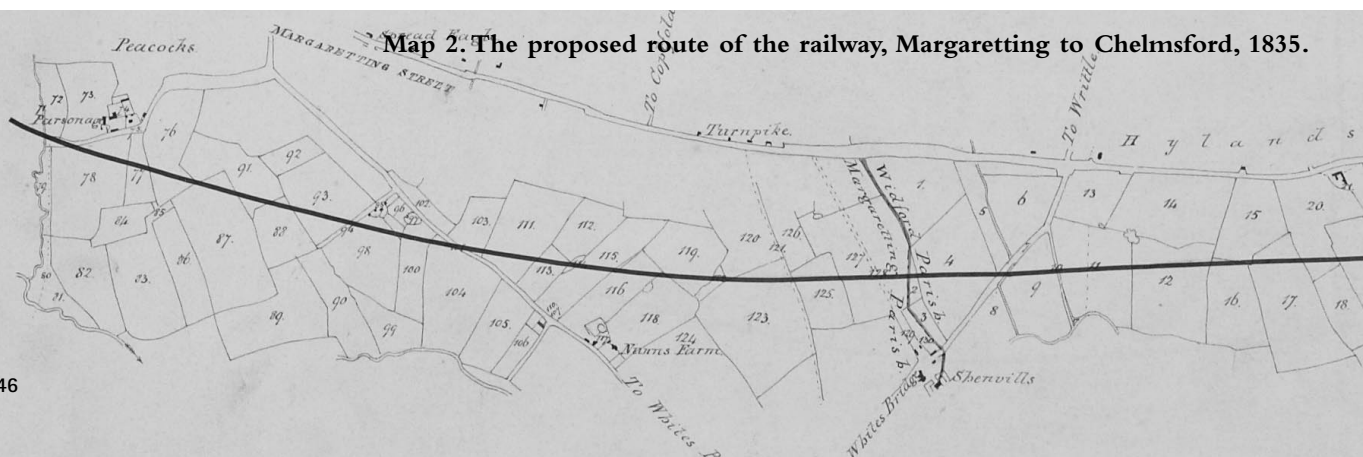
The majority of the land purchased was by the Chelmsford Company; five men brought together by family, business and religious links; John Copland, solicitor; William Collings Wells, brewer; Thomas Greenwood, banker; Edward Copland and James Fenton, engineer.¹⁴ The land sale led to the building of New London Road, George Street, Lower Anchor Street, Queen Street and the redevelopment and re-naming of New Writtle Street and Upper Bridge Road. New London Road was to run parallel to Moulsham Street, cutting directly through Mildmay land.

The *Essex Standard* in August 1842 wrote, 'the good old town had long been without material alteration, but it has now received an impetus which augers well',¹⁵ suggesting that the proposed railway brought development to the town which may not have occurred otherwise. This development also provided the town with fashionable new residences with their own private gardens, ornamental temples and summer houses;¹⁶ developed in part perhaps through the hope that once the railway was built, it would encourage wealthy persons to purchase an abode in Chelmsford as there would be easy access to London for business through the railway.

After many delays in the opening of the railway due to bad weather causing slips in the embankments along the proposed line and the hotly contested property rights cases and at a cost of £57,000 a mile to build,¹⁷ the Chelmsford to Colchester stretch of the railway line was finished on 27th February 1843 and officially opened for passenger traffic along the whole stretch of track on the 29th March. Official celebrations were reserved for Colchester only as the directors of the company and the engineer, John Braithwaite gathered for a celebration lunch at Moot Hall. Mr. Crossie, a Liverpool Director of the ECR had this to say about the day's events;

'The opening of this undertaking, an event so interesting and important in the history of the county of Essex, took place Wednesday last [29th March], under the most favourable auspices. The disappointments and mishaps

Map 2. The proposed route of the railway, Margaretting to Chelmsford, 1835.



Chelmsford and the coming of the railway

which have hitherto so frequently and peculiarly marked the various steps of this extensive work formed no part of the proceedings on this occasion'¹⁸

In Chelmsford, the railway station was adorned with the Union Jack and crowds gathered to watch the first trains from both London and Colchester pass through their town. The engineer of the ECR, John Braithwaite and the directors were honoured with a banquet on 9th May 1843 at the Saracen's Head Hotel.¹⁹ The *Essex Standard* recorded; 'the good old town of Chelmsford has rarely been so much excited,'²⁰ indicating that after much hostility to the proposed line, the inhabitants seemed excited to welcome the new innovation to the town. However, it is likely that the majority of the local population had never seen a train before and that perhaps as much out of curiosity crowded around to watch the spectacle.

The ECR line ran to the west of the centre of town (Maps 2&3) in a wide arc. This worried local traders as they believed that the railway was too far removed from the town centre compared to the coaches that went to its very heart, that it was possible it would have a negative impact on their businesses. This was contrary to how the ECR had promoted it. Concerns in Chelmsford were raised about the potential damage the line would do to shopkeepers, of which there was 'not a more respectable class in any town.'²¹ It was feared that easy communication with London would affect trade as people would buy from London in preference. A meeting

at the Shire Hall in Chelmsford to discuss the situation prompted John Copland to assert, 'we do not find our proximity to the metropolis detrimental to trade,' as it was argued people would have to buy a lot for it to be worthwhile shopping in the capital.²² However, this defence by Copland has to be noted with caution due to his interest in the railway development, so he would obviously be keen to promote the plans.

There were areas, however, that were to suffer because of the railway, notably areas of transport and industry. The railway line had an immediate impact on roads as tolls steadily decreased and in 1847 they were only a quarter of what they were in 1841. Less money was being spent on the maintenance of the roads and wages decreased for labourers and the turnpike roads to London only lasted until December 1866 when the London to Harwich turnpike, the last in the area, closed.²³ An area of the local industry that had to reinvent itself to secure survival was the coaching industry. Chelmsford, prior to the railway's arrival was a successful coaching town, due to its central point between London and Colchester, with a number of inns that were frequented by people resting at the midpoint in their journeys. The *Post Office Directory* of 1851 described Chelmsford as being 'pleasantly situated, and being in a central part of the county, with good communications, is naturally the scene of much traffic, and the place of resort of the neighbouring population'.²⁴

The arrival of the railway, however, meant there were changes

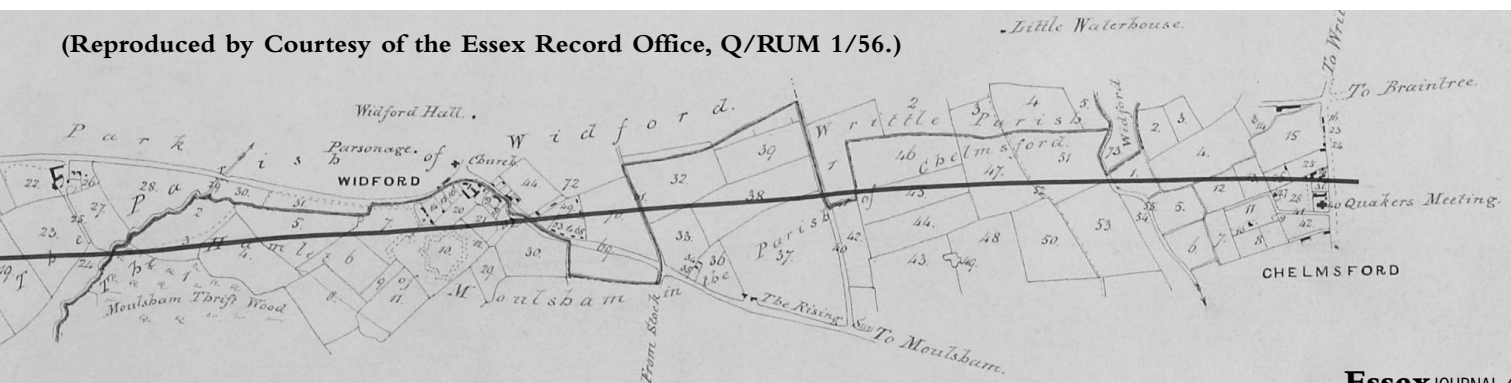
in the way people, particularly businessmen, used the facilities in Chelmsford. They could now travel directly to London and back in a day and thus not only the need for an inn as a midway resting point vanished, but also the need for a coach for them to continue their journey dissipated. However, the inn and coaching industry was not content to have its future decided by the railway and not only continued to strive, but found new ways to continue business successfully. Listings for inns, taverns and hotels are found in abundance in the trade directories of the time, demonstrating how important they were for the local economy of Chelmsford. Taverns and public houses dealt in the sale of alcohol on the premises, whereas inns were public houses that served food and accommodation. Many inns were also posting houses which served coaches en-route. Hotels were primarily for accommodation and food but could also include a bar and commercial hotels served the needs of the travelling businessman.

The coaching industry reorganised its trade to act as a feeder service for the trains. In effect at each station along the ECR route coaches would wait to take passengers to smaller towns not serviced by the railway.²⁵ The *Essex Standard* is full of adverts for such services, as the following advert for 'The Eagle Coach' demonstrates;

'From Halstead to Kelvedon. Leave White Hart Inn from Halstead 8am, stop at various points through Coggeshall and Kelvedon to make the 9:30am train to London'²⁶

The advert was placed by William

(Reproduced by Courtesy of the Essex Record Office, Q/RUM 1/56.)



Chelmsford and the coming of the railway

Moye, proprietor of the White Hart Inn, Halstead. There is however, always a flip side to the prosperity secured by some in the coaching industry. E&A Macnamara of 'Chelmsford Coaches' posted the following statement in the *Essex Standard* on 24th March 1843;

'In returning thanks to inhabitants of Chelmsford and its vicinity for the very liberal support they have received since the starting of their coaches to the Brentwood station beg most respectfully to inform them that in consequence of the opening of the Railroad they will discontinue running on Tuesday evening next'²⁷

White's Directory of 1848 displays an abundance of adverts for carriers and coaches that service the railway and the surrounding towns. For example an advert for Choat & Cook's Hackney Carriages announces that they 'convey passengers to/from all parts of town', with the railway arriving at Chelmsford eight times a day to London, Colchester, Ipswich and Bury St Edmunds.²⁸ Adverts also abound for carrier services, where goods can be forwarded daily to all parts from the railway station. Mr Geo.[Geoffrey] Bird is cited as providing a carrier service to all parts and receives goods at the Ship and Saracen's Head. Adverts for waggons are also placed, detailing passage through Chelmsford to and from London, which stopped at the King's Head Monday and Friday and returned Wednesday and Thursday.²⁹ Those

traders who took the initiative and provided services that complemented the railway were rewarded with continuing success. Not everyone prospered, however, as the example of E&A Macnamara highlights.

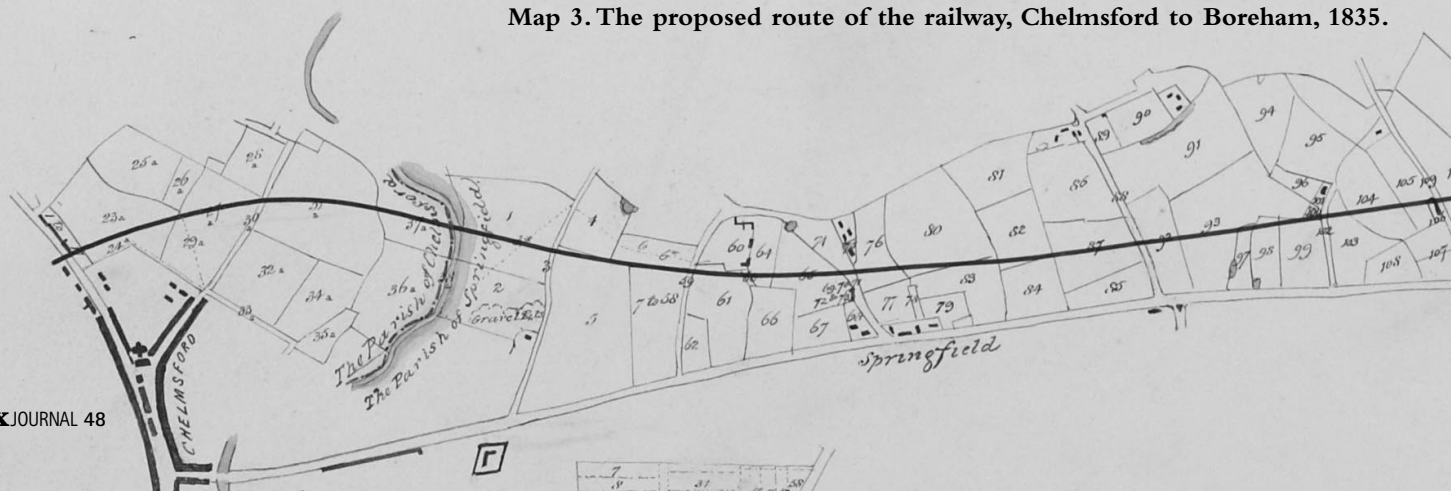
The coaching industry and the commercial inns and hotels worked closely together, with many commercial inns providing stabling facilities for horses. A closer look at the trade directories from 1823 through to the 1870s shows not only the development and fortunes of certain inns, but also the demise of others. *Pigot's Directory of 1823-24* listed 31 taverns and public houses and five inns, which were, the Bell Inn at Conduit Square; the Black Boy Hotel and Saracen's Head Hotel both on the High Street; the White Hart Inn on Conduit Street and the White Horse at Great Baddow. Also listed were two carriers providing service to London via the toll roads.³⁰ By 1839, *Pigot's* recorded an increase in tavern's and public houses to 46. There were still five inns recorded, however the White Horse had been omitted from the Chelmsford listings and in its place was the Lion and Lamb Hotel on Duke Street which was also listed as the posting house for the area. The carrier services had increased to three with the addition of two coach services into London.³¹ The trade directories present pre-railway Chelmsford as a time of prosperity for these industries; there were plenty of inns to satisfy the needs of the commercial traveller and with regular carrier services to London, the town and surrounding area were well served.

The picture from the trade

directories post-railway paints a similar situation, however, there is evidence of the industries beginning to develop and innovate to ensure their businesses survival. The 1845 *Post Office Directory of the Home Counties* was published two years after the railway's arrival in Chelmsford and records only three inns; the Black Boy Hotel, the Lion and Lamb Hotel and the Saracen's Head Hotel. However, all three inns are recorded as posting houses compared to just the Lion and Lamb in 1839, which may indicate the increase in the speed of communications since the railways arrival and also the volume of communication being higher because the infrastructure is in place to support it. At this point, in 1845, there are still two coaches to London and two carrier services, highlighting a survival of these services, although by this point the toll roads were running into disrepair, as highlighted earlier, the tolls collected for 1847 were only a quarter of what they were in 1841.³² It is by 1851 that we can start to see the changes in the industry brought about by the railway. There are six inns listed, the three that were listed in 1845 along with White Hart, Bell Inn and King's Head, with the Black Boy and Saracen's Head listed as posting houses.

There are, however, additional services provided that really highlights the fight for survival of the commercial inns. Omnibus services are listed as meeting every train from Black Boy and Saracen's Head 'from whence are hackney carriages to all parts'. Services are also provided the Lion and Lamb and Bell Inn.³³ Similarly, the 1855

Map 3. The proposed route of the railway, Chelmsford to Boreham, 1835.



Chelmsford and the coming of the railway

Post Office Directory lists the Black Boy and Saracen's Head as posting houses and also commercial inns. The proprietor of the Bell Hotel has also explored new business ventures as the hotel is now listed as hotel, commercial inn and car and omnibus proprietor. Likewise the Black Boy is also listed as fly and cab proprietors, with omnibuses meeting every train from Black Boy, Saracen's Head and the Bell Inn.³⁴ Whilst the railway undoubtedly affected the inn's abilities to procure business from travelling businessmen, it offered new opportunities for business avenues that the proprietors were keen to capitalise on, offering omnibuses that met the needs of local travellers and residents who lived too far from the main station. For the bigger, more successful commercial inns, the Black Boy and Saracen's Head, the benefit of also becoming posting houses could only be beneficial for business as this service was needed by the local community, meaning these two inns were needed also by the local community.

A word of caution must be expressed here, for the reliability of the trade directory as a primary source. Whilst they are an invaluable source for the study of local communities as they offer topographical and historical information about the area as well as listing places and persons of significance,³⁵ the way the information was collected cannot be judged as completely reliable nor can the way the information is listed over time. *Kelly's Directory* is amongst the most famous trade directories and he often used his links with the Post Office in order to compile

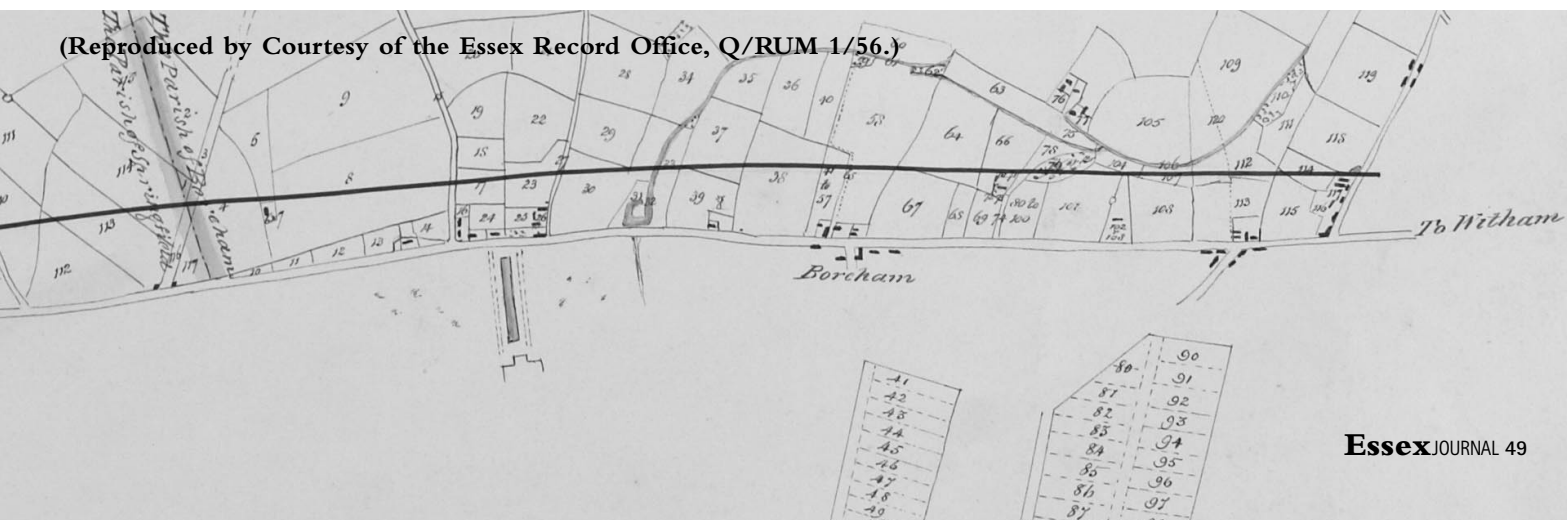
his directories, by sending around questionnaires with the local post man. Other methods included copying information from previous editions and there is indication that pressure was applied to local trades-people to continually buy new editions, in order to have their name included in the next edition.³⁶ These methods undoubtedly affect the accuracy of the information presented in the directories, as does the inconsistency of how premises are described. The terms 'hotel', 'tavern', 'inn' and 'commercial inn' seem interchangeable throughout the period looked at and it was undoubtedly in the proprietor's interest to be described in the most favourable way possible. The trade directories acted as the Yellow Pages of their day, a first port of call for a customer looking for a particular service offered, therefore it was important that businesses were presented in a successful and favourable light, offering many services. For example, the Bell Hotel would no doubt have looked an attractive option for a potential customer being it was described in 1855 as a hotel, commercial inn and car and omnibus proprietor.³⁷ It is also unknown, but a definite possibility that those who were better connected were offered a more attractive advertisement in the trade directories, boosting their revenue and reinforcing their position in the community. Thus, there can be interpretational difficulties when using trade directories as a primary source and it is always useful to be mindful of the way they were compiled and who their primary users were; men of commerce and business who used the

directory to carry out their day to day business needs.³⁸

One inn that declined in this period was the Black Boy. In 1851 it employed 16 staff and was an important centre of communication,³⁹ however, by 1857 the Black Boy was demolished.⁴⁰ It was sold at auction on Thursday 25th June 1857. The property had belonged to William Bacon from 1819 until his death in 1839, when it was sold under a charge of debts contained in his will. It was bought by J.A. Hardcastle and one other but by 1855 both owners had ceased business.⁴¹ It was not uncommon for the railway to initiate the collapse of such businesses; Noel Beer records the closure of some coaching inns, including the Golden Lion on the High Street, Rayleigh, as a direct consequence of the railway.⁴² In the Black Boys case possibly a combination of new owners plus the upheaval of the railway can be attributed to its collapse. Businesses had to work hard to survive and with many establishments offering the same services as the Black Boy but with the advantage of long serving, trusted, proprietors, they may have offered a safer option.

The coming of the railway to Chelmsford was a momentous occasion in the history of the town and area. Although there was a lot of public resistance and fear in the years running up to its arrival, once the railway was built and it could be seen that it would not damage the bulk of the town's trade, but offer more opportunities for development, there was an acceptance. The town had certainly been transformed through the re-development by the Chelmsford

(Reproduced by Courtesy of the Essex Record Office, Q/RUM 1/56.)



Chelmsford and the coming of the railway



Plate 1. The Agricultural Show of 1856 was held in Chelmsford and would not have been possible were it not for the ECR, who provided frequent passenger trains and transported livestock to the event (Reproduced by Courtesy of the Essex Record Office, I/Mb 74/1/167.)

Company and between 1841 and 1861 the population of the town increased by 24%,⁴³ with the market town becoming the busiest in Essex (Plate 1).⁴⁴ Certain sectors were changed forever with the coming of the railway and had to adapt to survive but developments in the middle of the nineteenth century laid foundations for the future. In 1878 R.E. Crompton & Co electrical engineers was founded, Hoffman's ballbearing factory was built between 1898 and 1900 and Marconi's Wireless Telegraph Co Ltd was opened in 1899⁴⁵ primarily because of the town's good transport links and proximity to London. Although the railway did not revolutionise Chelmsford immediately, as many railway lines had done in the industrial north, it nevertheless invigorated the town ensuring that it continued to play a pivotal role in the county as it always had done.

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The Author

Caroline Wakeham is a native of Essex and lives in Purfleet. Her main areas of interest are British social history, with particular emphasis on the Industrial Revolution, the history of the railways and the New Poor Law. Having completed a BA in History at the University of Essex in 2008 she then went on to gain a Postgraduate Diploma in Archives and Records Management from UCL in May 2010.

Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson (1826-1902)

Essex Worthy

by

Richard Morris

Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson lived for most of his life at Down Hall, in the parish of Hatfield Broad Oak, Essex (Plate 1). He represented Essex constituencies in Parliament for 27 years, and took a full part in many activities in the county throughout his life. He is perhaps best remembered in the south-west of the county for his support in the fight to save Epping Forest from enclosure, and in 1878, when he was Financial Secretary to the Treasury, he piloted through the House of Commons the Bill which became the Epping Forest Act.¹ As early as 1871 he had championed in Parliament public rights in Epping Forest.

Early Life

The first member of the Selwin family to live in Essex was William Selwin, a wealthy silk merchant, who purchased Down Hall in 1741 (Fig. 1). The Ibbetson's were an ancient family from Yorkshire who married into the third

generation of the Selwin's in Essex. Subsequent members of the family confusingly used either Selwin or Ibbetson or both in different orders, as their surname.

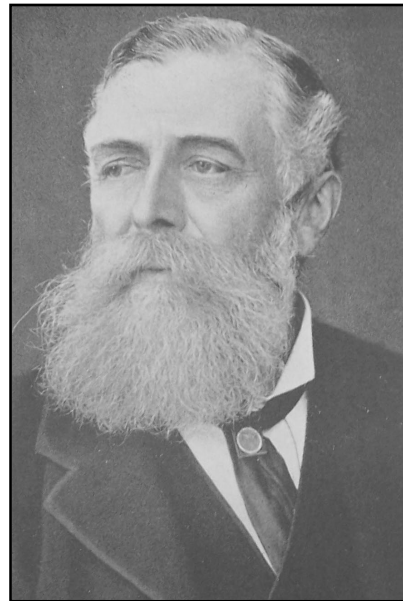
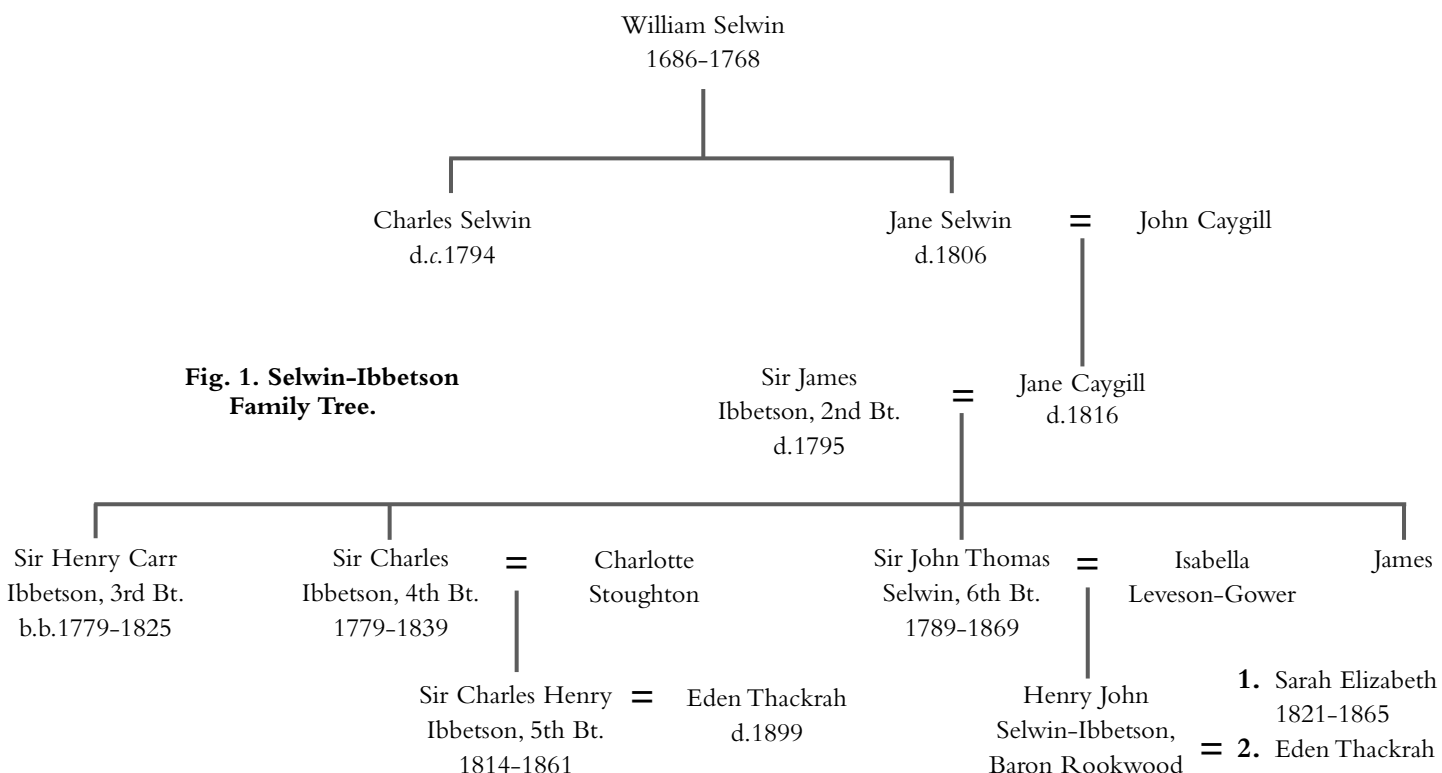


Plate 1. Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson.
(Author's collection.)

Born in Pall Mall, London, on 26th September 1826, Henry Selwin was the only son of Sir Thomas Ibbetson-Selwin and his wife Isabella, daughter of General John Leveson-Gower of Bill Hill, Berkshire (Plate 2).² Henry was educated at Beaconsfield School until he was thirteen years of age, but a severe attack of measles left him with a delicate constitution and it was impossible to send him to a public school, and he was educated at home. However, he spent most winters abroad, and in 1845 he went up to St John's College, Cambridge, from where he graduated BA in 1849, and MA in 1852.

At the relatively young age of 24, Henry Selwin, as he then was, married in 1850, the Hon Sarah Elizabeth, eldest daughter of John Singleton, first Baron Lyndurst, and they settled down in Essex. No children were born of the marriage. Subsequently he travelled through the Holy Land and up

Fig. 1. Selwin-Ibbetson Family Tree.



Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson

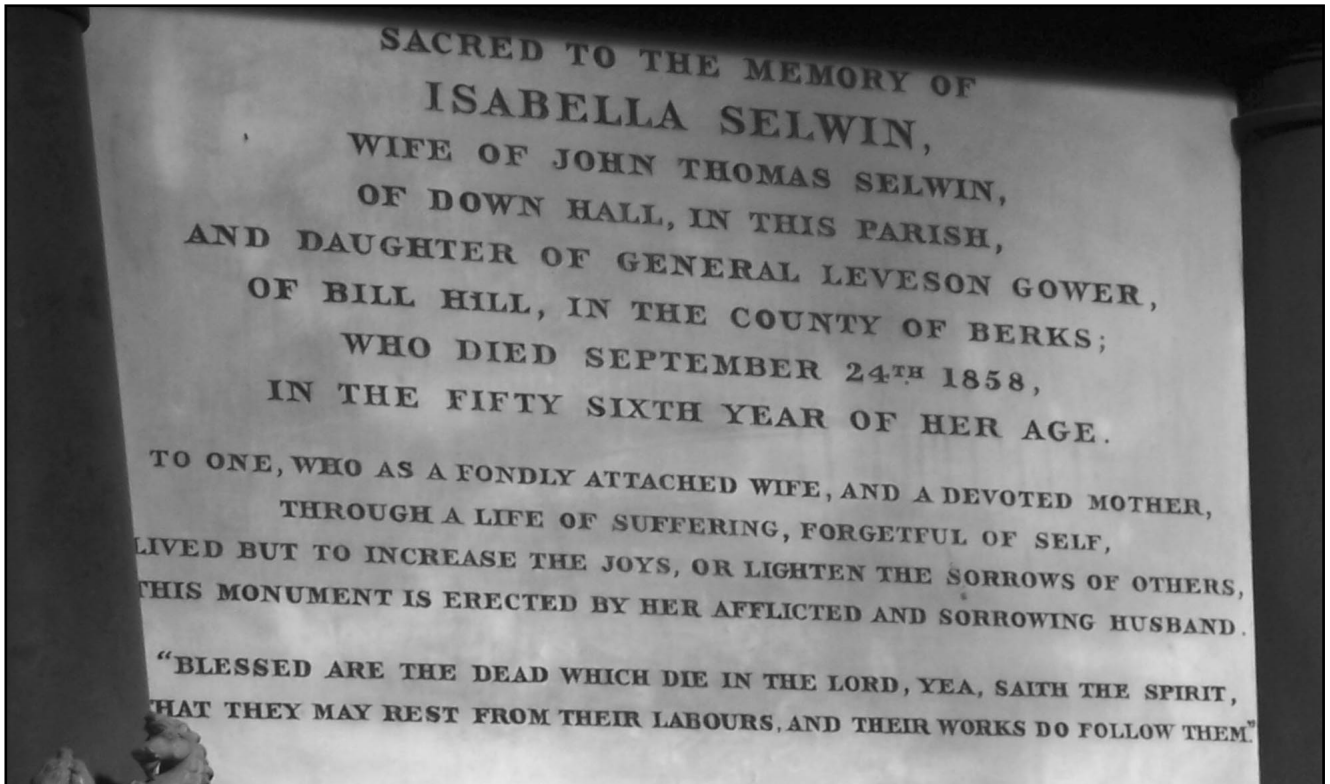


Plate 2. The plaque in St Mary's Church, Hatfield Broad Oak, to the mother of Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson. (Author's photo, 07/10/2010.)

the Nile, and was in the Crimea at the time of the proclamation of peace in 1856, when he witnessed the departure of the British and French troops from Balaclava.

Parliamentary Career

Selwin embarked on his political career as a Conservative in March 1857, when he stood with Mr J.C. Cobbold for the Borough of Ipswich, but he was at the bottom of the poll, although not badly beaten, as all four candidates polled between 700 and 800 votes. The close result justified another trial of strength, and in April 1859, he was third at the declaration of the poll, Sir Hugh Edward Adair, the old Liberal member, defeating him by only 21 votes.³

It was another six years before Selwin was to enter Parliament. He had become the candidate for the Borough of Maldon, but after wooing this constituency, T.W. Bramston and Perry Watlington announced, just before the dissolution of Parliament in 1865, their intention to retire from representing South Essex, and with the consent of his supporters at Maldon, Selwin was nominated to fill one of the vacancies for South Essex.

He was returned at the head of the poll, notwithstanding the death of his wife had prevented him from canvassing or taking a very active part in the election.⁴

The Reform Bill of 1867 divided the county into three parliamentary divisions. Selwin and his colleague, Lord Eustace Cecil, elected to sit for West Essex. He was returned unopposed for the western division in 1868, again in 1874, and by a large majority in 1880. Subsequently (after the redistribution in 1885) he sat for the Epping division until his elevation to the peerage in 1892.

Selwin took from the first a useful part in parliamentary discussion, cautiously supporting moderate reforms. In 1867 he married his second wife, Eden, née Thackrah, widow of his cousin Sir Charles Henry Ibbetson, fifth baronet; they had no children. On their marriage he resumed the old family name of Ibbetson in addition to that of Selwin, and in 1869 he succeeded his father in the baronetcy. In the same year, while in opposition, he carried a Bill which aimed at diminishing the number of beerhouses by placing

all drink-shops under the same licensing authority and by leaving none under the control of the excise. He encouraged the Liberals to take up the licensing question. In 1870 he supported the Liberals' Elementary Education Bill, and in 1873 he backed Plimsoll's Merchant Shipping Bill.

In 1874 the Conservatives were returned to power, and Selwin-Ibbetson became Under-Secretary to the Home Office. He was offered the Chairmanship of Ways and Means, which Lord Beaconsfield jocularly told him might lead to the Speakership, but he declined the offer, as he did also that of the Governorship of New South Wales. He proved a laborious and efficient administrator, but was perhaps too prone to deal with details which might have been left to subordinates. During his tenure of office, acts were passed for the improvement of working-class housing in 1875, for the amendment of the labour laws so as to relax the stringency of the law of conspiracy, and for the provision of agricultural holdings, a measure which was largely based on information he had himself collected. He was unsuccessful in

Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson

persuading his colleagues to introduce further licensing law reforms.

Selwin-Ibbetson was at this time frequently ill, but would not resign and he became something of an embarrassment to the government. In 1878 he became Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury, and largely owing to his thorough knowledge of Essex, piloted through the House the Bill which appointed the City of London as conservators of Epping Forest, as well as the Cattle Diseases Bill. In October 1879, while in Ireland with the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Northcote, he sanctioned a scheme for improving the navigation of the Shannon, and planned a reconstruction of the Irish Board of Works, which never became law but led to changes in the personnel of the Board. He was chairman of a Select Committee which resulted in the Metropolitan Police Force being entirely re-organised, and the public were indebted to him for the establishment of the block system on the railways.

In 1880 Selwin-Ibbetson retired from office with the Conservative government. He acted as second church estates commissioner from July 1885 to March 1886, and again from September 1886 to June 1892. He did not stand at the general election in 1892, and in the birthday honours of that year he was raised to the peerage by Lord Salisbury as Baron Rookwood of Rookwood Hall and Down Hall, both in the County of Essex.⁵ Rookwood Hall was formerly an old moated manor house in the parish of Abbess Roding. In a farewell address, Sir Henry acknowledged that he owed his position to his Essex constituents, and in returning thanks for congratulations offered to him by the Essex Standing Joint Committee, which met on the day that the announcement of his peerage appeared, he said that 'his greatest gratification was the feeling that this new honour still enables me to devote the remainder of my life to the service of my county'.⁶

Selwin-Ibbetson's part in saving Epping Forest

By the beginning of the 1870s the area of Epping Forest had been reduced to little more than 3,000 acres, principally as a result of enclosures by the local lords of the manor who had purchased the forestal rights in their manors from the Crown. The Commons Preservation Society had been formed in 1865, and was to play an important part in the fight to save Epping Forest. Among its first members were Shaw Lefevre, MP (later Lord Eversley), John Stuart Mill, Cowper Temple, MP, W H Smith, Andrew Johnston, and Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton.

Members of Parliament started to show an interest in the issue in the 1860s, and in February 1870, Henry Fawcett (1833-1884), the first blind MP, and the Member for Brighton, who had become a member of the Commons Preservation Society in 1866, proposed a Motion, addressed to Queen Victoria which was unanimously adopted: 'Praying, that she will take such measures as in Her judgment she may deem most expedient in order that Epping Forest may be preserved as an open space for the enjoyment and recreation of the public'.⁷ A Bill was subsequently introduced, but it was faulty both in principle and detail, as it allowed 2,400 acres of the forest to be sold and enclosed, leaving only 600 acres for the permanent enjoyment of the public, and the Bill was withdrawn.

Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson made his first contribution on the subject in the House of Commons in March 1871, when he asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer:

'If he is aware that the timber in High Beach, a part of Epping Forest, is being marked previous to being cut down by private people; and if so, whether he is prepared to take any steps to restrain such action till the question as to the inclosure of Epping Forest has been decided?'⁸

The Chancellor of the Exchequer had to reply that the Crown had already sold its forestal rights in the manor in which High Beach was situated and therefore no longer had any power to take action.

A month later another attempt was made to force the Government to take steps for the preservation of the Forest. A motion was proposed by Mr Cowper Temple and in the debate that followed Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson made his first major speech in the House on the subject. Cowper Temple moved that it was expedient that measures should be adopted, in accordance with the address to the Crown of the previous year, for keeping open those parts of Epping Forest which had not been inclosed with the assent of the Crown, or by legal authority.⁹

Selwin-Ibbetson agreed with all that Cowper-Temple had said of the beauties of the Forest, and

'whether he is prepared to take any steps to restrain such action'

'thought that every lover of the beautiful or picturesque must desire to keep it open'.¹⁰ However, he commented that although it was true that large numbers of persons came to Epping Forest, the area of their visits was limited to the neighbourhood of the different places of entertainment to be found in or near the Forest, and that the main portion of the Forest was not so generally resorted to as was supposed. If the lords of the manor were to be deprived of the manorial rights over the forest waste, compensation would have to be paid, and this could amount to something like £200,000.

Although the motion was opposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Lowe, the Government was defeated in the division by a majority of more

Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson

than two to one, showing how strong was the feeling in the House that steps should be taken to save the Forest.¹¹

Public concern had now been aroused and on 6th July 1871, Selwin-Ibbetson asked the Secretary of State for the Home Office whether he was aware that a meeting was to be held on Wanstead Flats on the following Saturday at which members of the public were being encouraged to take matters in their own hands and to destroy fences that had been erected by the lord of the manor inclosing part of the forest waste.¹²

The Government now proposed that a Royal Commission should be appointed to inquire into the condition of Epping Forest, and as to the respective rights of the Crown, of the Lords of Manors, and of the Commoners, with directions for the preparation of a scheme for the preservation of the open land of the Forest. Speaking at the Committee stage of the Bill, Selwin-Ibbetson supported the proposal but he still felt that some of the lords of the manors had been misrepresented about their willingness to reach an accommodation on public access. The Bill

passed through Parliament without opposition. However, a week before it received the Royal assent, in August 1871, the Corporation of London commenced a suit in the Court of Chancery against 16 of the 19 lords of the manors, claiming the right of common of pasture over the whole of the waste lands of the Forest – the right of inter-commonage.¹³

There was now to be a lengthy hiatus, as far as any parliamentary action was concerned, while these two inquiries proceeded. In fact it was necessary for Parliament in February 1873, to extend the date by which the Royal Commission was due to submit its report. Selwin-Ibbetson expressed his concern at the delay but the extension was agreed.¹⁴ It was also decided that in any event the Royal Commission would withhold their report pending the decision of the Master of the Rolls in the action in the Court of Chancery. Finally, on 24th July 1874, Sir George Jessel gave his judgment¹⁵ in which he declared that the enclosures made since August 1851 were illegal, and that there was a right on the part of the Commoners to turn their cattle out on the whole of the

waste of the Forest.

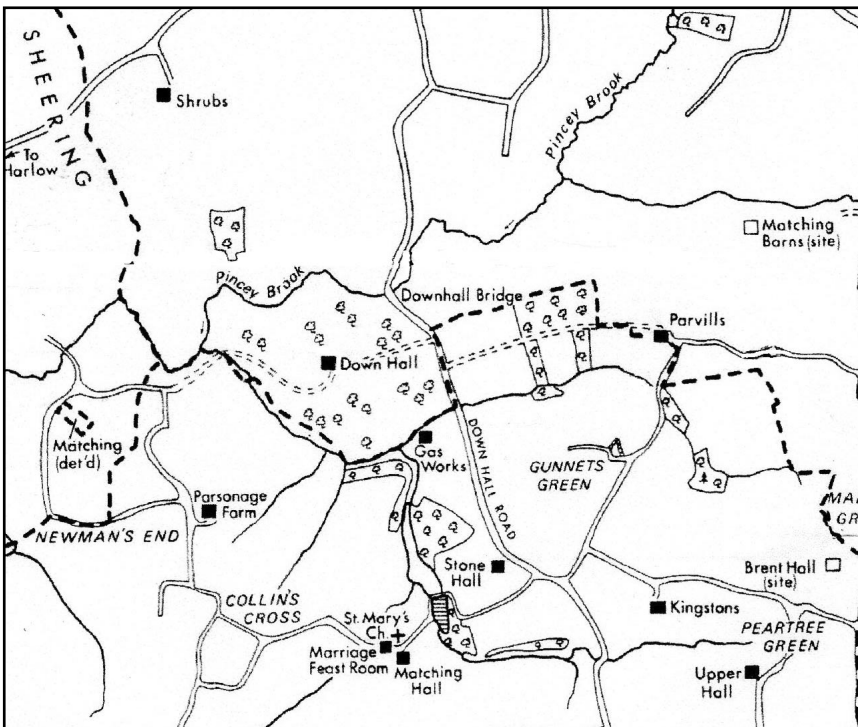
The Royal Commission made their first report in March 1875, but it was another two years before the final report was published containing a scheme for the preservation of the Forest. Parliament now had to start drafting a Bill to implement the recommendations.

The Government was ready in May 1878 to introduce the Epping Forest Bill, and it was decided that Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson should lead for the Government. In rising to move for leave to bring in ‘a Bill for the disafforestation of Epping Forest, and the preservation and management of the unenclosed parts thereof as an open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the public, and for other purposes’, Sir Henry summarised the efforts of Members of the House over the past ten years to achieve a satisfactory solution. The Bill handed over to the City [of London] the Forest to be preserved as an open space for the public for ever.¹⁶

During the second reading on 17th June, a number of concerns and suggestions were raised by Members, but Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson responded to all the points and the Bill was read a second time without any changes.¹⁷

It was now to be referred to a Select Committee for consideration. Eight members of the House of Commons spoke during the Committee stage, but the Bill returned intact for its third reading on 4th July. Some members still had concern about the membership of the Management Committee and Henry Fawcett proposed that the Metropolitan Board of Works should be represented on the Committee, but Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson responded that this had been previously discussed in the House, and the Government was against it. The Bill was read for a third time and passed, with 209 in favour and 49 against.¹⁸

The Bill was then presented to the House of Lords where it completed its stages and the Royal Assent was given on 5th August 1878.



Map 1. Down Hall and environs.

(Reproduced from *A History of the County of Essex*, vol. VIII, (London, 1983), pp.160&196, by permission of the Director.)

Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson

Life in Essex

Throughout his life Selwin-Ibbetson devoted himself to county business, frequently presiding at quarter sessions with efficiency and impartiality. He also did much work for hospitals and charities, especially in the Essex area, where he lived at Down Hall. A keen sportsman, Sir Henry, as he was referred to throughout the county, was as well known 'on Scotch moors, by the banks of Scotch rivers, and by the covert side',¹⁹ as he was in the House of Commons.

Since the early nineteenth century the county of Essex was divided for fox-hunting purposes into four 'countries', known as the Essex, Essex Union, East Essex, and Essex and Suffolk. The Essex was the principal hunt in the county, and its 'country', particularly in the Roothing district, close to Down Hall, was considered the best plough country in England.²⁰ Sir Henry was Master of the Essex hounds from 1879 to 1886, and during this time he hunted as often as his parliamentary duties would allow. When staying at his London house, he was on occasion seen 'booted and spurred at Liverpool Street Station, a passenger on the 7.35am train to Harlow, and this on many a cold foggy morning when even a younger man might have thought twice about turning out so early after a night's work'.²¹

Sir Henry took a great pride in the Essex Hunt and did not spare expense in maintaining it to a high level. The season was preceded by 'cub-hunting', which started at an early hour. He recalled that 'the cub-hunting season of 1880-01 began on 7 September at 4.30 in the morning at Latton and Harlow Park, an hour which frightened some, but which I had made up my mind was necessary if any work for the young hounds was to be obtained'.²² Firm, yet courteous in the field, it was said of him that he was never heard to swear or indulge in any stronger language than 'Hold hard, sir! we are not out stag hunting'.²³ Sir Henry continued to take a great

interest in the Essex for many years after he ceased to be Master.

Locally he also showed an interest in education and in 1875, built a new school for 123 children, with a teacher's house, about half a mile north of Matching Tye on the road to Sheering. Earlier he had supported an infant school at Newman's End in Matching parish.

The rectory of St Mary's Church at Matching Green was part of the initial endowments of Felsted School. However, in 1876, the rectory was sold to Sir Henry, who in the previous year had paid for the restoration and enlargement of the church to the designs of Sir Arthur Blomfield. The manor of Stock Hall, in the south-east corner of Matching was sold to William Selwin in 1755, and remained in the ownership of the family until 1920. Further south-west in the county, Sir Henry was President of the Loughton Park Cricket Club, although how he came to hold this office is not known.

At the time of the re-organisation of local government in 1889, Sir Henry presided over the first and second meetings of the provisional County Council in January and February of that year. He declined to be elected an Alderman of the County, following his principle not to serve *ex officio* on any body. He became the elected member for the Harlow division, but retired at the next election in three years' time. As chairman of the Standing Joint Committee, a position very congenial to his tastes, he was to a considerable extent father of the Police Act of

1890, under which the Joint Committee largely worked, and as senior chairman of Quarter Sessions, he felt at home, and did excellent work, having presided over 48 meetings in the 12 years that he was chairman of that important body.

In March 1893, at Epping Town Hall, Essex men of all parties presented him with his portrait by W.Q. Orchardson, which was installed at Down Hall. His second wife, Eden, died in 1899, and in September 1900, aged 73, he was married for the third time; his new wife was Sophia Harriet, first daughter of Digby Lawrell of Jersey. Baron Rookwood died childless at 51 Welbeck Street, London on 15th January 1902, following an operation, and was buried in the church at Hatfield Broad Oak, near Down Hall, his titles becoming extinct.

Down Hall

The Selwin family came to live at Down Hall in 1741 (Map 1), but the history of the house and manor goes back many centuries earlier. The manor of Down Hall lay in the south-west of the parish of Hatfield Broad Oak, but extended into Sheering and Matching. It was probably the tenement granted to Hatfield Broad Oak priory by Robert Taper in 1322-23, and comprising four messuages, 90 acres of land, 10 acres of meadow, three acres of pasture and ten shillings rent. Down Hall remained with the priory until that was dissolved in 1536.²⁴



Plate 3. Down Hall, c.1900. (Author's collection.)

Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson

In 1540, Down Hall was sold to William Glascock, who died holding it in 1579. Down Hall, from that time sometimes described as a manor, passed to William Glascock's son Richard (d.1617), then to Richard's son Richard Glascock (d.1624), whose heir was his daughter Elizabeth (d.1649), wife of John Ballett (d.1673). Richard Ballett, son of Elizabeth and John, left Down Hall to his nephew John Ballett (d.1716). John Ballett, son of the last, sold the manor in 1720 to Edward Harley, later Earl of Oxford (d.1741), who gave it for life to his friend Matthew Prior (d.1721), the poet and diplomatist. On Prior's death Down Hall reverted to Harley, whose widow sold it in 1741 to William Selwin, a wealthy silk merchant, for £4,500.²⁵

Selwin (d.1768) was succeeded by his son Charles (d.c.1794), whose heir was his sister Jane, wife of John Caygill. Jane Caygill (d.1806) left Down Hall to her grandson Charles Ibbetson, stipulating that he should take the name of Selwin, and that if he succeeded to the Ibbetson baronetcy and estates in Yorkshire, the Selwin property should pass to his younger brother John. When this duly happened in 1825, John Ibbetson in turn took the name of Selwin. As John Ibbetson Selwin he himself eventually, in 1861, succeeded to the baronetcy. On his death in 1869, Down Hall passed to his son Sir Henry Selwin-Ibbetson, Bt, MP, later Lord Roodwood, who left it to his nephew Major Horace W Calverley. The Hatfield Broad Oak part of the Down Hall estate comprised 248 acres in 1841. In 1920, when the estate was sold and broken up, the Hatfield part, about 1,000 acres, was mostly bought by the tenants.²⁶

When Matthew Prior first saw Down Hall he regretted that it was of timber rather than stone or brick, and though assured that it was 'fit for a squire, a justice of peace, or a knight of our shire', he planned a new house on a site a little to the west, with better views. He commissioned James Gibbs to design the house and Charles

Bridgeman to re-plan the gardens. Planting was in progress before the end of 1720, but building seems not to have been started by the time of Prior's death. Edward Harley, who often stayed at Down Hall, continued to employ Bridgeman in the gardens until 1726. Something of the outline of Bridgeman's work can still be seen in the woods north-west of the present house. Down Hall was eventually rebuilt in the later eighteenth century in a plain classical style. That building survived until 1873, when Sir Henry replaced it by a house built in a sumptuous Italian style, designed by P.C. Hardwick and built by F.P. Cockerell (Plate 3).²⁷

The house is mainly two storeys, with a colonnaded loggia on the garden front between three-storey pavilions. There is a lower service wing at right angles to the entrance front. The walls are of poured and shuttered concrete (for which Charles Drake acted as consultant), with stone dressings, and panels of ornate sgraffito decoration by F. Wormleighton and W. Wise in the South Kensington manner. North-east of the service wing is a square game larder with open arcaded sides and pyramidal roof.²⁸ Since becoming a hotel in 1986, the house has been subject to several large additions.

During the First World War Down Hall was used as a military hospital. It was not included in the sale of 1920, and was later occupied by the Calverleys until c.1930. From 1932 to 1967 it housed Downham School for girls. And in 1967 it became a conference centre and antiques business. In 1986 the estate was purchased by the Veladail Group, who have since operated the site as a four star hotel and conference centre.

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Acknowledgements

This article forms part of wider research into the 'saving' of Epping Forest, in the latter half of the nineteenth century, for the 'recreation and enjoyment of the public'. I am indebted to the late Mr John Howes for encouraging me to pursue this interest.

The Author

Since retiring ten years ago from a career in the City, Richard Morris has devoted much time to researching and writing about the history of south-west Essex. He holds the ancient office of Verderer of Epping Forest, and has written a history of the verderers from 1250-2000. His biographies of the Harvey and Lloyd families of Rolls Park, Chigwell, have also been published.

The defence of Croxton's and Broomfield Mills

by

Neil Wiffen

Recent anniversaries mean that the events of 70 years ago have been re-imagined in the national psyche. Who but the British could commemorate to such a degree the disastrous retreat to Dunkirk and the miraculous salvation of 'our' army? However, Churchill was acutely aware that wars are 'not won by evacuations', and that at the beginning of June 1940 the fate of Britain was in the balance. In the period before Fighter Command was fully tested, and the Battle of Britain fought and won, and when so much heavy equipment had been left in France, the prospect of invasion was, contemporaries thought, very real. In order to offset the lack of tanks and vehicles to prosecute mobile warfare and to combat the free flowing German tactics of *Blitzkrieg*, a series of stop lines and fortified towns were created using pillboxes as a major part of the defensive works. Such is their durability that 70 years on their unsightly forms dot the countryside in, sometimes, surprising numbers. One such stop line was the General Head Quarters (GHQ) Line which bisected Essex. From the Thames estuary in the south to Saffron Walden in the north-west, it ran around Chelmsford, through Springfield, Broomfield and on to Little and Great Waltham and beyond. This article will consider the surviving pillboxes for just a small part of the line as it follows the banks of the River Chelmer north of Chelmsford (Plate 1).

The dictionary definition of a pillbox is 'a small enclosed, partly underground, concrete fort used as an outpost'.¹ While they are relatively small and concrete they are not necessarily submerged in the ground to any degree or used just

as an outpost. Their use in the Second World War was prolific and many of us will be familiar with their presence in the landscape and will have some understanding of their function. Appreciation of the historical value of pillboxes has increased gradually especially since Henry Wills wrote his pioneering work on them in 1985.² Far from being seen as eyesores in the landscape, which to a certain degree they are, they are now appreciated as rightfully taking their place in a long line of fortifications stretching back into pre-history.³

Second World War defences as a whole have been surveyed nationally through the Council for British Archaeology's *Defence of Britain Project*. Running from 1995 to 2002 it recorded almost 20,000 military sites in the UK. More recently, the excellent *Defence of East Sussex Project* 'aims to record the anti-invasion defences of East Sussex using a combination of documentary sources, field-work and oral evidence', a model for us all.⁴ Whilst there is no equivalent of these specific projects in Essex we are in the fortunate position of having Essex County Council's *Unlocking Essex's Past Sites and Monuments Record* (SMR) database which is an invaluable tool when looking for pillboxes and other defensive structures.⁵ Finally the county has been well served by local authorities funding specific projects to record pillboxes and defensive structures

in their own areas with subsequent reports by Fred Nash.⁶ This article attempts to build on existing research as well as encouraging others to get out and about to look at the defences in their own locality.⁷

Perhaps because of the number of pillboxes built during 1940-41, estimated at upwards of 18,000,⁸ it could be assumed that they were very much a product of their time. However pillbox origins have been traced back to pre-history and their use in more recent nineteenth and early twentieth century conflicts has been recorded.⁹ Widespread use on the Western Front, as well as surviving First World War examples in Britain attest to the universality of these hardened concrete defences. So much so that during the 1920s and 30s the French and Germans adopted their use so fully that the *Maginot* and *Siegfried Lines* were the cutting edge of defensive systems. The British Army was well acquainted with pillboxes during its stay in France, over the winter of 1939-40, preparing defensive positions and constructing 400 or so of them before the German attack on May 10th.¹⁰ When the army shook itself down after Dunkirk it was quickly realised that with very few tanks, artillery pieces or automatic weapons it would be hard pressed to resist a German invasion. General Sir Edmund Ironside, Commander-in-Chief Home Forces devised a scheme of defence to slow down any German

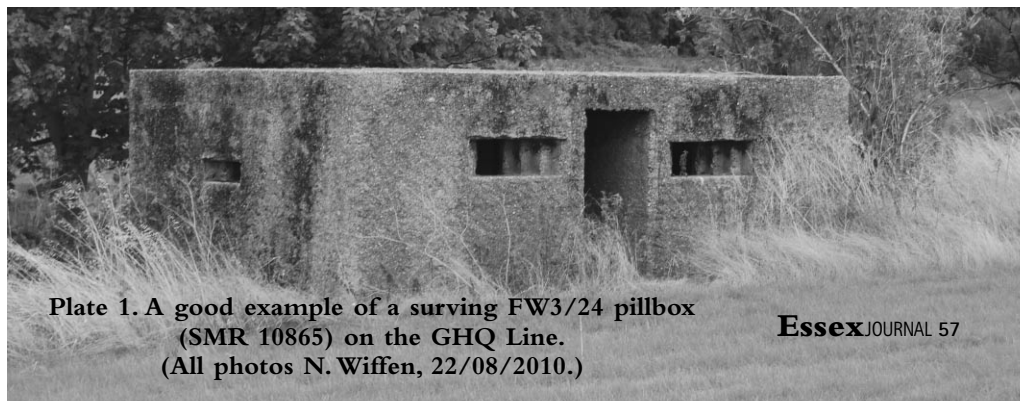


Plate 1. A good example of a surviving FW3/24 pillbox (SMR 10865) on the GHQ Line. (All photos N. Wiffen, 22/08/2010.)

Pillboxes of the GHQ Line in mid-Essex

Sites & Monuments Record number and map reference	Pillbox type
SMR 10859, TL709122	Eastern Command type (ECT)
SMR 10860, TL706121	FW3/22. (Destroyed)
SMR 10861, TL708121	ECT
SMR 10862, TL711118	FW3/24
SMR 10863, TL711115	ECT
SMR 10864, TL71011	FW3/28a
SMR 10865, TL712112	FW3/24
SMR 10866, TL712111	FW3/24
SMR 10867, TL709111	FW3/24? (Destroyed)
SMR 10868, TL713109	FW3/24
SMR 10869, TL709108	FW3/24 (Destroyed)
SMR 10870, TL713103	ECT (Bespoke)
SMR 10871, TL713101	ECT
SMR 10872, TL713100	FW3/28a
SMR 10873, TL713099	ECT
SMR 10874, TL715094	FW3/24
SMR 10875, TL714092	FW3/24
SMR 10876, TL712090	FW3/24
SMR 10138, TL715089	FW3/24
SMR 10140, TL716088	ECT

Table 1. Pillboxes discussed in article.

(For clarity only the last three digits of the SMR reference are used in the main text of the article to identify the pillboxes.)

forces that attempted to invade Britain.¹¹ This was based on a coastal 'crust' of defences while inland there were further 'stop-lines', anchored by defended towns and villages, which would prevent the very mobile German forces from racing all over the country, and allow the limited British mechanised mobile reserve forces the time to position themselves to undertake a counter-attack. Stop-lines were based along rivers and natural obstacles or railway

embankments with pillboxes and anti-tank defences built to strengthen them. The GHQ Line was a stop-line which was designed to protect London and the mid-land industrial heart of Britain from being directly over-run.

The plan to construct these defences was published on 25th June 1940 when the *Home Forces Operation Instruction No.3* was issued.¹² However, work on defences, in at least some areas, was already in hand. The civil

engineer I.D. Greeves recalls how 'On the morning of 18 June 1940, a meeting was arranged at the Esplanade Hotel, Seaford [East Sussex], between representatives of the military and contractors. The bare outlines of the proposed defences were discussed'.¹³ However as early as 29th June there were concerns about the nature of the plan Ironside was putting forward.¹⁴ By 19th July such was the change of mood in the country that Ironside resigned and was replaced by General Alan Brooke, who had fought in France in May and was well aware of how effective the German army was.¹⁵ He was concerned that all available units should be stationed as near to the coast as was practical in order to be able to counter-attack quickly when an invasion force was at its weakest. To him the idea of linear defences far away for the cost was a waste of time and effort. At the beginning of August a halt was called to building the GHQ Line, except for those works already started which were to be finished. It had advanced so far in the south and east of the country that by the end of the month it was essentially complete. Work in Sussex carried on into November.¹⁶ The following year work continued on fortifying villages and towns into anti-tank islands in a series of fortified 'nodal' points, the emphasis being placed on countering an invasion with mobile forces. Limited work on constructing hardened defences continued into 1942.¹⁷

The study area for this article (Map 1), runs for approximately 3 kilometres from the southern boundary of Broomfield to just north of Croxton's Mill in Little Waltham. Included is an interesting point in the defences - the end of the anti-tank ditch that ran from the River Thames to Chelmsford. This man-made ditch was the equivalent of a river where there was no river to act as an obstacle. It terminated when it met the River Chelmer at a point where the river formed the parish boundary between Springfield

Pillboxes of the GHQ Line in mid-Essex

and Broomfield (TL715091).¹⁸

In the event of a successful German invasion on the east coast, the River Chelmer would have performed the function of a moat, slowing an invading army from advancing on London and further inland. Pillboxes were constructed to strengthen the defences and are the most obvious surviving feature of the GHQ Line. However, on their own they were of limited use for once inside, their defenders would have had very little vision to the outside world. The pillboxes would have been supported by barbed wire obstacles and extensive field defences, such as slit-trenches and foxholes, whilst existing hedges, ditches and buildings would have also been put to good use by defending infantry.

The most vulnerable points to attack on the river were bridges, especially those bridges strong enough to support the weight of tanks. It is easy today to forget, as we easily motor through the county, that even as recently as 30 years ago many of the bridges that we take for granted did not exist and that river crossings were fewer and further apart than we are now accustomed to. In 1940 the only way for vehicles to easily cross the River Chelmer immediately to the north of Chelmsford was the bridge at Broomfield Mill and the Winckford Bridge in Little Waltham. There were smaller foot bridges at Croxton's Mill and just to the south of Little Waltham at the site of a former mill. It is this landscape into which pillboxes were constructed to best defend against a crossing of the River Chelmer.

Designs for these pillboxes were issued by the Fortification and Works department of the War Office (DFW 3). Osborne states that 'they were simply a suite of drawings from which both RE [Royal Engineer] officers in the field and building contractors could draw, in order to produce effective hardened defences which had been given the official seal of approval'.¹⁹ Various other commands throughout the UK also issued



designs for pillboxes and the Eastern Command Type (ECT) is an example of a local design.²⁰ Surviving pillboxes in the study area all appear to be 'shell-proof', with walls that are 25-54 inches thick as opposed to thinner 'bullet-proof' versions.²¹ A comparable section of the defences of GHQ Line at Hartford End in Great Waltham has been recorded in detail by William Foot.²² He describes the defences by the former Ridley's brewery with 'heavier pillboxes [FW3/24s] at the front edge of the defences by the anti-tank obstacle of the river, with lighter defence positions [FW3/22s] to the rear covering the ground in between with interlocking machine-gun fire'. By 'lighter' Foot may mean that the FW3/22 pillboxes would have housed fewer men (six as opposed to eight in a FW3/24) with fewer automatic or heavy weapons,²³ rather than the pillboxes being thinner walled. Of course this would need to be confirmed. It will be interesting to see if the defensive layout in Broomfield mirrors that a few miles to the north-west.

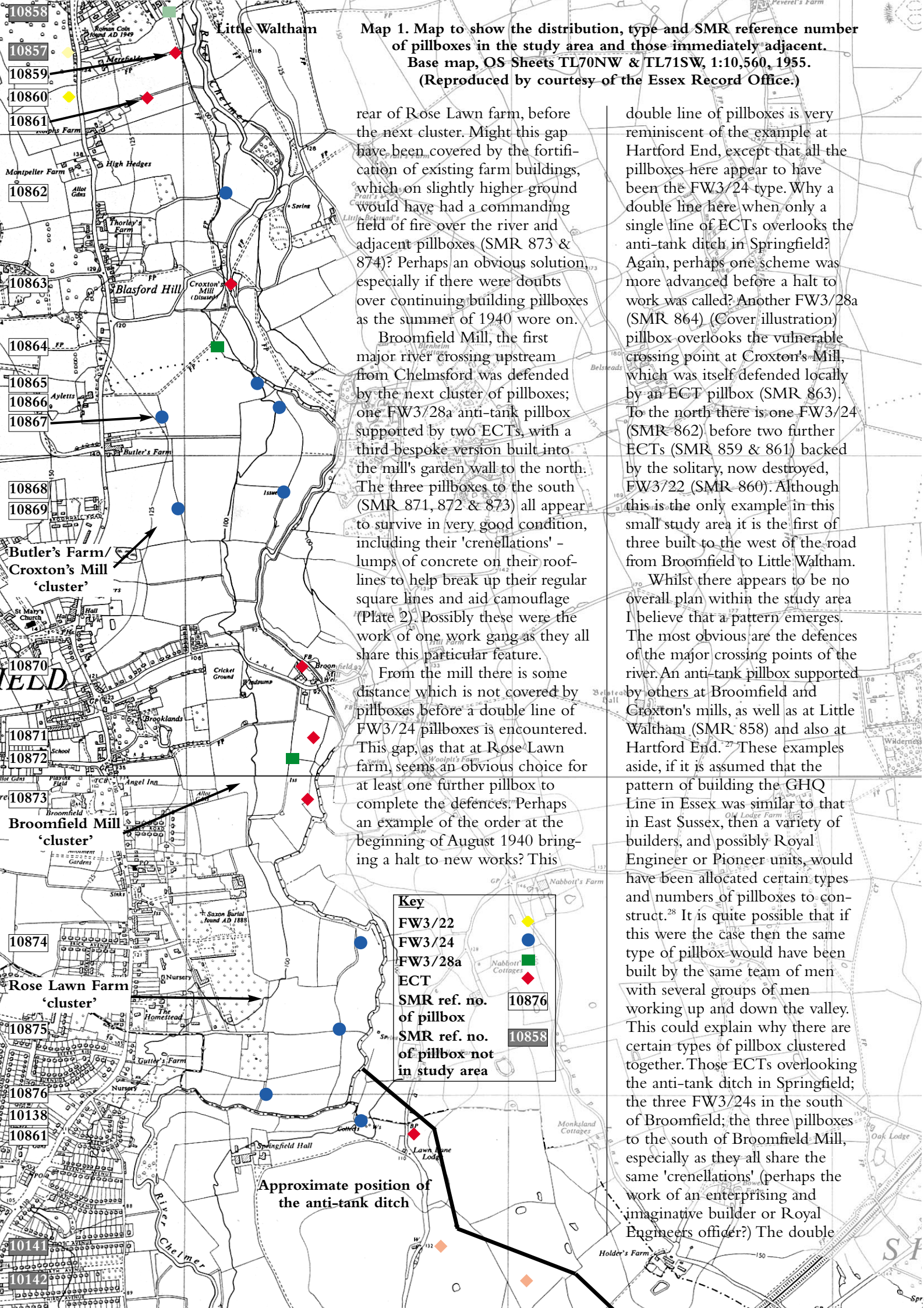
Taken as a whole there are 17 surviving pillboxes within the study area, with a further three, now destroyed, known from the SMR.²⁴ As can be seen from Table 1 there are four types of pillbox (Fig. 1) present in the study area of which there are the following numbers:

FW3/22	1
FW3/24	10
FW3/28a	2
ECT	7



Plate 2. The FW3/28a 2 pounder anti-tank pillbox to the south of Broomfield Mill (SMR 10872). Inset, a detail of a 'crenellations' and an interior view of a loop-hole for a Bren LMG.

Map 1 plots the 20 pillboxes situated within the study area. Ignoring the solitary FW3/22 pillbox (SMR 860) and assuming that the now destroyed pillboxes at Butler's Farm (SMR 867 & 869) were FW3/24s, then there are only three types of pillbox used, two if we ignore the specific use of the anti-tank FW3/28a (Plate 2).²⁵ Left with ten FW3/24 and seven ECT pillboxes it can be seen that there is no discernible coherent pattern of use along the sample length of the GHQ Line. There is a cluster of FW3/24s at the southern end where the anti-tank line joined the river and this feature seems to have been defended in Springfield by a solitary line of ECTs facing the anti-tank ditch as it ran from the railway to the Chelmer.²⁶ The pillbox (SMR 140) on Lawn Lane is an ECT and overlooks the anti-tank ditch and Chelmer and it is reinforced by a FW3/24 to the west. From here, in Broomfield, there is a cluster of four of these types before a change. There is a large gap between these, to the



Map 1. Map to show the distribution, type and SMR reference number of pillboxes in the study area and those immediately adjacent. Base map, OS Sheets TL70NW & TL71SW, 1:10,560, 1955. (Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office.)

rear of Rose Lawn farm, before the next cluster. Might this gap have been covered by the fortification of existing farm buildings, which on slightly higher ground would have had a commanding field of fire over the river and adjacent pillboxes (SMR 873 & 874)? Perhaps an obvious solution, especially if there were doubts over continuing building pillboxes as the summer of 1940 wore on.

Broomfield Mill, the first major river crossing upstream from Chelmsford was defended by the next cluster of pillboxes; one FW3/28a anti-tank pillbox supported by two ECTs, with a third bespoke version built into the mill's garden wall to the north. The three pillboxes to the south (SMR 871, 872 & 873) all appear to survive in very good condition, including their 'crenellations' - lumps of concrete on their roof-lines to help break up their regular square lines and aid camouflage (Plate 2). Possibly these were the work of one work gang as they all share this particular feature.

From the mill there is some distance which is not covered by pillboxes before a double line of FW3/24 pillboxes is encountered. This gap, as that at Rose Lawn farm, seems an obvious choice for at least one further pillbox to complete the defences. Perhaps an example of the order at the beginning of August 1940 bringing a halt to new works? This

double line of pillboxes is very reminiscent of the example at Hartford End, except that all the pillboxes here appear to have been the FW3/24 type. Why a double line here when only a single line of ECTs overlooks the anti-tank ditch in Springfield? Again, perhaps one scheme was more advanced before a halt to work was called? Another FW3/28a (SMR 864) (Cover illustration) pillbox overlooks the vulnerable crossing point at Croxton's Mill, which was itself defended locally by an ECT pillbox (SMR 863). To the north there is one FW3/24 (SMR 862) before two further ECTs (SMR 859 & 861) backed by the solitary, now destroyed, FW3/22 (SMR 860). Although this is the only example in this small study area it is the first of three built to the west of the road from Broomfield to Little Waltham.

Whilst there appears to be no overall plan within the study area I believe that a pattern emerges. The most obvious are the defences of the major crossing points of the river. An anti-tank pillbox supported by others at Broomfield and Croxton's mills, as well as at Little Waltham (SMR 858) and also at Hartford End.²⁷ These examples aside, if it is assumed that the pattern of building the GHQ Line in Essex was similar to that in East Sussex, then a variety of builders, and possibly Royal Engineer or Pioneer units, would have been allocated certain types and numbers of pillboxes to construct.²⁸ It is quite possible that if this were the case then the same type of pillbox would have been built by the same team of men with several groups of men working up and down the valley. This could explain why there are certain types of pillbox clustered together. Those ECTs overlooking the anti-tank ditch in Springfield; the three FW3/24s in the south of Broomfield; the three pillboxes to the south of Broomfield Mill, especially as they all share the same 'crenellations' (perhaps the work of an enterprising and imaginative builder or Royal Engineers officer?) The double

Key

FW3/22	Yellow Diamond
FW3/24	Blue Circle
FW3/28a	Green Square
ECT	Red Diamond
SMR ref. no. of pillbox	10876
SMR ref. no. of pillbox not in study area	10858

Approximate position of the anti-tank ditch

Pillboxes of the GHQ Line in mid-Essex

line of pillboxes behind Butler's Farm also fits this picture very well with a further section up around Little Waltham busily defending this important crossing point of the Chelmer. If one looks further north to Langley's, in Great Waltham, there was much building going on here with at least another ten pillboxes along a very short stretch of river. Gaps inbetween the clusters may represent work that was never started, before the order ending construction of new works was issued, or that they were filled by the fortification of existing buildings?

Within the 20 pillboxes of the study area there are some interesting examples of variation of design and camouflage. The pillbox built into the garden wall at Broomfield Mill (SMR 870) is described as being a purpose built ECT in the shape of an 'irregular diamond', demonstrating the ingenuity involved in planning these defences. Building this pillbox into the red-brick garden wall would have also camouflaged it. The wall in this case was the camouflage but in two other examples the builders had to work a little harder. The pillbox at Croxton's Mill (SMR 863) was disguised as a small wooden cottage with a tiled roof whilst an ECT (SMR 859) (Plate 3) is reported to have been disguised as a thatched cottage, again in the interests of camouflage.

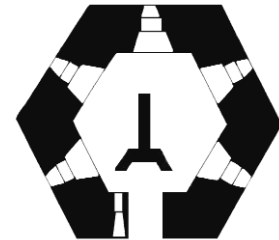
This highlights the importance of the SMR for without it we would have only been left with the concrete remains of the pillboxes, having lost the thatch and the tiles and other temporary camouflage to time and the elements. These different ways of camouflaging pillboxes are not restricted to this study area, Henry Wills has many examples of disguised pillboxes, but it is interesting to see their presence here.²⁹ It is also pertinent to consider those temporary ways of camouflaging which would have disappeared in a matter of days perhaps. A very simple way of disguising a pillbox would have

been to 'paint' it with liquid mud which would not have survived the next rain showers. The lumps of concrete on the pillboxes around Broomfield Mill would have helped to have broken up their outlines but so would have foliage, logs or netting. While we may see a pillbox isolated in the middle of a field we must consider that it may not have always been the case. An old map or aerial photo could show the long lost hedgerow that the pillbox was built into. Once this was removed the main element of camouflage was also removed. Picture this and all those temporary trenches and earthworks that would have been dug to support the pillbox and a much more complex defensive landscape can be envisaged.

As the prospect of invasion receded in 1940, especially so after the German invasion of Russia the following summer, pillboxes still had a function to perform. They were relegated to be manned by members of the Home Guard who became responsible for their upkeep. It is still remembered how the Springfield Home Guard undertook at least one night-time exercise to attack Broomfield Mill which was defended by the Broomfield Home Guard.³⁰ One assumes that the pillboxes we have discussed (SMR 870, 871, 872 & 873) were used for what they were originally planned for if only in a training capacity.

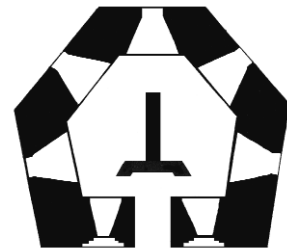
To fully understand the pattern of pillboxes we have discussed, further research is desirable. It may be possible to discover in the war diaries of the army units stationed in the area during the construction of the pillboxes more about the whole exercise. Were small numbers of pillboxes constructed by the same teams as I have suggested? Were more planned but never built? Had some existing buildings been identified for fortifying? This study of a small section of the GHQ Line is an initial exploration of some of its features. Further study may increase our understanding of the bigger

Fig. 1. Approximate floor plans, and garrison, of the pillboxes present in the study area. (Based on Osborne and Wills.)



FW3/22

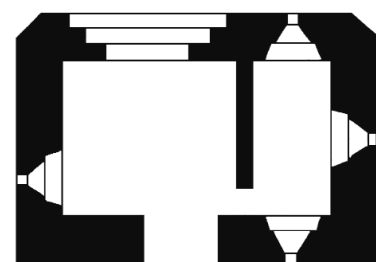
5 LMGs, 1 Rifle, - 6 men



FW3/24

5 LMGs, 2 Rifles, - 8 men

**1m.
Approx.**



FW3/28a

**2 pounder anti-tank gun,
3 LMGs - 10 men**



**ECT, enlarged FW3/26, 4 LMGs,
- 5 men**

Pillboxes of the GHQ Line in mid-Essex

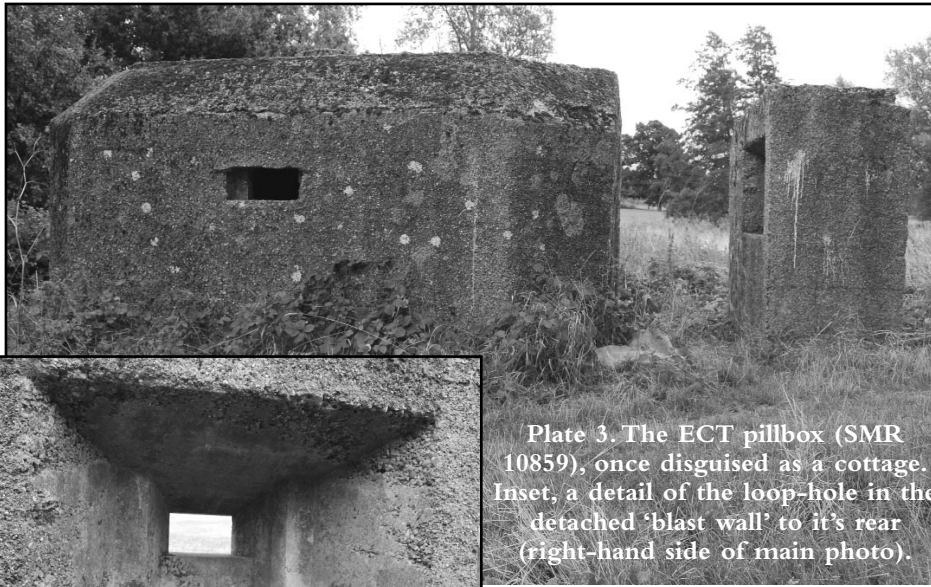


Plate 3. The ECT pillbox (SMR 10859), once disguised as a cottage. Inset, a detail of the loop-hole in the detached 'blast wall' to its rear (right-hand side of main photo).

picture. Whilst it complements some of the studies already undertaken it would probably be worthwhile to enlarge the study area to see how representative it actually is. Perhaps a fuller county-wide study of the remains of the GHQ Line would be apposite now we are 70 years on from when it was built. I also hope that this article will encourage others to go out and discover their local pillboxes. Do similar patterns exist in other areas as tentatively discussed here? However, some sites will be inaccessible, completely camouflaged and existing only as a 'bulge' in a Blackthorn hedge (SMR 876), while others will show signs of occupation with the detritus of old mattresses and food and drink cans (SMR 864 & 872). Whatever we think of them, pillboxes are worthy subjects for study even if we are still beginning to fully understand them and their place in the landscape.

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6. Such as, F. Nash, *World War Two defences in Essex: interim report*, (Chelmsford, 1998) and, to name but a few, *Survey of World War Two Defences* in the Boroughs of: Brentwood (1999), Southend-on-Sea (2001) & Colchester (2007).
7. Please respect private property and seek permission from landowners if you would like to examine at close quarters pillboxes that are not adjacent to public rights of way. In this study area a footpath ran for most of its length enabling me to visit seven of the pillboxes discussed.
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20. *Ibid*.
21. The SMR refers to them as 'thick-walled' which, I assume, means shell-proof and therefore the terms are interchangeable.
22. The very scarce *Beaches, fields, streets, and hills... : the anti-invasion landscapes of England, 1940*, (York, 2006), pp.416-425 and the more easily available *The Battlefields That Nearly Were: Defended England 1940*, (Stroud, 2007), pp140-149.
23. Alexander, pp.93-94.
24. The pillboxes described in this article are all recorded on Essex County Council's Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).
25. There appears to be no examples in the immediate vicinity of the more complex FW3/27 type with an anti-aircraft mounting as exists in the Hartford End case-study. Is this an example of a different workforce with differing skill levels or instructions from those working downstream? Foot, *Battlefields*, p.142.
26. Most of these were demolished to make way for the housing estate so it is difficult to be precise but entries on the SMR suggest this to be the case.
27. Foot, *Battlefields*, p. 145.
28. Greeves, pp.54-55.
29. Wills, pp.58-64.
30. My late Grandfather, Redvers Wiffen, was a member of the Broomfield Home Guard and he recounted this story to my Dad, Michael Wiffen.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the very helpful staff of Broomfield Library who have been invaluable in sourcing books and articles for this project. I would also like to thank Dr Sarah Honour for her comments on the draft of this article.

The Author

Neil Wiffen lives in Broomfield and has long been interested in the history of the Second World War. He is Hon. Ed. of the *Essex Journal*.

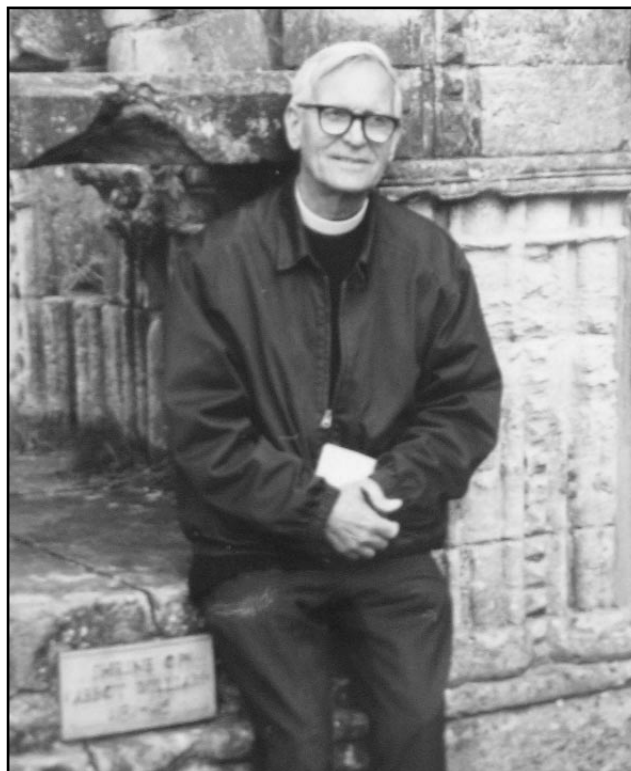
William Joseph Thomas Smith (1920-2010)

William Smith was born in Croydon on 18th February 1920 and died in Boreham, on his way to church, on 12th May 2010 aged 90 years. He attended St Michael & All Angels Church in Croydon where he joined the Choir under the Music Director, Dr George Oldroyd, becoming Head Chorister and Server. He went to Clark's College in Chancery Lane where, with other subjects, he was taught Latin.

William was called up two days after his 21st birthday to serve in the Second World War, volunteering for the Bomb Disposal Squad in Bedfordshire and Essex, helping to defuse many bombs in and around Chelmsford. He later recalled, modestly, that it was one of the most dangerous jobs he had ever undertaken! He then went on to serve in the 6th Airborne Division where he gained his paratrooper wings. However this was not without danger or incident and he was injured when his parachute failed to open properly. A posting to India as a member of a medical team was an opportunity to develop many friendships within the local community. He was demobbed in 1946 and became a Captain in the Church Army and News Teams Diocesan Office for the Chelmsford Diocese. He also undertook the role of Children's Missioner which saw him travelling all over Britain organising mission for young people.

Ordination in December 1956 was the culmination of training at Chichester Theological College where the Principal was Dr John Moorman, later Bishop of Ripon Cathedral. (Each year in August, William undertook a pilgrimage to Ripon Cathedral to see the chapel and altar dedicated to bishop Moorman). Starting out as Curate of Laindon-cum-Basildon (1955-61) he became Rector of Stifford (1961-65) and finally Vicar of Boreham (1965-90). In 1981 he celebrated 25 years of ministry as a Priest. St Andrew's Church, Boreham, organised a special musical weekend on 23rd December, attended by the Bishop of Chelmsford. He was also honoured to have an invitation from the Queen to attend a Garden Party at Buckingham Palace in recognition of his service to the church.

He retired in 1990 aged 70 but found time to officiate at many services in different churches. William continued to live in Boreham where he became a local historian of note, frequently visiting the Essex Record Office to undertake research. This was not wasted time as he published many booklets on the history of Boreham including *The Boreham Witch: fact or fiction?*, *Else Bing and her brass*, *Some Papers of the Overseer, 1807-1812* and *Bells, clocks and ringers* to name but a few. In addition to these he also wrote ten books of poems and hymns, all based on different subjects, as well as many articles for historical magazines and giving lectures to local



history groups. William also collected items of interest and photographs from many village people. These have been deposited in Chelmsford Museum and the Essex Record Office.

He loved people, especially children. His entire life was one of dedication and service, to God first of all and then to the communities in which he has lived and worked.

Daphne Hilliar

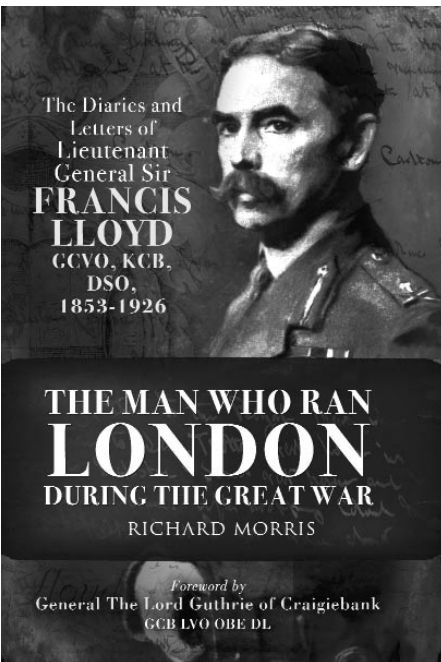
Retired archdeacon Michael Fox, recalls a memory from when he was parish priest at All Saints, Chelmsford, of William Smith in the early 1980s:

'A friendly dispute arose between Bill and historian 'Gus' Edwards as to the date of the tower of St Andrew's, Boreham. Bill insisted it was Saxon - Gus would have none of it - 'It's clearly Norman'. After some further discussion they reached the interesting compromise that it was Saxonormen! (though I suspect each remained entirely convinced of their own position). The entry for the church in the recent revision of *Pevsener*, by James Bettley, describes the tower thus:

'This seems to have started as the chancel of a Saxon church, the walls thickened and heightened by the Normans' [p.153].

So perhaps, in their own ways, they were both right after all!

Richard Morris,
The Man Who Ran London during the Great War: The Diaries and Letters of Lieutenant General Sir Francis Lloyd, GCVO, KCB, DSO, 1853–1926
pp.xii & 196. ISBN 978-1-84884-164-2
Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 2010, £19.99.



This biography of Sir Francis Lloyd is the second book by Loughton author Richard Morris on owners of Rolls Park, Chigwell. The first was his study of the Harvey family. Lloyd was a descendant of one of the daughters of Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey, and inherited the Essex property. This connection provides the main specifically Essex interest in the book, although this is limited, as Lloyd did not make Rolls Park his main home until late in life. To the general reader the most interesting part will be the account of Lloyd's work as General

Officer Commanding London District, during the First World War. This describes a vital aspect of military organisation which tends to be overlooked by histories which concentrate on the army in combat. It is also highly relevant to the study of the home front during the War.

Lloyd bequeathed his diaries to his old regiment, The Grenadier Guards; and almost 300 of his letters were left by a relative to the National Army Museum. However, although the sub title of the book might lead the reader to expect that it is an edition of the texts of these letters and diaries, this is not the case. The story of his life is told as a narrative, based indeed largely on his writings, but not quoting from them verbatim to any great extent.

Lloyd was a product of the old, professional, army of the late Victorian and pre First World War years. As a Guards officer he represented the elite of that army. He saw active and distinguished service in both Sudan campaigns and the Boer War, which the. In parallel with his military career, he filled the role of a country landowner and JP. Until after the War this, centred on his family's ancestral estate at Aston Hall in Shropshire, his preferred residence when military duties permitted.

Lloyd was still a serving general at the outbreak of war in 1914. About a year previously he had been made GOC London District. He was thus already in place to take on the vastly increased war time responsibilities of the post. Rather than transferring

to command a fighting formation, as he would undoubtedly have preferred, he retained this appointment until shortly before the Armistice. It is in this sense that he was referred to by contemporaries, as well as the author as 'The Man who Ran London'.

His work involved managing and, and providing for the needs of the huge numbers of troops who were based near, or passed through, the London area. or were treated in its many hospitals. This led to him working with many official and charitable bodies set up to serve these purposes. In particular he was made Chairman of Trustees of Queen Mary's Convalescent Auxiliary Hospital Roehampton, a post which he held until his death.

His position also inevitably made him active in encouraging voluntary enlistment, and he is reported to have been an inspiring speaker at recruitment meetings. The General was an aesthete (buying quantities of pictures and furnishings for his homes that he could ill afford), a heavy smoker and, above all, a fastidious man with a care for his personal appearance, even in his later years. Comments from contemporary journalists quoted by the author emphasise this latter aspect of his personality, as do caricatures (two of which are reproduced in the book). We may see a paradox in this elegant, dandyish figure, who only visited the Western Front briefly as an observer being heavily involved sending men to fight at the front. However this seems not to have worried contemporaries. He had proved his courage in previous wars. As the author points out, he was much in demand after the war for unveiling war memorials.

Lloyd's involvement in politics and civilian administration, begun late in life, was not as successful or, to him, enjoyable, as his military career. In 1919, following the War and the effective end to his military service, Lloyd was elected to the London County Council, having failed to find a seat in Parliament. From 1919 to 1921 he held the appointment as Food Commissioner for London and the Home Counties, a position to which he was clearly unsuited. At about this time, having consistently spent above his income, he was forced to give up his Central London house and Aston Hall. Rolls Park, where he had never before spent much time, now became his home, and his last years were spent in Essex.

This is a fascinating book therefore, but of limited Essex content. The last chapter is an account of Lloyd life and activities at Rolls Park between 1920 and his death in 1926. It incorporates an account of life there after his death, when his widow was still alive, taken from an interview with one of her former servants, Mrs Hems.

The book is well illustrated, with many photographs. It has a preface by General the Lord Guthrie of Craigiebank.

Richard Harris

Book Reviews

William Frost,
**Reminiscences of an Old Colonist
(Colchester, 1897): with additional
information by John S. Appleby,**
2009, £3.00.

Obtainable from John Appleby, Little Pitchbury, Brick
Kiln Lane, Great Horkesley, Colchester CO6 4EU
(postage free), or from the Castle Bookshop,
Colchester.

William Frost (1824–99) was one of eleven
children of Micaiah Frost, an agricultural
labourer of Great Bromley. At the age of 22 he
accepted an offer to go out to Trinidad to act as an
overseer on a large sugar estate. *The Reminiscences*
provide a vivid account of his life in Trinidad. He
had a long journey to get there; it took five days to
reach Glasgow, then after a wait of 13 days for the
sailing ship, the John Scott, it took 60 to reach Port

of Spain. He gives detailed descriptions of Trinidad
and its different peoples, and of the plantations on
which he worked, the methods of farming and of
sugar-making. The late 1840s were a difficult time,
because of low prices due to free trade, and labour
problems in the aftermath of the abolition of slavery
in all British possessions in 1837; rioters marched
into Port of Spain in 1849 and fires broke out on
several plantations. William married Elizabeth
Molland 'who came out to be married' in 1856;
their son and daughter died in Trinidad. William
returned to England in 1860 and comments on the
many changes since he left. He travelled by steamer,
and found the railway network much extended.
He retired in 1880, returning to Great Bromley
where he purchased New House; his grave is
in Great Bromley churchyard.

Jennifer Ward

Andrew Sargent, Editor,
**Traditional Crafts and Industries in
East Anglia, the photographic legacy
of Hallam Ashley.**

pp.176, ISBN 978-1-85074-968-4,
English Heritage, 2010, £16.99.

The years that Hallam Ashley was active, the
middle decades of the twentieth century, were
ones of great change and he faithfully recorded rural
life and society, the buildings and industries that
were to be found in East Anglia. Society and things
which had grown and evolved slowly from the
medieval era but were being radically altered by a
growing geographic and social mobility of the
post-war years.

It is over 20 years since we were treated to *John
Tarlton's Essex: a community and its people in pictures
1940-1960*, so this is a welcome publication in a
similar vein. When both Tarlton and Ashley were
active, crops were still harvested and transported,
and milk still delivered, by horse and cart. This
latest book presents Ashley's faithfully record of this
passing way of life, in a straight documentary style
that is unsentimental. For me, two of the most
poignant images are of rusting traction engines due
to be scrapped and a great house being demolished.
For all the things that have changed some still linger,
thatching roofs, frequenting fairs and shopping in
the market for instance.

Ashley was born in 1900 into a family of photog-
raphers and becoming a self-employed commercial
photographer could not adhere to, say, the naturalist
style of the earlier Peter Henry Emerson, who
photographed the fens and broads six decades before.
The photos are straight documentary black & white,

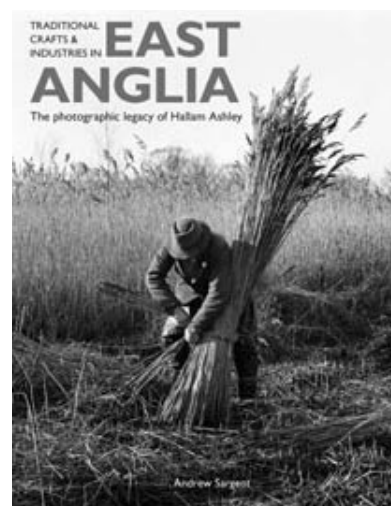
full of the great detail
and tone possible from
large format negatives
and nicely reproduced
in this attractive and
informative book which
is divided into chapters
on agriculture, milling
(this being a particular
interest of Ashley's),
fishing, quarrying,
industry, crafts etc. Each
chapter contains its own
introduction.

Every photo here
(140) has its historical
and human interest but in photographic terms, for
me, the outstanding photographs are those of 'Netting
Sheds' (p.41), 'Smith' (p.116) and 'Boat Builder'
(p.125), which reveal an eye for formal composition,
perspective and pattern and a talent for timing and
use of depth of field. And there is also the ever so
slightly surreal 'Savage's Works' (p.144); they being a
maintainer of fairground rides.

Whilst the Essex content is limited, it is a book
that many will find interesting and it is worth
remembering that this is just a small selection of
Ashley's photographic archive which is held at the
National Monuments Record (NMR) in Swindon.
What Essex treasures are there?

I wonder, would Ashley now see any parallels
with the disappearing crafts he photographed and
the decline in his own profession as darkrooms and
their associated craft skills are becoming rarer and
commercial photographers struggle in competition
with keen amateurs and online photo libraries?

Keith Wiffen



Book Reviews

Wally Davey & Helen Walker,
The Harlow pottery industries,
Medieval Pottery Research Group
Occasional Paper 3, 2009, pp.198.
ISBN 0-95061054-2, £16.00.

Available from Lyn Blackmore, Museum of London
Archaeology, Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle
Wharf Road, London N1 7ED. Cheques in sterling
should be made payable to 'Medieval Pottery Research
Group', (£18 for Europe and £21 for USA).

The publication of this report, supported by a grant from English Heritage, provides the most comprehensive account to date of the important pottery industries in Harlow. Unfortunately in the past the results of some excavations in advance of the construction of Harlow New Town and later the M11 were never published. The joint authors have therefore filled in a vital gap in not only recording finds and the remains of kilns but also researching and extracting relevant information from archives. The evidence from a variety of documentary and cartographic sources (which are all detailed) adds vital information to the history of this industry.

The duration of manufacture was some five hundred years from the thirteenth to the eighteenth centuries, when Harlow was one of the most prolific centres in the Eastern Counties. With such long duration it was inevitable that the craft of potting was often passed down through several generations of the same families. Of interest to family historians is the inclusion of four family trees of four different families involved in the industry for up to six generations from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. In some cases potters are associated with specific sites and a list of known potters in alphabetical order with relevant dates is provided. Information from a wide variety of documentary sources includes interesting accounts of clay extraction, water supply, fuel supply and the importance of the Bush Fair and Harlow Market for pottery sales.

Maps are included showing the geology around Harlow and the locations of various production sites and kilns. Sections of the Altham Estate Map of 1616 have been reproduced in colour showing production

sites. The remains and types of kilns are described, together with dating evidence and the variety of pottery and sherds found at each location. There is an interesting account of the number of workers and seasonal work, necessitating various dual occupations.

As expected the majority of the book describes the massive variety of pottery produced at each known location at the relevant period. With manufacture covering some five centuries, the types of vessels vary enormously and include pots, jars, bowls, dishes, jugs, mugs and cups (made from finer clay) and even candlesticks. The different colour glazes found varied from orange and red to brown and black with a small quantity of green glazes. A large range of plain red earthenware vessels found in Latton were dated to the 1660s and largely made for domestic use. A whole chapter is devoted to the important Metropolitan slipware mainly comprising of dishes but also some bowls. This was a type of post-medieval red earthenware with white decoration for which London was the principal market. The decoration, patterns, motifs, letters and slogans are illustrated and fully described together with the types of vessel they appear on and the relevant site. One frequently used motif was the Gordian knot, often as a centre pattern and many slogans are of a religious nature, common at that time.

The publication is an essential reference book for all archaeologists to help identify and date Harlow pottery found at other locations. Of further assistance are comparisons with various wares manufactured elsewhere in southern England.

One of the contributors, Richard Bartlett, died prior to publication and this volume is dedicated to his memory. Sadly, Wally Davey, one of the joint authors, died earlier this year but fortunately he was able to see the result of his hard work and research published before his death.

We should be grateful to the authors and contributors for the enormous research carried out. This well written report, with good illustrations, is an important and valuable addition to the archaeology and history of our County and in particular to the important pottery industry.

There are two Potter Streets in Essex, both commemorating medieval pottery industries. Apart from Harlow, the other is at Sible Hedingham, which was another important pottery manufacturing centre. At least one kiln at each location was of the same type of construction. It is pleasing to note that a book about the history and archaeology of the Sible Hedingham pottery industry is in the course of preparation, which should compliment the Harlow volume. This excellent publication has achieved very high standards in all aspects and I thoroughly commend it to you.

Adrian Corder-Birch

Your Book Reviewers are:

Richard Harris, former Archive Services Manager of the Essex Record Office.

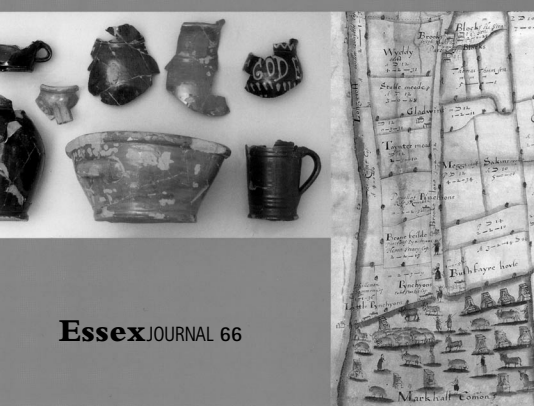
Dr Jennifer Ward, a prominent historian of Essex and formerly at Goldsmith's College, London and author of many books.

Keith Wiffen, a computer programmer and keen amateur photographer.

Adrian Corder-Birch, is Chairman of the Essex Journal.

The Harlow pottery industries

Wally Davey . Helen Walker
with contributions by Richard Bartlett, Mike Hughes and Alan Vince



EJ 20 Questions? Beryl Board

Beryl Board was born in West Australia in 1929 returning to England in 1932 to settle in Enfield. Rejecting a university place Beryl became a librarian specialising in reference work and bibliography. She and her husband Ken moved to Essex in 1954. Beryl was recruited to the staff of the Victoria County History of Essex in 1969. Her contribution to the *History* was recognised by election as a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society. After retiring in 1992 she edited the second supplement of *VCH Essex Bibliography* as well as contributing papers to the *Transactions* of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History and *Essex Journal*. Beryl has also indexed many publications, the most notable being John Hunter's *The Essex Landscape*. The death of her husband in 1995 ended 43 years of rich companionship. She continues her research and writing and has served as a parish and district councillor and is a churchwarden of Stow Maries.

1. What is your favourite historical period?

The seventeenth century for the Civil War, emigration to America and the King James Bible.

2. Tell us what Essex means to you?

Marshland, gentle hills, farmland, sky and small towns.

3. What historical mystery would you most like to know? Who wrote *The Battle of Maldon*, and when?

4. My favourite history book is... *The Greatness of Oliver Cromwell*, by Maurice Ashley, because it introduced me to the man and his times.

5. What is your favourite place in Essex? Maldon: for the High Street, its past revealed by Bill Petchey, Market Hill for its houses, and St Mary's church for its link to Mary Tudor's aborted escape plan.

6. How do you relax? Gardening, walking my dog, browsing among my books and especially the perennial pleasure of reading Jane Austen's novels and letters.

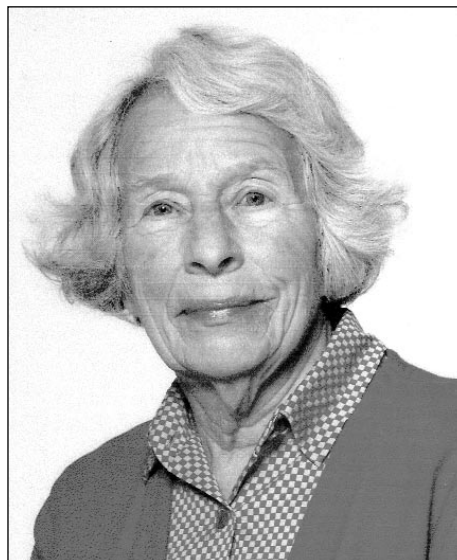
toy birds that twittered on long canes

7. What are you researching at the moment? The language of the Royal Flying Corps.

8. My earliest memory is... As a child, aged two-and-a-half, on the liner *S.S. Ballarat* on the way from Australia to England. Off Colombo, I saw dark-skinned men in little boats selling toy birds that twittered on long canes.

9. What is your favourite song/piece of music and why? Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto in E Minor for its joyfulness.

10. If you could travel back in time which event would you change? The Bull of Pope Pius V 'Regnans Excelsis' of 1570. It made obedience to Rome treason to the queen. It led to persecution and enduring strife between Catholics and Protestants.



(Photograph: B. Board)

11. Which four people from the past would you invite to dinner?

Margaret Paston, for her ability and common sense. John Thurloe, secretary of state during the Commonwealth, with whom Cromwell 'was wont to lay aside his greatness'. John Chalmers, Maryland Loyalist, buried in Stow church and John Thresh (1850-1932) Medical Officer of Health for Maldon and Chelmsford who did much to improve the housing of agricultural workers.

12. What is your favourite food? Little new potatoes with butter, Stilton cheese, raspberries.

13. The history book I am currently reading is... *Bonfires and Bells* by David Cressy.

14. What is your favourite quote from history? Speaker Lenthall's reply to King Charles, who was seeking to arrest the five members: 'I have neither eye to see nor tongue to speak but as the House is pleased to direct me'.

15. Favourite historical film? I see few of them but it would be hard to beat the thrill of the first *Henry V*.

16. What is your favourite building in Essex? St Peter's Chapel on the Wall, for its roots in a Fort of the Saxon Shore, the mission of St Cedd, and its restoration as a simple, holy place.

17. What past event would you like to have seen? King Henry VII receiving Philip, King of Castile, after his shipwreck on the English coast. In *The Paston Letters* William Makfyr described in detail the dress of the two parties. A splendid pageant that demands a collage!

18. How would you like to be remembered? As a person who tried to give some service in gratitude for the many blessings of her life.

19. Who inspires you to read or write or research history? Ray Powell, who taught, encouraged and inspired me throughout my VCH years.

20. Most memorable historical date? I shall never forget the fall of France in June 1940 and the dread of imminent German invasion.



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