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he ESSEX JOURNAL is **CONTENTS** published twice a year under the management of an Editorial Board Editorial consisting of representatives of the Essex Archaeological and Historical Congress, the Friends of Historic Essex, News the Essex Record Office (on behalf of the Essex County Council) and the Hon. Editor. It is recognised that the statutory duties John Kay and the Fly-Shuttle: of the County Council preclude the ERO Colchester's most famous non-resident? from sharing in the financial commitments by Don Scott of the consortium. Chairman: Adrian Corder-Birch, clerk@siblehedinghampc.org.uk The Longs of Corringham: Hon. Editor: Neil Wiffen, MA, a nineteenth century farming family neilwiffen@hotmail.com Hon. Secretary: Maureen Scollan, PhD, by Beryl Dixon mjscollan@macace.net Hon. Treasurer: Geraldine Willden, MAAT, geraldine.willden@essexcc.gov.uk Industrial Housing in Essex The annual subscription of £10.00 should by Tony Crosby, Adam Garwood and Adrian Corder-Birch be sent to: The Hon. Treasurer, 11 Milligans Chase, Galleywood, The Genesis of Harlow New Town Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 8QD Subscribers who receive a faulty copy or who by Stan Newens do not receive a copy at all should contact: The EJ Distribution Manager, Intercity Print Financial PLC, **Obituaries** 35 St. Augustine Mews, Colchester, Essex, CO1 2PF, martin.stuchfield@intercitygroup.co.uk **Book Reviews** Notes to contributors Contributions are welcome and should be sent in a Word format to the Hon. Editor at the email listed EJ 20 Questions? above. General correspondence can either be emailed or posted to: 30 Main Road, Broomfield, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 7EF. He is more than happy to discuss any

> Cover illustrations: Background - Extract from MAP/OS/6/1/41 (Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office); John Kay 1704-80/81 (Reproduced by courtesy of the Science & Society Picture Library, Image No. 10419513); Tombstones to the Long family (B. Dixon); The Terrace, Hatfield Peverel (A. Corder-Birch); Dr Chris Thornton (N. Wiffen); Lord John Petre (Lord Petre).

Editorial

hen I wrote my last editorial, indeed it was my very first, the members of the Editorial Board were anticipating, with some trepidation, the launch of the new look Essex Journal at Ingatestone Hall (An account of the launch written by our treasurer Geraldine Willden appears on page 3). We hoped that by bringing the preparation and laying out of the Journal in-house we would make a substantial saving and thereby secure its future. Well, I am delighted to report that we have exceeded our targets as well as recruiting over 120 new subscribers with our special three for two offer. This fantastic news means that, along with articles in hand for our Autumn 2008 and Spring 2009 issues, we can look forward to the future with optimism. Another benefit of rationalising costs is that we are able to maintain the annual subscription at \pounds ,10, a level at which it has been for almost two decades. Gas, electricity, council tax and beer might all increase in price year-on-year-on-year but we at the Essex Journal will continue to provide good value for money!

It is a big relief to all of us that the hard work put in by so many has not been wasted, and that the help, support and encouragement so willingly supplied by so many of our friends can be repaid through the continuation of the *Essex Journal*. Obviously a very big thanks must go to Lord Petre for so very kindly hosting our successful launch party back in October last year, and also for kindly agreeing to the dubious honour of being our first 'proper' respondent to the 20 Questions feature on page 33.

As to the new look, I hope that, on the whole, it meets with approval. I said in my previous editorial

that nothing is cast in stone: we. the Editorial Board, will need to respond to well founded suggestions as well as evolving the presentation over time to maintain its appeal to as wide an audience as possible. If we



do not produce an interesting and attractive product that pays its way then there is no point continuing – the *Essex Journal* cannot, indeed should not, stagnate and thus decline. Most of the feedback received has been positive. Of course, there will always be differences of opinion and there will always be room for this, but on the whole we have had a 'thumbs up'.

This whole editorial enterprise is one very steep learning curve for me. The editing of articles is one thing but to also get my head round the computer system is another! You'll be glad to know that I'm feeling much more at home with it all now and hope to go from strength to strength. The arrival of my daughter Chloe in November hasn't aided my progress but sometimes, as historians, we must remember to live for today rather than yesterday.

Neil

Members of the Editorial Board at the launch of the new look *Essex Journal* on 26th October at Ingatestone Hall. Left to right: Martin Stuchfield, Stan Newens, Geraldine Willden, Adrian Corder-Birch (seated), Neil Wiffen and Maureen Scollan. (This and two following pictures courtesy of Ian Mason).



News

Launch of Essex Journal

E ighteen months of hard work culminated in a very enjoyable evening at Ingatestone Hall on 26th October 2007 when the new look *Essex Journal* was launched in the presence of over 60 people; these included County Council officials and representatives from some of the many historical societies in the county. The new style *Journal* is now produced by desk top publishing under the editorship of Neil Wiffen, and an Editorial Board comprising representatives from the Friends of Historic Essex, the Essex Historical and Archaeological Congress and the Essex Record Office. Thanks to the kindness of Lord Petre the formal business of the evening took place in the Stone Hall on the ground floor of Ingatestone Hall.

Adrian Corder-Birch, Chairman of the Editorial Board, introduced the evening which began with a masterly survey of the current state of Essex history by Dr Chris Thornton, County Editor of the Victoria County History of Essex. Presentations were then made by Lord Petre to Mrs Jean Beale and her daughters, Stephanie and Harriet, (pictured below) in memory of our late editor, Michael Beale and to Mrs Marie Wolfe who retired as secretary of the Editorial Board after many year devoted service (pictured above). The final amusing speech was given by Neil Wiffen, the new editor, who described some of the events which had led up to the evening,



including his steep learning curve to get to grips with the desk top publishing programme, writing his first book review and his plans for the future. Afterwards, everyone adjourned to the adjacent rooms where refreshments were set out. Lots of good networking was carried out and friendships were made or renewed.

Copies of the *Essex Journal* were on sale at the launch, together with a special three issues for the price of two offer. Many present took advantage and thus far over 120 new subscriptions have been received. The future viability of this exciting new look publication now rests on your continued support.

Geraldine Willden



Can You Help?

he recent success following the launch of the new look *Essex Journal* has meant that we have attracted many new subscribers. As we are planning to continue to build on this wonderful start by recruiting more subscribers we will need some more help.

The Editorial Board would like, therefore, to recruit a membership officer to ensure that our

subscribers continue to receive a prompt and efficient service.

If you are computer literate, willing to spend a few hours a month on *Essex Journal* business and are able to attend two or three meetings in Chelmsford each year then please contact Adrian Corder-Birch at:

clerk@siblehedinghampc.org.uk.

News

Victoria County History Update

he Victoria County History (VCH) is in the news again and about to enter a new chapter in its long and eventful history, so *Essex Journal* asked its County Editor a few searching questions...

Can you remind us about the purpose of the project? Nationally, the VCH seeks to publish a complete history of England through professionally produced authoritative accounts of parishes and local communities based on research in original sources. Each county has a set of volumes providing essential guidance for a wide range of people interested in local history. That's the short answer. For more information please visit our website: <u>www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/Essex</u>

And how is it financed and

administered? Locally, our core funding comes from an annual grant from Essex County Council. These funds are supplemented by grants provided by the VCH Essex Appeal Fund. The costs of publication are met centrally by the Institute of Historical Research, University of London.

So what is happening to the VCH and its staff? For the past eight years the host institution for the project has been the University of Essex, but it has now withdrawn, and from 1st June 2008 the project has been administered under a new rolling three-year contract between Essex County Council and the Institute of Historical Research, University of London. The part-time County Editor and Assistant Editor have now transfered from the University of Essex to the Institute of Historical Research.

Where will be VCH be based? Office accommodation is being provided by Essex County Council at the Essex Record Office in Chelmsford.

How can we contact VCH Essex in future? Our new address is: The Victoria County History of Essex, Essex Record Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford, CM2 6YT. Tel: 01245 244680 e-mail: christopher.thornton@sas.ac.uk herbert.eiden@sas.ac.uk

Does all this mean the VCH staff will no longer teach Local History?

On the contrary, we're looking forward to collaborating with ECC Arts and Heritage on new educational initiatives. As members of staff of the new Centre for Local History at the Institute of Historical Research we will be able to continue to supervise higher degrees (MPhil, PhD) and anyone interested in studying for a research degree is welcome to contact us for an informal chat.

So as far as you are concerned the subject can still thrive? Some staff at Essex University believe that people aren't interested in taking degrees or other courses in Local and



Dr Herbert Eiden (left) and Dr Chris Thornton (right).

Regional History any more, but I'm glad to say that their view isn't universally held there. Poor recruitment seems more likely to be a reflection of the lack of support to attract students and build up activity and a reputation. A great many people do wish to take their interests in the subject further under professional guidance.

What are the VCH's current research and publication plans? We have two volumes in hand, Volume XI (covering the NE Essex seaside resorts: Clacton-on-Sea, Walton-on-the-Naze, Frinton-on-Sea, Holland-on-Sea, Jaywick, etc.) and Volume XII (the same area up to the 19th century, plus some neighbouring parishes such as St. Osyth). Although the volumes have been much delayed the material is accumulating and the development of the website gives us the opportunity to place our texts in the public domain at an earlier stage.

Can the VCH use volunteer or specialist help? As the core staffing has been reduced, we already depend on volunteers and some contracted specialists for a great deal of support. There are several volunteer contributors to volume XI and the section on the built environment has been prepared by Dr James Bettley. Additionally, the dedicated volunteers of the Clacton VCH Group have been working on the history of that resort during WW2 for many years. We are also exploring the use of further volunteers and local groups to initiate work in parts of the county hitherto untouched by the VCH. The key to this will be having enough time to construct projects likely to attract further external funding.

What else is on the horizon? There are several other projects running which in time will support the main VCH publications or produce other outputs themselves. The Clacton VCH Group has continued to expand its research, recently covering the WW2 coast defences of Clacton and this will lead to further displays and publications. The Essex VCH is also liaising with staff at Roehampton University over the production of a scholarly edition of the 1671 Hearth Tax for Essex.

News

Can you tell us more about the VCH Essex Appeal Fund? This registered charity was established in the 1990s when funding from local government sources for the VCH began to decline. As this trend has continued, so the Appeal grants have become more important in ensuring the VCH can continue. The Appeal raises money from other charities, societies and trusts as well as many individual supporters. All donors become members of the Appeal with the right to attend and vote at the AGM. The Appeal Fund publishes a newsletter twice a year and holds an annual lecture at the AGM in November. This year it will be given by Carenza Lewis of Cambridge University and formerly of 'Time Team' so we are hoping for a good audience!

What is VCH Essex Appeal Money used

for? The VCH Essex Appeal monies are used to support the work of the researchers and editors, essentially by enabling them to work longer hours on the project through additional part-time contracts.

The Appeal also helps to support other costs of the project, such as IT equipment, and it maintains an essential reference library for the editors. Thus without the Appeal's additional funding the project would be much more difficult to finance. Donations to support the work of the VCH can be sent to:

Mrs Patricia Herrmann, Secretary and Treasurer, West Bowers Hall, Woodham Walter, Maldon, Essex, CM9 6RZ. email: <u>patriciaherrmann@talk21.com</u>.

How have the VCH staff stayed so sane? Well that's a leading question! We both have busy family lives which help to keep you in the real world, and we both enjoy playing football. I really enjoy fossil-hunting, and have been successful this year finding part of an ichthyosaur jawbone at Lyme Regis. At about 200 million years old it puts all our VCH troubles into perspective...

Chris Thornton, County Editor, VCH Essex.

Essex Congress Symposium

his event is the most popular on the Essex Congress calendar and 2008 was no exception. It is always held at Christchurch, Chelmsford on alternate years and was started experimentally in 1987 by Andrew Phillips, Clayton Lewis and Bob Henrys. One hundred and sixty delegates sat down while County Councillor Gerry Knight chaired the meeting. John Smith gave the first talk on Smallpox in Essex based on his book The Speckled Monster, harrowing in parts but a revelation. Next followed a talk by Richard Shackle who commenced with the good news that Essex County Council had acquired the historic Cressing Temple barns and followed with an account of a group of buildings at Earls Colne which were timber framed, dating from 1380. After coffee Andrew Phillips gave a stimulating talk on the computer analysis of poll-books. I have never forgotten his visual aids of the time - a computer keyboard and VDU and a print-out several metres long, draped over a ladder and much of the platform! After lunch Past President John Boyes then commenced with his slides of Essex from the air and after tea we were divided into six groups to discuss further topics. Socially and academically a most rewarding occasion.

Moving on to 2008, our 11th Symposium was held on Saturday, 29th March and was titled 'Traders, Raiders and Invaders'. The day commenced with an inspiring talk by Dr Jennifer Ward on 'Pirates, Invaders and Settlers; Essex before 1100'. Jennifer is a good friend to Essex Congress who can be absolutely relied upon to stimulate our thoughts and set the standard for the day, which she did, by discussing the impacts on Essex by the successive 'invasions' of the Romans, Saxon, Vikings and Normans. After coffee, an entirely different and up-to-date talk by Fred Nash, 'World War Two Defences in Essex'. He is an expert on twentieth century defence sites (pillboxes, anti-tank obstacles) that were built throughout Essex during the war. Who can ever, now, walk past a pillbox without recalling his invigorating talk and slides?

After an excellent lunch efficiently organised by Wendy Hibbitt, the afternoon session commenced with a talk by Georgina Green who entertained us with a full account of 'The Trading Companies; Essex connections'. Georgina discussed the extent to which London merchants bought up land and estates in Essex once they had made their fortunes. After a cup of tea the day finished in sparkling form with a talk by Jonathan Catton - 'It Works Both Wavs; Essex strikes back'. Here we were treated to talk about the industries that were situated along the Thames that supported the war effort as well as the docks that helped to launch the troops that took part in D-Day. I do wish though, that he had brought his Second World War re-enactment group to finish the day - maybe next time?

The Essex Congress Local History Symposium has flourished for over 20 years and we must ensure it continues; I know that the Congress team are already considering a programme for 2010 as you, the readers, will understand a lot of planning is required. I close by thanking all organisers, past and present, for their hard work which has given so much pleasure.

Dorothy Lockwood

Colchester's most famous non-resident?

'n the past, Essex and East Anglia had a long association with woollen cloth production. Indeed many towns, villages and hamlets were completely dependent upon it as a source of employment and trade, although little remains to remind us of these former times except the many fine churches that were re-built with the profits of the cloth trade. But changes in fashions and improvements in technology brought about an almost total collapse in local cloth production. One invention that hastened the end of traditionally produced cloth was the fly-shuttle designed by John Kay (Plates 1&2), who has long been supposed to have had an association with Colchester, a claim that has been repeated in a major modern academic history of the town.1 This article will examine biographical and other original sources to establish whether John Kay and his famous invention really did have Essex connections, or if the propagation of this 'fact' has been the product of the continued recycling of a mistaken statement in earlier printed material.

hidden in a wool sheet and escaped

Until the beginning of the eighteenth century the cloth trade was distributed widely across Britain. It mainly produced heavy woollen cloth woven on manually operated looms, a technology which had hardly changed in five

by Don Scott

thousand years. The widespread introduction of cotton from America and India in the eighteenth century, combined with innovations and inventions of the industrial revolution, and a new desire for lighter textiles, completely changed cloth production and led to an expansion in its production. Manufacture was concentrated in factories, or mills, in the midlands and northern areas of Britain where sources of water, and later steam, power were available. These were all factors in the decline of the once thriving woollen trade of Essex and East Anglia.²

It is arguable that the first significant invention in the mechanization of the cloth trade was the flying shuttle, or fly-shuttle, designed by John Kay. The fly-shuttle was a wheeled shuttle travelling upon a wooden track inserted between the warp threads on the loom. It was operated by a mechanism of wooden hammers and cords controlled by the weaver using one hand only to send it from one side of the cloth to the other as the weaving proceeded. It enabled the weaver to weave wider cloth where previously he was limited by the stretch of his arms as he threw his shuttle from side to side, unless two persons were used to operate a single loom, and left him a free hand for other operations. The introduction of the fly-shuttle thus doubled the output of a

single weaver and also doubled the requirement for the necessary thread. Forty years later this led to the invention of the spinning jenny with frequent thread famines.

The earliest reference found so far to an Essex connection for John Kay is in the 1848 edition of White's Directory of Essex; 'Mr. Robt. Kay died in 1728 leaving his white bay concern at Coggeshall to his son John who invented the fly-shuttle in 1738.'3 This is incorrect on two counts as the fly-shuttle was patented by Kay in 1733,4 whilst John's father Robert was a yeoman farmer in Bury, Lancashire who died in 1704.5 Bennet Woodcroft, writing in 1863, also refers to Kay being involved in a concern in Colchester,6 whilst the Victoria County History of Essex (VCH) in 1994 stated that the fly-shuttle, 'was invented by John Kay in 1738 when he lived in Colchester'.7 Modern biographical publications on Kay himself, however, make no mention of any association with Colchester.

The entry for Kay in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (ODNB)⁸ states that he was born in 1704 near Bury, Lancashire, the fifth son of a prosperous farmer who died three months before John's birth. He left school at 14 to be apprenticed to a maker of reeds, devices which keep the threads of the warp separate and beat up the weft in cloth to give it greater 'body', but left

John Kay and the Fly-Shuttle

after a month believing he had learned all he could about the art. Kay became an independent inventor and maker of weaving devices, married young and had 12 children. He patented several devices from 1730 onwards, the best known, then described as a 'wheel-shuttle', in 1733. Trying to exploit his patent during its limited life (only 14 in those days) by licensing permission to use

it. However he set his prices too high and became involved in expensive litigation for breach of his patent. At this time entrepreneurs were setting up small factories or mills for cloth manufacture in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and were glad to use the new shuttle although unwilling to pay fees to Kay for doing so. His design was copied and license fees were not paid. Kay went to law to recover his dues but the manufacturers combined to form 'The Shuttle Club' which employed lawyers to fight the cases he brought and Kay was ruined by his legal costs. It has been suggested that his house in Bury was invaded by a mob in 1753 and everything in it destroyed.9 With the help of two friends he was hidden in a woolsheet and escaped.¹⁰ The ODNB discounts such stories.

In addition to inventions related to weaving Kay also patented a windmill for raising water from mine shafts; he also used waterpower to operate looms. In 1747 he emigrated to France partly, at least, because of his financial difficulties. The French weaving trade rivaled Britain's and Kay sought help from the French government in

Plate 1. John Kay, 1704-80/81 (Reproduced by courtesy of the Science & Society Picture Library, Image No. 10222478).

supporting his invention. He was awarded a pension by the King of France, although this was not always paid. Kay is thought to have returned to Britain several times in the 1750s and 1760s to renew his efforts at getting

financial recognition for his inventions. However he returned to France and died there around 1780, although the exact date and place of death is unknown. At least two of Kay's five sons followed his trade and the elder, Robert, made improvements to the fly-shuttle with a 'drop box' which held two or more shuttles: each was loaded with a different colour thread to allow striped or chequered patterns to be woven. Kay is seen as an inventor of talent though sadly lacking in business acumen. His fly-shuttle was never modified after the 1760s but remained in use into the twentieth century. The entry in the **ODNB** warns that many early biographies of Kay are inaccurate and denies that his family owned a woollen 'factory' in Colchester.11 Mantoux, writing in French in the 1920s, describes Kay as 'half weaver, half mechanic' and mentions that he first worked for a Colchester clothier and about 1730 was making combs for looms.¹² He states that 'John Kay could not avoid the complaint common against all inventors, for the Colchester weavers accused him of 'trying to deprive them of their daily bread". It seems certain that Mantoux's source was Woodcroft's

book, which was published in 1863. Arthur Brown, a careful researcher based in Colchester for many years in the

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ohn Kay and the Fly-Shuttle

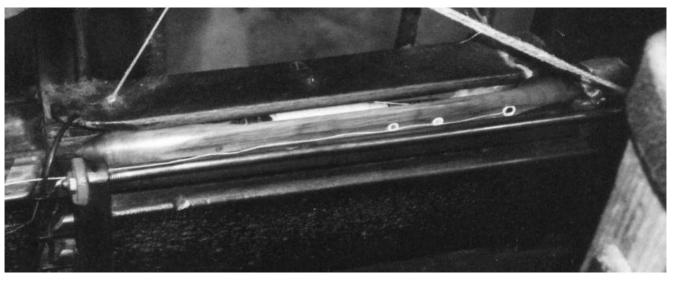


Plate 2. A fly-shuttle gear fitted to a loom at Quarry Bank Mill in Styal, Cheshire. (Author's photograph by permission of the National Trust).

twentieth century, accepts that Kay had local connections but quotes no sources for this belief.13

Eighteenth century Colchester weavers were not factory or mill workers but wove cloth in their own homes mainly for piece rates. Since the fly-shuttle could increase their output there does not appear to be good reason, apart from the cost of installing or modifying looms, why they should object to Kay's invention as might have happened in the northern districts. Brown states that 'the weavers' resistance to machinery and their power to prevent its introduction have been exaggerated'14 although White asserts that 'had the operatives tolerated the fly-shuttle when first introduced here by its inventor, Colchester might still have enjoyed a large share of the staple manufacture of Great Britain.'15 The history of John Kay in the cloth industry is complicated further by the existence of at least one

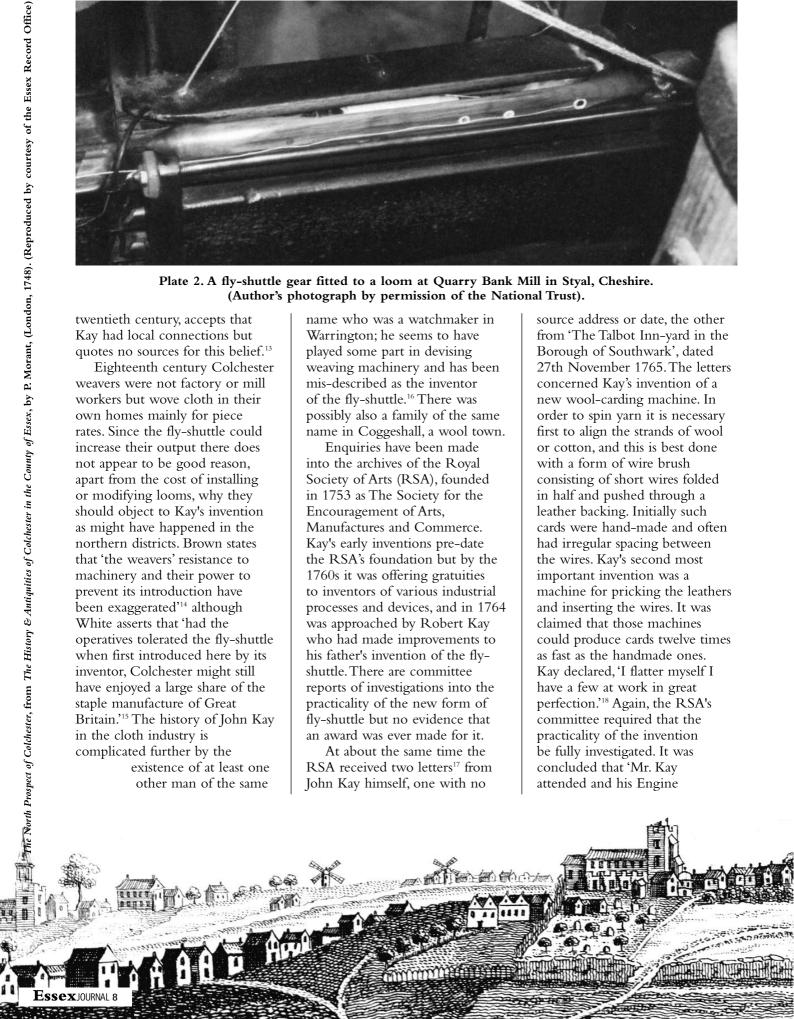
other man of the same

name who was a watchmaker in Warrington; he seems to have played some part in devising weaving machinery and has been mis-described as the inventor of the fly-shuttle.16 There was possibly also a family of the same name in Coggeshall, a wool town.

Enquiries have been made into the archives of the Royal Society of Arts (RSA), founded in 1753 as The Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce. Kay's early inventions pre-date the RSA's foundation but by the 1760s it was offering gratuities to inventors of various industrial processes and devices, and in 1764 was approached by Robert Kay who had made improvements to his father's invention of the flyshuttle. There are committee reports of investigations into the practicality of the new form of fly-shuttle but no evidence that an award was ever made for it.

At about the same time the RSA received two letters17 from John Kay himself, one with no

source address or date, the other from 'The Talbot Inn-yard in the Borough of Southwark', dated 27th November 1765. The letters concerned Kay's invention of a new wool-carding machine. In order to spin varn it is necessary first to align the strands of wool or cotton, and this is best done with a form of wire brush consisting of short wires folded in half and pushed through a leather backing. Initially such cards were hand-made and often had irregular spacing between the wires. Kay's second most important invention was a machine for pricking the leathers and inserting the wires. It was claimed that those machines could produce cards twelve times as fast as the handmade ones. Kay declared, 'I flatter myself I have a few at work in great perfection.'18 Again, the RSA's committee required that the practicality of the invention be fully investigated. It was concluded that 'Mr. Kay attended and his Engine



for cutting, doubling and crooking cardmaker's wire was produced and worked.'19 Kay was asked to produce six further cards for testing and was advanced two guineas for doing so. The second of Kay's letters contains references to his earlier ill-treatment by the 'wool-factres' [sic]²⁰ as a reason for his failure to patent subsequent inventions. Unfortunately there is no mention of further tests, deliberations or rewards in the RSA records so this seems to be the last record of John Kay's appearance in Britain and the only known manuscript documents signed by him.²¹ According to the ODNB Kay did have some successes and prosperity in France in the last decade of his life but at the time he died, France and Britain were at war.22

So, it seems clear that the chronology of John Kay's life is fairly well documented and there is no real direct evidence for an Essex connection. Quite where White found the reference that placed Kay in Essex is unknown. Indeed what is particularly intriguing is the absence of local records and therefore of the source of the references to Kay working in Colchester or Coggeshall. It appears, simply enough, that subsequent historians have just repeated statements made in 1848 without checking their facts fully – a salutary lesson for all who undertake historical research!

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- Patent no 542, 'Machine for opening and dressing wool, shuttle for weaving braidcloths, broadbaize, sailcloths and any other cloths, woollen or linen, granted to John Kay of Bolton in our County of Lancashire', 26/05/1733. Copy in British Library. Thepatent document gives little detail and no diagram of the device in question.
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- 7. Cooper, p.136.
- 8. Farnie.
- 9. For instance Woodcroft, p.3.
- P. Mantoux, *The Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth Century*, (London, 1928), p.206.
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- 12. Mantoux, p.206.
- 13. A.F.J. Brown, *Essex at Work*, 1700-1815, (Chelmsford, 1969), pp.23-24.
- 14. Ibid, p.24.
- 15. White, p.70.
- 16. Farnie.

- 17. H.T. Wood, 'The inventions of John Kay', *Journal of the Royal Society of Arts*, 60, (1911-12), pp.75, 78-79. Wood was at this time Secretary of the RSA, he had previously been a young colleague of Bennet Woodcroft at the Patent Office.
- 18. Wood, p.80.
- 19. Ibid. pp.80-81.
- 20. Ibid. p.82.
- 21. The manuscript letters are pre-served in the archives of the Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, where the present author has been privileged to see them.
 22 Earnia
- 22. Farnie.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are due to the staff of the British Library and to Ms Claire Batley of the RSA Archive Department, both of which I have visited in the course of writing this article. Also to the National Trust at Quarry Bank Mill, Styal, who permitted me to photograph a Kay Shuttle in action, and also to my friend and former colleague Mr Andrew Phillips, Colchester's leading local historian, who first set me on this quest and fully accepts the conclusion that John Kay is unlikely to have worked in Colchester in the 1730s.

The Author

Don Scott spent most of his career teaching Physics at the Colchester Institute before retiring as an Assistant Director in 1986. In retirement he has followed up lifetime interests in the history of his native Colchester and in industrial archaeology and is a Blue Badge Guide. He is a Fellow (and former Regional Secretary) of the Royal Society of Arts.



a nineteenth century farming family

hose engaged in agriculture during the nineteenth century experienced many extremes, from the boom years of the wars with France at the beginning to the bust years of the depression at the end. With the luxury of hindsight we are able to look back and chart how our ancestors fared, but it is important to remember that their life choices were made when they were unaware of what was to come next. Some, through luck, good judgment or hard work were able to prosper and continue farming, while others failed. One such family that did survive and continued to farm throughout the century was the Long family of Corringham. This article will chronicle their lives and the times in which they lived and examine why they prospered.

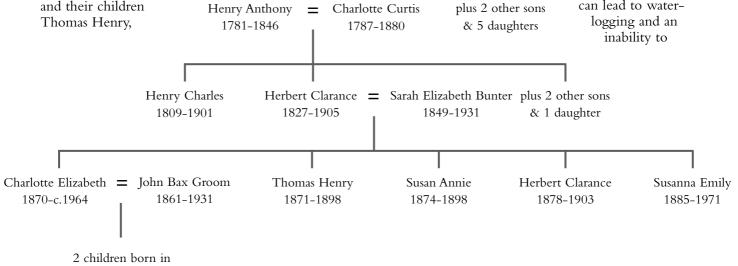
Just inside St Mary's church in Corringham is an impressive stained glass window dedicated by Sarah Elizabeth Long to her husband Herbert Clarance, her parents Thomas and Elizabeth Bunter and his parents Henry Anthony and Charlotte Long. Just outside the church door lies a group of five solid nineteenth century tombstones (Plate 1): one to Herbert, Sarah and their children He Thomas Henry,

by Beryl Dixon

Sarah Annie, Herbert Clarance and Susanna Emily;1 two to Charlotte² and her sons Henry Charles, Wellington Surridge and George John; one to Rosetta Baxter, her daughter, and her family, and one to Sarah's parents. (Fig. 1) These Longs were the children and grandchildren of Charles Long of Systod Farm in the parish of Writtle. He first appears in the records of Corringham and Fobbing in 1788,³ his wife Elizabeth having recently inherited about 30 acres in the two parishes from her step-father William Tower.4 The Longs then continue to appear throughout the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth century as farmers and principal landowners in Fobbing and Corringham until 1933 and finally just in Fobbing until 1937.5 They began as yeoman farmers and were described by Dr E.J.T. Collins as 'rare creatures indeed' in Thurrock. This was because 'of the twenty five tenants listed

in the Orsett Rental in 1870 only seven...were still on the roll in 1886 and only Wordley [Lorkins, Orsett], Long [Corringham Hall], and Cumbers [Doddinghurst] saw in the new century.⁶ Given the vicissitudes of nineteenth century farming, the Longs' survival was no mean achievement.

The lands that formed the core of their holdings throughout the nineteenth century are made up of three main soil types: London clay, light soil on a bed of gravel and alluvial marsh. The light soil lies between the alluvial marshland and the clay, with the present day Fobbing Road leading into Fobbing High road marking the approximate boundary between the light soil and the clay.7 The Corringham and Fobbing tithe maps and awards reveal that the Longs' land was 59% arable to 41% pasture and meadow, including drained marshland protected by a wall. Most of the arable land was clay and the rest the lighter valley gravel. Clay soils can be very productive in the right conditions, as they do not dry out as quickly as lighter gravelly lands. However, being a heavier soil they do require extra preparation before planting; too much rain at the wrong time can lead to waterlogging and an inability to



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Elizabeth Skinner

d.1812

Charles Long

d.1810

Calcutta

Fig. 1. The Longs of Corringham; a simplified family tree

plough. The lighter soils, on the other hand, are easier and quicker to work, but have less 'body' and can dry out very quickly in dry weather leading to smaller yields. Such a variety of soil types in the Long family's lands helped them to withstand the effects of bad weather or economic downturns.

These were a time of slump

Charles Long's tenure in Corringham and Fobbing, 1788-1812, coincided with a period of boom in agriculture. Grain prices rocketed because of increasing demands from an expanding London, a series of poor harvests and the disruption to trade caused by the wars with France. In 1792 the average price of wheat was 43s a quarter; in 1812 it had risen to 126s.8 It was Charles' second son, Henry Anthony, who took over from him in Corringham and Fobbing; his eldest son, Charles, inherited Systod in Writtle, the original family home.9 After his parents' death Henry bought out his siblings' share of the Corringham and Fobbing lands.¹⁰ He now farmed parts of Byron's, Brazier's Hall, Roger's Croft, Prowdes, Knights, Sprotts and Brooke's Croft. To do this he used part of an advance of $\pounds, 6,000$ that his local heiress wife, Charlotte Curtis (a minor), received in 1808 specifically to buy land in these parishes. In 1820 Charlotte inherited land and property in West Thurrock, Stanford-Le-Hope and Corringham, including parts of Roger's Croft, Sprotts, Brook Croft, Prowdes and Knights which complemented Henry's holdings and she immediately sold the Fox and Goose in West Thurrock for $f_{1,440.10s}$. When her mother died in 1822 Charlotte and her heirs received the income on \pounds ,4,772.95s invested in 3% stock.¹¹

These years were a time of slump when bumper harvests and growing imports of Irish corn led to a glut. In 1813 the price of wheat dropped from 123s.10d a quarter to 67s.10d.12 Though thousands of farmers quit in this period Henry prospered, partly because during the thirty years or so of low prices he had been on the receiving end of periodic boosts of land and income that came from his judicious marriage to Charlotte. He was able to mortgage in 1829, 1841 and 1842, not to keep solvent but to acquire more land when others were leaving and his largest purchase was Reedham's Farm, Fobbing. By 1846 Henry farmed some 1,415 acres including land in parishes from Pitsea to Barking and thus through sheer size kept his enterprises in profit.¹³ Over 60% of his lands were freehold or copyhold which carried only nominal dues to the Lord of the Manor. For example as a freehold tenant of Bush House, 76 acres, he paid \pounds 1.4s.11d a year and as a copyholder of Prowdes tenement with nine acres and Knight's Croft with four acres, 8s.9d and 2s a year respectively.¹⁴ Henry leased his residence, Corringham Hall (Plate 2), from the Orsett Estate which was more economical than building his own lavish farmhouse. When Henry died in 1846 the inventory which accompanied his will shows that his family lived comfortably and modestly with just two residential servants. Leaving enough to discharge his debts of £15,008.17s.6d, he still left an estate valued in excess of £30,000. Charlotte received the leasehold on Corringham Hall and an annuity of f_{400} charged on the sons' estates.

The rest of Henry's estate was divided between his four sons and married daughter Rosetta who received an equivalent cash sum.¹⁵ Charlotte and her sons continued to live at and work from Corringham Hall. They inherited a thriving concern just as the depression was lifting. Continued population growth, especially in towns, in the 1850s led to an increased demand for agricultural produce. A new style of cultivation known as

'High Farming' relied on inputs of artificial fertilizers, expensive land drainage where needed and the employment of many agricultural labourers. Although this led to higher costs, reduced wages, the New Poor Law of 1834 and tithe commutation following the 1836 Act lowered other expenses. Agricultural product prices were high enough to make even the less suitable land worth cultivating. This 'Golden Age' lasted for approximately thirty years until the advent of cheaper imported produce made prices drop by an average of 49% in less than twenty years. As much as 80% of wheat was imported but some poor domestic harvests, in 1879 for example, meant the grain yield halved, and there was sometimes hardly anthing to sell even at low prices.¹⁶ This agricultural depression lasted between, approximately, 1875-1905 during which time many farmers and agricultural workers quit the land. Not the Long family however.



Plate 1. Three tombstones to the Long family, St. Mary's Church, Corringham (Author's photograph).

Once more the family was lucky for inheritance provided more freehold ownership, acreage and cash injections. The eldest son, Henry Charles, inherited intestate his brother Wellington Surridge's estate in 1872. He then added Suttons and Whitehouse farms in North and South Benfleet and converted Spriven's Hall, now Probus, to freehold. Henry Charles then shared in 1877 his brother George's and in

The Longs of Corringham



Plate 2. Corringham Hall today. (Author's photograph by permission of the present owner).

1880 his mother Charlotte's estates with his youngest brother Herbert, their sister Rosetta again receiving equivalent cash sums.17 However, although the Orsett estate had increased its rents only 10-15% between 1820 and the 1870s, many tenants struggled to pay them.18 By 1890 88% of tenants on the Rent Roll in 1870 had quit.19 Henry is recorded in the Driver Report as the second highest rent payer on the estate at $f_{,655}$ a year.²⁰ He had cash flow problems but they went a long way back, before he had even taken over Corringham Hall from his mother in 1871. He had borrowed \neq ,1,500 from his brother-in-law, Thomas Baxter, as early as 1853 and \pounds ,2,000 from his brother George in 1866. By George's death in 1877, the sum was \neq ,5,000 but it was written off in the latter's will. Far from using the money to purchase more land, he even sold some. In 1881 he was farming 900 acres, 50 fewer than in 1871 even though he had inherited nearly 300 acres from his brothers.

One perennial expense was maintaining the sluice gates and repairing the sea wall. Henry once received a threat of a fine if he did not repair his share of the sea wall at Oil Mill Farm where a 'considerable slip' was in danger of allowing the Levels to flood. To help resolve this he wrote two letters in 1882 to W.S. Tomlin, a London corn trader, requesting loans of $\pounds 200$ to pay his Heavy Level Rate; they have an air of desperation about them.²¹ In 1894 Henry sold two small farms, Suttons and Whitehouse, which may well have been caused by continuing cash flow problems. His brother Herbert also rented land but increased his acreage, as recorded in census returns, from 330 acres in 1861 to 600 acres in 1871 and 1,000 acres in 1881.

Both Henry and Herbert were probably able to benefit from their heavy expensive clay lands because of the high price wheat was fetching during the 1850s and 1860s. They could still have made a living off their easier to work lighter lands during the depression years by cutting costs and moving away from 'High Farming' practices. Many farmers were forced to switch to different products to survive. In Thurrock, Mr Spitty of Stanford-le-Hope grew strawberries and Mr Ridgewell of Orsett small vegetables and fruit. Many of the Scottish farmers taking over failed tenancies turned to dairying.²² However no evidence has been found of the Longs radically changing their formula. This would have been in fact a reasonable approach for, as Hunt and Pam have pointed out, as others diversified, cereal production including wheat on medium soils and boulder clay, especially if combined with 'Low Farming', i.e. low cost, remained viable and rational.23

After all soft fruit, vegetables and milk, had a finite demand and Collins emphasises the problem that periodic gluts of vegetables and milk posed for farmers.24 At face value, Herbert, especially, would have been right to stick with corn. The Driver Report commissioned in 1886 by the new Orsett Hall owner, Thomas Whitmore, to assess his estate's financial situation described Old Hall, Herbert's main farm, as 'of sound character for corn growing'.²⁵ Herbert Long also appears to have been using labour more efficiently than his brother Henry. In 1881 he employed one man for every 38.5 acres against Henry's one man for every 27 acres, but despite having fewer workers, Old Hall was still described in the Driver Report as 'clean and well farmed by a very old tenant of a rare type'. Both Longs lived in leased manor houses: Henry at Corringham Hall, Herbert, who had married aged 41, at Old Hall. They appear to have led modest, respectable lives. Henry, in 1881, employed only a cook and a housemaid, Herbert a cook, nursemaid and a governess, but with five children to educate this was hardly an extravagance.

The grand old farmer of south east Essex

Henry died in 1901 and his obituary refers to him as 'The grand old farmer of South East Essex...his employees always spoke of him as being kind and considerate...an employer who seldom found an occasion to dismiss any of them' and as still 'visiting the London Corn Market to the last'.²⁶ Herbert inherited Henry's depleted but still solvent estate in 1901 but he did not continue farming Corringham Hall.27 In 1905 he put his Fobbing property into a trust fund for his surviving children, Charlotte and Susanna,²⁸ and died that year still leaving $\pounds 20,000^{29}$ His obituary

The Longs of Corringham

referred to him as 'the principal representative of an old and respected family', and remembered for his close association with the work of Corringham Parish Church and for his gifts to Corringham and Horndon-on-the-Hill churches.³⁰ Herbert's sons had pre-deceased him; Thomas died in Los Angeles in 1898, and Herbert in 1903. In 1910 Charlotte and Susanna were admitted as tenants in common at the same rents as their grandfather Henry Anthony had paid but they did not continue to farm.³¹ Their mother Sarah, lived on at Old Hall and died in 1931, but by 1937 widowed Charlotte and her unmarried sister had sold up.32 Curiously, despite the Longs' life long association neither of them featured in the memoirs of Thurrock historian E.H. Rowley (1869-1959) except for 'The Longs of Corringham were farmers and landowners.'33

Ironically it seems that it was a lack of heirs who were willing to continue in agriculture that ended the Long farming dynasty in the twentieth century rather than the economic conditions to which so many of their contemporaries had succumbed. It was ironic as this very lack of heirs in the mid-nineteenth century had prevented their lands from being split up. Herbert had handed on, in 1905, a still prosperous concern just as farming was entering another boom period but with the death of his sons and his daughters inability to continue farming meant there was no one to carry on. Their great grandmother Elizabeth's modest inheritance, 150 years previously, which had provided the family's initial foothold in Fobbing and Corringham was supplemented by a further judicious marriage, Henry Anthony's, which brought more land, property and cash to the Longs. The bachelorhood of three of his four sons ensured that the lands remained in one branch of the family whilst the sheer size

and soil diversity of the resulting holdings, many of them freehold, along with their modest lifestyles, and one suspects their hard work, had kept them solvent throughout agriculture's difficult times. The Longs had made some very perceptive life choices and wise decisions, which allowed them to continue farming only to fail when willing and able heirs ran out.

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Acknowledgements

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The Author

Beryl Dixon moved to Essex to live and work after gaining a BA (Hons) Degree in History at Royal Holloway College, University of London in 1962, but it was not until her retirement that she was able to pursue her interest in local history. She took a Certificate in Local History with Essex University and this article was part of her final submission.

by

Tony Crosby, Adam Garwood and Adrian Corder-Birch

ssex County Council's Historic Environment Branch is continuing its commitment to survey modern/industrial sites and monuments (as reported in the Spring 2000 and Autumn 2001 editions of this Journal¹) and in 2006 completed its seventeenth such survey.² Following on from specific industrial themes such as maltings, iron foundries, the textile industry and breweries, this latest survey concentrated on part of the social structure that supported industry - the housing provided by industrialists and industrial companies to attract and retain a workforce. The survey focused on purpose-built workers' housing, but did not include houses in which domestic out-work took place, such as weavers' cottages, farm or estate workers' housing or housing associated with transport built to accommodate staff at their place of work, e.g. station-masters'

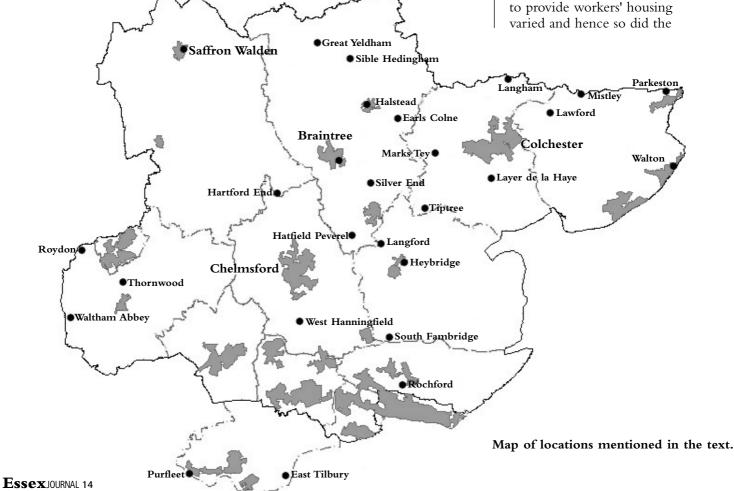
houses, lock-keepers' cottages.

The purpose of this, and all the surveys, was to identify, quantify and assess the historic and architectural significance of the surviving sites and structures. The information gathered is used to enhance the Historic Environment Record by providing detailed records of each site and structure, a comparative assessment of their significance and prioritised recommendations for their future management and statutory protection. When a site or structure becomes the subject of development proposals, an informed response can, therefore, be made. Through such management strategy and statutory protection, landscapes and structures of significance, and hence the historic and architectural character of the County, can be protected for present and future generations to understand and appreciate.

National Context

The Industrial Revolution was the era of the development of large-scale extraction and processing of minerals, production of consumer goods and transportation of raw materials and finished products. This expansion of industrial activity required more labour, but the emerging industrial areas did not necessarily have a sufficient workforce locally to support them. Thus, from the late eighteenth century onwards, housing was required to attract and retain the workforce.

Although some of the required new housing was built by speculative builders for rent or sale and in the twentieth century by Local Authorities (e.g. London County Council built the Becontree Estate in Dagenham which housed many workers for the Ford car plant in Dagenham), the industrialists took some responsibility for this themselves. The motivation for industrialists to provide workers' housing varied and hence so did the



quality of the houses built. Some just built cheap accommodation without basic amenities in order to meet the need in the cheapest way possible: back-to-back cottages with no gardens, shared water supply and external sanitary facilities all close to the smoking factory chimneys are well known and accurate images of the age. Others provided better facilities born out of a more paternalistic approach to the workforce, wanting to ensure full control of all aspects of their workers' lives. Yet others had a genuine concern for the welfare of their workforce and recognised that a healthy and content workforce was a loyal and productive one - it was good for business as well.

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries more enlightened employers such as the Strutts at their mill at Belper, Derbyshire, and Greg at Styal, Cheshire, provided higher standard housing plus other facilities - a school, shop and chapels at Styal. By the 1820s, Ashworths, cotton spinners of Bolton 'realised the expediency of well housed, content operatives in the mills'³ and provided piped water, redecoration and bookshelves. Saltaire (founded 1850) is generally given the credit as the first industrial model village where Sir Titus Salt fulfilled his dream of an industrial community away from the heavy atmosphere of Bradford with hygienic living standards, a church, dining rooms, school room and lecture hall, and steam laundry.

The development of industrial model villages continued at the end of the nineteenth century. Port Sunlight, Lever Brothers' self contained model community, was established in 1888 with terraced cottages and semi-detached houses all with gardens and space around them. Cadbury's Bournville, begun in 1895, offered similar living conditions as well as recreational, social and educational opportunities to its employees. Rowntree's model factory village at New Earswick, built in 1901 to designs by planners Parker and Unwin (who also worked on the Garden Cities), is still considered the most influential and successful of the type. This form of housing commissioned by the industrialist thus continued despite the number of Acts passed in the latter half of the nineteenth century to permit Local Authorities to provide housing for the working classes.

Survey findings

Although Essex was, and essentially still is, an agricultural county, it had a rich variety of industries, many of which reflected its agricultural nature. As a result of the scattered population pattern in the county many of these industries found it necessary to provide housing for their staff and the survey identified workers' housing relating to:

- 1. extractive industries (brick and tile making and cement);
- 2. engineering and foundries;
- 3. food production (malt, beer and preserves);
- general manufacturing (including shoes, explosive and timber products);
- 5. ports and associated industries;
- 6. public utilities;
- 7. market gardening.

The survey assessed 54 sites/groups of houses, totalling over 2.250 individual properties associated with 18 different industries. Of these houses, 123 (5.4%) already have statutory protection through listing and 1,008 (44%) lie within a designated Conservation Area, although 80% of these are within just two planned settlements, i.e. Silver End and East Tilbury. While most of these houses were built after industrialisation had become firmly established in the county, examples from the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were identified. In fact three distinct periods of development were identified:

- 1. early eighteenth to midnineteenth centuries
- 2. late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries
- 3. the inter-war and immediate post-war period

Early eighteenth to mid-nineteenth centuries

The port of Mistley was first developed as a planned industrial town in the early eighteenth century by Richard Rigby (1690-1730) and included ship-yards, coal-yards, a granary and two malthouses, as well as quays and wharves. Existing houses were renovated, terraces of Georgian houses were built along High Street and the Thorne Inn was built in 1724-25. Later in the century as the port became busier and industry developed, Rigby's son (also Richard, 1722-88) built an additional terrace of 12 cottages on The Green. These houses are all within the Conservation Area and are listed buildings. Also in the eighteenth century the London brewer Samuel Whitbread began extracting chalk at Purfleet and in 1790 built a terrace of 12 quarry workers' cottages (Plate 1), a school and a church at Botany Pit. The 12 cottages have since been converted into six dwellings and are listed Grade II.

Early in the nineteenth century the expansion of the Royal Gunpowder Works at Waltham Abbey, driven by the requirements of the Napoleonic War, led to the provision of new housing adjacent to the works. While most of this has now been



Plate 1. Hollow Cottages, Purfleet, built in 1790 by Sanuel Whitbread for chalk quarry workers (ECC).



Plate 2. The outbuildings associated with Brickfield Cottages at Wintry Park Brick & Tile Works, Epping. (A. Corder-Birch).

demolished a terrace of three workers' cottages, the Engineer's office with Clerk of Works' apartments above and the Chief Clerk's quarters all survive within a Conservation Area. In 1815, W. Bentall established an iron foundry at Heybridge on the Chelmer & Blackwater Navigation specialising in agricultural implements. The company built eight groups of houses over a period of nearly 100 years beginning in 1815. In this year The Square was built adjacent to the works entrance as a terrace of five two-storey red-brick cottages, one of which was used to provide breakfasts for the foundry workers. (The later housing will be described below.)

The middle part of the nineteenth century saw a few minor developments such as a fine terrace of five cottages built in Saffron Walden by the Gibson family (brewers and bankers) around 1840, which are Grade II listed. A row of three-storey houses (Grade II listed) were constructed in Roydon around the middle of the century, the purpose of which is still to be discovered. It may be that they, like two similar developments in Saffron Walden in the second half of the 1800s, were built for craftsmen and artisans. Alpha Place, Saffron Walden, is a development of 16 three-storey houses built in 1850 as two parallel terraces of eight, while Artisans Dwellings are 16 two-storey concrete houses built

as two parallel terraces in 1882. According to the censuses these were occupied by various craftsmen such as carpenters, painters, tailors, shoemakers, coachbuilders and a brewer's labourer. Artisans Dwellings were built by, and using concrete from Dix, Green & Co. cement makers, not for staff but as a showcase for their product. The mid nineteenth century also saw the first of over 15 developments associated with brickworks - the terrace of originally ten, but now eight, cottages at the Wintry Park Brick & Tile Works near Epping being one (Plate 2). At the rear of these cottages the original weatherboarded outbuildings which contained coppers and a communal bake house survive.

Late nineteenth to early twentieth centuries

The 1870s appear to be the start of the main phase of house construction by industrialists in Essex. Many small developments were associated with brickmakers and engineers who built housing close to their works. In the case of brick-makers the housing was probably also used to showcase their products as in the case of William Clover's houses of c.1890, The Terrace at Hatfield Peverel (Plate 3). W.H. Collier's Brick & Tile Works at Marks Tey is still operational and the five dwellings they built in the late nineteenth and early twentieth

centuries survive adjacent to the works. Carey & Birch's Steam Plough Works was established in Rochford in c.1870 and they built a terrace of ten cottages, now known as Russell Terrace soon afterwards. In 1898, Thomas Hollick built an engineering factory in South Fambridge along with two terraces of workers' cottages and a club house. One terrace has since been demolished and replaced with new housing, but the other survives. Before moving on to the larger engineering companies, there are three examples of housing that were developed by food and drink manufacturers during this period to consider.

Thomas Dixon Ridley established a brewery at Hartford End in 1842 and it remained a family business on the same site until 2005. In the late nineteenth century two pairs of semidetached houses were built in Mill Lane, while other houses built within the brewery site have since been demolished to make way for new offices. Around the turn of the twentieth century two detached houses were built nearby for senior staff. The port of Mistley, whose eighteenth century development has already been outlined, became a major centre for the malt industry in the latter half of the nineteenth century, serving the vast barley growing areas of East Anglia and supplying London and other major brewing



Plate 3. The Terrace, Hatfield Peverel, built by William Clover for his brick works staff. (A. Corder-Birch).

centres via sea and rail links. Seven multi-storey malthouses incorporating technical innovations patented by Robert Free and built by Free, Rodwell & Co. were in operation at the industry's peak. A purpose-built company settlement was established in New Mistley to the east of the port settlement developed by the Rigbys. Here housing was provided in a number of short terraces of two-storey cottages of varying architectural detail (Plate 4) and a school, public house and Methodist chapel were also built. Robert Free's own house, The Elms, lay within New Mistley and stood prominently overlooking the quay, his malthouses and the employees' route to and from work and even the children's route to school. These cottages all lie within a Conservation Area. In June 1885 Arthur Charles Wilkin established the Brittania Fruit Preserving Co. Ltd, renamed Wilkin & Son Ltd in 1905, on its present site in Tiptree. In 1904 the company began building cottages designed to be of a high standard for workers' housing. The nine pairs of semi-detached houses in Cherry Chase all had gardens planted with cherry trees, while the terrace of ten cottages known as Damson Gardens were provided with damson trees. A pair of semi-detached houses were built in Mulberry Way, while

those known as Trewlands Cottages were named after the farm on which the factory was built.

Returning to the major engineering companies, this was the period of further development by Bentalls for its foundry workers at Heybridge. The eight two-storey cottages at Well Terrace have a high level of architectural detail reflecting their status as supervisor-level housing. The 12 three-storey houses of Stock Terrace, however, were built for employees with large families, with some being set aside for younger, single employees under the supervision of a landlady (Plate 5). At the rear on the property boundaries survive the original single-storey utility/toilet ranges, now converted to other uses. The Roothings are two terraces of eight two-up/twodown cottages with minimum decorative detail for the basic grade foundry workers. In 1873 Bentalls built Woodfield Cottages, three parallel terraces of 40 Grade II listed concrete cottages. These single-storey cottages were constructed using concrete with a render facing and originally had flat roofs (they were referred to as 'Flat Tops') although these were eventually replaced with pitched roofs due to water penetration. Contemporary paired concrete out-houses face the cottages on the opposite side of the narrow shared access roadways and a



Plate 5. Stock terrace, Heybridge, built for Bentalls iron foundry workers. (ECC).



Plate 4. Stour Cottages, New Mistley, built by Free, Rodwell & Co for maltings workers. (T. Crosby).

central water pump and cistern, providing the fresh water for the inhabitants, survives. Bentalls' final developments took place just before the First World War and included Barnfield Cottages, a terrace of single-storey concrete dwellings with outhouses similar to Woodfield Cottages (Plate 6), 20 semi-detached Arts and Crafts style houses built for managerial staff in 1912 and Boulton Cottages, a group of four semi-detached managerial houses.

Robert Warner established his foundry in Walton-on-the-Naze in 1871-72 and subsequently built five terraces of houses, the first being Broomfield Cottages in Hall Lane (formerly Foundry Lane). In 1875 a dining hall/evening adult education centre designed by T.A. Cressy was built on the southern end of this terrace. Further housing was provided in Saville Street and First Avenue.

By the middle of the nineteenth century Courtaulds had established three silk manufacturing bases in Essex, at Bocking, Braintree and Halstead. In order to accommodate some of the many staff required to operate these factories, in 1872 they constructed five pairs of semi-detached cottages in Bocking and Factory Terrace adjacent to the weaving sheds of Halstead. This latter development consisted of one terrace of six and another of ten three-storey houses. In 1883, also adjacent to the Halstead site they



Plate 6. Barnfield Cottages, Heybridge. Early 20th century concrete dwellings built by Bentall's. (ECC).

built a pair of semi-detached houses and a terrace of ten cottages with a dining room at one end of the terrace. As well as providing housing within the existing settlements for the local workers, Courtaulds also provided a number of facilities for their staff and the community at large.⁴ Most of the Courtauld housing lies within Conservation Areas and some are listed buildings.

Reuben Hunt, who took over running the agricultural engineering business founded by his father in Earls Colne in the first half of the nineteenth century, provided housing and some community facilities within the village as well as in Great Tey. This began in 1872 with the construction of a terrace of 12 very ornate cottages named Hibernia Cottages in Foundry Lane (Plate 7). These were followed by a further terrace of ten in a similar style, Belle Vue Cottages, in 1876. As the Atlas Works developed and required a larger workforce⁵ so the construction of housing continued through the rest of the nineteenth century and up to 1911, by which time they were building semi-detached houses with an Arts & Crafts influence in a garden suburb style setting along the Halstead Road. Most of the Hunt's housing lies within the Conservation Area and some are listed buildings.

By the late 1860s the Great Eastern Railway (GER) needed an alternative to Harwich for

its increasing continental traffic, and in 1879-83 a new quay was constructed to the west. This was named Parkeston Quay in honour of the GER chairman C.H. Parkes and it opened in 1883. At the time of opening it was announced that 'the company have acquired a large quantity of land and are preparing to build houses for the workforce, so that Parkeston is likely to become an important town in the course of a few years'.⁶ However, the first houses to be built were a private speculative development to the south of the land acquired by the GER - six roads of terraced housing built between 1883-85. The first GER houses were a pair of semi-detached houses built in 1884 in Malins Road and another such pair (now demolished) in Coller Road. In 1890 two rows of terraces consisting of ten houses each were built in the north end of Tyler Street and about the same time, two rows of terraces consisting of six houses each were built in the north end of Hamilton Street. In Foster Road 40 cottages were built in two equal phases prior to 1914, while at the turn of the century 'Enginemen's Barracks' (aka Hamilton House) was built to house train crews who had to spend the night in Parkeston before returning home with trains the next day. That there was not a great need for this accommodation was quickly recognised and Hamilton House became a factory by 1913 and is now offices. Various community facilities were provided, but only the recreation ground, schools and Railway Club (now demolished) were provided by the GER, who also provided electric power to the town from its own power station on the quay, which is also now demolished.

One major industrial housing development that unfortunately no longer survives was Kynochtown. In 1897, Kynoch Ltd, manufacturers of high explosives, established a factory and accompanying workers' model village on the Essex marshes between Shell Haven and Holehaven Creeks. This 200 acre site comprised a main factory manufacturing nitro explosives, cordite, smokeless sporting powder and black gunpowder, plus a self contained community including shops, a post office, schools, an institute and considerable housing provision. Following the end of the First World War Kynochtown was closed, all buildings demolished and the site redeveloped as part of the Shellhaven oil complex.

Inter-war and immediate post-war period

Despite local authorities having been enabled to provide housing, a number of industrialists in the county continued to find it necessary to provide housing for their staff. From 1920 through to 1935 Courtaulds built 55 company houses in Halstead. The first were five pairs of semidetached houses in Vicarage Meadow adjacent to Factory Terrace and close to the Halstead weaving sheds, built in 1920. These were followed over the next 15 years with detached. semi-detached and terraced houses on and around Hedingham Road and Colchester Road. All were built in what became known as 'Courtauld Tudor' style, an Arts and Craftsinfluenced style in a garden suburb setting. Courtaulds also continued to provide facilities for the whole community within their main manufacturing towns, including the Homes of Rest in Halstead.7

Rippers Ltd established a very



Plate 7. Hibernia Cottages, Earls Colne, built in 1872 for the workers at Hunt's Atlas Iron Works. (T. Crosby).

extensive joinery works on the west side of the Colne Valley & Halstead Railway at Sible and Castle Hedingham Station. During 1920-21 they built 14 wooden bungalows which were demolished during the 1970s. However, between 1924-28 they built 94 semi-detached houses to the north and south of the works which survive.

The Land Settlement Association Ltd (LSA) was founded in 1934, influenced by the Carnegie UK Trust, with the aim of providing work on small holdings for unemployed industrial workers such as miners, principally from the north of England. Existing agricultural land was divided into plots of varying sizes with houses and out-buildings, glass houses, piggeries and poultry huts. Roads and a central storage and administrative centre were established, the latter usually based on a pre-existing farm. The plots, and hence the houses, were strung out at wide intervals along the frontage of the roads. Twenty five of these estates were established from Cumberland. through Leicestershire and Lincolnshire to Suffolk, with two being established in Essex, the Foxash and Yeldham Estates. The houses were designed by Messrs. Pakington & Enthoven to provide adequate accommodation as cheaply as possible according to the requirements of the Housing Act. Originally mainly semi-detached houses were built, but then detached houses were preferred, although the Foxash Estate only has two detached houses out of a total of 90. At Yeldham, 75 of the houses are detached, the other 16 being in pairs of semi-detached houses. Two-, three- and four-bedroomed houses were built at set ratios.8 The Ministry of Agriculture took over the LSA estates in 1948 and these were then sold in 1957-58, mainly to the tenants. All but two of the original houses on the Foxash Estate remain, while of the original 91 houses at Yeldham

89 remain, two have been demolished and two which were bomb damaged during the war were re-built. The original landscape of the estates is still recognisable.

The two developments of major international significance in Essex were begun during this inter-war period. Post-war reconstruction resulted in a vast increase in business for Crittalls, the metal window manufacturers of Braintree and Witham, who thus required an increase in the workforce. Workers had to be attracted from other parts of the country and, hence, when the jobs at the new Silver End factory were created they were advertised all over the country including the Midlands, the North and Wales, but these workers needed accommodation in an area of severely limited options. Francis H. Crittall had, in the immediate post-war years, instigated the building of an estate of 65 houses in Braintree, designed by Walter F. Crittall and C.H.B. Quennell. The initial pair built in 1918 was at 156 & 158 Cressing Road, and when complete all 65 houses formed the Clockhouse Way estate and these were amongst the first flat-roofed, concrete block, modular houses in the country (Plate 8). He did consider building superior housing in proximity to the Manor Works in Braintree, including a Clockhouse Way extension, but Francis wanted to build a model village similar to those at Bourneville and Port Sunlight, rather than the sort of cramped housing he had seen in the mill and coal-mining towns of Yorkshire.

Silver End is built on former farm land mid-way between Braintree and Witham. As well as houses, the village was developed as a self-sufficient community with village hall, hotel, departmental store, churches, playing fields and gardens, and two farms. Francis wanted to avoid a monotonous feel to the housing in the village and hence



Plate 8. Cressing Road, Braintree, part of the Clockhouse Way estate developed by Crittalls in 1918. (T. Crosby).

engaged a number of architects who would inevitably design different styles of housing within the context of an overall Garden Suburb plan. The houses also varied in size and configuration with the result that there are flats, terraces, semi-detached and detached houses. This variation in size met the needs of the different status of staff employed at Crittalls, with the largest of the detached houses (The Manors) being built for Francis himself and his family.

Inevitably the Modernist-style housing has attracted most attention and is one reason behind Silver End's fame. It was criticised at the time it was built, but has been the main attraction for architectural historians since. The flat roofed, rendered and painted brick-walled houses are in Broadway, Francis Way and Silver Street (Plate 9). In addition 'Wolverton', 'Le Chateau' and 'Craig Angus', the detached houses in Boars Tye Lane, are also in the Modernist style. Many of these houses were designed by Tait & McManus. This style of house only accounts for about a third of the total houses at Silver End, the rest being Neo-Georgian style with pitched slate roofs and brick built. Metal framed windows were originally incorporated as would be expected, and although some have been sympathetically replaced over the years the village retains much of its original style of layout and house design. The whole village is a Conservation Area and many of the Modernist houses have been listed.



Plate 9. Modernist houses in Silver Street, part of Crittalls planned industrial community of Silver End. (ECC).

> The second development of significance is that at East Tilbury. Thomas Bata had founded a Czech shoe-making firm in 1900, and having expanded to England decided to build a company village adjacent to its factory at East Tilbury. The design was based on previous such estates in Czechoslovakia, including the Czech factory town of Zlin, and other European countries. The factory is of a steel-frame and concrete daylight construction and towers above the houses built for the workers.9 Here the majority of houses are in the Modernist style, but some appear to have been demolished. The village also had a hotel (now flats), a farm (now derelict land), primary school, playing fields, shops and a village hall.¹⁰ The original village lies within a Conservation Area and in common with Silver End includes a number of listed Modernist houses (Plate 10).

The Cold War research and development of armaments and propellants stimulated the continued growth of the Royal Gunpowder Works at Waltham Abbey. These led to the construction of a discrete housing estate for Ministry of Defence (MOD) employees by the Armament Research and Development Establishment on the eastern side of the town. This estate provided modern housing across the employee spectrum from management to trainee levels of staff. Maintained and overseen by a Housing Association administered by the

MOD the housing was finally sold off as private housing in the 1980s. The development consists of a large number of units built in six groupings on different roads. The units range from five-, four- and three-bedroomed semi-detached houses to terraces and flats, the different sizes reflecting the differing status of the employees for whom they were built.

Finally, during the inter-war period as the public water supply industry developed to meet the needs of both the rural communities, whose supply was still primitive, and the growing urban areas, it was found that as the waterworks were in remote locations staff housing was needed. The Southend Waterworks' Langford site was the first to be developed with housing in the 1920s. During the 1930s the waterworks at Tiptree, Langham and Layer-de-la-Haye were all established with their own staff houses. In the post-war period additional housing was constructed at Langford, while staff housing formed part of the West Hanningfield scheme in the 1950s.

Architecture

There is a wide variety in the architectural styles used in the housing identified for this report, ranging from the ubiquitous simple red-brick Victorian terrace to the International Modern Movement style used at Silver End and East Tilbury. This variety is a result of a number of factors including: the status of the company building the houses; other purposes for which they may have been built (for example as a demonstration of the company's product); the status of the staff for whom they were built; and the prevalent architectural styles of the age, especially considering that this report covers a period of over 200 years. The eighteenth century development at Mistley Thorn is in the Georgian vernacular style of architecture. The housing

associated with the brickworks, engineering firms and food and drink manufacturers built from the mid nineteenth century through to the early twentieth century are in the red-brick, slate roofed Victorian style of terraces and semi-detached houses. Companies such as Courtaulds and Hunts which developed housing over a number of years, adopted different architectural styles depending upon the contemporary taste, be it Victorian style terraced cottages, Edwardian style villas or Arts and Crafts-influenced semi-detached houses in a garden suburb setting.

The inter-war period saw the establishment of the two highly significant industrial housing developments in Essex, those at Silver End and East Tilbury. Crittall had experimented with a small estate of Modernist style, flat-roofed, concrete houses in Braintree in the immediate post-war period and continued to use this style at Silver End. Bata's East Tilbury, on the other hand, shows its European roots being predominantly Modernist style housing with pitched roofed housing only being introduced after the Second World War. While the water companies also adopted the Modernist style of architecture for their water treatment works, especially Langham, Layer-de-la-Haye and Tiptree, the associated housing is a more restrained style similar to that used by Hunt and Courtauld at this time.

Conclusions

In analysing the development of industrial housing in Essex as outlined above, there seem to be



Plate 10. Executive, Modernist houses on Bata's planned industrial community of East Tilbury. (T. Crosby).

four different models of development which could be proposed:

- A few houses built around an isolated industrial site, e.g. many of the brickworks, small engineering works, Ridley's Brewery, Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Works and the various waterworks sites;
- Houses built in an existing settlement, e.g. some brickworks, Warners, Bentalls, Wilkins and Rippers;
- 3. Developments of housing and community facilities with major impact upon an existing settlement, e.g. Courtauld and Hunt;
- 4. The planned industrial community, i.e. New Mistley, Silver End, East Tilbury and Parkeston.

Although Essex did not have the heavy extractive and manufacturing industries typical of the industrial North and Midlands, its original pattern of scattered rural settlements and eventual expanding urban centres did require its industry to attract and retain a workforce that was not necessarily readily to hand. There is a history of industrial housing provision initiated by a wide range of industrial concerns, from local traditional industries such as small independent brickmakers, to large multi-national manufacturers such as Bata Shoes. The findings of the survey revealed a diversity of industrial housing provision which survives in Essex from across a wide period of time; this reflects a wide range of architectural styles, social hierarchies and, through analysis, the four distinctive models of development. This housing reflects not just a basic provision of shelter but rather a considerable improvement in the standard of housing and facilities for employees and their families. As well as somewhere to work and live, many of the resident workers, particularly those in the larger settlements or model villages, benefited from a range of

leisure, religious and educational facilities provided by their respective employers.

Whether individual houses, terraces or entire planned towns, it is clear that these otherwise ordinary buildings make a positive contribution to the historic and architectural character of the settlements in which they were built. Through association with industry which in many cases lies within living memory, industrial housing provides a sense of place to the community and a resonance with local residents. In most instances this housing remains the only connection to the industry which built them, and in many cases with the same industry which shaped the historic and economic landscape of the county. These houses were built during an important period of industrial growth in Essex and as a group they demonstrate not just the lengths to which employers went in order to attract a workforce, but highlight issues such a class and status as seen in the hierarchical nature of the provision, philanthropy and the commitment to innovative design and planning. Although a reasonable proportion of the housing already enjoys some statutory protection, a large number of significant sites remain unprotected. It is hoped that the recommendations of this survey will address this situation and ensure that this significant built legacy and landscape can be understood and appreciated by current and future generations.

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arlow New Town, which now has a population of 80,000, celebrated the 60th anniversary of its designation on 25th March 2007. Building completely new 'modern' towns to remedy many social ills was first suggested in the late nineteenth century, and thus prefigured Harlow's existence by many years; even then Harlow was not the first 'new town' to be built. Before any work started. though, many debates were had regarding the benefits and problems that building on the site would bring. However, with the heightened need for new housing to replace that destroyed during the Second World War the go-ahead was given for the development of Harlow, one among several new post-war towns. Now that Harlow is entering its seventh decade it is well worth reviewing the background to its development and the place it holds in the county of Essex.

The idea of building new towns - or garden cities, as they were initially called - was the brainchild of Ebenezer Howard (1850-1928), a social reformer who was inspired by reading Edward Bellamy's utopian socialist novel, Looking Backward.¹ In this, the narrator of the story wakes up more than a century after going to sleep in a very unequal world and finds himself in an ideal society. Howard committed himself to working to achieve this, despite having only a limited income as a self-taught shorthand writer. He decided that human beings were physically and morally degraded as a result of living in overcrowded and unhealthy conditions in large cities, and became convinced that they needed access to nature and the countryside to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. To remedy this, he proposed the building of new towns of a limited size, surrounded by a rural green belt,

by Stan Newens

with their own industries to provide employment. Trustees would borrow money to acquire land on behalf of the community to be created, which would eventually become the landowner. So convinced was he of his idea that he publicized it by publishing two influential books as well as forming, in 1902, the Garden City Association.² After a great deal of hard work mobilising support, the First Garden City Ltd. came into existence on 1st September 1903. It acquired promoted the idea of planned new towns as an alternative to unchecked urban sprawl. In 1940, a Royal Commission on the Distribution of the Industrial Population under Sir Montague Barlow reported in favour of planning for the decentralisation of population and industry from the larger cities.⁵ In 1943, the Ministry of Town & Country Planning was established to plan the reconstruction of Britain in the post-war period. In the same year,



Plate 1. Sir Frederick Gibberd, Master Planner, (left), and Ted Woodland, Chairman of Netteswell Parish Council in 1947, recalling in October 1980, the campaign in favour of Harlow New Town (Reproduced by courtesy of the Museum of Harlow).

3,822 acres at Letchworth in Hertfordshire and embarked on the construction of Letchworth Garden City.³ In 1920, Howard succeeded in launching the construction of a second town at Welwyn Garden City, also in Hertfordshire.⁴

Between 1918-39 concern began to grow more generally about uncontrolled city growth and its consequences. In 1935, this led the London County Council to initiate the idea of a green belt round the metropolis, which became law by the Green Belt Act of 1938. The Town & Country Planning Association, successor to the Garden City Association, Professor Patrick Abercrombie was appointed to prepare the Greater London Plan of 1944 on behalf of the Standing Conference on London Regional Planning.⁶ This proposed ten sites for the building of satellite towns round London, including Harlow, Ongar and Margaretting in Essex. A research group under William Holford, which included Frederick Gibberd, an architect planner, (Plate 1) was set up by the new Ministry to evaluate each of these.

The election of a Labour government in the 1945 General Election led to the appointment of Lewis Silkin, who had chaired the Town Planning Committee of the London County Council 1940-45, as Minister of Town and Country Planning. He was naturally very sympathetic to the idea of new towns and appointed Lord Reith – known for his role in creating the BBC – to chair a New Towns Committee. Its report formed the basis for the New Towns Bill, which was introduced in Parliament in April 1946 and speedily passed.

Leah Manning, the recentlyelected Labour MP for the Epping constituency, which then included Chingford, Waltham Abbey, Epping, Harlow and a number of surrounding villages, used the Parliamentary debate to support the case for a new town at Harlow:

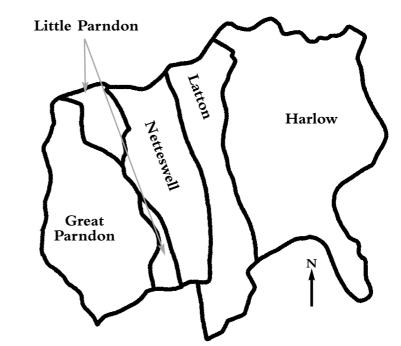
in the constituency which I represent, I hope – indeed I almost pray – we shall have at one end a new town... The alternatives which face the country-planners of today are either to build on green belts and beautiful open spaces or build new towns.⁷

The proposals for a new town were, however, not universally welcomed in the locality. The Harlow Defence Association (HDA), chaired by Leonard Radbourne, a local farmer, was formed and a campaign launched to oppose the plan. This was, however, countered by a group of Leah Manning's supporters who believed that the project would be of benefit both to existing residents and to those in desperate need of housing after six years of war. Ted Woodlands (Plate 1), who had been elected to the Chair of Netteswell Parish Council on a Labour platform, helped to launch a petition in favour of a new town and sent in a list of signatories to the Minister. He followed this up with an invitation to Lewis Silkin to visit Harlow and, on 30th October 1946, a meeting was organised which the Minister addressed. A public enquiry was opened at the Drill Hall in Harlow in December 1946,

at which a challenge to its legality by Eric Blain for the HDA was turned down. Bill Fisher, another of Leah Manning's supporters, presented a petition in favour of the new town. After an appeal against a favourable decision was withdrawn, Harlow was designated as a new town on 25th March 1947. It was one of the first four to be designated, the others being Stevenage, Crawley and Hemel Hempstead.8 But for the manifestation of local support, the proposals for a new town at Harlow could have foundered, as they did at the other Essex sites, Ongar and Margaretting. Basildon, which was designated as an Essex new town a couple of years later, like Harlow relied on a strong group of supporters led by Billericay Council Clerk, Alma Hatt, and senior councillors who countered the opposition.9

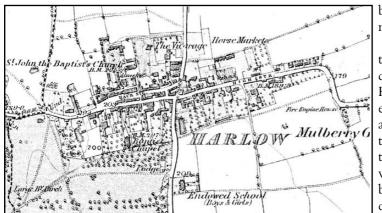
Even before Harlow's designation, Lewis Silkin sent for Frederick Gibberd, who had served on the New Towns Research Group set up by his Ministry, to ask him to prepare a Master Plan in co-operation with an Advisory Committee – a shadow Harlow Development Corporation (HDC) – which met in London.¹⁰ The area chosen for development was a 6,000 acre rectangle of land measuring some four miles from east to west and three miles north to south. It consisted of five long and narrow country parishes – Harlow, Latton, Netteswell and Great and Little Parndon, which ran parallel to each other, from the River Stort in the north to the ridge of high ground extending from Hastingwood to Rye Hill in the south (Map 1).

Although the ancient parish of Harlow had been the site of a medieval market, granted in 1281, and had a past stretching back through Roman, Iron Age, Bronze Age and Neolithic times, as evidenced by its ancient temple site and a prehistoric village, it had declined as a centre of trade and no longer had a market day. Outside of Old Harlow (Map 2), the population was sparse and lived in scattered village hamlets, isolated farms and cottages, generally surrounded by fields and woods. Industries had existed in the area in the past - cloth, pottery, malt production and, most recently, marine engineering. However, the last of these, represented by Kirkaldys of Burnt Mill, closed down in 1930. Craftsmen. retailers and service providers in the area catered only for local needs. Harlow was, however, linked to London by road, rail and the Stort Navigation, which gave rise to a small number of jobs and



Map 1. The Ancient Parishes of Harlow New Town. (Based on ERO, *The Parishes of Essex*, Chelmsford, 1999).

The Genesis of Harlow New Town



Map 2. Harlow Old Town, c.1873. (Extract from MAP/OS/6/1/41, reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office).

enabled others to commute to work elsewhere.¹¹ Most of the land was owned by the Arkwright family, descended from Richard Arkwright (1732-92) inventor of the Water Frame and pioneer of cotton spinning in factories, whose fortune had enabled his descendants to become landed gentry.¹²

Statutory education was provided mainly in all-age Anglican schools at Churchgate Street, Harlow Common, William Martin and Great Parndon, or at Fawbert & Barnard's (Undenominational) School, Old Harlow, open to all religions from its foundation in 1836. Higher education was available at Harlow College, Old Harlow, for fee payers and a minority of scholarship boys, while a few of the girls were sent to the Herts. & Essex School at Bishop's Stortford. Most pupils left school at 14 to work as manual workers - some on farms - or, in the case of girls, a proportion went into service.

Whilst Harlow and the surrounding parishes supported a predominantly rural community that had traditionally looked to its landowners, clergy, farmers, traders and other substantial citizens for leadership, by 1945 change was in the air. The election of that year returned a Labour MP, Leah Manning, and a number of Labour candidates to the various parish councils. This provided the basis for the local support given to the concept of

building a new town.13 Once the town had been designated, HDC was established on an official basis to implement the decision which was beyond the capacity of any existing local authority in the area. Sir Ernest Gowers, Senior

Commissioner for London during the war, became Chairman; Eric Adams, who had been the Town Clerk for Islington, became General Manager; and Ben Hyde Harvey, the Borough Treasurer for Leyton, was appointed Chief Financial Officer. The latter succeeded Eric Adams as General Manager. All three have been commemorated by the use of their names to designate new town buildings or an area. Other key officers appointed to the HDC were Victor Hamnett (Executive Architect), Ron Jacques (Chief Solicitor) and Cliff Jackman (Housing Officer). Marjorie Green was appointed Social Development & Liaison Officer but, after her marriage to Will Soper, a local farmer, she was succeeded by Len White, founder of a settlement for the poor in Camberwell. Len White became one of the best known HDC officers.14 He and his wife, Molly, were active in many fields until their deaths in 1998

and 2007 respectively. Frederick

Gibberd's appointment as Architect Planner¹⁵ with the task of preparing the Master Plan¹⁶ was confirmed. This was shaped by the geography of the designated area with the River

Stort defining the northern and the Rye Hill ridge the southern boundary. Within the area, Frederick Gibberd decided to preserve the valleys as green wedges and create neighbourhoods between them. The aim was of ensuring that every resident had countryside and all amenities within walking distance. The main industrial area to provide jobs was sited along the railway, close to the northern boundary delineated by the River Stort. The final plan was for a population of 60,000 but this was increased to 80,000 in 1952.

The Corporation originally earmarked Mark Hall mansion, previously owned by the Arkwrights in Latton parish, as its headquarters but, sadly, this was destroyed by fire in 1947. The HQ therefore went to Terlings, over the Hertfordshire border, until a housing office was built at The Stow and other accommodation at the Town Centre (The High) much later. Land for building was acquired from the Arkwright family and others, with the Mark Hall area, Latton, being bought for about £,80 per acre. The first dwellings erected were four prefabs in Hart Road, Old Harlow, in January 1949 (Plate 2). Soon afterwards, the Corporation obtained approval for 98 dwellings at Chippingfield, Old Harlow, though progress was slow and only 50 had been built by 1950. Houses were allocated for rent to those who took up approved employment in the town, and incoming employers were promised accommodation for staff who moved to Harlow.



Plate 2. Handing over the keys to the first New Town tenants, Mr Satchell and Mr Mealing, Old Road, 4th August, 1949 (Reproduced by courtesy of the Museum of Harlow).

The Genesis of Harlow New Town

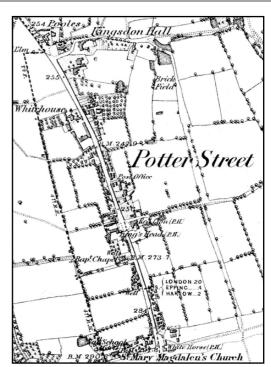
Since the most rapidly expanding industry was building in the initial years, most of the houses in Chippingfield, and in Mark Hall North, which was the first neighbourhood development, went to building workers. Mark Hall North was built in 1950 and included the first tower block erected in post-war Britain. Named The Lawn, it was opened by Hugh Dalton, who had succeeded Lewis Silkin as Minister of Town & Country Planning, in May 1951. Development then moved to Mark Hall South 1951-53 and then to Netteswell. Harold Macmillan, who took over as Minister when the Conservatives were returned to power in 1951, aimed to boost the national rate of house building to 300,000 per annum. He insisted on putting an extra 1,000 houses into the Harlow programme in 1954, which were developed at Potter Street at the cost of lowering design standards.

In 1955-57, the builders moved to Little Parndon and Spring Hills, Canons Gate and Ashtree Field took shape. The Bush Fair area was developed in the years 1955-62. In the 1960s, the concentration was on the southern side of the town and at Great Parndon. Most of the accommodation took the form of houses with gardens and there were few blocks of flats. This was very popular. In the later period, however, the HDC experimented with development of high density areas like Bishopsfield and Charters Cross. Later, Fernhill, Clarkhill and Honeyhill were built on similar principles and proved to be a failure. Consequently, they were redeveloped some years later. In 1972, Katherines and Sumners were built on the western edge of the town, but further expansion at Tylers Cross, Roydon, was rejected by the Minister at the time, Peter Shore. After completing building operations, the HDC was wound up in 1980.

Hand-in-hand with house

building, the development of factories, offices, shopping centres, schools, churches, community centres, health centres and other amenities proceeded according to the Master Plan. When Ben Hyde Harvey took over as General Manager of the HDC, he was particularly anxious to attract high technology firms to Harlow, with the result that a large proportion of graduates and highly skilled operatives were drawn to the town. Key Glass, later United Glass, was practically the only large employer which provided jobs for previously unskilled labour. This had an important influence on the character of migration into Harlow. The new residents were often sophisticated people who demanded high standards and provision of a comprehensive range of community and leisure services.¹⁷ In the early years of the new town, public services were the responsibility of Epping Rural District Council (ERDC), of which Harlow was part, Essex County Council (ECC) and certain other authorities. The HDC was required to co-operate with these. The demand for improvements was reflected in the election of several outspoken local Labour representatives. Alf Brown and Pat Fox-Edwards (later Lady Gibberd) were elected to ERDC and, at a later stage, Bill Fisher and Don Anderson to the ECC. In 1955, Harlow was separated from Epping and became an Urban District Council. This returned a Labour majority and Alf Brown became its first Chairman.

Education was a service in which there was a strong demand for improvement. This was met by the building of new secondary schools, the first of which was Mark Hall, opened in 1954. Netteswell followed, and then Brays Grove. The original plan was for these to be bilaterals, but in May 1958 Labour won the ECC on a programme of introducing comprehensive schools and County Councillor



Map 3. Potter Street, c.1873. (Extract from MAP/OS/6/1/41, reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office).

Don Anderson managed to secure agreement that these Harlow schools would be the first to be converted.¹⁸ Latton Bush, Stewards, Passmores, Burnt Mill and St. Mark's Comprehensive Schools followed later. Nearly 30 primary schools were also established, plus Harlow College of Further Education, which subsequently became a tertiary college. For the provision of medical services, a demand was voiced for the building of health centres. A temporary medical centre was established in the Mark Hall neighbourhood until two semi-detached houses in The Chantry could be adapted for the purpose: Haygarth House. Dr Stephen Taylor,¹⁹ the former Labour MP for Barnet, became the driving force behind this demand, following his appointment to the Corporation Board. He managed to persuade the Nuffield Trust to finance the building of health centres in Harlow, and the new town became a pioneer nationally in this provision. Dr Taylor (later Lord Taylor of Harlow) was also behind the establishment of the Industrial Health Service in Harlow, at Edinburgh House

The Genesis of Harlow New Town

(now Stephen Taylor House) and another centre. This was another pioneering achievement for Harlow. Another of his projects was the establishment of a University of Newfoundland campus in an adapted malting off Market Street in Old Harlow. He was, in addition, the originator of the idea of calling all new public houses in the town after Essex moths and butterflies. A campaign also developed



Plate 3. The Water Gardens and the Town Hall, Harlow Town Centre, in the early days; clean, crisp, modernity. (Reproduced by courtesy of the Museum of Harlow).

> to press for Harlow to have its own hospital instead of being dependent on St. Margaret's at Epping and the Herts. & Essex at Bishop's Stortford. The HDC allocated 30 acres to provide for this and, in 1966, Princess Alexandra came to open Harlow's own hospital, which was named after her. Shopping was provided according to plan by constructing four neighbourhood shopping centres at Old Harlow, The Stow, Bush Fair and Staple Tye, plus local shopping centres. The town centre, which had once been suggested for Old Harlow, was established in the middle of the development to accommodate large stores, specialist shops, a market, offices and the Town Hall. Community centres were created in every neighbourhood. At The Stow, in Mark Hall, the former St. Mary-at-Latton Vicarage, built in 1840, was adapted for this purpose. Under a very dedicated warden, Sewell Harris,²⁰ it provided for a

wide range of activities, including voluntary organisation meetings, social and educational events, and dramatic performances. Other community centres also flourished. Sport was a great priority for the HDC, which allocated large areas for playing fields, a golf club at Canons Brook, a rugby ground, a sports centre, and various other facilities. Harlow Urban District Council (HUDC), later Harlow District Council) built a swimming pool and gave full support to the development of sport, the arts and youth activity. Play areas and play barns were provided for the young and organised entertainment for other age groups. Water facilities were developed at the Moorhen (Plate 3); a town park was created. Harlow Football Club was formed in 1879, long before the new town began,²¹ but a very large number of new teams were formed to take advantage of the numerous playing fields.

The town also became a centre for drama, with groups like the Moot House Players, Prentice Players and Netteswell Players.²² Music flourished, with the formation of the Alberni String Quartet, visits by Sir Robert and Lady Meyer, well-known patrons of music, and the establishment of the Harlow Chorus. Harlow Band and Netteswell Youth Band. Music and the teaching of musical instruments were promoted in Harlow schools. A film, The Pied Pipers of Harlow, was made and attracted national attention.²³ The Harlow Ballet School was established by Leo Kersley and his wife Janet Sinclair.²⁴ In 1953, Frederick Gibberd, Eric Adams, Pat Fox-Edwards, Sir Philip Hendy (Director of the National Gallery), and Maurice Ash formed the Harlow Arts Trust, which commissioned Henry Moore's sculpture, The Family Group, and sited a rich selection of sculptures throughout the town.²⁵ Campaigns were run to build a theatre and a cycle track which were, in due course, successful.

Later still, a museum was opened at Passmores House, a listed building, and a cycle museum in the former stable block at Mark Hall, as the result of HUDC initiatives. Frederick Gibberd and his second wife, previously Pat Fox Edwards, created the Gibberd Garden, an outstanding public attraction which eventually passed to a trust after his death, and still flourishes.

The sporting, cultural, social and charitable undertakings that came into being with the development of the new town were created as the result of the separate, co-operative and sometimes competitive input of HDC, HUDC, ECC and the activity of vocal and dedicated groups of Harlow people. The churches, the political parties, the Employers' Group, the trade unions, sports clubs, Harlow Council for Voluntary Service and others all made important contributions. Success in creating services and facilities during the formative stages stimulated and motivated community efforts. Harlow's image as a successful new town attracted new residents and hosts of visitors. Amid so much that was new, however, efforts were made to preserve Harlow's historic heritage. Many traditional buildings were preserved, although there were some regrettable losses. Much of the original road structure survived in the cycle tracks. Field names, as well as the names of outstanding personalities were used to designate housing and public areas. Archaeological and historic research was encouraged to reveal more about Harlow's past.

When HDC was wound up in 1980, the idea that the new town assets as a whole should be transferred to Harlow District Council, in accord with the ideals of the pioneers of garden cities, was not given serious consideration by the then Labour Government – although resolutions had been passed at conferences and a working party had reported in favour of this

course of action.26 The major industrial and commercial assets, in accordance with the policy adopted in other new towns upon completion, were conveyed to the New Towns Commission (now English Partnerships). Harlow District Council received only the housing assets and some shopping areas. The result was that the very considerable returns on New Town Commission owned property – at first in rents and later in sales - went to the Treasury. Harlow District Council, meanwhile, was not left with adequate means of generating the funding required in the long-run to maintain and ultimately regenerate its large housing stock and other priorities. The contrast with the situation in Letchworth, the first garden city, in this respect, drives home the reason why Ebenezer Howard and his co-thinkers wanted the community to own their town. The New Towns Commission, furthermore, was not primarily concerned, as HDC had been, with the realisation of the original objectives of providing employment for residents. It raised rents and readily accepted the conversion of industrial property to commercial purposes which offered a better return to the Treasury. The industrial estates became sites for large retail organisations and warehousing. Harlow's manufacturing industry shrank within 20 years of the Corporation's wind-up to a fraction of its previous importance and the problem of providing the means of maintaining and enhancing standards became more and more apparent. Some facilities, such as the Town Centre cinema, have been closed. Passmores House ceased to be a museum, the cycle museum was converted as the town museum and the cycle collection was partly dispersed. Cuts in local government expenditure have resulted in other serious reductions in services provided in earlier days.

Despite this, however, and the fact that the town inevitably ceased to be a centre of dynamic change and settled down to a more routine existence, the manner in which it was planned and built has had a dominating effect on the character of West Essex. The creation of a new town, on garden city principles, with a population of some 80,000 people is a development of great significance. Although the question of regeneration and further expansion are current issues, the record of the growth of the present community, the interplay between the various authorities and the people and the policy of conserving original features alongside newer developments represents an important chapter in the history of the locality.

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The Author

Stan Newens is a former MP for Harlow and MEP for Central London. An author of numerous articles and books, he chairs Harlow Civic Society, the Gibberd Garden Trust, and Labour Heritage, and is President of Waltham Abbey Historical Society. He is completing a three-year term as President of the Essex Society for Archaeology & History.

Obituaries

Professor Geoffrey Hayward Martin, CBE (1928-2007)

eoffrey Martin's remarkably wide-ranging scholarship was illuminated by his prevalent wit, which made his intelligence readily available among his colleagues, his students and his friends. He was born in 1928 and his home town, Colchester, provided him with an excellent education in its Royal Grammar School. He repaid his town amply, not least with The Story of Colchester from Roman Times to the Present Day, first published in 1959 by Benham. It is one of the most memorably readable of town histories, a subject he made generally his.

In the preface of Geoffrey's calendar of The Ipswich Recognizance Rolls, 1294-1327, (Suffolk Records Society, 1973) he noted that he began his own studies in Ipswich 'at the suggestion of the late K.B. McFarlane in 1950'. Bruce McFarlane was my tutor at Magdalen, Oxford, who encouraged my own interest in Suffolk's history. These were the circumstances in which Geoffrey and I resolved to found the Suffolk Records Society instead of trying to continue for Suffolk the two rather stereotyped ponderous volumes of the Victoria County History published back in 1907 and 1911. The unfailing regular annual production of the Suffolk Records Society's volumes seems to justify our decision: indeed it is further supported by the successful founding in 1979 of the Suffolk Charters series, principally at the insistance of the late lamented R Allen Brown.

In 30 years at Leicester, Geoffrey rose to be Pro-Vice-Chancellor, and in 1982 boldly switched to become Keeper of the Public Records in

Percy Arthur Lawrence Bamberger (1910-2008)

ercy Bamberger, affectionately known to his friends as 'Bam', had a full and active life having achieved the great age of 97. He was a well known and much respected Vice President of Halstead and District Local History Society. Bam was also a staunch member of the Workers Educational Association (WEA) for over 70 years and held regional, county and local positions. Through the WEA he was well known over a wide area and following a meeting of the Halstead Branch in 1976 a decision was made to form the Halstead and District Local History Society. Bam was a founder member and elected as a Committee Member and as Vice-Chairman. He was also Newsletter Editor for many years and during this time he researched and contributed many articles, which in themselves recorded valuable aspects of local history as well as writing four local history books: A Pictorial History of Halstead and District, Discover Halstead, Halstead in Old Picture Postcards and Dedham Days.

Discover Halstead is now in its third edition, which Bam revised when in his 91st year. The success of Discover Halstead and his other books is a tribute to

Chancery Lane. In 1985 he led the first official delegation of British archivists to China, and the next year he was appointed CBE. In 1988 he turned to biographies for the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, writing no fewer than 51.

Geoffrey's eyesight barred him from military service, and he was anyway only seventeen



when the war ended in 1945: but as someone whose first book. Assault Division. described the landing I'd taken part in on Sword Beach early on 6th June 1944, and who for years regularly reviewed war histories for the Birmingham Post, I was often ashamed to find that he was more familiar with World War II that I was. Indeed on his retirement, when he was appointed to a Research Chair at Essex University, he taught the story of that war to the great inspiration of his students.

I was proud to be his best man on his marriage to Janet Hamer in Oxford in 1953. She and their daughter Sophie were a wonderful mainstay as he put up a truly heroic fight against multiple myeloma. How deeply he must be missed by Janet and their four children, as indeed he is by all his friends.

Norman Scarfe

his research and writing skills. In his younger days he held a position with a national newspaper and this experience was of significant benefit to the History Society. He shared the view that local history must be recorded before it is lost and he worked very hard to achieve this. He was a key member of the History Society, which became a prolific publisher of books.

When in his 90's he researched the history of Halstead Public Gardens for Braintree District Council and Halstead Town Council, and also helped the Town Council with historical information for its Town Guides.

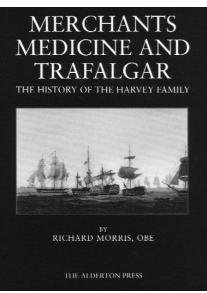
He took an active interest in the Brewery Chapel Museum and carried out much practical work (see Essex Journal, 25, III, (1990), p. 71). He was a Past President of Halstead and District Local History Society and was still a Vice-President at his death. He was a staunch supporter of the History Society and regularly attended meetings until the last couple of years. With his passing the Society has lost one of its most conscientious and hard working members.

Adrian Corder-Birch.

(Photo courtesy of Mrs Janet Martin)

Richard Morris, **Merchants, Medicine And Trafalgar; the history of the Harvey family**, The Alderton Press, 2007, pp.xii & 235. ISBN 139781905269075. £17-99.

Available from: The Alderton Press, 6 High Gables, Loughton, Essex, IG10 4EZ. Cheques made payable to 'Loughton & District Historical Society'



The Harvey family lived in Essex for 200 years, initially at Hempstead where they were buried and later at Rolls Park. Chigwell which became their principal home. Some of them were prominent in our national history. The majority of historians know that Dr. William Harvey of Hempstead discovered the circulation of blood and that

Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey was a distinguished contemporary of Nelson, but this book highlights other members who also achieved distinction in parliament, the law and the army. Some became Members of Parliament, Deputy Lieutenants, Sheriffs and Justices of the Peace for Essex. Those of us who are familiar with the author's interests will not be surprised to learn that four members of the Harvey family were Verderers of Waltham Forest, whilst two were Lieutenants of the Forest. Inevitably the book includes information upon their duties associated with the Forest.

There is still considerable interest in Trafalgar, the ships and those who took part particularly since the bi-centenary three years ago. The book contains new and previously unpublished material about Eliab Harvey's role at Trafalgar when he commanded the *Temeraire*. Of special interest to this reviewer was the brief reference to Captain (later Admiral) George Fowke (of Sible Hedingham) who captained the *Temeraire* in Harvey's absence a few months before Trafalgar. It is a pity that four years later, following such distinguished service, Harvey faced a court-martial, but he continued to receive honours for his service. The publication of this book is well timed and is essential reading for all historians interested in Trafalgar and the Napoleonic Wars.

Quite apart from the Harvey family itself, the book also includes much valuable information about their ownership of various estates and properties in Essex and elsewhere with interesting descriptions of Rolls Park. After the death of Eliab Harvey in 1830 this and other estates were bequeathed to his daughters and their descendents and thus, with no surviving sons, the Harvey name disappears. However the story does not end there because the author continues this fascinating family history with the lives of the six daughters and their descendents almost to the present day. Therefore the overall family history covers a period of some 400 years.

There is much to interest Essex historians as members of the family married into other well known Essex families. They were Governors of Chigwell School and held parochial positions such as surveyor of the highways. As a family history it is well written, informative and readable. It is well balanced and includes the flaws as well as the highlights of this illustrious family. For the art historian there is extensive information about the numerous family portraits and other pictures associated with them including artists, provenance, location and other detail.

The book is well illustrated with about forty excellent illustrations, many of them in colour. There are three detailed family trees in one of the three very helpful appendices; the others recording monumental inscriptions at Hempstead. Finally the book contains a very comprehensive index extending to no less than thirteen pages and many useful references. This hardback should be an essential addition to the library of every historian. I commend it to you.

Adrian Corder-Birch.

Pat Francis, **Borough Over The Border; life in West Ham, 1895–1915**, East London History Society, 2007, pp.vi & 223. ISBN 9760950625881. £8-40. Available from: <u>mail@eastlondonhistory.org.uk</u>

If it is true both that 'the past is another country' and that 'until you know where you have come from, you are not safe to travel' then this book should be in the hands of anyone going to work in the present day London Borough of Newham. Pat Francis, herself a product of Plaistow, the hinge between the Borough's northern middle class parts of Forest Gate and the southern Dockside areas of Canning Town, Custom House and Silvertown, has produced a marvellously vibrant yet detailed account of the formative years of this part of London-over-the -Border. West Ham, north of the Thames and east of the Lea was the heart of the massive population growth of south west Essex during the second half of the nineteenth century. Divorce from Essex and County Borough status did not come until 1889, and between 1881 and 1904 residents rose from 129,000 to 289,000. The twenty years covered by the book sees the slow acceptance by mercantile London of the

struggles to live of the newly urban poor on which their wealth was built.

Francis says 'This work is an attempt to obtain a glimpse into the minds of people living and working in West Ham between 1895 and 1915, in part through the songs they sang and listened to, and the poetry they recited, paying particular attention to the appearance, or non appearance, of references to imperialism and to the countryside'. Whilst acknowledging the importance of the Curwen Press (based in Plaistow) for popular music, and the undoubted insight lyrics give us into the mindset of their listeners, nonetheless for this distinctly unmusical reviewer, my heart sank. I need not have worried. Francis has integrated that material into a more sombre narrative using this interpretive tool judiciously alongside copious local research setting the social and political evolution of the Borough in the wider context of English and Empire history of the time.

It is a wonderfully vivid and colourful account with the key MPs Will Thorne and Charles Masterman at the heart of a cast of local figures including Arnold Hills of the Thames Ironworks, Minnie Baldock of the ILP, Passmore Edwards and the Curwen family. If I have one small 'beef' it would be the desire to hear more of religious influences beyond the standpoint of Christian Socialism represented so well by Father William in Balaam Street (still the base for the Anglican Franciscans locally), and the reactionary paternalism of some of the established church as shown by the Rev. Baumgarten, vicar of St Gabriel Canning Town.

To be left wanting more after over 200 pages is testimony to a great read and an important one, as West Ham today lies in the shadow of global capital in Canary Wharf and is about to be remade for the Olympic Games. Once again the local people need a voice as good as this that shows their trials and delights with the aids and the barriers to human flourishing.

Michael Fox

Graham Smith, Essex And Its Race For The Skies, 1900–1939, Countryside Books, 2007, pp.224. ISBN 9781846740541. £10–99.

Available for Essex Journal readers from the publishers at the special price of £8.99. Please print your name, address and the title of the book clearly on a sheet of paper and send it to: Countryside Books (EJ Offer), 2 Highfield Avenue, Newbury, Berkshire RG14 5DS. Cheques made payable to 'Countryside Books'.

Although I'm familiar with aviation between 1939-45 I have to admit to not knowing too much about what came before but thanks to Graham Smith I now have no excuses. A companion, indeed prequel, to his 1996 *Essex Airfields in the Second World War*, it is a very welcome addition to the history of aviation in Essex. Whilst it is titled as covering 1900–1939, the first chapter discusses the very first 'aeronauts' of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. A further twelve chapters then complete the story up to the outbreak of war in 1939.

It is the history of early flight that I found most fascinating. How many know that the first descent from the sky on to Essex was that by Jean-Pierre Blanchard in 1785 when his balloon landed at Laindon Hills? Our first recorded Essex flyer was George Rush of Elsenham Hall, who achieved the amazing altitude, in his balloon, of 27,146 feet in 1838! One generally thinks of the twentieth century as the era of flight so it is surprising, and refreshing, to read of these very early steps to flying.

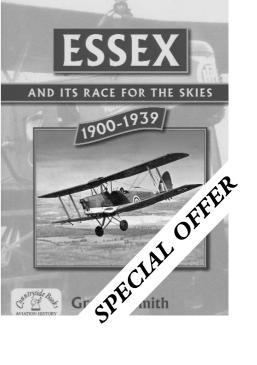
The first tentative experiments with powered flights are equally as engaging. Initially they took place with kites before moving towards purposedesigned craft. Not only are the aircraft interesting but it is the personalities that stand out: the American showman Samuel Franklin Cody or Horatio Phillips of Southminster whose 'aircraft' had 200 small wings and is said to have 'resembled Venetian blinds' (p.17). It is suggested that it flew at St. Lawrence Hill three months before the Wright brothers in America. What a claim for Essex if it had been the case!

There is a colourful roll-call of characters on hand to continue the race for the skies: Noel Pemberton Billing, Alliot Verdon Roe (founder of Avros of Lancaster bomber fame), John Moore-Brabazon, José Weiss and, not least, Bentfield 'Benny' Hucks, to name but a few. Dagenham and South Fambridge loom large with these early pioneers, both seemingly less than suitable for powered flight but, anyway, events soon moved away from them.

Later chapters cover the First World War, mainly home defence against Zeppelin and Gotha attacks,

before moving on to 1920s and 30s, looking at both civilian and military aspects. Along the way we are treated to Pups and Camels, Siskins and Gladiators and Moths of all kinds before we get to the first Hurricanes and Spitfires of the immediate pre-war years.

Obviously in a review of this length I cannot do justice to every



aspect of the book but I can say that I enjoyed it immensely. It has a good selection of illustrations, although not all have credits for those who might wish to pursue them further, and an adequate bibliography and index. A useful map has approximately 30 locations associated with links to early aviation and which are mentioned in the text. I thoroughly recommend it especially at the reduced rate that *Essex Journal* readers can purchase it at. And, let's face it, any story that includes an attempt to fly a Venetian blind just has to be read!

Neil Wiffen

Linda Rhodes & Kathryn Abnett, Foul Deeds & Suspicious Deaths In Barking, Dagenham And Chadwell Heath, Wharncliffe Books, 2007, pp.191. ISBN 9781845630348, £12-99.

The popularity of historical 'real crime' stories seems to be undiminished, and this 'foul deeds and suspicious deaths' series now has a second Essex volume - the first covers Colchester. Deeds from urban Essex have been investigated by two authors whose account of the unsolved murder of Police Constable George Clark in 1846 at Dagenham won the Crime Writers' Association Gold Dagger Non-Fiction Award in 2006.

A chronological approach is used, and the first of the twenty one chapters includes accounts of some of the men and women who were burnt at the stake for witchcraft, or for refusing to revert to Roman Catholicism when Mary Tudor came to the throne in 1553. Some of the exploits of Dick Turpin (born in Hempstead) and his brutal gang of robbers are also included.

At the other end of the time scale we learn about the exploits of Alfred Roome, alias the 'Ilford Kid,' who was involved in a violent battle with the Flying Squad in 1948 after he and his gang had stolen diamonds and gold bullion from London Airport. Eventually arrested and imprisoned for ten years, Roome returned to his wife and family in 1955. He made their lives a misery, before attacking his wife's employer with an axe and fatally poisoning himself.

Other chapters detail a variety of 'foul deeds'. They range from the appalling treatment of apprentices in the Barking fishing fleet, a major explosion in the boiler house of Hewett's engineering works, and the Ajax armanents factory disaster in 1917 where 17 of the 120 women employed there were burnt beyond recognition in a massive explosion. A chapter entitled 'The Colditz Rat' gives an account of Walter Purdy, born in Barking and a member of the British Union of Fascists. Purdy was one of only four British citizens to be convicted of treason, after he lived in Germany, collaborated with the Nazis in broadcasting radio propaganda and passed on information he had gained from British prisoners of war. Although subsequently sentenced to death in 1945, the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment and Purdy served for nine years and only died in 1982.

The book is well presented and readable, with a location map, good photographs and source references at the end of each chapter.

Maureen Scollan

C. Given-Wilson, general editor, **The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England, 1275–1504 (16 volume set),** Boydell & Brewer, 2005, ISBN 978184381617. £1,950.

The Rolls of Parliament contain the official records of the meetings of the English parliament from the reign of Edward I (1272–1307) to the reign of Henry VII (1485–1509). The series covers the ten reigns of this period in which parliaments were held. The rolls have been published in 16 volumes; the parliaments of the reign of Edward I occupy two volumes, for example.

The volumes include an introduction to every parliament known to have been held by an English king (or in his name) between 1275 and 1504, whether or not the roll for that parliament has survived. Where appropriate, appendices of supplementary material are provided. Information about each parliament is included, derived from sources other than the actual roll. Where there is evidence of business carried out at the parliament from chancery, exchequer and other sources then this is noted. Much of this supplementary material consists of petitions to parliament.¹

The Parliament Rolls of Medieval England were published for the first time in 2005. There are three versions, as follows:

- 1. a CD-ROM version, published by Scholarly Digital Editions in May 2005;
- 2. a subscription-access internet version, published by Scholarly Digital Editions in July 2005;
- 3. a print version, published by Boydell & Brewer in August 2005.

The Internet version will incorporate any subsequent amendments, but amendments to both printed and CD-ROM versions will be published in an accompanying website. This may mean that the versions will diverge slightly and it will become necessary to cite references to a particular version accurately.

The Essex Record Office (ERO) has purchased the sixteen printed volumes and the CD-ROM, so continuing to maintain its very comprehensive

collection of published state papers. The purchase has been aided by a grant of \pm 750 from the Friends of Historic Essex towards the purchase, enabling the ERO to purchase the CD-ROM version also. As a bonus, the CD-ROM contains a representative selection of images of selected documents from all reigns. For further information about visiting the ERO to access this wonderful resource please telephone, 01245 244644, or email, ero.enquiry@essex.gov.uk.

The scholarship of the seven editors involved is assured and masterly, including the late Professor Geoffrey Martin who edited part of the reign of Richrd II, (1377-79). The splendid production of the printed volumes is immediately evident. However, the capture of the full text of the series onto a single, user-friendly CD-ROM for the first time in such publications presents a major step forward. Accessibility is improved hugely. The search facility linked to the CD-ROM is easy to use being simple, conventional and intuitive. Searching key words over the full period of these rolls is straightforward; alternatively, a search may be limited to a particular reign. The results of a search are listed with some accompanying text to hint at the context. By comparison, the handling of the full printed version may be expected to be far less convenient!

Medieval England comes alive from the petitions, proceedings and judgments which are recorded; the plea of the commoners of Inglewood Forest for the return of their right to gather dead wood and turf; Inglewood inhabitants again requesting recompense for the destruction of the local Forest; a request for special measures to restrain students of Oxford University from taking 'both by day and by night, fallow deer, hares and rabbits, and they threaten to assault and kill the wardens, foresters and parkers, and their servants and deputies'; the nuns and sisters of the hospital of Buckland petitioning for the restoration of the right to three cart loads of wood from the King's park of Perton, the practice having been interrupted in the aftermath of the battle of Evesham; the inhabitants of Cockermouth seeking pontage in order to repair their bridge; revocation of the possession of Bobbingworth manor etcetera. The fascinating stuff of medieval life is at your fingertips!

Robert Brooks

Your Book Reviewers are:

Dr Robert Brooks is a retired research scientist whose special interest is in remote sensing of the environment. His historical pursuits include the ancient woodland of Essex. He is the founder of his local history society, the High Country History Group, in rural Essex.

Adrian Corder-Birch is chairman of the *Essex Journal* Editorial Board. See page 21 for further details.

Michael Fox has a long association with 'Essex in London' having been brought up in Barking. He has also

just retired, after 11 years, as Archdeacon of West Ham. Currently he lives in Colchester as well as spending as much time as possible in Lyon.

Dr Maureen Scollan is Secretary of the *Essex Journal* as well as Chairman of the *Friends of Historic Essex*. She was awarded her PhD in 2007 for a thesis on parish constables in early nineteenth century Essex, and is currently expanding some aspects of that work.

Neil Wiffen is honorary editor of the Essex Journal.

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EJ 20 Questions? Lord Petre

John Petre, the 18th Baron Petre of Writtle, Essex, JP, MA, was born at Windsor in 1942. He was educated at Eton and Trinity College, Oxford, before moving to London to work in theatrical management, ultimately as General Manager of the



Hampstead Theatre. He returned to Essex in the early 1970s in order, after two years at Writtle Agricultural College, to work with his father on the estate that his family have owned since the sixteenth century. He now manages this in collaboration with his son, Dominic. In 2002 John was appointed Lord Lieutenant of the County and, as such, has since accumulated a substantial portfolio of mainly formal posts in a wide variety of organisations throughout the county. He has been married to Marcia for 42 years and they have one surviving son, a daughter, and three grandchildren.

1. What is your favourite historical period? For professional reasons I have to say Tudor. Each year, we hold a series of Tudor re-enactments for school children at Ingatestone Hall which are firmly based on recorded facts.

2. Tell us what Essex means to you? Quite simply, home. I do believe that one of the reasons that this county is poorly perceived is that, because it is so diverse, it is almost impossible to characterise.

3. What historical mystery would you most like to know? The disappearance of the dinosaurs.

4. My favourite history book is... *The Catholic Families* by Mark Bence-Jones, which is great fun. It is a gossipy account of the fortunes of the English Catholic gentry families since the end of the eighteenth century. In view of the serial intermarriage among recusant families most of those mentioned are, one way or another, my cousins!

'Sometimes I sits and thinks and sometimes I just sits!'

5. What is your favourite place in Essex? As a former Trustee of the place, I have a great affection for the Marks Hall Estate at Coggeshall. I also look forward to opportunities to visit Harwich.

6. How do you relax? I think it is the caption to an old *Punch* cartoon – 'Sometimes I sits and thinks and sometimes I just sits!'

7. What are you researching at the moment? It does not really merit the description of 'research' but the ordering and tabulation of all the scraps of information about the family genealogy is a task I have set myself.

8. My earliest memory is... It is difficult to distinguish true memories of one's own from those based on the evidence of anecdote and old photographs, but probably either watching from the end of our lane troop convoys making their way south (presumably soon after D-Day) or my first banana!

9. What is your favourite song/piece of music and why? My taste is eclectic (not to say pretty low-brow) and current favourites change by the week. I guess it would be something from the jazz repertoire of the period 1930–1965.

10. If you could travel back in time which event would you change? Out of pure self-interest, the outcome of the Jacobite Uprisings of 1715 or 1745. According to surviving correspondence, my family gave not inconsiderable financial support to the exiled Stuart court at St. Germain and, had they regained the throne, we had reason to believe we would be duly rewarded – an earldom at least!

11. Which 4 people from the past would you invite to dinner? I feel that most of the really great figures would actually make rather poor dinner companions and so it would be artists and writers rather than politicians, warriors or heroes. Shall we say Cicero, Voltaire, Oscar Wilde and, to avoid an all-male company, Dorothy Parker.

12. What is your favourite food? Italian.

13. The history book I am currently reading is... *The Lord-Lieutenants and their Deputies* by Miles Jebb – I suppose you could say, required reading.

14. What is your favourite quote from history? 'Hegel remarks somewhere that history tends to repeat itself. He forgot to add the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce.' – Karl Marx.

15. Favourite historical film? Does *Monty Python and the Holy Grail* count?

16. What is your favourite building in Essex? Without wracking my brains, Waltham Abbey Church springs to mind.

17. What past event would you like to have seen? The building of the Great Pyramids. It remains difficult to believe it was achieved by muscle power alone. Perhaps it was aliens after all!

18. How would you like to be remembered? In the words of Douglas Adams, 'Most harmless.'

19. Who inspires you to read or write or research history? Difficult to identify individuals but I have fond memories of Brian Rees, my history teacher at school, and, of course, Gus Edwards. They were both very strong on history being about human nature as much as great events.

20. Most memorable historical date? On the assumption that this means the date most difficult to forget rather than the significance of the event it marks, it must be either 'In fourteen hundred and ninety-two, Columbus sailed the ocean blue' or 'George III said, with a smile, "1760 yards in a mile"

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