

Essex JOURNAL

A REVIEW OF LOCAL HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

Autumn 2012

KATHARINE SCHOFIELD DISCUSSES THE MEDIEVAL DEEDS OF COLCHESTER HALL IN TAKELY

PLUS
NEWS FROM STEBBING & UPMINSTER,
NAYLOR LEYLAND – COLCHESTER POLITICIAN,
THE OATES FAMILY OF GESTINGTHORPE
AND BOOK REVIEWS

Sciant presentes et futuri quod Alex de limesle et uxor eius Rohasia de ambli. communi assensu pariorum uoluntate dederunt eccie beati iohis bapt colecestre et monachis ibi do seruentibus et sup altare obtulerunt totum tenem quod fuit harnus cum omnibus pertinentiis suis in thakeleya in libam et perpetuam elemosinam. cum decem solidis quos monachi de eodem tenemto singulis annis illis reddere solebant. Ita quod in perpetuum tam redditum quam tenemtum integre libe et quiete tenebunt. Hoc igitur fecerunt pro salute animarum suarum et omnium predecessorum suorum et successorum. Monachi uero de caritate eccie memorato Alexandro et Rohasie sex marcas dederunt. He igitur hec eorum oblatio tractu temporis in uitium posita reuocari. scriptum illud sigillo utriusque roboratur. Testibus huius. Walt de haria. Osbro senescallus. Humannus etc.

Sciant presentes et futuri quod ego Galfridus de ambli assensu heredum meorum et amicorum concessi et dedi eccie beati iohis bapt colecestre et monachis iudatas tre in thakelee de Boesia in decem solidorum et etiam elemosinam pro salute anime et omnium predecessorum meorum. Huius petro albe de Gogelhale. Willio filio symonis. Osbro senescalli. Galfridi de Hereford. Willio francisci. Thoma de clere. Willio de Andeuile. Walto de Sarrino bonam dico. Confirmant presentes et futuri quod ego Willis de Ambli filius Galfridi de Ambli concessi et hac presenti carta mea confirmavi. Albi et monachis beati iohis bapt colecestre omnes terras et redditus et possessiones in hac carta subscriptas. scilicet leuhale que dicitur estfeld. cum omnibus suis pertinentiis presentium. Hec non terram que fuit hereditaria pertinentiis suis. Et unam acram inter le Wardbroch. et terram Arnes. et unam acram pasture que iacet inter Hardwin. et terram de lalaher cum tribus acris et dimidiis.

EJ 20 Questions:
Gloria Harris

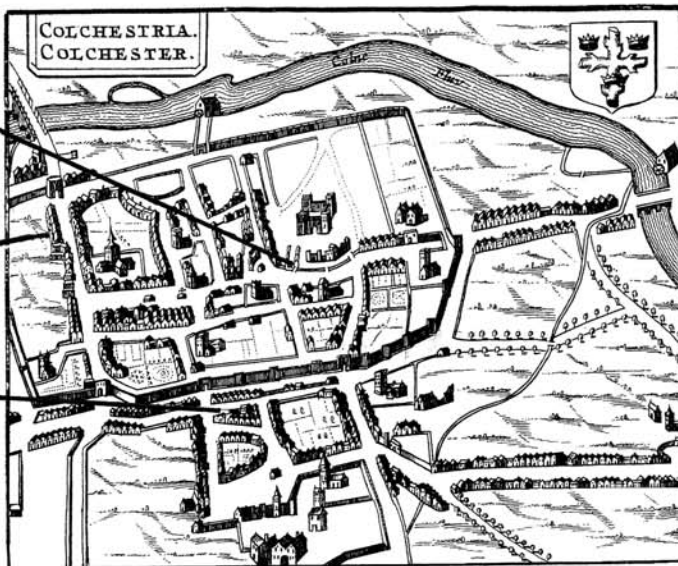
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Well, here we are finally with the delayed autumn 2012 issue of the *Essex Journal* – the eleventh that I have seen through to completion. I'm sure that you will have already noticed on the page opposite that members of the EJ Editorial Board are looking for an Honorary Assistant Editor, which is the first stage in allowing me to start to step backwards from the role I currently occupy. The past five years have been very busy ones for me, not only getting this journal to completion twice a year but also in my role at the Essex Record Office and, more importantly, being Dad to Thomas and Chloe (Chloe who came along at the beginning of my tenure). I feel the time has come to look for my eventual replacement as family life is becoming busier, in the last year I have increased the number of hours I work and also I have become involved in a community history project in Broomfield. I would also like to turn my MA into a PhD as well as just generally researching and writing more history. Editing articles for publication makes me very envious of all of you who do have time to get to archives to look at documents. But most of all I am extremely conscious of the passing of time and the occasions when Thomas has said 'Can you help me build a Lego castle or are you too busy with the *Essex Journal*?' Now I'm not going to get that chance for ever and it's about time I started taking them when they come (You'll remember toy railways in my first ever editorial!) Hopefully I don't sound like a tired old politician who has been caught with his fingers in the till but the time has come. Don't be too concerned though, I'll be hanging around until my replacement has settled in and I do want to oversee the planned index that will celebrate the EJ 50th anniversary in 2016. Also the venture is in much better financial health than when I took over and hopefully my successor will assist with the social media side of things which is not my forte! So, could it be you? Drop me an email if you're interested.

I hope that there is something of interest for everyone in this issue. Hannah Salisbury brings us all up to date with just a small selection of the happenings at the Essex Record Office. Do look out for the 2013 events programmes when they are published as I know that there are many interesting and varied talks, lectures, walks and courses that will be run throughout the year including some to mark the 75th anniversary of the ERO. Come along and support the show!

Following on from this are two pieces which demonstrate how vibrant the local history community is across Essex. Derek Towler introduces us all to an exciting collaborative project that is taking place in Stebbing between the local history group and Professor Lawrence Poos into the medieval history of the parish. Hopefully we will see further updates on this in years to come. Meanwhile Paul Sainsbury discusses the work that has taken place on the Miller's

house in Upminster. This just goes to show what can be done by a dedicated and enthusiastic team of volunteers.

I'm sure that for many of you, just like me, the name Naylor Leyland had not been heard before. Fortunately Rita Sharp shines a light on this erstwhile MP for Colchester.

With the expenses scandal of the last few years it is easy to forget that politicians in the past were also open to some dodgy dealing. Just because they happened in the nineteenth century does not mean that actions were any more gentlemanly.

Another Colchester connection, albeit slightly obliquely, is discussed by Katharine Schofield, namely the medieval deeds that relate to the Colchester Hall in Takely. It is a wonder that these superb documents have made it down to our own times but fortunately they have and quite a story they tell, which Katharine recounts.

Rounding off the articles Adrian Corder-Birch examines the Oates family and their connection with Gestingthorpe.

As ever book reviews follow which include my own of the much anticipated Volume 11 of the Victory County History of Essex. The review is very much a flavour of the book – in order to do it justice go and look at it yourselves as it is well worth it. Well done to Chris Thornton, Herbert Eiden, all their co-authors as well as all those who support the VCH. Hopefully we will hear from Chris in the next issue.

Finally Gloria Harris shares her 20 answers, and another fascinating selection they are. I wonder if after this eleventh issue there is a theme coming across, something that unites us all in our love of Essex? Perhaps on a cold and wintry day, when you are looking for something to do, you could look back on previous answers and let me know?

That's about it except to share one last thing. You may have noticed that in some of the local Essex press this autumn there has been talk about how much the 'so called heritage assets' that ECC looks after on all of our behalfs are worth in financial terms. It brought to mind that saying of Oscar Wilde's regarding a cynic (although perhaps it should be a philistine in this instance?) 'What is a cynic? A man who knows the price of everything and the value of nothing'. Be ever vigilant everyone.

Cheerio,

Neil



WANTED

Honorary Assistant Editor

After five busy and rewarding years of editing and overseeing production of the *Essex Journal* the current Hon. Ed. would like to start sharing his duties with a view to handing them over.

The Editorial Board of the *Essex Journal* would like to hear from you if you are interested in helping with the production of this successful publication.

If you are enthusiastic about the history of Essex and have some time to spare and this opportunity interests you then please contact Neil Wiffen for more information:

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Jenepher Hawkins

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News from the Essex Record Office

It's been a very busy few months, with our first ever Heritage Open Day in September, new accessions arriving all the time, and the next stage of Essex Ancestors approaching fruition.

Next year, 2013, will mark the 75th anniversary of the foundation of the Essex Record Office, and as one of the oldest and largest county record offices we are looking forward to celebrating this important milestone. We have come a long way from our beginnings in a collection of small rooms at County Hall to our current purpose-built home, with our seven miles of shelves in controlled conditions, our spacious Searchroom, and online facilities.

The last few months have seen several notable discoveries and new accessions. In June we accessioned the earliest known map of Saffron Walden, made in 1757, which was discovered in a farm outbuilding. The map has clearly had a hard life – one whole corner has fallen victim to rodents – but despite this the markings on the parchment are still remarkably clear, and show us the layout of the town in exquisite detail. The map has now been carefully conserved, and will be stored at the ERO, with a digital copy to be returned to Saffron Walden.

One of the joys of an archive is the constant new discoveries. One of these recent revelations was the Whitmore family albums (D/DWt Z2/1-16 and Z3/1-17). The albums were compiled by Colonel Francis Whitmore of Orsett Place from about 1897 to 1960. They have recently been catalogued and have revealed an amazing array of pictures, including images from Col. Whitmore's service in the First World War, the basket weaving factory he established in Orsett for local men disabled during the fighting, and of Whitmore's travels in Africa, South America, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and America.

Essex Ancestors, our subscription service which allows users around the world to view images of Essex parish registers and wills, has just celebrated its first birthday, and as I write is about to undergo

a major update. Images of all of our parish registers not initially included are about to be uploaded; you can access the service at www.essexancestors.co.uk, where you will also find more details on the update. We are also pleased to be able to say that we have arranged with the London Borough of Waltham Forest to digitise the registers they keep for parts of historic Essex (Chingford, Leyton and Walthamstow), which will be added to Essex Ancestors next year. The project is also continuing to digitise the wills that we hold; approximately 20,000 of our wills are currently available on Essex Ancestors, with around 50,000 to be added in the future.

Our blog has really taken off, with our readership steadily increasing each month, and some very kind reviews of it have come from as far away as Canada. The blog is updated with news, highlights from our collections, and peeks behind-the-scenes, and can be found at: www.essexrecordofficeblog.co.uk.

We are hard at work planning our 2013 events programme, including a conference on 6th July exploring Essex's industrial past – a little touched on yet fascinating subject. The new year will also see the return of our popular Introduction to Bookbinding course, which will run 6.00pm–8.00pm every Monday evening from 28th January–4th March. The course fees are £120 including all equipment and materials – please telephone 01245 244620. Look out for more details in the new year in our events guides and on our events webpage:

www.essex.gov.uk/EROevents

You can keep up with the ERO by joining the e-bulletin to receive monthly updates. To be added to the mailing list, e-mail:

marilyn.hawkes@essex.gov.uk

with 'e-bulletin' as the subject.

We hope to see you at the ERO soon!

Hannah Salisbury, Audience Development Team

Marconi's New Street works (left) soon after they opened in 1912, and a view of the condenser and mounting shop (right), both photographed by Fred Spalding. The factory was the site of the first radio broadcast by Dame Nellie Melba in 1920. Marconi's is an important part of Essex's industrial heritage, which will be the subject of an ERO conference on Saturday 6th July 2013. (ERO, D/F 269/1/3676, 3678.)



Unlocking Stebbing's Past 1200-1600

The Stebbing Local History Society (SLHS) was formed in 1995, with the aims of conserving, researching and promoting interest in the history of the Parish. It now has an archive of over 500 images, mainly photos and a document archive containing original documents, maps, newspaper scrapbooks, etc. Its 70 plus members meet five times a year, as well as publishing a *Journal* twice a year while other original research is captured in *History Papers*, that range from the story of the various pubs to the arrival of the Quakers in Stebbing.

However, while we have been able to research successfully the early-modern and modern history of Stebbing the medieval period is a tougher proposition altogether. The various documents produced by the manorial system had not been accessible to the SLHS, as acquiring a working knowledge of medieval legal Latin and the accompanying paleographic skills do not come easily. The Society was aware that the British Library (BL) and the Essex Record Office (ERO), amongst others, held manorial records for Stebbing, but the cost of professional transcription was beyond our resources. We never imagined that help would arrive from the other side of the Atlantic.

In December 2011 the Chairman of the SLHS, Graham Jolliffe, was perusing the library in the ERO while awaiting documents to arrive in the

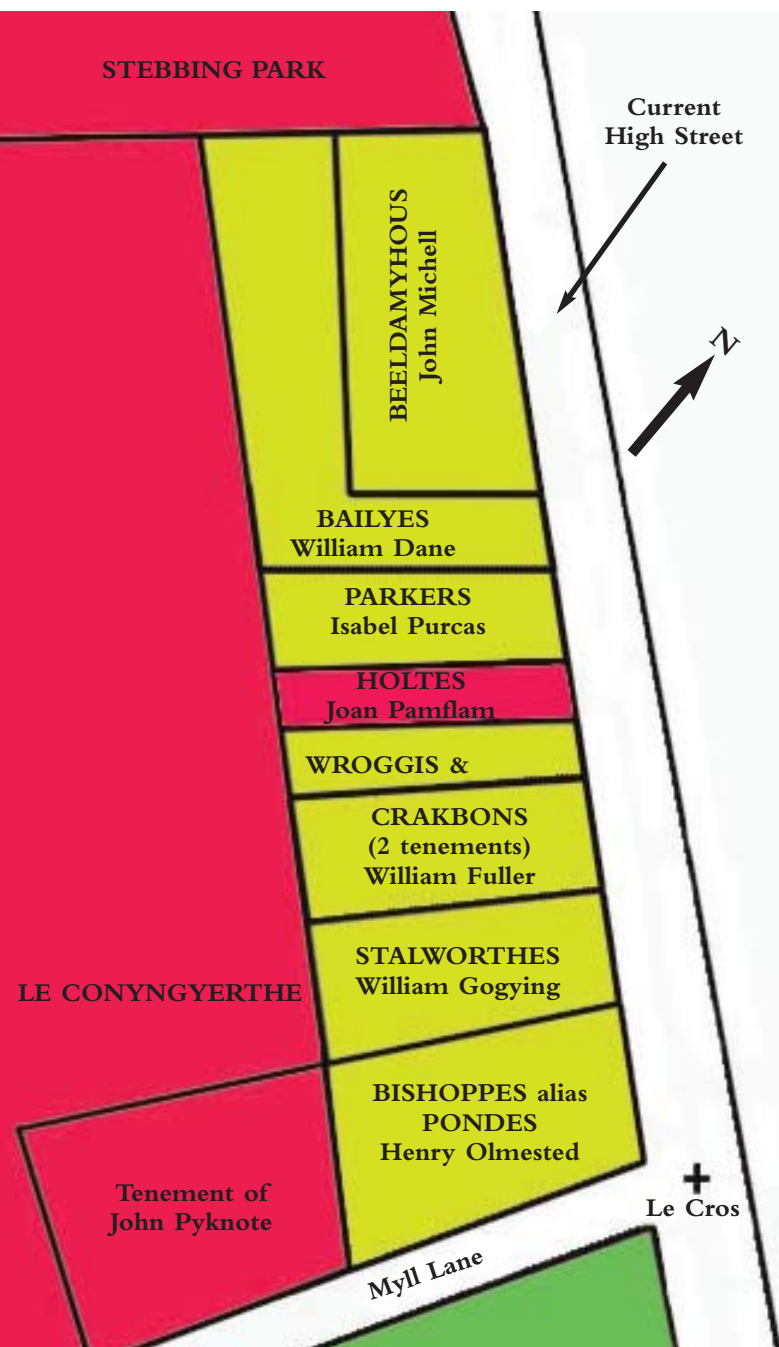
Searchroom. He noticed a book, *A Rural Society after the Black Death: Essex 1350-1525*, by L.R. Poos which interested him. The index revealed many references to Stebbing, with quite extensive use of Stebbing manorial documents referencing BL catalogue numbers. Previously we had no real sense of the number of documents held by the BL and these references seemed to imply they were quite extensive – which was news to us. An online check of the author revealed that, the now Professor, L.R. Poos was Dean of School of Arts and Sciences at The Catholic University of America in Washington DC.

Following an exchange of emails Professor Poos ventured that he would be interested in preparing an academic publication based on Stebbing's manorial records and he would transcribe the documents held in the BL and pass copies to the SLHS. The publication would also indicate the archival location of other Stebbing medieval documents. Such an exciting opportunity does not arrive every day, and the Society took little time to accept Professor Poos kind offer and to think about the many areas of research this would open up.

At this point a brief history of the manors in Stebbing may be helpful. Domesday records in 1086 there were two manors, Stebbing Hall, held by Henry de Ferrers and Priors, also known variously as Freers or Friars Hall, held by Ranulf de Peverell. By the

Porters Hall, Stebbing, a sixteenth cent. moated Manor House
(Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office, I/PA/18.)





Stebbing High Street (south side) c.1487, based on a rental from Porters Hall (BL Add.Roll.66054) and the Stebbing tithe map (SLHS archive, H1/3.)

early twelfth century most the Peverell land was held by the Ferrers family and in 1181 William de Ferrers, 3rd Earl of Derby, gifted Priors Hall (the Rectory manor) to the Knights Hospitallers, where it remained until their dissolution in 1540. Meanwhile in the thirteenth century a third manor emerged, Porters Hall. A comprehensive history of the Stebbing manors has been written by W.R. Powell.¹

The Society quickly began to make plans, well aware that we would be moving from a dearth of manorial information towards something like a glut and we were eager to handle this gift in a professional manner. In considering our objectives it was decided

to aim to create a map of sixteenth century Stebbing, using the 1839 Tithe map as a base. That is a long term aim and to build to this objective the Society will publish (internally) a comprehensive analysis for each record. These documents can then form the basis for later thematic studies. An important part of this work will be to identify sources that can enlarge on and corroborate (or not) the story being told by the manorial records. Already the volumes of Elizabethan wills by F.G. Emmison have proved useful in this respect.

Meanwhile Professor Poos had been very industrious and the Society now holds a variety of surveys, terriers, rentals and court records in English and Latin, spanning the period 1426 to 1580, with more to come. One of which is an unusual and detailed account of a year in the Porters Hall demesne farm. The earliest record identified so far is 1288, but it is becoming clear that the BL hold more documents than their cataloguing suggests. As the transcriptions still have to undergo correction and editing we are using the opportunity to pilot our analysis procedures. The accompanying map uses the Tithe Map as a base and is a tentative recreation of one part of the High Street based on a 1487 manorial rental.

For those who know Stebbing, 'Bishoppes alias Pondes,' at the junction of Mill Lane and the High Street, is now the White Hart pub. Next door Stalworthes (now Tweed Cottage) is we believe the oldest house in the village, a thirteenth century small Hall House. The large field to the left, 'Le Conyngyerthe', now the cricket field, is named on the Tithe Map as 'Coney Fare.' the land coloured yellow is Porters Hall, Stebbing Hall is pink and Priors Hall green.

Already at this very early stage the work has thrown up surprises, particularly striking are the large number of names for lanes and greens that had been lost. Crosses are often mentioned as a reference point and it is unclear whether they are describing a cross in the road or a physical cross, perhaps a religious memorial. A rather graphic name for one lane seems to indicate there may have been an equivalent of a red light district in the village, a very surprising thought!

This for the Society is a long term project that does have potential, combined with sources such as the Poll Tax, Lay Subsidy Rolls, wills etc held by the ERO to unlock the medieval history of an Essex parish. For more information about this exciting project, or if you wish to join the SLHS then please contact the Secretary, Mr. D.R. Towler at:

d.towler@btinternet.com

1. W.R. Powell, 'What Use are Manorial Descents? The Case of Stebbing, 1066-1545', *The Transactions of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History*, 30 (1999), pp.144-153.

The Miller's House Excavations

by

Paul Sainsbury

An exciting community project has been taking place in Upminster for the last eighteen months centred around the rediscovery of a lost building. Remains of the Miller's House, which was associated with the windmill, are in the process of being uncovered through the efforts of local volunteers who have been excavating the remains to discover just what still exists. The aim of the project is to excavate the remaining foundations and basement areas and record, photograph and measure all that is found in order that scale site plans can be drawn up with a view for a possible rebuild. All associated finds will also be cleaned, photographed, recorded and stored and this article discusses the project to date.

Upminster Windmill is a Grade II* listed smock windmill which was built in 1802 before being upgraded with introduction of steam power around 1812. The accompanying Miller's House was built about 1838-39 while other buildings were added to the complex throughout the

nineteenth century, eventually totalling 16 including the windmill. There is some evidence the miller's house was rebuilt c.1859-60.¹ The windmill last worked commercially in 1934 although by this date it was mainly concentrating on animal feed and dog biscuits as production of flour had ceased around 1911 due to imported grain arriving at Tilbury docks. The miller's house had been vacated by the mid-1930s and remained empty and derelict before being demolished, along with the other buildings, in 1960. The site is owned by Havering Council, and run and maintained by volunteers of The Friends of Upminster Windmill.

Location and Scope of Works

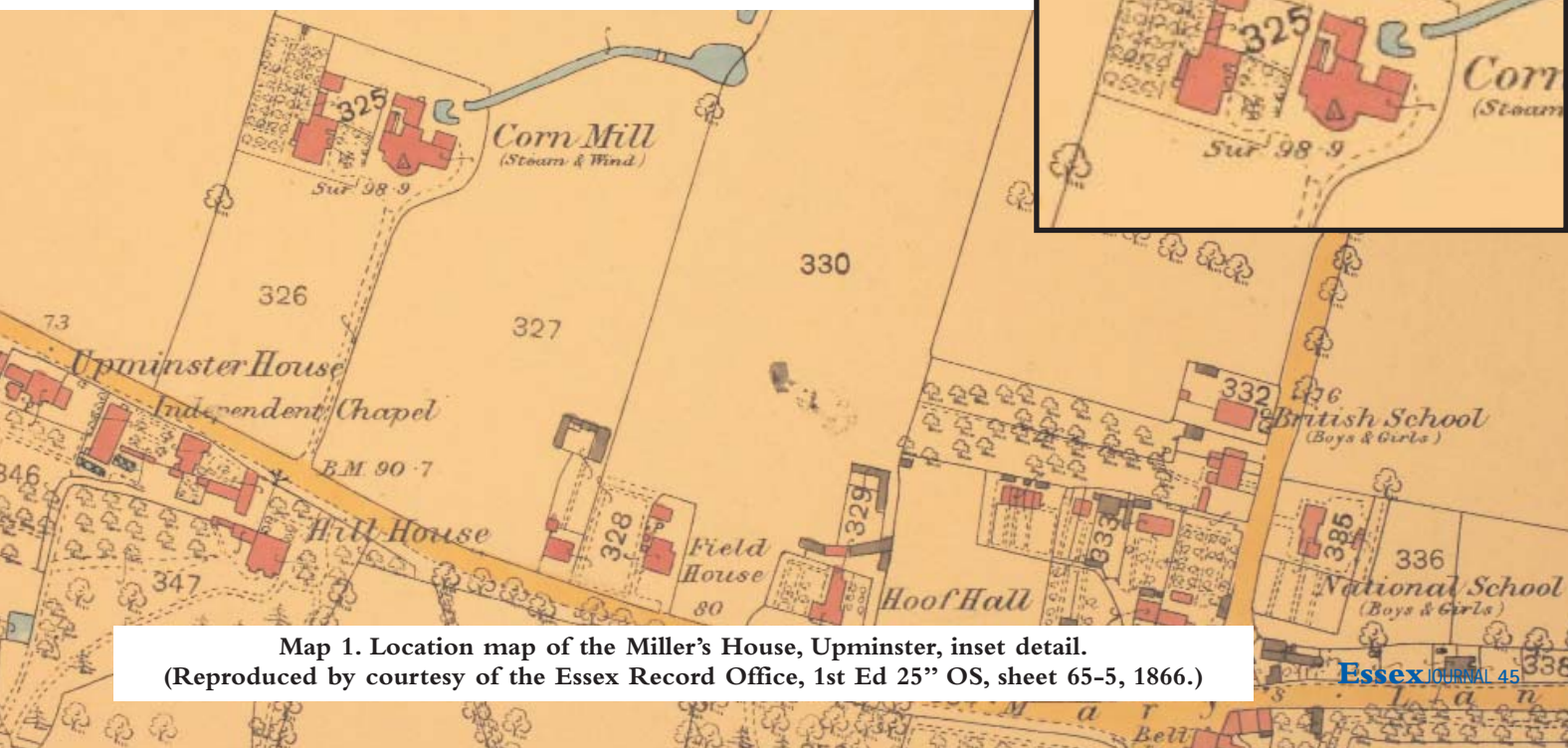
The Miller's House is located on Mill Field, north of St Mary's Lane in Upminster Essex² (Map 1). The site is located on a hill with the land sloping gently, westward to the River Ingrebourne, and southward to St Mary's Lane. The land to the North and East is lower and level due to housing. A stream once ran from the North

East corner to ponds situated at the Windmill. These no longer survive, but there is evidence of water still present below the houses on the East side of the site. The land was meadowland, before the Windmill was built, with a clay base. No evidence from previous archaeological surveys or research to date has indicated any previous occupation of the site. The house itself was a substantial building comprised of the following:

Ground Floor – Entrance Hall with water closet, Sitting Room, Drawing Room, Dining Room, Breakfast Parlour, Scullery, Rear Lobby, and a Bathroom added early 1900's. (We are currently unable to excavate the scullery and rear lobby as they lie outside of our present boundary).

First Floor – Five Bedrooms.

Basement – Front and Rear Basement Kitchens, Coal Cellar, Wood Cellar and Wine Cellar.³



Map 1. Location map of the Miller's House, Upminster, inset detail.
(Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office, 1st Ed 25" OS, sheet 65-5, 1866.)

Excavation Methodology

No building plans have been found for the Millers House although the tithe map of 1841 and later Ordnance Survey maps do show the existence and location of the Miller's House.⁴ Many photographs survive from the late nineteenth century and these,⁵ in conjunction with the maps, were used to locate the site which was totally overgrown.

A grid of five metre squares was marked out to cover the whole site (a total of 16 squares), so that the foundations could be accurately recorded on the context sheets. These squares were further divided into one metre squares (giving a total of 365), to record finer foundation locations and also for recording finds. The finds location number is then cross referenced with the finds photograph number and recorded on the bulk recording sheet. Unfortunately the location of the finds will not necessarily give us much further information, as they are mixed up with all the demolition rubble, but it might throw up a few surprises.

Excavation was carried out by hand, to ensure any archaeology was not damaged, and work commenced on 12th April 2011. Visits were made by the English Heritage Archaeology Advisor, with advice being given, and agreement of the method and format of the recording of data along with a copy of MoLAS Module 94⁶ for use as a reference. Whole bricks recovered were cleaned and stored for possible re-use while other finds were cleaned, recorded and stored. Spoil from the site has been stored and marked, to be sieved through at a later date. (Some debris from the basement had to be removed by mechanical digger, as it had become unstable and posed a health and safety issue).

The Foundations

Upon excavation, the foundation walls were found intact which gave the footprint of the building, (Figs 1&2). Some internal features are still open for discussion. The



Fig. 1. (All photos by the author)

perimeter walls and central load bearing walls are 14 inches (35.5 cm) wide and internal walls that remain are 9 inches (22.8 cm) wide. The foundation walls of the building are stepped out over three courses from 14 inches (35.5 cm) to 21 inches (53.3 cm) and sit on a bed of clay. The brickwork was of Flemish bond.

The damp course was made from slate, which was 12 courses from the clay bed. It appears that the timber thresholds for the door frames were set on beds of lime mortar. Door lintels were of 3 inches (7.6 cm) thick by 8 inch (20.3 cm) wide sandstone blocks, which were found in situ over a couple of the basement door openings. The window sills were of brick/brick rubble construction with a cement render to give a smooth finish and drip channel, and also of sandstone, although we do not know which was found where. The roof consisted of Welsh slate tiles and slate cap-pings and was of shallow pitch and hipped on the northern part of the house while shallow pitched and 'u' shaped on the southern half of the house with

cast iron square profile guttering and round down pipes.

The step to the front door consisted of two slabs of sandstone each 2 foot x 6 foot (61 cm x 183 cm) set on a raised brick base, with a wrought iron porch led into the sandstone. Very little timber remains, as this was burnt during demolition.

Nothing remains above ground level, although the ground floor room locations are shown by the brickwork foundations as well as the fireplace foundations. Very little evidence remains of the doorways, and the location of the staircase to the first floor is purely conjectural at this time. Evidence does exist of the location of ground floor, floor joists, as the post holes are still visible in the north wall.

Windows in the northern half of the house were sash, of wood construction and contained 12 panes. On the southern half of the house, the windows were rectangular, contained 20 panes and we think were of metal construction and leaded. Shallow brick arches acted as lintels above the windows.



Fig. 2.

Ground Floor

The house is effectively in two parts separated by the hallway. The basement and sitting room are in the southern half of the building, creating a basement and ground floor, while the dining, drawing rooms, breakfast parlour and bedrooms are in the northern half, creating a ground floor and first floor.

The ground floor foundations indicate there was a hallway running from east to west across the full width of the house. There was a door at the far end of the hall which led to the rear gardens and water closet. The water closet was situated against the outside of the west wall between the hall door and the external stairs to the basement. The room to the south of the hall was the sitting room, and we think a bathroom was installed in the south-west corner of this room in the early 1900s (as a bathroom was mentioned in the 1911 census). We also found evidence of a wall/doorway running south from the chimney stack to the south wall (the land drain ran from the south-west corner area westward).



On the northern side of the hall, we have the foundations of the drawing room, dining room, breakfast parlour (mentioned in 1849 auction catalogue) along with the fireplace/chimney foundations. We think the area in the north west corner was probably a small hall leading to the scullery and staircase to the first floor. The scullery ran northwards from the northern wall and a lobby

ran eastward from the scullery, although these are no longer accessible as they are outside the present boundary of the project.

The Basement

The hearth in the front basement kitchen was made of one piece of sandstone, which is still in situ, (Fig 9). There is evidence that all the ground floor hearths may have been the same as another sandstone hearth, although broken into five pieces, has been found. The face of the front basement kitchen fire was lined with sandstone, two pieces were in situ, and the sandstone hearth had been cut out either side of the fire to accommodate these. This fireplace shows signs of modification from an open fire, to having a range with boiler fitted. The fireplace in the rear basement kitchen, also shows that this has gone from an open fire to having a range with boiler, which was later removed and a brick oven installed. (Fig 10)

Some lime plaster on the walls of the basement has been found intact, and this was of a light blue colour (usually made from dis-

temper mixed with 'dolly' blue – said to keep the flies at bay). The brick floor in the rear basement kitchen and the three cellars, remains largely intact (Fig11). The same cannot be said for the floor in the front basement kitchen, as most of it has disappeared, although this does give us the chance to see the drainage system. Pipes were laid under the flooring, some with perforations,



Fig. 10.

although they appear not to have connected to each other. There are rows of bricks running north to south across the floor, and after careful examination, we have found these to be soakaways. It appears channels were dug out of the clay, filled with a soil and straw(?) mixture and covered with a row of bricks, and then the flooring. The pipe work would then presumably carry excess water away to the soakaways. The stairs from the basement to the outside garden at the rear of the house remain (in the west wall), although in a poor state are usable. These stairs are of a brick construction, with each step having a brick capping. A shallow sandstone sink (arms sink), was still in situ on its brick piers against the west wall beside the stairs. This was complete although broken due to the weight of the demolition rubble on top of it. The drain for the sink is still present in the floor, the waste water from the sink being allowed to run down the pier, onto the floor and down to the drain.

There were two windows set into the east wall of the front basement kitchen (Fig 18) with the tops just above ground level, to allow light into the basement kitchen. Each window had its own drainage system to allow water to run away. Beyond this, externally, was a brick paved area with a small gully (made up with what material could be found) that sloped towards the windows, possibly to aid maintenance of the windows.



Fig. 11.

First Floor

We think the first floor layout would have been similar to the layout of the ground floor at the northern half of the building, (the chimneys from the fireplaces would have carried on up) with the fifth bedroom presumably between the two bedrooms against the southern wall of the northern half, with the landing opposite. We think the staircase was against the northern wall of the house.

The Finds

We are still in the process of cataloguing and researching the origins of the finds but a proportion of them have been cleaned, photographed and where possible reassembled. The spoil heaps have still to be sieved which should throw up some more items.

Porcelain/Pottery.

Numerous pieces of pottery have been excavated, many of them blue and white fragments. There has been a mixture of pieces of pottery, earthenware, ceramics, stoneware along with a couple of pieces of ironware. Although we are unable to assemble most of the pieces, we have managed to at least part assemble some of them including storage jars, plates, mugs, teapots, bowls/basins, toilets (including a blue and white Victorian one) and even a cake stand. The cake stand has the makers mark of Dunn & Bennett (now part of the Royal Doulton Group) and was manufactured between 1874 and 1907. We have also been able to date part of a blue and white flower patterned bowl. This has the makers mark of

Cumberlidge and Humphreys, and was manufactured between 1891-95.

Glass

Much plate glass has been excavated but it is difficult to date. It includes oxidised glass, plate glass, and milled plate glass and some extremely thin glass. This has not been recorded yet, but has been stored for further investigation. Lots of glass bottle fragments have been recovered ranging from clear glass through the various hues of green and brown to blue. It appears R Whites and Schweppes seem to be the most popular drink bottles. We have retrieved a few bottles intact, although only a few have identification marks. One bottle was embossed 'A.J. White' and had contained a medicine called 'Mother Seigel's Syrup' – shipped in from America by the Shakers and sold by A.J. White Ltd in the UK from 1877 until 1905. A screw bottle stopper embossed 'Keystone Burgundy' was from a bottle of Hall's 'Keystone Burgundy, a 'ferruginous' wine available around the late nineteenth century priced at 1s.6d. a bottle.

Marble

Numerous pieces of marble have been uncovered, both white and grey, of varying sizes (nearly all of it has been broken during demolition), which leads us to think that the fireplaces, downstairs at least were of marble construction. Three square marble roundels 6x6x1 inches (15.3x15.3x2.5cm) have been uncovered, Two white marble and one grey marble and these formed part of a fireplace

as they have heat/smoke marks. We have also recovered the top a marble mantle piece complete, with evidence of the adhesive that held on the tiles.

Plaster Work

Surprisingly we have recovered quite a few pieces of plaster moulding which although very wet still have their profiles, and are drying nicely. Also recovered is a lovely plaster figurine with some damage, but you can still make out the topic. Some plain painted plaster has been found, although the pale blue coloured pieces have faded to almost white. A few pieces of the moulding have been found attached to the original wall plaster which has been up to 2 inches (5cm) thick in places.

Electrical

We have uncovered various pieces of electrical hardware including ceramic light fittings and light switches, (one with a copper cover) a 2 pin 5amp 250volt Bakelite electric socket. A couple of feet of bare copper wire, and part of a light bulb (base and filament) which according to the dimensions of the filament we think was a Mazda gas filled bulb of 40/60watt produced in 1929. We have also uncovered the ceramic input terminals (complete with metal brackets and wire ties) of either power or telephone.

Tiles

A large quantity of glazed tiles have been recovered. There seem to be three sizes of rectangular tiles: brown ones, measuring 4x2 inches (10.7x5.3cm), make up the majority of those recovered; green, 6x2 inches (15.2x5.3cm), are not as common; the third type have been a few that are pink, blue and white and all 2 inches wide, but no whole ones to indicate their length.

There are two types of square tile: the first type are individual tiles of the same flower pattern with a diamond pattern border 6x6 inches (5.3x5.3cm); the second are parts of a set of six

tiles depicting a vase containing chrysanthemums with a square pattern border 6x6 inches (5.3x5.3cm). There are sufficient of these to indicate that there were two sets of these presumably one set either side of the fireplace.

Stone

Apart from the sandstone door lintels and hearths mentioned earlier, the only other pieces of worked stone found to date are a couple of stone orbs of 3 inches (8cm) diameter with a hole drilled through the centre of each, (These could have been used as counter balance weights, perhaps for a dumb waiter?) and a shallow sandstone sink (possibly called an 'arms sink').

Metal

As expected, there has been large quantities of metal finds, mainly rusted nails, door hinges and pieces of unidentifiable lumps of heavily corroded metal. We have found some recognisable pieces as well, like the cast iron sash weights, and the sash pulleys. A few parts of some agricultural tools have come to light, as well as a few mangled and corroded door locks and door furniture. Some bigger pieces include grating from the fires and the metal hearth surrounds. Some of the nicer artefacts are accessories from one of the ranges, a ceramic and metal window catch from one of the sash windows, the door handle and letterbox from the front door, and a pair of fire tongs. A few hooks and fittings have turned up as well. There is still a lot of metalwork to be recorded and cleaned, which has been stored until time permits.

Miscellaneous Items

Several pieces of black leather have been recovered, which look like they form part of a ladies or child's ankle boot. The age of this has not been determined as yet. Other artefacts found include a tortoise shell comb, toothbrush minus the bristles, pieces of wallpaper, grey with red flower pattern, a piece of book cover with printed page, key guards, ceramic and Bakelite door handles.

Conclusion

The miller's house had been occupied for around 96 years, from when it was built about 1839, until the last person left in 1935. For the last 77 years it was lived in by members of the same family.⁸ It would have changed through time with the introduction of services such as water, electricity and the telephone, and also with the fortunes of those who lived there. Evidence from census records show that not only did the family live there, but they had lodgers as well.

Judging by the finds recovered, they enjoyed some of the finer things in life, but this does not necessarily show the poorer times, as the fine porcelain and marble fire surrounds would have continued to be used when times got harder, as they did after 1900, when milling declined. The house was then left empty until it became derelict, and was demolished in 1960. From this sad ending this project is now giving the local community the chance to rediscover an important lost Upminster building.

More information about the Upminster Windmill project can

be found at:

www.upminsterwindmill.co.uk

Interested about The Friends of

Upminster Windmill? Email:

membership@upminsterwindmill.co.uk.

References

1. V. Body, *The Upminster Story*, (1973).
2. NGR TQ55734-86725.
All references and measurements are taken from the SW corner of the house (N51.5502 E 0.24414) which is on a North-South orientation with the front door facing East. There is a 5 degree variation from magnetic north.
3. Essex Record Office (ERO), D/DU 897/3, ground plan of [Upminster] wind and steam mill and associated outbuildings, 1849.
4. ERO, D/CT 373B, Upminster Tithe Map, 1841; 1st Edition 25 Inch Ordnance Survey, ?????, 18??
5. The Friends of Upminster Windmill & Reeve Burrell hold a collection of early photographs of the site.
6. Museum of London Archaeology Service Site Manual, 1994.
7. It is assumed that the wine in question was dark red in colour: 'Ferruginous, resembling iron-rust in colour; reddish brown'. <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/69480?redirectedFrom=ferruginous#eid>, (11/10/2012).
8. The 1841 census lists the appropriately named Benjamin Miller along with Thomas Harbour as the resident millers. By 1851 Charles Welham was the miller before the Abraham family took over until it finally closed.

Acknowledgements

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and the Honours scandal of 1895

by

Rita Sharp

'There is one appointment in the [honours] list which we cannot help regarding as a scandal. It is nothing less than a gross abuse of the prerogative of the Crown...that Captain Naylor Leyland should be created a baronet'¹

This attack on the erstwhile Conservative MP for Colchester was just one of many appearing in newspapers and public prints. Such was its impact that it became a *cause celebre* even finding its way across the Atlantic with reports in the *New York Times*.² The furor had been caused by the fact that no-one knew why this 31 year old man in his short unspectacular parliamentary career had been created a baronet.³ At the same time allegations that peerages conferred on MPs Sydney Stern and James Williamson had been obtained by 'improper means' were publicly stifled by the sheer blatancy of the award to Naylor Leyland.⁴ *The Daily Chronicle* demanded to know 'on what conceivable principle and for what conceivable service has his honour been bestowed.'⁵ One newspaper nominated it as 'one of the most extraordinary selections ever made by a Prime Minister.'⁶ The Prime Minister in question Lord Rosebery also found himself censured by one of his own MPs Henry Labouchere, who pulled no punches:

'I do not hesitate to say that whoever was concerned in granting this "honour" to Captain Naylor Leyland is as much disgraced by it as the Captain is in accepting it.'⁷

A political maelstrom was engulfing Naylor Leyland which threatened to end his parliamentary career. The following article traces the trajectory of these events

which finally ended in a tragic denouement.

It had all begun so very differently when in 1892 as a wealthy 28 year old former Captain in the Life Guards he was chosen by the Colchester Unionists as their parliamentary candidate.⁸ His political credentials were impeccable and were further enhanced by the fact that he was a member of the exclusive set of the Prince of Wales. The Unionists confidence in the value of their candidate received further endorsement when the Hon George Curzon, the then under Secretary of State for India came to Colchester in his support.⁹ Curzon's speech which received 'prolonged cheering' prompted Naylor Leyland to warn his audience that he felt in the position of a pop gun, 'that was going to harmlessly salvo forth a few innocuous puffs of smoke alongside the 'veritable 110 gun' of the previous speaker.¹⁰ This analogy would come back to haunt him in the years to come - but for the present all seemed set fair - so fair in fact that in the 1892 July general election he claimed victory over his Liberal opponent Sir Weetman Pearson by 61 votes. This was hardly a ringing endorsement but nevertheless it was a victory and the new Conservative MP for Colchester took his seat in parliament.¹¹

Despite some health problems which necessitated a spell abroad he nevertheless fulfilled all expectations and was 'unremitting' in his parliamentary duties.¹² But then in 1894 the political world of Colchester was suddenly

plunged into disarray when Naylor Leyland announced that he had:

'decided to retire...at the close of this parliament...my private responsibilities will not enable me to reside in the future in Colchester [and] they may necessitate my absence for a considerable period from England probably in the course of the next fourteen months [which] are the most likely for an election to occur...I have not arrived at this decision without serious reflection without moreover a serious conviction that...in the interests of the Conservative party in Colchester it is the best, proper, right and only one'¹³

The Unionists stunned by this turn of events nevertheless claimed they 'had never had a better member' and would 'find it hard to equal him in his successor.'¹⁴ However it soon became clear that not every one saw him as the model MP when rumours began circulating suggesting very different reasons for his resignation. One became so prevalent that he was forced to emphatically deny a statement attributed to him that he had complained of having 'to keep half of Colchester and he was tired of it,' a reference to the money he had spent in nursing the constituency.¹⁵ But no sooner was one rumour extinguished than another took its place - there was gossip over serious problems with his agent who was

claiming arrears of salary, and even suggestions that dissension and disagreements with his party had precipitated his resignation.¹⁶ The Conservative *Essex Standard* quivered with indignation at such calumnies dismissing them as ‘absurd’ and ‘unfounded’ and ‘absolutely void of truth.’¹⁷ Nevertheless the impact of his resignation on the Colchester Conservatives was momentous. Not only did they face the dilemma of finding a new candidate, but were also pressured by the time constraint of an expected general election in the coming months. Then at the beginning of December 1894 it was learnt that Naylor Leyland was suffering from typhoid fever, his seemingly fragile health adding yet another compelling argument to his decision to resign.¹⁸ It had been a difficult and stressful period for all concerned but with the new year beckoning there was a resolute determination to fill the political vacuum as soon as possible.

That determination paid off when in January a Captain J.M. Vereker was persuaded to fill the vacancy. But as a newcomer he was given no time to ‘nurse’ the constituency for within a fortnight of his adoption Leyland delivered another shock when he revealed his intention to apply for the *Chiltern Hundreds* - a procedural device which allowed an MP to immediately resign. This was greeted with astonishment by ‘Gladstonians and Conservatives’ alike since ‘it was generally understood that he would retain the seat until the next general election.’¹⁹ So why was he going now? Was his delicate health to blame? Newspaper reports dismissed this possibility with further deeply disturbing news:

‘The Press Association learns from Captain Leyland...that illness is not the moving cause of his resignation but that it is mainly due to the fact that he is strongly in favour of the resolution of the Government against the veto power of the House of Lords and that

moreover he does not feel justified in opposing any of the forthcoming reforms of the government...much excitement has been caused at Colchester by the publication of this statement. Conservatives have refused to credit this explanation’²⁰

Shock and confusion reigned amongst the Unionists as they sought to assimilate the fact that their MP of all people was now supporting policies of the Liberal government. To make matters worse he had plunged them into the turmoil of an unexpected and unwanted by-election with a virtually unknown candidate. The *Liverpool Mercury* summed up the prevailing mood:

‘the resignation of Captain Naylor Leyland has given rise to widespread indignation among the Unionists...all the circumstances connected with it have been such as to increase the resentment with which it is met...his conversion could not be the work of yesterday and from the point of view of his party they are justified in believing they have not been fairly treated.’²¹

Arguments over the timing of Naylor Leyland’s resignation proliferated and a war of words erupted as his dramatic *volte face* became a topic for widespread newspaper comment.²² But claims and counter claims merely muddied the waters leaving the Tories still fighting to establish Vereker as a feasible candidate. It comes as no surprise to learn that in the by-election the Liberal Sir Weetman Pearson was victorious. Leyland’s resignation had delivered a much needed fillip to a floundering Liberal government.²³ But events had not yet reached their nadir. A few months later came the news that he was to stand at the next general election as a Liberal candidate for the constituency of Southport and his Conservative opponent would of

all people be the Hon George Curzon the present incumbent of the seat. The irony of the situation did not escape the *Essex Standard*:

‘the whirly gig of time brings about strange revenges perhaps Capt Naylor Leyland himself would have been somewhat incredulous if on that memorable occasion it could have foretold to him that in three years he would turn his pop gun round with a view to demolish the 100 ton gun’²⁴

This unhelpful allusion to his past boded ill for his political campaign but he did have strong local interests as a beneficiary of the vast Scarisbrick estates.²⁵ He would at least have a fighting chance against Curzon.

That is until July 1st and the publication of Lord Rosebery’s honours list with its infamous award of a baronetcy to Naylor Leyland for ‘unknown services to his Queen and Country’, as the *Essex Standard* bitinglly observed.²⁶ Under the impact of such merciless publicity his election campaign stuttered to a halt becoming mired in the scandal which now broke over his head. Rumours of suspicious transactions between Naylor Leyland and the Liberal whips encouraged a closer look at the sequence of events in Colchester and for some there was no doubt there had been political chicanery afoot. A *Times* editorial trenchantly stating that:

‘he never did anything of which the public heard until he suddenly deserted the Unionist Party and by quitting his seat at Colchester at an inconvenient moment deliberately threw the representation of that borough into the hands of his radical opponent...it is not too much to say that such an apostasy whatever reward it may deserve from those who profit by it ought not to be singled out for honour by the responsible advisors of the QUEEN.’²⁷

And the *Cheshire Observer* angrily informed its readers that:

'he was a Tory up to a few months ago when he "ratted"... Then to the astonishment of all [he] is created a baronet by Lord Rosebery... A more flagrant job never was perpetrated or one more calculated to bring the [Liberal] Party into utter discredit with the democracy of the country.'²⁸

However the suggestion that his apostasy was the reason for his award was soon joined by another. Could Naylor Leyland's wealth have played a part? Did he in effect buy his baronetcy by making a substantial donation to much needed Liberal party funds?²⁹ If either or both of these propositions were true, there was it seemed, something rotten in the body politic. The *St James Gazette* noted gloomily 'It is a pity there is no means of distinguishing between the 'honour' conferred on the man who has done good service to the state and the 'honour' conferred on the other man who has merely emptied his money bags or turned his coat to help a party'.³⁰ In a letter published by the *Liverpool Mercury* Naylor Leyland attempted to defend himself:

'I learn that I joined the Liberal party in consideration of a baronetcy and that I purchased the said baronetcy for a large sum of money... permit me to say both these statements are calumnies and both these statements are lies.'³¹

But this did nothing to stem the flow of criticism powered by the fact that he had given no explanation as to just why he had received the honour. The consequence was that the rumour mill continued to grind out ever more audacious reasons one even involving the Prince of Wales who it was alleged had used his influence to obtain a baronetcy

for his friend. And the bad news just kept on coming. His mother's family the Scarisbricks let it be known they were 'deeply regretful of the apostasy of their relative the new baronet'.³² Their regret was made plain when Leyland's uncle, Charles Scarisbrick leader of the local Conservative party in Southport provided accommodation and fulsome support for Curzon throughout the campaign. Then it was claimed that Naylor Leyland had plagiarised some of Curzon's printed speeches for his own use at meetings in Colchester. The *Essex Standard* ran side by side columns of the two men's speeches in proof of the validity of the claims.³³ A shaken Naylor Leyland defended himself by accusing certain people of 'wallowing in all the slop pails' and 'scavenging from the dust heaps'.³⁴ All this was grist to Curzon's mill and unsurprisingly he held the Southport seat with an increased majority. The result was greeted with a sense that justice had been done:

'Perhaps most gratifying of all is the result of the Southport election. Mr Curzon's victory would be popular in any case but its popularity is doubled... by the condemnation it conveys of the prostitution of titles and honours.'³⁵

The *Glasgow Herald* elevated 'the sound thrashing which Mr Curzon gave at Southport to Lord Rosebery's notorious baronet' to a notable event.³⁶ And when the news reached the Conservative Club in Colchester scenes of the 'wildest enthusiasm' erupted with members leaping on chairs and tables shouting and cheering with delight.³⁷ For Naylor Leyland there was no joyous celebration only the disillusionment of defeat and the humiliation of a scandal which refused to go away. It seemed that all his political ambitions were now at an end.

But the fates had one more card to play. In 1898 George Curzon was appointed Viceroy of

India and with his promotion the Southport seat fell vacant with Naylor Leyland again standing as the Liberal candidate. Although the whiff of scandal still hung around him he won the seat by a margin of 272 votes. A weak opponent, his strong local connections and the unpopularity of the Conservative government had combined to provide him with an unexpected victory.³⁸ But it left the *Saturday Review* singularly unimpressed:

'In electing Naylor Leyland the electors of Southport have... chosen a man whom they rejected with scorn three years ago and from whose public influence they have nothing to expect.'³⁹

Even so he had been given another chance to show his worth but then something happened which at first sight seemed negligible. His voice which had become hoarse and almost inaudible in the last few days of the campaign began to take on a more sinister aspect, and although no one knew it at the time he was already a dying man. Some nine months later at the age of 35 he succumbed to what has been variously described as laryngitis or cancer of the throat. His illness had been of such ferocity that he was never able to take his seat in parliament. The *Bristol Mercury* reflected that it afforded 'a sad commentary on the vanity of political ambitions'.⁴⁰

His death left the questions surrounding the award of his baronetcy unanswered. Was it indeed a reward for 'ratting' which sowed the seeds of a Liberal revival at Colchester and/or did he make donations to their party funds as some papers alleged?⁴¹ Even research amongst Lord Rosebery's papers by his biographer, 'failed to find any details about what he termed this *sordida*'.⁴² But he does suggest that there was at least one Liberal whip who had been engaged in the peddling of honours at the time and it was probable that the

Leyland affair was characteristic of his tactics.⁴³

The principle that peerages and baronetcies were a reward for services to the state had been significantly undermined by the Naylor Leyland affair and the two Liberal MPs Stern and Williamson. It had fundamentally set down a marker that such honours could be purchased at a price. Indeed throughout the following years it gradually became accepted as a constituent of political life until finally the scandals which littered the Lloyd George era brought into being the Prevention of Abuses Act of 1925 making the sale of honours a criminal offence.

References

1. *The Times*, 01/07/1895, p.9.
2. *The New York Times*, 27/07/1895. What gave it piquancy was the fact that Naylor Leyland was married to an American socialite.
3. This was not the first time criticism over the honours system had been voiced. In 1894 an unsuccessful attempt had been made in the House of Commons to introduce a motion for a public statement naming the reasons for which honours and titles were conferred. Hansard, H.C. Debate, vol. 24, cols. 410–417, (04/05/1894).
4. For a full account of the scandal attaching to Stern and Williamson see H.J. Hanham, 'The Sale of Honours in Late Victorian Britain', *Victorian Studies*, 3, no.3 (1960).
5. *Daily Chronicle* quoted in *Essex Standard (ES)*, 06/07/1895, p.7.
6. *Southport Visitor* quoted *ES*, 06/07/1895, p.7.
7. Hanham, p.287.
8. At this time the word 'Conservative' was used interchangeably with 'Unionists' and 'Tories'
9. This had been in response to a personal invitation by Naylor Leyland. See a retrospective account of this event in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, 12/07/1895, p.7. Curzon was later to become Viceroy of India and later still Foreign Secretary.
10. *ES*, 09/04/1892, p.2.
11. The General Election ran from 4th to 26th July. Although the Conservatives led by Lord Salisbury won the greatest number of seats it was not enough for an overall majority and Gladstone formed a minority government dependent on Irish Nationalist support. He resigned in March 1894 and was succeeded by Lord Rosebery.
12. *ES*, 25/08/1894, p.2. Hansard recorded 76 parliamentary contributions including membership of committees and interventions on behalf of his constituency: <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/people/sir-herbert-naylor-leyland>, (01/03/2012).
13. See Naylor Leyland's lengthy statement. *ES*, 25/08/1894, p.5.
14. *Ibid.*
15. Naylor Leyland's response was sent to the *ES* in a letter headed 'Radical Calumnies on the Member for Colchester'. 08/09/1894, p.5.
16. His agent Gordon Scott took Leyland to court but the jury stopped the case in Leyland's favour. *The Times*, 30/04/1895, p.13.
17. *ES*, 25/08/1894, p.5.
18. *ES*, 01/12/1894, p.8.
19. *Berrow's Worcester Journal*, 09/02/1895, p.6. See also his resignation letter in the *ES*, 25/08/1894, p.5.
20. *The Times*, 05/02/1895, p.10.
21. *The Liverpool Mercury*, 06/02/1895, p.4.
22. For example the *Aberdeen Weekly Journal*, 05/02/1895, p.6: 'It appears that his resignation upon these grounds was placed in the hands of the Conservative leaders at Colchester over three months ago'.
23. 'The Colchester election has given the Government that "fillip"...by way of an antidote to the depression caused by the dwindling majority in the House of Commons.' *The Times*, 20/02/1895, p.9.
24. *ES*, 01/06/1895, p.5.
25. These encompassed two-thirds of the borough of Southport and a large area of adjoining land. *The Liverpool Mercury*, 24/06/1895, p.6.
26. *ES*, 06/07/1895, p.3.
27. *The Times*, 01/07/1895, p.9.
28. *The Cheshire Observer*, 06/07/1895, p.5.
29. The elections of 1885 and 1886 had inflicted great expense. By 1891 'the only possible way of obtaining the money they needed was by offering in return honours to be distributed when the party returned to power.' Hanham, p.283.
30. *The St James Gazette* reported in the *ES*, 06/07/1895, p.7.
31. *The Liverpool Mercury*, 16/07/1895, p.6.
32. *Pall Mall Gazette*, 12/07/1895, p.7.
33. *ES*, 13/07/1895, p.4.
34. *Pall Mall Gazette*, 12/07/1895, p.6.
35. *Pall Mall Gazette*, 18/07/1895, (4th ed), p.1.
36. *Glasgow Herald*, 18/07/1895, p.4.
37. 'Colchester Conservatives and the Southport division', *ES*, 20/07/1895, p.8.
38. For example, *The Times*, editorial, 25/08/1898, p.7.
39. T.G. Otte quoted in 'Avenge England's Dishonour: By-elections, Parliament and the Politics of Foreign Policy in 1898', *English Historical Review*, CXXI, no.491 (2006), p.422.
40. *Bristol Mercury*, 08/05/1899, p.5, 'Talk of St Stephens' (London, Sunday night).
41. 'In consideration of his 'ratting' Capt. Naylor Leyland has been allowed to buy his baronetcy for £10,000.' *North Wales Chronicle*, 13/07/1895, p.8.
42. Robert Rhodes James, *Rosebery: A biography of Archibald Philip, Fifth Earl of Rosebery*, (London, 1963), p.379.
43. *Ibid.*, p.380.

Acknowledgements

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The Medieval Deeds of Colchester Hall, Takeley

by

Katharine Schofield

Among the earliest Essex documents in the Essex Record Office are 42 medieval deeds, dating from the late twelfth to early thirteenth centuries.¹ The deeds relate to the manor of Colchester Hall in Takeley. Colchester Hall was a manor belonging to St. John's Abbey in Colchester, and the deeds are more interesting because most of them appear in the cartulary of the abbey² which dates from the later thirteenth century. They have recently been repaired and repackaged with money from the bequest to the Record Office made by the former County Archivist Ken Newton and his wife Muriel.

The deeds were found in 1932 in a box labelled 'Papers never likely to be required'. They formed part of a collection deposited in the Essex Record Office in 1939, and were described in some detail in an article by Janet Macaulay and I.M. Russell in the Essex Archaeological Society's *Transactions* the following year.³ The cartulary and the abbey's 'leger' book⁴ came into the possession of John Lucas, probably when he bought the lease of the abbey in 1547. Despite selling the estate in 1670 the two volumes remained in the possession of his descendants until sold at auction in the early twentieth century.

Domesday Book records three manors in Takeley in 1086, one belonged to Eudo Dapifer, one was the possession of Robert Gernon and the third had been granted to the Abbey of St. Valéry in Caen. Philip Morant recorded four manors in Takeley in 1768 - Waltham Hall, Colchester Hall, Warish Hall and Bassingbournes.⁵

Warish Hall was the corruption of the name of St. Valéry, from the reign of King John (1199-1216) alien priories were

expelled from England at various dates, until the final expulsion by Henry V in 1414. Morant suggested that Bishop William of Wykeham obtained the manor from Edward III and subsequently settled it on New College in Oxford which he founded in 1379. Bassingbournes originated with the manor granted to Robert Gernon, whose lands were centred on Stansted. One of his sons took the surname Mountfitchet from family lands in Normandy.

The manors of Waltham Hall and Colchester Hall were acquired by Waltham Abbey and St. John's Abbey in Colchester. It has been suggested that the prevalence of abbey lands in the area might be the result of proximity to Hatfield Forest and the risk of damage to crops and land caused by the royal deer.⁶

The link between Takeley and Colchester Hall originated with Eudo Dapifer or Eudo the Steward. He founded St. John's Abbey in Colchester at the end of the twelfth century, on the site of an alleged miracle, and endowed it with various lands in Essex and beyond. His endowment included two parts of the tithes of Takeley. However, there is no evidence to suggest that he ever gave the abbey any lands in the parish. Eudo Dapifer was one of the tenants-in-chief listed in Domesday Book. In England after 1066 all land was held from the King, who granted land to reward his supporters or tenants-in-chief. They in turn granted land to their followers in a process of subinfeudation. The buying and selling of land or granting it to religious houses seemed outside this natural order and many of the Takeley deeds reflect this uncertainty. As the original grantor died, successors were asked to confirm grants already

made by their predecessors.

The cartulary contains transcripts of charters and deeds relating to the lands of the abbey, beginning with the grant of Eudo Dapifer. It is thought that this deed never actually existed, but the grants of the land contained in it were genuine. The cartulary does not record any gift of lands in Takeley to the abbey by Eudo Dapifer, but as the process of subinfeudation continued it is possible that those who were originally his tenants felt a link to his foundation at Colchester. The deeds show how St. John's Abbey built the manor up piecemeal from grants made by a number of landowners.

The cartulary was begun during the second half of the reign of Henry III (c.1250). The scribe, John de Hadlegh, seems to have found the muniments stored in five *armaria* (chests or cupboards). The cartulary is arranged by *armarium* and within each *armarium* there are *particulae* (or parcels) (Fig. 1). The *armaria* reflect the significance of the charters and deeds. The first *armarium* contains the charter of the founder, as well as royal charters and writs, papal bulls and charters of archbishops and bishops. The second *armarium* contains general charters and other grants, the third *armarium* transcripts of grants. The fourth *armarium* has agreements with other churches and copies of leases. The Takeley deeds appear in the third and fourth *armaria*. It is thought that he may have intended to leave space for a fourth book of grants in later years, and to have a fifth book for agreements with other churches and leases.⁷ No fifth book was produced and the contents appear as the fourth book. He also left pages blank which have been filled by later additions.

3	3	198	R	adulfus de haia confirmat eandem lōs Johanni.	
3	3	198	T	homas streut de quadam mora apud estgardinum.	
3	3	198	Q	ueta clamatio Galfi filii Rich de stockelindue.	
3	3	198	I	oh de broma de .x. s. reddit' in colecesti.	
3	3	198	E	udo capllanus de .vii. s. reddit' ad lum glōse uirginis.	
3	3	198	O	ue carce de quadam pncula more apud estgardinum. Particula quarta.	?
3	3	199	A	lexander de limesia et uxor eius Rohasia de tū ernisii de takeley.	
3	3	199	I	tem iidem ambo postmodum de eadem tū. ernisii.	
3	3	199	R	oasia ipa de ambli de eodem teneūto i iudicantia sua.	
3	3	199	G	alfridus de ambli confirmat illud idem.	
3	3	199	W	ill de ambli confirmat omī possessiones suas in takeley.	
3	3	140	C	omet oxonie hugo de terra thome beuene in takeley.	
3	3	140	D	onato Will filii adcliz de reddite talul quibdam terris et pūto.	
3	3	140	H	elial filius eiusdem Will de eodem teneūto.	
3	3	140	W	ill filius eiusdem hebe de omnib; tū tenementis.	?
3	3	141	W	ill burto de qdam tū in lalesford data Ricardo de askerot.	
3	3	141	D	onato Ric de cas thome de lalesford .xlv. s. de cas. Gulebro de Biham.	?
3	3	141	D	onato ipius Guleb. de eodem redditi .xlv. s. lōs Johanni.	
3	3	141	Q	ueta clamatio Walteri clerici de qdam pētia tū in lalesford.	
3	3	141	R	ad de haunilt de una uirgata tū in takeley.	?
3	3	141	W	ill filius eiusdem Rad de eadem uirgata tū.	
3	3	141	I	dem Will de aduocatōe ecclē de takeley.	
3	3	141	Q	ueta clamatio eiusdem Will de tū ernisii de takeley.	
3	3	141	I	dem W. de decimis de takeley et de bertonie et palmagn de takeley. Particula quinta.	?
3	3	143	I	dem de .iiii. acris tū de pō suo in takeley iuxta fecum poul.	
3	3	143	I	tem idem de eodem in exambium palul .c. acris filius suus dedit.	
3	3	143	I	tem idem de campo de cisteto dato in exambium pō .iiii. acris et quibdam alius tū.	
3	3	142	D	onato eiusdem W. de gardino in socetpare .xv. acris tū in takeley.	
3	3	142	I	dem de toto socetpare et gardino et lū ueniale et quibdam alius tū.	
3	3	142	T	estimonium eiusdem de omnib; donationib; suis.	
3	3	142	W	ill de haunilt filius eius Will de decimis suis in takeley.	
3	3	144	I	dem de uirgata tū et tū ernisii decimis tū.	
3	3	144	T	estimonium utriusq; Will de donationib; eorum.	
3	3	144	W	ill unius de pūto exambio .iiii. acris et quibdam alius tū.	
3	3	144	I	dem de tū de socetpare cum pūto .xlv. tū iuxta cam et quadam ma.	
3	3	146			
3	3	146			
3	3	146	W	ill de haunilt unius de tū sagari poter. Sic pūto et Willi gardinar.	?
3	3	148	I	dem Will de uanmratōe omnium donationum suar et pūto.	
3	3	148	Q	ueta clamatio eiusdem de .xii. s. reddit' pro socetpare.	
3	3	148	I	dem Will de aduocatōe ecclē de takeley.	
3	3	148	I	tem idem de eadem ecclē et aduocatōe. Particula sexta libi armarij terti.	?
3	3	148	I	caro filii pagani de stanstede de tū de la lege et .ii. tū.	

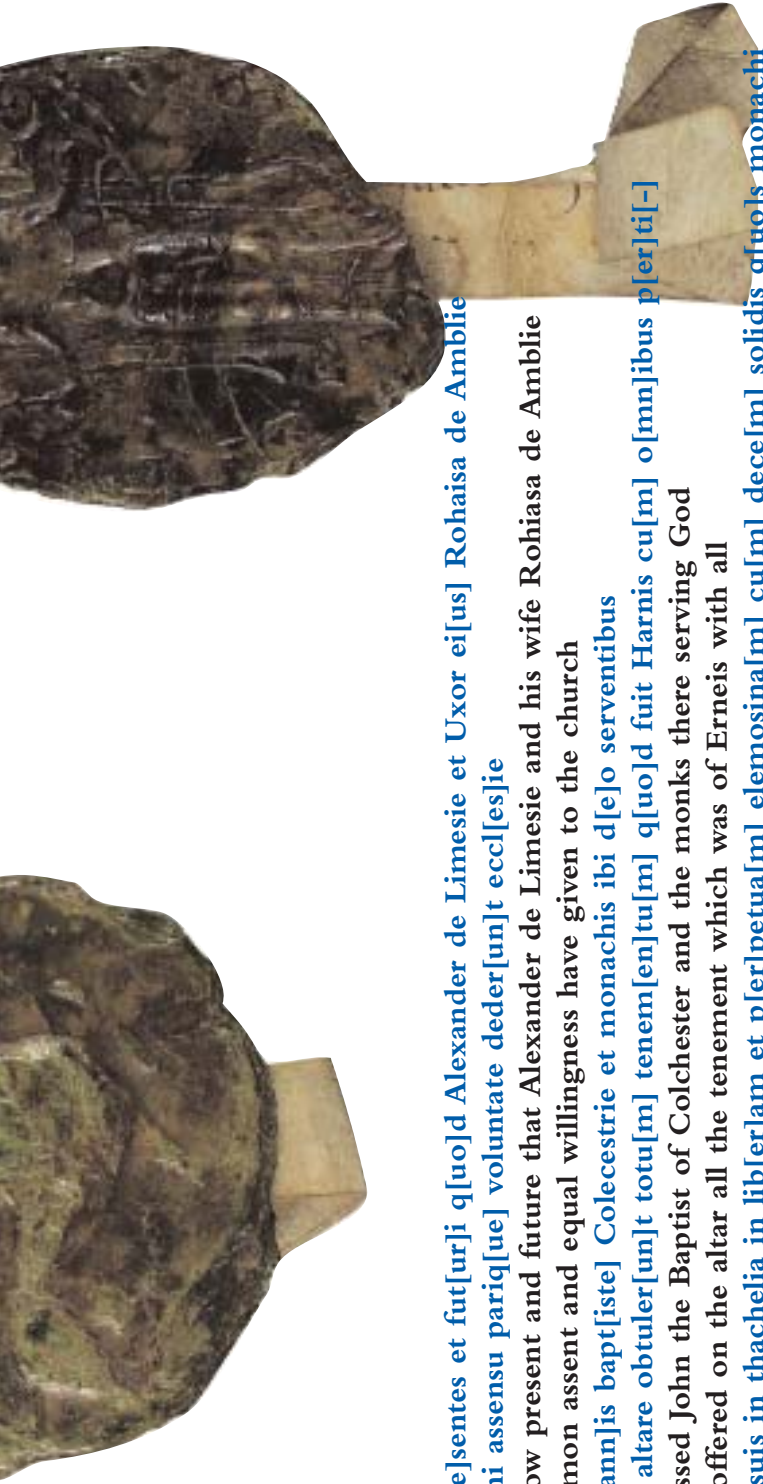
1. Cartulary of St. John's Abbey, Colchester table of contents (D/DJ 1/1.)

The cartulary contains very early examples of Arabic numbers. The Takeley deeds were found in the third cupboard [armarium] under the heading *Particula quarta* [fourth parcel]. The first surviving deed appears under the heading *Item iidem ambo postmodum de eadem t[er]ra ernisii* referring to the previous (non-surviving) Takeley deed [The same (Alexander [de Limesea] and Rohaisia his wife) of the same holding of Ernisius

(in Takeley)]. To the left of the entry are the Arabic numerals or page numbers.

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Sciatis presentes fuisse: quod Alexander de Lincolne. et Wyolm ei Reclusia de Ambie. communi assensu. p[ro]p[ri]a: uoluntate. dederunt etiam
beati Johis bapt[ist]e Colecestre. et monachi ibi de seruientib[us]. sup[er] altare obtulerunt totum tenementum quod fuit harnis cum omnib[us] p[ar]ti-
mentis suis in thachela in libam perpetuam elemosinam. cum decem solidis quos monachi de eodem tenemento singulis annis
illis reddere solebant. Ita id perpetuum tam reddunt quam tenementum integre. libere et quiete tenent. Hoc ergo fecerunt pro salute
animarum suarum. et omnium predecessorum suorum. et successorum. Monachi uero de caritate ecclesie memorato Alexandro. et Ro-
hacie se marcas dederunt. Hoc hec eorum oblatio tractu temporis in irritum possit reuocari. scriptum istud sigillo 1174
usque roboratum. Testibus huius. Waltero de hura. Ostro senescallo. Beniamin clerico. Reginaldo filio b[er]n[ard]i. Waltero clerico. Waltero
dispensatore. Alexandro de abbe. Waltero marscallo. Waltero de h[er]ford. et multis aliis.



2. This deed (D/DRu T1/1) is the actually the second Takeley deed recorded in the cartulary under the heading *Item iidem ambo postmodum de eadem terra Ernestii* (the same [Alexander and Rohaisa] of the same land of Erneis). The deeds are unusual for the number which still have their seals attached and the recent conservation work, including the cleaning of the seals, has made it possible to make out the detail. Alexander's seal on the left shows a wyvern (a mythical winged reptile with a dragon's head and barbed tail). Rohaisa's seal is vesical (a pointed oval), a shape used by women and ecclesiastical houses. It is now possible to see the figure of a woman with a bird on her left wrist and in her right hand a caduceus (a staff with coiled serpents and wings). Both symbols were often used by women. It was not unusual at this date for joint grants to be made, usually, as is likely here, where the land originally belonged to the wife or her family. Medieval women in England were often parties to deeds, where the land originally belonged to their families. The Married Women's Property Act of 1870 restored rights to women that many medieval women in England had enjoyed. It was not unusual for medieval women to be parties to deeds, particularly where the land originated with their families.

Sciant p[re]sentes et fut[ur]i q[uo]d Alexander de Limesie et Uxor ei[us] Rohaisa de Amblie
co[m]muni assensu pari[que] voluntate deder[un]t eccl[esi]e
Let all know present and future that Alexander de Limesie and his wife Rohaisa de Amblie
with common assent and equal willingness have given to the church
beati Joh[ann]is bapt[iste] Colecestrie et monachis ibi d[e]o serventibus
et sup[er] altare obtuler[un]t totu[m] tenem[en]tu[m] q[uo]d fuit Harnis cu[m] o[mn]nibus p[er]ti[-]
of the blessed John the Baptist of Colchester and the monks there serving God
and have offered on the altar all the tenement which was of Erneis with all
[-]nentiis suis in thachelia in lib[er]am et p[er]petua[m] elemosina[m] cu[m] dece[m] solidis q[uo]s monachi
de eode[m] tenem[en]to sing[ulis] annis

its appurtenances in Takeley in free and perpetual alms with 10s. which the monks for the same tenement
illis reddere solebant. Ita q[uo]d in p[er]petuu[m] ta[m] redditu[m] q[ua]m tenementu[m]
integre lib[er]e et q[ui]ete teneb[un]t. Hoc [i]g[itur] fecer[un]t p[ro] salute
were accustomed to pay them yearly so that they will hold the tenement
and the rent fully freely and quietly in perpetuity. This therefore they have done for the salvation
animaru[m] suaru[m] et o[mn]ium p[re]decessorum suorum et successorum.
Monachi v[er]o de caritate eccl[esi]e memorato Alexandro et Ro[-]
of their souls and all of their predecessors and successors.
Moreover the monks from charity of the church have given to Alexander and Rohaisa
[-]hasie sex marcas deder[un]t. Ne [i]g[itur] hec eorum oblatio tractu te[m]poris
in irritu[m] possit revocari: scriptu[m] istic sigillo utri[-]
6 marks. Therefore this offering of theirs cannot be recalled nor be void with time
this deed is strengthened with the seals of both
[-]us[que] roborat[ur]. Testibus hiis: Walt[er]o de Haia. Osb[er]to senescallo. Benjamin cl[er]ico.
Reginaldo filio brun. Will[el]mo cl[er]ico. Walt[er]o
With these witnesses Walter de Haia, Osbert the steward, Benjamin the clerk,
Reginald son of Brun, William the clerk, Walter
dispensatore. Alexandro de a[m]blie. Will[el]mo marescallo. Walt[er]o de h[er]eford. et multis aliis
the steward, Alexander de Amblie, William the marshal, Walter of Hereford and many others
(Transcript by author based on those by Moore and Laver.)

Docum sit *Alex de Limesia de terra ernisi de Ca-*
plentibus et futuris qd ego Alexandr de Keleia.

lunelia et uxori ei Rohaisa de Amblia concesserunt
et confirmauerunt ecclesie sci Johis de Colecestre et mo-
nachis ibidem de gentibus in phennem elemosina
totum feodum ernisi de Tabeleia in agris et pas-
tuis et omnibus suis pertinentiis. Illud feodum tenent
monachi de ipsi et de ipsorum hereditibus libere et quiete ab
omni tenore seruicio pro redditum x solidi annuorum
quos reddent ad festum trinitatis in anno. Et hoc fe-
cerunt pro dei amore et fraternitate illius ecclesie. ut sit
particeps omnium beneficiorum que ibi fuerint inter et for-
as. Pro hac concessione et confirmatione dedit Albas
Alexandr. xx. sol. de gsumma. Et Alexandr. post locu-
out sue et suorum hereditum obtulit illud tenementum super
altare sci Johis. et prout de uariante scilicet iohi. usus
omnes homines illud tenementum. Postea ipsa Ro-
haisa agnouit et laudauit illam concessione. obtu-
litque pro se ipsam super altare sci Johis et confirmauit
sigillo suo. Tuncque item Albas tibi est unam marcam
argenti. Testes sunt. Paganus dicit de Binnesie. Hen-
ricus de uesimle. Gaufridus de welesford. magister preb. Wal-
terus de limesia. Osbertus de clacetum. Galfridus et Gode-
fridus et humfridus homines Albi.

Item Alex. et Rahaisa
Sicut presentis et uxori sua de eodem tenemento ernisi
fuit. qd Alex. de limesia et uxori ei Rohaisa de am-
blie. communi assensu pariter uoluntate dederunt
ecclesie beati iohis bapt. colecestre et monachis ibi de
seruientibus et super altare obtulerunt totum tenem-
qd fuit hancum cum omnibus pertinentiis suis in cha-
cheleia in libam et perpetuam elemosinam. cum decem
solidis de monachi. de eodem tenemento singulis an-
nis illis reddere solebant. Ita quod in perpetuum tam
redditum quam tenementum integre libere et quiete tene-
bunt. Hoc igitur fecerunt pro salute animarum suarum
et omnium predecessorum suorum et successorum. monachi ue-
ro de caritate ecclesie memorato Alexandro et Rohaisa
sex marcas dederunt. He igitur hec eorum oblatio tractu
temporis in irritum possit reuocari. scriptum illud si-
gillo utriusque roboratur. Testes huius. Walterus de hama.
Osbertus senescallo. beniamin dicit. Reginaldo filio beati
Willelmi dicit. Walterus dispensatore. Alexandro de amblic.
Willelmo marescallo. Waltero de heford et multis aliis.

Sicut presentis **predca Roas de eodem.**

et futurum qd ego Rohaisa de Amblia dedit et con-

cessi et presentis mea carta confirmauit ecclesie sci iohis
bapt. colecestre et monachis ibidem de seruientibus con-
tenentium qd fuit Erensi in Tabeleia cum omnibus
pertinentiis suis in puram et perpetuam elemosinam.
ut teneant illud libere et quiete. ab omni seculari
seruicio. et nominatum de x. sol. quos michi et me-
is antecessoribus inter annuatum reddere solebant.
Et hoc feci pro salute anime mee et hereditum meorum
et omnium antecessorum meorum. Testes sunt. Rogfridus
benfridus. Will. de hama. Osbertus de clacetum. Rad-
bertus. helya de scilicet clacetum. Hamone gressio. Ric-
marchallo. Alex. filius Osberti. Will. frater eius. Godelino
capitulum sci Dunst. Symone filius Mauricius et multi
alii.

Galfridus de Amblia de eodem tenemento ernisi.
Sicut presentis et futurum qd ego Galfridus de am-
blie assensu hereditum meorum et amicorum concessi
et dedit ecclesie sci Johis bapt. colecestre et monachis
ibidem de seruientibus decem solidatas terre in tha-
chele. qualis solebant terre in thachele de Boecia
amica mea pro annuo redditum decem solidorum
ut illas teneant in libam et perpetuam elemosinam
absque omni tenore seruicio. et hoc feci pro salute
anime mee et uxoris mee constantie et omnium pre-
decessorum et successorum meorum. Testes huius. Petrus Albi de
Gogehale. Willelmo filius Symonis. Osbertus senescallo. Galfridus
de Hereford. Willelmo franciscus. Thoma de clacetum. Willelmo de
Andeulle. Waltero de larrino bonam dicit.

Confirmatio
Sicut presentis et omnium possessionum nra. in
et futurum qd ego Willelmo de Ambli filius Takel
galfridi de Ambli concessi et hac presentis carta mea
confirmauit. A. Albi et monachis sci Johis bapt. de
colecestre omnes terras et redditus et possessiones in
hac carta subscriptas. scilicet leubale que dicitur
estfeld. cum omnibus suis pertinentiis pro molend-
dinum. Hec non terram que fuit helye dicit cum
pertinentiis suis. Et unam acram terre que iacet in-
ter le Wardbroch. et terram Arnoldi berard. et unam
acram pasture que iacet inter terram Arnoldi et terram
Haroldum. Et et terram quendam que de lalche cum
terris aliis et diuicia. qualis Paganus calle aliqui
tenent in villa de Tabeleia. cum eandem terram
pasturam et pratum et alia suis pertinentiis. Similiter et ter-
culam quendam olim in parte eadem uille que dicitur
scilicet par cum gardino et quinque acris terre. qualis
quinque acras cum gardino Rad de hama tenet

Cartulary of St. John's Abbey, Colchester (D/DJ 1/1, folio 338.)

The first surviving grant of Alexander de Limesey and Rohaisa de Amblic appears under the rubricated heading *Item Alex[ander] et Rahaisa] uxor sua de eode[m] tenem[en]to ernisi* [The same Alexander and Rohasia his wife of the same tenement of Ernisi]. The Arabic numbers at the top of the page match the index entry. Written on the back of all of the deeds are the relevant cupboard and parcel numbers making it possible to match the deed to the index and then to the page of the cartulary.

The deeds show how St. John's Abbey built the manor up piecemeal from grants made by a number of landowners and it eventually comprised around 250 acres of land. The grants were made as alms or charity, for the sake of the souls of the grantors and also for those of their antecedents and descendants, as the monks would pray for them. In one case the grant was also made for the soul of King John.⁸ However, in some cases the owners were also paid compensation by the abbey. Ecclesiastical landowners were among the biggest purchasers of lands in the early medieval period and the deeds reflect this. The different grantors suggest that the abbey may have sought the pieces of land to create a coherent landholding in Takeley, which would complement their other holdings in Elsenham and in Hertfordshire. The abbey may well have seen the manor of Colchester Hall as part of a larger group of lands with others in the west of Essex and the east of Hertfordshire which could be administered together.

The first group of deeds⁹ relate to the land of Erneis [Ernest] in Takeley originally granted to the abbey by Rohaisa de Ambly and her husband Alexander de Limesey. The cartulary records five deeds, of which only three survive, all pre-dating 1194. They begin with the grant of the land of Erneis, in exchange for the payment of one mark and a fine of 20s. The abbey was also to pay quarterly an annual rent of 10s. The first deed in the collection makes the same grant, this time free of the annual rent, but in exchange for a payment of a further six marks by the abbey (Figs. 2&3). The next deed is the same grant, this time made by Rohaisa alone, which the cartulary records as having been made 'in her widowhood' [*in uiduitate sua*]. The last of these deeds was made by Rohaisa's nephew Geoffrey de Ambly, and confirmed his aunt's grant of the 10s. rent to the abbey, for the first time making no reference to the

land of Erneis. Both grants were likely to have been made to ensure that no future claim could be made by any heirs as first Rohaisa's husband died and then Rohaisa herself.

The cartulary records an additional grant of confirmation made by Geoffrey's son, William de Ambly in c.1230 under the heading 'William de Ambly confirms all our possessions in Takeley'. This confirms both his father's grant and also other lands granted by the de Hauville family. Together with the quitclaim made by the elder William de Hauville to any rights in the lands of Erneis¹⁰ it is clear that the de Hauville family were initially tenants of the de Ambly family in Takeley. As the de Ambly family were the main landowners, this small collection of deeds begins the Takeley deeds in the cartulary, although there are deeds which pre-date these.

Most of the grants which made up the manor of Colchester Hall were made by relatively minor local landowners. The exception are two grants made by Hugh de Vere, Earl of Oxford, dated c.1221-1263.¹¹ As befits a more distinguished grantor, the detail on the seal on the first deed is much finer than any of the others in the collection. It is made of white wax and includes a counterseal on the reverse. This is one of the deeds which differs from the transcript in the cartulary. The cartulary lists this under the heading 'Of the land which Thomas Benpenine held in Takeley' and describes the land as lying between land of the monks of 'Lecestr'. It is possible that when the cartulary was written it was intended to leave space to add the full name 'Colecestr' which appears in the original deed, but no space was left. Both deeds are among those in the cartulary which do not name the witnesses. Possibly the two pieces of land would have assisted in the consolidation of their holdings as they adjoined existing abbey lands in Takeley.

The cartulary interrupts the

sequence of deeds from Takeley with four deeds relating to lands in the abbey's manor in Lawford. The Takeley sequence resumes with a group of deeds granted by William of Takeley, son of Adeliza, his sons Elias and William, and Elias's son William.¹² The earliest deed recorded in the cartulary, which has not survived, is dated c.1141-1151 and was a grant made by William of Takeley, his wife Muriel and their son Elias of the lands of Redesele, with meadow, five acres of assart¹³ and the grove between Slictaneslaye and the road in exchange for 40d. rent a year, an agreement to fence the land when William fenced his own, a fine of 20s., four quarter-acres of corn and two silver marks. The first of this group of deeds to survive is an additional grant by Elias pre-dating 1185. In exchange for an annual rent of 16s. he grants the abbey more lands to make a total of 20 acres. This is followed by a quitclaim of William of Takeley, son of William, presumably Elias's brother, in which he renounces all right to the 16s. rent in exchange for 100s. The final grant by Elias's son William, dates from c.1200-1201, confirmed his father's grant and renounced all claim to the abbey's lands in Redesele, in exchange for the continued annual rent of 16s. and the fencing of the land.

The majority of the deeds in the collection relate to lands given and exchanged by the de Hauville family or their tenants.¹⁴ It is thought that the family originated from Préaux in Normandy. The first reference to the family is to a Ralph de Hauville, one of the falconers of Henry II (1154-1189), and the office appears to have been hereditary. A number of the deeds still have seals attached and the family seal shows a bird of prey on the left wrist of the figure, possibly in reference to the role. The grantors of the deeds are Ralph de Hauville, his sons William and Geoffrey, and William's son William. The only grant of Ralph de Hauville, dated c.1150, was of one virgate



4. The seals (not to scale) of, left to right, Hugh de Vere, Earl of Oxford, William de Hauville the younger and Thomas of Elsenham (D/DRu T1/4, 17, 26.)

The seals demonstrate the difference in social status of the grantors of land to the abbey. The white wax seal of the Earl of Oxford is much finer and has a counter seal on the reverse. The other two seals are of green wax. The seal of the de Hauvilles shows a man on horseback with a bird of prey on his left wrist, possibly a reference to the role of the de Hauville family as falconers to the King. The seal of Thomas of Elsenham has a six pointed star between a crescent moon.

(conventionally 30 acres) of land in Takeley. This grant was then confirmed to the abbey by his son William.¹⁵

The older William de Hauville granted two parts (half) of the tithes of Takeley and Berton [modern Burton End] and the whole of the pannage in Takeley. Pannage was the right for pigs to be allowed to roam in a wood and to eat acorns, beechnuts and other nuts. Little Domesday Book covering Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk records the value of pannage, assessed on a certain number of pigs, in each manor, indicating that it was a valuable right. Domesday records that the three manors in Takeley had the right of pannage for 600 pigs in each of the manors of St. Valery and Eudo Dapifer (both reduced from 1,000 pigs in 1066) and 200 pigs in the manor of Robert Gernon. This grant was confirmed by William's son William in c.1205¹⁶, together with assarts made in Takeley.

The older William de Hauville made a number of other grants to the abbey.¹⁷ These included in c.1200–1208 80 acres of parkland in Takeley located between the road and the land of the abbey of St. Valéry (the manor of Warish Hall). This was then re-granted in exchange for 100 acres which had been granted by William's son William during his period of wardship [*in custodia*] of his father's lands, when the elder William was ill.¹⁸ Before 1213 he also granted a field called Estfeld, with the exception of the mill located there in exchange for the 80 acres of parkland. Mills were a lucrative source of income for manorial lords throughout the Middle Ages and a source of frequent contention with their tenants. The tenants were obliged to use the lord's mill to grind their corn and had to pay for the privilege. Unfree manorial tenants could also be the subject of deeds. In addition to Estfeld, William also granted Elias son of Gilbert

and his tenement of land to the abbey. Around the same time William re-granted Elias son of Gilbert and his tenement of land along with another field called Newenhale, again with the exception of the mill located there.

The area called Sceteparc or Sheteparc was the subject of only two of the deeds which survive,¹⁹ but a number recorded in the cartulary, which have not. The older William de Hauville granted a garden located in Sceteparc and five acres of land to the west, with one pound of wax to be given to the abbey at each Epiphany. In a deed of c.1211 the younger William promises the abbey that he will obtain from his father William a deed and confirmation of the younger William's grant of Sheteparc and other lands in Takeley, as at present they only had the younger William's grants and Geoffrey's quitclaims. It would seem that the abbey owed the younger William four marks in rent and they promised to pay

him the outstanding money if he obtained the older William's confirmation. If he failed to obtain the relevant deeds or the abbey was deprived of the lands by 'malice or wilfulness', the younger William promised to exchange these lands with others to the same value judged by a verdict of 'good men and true' [*per visum proborum hominum*]. The cartulary records the older William's confirmation of his son's grant of Sceteparc, with a garden to the west, land to the south, and a field called Liewenhale.

The younger William de Hauville in c.1212 in exchange for 15 silver marks made a grant of lands held by Siger Poter, Richard Porcar and William Gardener.²⁰ The abbey in 1208 renounced all claims to Geoffrey son of William to any secular rights relating to the lands in Takeley given to them by either William de Hauville.²¹ These appear to have been grants of lands made together with their tenants and the abbey renounced all claim to Godwin, Richard Parker, Siger, William Gardiner, Richard Porcar, Roger Capstotht, Ralph Teronin, William the clerk and William le chat and their issue [*sequelis*].

The last major group of deeds relates to a series of grants made by Thomas of Elsenham, son of Agnes de Ruilli of Elsenham, dating to c.1234.²² They relate to two parcels of five and seven acres of land abutting on the abbey's holdings. Thomas was a tenant of the de Hauville family and the abbey initially undertook to pay the annual rent of 2s., before agreeing to pay it to Thomas. Thomas of Elsenham's seal is significantly less decorated and elaborate than those of the de Hauville family or the Earl of Oxford, indicating quite clearly his lower social standing (Fig. 4).

The process of subinfeudation ultimately led to the possibility of tenants having two different lords. It appears that Thomas of Elsenham was also a tenant of Waltham Abbey as the de Hauvilles had also given land,

of which he was a tenant, to that abbey. The collection also includes two chirographs or agreements between St. John's Abbey and Waltham Abbey.²³ Chirographs were the original indentures. Two copies of an agreement were written out with the word 'chirograph' written between them. The parchment was then cut in an indented line so that if a later dispute arose the two parts could be matched together. One of the agreements is dated 27th July 1238 and in this Waltham Abbey gives lands held by Thomas of Elsenham to St. John's Abbey of these lands in exchange for an annual rent of 4s. The other chirograph is dated c.1238-1245 and in this St. John's Abbey grants Waltham Abbey seven and a half acres of arable land in Takeley in exchange for an annual rent of 12d. It is possible that both agreements were made at the same time, in both cases to make each abbey's landholdings more coherent.

Only one of the deeds listed in the cartulary relates to land-owners who are not grantors in other deeds.²⁴ It dates from c.1240 and involves four sisters, Margaret, Cecilia, Emma and Agnes, daughters of William del Rothe, and their respective husbands Hugh Skele, Robert of Stansted, Gilbert del Frith and Geoffrey Smith of Colwell. They exchange three acres of land in Halleueld, possibly Hall Field, for one acre of abbey land on Langecroft. The three acres is described as being located next to Portstrate or Port Street. The Earl of Oxford's grant²⁵ describes his land as being next to Portstrete and this suggests that the two small pieces of land could have been geographically convenient to the abbey. Port Street has been identified as the road which runs from Coopers End Roundabout north-east towards Molehill Green, parallel with Stansted Airport's Terminal Road South.²⁶

Not all of the Takeley deeds recorded in the cartulary have survived. Within the groups of each of the different donors to

the abbey, the originals do not always include later confirmations of grants of individual lands. The largest number of deeds in the collection relate to the de Hauville family, but none of their grants of the advowson (right of church patronage) are included in the collection. The advowson eventually passed to St. Paul's Cathedral, presumably with the original deeds, which have not survived.

Perhaps of more interest is the fact that eight of the original deeds in the collection were not transcribed in the cartulary. Despite not appearing in the cartulary, all of the deeds, except the last one are endorsed with details of a *particula* and *armarium*.

Four deeds²⁷ relate to lands in Takeley in a meadow called La Leye, which also features in five deeds which are recorded in the cartulary.²⁸ These grants also include an additional three and a half acres of meadow granted by Richard son of Payne Casse of Stansted to the abbey and two acres of arable and half an acre of meadow initially granted by Richard to his tenant Richard son of Leuric, who in turn granted the lands to the abbey. There seems to have been some dispute as to whether the rent was one or one and a half pounds of pepper and if Richard or the abbey should pay it to the de Hauville family. However, following a payment of 16s. to William de Hauville he transferred the pepper rent to the abbey, with the result that Richard remained the tenant of the lands and paid the rent to the abbey instead of the de Hauvilles. It is possible that the cartulary scribe considered the dispute over the amount of rent to be too insignificant to be worth transcribing the contents.²⁹

The last four deeds relate to transactions which would have been relatively new at the time that John de Hadlegh was producing the cartulary. Two deeds are of individual grants of lands made in c.1239 and these may have been omitted as the grants were relatively insignificant. The

PLAN OF ESTATES
 lying in the Parishes of
TAKELEY, ELSENHAM & BROXTED,

To be Sold by Auction by
FRANKLIN & SON,
 AT BISHOPS STORTFORD,
 In June, 1877.



5&6. Sale catalogue of Colchester Hall Estate, Takeley and Elsenham, 1877 (SALE/B992).

(This page). The map shows the estate as it was sold in 1877. At 128 acres it was smaller than the estate which St. John's Abbey had acquired

(Opposite). Reference is made to the court rolls - did the medieval rolls, mentioned in 1325, survive to this date?

first is a grant by Robert del Frith, son of Richard, of land next to the abbey's field called Skulesleghe.³⁰ The second is a quitclaim by Adam son of Basilia of Takeley, in which he renounces for himself and his heirs all right in the lands of his mother in Takeley which she had granted to the abbey.³¹ The last two deeds relate to arrangements with other ecclesiastical houses. The first of c.1231 is a grant to the abbey by Thremhall Priory in Stansted of 2d. annual rent paid by Walter Reverhyt for three rods of land in the parish.³² The last is a chirograph or agreement of c.1234 with Thomas of Elsenham in which he agrees to grant for six years his meadow land which adjoins other lands of the abbey in Takeley.³³

The other surviving documentary source of St. John's Abbey is the 'leger' book.³⁴ This is a memorandum book, in which notes were kept detailing lands, and possessions, significant legal cases and other useful information. It appears to have been a 'working' reference book and does not have any decoration, unlike the cartulary. The 'leger' book dates from c.1315, more than 50 years after the cartulary was begun, and notes made in the volume continue until c.1530. By the time compilation of the book began, the manor of Colchester Hall was just one part of the abbey's landholdings and it contains four references to the manor.

Among the leases of abbey land copied into the book at the beginning of the fourteenth century are two for Takeley. The older lease was to Godfrey, rector of Walkern in Hertfordshire and dates from Michaelmas 1314.³⁵ He was granted the manor of Takeley, with its tithes, and rents from lands in White Roding and Sawbridgeworth in Hertfordshire, in return for an annual payment of 20 quarters of wheat, 40 quarters of oats and £8.10s. to be paid at Colchester at Godfrey's own expense between Michaelmas and Whitsunday. The corn was to be

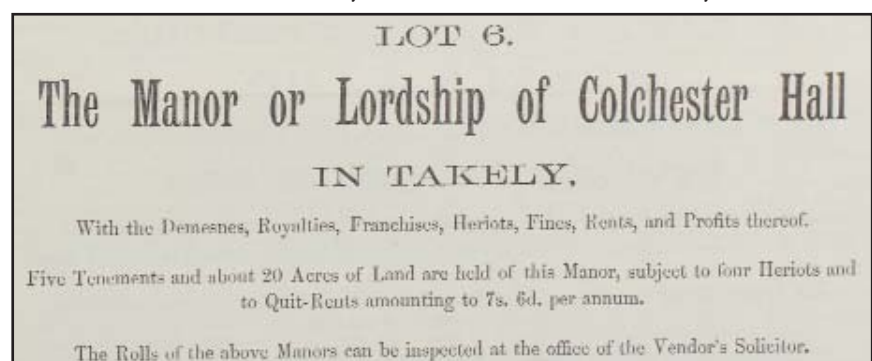
measured by strike measure, that is once the bushel was full a stick or strike was laid across the top to level it off without pressing down. Godfrey was also leased the church of Barkway in Hertfordshire in August 1314.

The other lease recorded in the book is one for six years to John Bolebeke of Foweleswode, dated the Sunday after the feast of St. Dunstan (25th May) 1325.³⁶ This continues with a detailed inventory of the furniture and implements which Bolebeke received with the manor.³⁷ As well as items in the house, including crockery, and the lord's chapel, where a painted crucifix, two pewter cruets and a super-altar (portable stone slab) were to be found. The inventory lists implements located in the dairy, and more extensively in the granary, where forks, shovels, spades, a mattock, hoe and wheelbarrow, ploughs, carts and ropes were to be found. It concludes with a note that in the lord's chamber there was a chest with a double lock and in this, a bag with the court rolls.

The other two references to Takeley deal with the rights of the abbey. In a section listing lands in various parishes paying tithes written in c.1320³⁸ there is a list of nearly 30 pieces of land from which the abbey received two tithe sheaves and the rector one. This arrangement continued after the Dissolution of the Monasteries. Two terriers of 1562 and 1641³⁹ record lands in Takeley paying tithes on the basis of two-thirds to the manor and one third to the 'parson or his deputie'. The final reference to Takeley occurs in a note of an inquiry made by the Crown in the thirteenth year

of Edward I [1284-1285] as to rights of the abbey in claiming certain franchises or rights in Greenstead and West Donyland, Takeley and Pitsea.⁴⁰ In Takeley the abbey claimed *frythsokne* or the view of frankpledge and with it the assize of bread and ale (the right to regulate bread and ale produced on the manor). In all cases the abbey was able to produce its royal charters to support these claims.

At the Dissolution of the Monasteries St. John's Abbey was the fourth richest monastic house in the county. The last abbot John Beche was executed for treason in 1539 having resisted the Dissolution he was reported as saying that 'the King shall never have my house but against my will and against my heart, for I know by my learning that he cannot take it by right and law'. The site of the abbey in Colchester was initially leased to Sir Thomas Darcy in 1544. He sold the lease to John Lucas in 1547, and he and his descendants lived in the mansion (the former abbey) until it was destroyed during the Siege of Colchester in 1648. In 1670 the abbey estate was sold to John Walkeden. The only physical remains of the abbey today are parts of the precinct wall and the fifteenth century gatehouse, now in the care of English Heritage. At the Dissolution the manor of Colchester Hall was leased for the annual rent of £7.7s.8d. In 1538 Henry VIII granted the manor to Robert Foster and it then passed through various owners, until in the mid seventeenth century it came into the possession of Robert Russell, a City merchant and was inherited by his son Sir



William Russell of Stubbers, North Ockendon.⁴¹ The manor passed out of the Russell family's hands in 1795, but the deeds, which presumably had until then been passed from owner to owner remained in the family.

The Essex Record Office holds later sale catalogues for Colchester Hall. In 1877 the manors and farms of The Grange and Colchester Hall in Takeley and Elsenham (a total of 273 acres) were sold by the trustees appointed in the will of Frederick Nash.⁴² The medieval manorial court rolls for Colchester Hall have not survived. They were first recorded among the 'fixtures and fittings' in the abbey's 'leger' book in 1325. Court rolls were available for inspection at the time of this sale in 1877 but it is not known if these included the medieval rolls. (Figs. 5&6). Colchester Hall Farm was sold again in 1891 and then in 1917.⁴³

The survival of these early medieval deeds throws some light on the acquisition of land by monastic houses. Although most of the grants were made through piety, as alms and for the salvation of the souls of the donors, in many cases the abbey also paid compensation either in money or by exchanging lands. Monastic houses were major purchasers of land in the early medieval period, but whether the compensation paid was the full market value cannot now be known. These deeds show how the abbey built up the manor piecemeal through gifts, exchanges and purchases, suggesting that parcels of land were actively sought from different landowners. Today all that remains of St. John's Abbey are the gatehouse and parts of the precinct wall while the manor of Colchester Hall lies underneath Stansted Airport. However, the deeds are available to all in the Essex Record Office Searchroom.

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Acknowledgements

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The Author

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The Oates Family and Gestingthorpe:

Captain Lawrence Edward Grace Oates and the association of the Oates family with Gestingthorpe¹

by

Adrian Corder-Birch

In his Editorial in the Spring 2012 issue of *Essex Journal*, Neil Wiffen quite rightly draws our attention to numerous anniversaries this year, including the centenary of the Scott expedition. One of the principal members of this expedition had strong links with Essex namely Captain Lawrence Edward Grace Oates of Gestingthorpe (Fig. 1). His sad and heroic death occurred on 17th March 1912 being his 32nd birthday.

His brave act of leaving his comrades to give them a chance of survival on their return journey from the South Pole is well known. He walked out into a blizzard and certain death so as not to become a burden, but sadly the three remaining members of the team were also to lose their lives a few days later. The body of Captain Oates has never been found.

Over the years much has been written about Captain Robert Scott, Captain Oates and their teams adventures in Antarctica but little about the Oates family and their close association with the north Essex village of Gestingthorpe. It is appropriate that this is addressed in the centenary year, which was commemorated in Gestingthorpe as well as nationally.

In 1891, William Edward Oates, FRGS, (1841–1896) the father of Captain Oates purchased Gestingthorpe Hall (Fig. 2) and the Manor of Over Hall and thereby became Lord of the Manor of Over Hall, which became known as Gestingthorpe Hall.² The Hall is a large red brick Georgian Manor House mainly built in 1735 but containing

brickwork and other features from an earlier house. Rear additions were built in 1891 by William Oates and in 1914 by his widow, Caroline Annie Oates (1854–1937), the latter as a memorial to her son Captain Oates.³



1. Captain Oates.
(Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office.
Photo facing p.57, *Essex Review*, XXII (1913).)

On 3rd April 1896 William Oates died and was buried in Funchal, Madeira.⁴ His eldest son, Lawrence then somewhat notionally became Master of Over Hall and Lord of the Manor of Gestingthorpe at the age of 16 years, positions he held until his brave death in 1912. However power remained firmly in the hands of his rather formidable mother who was recorded as Lady of the Manor until her death in 1937.⁵

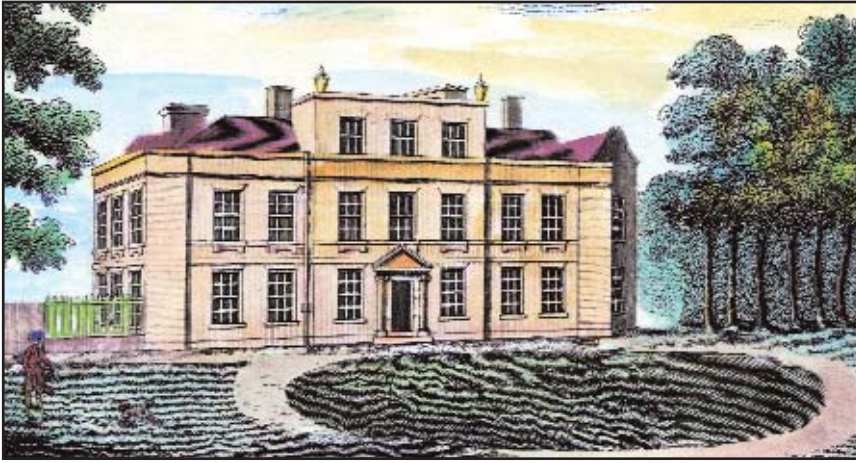
Upon leaving Eton, Lawrence Oates began his military career with the 2nd Volunteer Battalion of the Suffolk Regiment and later

joined his father's regiment, the 3rd Battalion the Prince of Wales's Own West Yorkshire Regiment (Militia). He later obtained a commission in the 6th Inniskilling Dragoons and went with them to South Africa to take part in the Boer War where he was in action. On one occasion, when in charge of some troops surrounded by the enemy he refused to surrender and was badly injured. As a result he was mentioned in despatches and became known as 'No Surrender Oates'.

His 21st birthday on 17th March 1901 was spent in Hospital in South Africa recovering from these injuries. His safe return home and his coming of age was celebrated on 22nd June 1901 when the whole village of Gestingthorpe was invited to Over Hall. The children were given tea at 3pm and adults dinner at 4pm.⁶

Oates was an intrepid yachtsman and also enjoyed riding, hunting, point-to-point, steeple chasing and polo, in fact anything to do with horses. He trained his own horses and one of them was appropriately named *Gesting Thorpe*, upon which he won the Military Cup at Dundalk in 1904, which was one of many victories. He hunted with the East Essex and it rapidly became his most cherished activity.

He had a younger brother, Bryan William Grace Oates (1883–1964), and with his help they kept hounds in a barn at Gestingthorpe and eventually employed a kennel-man. Lawrence took these hounds to Mhow, India when the Inniskilling Dragoons were



2. Over Hall, Gestingthorpe c.1769, when it was the seat of Edward Walker, Esq., from *A History of Essex*, by a Gentleman, II, 1769. (Author's image.)

stationed there and his pack was used to hunt hyenas. In 1910 Bryan Oates married Alma Edith Kirby (1883–1941) the daughter of Rev. Augustus George Kirby, who was Rector of Pebmarsh from 1881 to 1912.⁷ Captain Oates was best man at his brother's wedding, which took place at Pebmarsh Church. Bryan served in the First World War, in the Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve and as a Second Lieutenant in the Royal Army Service Corps. He is included on the Roll of Honour in Gestingthorpe Church and one of his sons, Edward Bryan Oates (1912–1989) became a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army.

Lawrence and Bryan had two sisters. The eldest being Lilian Mary Oates (1878–1965) who married Frederick Baring Ranalow, FRAM, (1873–1953) in 1909. They had two children, Erica Sheila Mary Ranalow (1912–1984) who married John Blenkinsop (1905–1968) and Patrick Baring Oates Ranalow (1914–1945). Patrick was a Flight Lieutenant, Air Bomber, with 35 Squadron, RAFVR who was killed in action on 10th April 1945 over Germany and is buried in Becklingen War Cemetery.⁸ The youngest sister, Violet Emily Oates (1881–1966) lived at Gestingthorpe Hall for the majority of her life. She became an amateur artist and could often be seen painting the beautiful landscapes around Gestingthorpe and

the Belchamps. Her watercolours of Gestingthorpe include Hall Farm, Leys Barn, Nether Hall Barn, the Brickfields and Church Cottages. She left Gestingthorpe Hall in 1947 and moved to Highfield, Liston, a nearby north Essex village. The Hall and Estate was then sold by the sisters Lilian Ranalow and Violet Oates and purchased by the Cooke family in 1948 who owned it until 1998.

When owned by the Oates family, Gestingthorpe Hall was part of an estate, comprising of Hall Farm of 286 acres including Leys Barn and stackyard, Pound Farm of 26 acres, a detached field of nearly 18 acres south of the Bulmer Road and numerous cottages.⁹ By 1902, Captain Oates, then a Lieutenant, owned four freehold cottages at Nether Hall Hill, Gestingthorpe. His brother, Bryan, owned freehold houses near the Church from 1908.¹⁰ Their mother later provided apple trees to be planted in the garden of every cottage in Gestingthorpe in memory of her son. Following the death of Captain Oates, a flag was flown from the roof of the Hall on 17th March each year, being the anniversary of his birth and death. Every room was muffled with black crape and the library became a memorial chapel containing Antarctic memorabilia.

The Oates family were great benefactors to Gestingthorpe and in particular to its Church, which contains stained glass windows in

the north wall of the nave in their memory. The Church, dedicated to St. Mary the Virgin, with its massive red brick tower is situated opposite Gestingthorpe Hall. Mrs. Caroline Oates expended significant amounts of money on the church where she spent much time. The Oates family support for the church started soon after they moved to the village when the Rev. Crowder Tom Bromwich, asked for a donation towards essential restoration work. William Oates gave £200 towards the costs of over £1,300. The 1893–94 restoration work was carried out under the direction of Arthur Blomfield Jackson, ARIBA, architect of 7 Bedford Row and later of 3 New Square, Lincolns Inn, London, who continued to carry out much work on the Church and Hall during the ensuing three decades. In 1893 William Oates gave a brass eagle lectern and in 1894 an organ chamber to the Church.¹¹

The first stained glass memorial window was dedicated on 9th April 1898 to commemorate William Edward Oates. At the same time the four belfry windows and the embattlements and pinnacles were restored by the generosity of his widow. A ringing floor was later installed and the tower steps restored.¹²

This was followed in 1901 by another handsome stained glass memorial window to Francis Grace (Frank) Oates, FRGS, (1840–1875). He was an elder brother of William Oates and became a well known naturalist, traveller and explorer. He was one of the first to visit the Victoria Falls and died in Matabeleland on 5th February 1875. William and Frank Oates were both gifted amateur artists, of drawings and watercolours of wildlife, birds and landscapes particularly of Africa.¹³

On 29th October 1900 George Day and Son, Church Bell-hangers of Eye, Suffolk produced a report upon the condition of the six bells in the church. The bell frame was found to be in a very decayed and dangerous state and to carry out the

complete restoration work was estimated to cost nearly £200.¹⁴ In 1901 Caroline Oates paid for two old and cracked bells to be re-cast and re-hung as a gesture of thanks for her son's safe return home from the Boer War. The fifth bell dated 1581 was inscribed:

'In gratitude to God for the safe return with honour of my beloved son, Lawrence E. G. Oates from the dangers of war in South Africa.
C. A. Oates 1901'

On 19th December 1901 the bells were rung for the first time since 1832 through her kindness in defraying the cost of recasting the 5th and 6th bells and restoring the bell frame.¹⁵ Towards the end of 1901 Lieutenant Oates, as he then was, returned to South Africa and following further war service left in June 1902. Upon his return to Gestingthorpe his mother ordered the newly restored bells to be rung in his honour.

In 1907, Mrs Caroline Oates generously paid £150 for the reconstruction and restoration of the fifteenth century oak screen, which remains a particularly good example. The work was carried out under the direction of Arthur Blomfield Jackson and executed by Ernest Beckwith of Coggeshall. It was dedicated by the Bishop of St. Albans in May 1907.¹⁶

This was followed by the provision of a new organ built by James J. Binns of Bramley Organ Works, Leeds in 1910 at a cost of £378. At the dedication service, three songs were sung by Frederick Ranalow, a professor of singing and voice production, the brother in law of Captain Oates. There was also a recital by Sir Frederick Bridge, MVO organist at Westminster Abbey.¹⁷ The same year further restoration work, supported by the Oates family took place. The chancel floor, which formerly had white bricks was laid with red tiles and the altar steps were laid with mosaic,

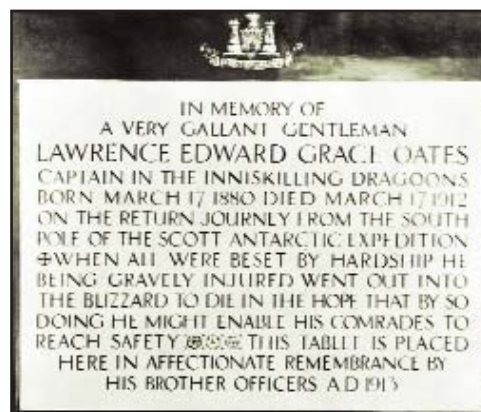
replacing the old floor bricks.

It was not until February 1913 that news of the loss of Captain Scott and his team reached England. On 14th February 1913 a memorial service was held in St. Paul's Cathedral for the five heroes who lost their lives in the British Antarctic Expedition. It was attended by King George V and members of the Oates family. A service was held simultaneously in Gestingthorpe Church at which the family was represented by Miss Mary Oates, who was Captain Oates cousin. Another service was held at Muttra, India where Captain Oates regiment was stationed.¹⁸

On the north wall of the nave is a brass plaque erected by Officers of the Inniskilling Dragoons in memory of Captain Oates (Fig. 3). It was unveiled on 8th November 1913 by Major-General Edmund H.H. Allenby, CB, (later Field-Marshal Viscount Allenby, GCB, GCMG,) of the Inniskilling Dragoons. The unveiling took place in the presence of Caroline Oates and her family together with Commander Edward Evans, CB, RN, (Teddy Evans, later Lord Mountevans) and six other members of the Scott Expedition.¹⁹ Thereafter Caroline Oates polished the plaque every week until her death at Gestingthorpe Hall on 26th November 1937 aged 83 years. Her daughter Violet then continued to polish it until she left Gestingthorpe ten years later.

The lych gate at the western boundary of Gestingthorpe Churchyard was presented by Caroline Oates in 1915. It was designed by Arthur Blomfield Jackson in May 1914, erected by Ernest Beckwith and dedicated by the Bishop of Chelmsford on 4th July 1915.²⁰

The previous year A.B. Jackson also prepared plans for alterations and additions to the Hall for Caroline Oates to commemorate her son (Fig. 4). The builders contract dated 15th July 1914 was awarded to Charles Deaves of Bures for £1601.15s.0d. It



3. Brass plaque in memory of Captain Oates on the north wall of the nave of Gestingthorpe Church. (Author's image.)

provided for work to start on 20th July 1914 and be completed by 16th January 1915.²¹ A specification for providing a new brick wall to match the existing wall along the Yeldham Road was also prepared. The 9 inch red brick wall was 170 feet long, 7 foot 6 inches high, with 18 inch brick piers. The successful estimate of £90.7s.0d. was provided by Pudney and Son, builders of Colne Engaine, who were also required to supply and fix York stone steps to match the existing steps to the terrace.²²

On 20th January 1920 George Day & Son quoted £225.14s.0d. for adding two treble bells to complete the octave of eight bells. This work was carried out through the generosity of Mrs Oates.²³ In 1931 a peal was rung to commemorate the safe return of Augustine Courtauld from the Arctic Region.

Throughout their residence at Gestingthorpe, the Oates family supported good causes associated with the Church. This included the Village School, which was built in 1856 and closed in 1963. On 27th October 1895 the Rev. Bromwich and William Oates visited the School to inspect 'the offices'. This led to improvements to 'the out-places' the following year. Mrs Caroline Oates and her daughters were regular visitors to the School over many years, with at least six visits during 1892 to hear children sing, watch them drill and to inspect needlework. On 21st July 1896 the 'Registers



4. Gestingthorpe Hall.
(Author's image.)

closed at 1.30pm to enable children to leave school earlier on account of tea at the Hall'. On 17th January 1898 the School closed for the whole day 'on account of a treat given by Mrs. Oates'. On 21st January 1909, 'Closed School for the day by a request of Miss. Oates on the occasion of her marriage'.²⁴ This was the marriage of Lilian Oates to Frederick Ranalow. Thereafter her sister, Violet Oates, continued visiting the School until its closure. Members of the family therefore took an interest in the School for over seventy years.

When Gestingthorpe Parish Council was formed in 1894, William Oates was one of the original seven members. The other members were Walter Nice, Alfred Felton, Patrick O'Sullivan, Charles Edgar Downs, Aubrey Chinery and the Rev. Crowder Tom Bromwich. The three unsuccessful candidates were King Downs, Alfred Benjamin Finch and Arthur Pannell.²⁵

Caroline Oates was always concerned about the welfare of the inhabitants of Gestingthorpe, particularly the elderly and the children (Fig. 5). She provided families with meat at Christmas and treats for the children. At regular intervals she entertained the aged inmates of Sudbury Infirmary who were conveyed latterly to Gestingthorpe Hall by motor-coach. This generous support probably started much earlier when the Rev. Crowder Bromwich of Gestingthorpe was Chairman of the Guardians of Sudbury Union. She performed many kindnesses in a quiet and

unostentatious way.²⁶ Apart from attending Church she rarely left the Hall in later life. She wore black in memory of her beloved son and being in mourning for the remainder of her life was likened to Queen Victoria.

In this year of anniversaries, including the Diamond Jubilee of HM Queen Elizabeth II, it is appropriate to record the staunch support which the Oates family had for the monarchy. They arranged celebrations in Gestingthorpe for the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria in 1897, the Coronations of King Edward VII and King George V in 1902 and 1911 respectively, the Silver Jubilee of King George V in 1935 and the Coronation of King George VI in 1937 (Fig. 6). Their home was the principal venue in Gestingthorpe for the celebration of these events.

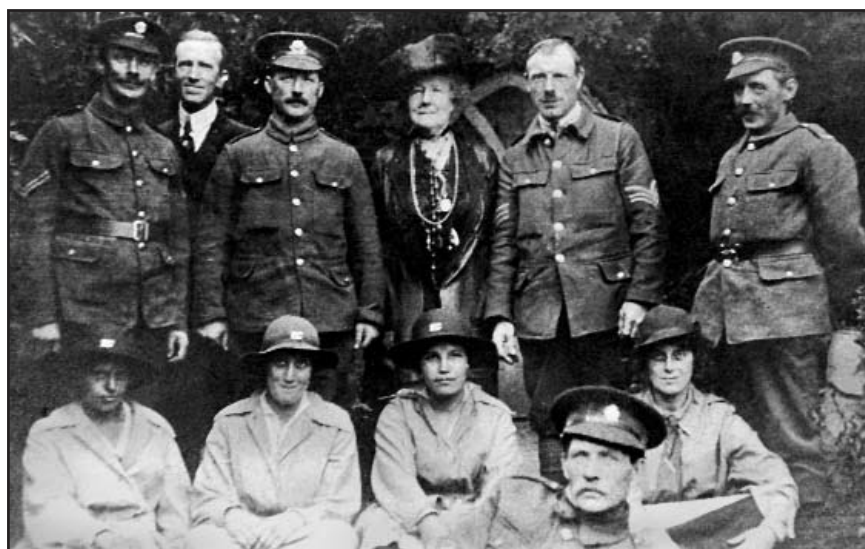
It was not until the sad death of Captain Oates one hundred years ago that the small Essex village of Gestingthorpe became better known to the outside world. In 1913 the Rev. Crowder Bromwich wrote, 'Gestingthorpe will be proud having given to the nation and to the world a man who will go down in history as one of the heroes of his day'. He is remembered worldwide as 'A Very Gallant Gentleman'. As recently as 2010, George Courtauld Vice Lord Lieutenant of Essex, opened some new com-

munity homes in Gestingthorpe appropriately named 'Oates Cottages'. This year the village has actively commemorated his loss with an Oates Centenary Service at St. Mary's Church when a Guard of Honour from the Inniskilling Dragoons was present. The Gestingthorpe History Group presented an exhibition and held various talks in honour of Gestingthorpe's most famous son.

References

1. I should like to acknowledge three books about Captain Oates, which have provided some useful background information namely: L.C. Bernacchi, *A Very Gallant Gentleman*, (London, 1933); S. Limb & P. Cordingley, *Captain Oates: Soldier and Explorer*, (London, 1995); M. Smith, *I Am Just Going Outside: Captain Oates - Antarctic Tragedy*, (Staplehurst 2002).
2. There were two manors in Gestingthorpe, the other being Nether Hall of which successive members of the Vaizey family were Lords of the Manor.
3. J. Bettley & N. Pevsner, *The Buildings of England, Essex*, (London, 2007), p.377.
4. Probate Records held at First Avenue House, High Holborn, London.
5. *Halstead Gazette and Times*, 3/12/1937.
6. *East Essex and Halstead Times*, 29/06/1901.
7. In 1912 Rev Augustus Kirby

5. Gestingthorpe men and women serving during the First World War with Mrs. Caroline Oates standing centre. (Author's image.)



- became Vicar of South Weald where he remained until his death on 13th July 1926. He married Edith, daughter of Col R.A. Smith-Dorrien and sister of the well known commander in the 1914-1918 war, General Sir Horace Smith-Dorrien, KCB, DSO, The Dorrien name continued in the Oates family with Robin Dorrien Grace Oates, a race horse trainer and nephew of Captain Oates.
8. Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Becklingen War Cemetery, 14. B. 14.
 9. Essex Record Office (ERO), D/DOa/E1, Schedule of lands of Hall Farm, Gestingthorpe, c.1900 & Sale/B4212, Sale Catalogue, Hall Farm, Gestingthorpe, 1948.
 10. ERO, C/E 1/6/14-20, Electoral registers for Northern or Saffron Walden Division, Gestingthorpe, 1902-08.
 11. Parochial Records of Gestingthorpe Church 1893-1901. At time of writing in the custody of Gestingthorpe PCC.
 12. Ibid.
 13. M. Coulson, *Frank Oates and the Victoria Falls*, (1995).
 14. ERO, D/P 85/3/1-6, Gestingthorpe, St Mary the

- Virgin, Property and Income of Benefice, 1894-1920.
15. *Essex Review (ER)*, XI (1902), pp.57-58 & Parochial Records of Gestingthorpe Church 1893-1901.
 16. ERO, D/P 85/3/1-6.
 17. *Notes on The Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin Gestingthorpe*, (n.d.)
 18. *ER*, XXII (1913), p.62.
 19. *ER*, XXIII (1914), p.37.
 20. ERO, D/P 85/3/7, Detailed plan for lych-gate for church by Arthur Blomfield Jackson, 1914 & *ER*, XXIV (1915), p.198.
 21. ERO, D/DOa/E2, Builder's contract for carrying out alterations and additions at Gestingthorpe Hall, 1914.
 22. ERO, D/DOa/E3, Builder's specification and estimate for providing new brick wall at Gestingthorpe Hall, c.1910.
 23. ERO, D/P 85/3/1-6.
 24. ERO, E/ML 125/1&2, Log books: Gestingthorpe Church of England Primary School, 1875-1912 & 1912-1963.
 25. ERO, T/P 181/5/26, Cuttle Collection of newspaper cuttings relating to Gestingthorpe, 1894-1936.
 26. *Halstead Gazette and Times*, 03/12/1937.

Acknowledgments

My thanks are due to Stan Newens who inspired me to research and write this article and to the staff of the Essex Record Office for the production of documents. Over the years Ashley Cooper, farmer, historian and author has shared information and documents about Gestingthorpe some of which have been used in this article. Finally I should like to pay tribute to Tony Dagnall of Gestingthorpe who gave a brilliant talk about Captain Oates at Little Yeldham Church in May 2012.

The Author

Adrian Corder-Birch is Chairman of the Editorial Board of Essex Journal and a Past President of Essex Historical and Archaeological Congress. Following fifteen years as Chairman and Secretary of Halstead and District Local History Society he is currently its Patron. He has lived in Essex all his life and his interests include industrial archaeology, local and family history. He has written five books and has contributed articles to *Essex Journal* and other publications.

6. Estate workers, pensioners and widows of Gestingthorpe at the south front of Gestingthorpe Hall when celebrating the Silver Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary in 1935.

Standing in back row: Tom Lampard, Fred Rippingale, Fred Smith, Walter Mayes (groom), Walter Surridge, Reg Mitchell, Aubrey Chinery, ? Mitchell, William Pannell, unknown, Ted Broyd, Charles Downs, Harry Steward (wearing his Boer War Medals), Harry Everitt, Bryan William Grace Oates, Ernie Turner, Ted Bradman, William Everitt, Arthur Rippingale, William Kemp (gardener) and George Rose.

Seated in centre row: Polly Cansell, unknown, Louise Surridge, unknown, Liza Chinery, unknown, ? Surridge, Mrs Caroline Oates, Miss Violet Oates, Kate Rippingale, Ellen Rippingale (nee Corder), Emma Radley, Mrs Walter Mayes, Emily Springett, unknown and unknown.

Seated in front row: Mabel Pannell, Adeline Kate Corder (postmistress of Gestingthorpe), ? Overall, Hubert Smith, Mrs Stevens, Kitty Brown, William Henry Stevens (land steward to Mrs Caroline Oates), Mrs Alma Edith Oates, Mary Felton (née Corder), unknown, Edith Nice, Cecil Nears, William Nice (gardener) and Albert Reeve. (Author's image.)



Chris Thornton, Editor,
assisted by Herbert Eiden,
A History of the County of Essex, Vol. XI,
pp.xix & 373. ISBN 978-1-90435-639-4,
Boydell & Brewer Ltd for the University of
London, Institute of Historical Research,
2012, £95.00.

It is over a decade since the publication of the last volume of the Essex VCH and readers to this journal will be aware, through updates and news pieces, of the trials and tribulations that its staff have gone through over these years. Indeed we should all be very grateful for the wonderful display of tenacity and sheer endurance that the current editor, and sole surviving member of staff from 2001, has demonstrated. If Chris Thornton had walked away from the project no one could have blamed him, but he didn't and the result of his perseverance, and that of all of his contributors and helpers, is another example of a wonderfully researched and produced 'big red book'.

The latest volume covers the seaside parishes of Clacton, Walton and Frinton, all part of the Tendring Hundred, and in a move away from recent volumes, only the modern history of these parishes is included; volume XII will cover their earlier history along with those other parishes from St Osyth to the Naze. The principal area of study is the development of these parishes during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as seaside resorts.

As with previous VCH volumes it follows a chronological sequence. After a general introduction separate chapters follow on each resort discussing them from the early nineteenth century through to 1914 with each chapter discussing the resorts in a logical and comparable manner, under the headings 'Resort Development', 'Economy', 'Local Government and Politics', and 'Social and Cultural Life'.

Chapters follow on the resorts during the First and Second World Wars and they sandwich one on inter-war developments while the two following them look at the post-war history. Chapters on 'Institutions' and the 'Built Environment' are then concluded with a bibliography and index. Just looking at the list of authors (apart from the VCH editor and his deputy) who contributed to this endeavour – Bettley, Rusiecki and Durgan to name but three – tells you that we, and in particular the parishes, are in very safe pairs of hands.

It is impossible to do justice to such an exhaustive history so this review will deal with just a brief overview of some of the content.

Chris Thornton, in the first chapter, introduces some of the main themes regarding the resorts. He states that the resorts under discussion were all part of the development 'to provide genteel bathing and leisure facilities' (p.1). However Essex was a late developer due to lack of suitable beaches near to

A HISTORY OF THE COUNTY OF ESSEX

EDITED BY CHRISTOPHER C. THORNTON
ASSISTED BY HERBERT EIDEN

VOLUME XI

CLACTON, WALTON AND FRINTON

NORTH-EAST ESSEX SEASIDE RESORTS

London. Those beaches that did exist in the north-east of the county were difficult to get to until the advent of the railways. The beaches were shallow so it was difficult for steamers to land potential holiday makers without needing long piers. But the main ingredient was there: good sandy beaches.

Looking at their origins Thornton tells us that Walton-on-the-Naze as a resort dates from the late 1820s. The initial development was set up by a group of local businessmen in competition to Dovercourt, struggling initially until railway entrepreneur Peter Bruff became involved by purchasing land in Walton, along with Great Clacton and Frinton. The arrival of the Tendring Hundred Railway to Walton in 1867 and the Bank Holiday Act of 1871 all helped to develop the growth in seaside excursions. Bruff was also instrumental in developing Clacton-on-Sea from the the mid-1860s. While he, Bruff, had a railway background, Clacton was initially developed to be accessed by steamship from a new pier as money could not be raised to extend the railway. However when it finally arrived in 1882 Bruff had been bought out by the Clacton-on-Sea General Land, Building & Investment Co. Ltd. Frinton's slow start was also helped by the arrival of the railway in 1888 – ease of access being the key to success and allowing the development of hotels and amenities to take place. However, the price of train fares could also slow down the development of the tourist trade – the cost of getting to a resort being a direct influence on how many people could or would travel to take advantage of the sandy beaches and amenities on hand.

In general most development was undertaken by small scale businessmen and speculators, and indeed Bruff himself had only limited funds which meant that others finished off what he had started. The resorts appealed to middle-class holiday makers for longer stays and thus had a more genteel feel than Southend, which being much closer to London, was easily available for day trippers. The rise of the specialised holiday seaside resort led to distinctive qualities which generally continue to this day: relatively large

numbers of retired people, seasonal migration as well as a specialised workforce. Of interest is the competition provided, not only by other resorts, but by other outlets for people's desire to 'holiday' – in this instance mainly plotland developments in south-east Essex. One imagines the more individually minded preferring to relax on their own plot rather than to go to the effort of booking and travelling to a resort for a conventional holiday. I know how that feels!

Following this introduction the resorts are then looked at in more detail (under the headings of 'Resort Development', 'Economy', 'Local Government and Politics', and 'Social and Cultural Life') in their respective chapters by Boyden, Senter, Durgan and Thornton. Rusiecki discusses the impact on the resorts of the First World War, which as imagined was not good for the economy (Fig. 1.) as they were all placed within a prohibited zone which stretched for ten miles inland. While most of us must be familiar with the Home Guard of the Second World War, I did not know that a First World War equivalent existed and each of the resorts had a Home Defence Volunteer Corps by 1915. These were manned by those too young or too old to join up but who could assist with opposing an invasion. Just like the Home Guard they appear not to have had enough guns for their recruits. They soon disbanded.

Moving on, the obvious reason why the resorts existed (the quality of their beaches along with sea and the opportunity to splash and swim and have fun on a, hopefully, glorious, sunny holiday) there is a discussion by Herbert Eiden on bathing. However, something which we take for granted on a visit to the seaside was once taken very much more seriously. In his chapter on the resorts between the wars, Eiden looks in some detail at the ritual of taking to the water. The *Clacton Graphic* in August 1919 reported large crowds lining the prom to 'watch the water nymphs', presumably of both sexes and suggestive of the popularity of beach use for swimming. However, this easy going attitude was not universal. Following the end of male nude bathing before the First World War, the beaches had then become available for both men and women to swim together which led to the end of bathing machines. All bathers could now walk across the beach to the sea where previously a bathing machine would allow them to enter the water unseen. However, and

Fig. 1.

ECONOMY

The economies of the three resorts were much disrupted by the war. Fears that the coast might be shelled, bombed or the target for invasion, or that visitors might be stranded by the military's extensive use of the railways, engendered a negative attitude towards the resorts on the part of would-be holidaymakers and day-trippers. Most vulnerable were the boarding and lodging house keepers, hoteliers and apartment owners who were dependent on the summer season's takings. The war brought a premature curtailment of the 1914 summer season by several weeks. The number of August Bank Holiday visitors arriving by rail fell by 20 per cent at Walton, although figures at both Clacton and Frinton were slightly up on 1913.¹ However, while the number of these day-trippers had been sustained, at Clacton 90 per cent of all longer-stay holiday bookings had been cancelled within a few days of war breaking out.²

Although there were re-bookings at all three resorts up to the end of September,³ the season had effectively collapsed by the end of the first week in August. Cancellations were still arriving at Walton in late September, and were ascribed to 'the dread of invasion'.⁴ Some lodging house keepers resorted to the courts to bring cases, often successfully, against those who had booked rooms in August and September 1914 and then hurriedly cancelled them.⁵ The Coast Development

Corporation kept its Belle steamers running from London to Clacton and Walton until early September, but then it abandoned operations for lack of passengers. The impact of the collapse of the season on these two resorts may be inferred by the loss of £14,000 suffered by the Coast Development Corporation and its voluntary liquidation in June 1915.⁶

The 1915 summer season was an even poorer one. Although some boarding houses clearly attracted good custom,⁷ the number of day-trippers was very low, with a 70 per cent drop on the Easter 1914 numbers, and an 80 per cent fall at Whitsuntide.⁸ During the August Bank Holiday Frinton's visitors were fewer than the low numbers of 1914, whilst visitors to Clacton fell from 22,623 to 7,888.⁹ It is difficult to assess accurately the state of the holiday industry in 1916 because no figures for visitors were given in the press, but Whitsuntide, traditionally the start of the summer season, was a disaster due to the poor weather and because the Government had forbidden its celebration as a holiday.¹⁰ Christmas bookings were also much reduced that year at Clacton.¹¹ There seems to have been a definite improvement in 1917 for the August Bank Holiday was said to have been quite beyond expectations, with hotels and boarding houses full at both Clacton and Walton; the *Essex County Standard* suggested that most

43.
*Holidaymakers
residing at
Glenthorne
boarding house,
Clacton-on-Sea,
during the
August Bank
Holiday in 1915.*



1 *ECT*, 8 Aug. 1914; *CN*, 8 Aug. 1914.
2 *FCS*, 8 Aug. 1914; *CN*, 15 Aug. 1914.
3 *CN*, 25, 29 Aug., 30 Sept. 1914.
4 *ECT*, 29 Sept. 1914.
5 *FCS*, 28 Nov. 1914; *CN*, 22 Aug. 1914, 30 Jan. 1915.
6 *ECT*, 31 July 1915; P. Box, *Belles of the East Coast* (1989), 87–9.

7 Below, Fig. 43.
8 *CN*, 10 Apr., 29 May 1915.
9 *Ibid.*, 7 Aug. 1915.
10 *Ibid.*, 17 June 1916.
11 *ECT*, 30 Dec. 1916.

rather surprisingly, 26 private bathing machines were still in use at Clacton up until the Second World War. I assume that there must have still been a market for them among an older generation of bathers who had grown up with them?

Now, while there were concerns about mixed bathing there was obviously money to be made – and one assumes that the private bathing machines mentioned above were charged for. So it was with the municipally owned bathing tents and huts, bathing costumes and towels. Charges to use these facilities were a well received income and also allowed those who were operating them to 'police' the beaches to ensure that those present were appropriately attired and behaving properly. This meant that acceptable standards of dress were worn, which as advances in

Fig. 2.

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1920s as there was a consequent loss in revenue but also they were thought to be behaving in an indecent way – 'to bathe from the beach' as opposed to bathe from the changing facilities. Still such must have been the demand that permission was given, in Clacton, in 1930 to allow 'mackintoshers' permission to bathe, although they were restricted to two parts of the beach and they were charged 3d. per person from 1932. Happy days indeed!

Regarding production, an innovation introduced to Vol XI are the images scattered throughout the text (as in Fig. 1), rather than restricted to distinct and separate sections of plates. These sections still exist but now contain only the colour images. The images are all carefully chosen from a variety of sources and are reproduced very well. I particularly like the Ford Madox Brown painting looking across Walton Backwaters (opposite p.109). As is to be expected from the VCH all the accompanying maps are to a very high standard but then that can be said of the publication as a whole, from the writing, the referencing to the production which Boydell has undertaken extremely well.

The volume is rounded off with an extensive bibliography and a wonderfully detailed 22 page index (Fig. 2). I know this latter addition gave the editors a lot of work to bring it up to Essex VCH standards but it is well worth the effort. Starting off with an entry for Abbot & Co., (page 339 if you would like to know) it covers everything you would expect from a VCH volume. Clacton itself is spread over six

pages with topics sub-divided within the overarching headings: 'airfields', 'allotments', 'associations and societies, Amateur' etc. Along the way there are entries for the 'Stratosphere Girl' (a big attraction in the 1930s apparently!), Oswald Mosley and Enoch Powell to name but three. The last index entry is 'Zog I, king of Albania', so this truly is an A-Z history. However, if you want to know what King Zog's connection with the north-east Essex seaside resorts is then you'll just going to have to read this comprehensive history!

Neil Wiffen

fabrics and fashion were made caused concern as this was a dynamic situation. For instance by around 1930 low-cut 'sun back' costumes seemed to have been allowed but men in shorts and women in bathing suits without legs (equivalent to modern day all-in-one swim suit?) were not. By 1933 though, these were also deemed acceptable. As with all rules and regulations it is amusing to read about how people got round them. I suppose that the so called 'mackintosh bathers' were those who wanted to use the beach but could not afford to pay to use the changing facilities provided, didn't want to pay or perhaps wanted to jump the queue for the changing tents? This vexed the local authorities through the

Book Reviews

Nicholas Leach, **Harwich Lifeboats: an illustrated history**, pp.191, ISBN 978-1-84868-876-6, Amberley Publishing, 2011, £16.99.

This book is an essential addition to the libraries of those interested in the maritime history of Essex as well as Harwich. It throws light on the development of life-saving at sea and also reveals the extent to which lifeboats salvaged vessels ranging from pleasure craft, through fishing boats to large merchant ships between about 1800 and the present day, to the extent that any reader not familiar with the history of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution as a national organisation would benefit from reading just this volume.

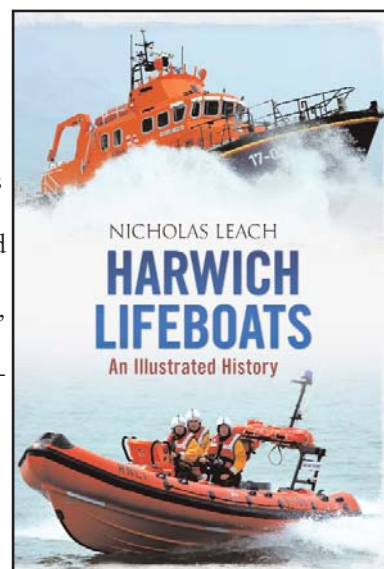
The modern reader and land-lubber may be surprised at the extent to which life-saving and salvaging continued to be carried out by tug boats and naval vessels, partly as a result of lifeboat men's reliance on oar power and the wind in the early days or simply the need for greater mechanical power or team-work in situations persisting to the present day, in which collaborative rescues might involve not only the lifeboat but RAF search and rescue helicopters and HM Coastguard. For a period Harwich was not served by its own lifeboat station, a situation partly compensated by neighbouring stations in Essex and Suffolk, port and maritime authorities and the Royal Navy, despite the importance of the coastal shipping lanes and treacherous sandbanks cluttering the approaches to Harwich and London. The serious reader should make good use of the simple charts on pages 4 and 10 but would be well advised to have a good nautical chart to hand in order to follow events.

Mr Leach treats his subject mainly chronologically, reviewing the fascinating progression from rowing boat to the all-weather modern Severn Type lifeboat

Albert Brown, providing details of rescues or 'services' throughout and with a more detailed table at the rear containing again a chronological list of services with names of ships and numbers of persons rescued. The book is liberally illustrated with black and white photographs of lifeboats, rescued vessels and lifeboat crews, while the colour photograph section in the middle is a delightful bonus. The photographs are very well reproduced and usually well captioned, although the author is inconsistent in dating them. There are also some good drawings of vessels and photographs of relevant architectural heritage including the old lifeboat house.

Like many modern publications the book suffers from poor proof-reading which it is hoped can be improved for a second edition and there is a reliance on printed rather than archival sources, the *East Anglian Daily Times* proving a particularly worthwhile quarry of information on the Harwich lifeboat station's development and services. The reader may be disappointed also in the lack of social historical background to the lifeboat crews and those who supported them. We are left to ask questions like what makes a typical lifeboat crewman? Are volunteer crew members supported by employers? Who were the early lifeboat men and what were their occupations? How did they live? How were they recruited? Notwithstanding these concerns, the reader will enjoy Mr. Leach's narrative, the more so if he is interested in the technological development of the different types of lifeboat.

Stephen M. Dixon



Patrick Denney
Buildings of Colchester Through Time, pp.96, ISBN 978-1-44560-408-4, Amberley Publishing, 2012, £14.99.

'Look up, look at the roof line', the words of Gus Edwards, doyen of the Essex Record Office to a young vicar ignorant about buildings who had taken him on a drive around North Essex looking particularly at timber framed buildings. The words came to mind as I looked at this fine collection of pictures of buildings in central Colchester. It would certainly make an eye opening and informative accompaniment to a day's wander around this remarkable town.

'Not another Patrick Denney book on Colchester - he must have cornered the market' was the response of another friend, but on this evidence he deserves to.

The brief text is unfailingly helpful, the short glossary good to take people further and the progression through streets well thought out. The major focus is on houses and commercial buildings and little of real note is missed. A couple of regrets. As St Botolph's Priory is included the other historic Churches might have appeared especially the fascinating St Martin's. The Stockwell Arms was probably in the early stages of restoration when the pictures were taken - it would be an interesting addition to any future edition.

Two fascinations as one follows the development of commercial buildings. Just how many shops have changed hands in the last two years (a continuing process) and how many Banks there were a century ago. Complaining about the dominance of Banks and Building Societies cannot be a new phenomenon!

Michael Fox

Book Reviews

Tony Crosby,
A Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of Essex,

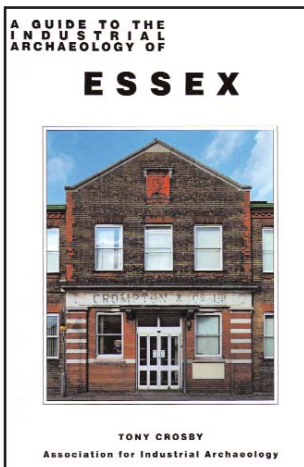
pp.68. ISBN 978-0-95602-511-1

Association for Industrial Archaeology,
2012, £5.50 + £1.10 p&tp

Available from: AIA Sales Officer, Barn Cottage, Bridge Street,
Bridgnorth WV15 6AF. Cheques made payable to:

'The Association for Industrial Archaeology',

or: <http://industrial-archaeology.org/asales.htm>



This attractive staple bound booklet (published with the assistance of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History) is one of a series of county gazetteers produced by the Association for Industrial Archaeology to mark its rotating annual conference venues. It is not intended to describe all industrial or former industrial sites, but to select those of local or national importance or significance. It covers the present county, including the two unitary authorities, but not the metropolitan boroughs.

Though Essex is not inclined to think of itself as an industrial county, about 270 sites are described of which about a third are illustrated in colour thumb-nails in the text. Many are rural industries, such as breweries, mills, maltings, model farms, saltworks and sail lofts. A good number are connected with infrastructure such as transport, water, gas and power

supply, and lighthouses. Others are part of the social fabric, such as workers' housing, seaside piers, cottage hospitals and smallholdings.

As one would expect from AIA, the manufacturing side of Essex has not been neglected and there are short descriptions of electronic, explosive and engineering works, metal window factories, and petrochemical plants. Each has a short entry indicating the significance of the site, and describing the surviving structures, often with an indication of their present condition and use. Not surprisingly, many now serve a different function, while some are derelict or awaiting development. Each is provided with a six figure grid reference, and a key to indicate whether it is open to the public, or visible from a nearby right of way. The usefulness of this guide is increased by location maps, and the index provides a key to the different type of sites covered and their whereabouts in the text. There is also a three page introduction to the development of industries in the county.

This booklet is a useful reminder of the surprising (and often elegant) industrial sites in the county, from an isinglass factory to a train ferry gantry, from a timber railway viaduct to one of the country's earliest surviving cinemas. It should prove very useful to both the curious explorer and to those with an interest in the surviving structures of a specialised part of the county's past. It is also a reminder that some of the sites which have survived are now under threat, and that constant vigilance is necessary to protect our heritage.

Michael Leach

Jenny Coumbe,
'Lovely Little Places!' The story of the prefabs at Stewards Green, Epping,
pp.96. ISBN 978-0-755-21121-0,
Authors Online, 2009, £11.95.

Available from : Authors OnLine Ltd., 19 The Cinques, Gamlingay,
Sandy, Beds., SG19 3NU. www.authorsonline.co.uk

This book is not an academic study. It is the simple story of the creation of a community of ordinary people in post Second World War Epping. It begins with a bombing raid on neighbouring North Weald Aerodrome on 29th August, 1940, and describes the damage and casualties suffered in subsequent Luftwaffe, V1 and V2 raids on Epping up to 1945.

At the end of the war, as throughout Britain, there was a severe housing shortage which was partially met through the erection by Epping Urban District Council of 41 Tarran-type prefabricated bungalows on a field near the junction of Stewards Green Road and Bower Hill.

To the astonishment of many of those allocated tenancies, the prefabs were provided with bathrooms, inside toilets, hot and cold water and kitchens fitted with refrigerators – luxuries undreamt of in most ordinary working class accommodation at that time. With a rent of £1 a week, despite the cold and damp in winter many tenants loved the surrounding green landscape and initially turned down offers to move into alternative permanent accommodation.

The residents supplemented their limited incomes by growing vegetables, keeping chickens and pea and potato picking on neighbouring farms. They helped organise their own leisure activities and participated in local fairs and fetes. They were part of the wider Epping community.

When the prefabs were finally dismantled in the 1960s, many chose to move into the permanent houses built on the site, which they continued to enjoy. As one familiar with the area and the times described, I recommend this book as a record of fascinating events which might not otherwise have been remembered.

Stan Newens

Your Book Reviewers are:

Michael Fox, a retired Church of England Archdeacon; **Stephen Dixon**, the current Archive Services Manager of the ERO; **Michael Leach**, a retired GP; **Stan Newens**, a retired politician; **Neil Wiffen**, is the Hon. Ed. of *Essex Journal*.

EJ 20 Questions? Gloria Harris

Gloria Harris was born in Romford, Essex, in 1945. Her family moved to Mountnessing and it was here that Gloria's mum and sister ran a cafe and then the Post Office and general stores while her father worked at the Barking Power Station. Following secondary school education in Chelmsford and Ingatestone, Gloria worked for the Hoffman Manufacturing Company in the Sales Office. After her marriage and three children, she returned to fulltime study as a (very) mature student at Essex University, graduating with a joint BA Hons in History and Literature, and MA in Local and Regional History. She joined the Essex Record Office in 1995 and is still there.



(Photograph, Gloria Harris)

1. What is your favourite historical period?

My current interest is in the fourteenth century, one of great upheaval and turmoil as the result of, among other things, the Hundred Years' War, the Black Death and the, so called, Peasants Revolt.

2. Tell us what Essex means to you? Essex born and bred, I have always lived in the county and love its diverse landscape, particularly the marshes. They are uniquely mysterious and atmospheric, as though they know much that they keep to themselves.

3. What historical mystery would you most like to know? What happened to the old Great Sir Hughes house in Great Baddow when the present one was built. It is often said that it was demolished in the 1930s, brick by brick, shipped to America and reconstructed there but I haven't proved it yet.

4. My favourite history book is... Hilda Grieve's *The Sleepers and the Shadows*, her two-volume work on Chelmsford. It is a work to dip into and is packed full of information about the county town.

5. What is your favourite place in Essex?

Great Baddow, where I live. It is a vibrant, thriving place and I can be in the countryside within five minutes or I can walk to Chelmsford in twenty if I want an urban experience!

6. How do you relax? Walking in my locality, reading, researching and writing.

7. What are you researching at the moment? Sir Hugh de Badewe, a fourteenth century knight who lived in Great Baddow and played a significant part in the local affairs of Essex.

8. My earliest memory is... Sitting in the garden of our semi in Crow Lane, Romford making mud pies when I was about two.

9. What is your favourite song/piece of music and why? 'Sisters are doin' it for Themselves', by Aretha Franklin: because they can; because they want to; because many have little choice.

10. If you could travel back in time which event would you change? I would be a bit worried about changing anything. It would be like testing the chaos theory.

11. Which four people from the past would you invite to dinner? Mary Wollstonecraft, Clarissa Bramston (wife of John Bramston, vicar of Great Baddow from 1831-1840), Sir Hugh de Badewe and, my brother Rob, who died when he was nineteen and I was two. I should like to have known him.

12. What is your favourite food? Where do I start? Probably pancakes with lemon and sugar – so simple, so delicious.

13. The history book I am currently reading is... More dipping into than reading, but *The Reign of Edward III* by W. M. Ormrod.

14. What is your favourite quote from history?

'I must create my own system or be enslaved by another man's. My business is not to reason and compare: my business is to create'. William Blake.

15. Favourite historical film? *The Duchess* – about Georgiana Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire.

16. What is your favourite building in Essex? I'm not a religious person but I am very fond of St. Mary's, the parish church of Great Baddow. So much must have gone on, in and around it, that I will never know about.

17. What past event would you like to have seen? The bridging of the river Can between the manor of Moulsham and the Manor of Chelmsford, now the stone bridge, allowing travellers to pass through Chelmsford, on their way to or from London, instead of having to cross at Writtle. It put Chelmsford on the map.

18. How would you like to be remembered?

For my academic achievements as well as my culinary ones!

19. Who inspires you to read or write or research history? Neil Wiffen, who never gives up on me, members of the Local History Workshop – their help has been invaluable, and my younger son, Bon, who doggedly and persistently encourages and inspires me to keep going, from his home in L.A. over 3000 miles away in California.

20. Most memorable historical date?

1348 – the arrival of the the Black Death in England.



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