

Essex JOURNAL

A REVIEW OF LOCAL HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

Spring 2014

COMPLETION OF THE ESSEX MANORIAL DOCUMENT REGISTER

AND SO MUCH MORE...

EJ 20 Questions:
Hannah Salisbury

Hylands Hospital, Widford.



Essex at War, 1914-1918

Commemorating the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War

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At Hylands House, London Road, Chelmsford, CM2 8WQ

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I must apologise for the late arrival of this issue of the *Essex Journal* but not only has family and home life been incredible busy (and that's before you take into account my very large garden) but my day job at the ERO has taken up much more of my time and energy than normal. To top it all I have been co-ordinating an upgrade to the equipment and programmes that *EJ* is produced on. This has been a significant learning curve for me, for while I use and appreciate modern technology, I do generally use it as a tool rather than for enjoyment. Basically I'd rather read a papery book than go to a computer to find my kicks! All this new 'stuff' that the *EJ* has invested in will pay dividends in the longer term but, combined with all the other calls on my time, the result has been to delay the publication of this issue.

One of the things that took up a fair bit of my time and energy was hosting one of the ERO's outreach sessions – *Walking with Walker*. This was a genteel stroll up Chelmsford High Street talking about the layout and buildings and how the modern town relates to the wonderful 1591 map produced by John Walker, along with using some of the fantastic images that the various Spaldings took of Chelmsford. The research side of things was made very easy as Chelmsford historians are fortunate indeed to have access to the two volumes of *Sleepers in the Shadows* by Hilda Grieve. What a delight to read and how easily Hilda wears her learning! Pulling out key points was only made difficult by the breadth, width and depth of her knowledge. My only regret is that I never knew Hilda but by all accounts she was as lovely in real life as her writing is still. At the end of the walk, standing in front of Shire Hall, I had great pleasure in acknowledging the debt that we owe Hilda, as indeed we do to all those historians who have gone before us (and which Noel Beer, in his article on Danbury Palace, does for Nancy Edwards). To drive home how important Hilda's research was/is I read out to the assembled company who had taken part in the walk, the following from the introduction of volume 1 of *Sleepers*:

'When the last war ended in 1945 I was still as ignorant of Chelmsford's Past as I had been when I first came here in 1939. It was the Chelmsford Planning Survey of 1944-5, sponsored by a Chelmsford Area Planning

Group formed in 1935 and directed by Mr Anthony Minoprio, that drew my attention to it, by inviting me to contribute a brief historical chapter to the final Report published in 1945. I discovered then that a business review of the Industries of the Eastern Counties published in 1888-90 considered that Chelmsford was 'happy in possessing little in the way of history'; that Frederick Chancellor confessed to the Essex archaeological Society in 1906 that 'the ancient history of Chelmsford has still to be written'; and that in 1921 J.H. Round dismissed this neglect with the judgement, 'There seems to be very little about which to write'. My superficial reconnaissance in 1945 convinced me that Round might be wrong.'



Understated and just right – good on you Hilda, we remember.

I hope that there will be something for everyone in this issue, from the Romans, via King Cnut, to manorial documents, Charles Clark in Great Totham, Essex policemen, nineteenth century Bishops, a World War One aerodrome and news from the ERO. Martin Stuchfield remembers Brian Burton and Bill Hewitt while Stuart Warburton shares his memories of Debbie Peers whom we lost at far too young an age. Finally a few book reviews and last but by no means least Hannah Salisbury shares her interesting 20 answers with us.

Here's to the autumn issue, may it come out in a more timely fashion! I'm off for a lie down.

Cheerio,

Neil

PS My congratulations to Martin on his MBE – I can only hope it will make him less busy!

STOP PRESS

It is with great pleasure that the Essex Journal Editorial Board is able to congratulate Martin Stuchfield on his appointment to an MBE – well done Martin and thank you for all your support over the years.

'Her Gracious Majesty is pleased to have appointed Howard Martin Stuchfield as a Member of the Order of the British Empire (M.B.E.) for services to Heritage, Charity and to the community in Essex.'

THE PLUME LECTURE 2014

Saturday 15th November

The Trustees of Thomas Plume's Library are pleased to announce that this year's Lecture will be given by Dr Robert Beaken, author of *Cosmo Lang: Archbishop in War and Crisis*, parish priest of St Mary the Virgin, Great Bardfield and St Katharine, Little Bardfield in Essex.

In December 1936, at the height of the Abdication Crisis, Cosmo Gordon Lang, Archbishop of Canterbury, held the fate of the British monarchy in his hands. Together with the Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin, he helped to manoeuvre Edward VIII from the throne and to replace him with the king's brother, the Duke of York, who was to become George VI. It was a move which would have far-reaching consequences for the course of British history.

The period 1928-1942 saw some of the greatest political and social upheavals in modern British history and Lang was at the centre of these. As Archbishop of Canterbury, he led the Church of England through this tumultuous period and was a pivotal influence in political and religious decision-making. Although Lang has often been seen as a fairly unsuccessful archbishop who was resistant to change, Robert Beaken shows that he was, in fact, an effective leader of the Church at a difficult time.

He also proved to be a sensitive leader during wartime, opposing any demonization of the enemy and showing compassion to conscientious objectors. Drawing on previously unseen material, Beaken tells the story of a fascinating, yet complicated man, who was Britain's first 'modern' Archbishop of Canterbury.

The lecture will take place on Saturday 15th November 2014 at 7.30 pm in the United Reformed Church, Market Hill, Maldon, CM9 4PZ. There is no entry charge and advance booking is not necessary.

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Knútsdrápa

and the site of the Battle of Assandun

by

James Kemble

**‘You fought a battle beneath the shield at Assatún.
Prince, you won renown enough with your great sword north of Danaskogar,
But to your men it seemed slaughter indeed.’¹**

In 1016, the Danish leader Cnut defeated King Edmund Ironside at Assandun in Essex and was king within a year, the first non-Saxon to rule England for over 400 years.² Where this decisive battle took place as Cnut’s army was making its way into Mercia, either at Ashdon in north Essex or Ashingdon on the River Crouch in the southeast, has been the subject of fierce debate at least since the sixteenth century when Camden favoured Ashingdon.³ Amongst the more recent significant contributions to the debate have been those of J. Down, C.R. Hart and W. Rodwell⁴ who have discussed the documentary evidence, battle strategy, topography, place- and field-names, and the extant churches. All three have, hesitatingly, favoured Ashdon, but left the question open. This Note adds a further case for Ashdon to which both Hart and Rodwell alluded but were unable to pursue.

Amongst place-name evidence for the battle is Assatúnnum which Reaney⁵ included under Ashingdon. This name occurs in the Old Norse poem extolling Cnut, *Knútsdrápa*, compiled c.1050 some 34 years after the battle. Direct reference to the geographical site for the battle is here stated as having been ‘north of Danaskogar’, ‘Dane’s Wood’.⁶ Rodwell looked in vain for ‘Dane’s Wood’ in Ashingdon and

neighbouring Canewdon. In Ashdon, he was distracted to Hales Wood and Shadwell Wood, but noted fields called Danes Croft, Short and Long Dane in adjacent Hadstock (which fields are fairly widely separated so do not denote a focus).⁷

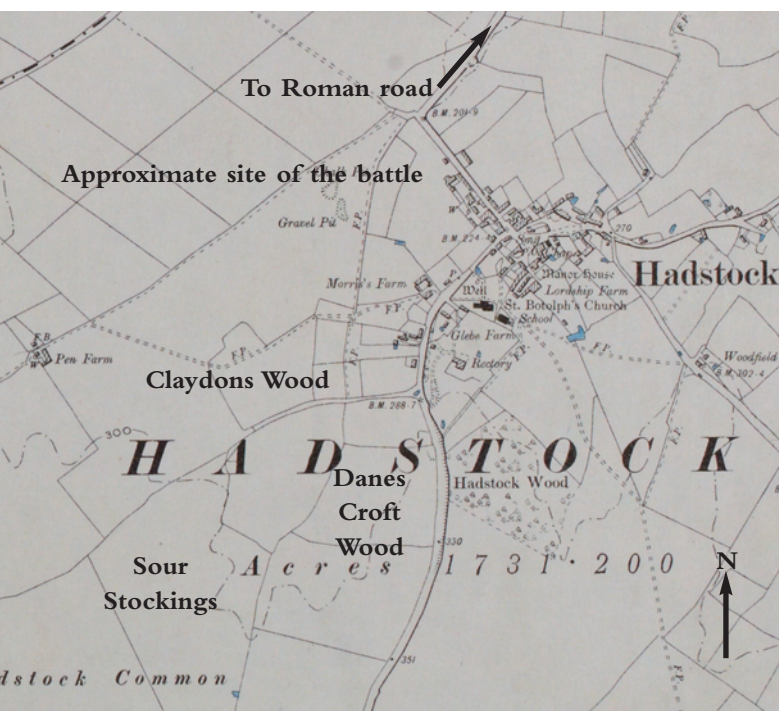
Danes Wood can however be identified. From the Enclosure Map and Award of Hadstock, the ancient inclosure Danes Croft lies immediately northeast of and adjacent to an unnamed remnant of woodland and the large ancient inclosure named Sour Stockings (OS, TL555446). Here is the clue to the site of Danes Wood, the wooded remnant next to Danes Croft plus the field Stockings, that is from Old English *stoccing*, ‘land from which tree-stumps have been cleared’.⁸ Before its clearance, this was an extensively wooded area, Claydon Grove and The Lays (woodland clearing) lying immediately to the north, no doubt all once known, at least in Old Norse, as Danaskogar. The topography northwards lies on a ridge above the 300 ft contour, only 2 miles from the Roman road into Mercia.

North of Danes Wood, so the almost contemporary poem states, was where the opposing armies of King Edmund and Cnut met, and where all the flower of England, including monks from Ely Abbey who may have been residing at Hadstock, perished in the fighting.⁹

References

1. M. Ashdown, (ed), *English and Norse Documents relating to the Reign of Æthelred the Unready*, (Cambridge, 1930), p.139.
2. G. N. Garmonsway, ed, *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, (London, 1972), p.151-152.
3. W. Camden (R. Gough, ed), *Britannia*, (London, 1789).
4. J. Down, ‘The Location of Assandun’, *Essex Journal*, 22, II (1987), p.7; C. Hart, *The Danelaw*, (London, 1992), p.553; W. Rodwell, 1993, in J. Cooper, (ed), *The Battle of Maldon*, (Hambleton, 1993), p.127.
5. P.H. Reaney, *Place-names of Essex*, (Cambridge, 1935), p.177.
6. Ashdown, pp.138-139.
7. Essex Record Office, Q/RDc 7a, Hadstock Enclosure Award, 1805 & D/DQy 28, Hadstock Enclosure map c.1805.
8. J. Field, *English Field Names*, (Gloucester, 1989), p.220.
9. E.O. Blake, ‘Liber Eliensis’, *Royal Hist. Soc.*, Camden 3rd series, 92 (1962).

**Map of Hadstock with additions.
(Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office,
2nd Ed 6 Inch OS, Sheet 3NW, 1896.)**



Great Totham Church in 1821

(or thereabouts)

by

James Bettley

Two paintings in St Peter's Church, Great Totham, are to be conserved and redisplayed in the church, thanks to grants from Heritage Lottery Fund, the Essex Heritage Trust, and the Church Buildings Council, as well as private donations.

Both the oil paintings have been in St Peter's since at least 1831. This was the year of publication of G.W. Johnson's *History of the Parish of Great Totham*, and one of the paintings – 'Great Totham Church' by Miss Hayter – was engraved for the frontispiece. The original has not been seen properly for a long time; until last year it was hidden behind a cupboard in the vestry, where it had suffered badly from damp and dirt. It shows the church as it was before changes to the building later in the 19th century, and so is an important historical record as well as a charming work of art. The identity of 'Miss Hayter' has not been confirmed, but there is strong circumstantial evidence to suggest that she was Ann Hayter (1795–1854), daughter of the painter Charles Hayter and herself an accomplished artist who exhibited at the Royal Academy. Charles Hayter lived in Witham for a few months in 1821 and knew the Revd Thomas Foote Gower, the curate (and later vicar) of Great Totham who at one time owned the painting.

The other painting is the 'Adoration of the Magi', which was originally given to the church to use as a reredos but in recent years has been hanging by the font. According to Johnson it was given to the church by Mrs Frances Lee of Maldon and came from a chapel attached to Messing House. It is hoped that further investigation will identify Mrs Lee and Messing House, and also the original of which the church's painting is presumed to be a copy.

Some versions of the engraving of 'Great Totham Church' (of which there are various examples in the Essex Record Office) state that Miss Hayter's painting was in the possession of Charles Clark, the doggerel poet and amateur printer who lived in Great Totham Hall (and printed Johnson's *History*). Clark, Gower, and the brothers G.W. and C.W. Johnson were the centre of a social and cultural circle that flourished in Great Totham from the 1820s to the 1840s, and to mark the anticipated return of the paintings a symposium is being held in the church on Saturday 1st November 2014, entitled 'Miss Hayter, Mr Gower, and Mr Clark: Great Totham in 1821 (or thereabouts)'. This will take the form of an afternoon of short talks and related events, including an introduction to Great Totham in the 1820s by Clive Potter, readings of Charles Clark's poems by poet and art historian Adam Crick (who,

it is hoped, will also recite his own poem in the style of Clark written specially for the occasion), demonstrations by amateur printer and Charles Clark aficionado Alan Brignull, and a contribution by Dr Carrie Griffin of the University of Bristol who, with Dr Mary O'Connell, has been studying Clark's papers in the Essex Record Office. They uncovered this reference to Miss Hayter's painting in a letter that Clark wrote to London bookseller John Russell Smith on 16th November 1842:

'While you were packing up for me on Monday evening I was most comfortably dining & tossing down my wine at our worthy Vicar's tithe-dinner, according to annual custom, in the very room from which Miss Hayter took her sketch of our Church that was engraved from for our History, & it was suspended against the wall just behind me. About a dozen of us spent a very pleasant 6 or 7 hours of it, I assure you. Most of us, I fear – not excepting even our spiritual pastor! – felt a little the worse for it yesterday, with headaches, &c. &c. Gower gave us some capital old port. We dined at about 4 & broke up at a little after 10, a very sober hour certainly!' (ERO, D/DU 668/6.)

For further information about the symposium, please consult totham1821.wordpress.com, or email jb1782@icloud.com. It is very likely that port will be drunk at some stage of the proceedings, although not in such quantity as to induce headaches.



Manorial Documents Register for Essex

by
Alison Cassidy

The Manorial Documents Register (MDR) is the official register of manorial documents for England and Wales and it is maintained by The National Archives (TNA) on behalf of the Master of the Rolls. The Register contains information about the nature and location of surviving manorial documents.

Manorial documents have statutory protection under the Manorial Documents Rules. They are defined in the Rules as court rolls, surveys, maps, terriers, documents and books of every description relating to the boundaries, franchises, wastes, customs or courts of a manor. Only these types of document are noted in the MDR. Title deeds and other evidences of title are not defined as manorial documents and are therefore not included. It is not a register of title and information about the ownership of manors is not collected.

The MDR is partially computerised – Wales and the following English counties, Bedfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Cumberland, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, Isle of Wight, Lancashire, Middlesex, Norfolk, Nottinghamshire, Shropshire, Surrey, Warwickshire, Westmorland, and the three Ridings of Yorkshire, are available online. Essex has just been completed.

The project to update and computerise the original MDR paper records relating to the county of Essex has been made possible through a collaborative project led by Royal Holloway, University of London in association with Essex Record Office (ERO), supported by the Marc Fitch Fund and TNA. It commenced in April 2009 under my predecessor as Project Officer, Dr Christopher Starr. I started work part-time as Project Officer for Essex in October 2011 with a projected completion target date of September 2013, subsequently extended to December 2013. At the time of my appointment the details from the Essex MDR ring-binders had already been transferred to an Excel spreadsheet, and provisional Essex parish and manor lists compiled and significant work on identifying manors had been undertaken.

To bring the project to completion, therefore, my tasks have been to verify the parish and manor lists, then to work through the MDR entries and check them against available catalogues, online where possible, to verify details of the records, to visit relevant repositories to check records where the catalogue details were insufficient for the requirements of the MDR, and to contact remaining repositories which were too distant to visit or where holdings were small to request details from them.

During the project I had considerable recourse to SEAX, the online database including details of the holdings of ERO, and also made repeated visits to ERO to check for further details of their manorial

holdings. Other repositories visited after initial checks of their online catalogues established that more detailed examination of the records or, indeed, of paper catalogues, were needed were TNA, the British Library, London Metropolitan Archives (LMA), Waltham Forest Archives and Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies.

The verification of the details in the MDR binders for Essex has been completed, with the exception of the following outstanding records: records in other repositories where responses to letters are still awaited, records in private hands which are to be referred to TNA, to follow-up, records purported to be at ERO which I have not been able to locate in SEAX or in the course of checking through documents there.

Record Locations

Of the records input to the database, some 70% of entries relate to records at ERO, although since many of these entries represent runs of records rather than single items, the overall proportion of known Essex manorial records held at ERO is undoubtedly rather higher than this. Significant quantities of manorial records survive in a number of estate archives deposited at ERO, notably in the archives of Lord Petre of Ingatestone Hall and Thorndon Hall, Lord Braybrooke of Audley End, the Mildmay family of Moulsham Hall, Chelmsford, the Rich family of Wanstead House and Rochford Hall, and the Tower family of Weald Hall, as well as in various solicitors' collections (which obviously also ultimately emanate from their clients' estates). Since a proportion of the ancient county of Essex was in 1965 transferred to be re-designated as various London Boroughs, there are also holdings of Essex manorial records in several London Borough repositories, notably in Newham Archives and Local Studies (manors in the areas of East and West Ham) and in Waltham Forest Archives (manors in the areas of Leyton and Walthamstow).

The other most significant holdings of Essex manorial records in terms of number of entries made to the Essex MDR database unsurprisingly proved to be at TNA (about 15%) and the LMA (about 4%, mainly as the place of deposit of the archives of the Diocese of London and the Dean and Chapter of St Pauls Cathedral). The remaining archives input to the database are held in the usual variety of other repositories – county archives, university archives, country house estate archives, etc. – numbering over 50 in total, including small numbers of records at four overseas repositories.

There have also been a number of records input to the database from microfilms at ERO of privately held manorial records, the current whereabouts of which records will need be confirmed or established.



An extract from the 1592 manorial survey of Castle Hedingham by Israel Amyce. (ERO, D/DMh M1.)

Manors

Establishing a list of manors for each county involved identifying those which not only were called a manor but which with reasonable certainty maintained a manor court. This is crucial because only records produced under the administration of a manor court are eligible for inclusion in the MD Register.

Using the authority sources of Morant's *History and Antiquities of Essex* (1768), the volumes so far printed of the *Victoria County History of Essex* (VCH), and, of course, the records themselves, the total number of properties called a manor identified for Essex is currently 1273. Of these, five manors are found in the Essex VCH, but not in Morant, so it might be anticipated that, since the Essex VCH so far covers only about 15% of Essex, further manors may be identified as further VCH volumes are researched (applying a multiplier would suggest approaching 30 further manors might be uncovered). Some eight manors have been proved from actual records, however, which do not appear in Morant, but for which there is no coverage as yet in the VCH.

Of the 1273 Essex manors identified, 647 have sufficient quantities and appropriate types of records to be considered proven manors (ie with reasonable certainty maintained a manor court) 626 further manors are considered unproven, of which there are records for 191 or c.30% of those 'manors', but not of a type to prove manorial administrative activity or status, and no records for the remaining 435 or c.70% of those 'manors'.

If all 1273 manors were of an equal size (which, of course, they are not), with the county of Essex being about 1,420 square miles in area, the average area covered by each manor would be 1.1 square miles.

Honours

Additionally I have entered to the database eight honours for which there exist some records representing administration carried out in Essex. An honour was an administrative unit based on a number

of manors, the tenants of which manors owed suit to an honour court in addition to, or in place of, the normal manor court. They are as follows:

- 1-3. The honours of Castle Hedingham, Rayleigh and Stansted Mountfitchet, which each had their caput at the Essex locations bearing those names.
4. Mandeville honour, which was extensive but, although holding courts additionally in London and Hertford, had its caput at Pleshey in Essex. References are sometimes made in printed sources (e.g. Morant) to Pleshey honour, but presumably this is actually Mandeville honour, since I find no actual records of it otherwise and doubt that they would have co-existed.
5. Lisle honour, which comprised the Essex and Kent portions of the extensive honour formerly held by Eudo Dapifer, and held its courts at Arkesden in Essex and Walbrook in the City of London.
6. Clare honour, which is strictly, as its name suggests, a Suffolk honour, but which operated a court leet known as Sandpit Leet in Braintree in Essex, relating to which there are many records at TNA.
- 7-8. Also Stambourne Honour and Gloucester Honour, for which records survive of administrative activity at Stambourne in Essex, specifically under those honorial titles, but which, particularly with the first named, I suspect might really relate to the honour of Clare: certainly Morant in his *History and Antiquities of Essex* makes no mention of a Stambourne Honour at Stambourne, although he does mention a court leet held at Stambourne for the honour of Clare.

By the time this issue of *Essex Journal* has gone to press a launch event for the Essex MDR will have been held at ERO on Saturday 12th July. *Essex Through the Ages: Tracing the Past Using Manorial Documents* will incorporate sessions on the history and purpose of manors generally, the Manorial Documents Register, and manorial records in Essex. Following on from this Essex entries will be able to be searched on the MDR pages of the TNA Website:

<http://apps.nationalarchives.gov.uk/mdr/default.htm>

I would like to thank specifically all the other MDR Project Officers who have assisted me by checking Essex manorial records in the repositories for their counties, notably the Project Officers for Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire, and Suffolk, who, working on the projects for nearby counties to Essex, inevitably bore the brunt of my enquiries. I would also like to express my considerable indebtedness to the collaboration of Katharine Schofield at ERO, whose assistance has been both extensive and good humoured, and also to Liz Hart at TNA for helpful responses to a variety of queries which arose in the course of the project.

The Saving of Stow Maries

Great War Aerodrome

by

Stuart Warburton and Ivor Dallinger

On the 17th December 2013 a new chapter opened in the story of Stow Maries Aerodrome near Maldon, a story that had its beginning during the Great War and the first London Blitz and battle for Britain.

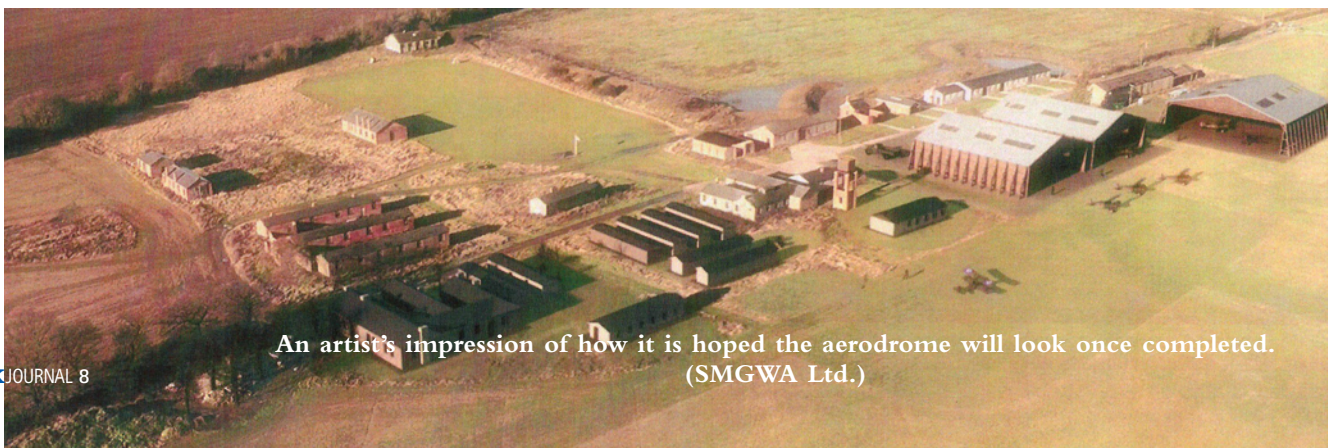
The aerodrome is of national and international importance. There are other World War One period aerodromes (for example Duxford in Cambridgeshire, Upavon and Netheravon in Wiltshire) but these were extended, rebuilt and modified during World War Two or simply demolished; Stow Maries was not and is the last unadulterated and complete World War One aerodrome in Britain and Europe.

Its historic, architectural and military importance was for many years forgotten and the site buildings survive only because it became agricultural accommodation for farm labourers working at the nearby Flambirds Farm. The historic importance was realised in 1997 when local historians brought the site to the attention of the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments (England) who, from their Cambridge office, carried out the first site survey producing a report in March 1997, *Stow Maries Airfield*. In 2006 the 79 acre site was purchased in a very dilapidated and derelict state by Stow Maries Aerodrome Ltd. The owner's tenant and partner Russell Savory was to begin renovation of the site buildings starting with his own workshop for his high performance sports car business. Over a four year period Mr Savory and Stow Maries Aerodrome Ltd restored six buildings including the Other Ranks Mess Hall, the Royal Flying Corp Workshop and Dope Shop, the Blacksmith's Workshop, the Ambulance Garage and Mortuary and the Squadron Office, which became a museum devoted to the history of the site. Stow Maries Aerodrome Ltd under Mr Savory's guidance saw the importance of the site and opened it to the public from 2010. In that year Maldon District Council recommended the site should be designated a conservation area and in 2012 all twenty-four remaining buildings were listed as Grade II* on the advice of Maldon District Council and English Heritage, who also produced a detailed

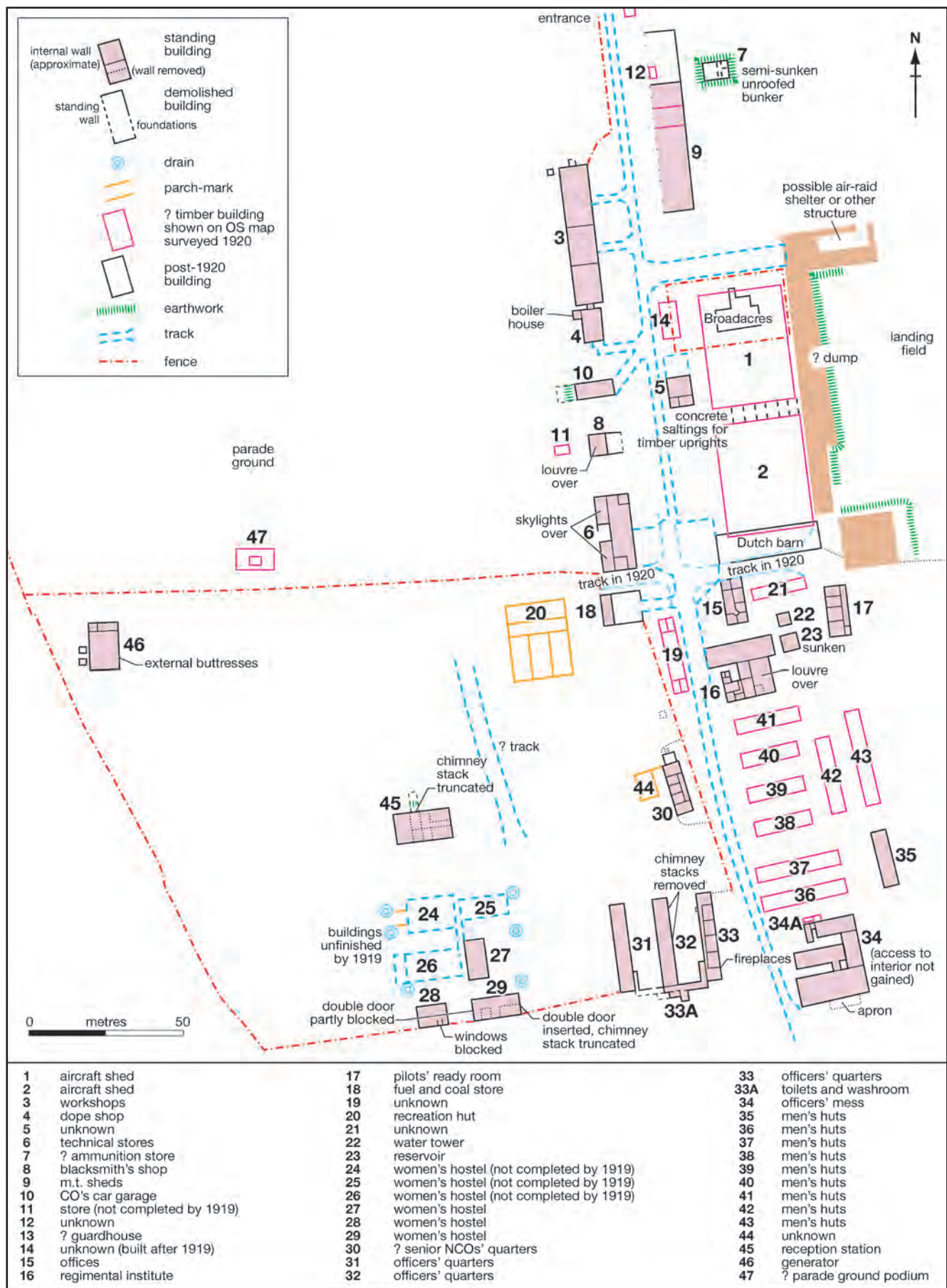
advice report based on a survey carried out in September 2011, (English Heritage Advice Report, Case Name: Stow Maries WWI Airfield, Case Number: 468822, 02/04/2012).

Although the site was statutorily protected it was put at risk in August 2012 when Stow Maries Aerodrome Ltd decided to sell the site for £2 million. Mr Savory was unable to purchase the site from his partner and therefore approached Essex County Council and Maldon District Council for assistance in raising the money to safeguard the purchase and put the site into public ownership. The Leaders of Essex County Council and Maldon District Council, Councillors Peter Martin and Bob Boyce, led a project team to raise the funds required for its purchase. Under the guidance of Councillors Jeremy Lucas (ECC) and Adrian Fluker (MDC), Stuart Warburton (Heritage Development Manager with ECC) started the process of raising the necessary grants through producing a business plan, identifying legal and financial representation and applying for grants. The cost had dropped to £1.85 million but this was still a large asking price. A meeting with the Heritage Lottery Fund in Cambridge, however, opened the door to the National Heritage Memorial Fund, who are the 'fund of last resort' and in April 2013 approved a grant of £1,505,000 to assist with the site purchase. The remaining £350,000 was raised through English Heritage (£50,000) and Essex County Council and Maldon District Council who provided loans of £200,000 and £100,000 respectively, to be paid back within 10 years. During April 2013 the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome Ltd charitable company was enacted to be the recipient of the grants and purchase the site from Stow Maries Aerodrome Ltd. After prolonged legal and financial due diligence the site was finally purchased and secured for the nation by the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome Ltd. on the 17th December 2013.

Why not join the Friends of Stow Maries Aerodrome and help to support the important work being undertaken to bring it back to life. For more details see: <http://www.fosma.co.uk>



An artist's impression of how it is hoped the aerodrome will look once completed. (SMGWA Ltd.)



A plan of Stow Maries aerodrome based on the RCHM survey, NBR: 96158. (C. D'Alton.)

News from the Essex Record Office

In the year which marks the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, we have been investigating our collections to see what they can tell us about the effects of the war in our county. Even we have been surprised at the amount of material that we have unearthed; we have found everything from local preparations in case of a German invasion to a soldier's sketches made in the trenches. We will be posting First World War highlights from our collections on our blog over the coming months and years (www.essexrecordofficeblog.co.uk) and we are also running special events to mark the centenary. Our next Discover: First World War records at ERO workshop, which will introduce you to some of the sources that we have here and also take a look at how to trace names on local war memorials, takes place on 6 August, and on Sunday 14 September, we will be heading to Hylands House to take part in Essex at War, part of a weekend of special centenary events in Chelmsford for Heritage Open Days. You can find out more at www.essexrecordofficeblog.co.uk/wwi

One of our other major points of focus recently has been manorial documents. The ERO has been taking part in a major update of the Manorial Documents Register (MDR) which is kept by the National Archives, to make these records easier for researchers to find. Manorial documents can be useful for all sorts of different kinds of research, whether it is tracing your ancestors or the history of your house or local village, or social and economic history. Manorial documents can date back to the 1200s up to 1922, and before parish registers began to be kept in 1538 they might be the only documents in which relatively ordinary people might appear.

To mark the conclusion of our contribution to the MDR update, we have been publishing useful guides on our blog to help researchers find their way through these documents. These guides cover what a manor was and what sort of records have survived from them, and what sort of information you might expect to find in them. This might include anything from who held land to outbreaks of violence, such as an attack which took place in Earls Colne in 1472, when a mob armed with 'pycheforkes' beat up other local tenants. You can read more about manorial records in Alison Cassidy's piece on pages 6 and 7.

We have had a few staff changes since last writing; Archivist Sarah Dickie retired in March after 20 years with ERO, and she has been replaced by Lawrence Barker, who has been with us as in various capacities since 2007. We wish Sarah a long and happy retirement and Lawrence the best of luck in his new role.

We have also welcomed two new staff members; Andy Morgan has joined us in a temporary role as a Digitiser, digitising material for Essex Ancestors and for customer orders, and Sarah-Joy Maddeaux has joined us as You Are Hear Project Officer. In the last *Journal* we mentioned that we had been fortunate to secure a grant of £53,700 from the Heritage Lottery Fund for our project *You Are Hear: Sound and a Sense of Place*. The project ultimately aims to digitise and catalogue historically valuable recordings held in the Essex Sound and Video Archive, focussing on oral history interviews. This wealth of digitised recordings will then be shared with Essex residents in a variety of ways.

Meanwhile, our schools service has recently launched a brand new session for primary school pupils based on the impact of the First World War on Essex. We are also working on a First World War resource pack for secondary school pupils which should be available soon. As the current school year draws to a close over 1,000 school pupils, both primary and secondary, have accessed our education service, whether through a visit to ERO or through one of our sessions at their school. If you know a teacher who would like to book a session with us, put them in touch with:

heritage.education@essex.gov.uk

As ever, there is plenty going on in our events programme, and with workshops, lectures and family activities we have something for everyone. You can find details of them at www.essex.gov.uk/EROevents or write to us to request an events guide.

You can keep up with the ERO by joining the e-bulletin to receive monthly updates. To be added to the mailing list, e-mail me, hannahjane.salisbury@essex.gov.uk, with 'e-bulletin' as the subject.

We hope to see you at the ERO soon!

Hannah Salisbury, Access and Participation Officer

**Soldiers at Great Waltham.
(ERO, I/MB 383/1/12.)**



Secrets of the mound:

rare frankincense found in Mersea's Roman barrow

by

Sue Howlett

In January 2013, a consignment of ancient cremated bone was delivered to the laboratories of Wessex Archaeology, for analysis by Senior Osteoarchaeologist Jacqueline McKinley. While this assignment appeared at first 'all in a day's work' to the experienced professional, who had investigated and reported on more than 5000 cremation burials and appeared regularly on Channel 4's *Time Team*,¹ to the people of Mersea Island these bones were the subject of intense interest. Identified following their discovery as the remains of an adult, in the 1970s they were labelled and described in a Colchester Museum publication as those of a child. After further decades of uncertainty and curiosity, the centenary of their excavation

provided the stimulus for a major exhibition in Mersea Island Museum and a campaign of fund-raising to pay for analysis of the cremated bone.

Local residents and visitors were quick to donate and, helped by generous grants from the Association for Roman Archaeology and the Mersea Island Society, the target was reached in the autumn of 2012. A few months later, permission was granted and arrangements made by Colchester Museum Service for the bone fragments to be carefully packaged and despatched to Salisbury for scientific analysis. In due course, routine tests confirmed details of the age, sex and physical condition of the individual buried beneath the barrow, but

they also raised an urgent and unexpected question: what was the mysterious, sticky substance coating the bones, which emitted a choking, resinous aroma and fine dust when disturbed?²

The 1912 Excavation

The cremated bone in its fine glass urn had been discovered in 1912 beneath the Mersea Barrow (also known as Mersea Mount), a conspicuous tumulus, or burial mound, beside East Mersea Road in West Mersea (Figs. 1 & 2). Nearly two millennia after its construction, the barrow still measured 22 feet 6 inches (6.85 metres) high, with a circumference of about 110 feet (33.5 metres). It was excavated for the first time by the acclaimed geologist, Samuel Hazzledine Warren, on behalf of

1. The Mersea Barrow, East Mersea Road, West Mersea.

(This and subsequent illustrations reproduced courtesy of Mersea Island Museum Trust.)





2. The Mersea Barrow cremation urn, displayed in Mersea Island Museum during the summer of 2012.

the short-lived Morant Club, a 'spade club' formed to investigate such ancient earthworks in Essex. On a preliminary visit to the barrow, Warren met the club's two secretaries, Miller Christy and Francis Reader, who agreed that a six-foot wide trench should be cut from the eastern side of the mound towards its centre, to meet a shaft, 12 feet square, which would be sunk down from the central summit. The position of this shaft was dictated by several large trees growing on the mound, and this, combined with changes in the mound's profile over many centuries meant that when the burial was eventually located it proved to be around 13 feet to the north-west of the apparent centre of the mound.

On Monday 15th April 1912, Warren arrived from his home in Loughton, Essex, to take up temporary residence in a boarding house in Seaview Avenue, West Mersea. Work began at the site the following day, and by the end of the week four workmen, on loan from Colchester Corporation, had arrived to assist in the heavy digging. By Tuesday 7th May, Warren had taken only one day's break, until a family emergency forced him to return home and suspend operations on the cusp of a major discovery. He returned to Mersea on Monday 20th May, and within a day the workmen's tools

at last struck something solid. Rushing to West Mersea Post Office he despatched an excited telegram to Arthur Wright, curator of Colchester Museum with whom he had been in regular postal contact throughout the excavation. The message read simply:

'Found small built structure wait opening tomorrow'.³

The momentous discovery was revealed on 22nd May 1912, in front of a crowd of local dignitaries, curious visitors and islanders, and the chairman of the Morant Club, Dr Henry Laver. At the heart of the barrow, the excavators had uncovered a solid, layered, domed structure built of flanged Roman roofing tiles on a foundation of stone and flint. This impenetrable tomb was further sealed by layers of a mysterious

'red stratum', consisting of crushed red tile, yellow ochre and mortar. It was necessary to dismantle the eastern side of the structure in order to reveal its contents, a task which Warren approached with meticulous care. As he recorded in a pencilled letter, hastily written from the excavation site to Arthur Wright, unfortunately absent because of a family bereavement:

'I am anxious not to rush the thing but to get round it carefully. I have worked a candle into the chink we have made in one side, & find that there is a cinerary urn inside, which appears to be perfect. It seems to be contained in a square receptacle which looks like lead, & is covered with two pieces of wood.'⁴

3. Flashlight photograph taken by Warren in May 1912, showing the opened structure containing a lead box. The removal of two planks had revealed the rim of a glass urn.



As the process was completed, Warren took several flashlight photographs to record the burial, exposed for the first and only time since the tomb was sealed and buried beneath tons of earth by the construction of the great barrow above (Fig. 3.). Although Warren hoped that the tomb structure could be dismantled, removed and reassembled in Colchester Museum, this proved impractical. After remaining in place for at least a year, complete with replicas of the casket and cremation urn, the remains of the tomb, consisting mainly of Roman roof tiles (*tegulae*), disappeared sometime after the outbreak of the Great War. However, as Warren proudly recorded in his report of the excavation: 'It was a great day for the inhabitants of Mersea Island, to see the secrets of their barrow, which had for so many generations exercised their wonder and speculation, at last revealed.'⁵

Warren's immediate concern was removal of the lead box containing the urn and cremated bone for transport to the museum in Colchester Castle, and arrangements were made for a horse and cart to be provided. Perhaps fortunately, this proved unnecessary, as Henry Laver's son, Dr Philip Laver, arrived on the scene in time to convey the fragile items in his new motor car (described by Warren as a 'dreadful anachronism!')⁶ After its safe delivery to Colchester Castle, the glass cremation urn was for the first time removed from its lead casket, to be studied and photographed by Arthur Wright. Struck by its 'superior technique and proportions' compared with others of the same type, he estimated that the bowl dated from the Flavian period, between AD 60 and 96.⁷ On the advice of the Morant Club, the Mersea Barrow funerary assemblage was formally presented to Colchester Museum by landowner Charles Brown. The items went on public display, to be joined more than 20 years later by a second, smaller cremation urn containing the remains of a

child, which had been discovered near the site of a known Roman villa at West Mersea.

Analysis of the cremated bone

For the century following their discovery, the items found in the Mersea Barrow remained on display in Colchester Museum until its closure in 2012 for a major redevelopment project. By fortunate coincidence, this was the year in which Mersea Island Museum planned to celebrate the centenary of the barrow's excavation, and a formal request was made for the temporary loan of the lead casket and glass cremation urn, to form the centrepiece of Mersea Museum's summer exhibition. To widespread delight this request was granted. The cremated bones in their beautiful container returned to the island where they had first been buried beneath the great tumulus nearly two thousand years before. Between May and September 2012, hundreds of local people and visitors from further afield visited Mersea Museum to admire the items from the barrow and other 'Buried Secrets' which the exhibition celebrated. Many also ventured inside the Mersea Barrow, especially on the Heritage Open Days of 2012 and 2013, which saw a combined total of over 500 adults and children exploring the burial chamber at the heart of the great mound. There was great public interest in the barrow, and especially in the identity of (or at least, some information about) the individual whose bones were contained in the beautiful glass urn. Who had been important enough for such a huge and conspicuous monument to be constructed over his (or her) remains?

Even the original excavator, Samuel Hazzledine Warren, had found this a difficult question to answer. The burial containers were clearly Roman, but Warren knew that barrows had not been built in Britain since the Bronze Age, only reappearing with the advent of Roman influence.

Yet he was also convinced that Romans did not build barrows, which must have been constructed by 'more barbarous', presumably British inhabitants:

'It seems to me in the highest degree improbable that an important personage of a more highly cultured race would be buried according to the custom of a more barbarous people whom they had conquered... Thus, although we have unfortunately no clue to the name, I think that we may reasonably suppose Mersea Mount to be the tomb of some important personage or petty ruler of British race, but living under Roman influence.'⁸

However tantalizing this question, it was most unlikely that osteological analysis could provide any evidence of the individual's ethnic or geographic origins. It is quite possible, though unlikely ever to be proved, that the individual or his family had originated in another province of the Roman Empire such as Belgic Gaul, where barrows of the Roman period have been identified.⁹ However, even without such information, any indication of the sex, age group and physical condition of the Mersea Barrow individual would add considerably to the discoveries made by Warren a century before. Thus, when sufficient funds had been raised and permission granted by Colchester Museum Service, the cremated bone was sent to Salisbury for analysis.

During the four months which passed while the bones were being analysed and reports written, intriguing hints arrived in a series of emails. On first opening the package on 24th January 2013, Jacqueline McKinley's immediate response was enthusiastic: 'Material has arrived safely & it's a biggie - c. 1800g! Good big bits'.¹⁰ In fact the weight of bone buried beneath the Mersea Barrow was



4. Three upper thoracic vertebrae showing smooth new bone over right sides of bodies. Note white resinous precipitate coating bone. (J. McKinley.)

described in the final report as ‘amongst the highest from any cremation burial, of any period, in the British Isles’.¹¹ It quickly became clear from the remains that the individual, probably male, had suffered from a serious joint disease known by the initials DISH (Diffuse Idiopathic Skeletal Hyperostosis). Although identified in numerous inhumation burials, McKinley reported that she knew of no other cases of DISH recorded in cremated remains.¹² The condition caused excessive bone formation, still apparent on many of the Mersea Barrow remains, including at least nine thoracic vertebrae (Fig. 4).

However, before the analysis could be completed, an unexpected problem arose. Most of the bones were found to be coated with a strange, sticky substance which could not easily be rinsed off. To make matters worse, when attempts were made to scrape it away, it emitted a choking smell and unpleasant dust which resulted in McKinley having to work in mask and gloves for the first time ever.¹³ There was an urgent need to identify the ancient material,

which appeared to be some kind of resin. A specialist team, led by Professor Carl Heron of the University of Bradford, was found to be researching just such organic matter in archaeological contexts. Even more fortunately, a research student was working on a PhD thesis exploring ‘the identification of resinous materials in Roman mortuary contexts in Britain and evaluation of their significance’.¹⁴

Samples of the Mersea material, including amorphous lumps which floated when immersed in water, were sent immediately to Bradford for molecular analysis. The amazing results which began to emerge were first conveyed in an excited email on 13th May 2013. The mysterious substance had proved to be a combination of a pine resin and ‘of mega importance, frankincense’.¹⁵ Instantly, the mention of frankincense conjured up images of the three Magi presenting priceless gifts to the infant Jesus, around a century before this individual was buried. Why should such a rare, expensive and exotic substance be brought across the known world, to be added to cremated bones

buried deep within the Mersea Barrow?

In the first week of June 2013, two reports on the analysis of the cremated bone were received by Mersea Island Museum Trust. According to McKinley’s osteological report, the surviving bone fragments identified the individual as a male aged between 35 and 45.¹⁶ (This was around the average life expectancy in ancient Rome, although the figure is skewed by the high level of infant mortality.) Despite the joint disease which must have caused stiffness and discomfort, he had been ‘regularly engaged in strenuous walking/running’ (which might imply military service). Most of his remains appeared ‘relatively large and robust, with some marked muscle attachments, particularly in the lower limb’; while signs of soft tissue injury suggest he may have suffered a tear in one of the major thigh muscles.¹⁷ Despite the likelihood of pain and reduced mobility caused by the condition DISH, there was no evidence to indicate the immediate cause of death.

After death, the body was cremated on a funeral pyre

(normal practice in the first two centuries or so of Roman Britain),¹⁸ perhaps close to where the massive burial mound would soon be erected over an elaborate tomb. The bones experienced varying degrees of oxidation after the soft tissue had been burnt away. This resulted in some of the surviving bones appearing black (charred), grey, or light brown (largely unburnt), while the majority appeared white in colour and fully oxidized. After the fire had gone out and the remains were cool, the bone fragments were placed into the large glass funerary urn, probably imported for this purpose. Although the urn was only partly filled, some skeletal elements were missing which could not have been totally consumed by the fire. Smaller bones from the hands and feet may have been left behind among the pyre debris, but the urn also contained far fewer fragments from the arms and ribs than from the legs. It is not clear what happened to the remains left out of the urn. The original excavator, Samuel Hazzledine Warren, searched unsuccessfully for the site of the funeral pyre, and it is indeed possible that other human remains left at the pyre site are still concealed beneath the unexcavated, western half of the Mersea Barrow. It is even possible, speculates McKinley, that some bones such as those of the hands may have been distributed as mementoes for the deceased's relatives or friends.¹⁹

A greater mystery than the missing bone was the nature and significance of the aromatic substance coating the bones, analysed by Rhea Brettell at the University of Bradford in a series of highly complex processes. Her report confirmed that it comprised a mixture of two different resinous substances. The first, in lower abundance, was a coniferous resin from the widespread sub-family *Pinaceae* which includes cedars, larches and pines with the latter 'believed to have special significance in

Roman mortuary beliefs'. However, the more important identification was described as follows: 'Of even greater significance, the more abundant resin present in the Mersea samples is a *Burseraceae* exudate which most closely resembles frankincense'.²⁰ This precious incense, which had been traded from the Arabian Peninsula and North Africa for three thousand years before Christ, was used in many cultures for religious and medical purposes. Was its use in the funeral rites at the Mersea Barrow a unique occurrence, or, more likely, was it simply the first time that archaeological evidence of such a practice had been scientifically confirmed?

The significance of the results

The identification made in the laboratories of the University of Bradford is of major archaeological significance, not solely of British interest. Before the analysis of the Mersea remains, 'resinous exudates' had been identified in only a small number of Roman period inhumations in Europe and Britain, 'sprinkled over the wrapped body or pasted onto the textile wrappings'.²¹ Although Brettell and the team at Bradford have identified coniferous resins in a number of high status inhumation burials from Roman Britain, no such substances have yet been discovered from cremation burials. As the report on the material from the Mersea Barrow confirms, 'It provides the first chemical confirmation for the use of resins in a Roman cremation burial'.²²

Of even greater significance is the confirmation of frankincense, 'historically...one of the most valuable substances in the world',²³ with the cremated bone from the Mersea Barrow. Before this discovery, frankincense had been identified in varying contexts at only four other archaeological sites: in Egypt, Nubia and Yemen.²⁴ This is surprising, since frankincense trade routes in the Roman period were well established

and far reaching, from east Africa, southern Arabia and north-west India, to Persia, Gaza and particularly Alexandria, from where it was redistributed around the Mediterranean.²⁵ There are many references in classical texts to the use of resins in the form of perfumes, ointments or incense at various stages of Roman funerary rites, but little evidence of their application to the cooled, cremated remains. Rhea Brettell's report opens with an epigram of the Roman poet, Martial, urging: 'Shameless Zoilus, empty your dirty pockets of the unguents... and myrrh...and the half-cremated frankincense you took from the pyre'.²⁶

Because they had survived so well in the Mersea cremation urn, it was clear that the resinous materials including frankincense had not undergone heating: they had not been used either to anoint the body before cremation (with the added advantage of concealing the odour of decay) or to accelerate or quench the fire. In such instances, they would either have been consumed by the intense heat, or traces of ash would have adhered to any surviving resin. It is possible that the resins might have formed a seal to close the wide, open mouth of the glass urn, but it is more likely that they were added to the cooled, cremated remains shortly before their burial. During the nineteenth century, excavators of Roman cremation burials at the Bartlow Hills, formerly in Essex, and Weston Turville, Buckinghamshire, observed substances which they described as resembling frankincense. Unfortunately, however, this material, which might cast significant light on the frankincense found in the Mersea Barrow, no longer survives for scientific confirmation.²⁷

At present, the Mersea discovery is the only confirmed physical evidence of frankincense in a Roman funerary context, here used with other resins as part of elaborate funerary rites attending a Roman cremation burial. The

pine resin identified from the Mersea Barrow remains could have been obtained from within Britain or north-western Europe, but the frankincense certainly could not. The four main resin-producing *Boswellia* species grew in southern Arabia, north-western India, northern Somalia and eastern Africa. Although it is not yet possible to definitively distinguish between different species, the frankincense found in the Mersea Barrow may well have come from east Africa.²⁸ It could have been transported across the Roman Empire by an elaborate trade route, or possibly brought into Britain by a migrant or returning Briton who had travelled or served overseas, perhaps in the Roman army.

No inscription or written record bears witness to the individual buried beneath the Mersea Barrow or even to the island, less than ten miles from the first capital of Roman Britain at Colchester. One extensive Roman villa was certainly built near the island's southern shore at West Mersea: several sections of patterned mosaic floor were discovered in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries around the present West Mersea church and West Mersea Hall. Close to this villa, two significant Roman tombs were uncovered and excavated before their subsequent

destruction by residential development.²⁹ Considered in conjunction with the Mersea Barrow, they suggest that during the second century AD, Mersea Island was home to at least one wealthy family who commemorated their dead in conspicuous tombs.

The most impressive of Mersea's lost Roman tombs was identified by its first excavators in 1896 as the foundation structure of a Roman pharos, or lighthouse. However it is now regarded as a circular mausoleum, or wheel tomb – its small central chamber, with radiating walls meeting a circular, buttressed wall 65 feet (19.8 metres) in diameter, giving the appearance of a spoked wheel (Fig. 5). The roofed masonry structure and enclosing wall were probably surmounted by an earthen tumulus, following the example of the mausoleum of Augustus in Rome.³⁰ This fashion for conspicuous burial mounds, often close to roads or boundaries, may have reached eastern England from the Roman province of Belgic Gaul, where tumuli were constructed in the tribal territories of the Treveri and Tungri from the late first century AD.³¹

Although no evidence of burials or grave goods was found at the West Mersea wheel tomb, it must have provided an imposing

monument for an important family, presumably living at the villa known to have stood less than 200 metres away. It would have been a visible landmark to ships navigating the River Blackwater or approaching Mersea from the third century Roman fort of Othona, on the opposite shore at Bradwell. In contrast, the Mersea Barrow, which today still stands nearly seven metres high, was built near the opposite, northern shore of the island, visible to travellers approaching Mersea via the landward route from Colchester. It is not known whether both important monuments, the Mersea Barrow and the West Mersea wheel tomb, were built for different members of the same family living at the West Mersea villa, or whether two families living on opposite sides of the island built monumental tombs to rival or emulate each other. If the latter is the case, this suggests that there may have been a second villa closer to the site of the barrow. Despite a small amount of circumstantial evidence, no clear trace of a villa in this location has yet been found.³²

When Samuel Hazzledine Warren excavated the Mersea Barrow in 1912, he was puzzled by the identification of yellow ochre mixed with crushed red tile which he considered 'may have been connected with some custom which was observed at the ceremony of interment'.³³ (Traces of a similar red material had also been observed around the now lost 'brick tomb' containing a child's cremated remains, close to West Mersea Church). If Warren was correct, the red layer sealing the tomb beneath the Mersea Barrow was just one feature of the elaborate ritual which accompanied the departure of the deceased from this world into the next. His cremated bones had already received a libation which included the highly valued, sacred and exotic gum-resin, frankincense. Jacqueline McKinley concludes that the unexpected

5. The exposed foundations of the West Mersea 'Wheel Tomb' close to the south shore of Mersea Island.



and currently unique discovery of this substance 'has enriched our comprehension of the wealth and magnificence of this individual's funeral rites and his reflected social status and connections'.³⁴

The analysis of bones found a century ago beneath Mersea's ancient burial mound has provided important new evidence and contributed significantly to academic research into burial rites and practices across the ancient Roman world. This resident of Roman Mersea, whose remains lay concealed for nearly two millennia, has been brought into the daylight, and secrets of his medical condition and elaborate, costly funeral have been revealed. Whatever his name and background, he obviously held a major social and probably administrative position in this corner of Roman Britain. His monument is marked to this day, and into the foreseeable future, by the conspicuous earthwork of the Mersea Barrow.

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The Author

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The Bishops of Danbury Park

and their changing styles of diocesan leadership¹

by
Noel Beer

“The most significant change in church life in the second half of Victoria’s reign was a new type of diocesan bishop, more pastorally active and accessible.”²

From 1846 to 1890 the house at Danbury Park, in Essex, was the palace of the Bishops of Rochester (1846–77) and of St. Albans (1877–90) (Figs. 1, 2 & 5). The house had been built in 1832 for John Round, who was MP for Maldon for ten years and a prominent figure in the county. It was designed by Thomas Hopper, the county surveyor, with some input from John Round’s wife, Susan Constantia. It replaced the former Danbury Place, which stood a hundred yards to the west of the new building. This had previously been the home of the Darcy, Mildmay, Ffytche and Hillary families, but after three centuries and much alteration it had become dilapidated. At the time of John Round’s purchase of the park it had been rented out and was being used as a farm, which let in the rain and was beyond repair.³ At first the Round family lived happily in the new house, but by the early 1840s John Round found himself under pressure from both work and family matters and his health suffered, so the decision was taken to sell Danbury Place and move to their house in Brighton. This was done in 1845, but not before Susan Round had tragically died in a fire in London.⁴

The first of the bishops to arrive at Danbury was George Murray, who was in residence from 1846 to 1860 (Fig. 3). He was followed by Bishop Joseph Cotton Wigram from 1860 to 1867, and finally by Thomas Legh Cloughton (Fig. 4), who was Bishop of Rochester from 1867 to 1877 and of a re-structured Diocese of St. Albans from 1877 to 1890. During these years, when

bishops. These developments are illustrated in the major differences in the ways in which the three Danbury bishops performed their diocesan roles and the comparison that follows aims to demonstrate these differences.

In part, these changes were stimulated by the social effects which resulted from the rapid growth of urban population in the country. In Essex this was particularly the case in the south west of the county, in what became known as

‘London over the Border’.

In addition, the 1830s and 1840s had been years of agitation for reform in the political, social and economic dimensions of British society and much of this demand resulted in new legislation. The Established Church came in for criticism at this time, especially the bishops who, to a large degree, were seen as idle, rich and privileged. This perception was not helped by events surrounding the Reform Act of 1832, when in October 1831 the bill was rejected by the House of Lords, having already passed its second reading in the Commons under Earl Grey’s Whig government. Archbishop Howley and twenty bishops voted against the bill, whilst six bishops abstained. Had



1. Front elevation of Danbury Palace. (This and subsequent illustrations, unless stated, reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office, I/MB 114/1/5.)

Danbury Place had become Danbury Palace, the Church of England experienced major changes, including significant developments in the role of the

they voted the other way, in what was a tight result, the bill would have been passed.⁵

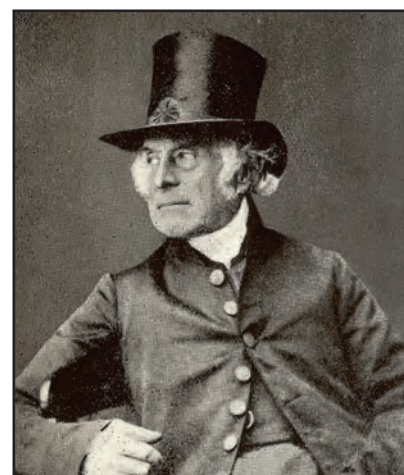
Within the bishops' ranks there were some differing opinions about reform, yet whilst some thought that a reform bill was necessary, they did not believe that this time of riots and disorder was an appropriate one in which to pass the bill. Bishop George Murray's position on the matter was clear enough: 'descended of an ancient line of aristocrats, and with an uncomplicated dignity, [he] wanted to follow his ancestors in making Britain safe for aristocrats', says Chadwick⁶ so he voted against the bill.

The extremeness of his aristocratic, Tory stance was demonstrated again in 1832 over the issue of whether degrees from the new 'Durham College' would be acceptable for qualification for holy orders. The Bishop of Durham wrote to the other bishops seeking their approval and only two refused. One of these was Bishop Murray, 'staunch aristocrat who disapproved of encouraging the lower classes to aspire for stations for which there were already too many candidates from the classes immediately above them'.⁷ Bishop Murray's adherence to tradition was also

apparent from the fact that he was 'the last of the old-fashioned wigged bishops', not only wearing his episcopal wig in church, but also outside it.⁸

His move to Danbury Park resulted from a re-structuring of dioceses, following the report of the Ecclesiastical Commission of 1835. One of its significant members was the energetic Charles James Blomfield, Bishop of London, who was seeking a more compact Diocese of London, which did not include the distant territories of Essex and Hertfordshire, but which did include some of the London sections of the Diocese of Rochester as well as the bishop's palace at Bromley. What remained of the diocese was merged with most of Essex and Hertfordshire to create what was described as 'an absurd diocese, absurdly shaped and absurdly provided'.⁹

Cox¹⁰ describes the final arrangement thus: 'In the year 1845, in accordance with the developed plans of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, the county of Essex, together with a part of Hertfordshire, were taken from the Diocese of London and united to that of Rochester. The change that was made by Order in Council on August 8, 1845,



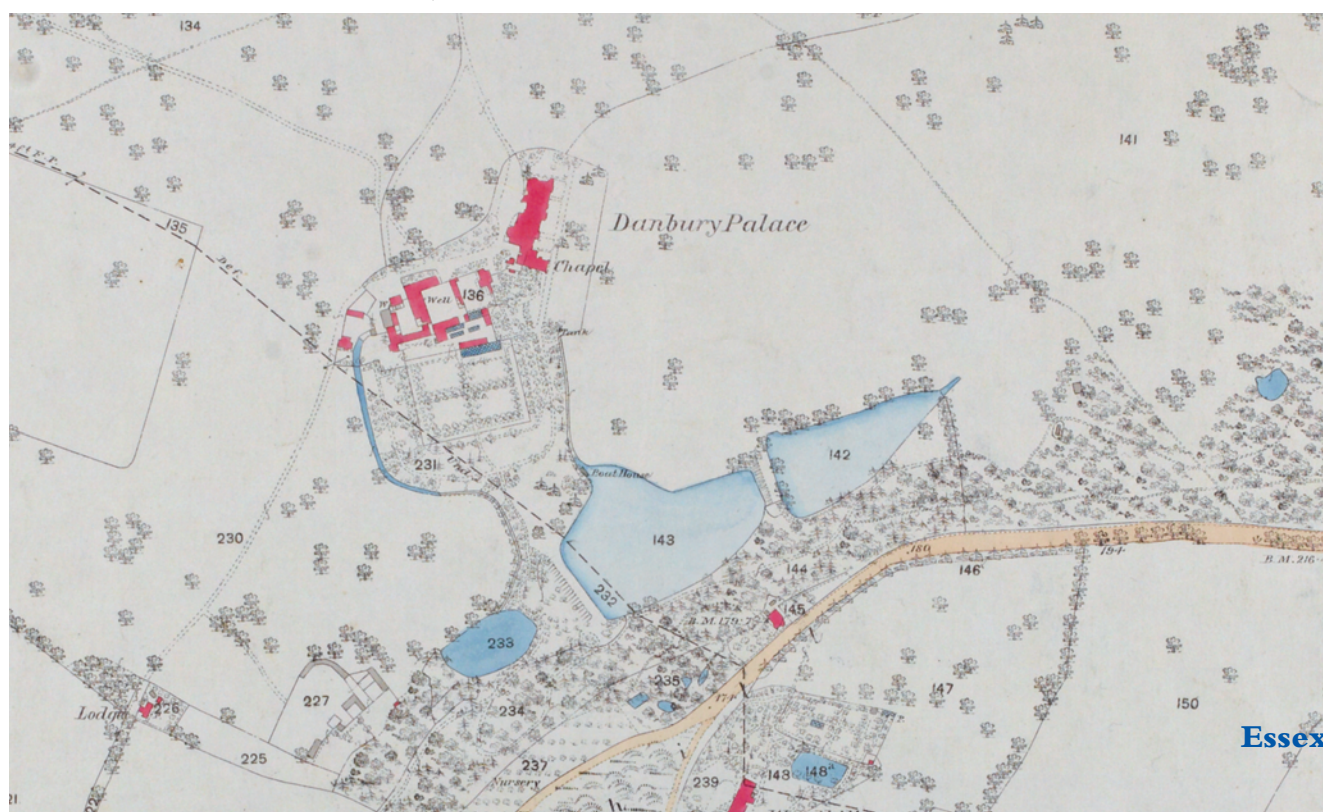
3. Bishop George Murray (1784-1860)

(Author's collection.)

and which came into operation on January 1, 1846, declared that the new bounds for the see of Rochester embraced the whole of Essex, with the exception of the nine parishes of Barking, East Ham, West Ham, Little Ilford, Low Leyton, Walthamstow, Wanstead, St. Mary Woodford, and Chingford, which were to remain in the diocese of London'.

South of the Thames the diocese included only the city of Rochester with its deanery, so it made sense for the bishop to move nearer the centre of the new diocese and the purchase of Danbury Park from John Round was agreed in May 1845.¹¹ The

2. Reduced sized map extract showing the extensive gardens and just some of the grounds of Danbury Palace. (ERO, 1st Ed. 25" OS Sheet 53-10, 1875.)





4. Bishop Thomas Claughton (1808-1892), seated with walking stick. (ERO, I/Sp 17/98.)

house and its estate provided an appropriate location for a bishop's palace. The 1845 sale catalogue¹² offered 'a noble and elegant mansion', which is subsequently described as 'one of the most perfect residences in the county'. Despite these advantages, its purchase price did not go unnoticed in some quarters, and its location, some miles from the nearest railway station, made it difficult for clergy to visit the bishop, and for him to travel around his diocese.

However, the manner of his arrival at Danbury Park seemed to meet with the approval of the *Essex Herald*¹³ which reported that 'his domestic establishment and part of his family arrived at the palace and were welcomed by a merry peal of the village bells' and that 'his Lordship has already evinced that liberal spirit and kind consideration for those around him which are so calculated to win the good will and affection of all those amongst whom his future residence is fixed'.

Meanwhile, the critics of the bishops' expensive lifestyle, and the sums spent on the purchase of their episcopal palaces by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, included Danbury Palace in their criticism. Some comments in the *Church and State Gazette*, in February 1849, prompted a reply from the Bishop of Worcester, in which he contradicted statements

about alleged expenditure on episcopal palaces, including his own,¹⁴ and defended the purchase of Danbury Palace on the grounds that it cost less than the sum received from the sales of the old palaces at Rochester and Bromley. However, the critics of the purchase still felt that the 'sum of twenty four thousand seven hundred pounds'¹⁵ was too high for the new residence.

Bishop Murray also had some building done to bring the park up to the standard required of a bishop's palace. He had a chapel added to the rear of the house, named 'The chapel of All Saints at Danbury Palace', (Figs. 5 & 6) which was consecrated in 1850¹⁶ and he had four additional lodges built in the grounds between 1851 and 1861.¹⁷ It also seems that he had secured for himself a financial arrangement which bettered that of his successors at Danbury, Bishops Wigram and Claughton. The latter, in a letter to Archbishop Tait,¹⁸ on 6th October 1876, on the subject of the foundation of the new bishopric of St. Albans and the cost of Danbury Park and its lodges (which were proving expensive to repair) indicated that Bishop Murray's income had been higher than that of himself and Bishop Wigram and he sought to be released from paying the Park's rent of £300 a year.

So Bishop Murray had been successful in negotiating an income and lifestyle which made the transfer to Danbury a comfortable one. He seems to have been fond of money. Arnold¹⁹ describes him as being 'avaricious' and Van Loo's²⁰ description of events prior to his moving to Essex explains how he came to receive £4,500, which in Claughton's letter to Tait, he managed to get increased to £5,000. Van Loo says that:

'When he was made Bishop of Rochester in 1827 the salary was £1,500, less than he had received as Bishop of Sodor and Man, and so he manoeuvred for himself the post of Dean of Worcester. Despite the scandal that he created...he refused to give up Worcester. Eventually, in 1836, the Ecclesiastical Commission had to intervene; Murray made a bargain with them; if they would pay him, at Rochester, the yearly £4,500 which his eventual successor would enjoy under the Established Church Act of 1836, then he would give up Worcester...The Commissioners agreed. But Murray kept Worcester until 1845 when, in a gracious gesture to the Prime Minister, Peel, he offered to resign so that Peel's brother could become Dean! Peel gratefully accepted'.²¹

Bishop Murray's position on some of the contentious religious issues of the time appears to be a low profile one. He made the appropriate utterances on matters calling for an obvious response, as, for example, that of Popish aggression, when the Dean and Chapter of Rochester sent him an address on 28th November 1850.²² 'We the Dean and Chapter of Rochester in chapter assembled...in common with the Church of England generally we have seen with a just indignation...the recent attempt of the Bishop of Rome and his clergy

to intrude a New Hierarchy, Provincial and Diocesan, within the limits of our ancient and Apostolic branch of the Catholic church...etc'. In reply, on 7th December²³ Bishop Murray says that 'I fully concur in the sentiments of just Indignation which you entertain towards the Roman Pontiff...etc'. However, on other matters his stance could be less specific; for example, in discussing his position on the Tractarians,²⁴ Pearman²⁵ says 'The Bishop of Rochester was not a controversialist. In principal he belonged to what is called the 'high and dry' school. Under the circumstances of the time it was impossible to remain silent, and he expressed himself as one who, admiring the Tractarians in many respects, and agreeing with them, was forced to protest against some of their utterances and not a few of their practices'. Again, he seems to be sitting on the fence on the subject of Ritualism;²⁶ in 'referring to the use of the surplice in the pulpit, he wonders how it could have caused so much excitement. It had always been worn in the cathedrals...etc. With regard to ceremonies in general, his advice is to depart, in the present state

of the public mind, as little as possible from the usages to which the congregation has been accustomed'.²⁷

This was Bishop Murray's conventional position – being middle of the road, uncontroversial and pragmatic, seeing church and government as being integrated, and seeking to maintain the status quo. In his time he was probably the prime example of the right wing, change-resisting bishop – just the sort of person whom Prime Minister Palmerston wanted to replace with what became known as the Palmerston Bishops.

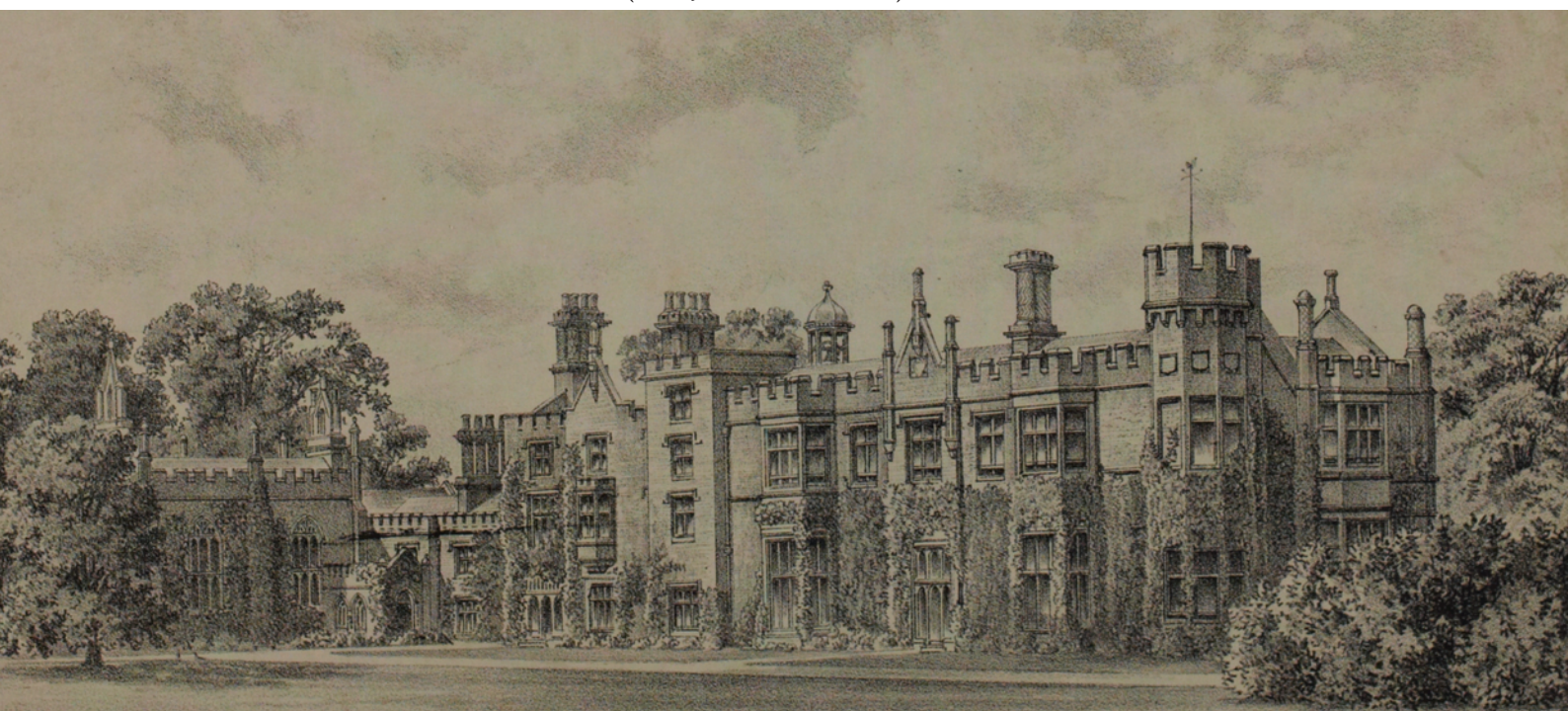
When Bishop Murray died, in 1860, he was succeeded by a new type of bishop in Joseph Cotton Wigram. Palmerston was seeking to replace scholarly, political, detached divines with individuals who would move around their dioceses and communicate with their clergy. During his time in office he appointed to nineteen English sees. They came to be known as the Palmerston evangelicals, men whose 'chief duties consist in watching over the clergy of their diocese, seeing that they perform properly their parochial duties'.²⁸

In making these changes Palmerston challenged the political authority which the bishops had been able to employ in the House of Lords.

Bishop Murray had become a bishop (of Sodor and Man) at the age of 30, assisted by his family connections, whereas Bishop Wigram served a lengthy apprenticeship in the field, starting as a deacon when aged 24 and becoming a bishop after he had turned 60. As a Palmerston evangelical he was industrious and energetic and 'threw himself with great earnestness into the work of the diocese, and went far to realise what in the popular phrase of the time was described as a 'gig-bishop', by visiting the remotest villages of Essex in the most informal manner'.²⁹ The term gig-bishop was used contemptuously by the opponents of Palmerston's evangelicals, but it appropriately described those bishops who left their palaces and travelled extensively, but unostentatiously, in their diocesan work.

In his charge delivered at his primary visitation in November 1860³⁰ Bishop Wigram entitled his subject 'Fellowship with the flock

5. View looking across the 'Lawn and Garden Front'. This shows, on the left, the Chapel. (ERO, I/MB 114/1/17.)



is essential to the true pastoral system'. He talked about 'the evangelising of the whole body of the people' as opposed to an undesirable system where the clergyman of a parish seemed to stand in isolation. So he encouraged the clergy to help lay people to spread the Gospel, taking a wide view of who lay people were, because he believed the consequence of the clergy's failure to co-operate with the laity was the loss of supporters to Rome, or to other sects.

He went on to identify certain categories of the clergy whom he felt that he could not 'but regard with pain and misgiving, knowing...that they are not the men who can do our master's work in the manner it has been set forth'. From his descriptions there are five types, who might be labelled 'The Conservative', 'The Sportsman', 'The Follower of Fashion', 'The Bureaucrat' and 'The Ritualist'.

The first is change-resisting and is 'quite content with the religious conditions of his parish and with things as they have ever been'. The second is a younger, vigorous, athletic person for

6. A heraldic mitre and pallium in relief over the entrance to the Chapel.
(Author's collection, c.1982.)



whom 'games and diversions prove his temptation and his snare'. Members of cricket, archery and rifle clubs are included in this category, particularly if they enjoy the praise and applause that results from successful competition. The situation is seen as even worse for those young clergymen who enjoy the card table, the ballroom, the theatre or opera, hunting, shooting and other field sports.

The third category includes, amongst others, those with 'a taste for dress, for the refinements of the drawing room' and a modern style of conversation, as well as those who smoke, or who cultivate 'an inordinate profusion of hair about the face'. Fourthly, there are those who 'are little more than men of routine, lacking the Spirit which alone can give life to a ministry'.

Finally he challenged those 'whose energies are devoted to setting out religion with those extra adornments which constitute her least noble part', who tend to revert to ancient rites and vestments and minister in a way that hazarded 'the revival of practices which belong to the corrupt Roman system out of which our nation was mercifully brought at the Reformation'.

He finished with a plea for instant action, as 'we have much lost ground to recover'. Some of his clergy would have felt uncomfortable with the contents of his charge and perhaps recognised themselves within his five categories, but four years later, at his second General Visitation³¹ he was able to report on progress in taking the Gospel to the people.

Because of his concern for the welfare of his clergy, and in order to help the poorer members, he founded the Rochester Diocesan Endowment Fund in 1865. This was a success and was continued under the new Diocese of St. Albans.

Bishop Wigram died suddenly and unexpectedly and although

his funeral was meant to be a private one 'a large body of the neighbouring clergy attended, unasked, to show respect to the Bishop's memory'.³²

He was succeeded by Thomas Legh Cloughton as head of an enhanced Rochester diocese. The nine parishes of the Barking deanery, which had remained with the London diocese in the 1845 re-structuring, were returned to Essex and became part of the Rochester diocese.

Bishop Cloughton's appointment would have been unlikely under Palmerston, who only recommended Low Churchmen to the Queen, but it was Lord Derby who recommended his friend Cloughton, a High Churchman, in 1867. A powerful intellectual, with a fine record of academic achievement at Oxford, he was there for much of the time that *Tracts for the Times* were being published and his High Church principles came from this association. 'He was, however, never an extreme man: his genial and sympathetic disposition led him into contact with men of all schools of thought, and the experiences of a town parish has a tendency to merge ideals in practical work'.³³ The town referred to was Kidderminster, where he was vicar from 1841 to 1867, and where he revived a neglected church and stimulated those around him by his energy and organising ability. 'A restored parish church, a district church, new schools, and the whole organisation of a well-managed parish attested to his successful work; and the remarkable way in which young men of promise, entering the ministry, offered themselves to him as curates, was an indication of the reputation which he soon won as a parish priest'.³⁴

So 'Cloughton of Kidderminster', as he was well-known in England, became a bishop whose experience enabled him to relate to the needs of his clergy and serve as a role model for them. Like other bishops of his time, he needed to be

industrious as bishops in the 1860s, according to Christopher Wordsworth, were 'all over-worked'.³⁵ In this regard Claughton himself had a good role model in his friend Samuel Wilberforce, Bishop of Oxford, and later of Winchester, a man of restless and relentless energy who seemed to draw workaholics to him. Lord Beaconsfield said of him in 1868, 'There is one thing in the Bishop of Oxford which strikes me even more than his eloquence: it is the wonderful faculty he possesses of gathering round him so many like-minded with himself for work'.³⁶ He also seemed to be able to draw work from other people on a scale they would not have thought possible. Claughton wrote to Wilberforce, 'You have introduced such a system into the episcopate that one has time for nothing'.³⁷ Yet Claughton, too, was an industrious and diligent bishop, despite his protestation, which would have been made with the kindness and affection which was characteristic of him. Wilberforce was fond of Claughton and was glad of his support at difficult times. When he was experiencing extreme pain and sorrow at his only daughter's secession to Rome, he found 'Dear Claughton, all kind love and sympathy'.³⁸

Wilberforce was a highly prolific letter writer. His diary entry for the last day of 1872 includes 'All day poured with rain. I wrote some fifty letters'.³⁹ Claughton, too, conducted an extensive correspondence, and from time to time comments on the letter-writing demands on bishops in his own letters.⁴⁰ Apart from the correspondence with his own clergy, and private individuals in the diocese, he had a large correspondence outside the diocese with people like the Eastern Counties bishops and Archbishop Tait. Much of this was to do with his own clergy on matters of finance, job changes, ritualism, requests for honorary degrees, inhibition of clergy and suchlike.⁴¹

Occasionally there were major problems that demanded a lot of his time. An example of this was a ritualism matter, the Hatcham case, involving Rev. Arthur Tooth of St. James church, Hatcham, which started in 1871, with a letter from a visiting member of the congregation to the Archbishop, complaining about ritualism, and continued until 1877 when Tooth was inhibited. Tooth was imprisoned at one stage and the case appeared in the national press. The Tait papers, containing an extensive correspondence on the case, demonstrate the time given to such matters.⁴²

The bishop's own kindness of heart involved him in work that other bishops might have avoided. 'Even amid the manifold distractions of a bishop's life, there was much of the parish priest clinging to him; in his own parish church at Danbury, at Chelmsford Church, and in the country churches about, he would often volunteer to preach; and sometimes if he heard of a hardworking clergyman who had a difficulty in getting a holiday, he would himself take the services for a Sunday or two. And whenever affliction had befallen a family within reach of the Palace, whatever their social position might be, the Bishop was sure to be found there before long'.⁴³

One of the major problems that Bishop Claughton had to cope with was the acquisition of the nine Barking Deanery parishes, which were returned to the diocese when he became bishop in 1867, and the rapid growth in population in that part of the county: 'the adding to his diocese every four years of a town the size of Halifax or Huddersfield'.⁴⁴ In an attempt to ease this problem he started the Bishop of Rochester' Fund in 1869, which was re-named the Bishop of St. Albans Fund in 1877 when Essex and Hertfordshire became the Diocese of St. Albans, with Bishop Claughton as the first Bishop

of St. Albans. The 1882 Diocese of St. Albans *Report of the Diocesan Institutions*,⁴⁵ the first such collective report, says that 'the present estimated population of these districts is about 250,000, being an increase of 136,000 since the census of 1871. Viewing the district as a whole, there is probably no place in England where the inhabitants are changing so rapidly from the class who can provide their own spiritual machinery for themselves, to that class for whom it has to be provided'. The report goes on to identify just how many clergymen, churches and sites are needed and refers to 'Great and urgent present needs'.

In the same year, 1882, Bishop Claughton was able to reduce his work load by the appointment of a suffragan bishop; this was Alfred Blomfield, Archdeacon of Essex and son of C.J. Blomfield, who became Bishop of Colchester and in which position he displayed much of his father's endeavour and drive.

In 1877 work had begun to restore, repair and refit the Abbey Church of St. Albans as a cathedral and this was successfully completed by October 1885 when the opening service of the Cathedral was held. The remainder of the diocese was not neglected and Barrett⁴⁶ states that 'As some further indication of the activity of the Church during Bishop Claughton's thirteen years episcopate of the newly-formed see, it should be mentioned that sixteen new ecclesiastical districts were formed, fourteen in Essex and two in Herts, and thirty seven new churches and chapels were consecrated. He also introduced the order of Lay Readers, and set apart ten for the work. In the last eleven years of his rule there were 76,994 persons confirmed. The number of clergy also largely increased'.

He was 69 when he became Bishop of St. Albans and continued to labour to improve the diocese, until his failing health obliged him to retire in 1890. He remained at Danbury Palace,

being 'not disposed to give it up during my lifetime', as he had written to Archbishop Tait 14 years before, and he died there in 1892. His body lay in state in the Danbury Palace chapel for four days and was then taken to the Cathedral Church for interment.⁴⁷

The national picture of the changing roles of the bishops in mid-Victorian England is made apparent in the microcosm of Danbury Park, where three different bishops were exemplars of their national categories. Bishop Murray was a classic example of the palace-bound, change-resisting, wig-wearing aristocrat. Bishop Wigram was a model of the Low Church, highly-mobile, motivating Palmerston evangelical, and Thomas Legh Claughton was known nationally as an industrious, caring High Church bishop, in the Samuel Wilberforce mould, who laboured to improve the lot of both his clergy and the population of his diocese. The Danbury bishops provide a model of the mainstream of the national scene writ small.

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The Author

Noel Beer has written extensively on the history of Rayleigh. He has fond memories of working for 12 years at the Regional Management Centre at Danbury Park where his office was located in the former servants' quarters.

The Essex Police Museum at 21

by

Maureen Scollan and Martyn Lockwood

Some knowledge of its own history has always been part of British military culture, but that is not so with the police service which currently comprises 43 individual forces. Most, including Essex Police, have staff who are interested in the history of policing and perhaps collect books, photographs, truncheons, or badges. When Parliament passed an Act in 1839 allowing any county to set up a full-time, paid police force Essex was one of the earliest to do so. Captain John Bunch Bonnemaïson McHardy was appointed as the first Chief Constable on 11 February 1840, with authority to recruit 100 constables and 15 superintendents. Over time those 115 officers have increased to around 3000 men and women; the county boundaries have also altered.

In the beginning - 'the museum'

The oldest buildings at the present Police Headquarters at Springfield were built in (Fig. 1) 1903, and by the 1950s and 1960s there was a small room which housed a miscellaneous collection of official photographs, manuscripts and personnel records from the 1840s; that room was usually referred to as 'the museum.' When space was needed in the 1960s for a new

teleprinter training school, all the contents were disposed of by officials who had little idea of their potential historical value. At that time Maureen was on the staff of the Essex Record Office, but served as a special constable in her spare time. Hearing 'on the grapevine' about what was happening, she managed to rescue the original staff registers and a few other documents, and get them deposited in the ERO; she was later given the job of cataloguing them for the benefit of police historians which some years later included herself.¹

It is known that many items in the original 'museum' were shredded without consultation. While some surviving artefacts were given to Chelmsford Museum, others were handed over to the licensees of the Kings Head public house in Gosfield near Halstead. Mr David and Mrs Georgie Roy-Clark had started their police collection after driving an old London bus across America and finding that they were unable to answer many of the questions they were asked about British bobbies and their history. The resulting collection of miscellaneous cuttings and police artefacts displayed in their public house attracted much media interest but had no systematic collection policy. Multi-coloured American police patches were

displayed beside English bobbies' headgear and truncheons; German police uniforms and redundant uniform items from Essex Headquarters were rubbing shoulders on life-sized dummies donated by local department stores.

For some years in the 1970s and 1980s the King's Head was regarded as the *unofficial* Essex police museum, and many unwanted items from Police Headquarters found a temporary home there. Several years on many of the Essex items moved again when Mr and Mrs Clark went their separate ways and the collection was broken up. By the late-1980s there was space at nearby Castle Hedingham police station after its adjacent magistrates' court was closed. Official permission was given to store the Essex artefacts in the court room, and a few visits were made by children from one or two schools under the supervision of local officers and Maureen, who by that time was inspector in charge of policing in the Halstead area.

Official interest in Force history

In 1990 Essex Police celebrated its 150th anniversary with official support and the enthusiastic involvement of police officers and civilian staff of all levels. Many events took place in and around

1. The front of Police Headquarters at Springfield, known as New Court, was built in 1903. The first HQ was called Old Court in Arbour Lane Springfield. Some of those buildings remain but are now part of a housing development. (All images Essex Police Museum.)





2. Peter Simpson, Deputy Chief Constable, one of the principal supporters of the police museum from its earliest days until his death in 2008.

local police stations; there was also a magnificent police and military historical pageant at Colchester and a commemorative service in Chelmsford Cathedral, where the Essex Police choir made one of its first public appearances.

Keen to build on the new official appreciation of Force history was Peter Simpson (Fig. 2) who joined Essex Police as an Assistant Chief Constable in May 1981; he became the Deputy Chief Constable five years later. Simpson had grown up in Essex where his father was a serving officer, but after military service had joined Hertfordshire Constabulary and worked his way up through the ranks. When he found that Maureen was already writing a book on the history of Essex Police in her spare time he gained official approval to second her for some months to the Publicity Department. Whenever her services there were not needed she was required to finish her book and bring its coverage up to the 150th anniversary year. Her other role was to produce a detailed report on the practicalities of setting up a Force museum to include systematic procedures and a clear educational role. As part of her research for the report she visited several other police museums where Duncan Broady, the professional curator at Greater Manchester Police, was particularly helpful.²

A room at Headquarters for the proposed museum was found in an unused section of the clothing store. Before being painted and carpeted a colony of spiders had first to be rehomed; then a corner was partitioned off for the embryo museum's temporary workers. Fred Feather, a retired police sergeant from Southend, joined the Publicity Department where he was contracted to work two days a week in the Museum.

A new museum is born!

It was not until 29th July 1991 that the inaugural meeting of the Essex Police Museum committee was chaired by Peter Simpson, and included a sprinkling of serving and retired officers of all ranks as well as civilian staff members; two of those present were serving inspectors who are the authors of this article. Simpson considered the occasion to be 'a most momentous and important meeting to assist in achieving a goal sought by many'.³ He thought the first objective was to form a properly constituted committee with officers who would ensure 'we do the right things to get the museum properly established from the outset so that it will be a permanency'.⁴ It was also intended from the first to steer the embryo Museum towards some element of financial independence from the owners of the building, the Police Authority.

Planning a museum committee began with appointing a president. The Chief Constable, John Burrow, recorded his delight at accepting the invitation, and it was agreed by the committee that in future years the president would be an *ex officio* role for the serving chief constable. Peter Simpson – in his typical self-effacing way – commented that he was quite happy to be the first chairman, but didn't wish committee members to feel it had been imposed on them! It had not; he was formally proposed by one of the authors of this article, enthusiastically and unanimously appointed, and was to be closely

involved in all aspects of the Museum's work for the next 15 years.

As well as sub-committees to formulate rules and collection policies serious consideration had to be given to funding, even though the designated museum area at that stage was owned and operated by the Police Authority. With a basic administrative structure in place, the chairman pointed out that the Museum would be a shop window for the Force's archival material as well as three dimensional exhibits. Police stations across Essex were asked not to destroy anything of potential historical interest until a member of the Museum committee had examined it. Unfortunately people had different views of what was worth keeping, and one of the most frequent early deposits were volumes of Force Orders from the early 20th century; on one occasion 15 copies of the same volume arrived in the internal post, the only difference being the name of the police station on the spine!

In December 1991 the monthly meeting of the Museum committee was held for the first time actually in the Museum, where security doors and a blue light had been fitted; these were later joined by a cell door from one of the first purpose-built police stations in the county at Dunmow. The renovation of Southminster magistrates' court and police station released a Victorian charge desk and cabinets which formed the basis of a police office display.

Until the Police Authority had been officially informed of the Museum's existence publicity had been limited, but once this had taken place there was a good deal of press interest. Members of the public and retired officers began to donate potential exhibits, although it later transpired that several were delivered anonymously because officers who had refused an order to destroy items had sometimes taken them home to ensure future preservation!

BBC Essex interviewed the Museum's curator and archivist (Fred Feather and Maureen Scollan), and so many listeners phoned in after the initial broadcast in 1992 that for several months afterwards the two had a regular slot on the afternoon radio show hosted by Steve Scruton. Useful offers of loans and deposits resulted, including the diary of Acting Sergeant French of the Colchester Borough Police river patrol between 1899-1919.⁵ A subsequent mention on the radio about the crash of a German Zeppelin at Great Wigborough in 1916 brought an offer to lend the Museum an inscribed pocket watch and other memorabilia from the family of Special Constable Edgar Nicolas (Fig. 3) who had been the first officer on the scene.

Museum events and displays were in preparation well before an official opening could be carried out, and that finally took place on 16th October 1992. County Councillor Geoffrey Waterer, then Chairman of the Police Authority, performed the official ceremony and accepted a miniature replica of the plaque which hangs by the Museum's entrance.

One unusual deposit was made in 1993 with the arrival from Saffron Walden of a stuffed dog in a glass case. Special Constable Tina Robbins was researching local police history and had seen the dog in the offices of a local solicitor where it was recognised as Jack (or sometimes Jacko), the much loved pet of a murder victim in 1899. Jack's mistress was a wealthy lady named Miss Camille Holland who had lived with Samuel Herbert Dougal in Moat Farm at Clavering where he was found to have murdered her and concealed her body. A photograph already existed in the Museum of officers searching for Miss Holland's body, and Jack had been photographed with them, so his identity could be confirmed (Fig. 4). Exhibits and information boards on the Moat Farm murder



3. Special Constable Edgar Nicolas was the first officer on the scene of the crash of a German Zeppelin at Great Wigborough in 1916.

are still one of the Museum's most popular exhibits. A Chelmsford dramatic society has even presented a play on the Moat Farm case in its small theatre and also in the Museum.

Several months after the Museum's official opening a new Charities Act was passed, and it became necessary to rethink the relationship between trustees and the management committee. The Act required five trustees to be appointed, who were supposed to take an active part in museum activities. Each of the five contributed some relevant experience: there was a retired chief superintendent; a senior member of the police staff; the chief legal executive of Essex County Council; and County Councillor Tony Peel, son of a former chief constable Sir Jonathan Peel. When Peter

Simpson retired in October 1993 he relinquished his role as chairman but remained as a trustee and museum volunteer until his untimely death in 2008; Tony Peel died suddenly in the same year. Members of the museum management committee, meanwhile, continue to be appointed annually at the AGM.

Publicity and Publications

Public relations is an important part of police work, and from the very beginning of the Museum that role was partly funded from the public relations budget. Over the years this has included creating special exhibitions within the Force for something specific, or by giving talks and displays at some high profile events both inside and outside Essex. One of the earliest Museum publications series is still a popular aspect of its



4. The police officers investigating the death of Miss Camille Holland at Moat Farm in Clavering. It is her dog Jack in the front row.

work. The *History Notebook* series was seen as a way for a volunteer researcher to write a short paper based on some aspect of Force history which could be made freely available to interested members of the public. The very first *Notebook* was written by Martyn Lockwood and dealt with the murder of Acting Sergeant Adam Eves in 1893. Initially printed by a local company and paid for from the publicity budget, the *Notebooks* are still prepared, although funding problems have meant that they are now available on-line and can be downloaded freely by anyone. The most recent *Notebook* is number 58, on Essex Chief Constables.

A new professionalism

One of the original objectives for the Museum was to work towards achieving charitable status thus giving it a measure of independence from the Police Authority; that in turn would make the Museum eligible to apply for Heritage Lottery funding (HLF) for specific projects. Trustees and committee members were anxious to take every safeguard to ensure that the Museum would be protected against arbitrary disbandment, as had happened in the 1960s.

By the time of the fourth AGM in 1995 members heard that the Museum had gained provisional charitable status, but still

needed a more detailed forward plan and better provision for educational work with children. As the number of deposits was also causing a problem a former police house near the Museum was taken over as a store, despite difficulties with security. Eventually the surplus police houses near Headquarters were sold, and the Museum now has a purpose-adapted store with climate controls nearby.

While the administration of the Museum had been run by mainly volunteers the situation changed slightly in 1997-98 after Fred Feather retired as a public relations officer and part-time curator. In November 1998 Elizabeth Farnhill became the Museum's first professional curator when she was appointed to the Publicity Department but worked for two days a week in the Museum. That innovation was followed by a formal tenancy agreement with the Essex Police Authority for leasing the Museum building for ten years at a peppercorn rent. This has been subsequently renewed. A legally binding managing agreement between trustees and the Police Authority followed in June 2000. The agreement made the trustees responsible for the day-to-day running of the Museum, with the assistance of a management committee comprising the curator and other members under the chairmanship of the Deputy Chief Constable; the curator had no voting rights. Included in the agreement were all aspects of museum management including accreditation, displays, finance, education, public opening and care of the artefacts to museum standards. Such an agreement recognised that the collection was the property of the Police Authority and that items for the collection would be accepted on behalf of the Authority and must meet conditions laid down in the Acquisition and Disposal Policy.

Full registration with the Museums and Galleries

Commission was eventually gained in 2002, by which time the Museum had already had two professional curators. In 2005 curator Sarah Ward oversaw a successful application to the HLF for £43,000 to completely refurbish the displays, which took six months to complete.

When the Museum re-opened the HLF required regular public access, which initially took place every Wednesday afternoon. In the year following around 5000 members of the public visited the Museum, which in September 2005 appointed Becky Latchford (now Wash) (Fig. 5) as the professional curator; she worked in the Museum for two days a week and in the PR department for the remaining three. When the curator's post became full-time in 2007, HLF funding allowed the employment of an education consultant to create a programme aimed initially at primary school children for covering Key Stage 1 and 2 history and citizenship. Over time the regulations have changed, and the Museum is now developing programmes to embrace the new regulations.

5. A view of the Moat Farm museum display (including a stuffed Jack!), with curator Becky Wash standing in the witness box.



Beyond the 21st birthday Celebrations

The Museum celebrated its 21st birthday in September 2013. In November 2012 the government had introduced a new system to replace each county police authority with one elected Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) in each police district; that individual is responsible for setting priorities for the crime and policing budget and can also appoint and dismiss the chief constable. While the full implications of the new arrangements in all force areas and government departments are still being explored, they have included various financial reviews and projects to consolidate services and reduce budgets; this is resulting in a reduction in staff in some areas. Anticipating the government's new system, Essex Police had decided in 2011 to make some posts, including that of curator, redundant. However, subsequent meetings with the Trustees resulted in the Force offering to part-fund the Museum for three years, as it was accepted that it had a valuable part to play in continuing to preserve the history of Essex Police, and in educating members of the public, especially young people, in the importance of policing and its place in society. The Museum's considerable collections now include a specialist reference library and original material of value for family historians, such as the records of service of officers who served in Essex and some of the forces which were formerly independent of the county force e.g. Colchester and Southend. The education sessions for children and loans boxes are also very popular.

Visiting the Museum, registered charity 1042055

The Museum is based at Police Headquarters in Springfield and is open to the public every Saturday from 10am to 4pm; there is no charge although donations are very welcome! Facilities include disabled access and toilet facilities,

a small shop and a free car park adjacent. The Museum is open at other times by arrangement for lectures and craft programmes. For full details of activities and programmes see:

www.essex.police.uk/museum.

References

1. Maureen Scollan was a special constable while working for over seven years in the Essex Record Office. She joined the regular Force in 1971.
2. The book *Sworn to Serve: Police in Essex 1840-1990*, was published by Phillimore in 1993 with all royalties being given to the Museum.
3. Original minutes of meeting.
4. Ibid.
5. While the original remains with the French family a copy can be seen in the Museum. Colchester was an independent police force until 1947.

The authors

Maureen Scollan worked in the Essex Record Office for more than seven years and was also a special constable before joining Essex Police in 1971, where she eventually retired as an inspector having worked in many different policing roles. She holds an MA in Victorian Studies from Birkbeck College, London, and a PhD from the Open University; she is also the author of *Sworn to Serve: Police in Essex 1840-1990* and various published articles. She is currently chairman of the Friends of Historic Essex.

Martyn Lockwood joined Essex Police in 1966 and worked in various areas of Essex. He is the author of *The Essex Police Force – A History*, published in 1999, and *Murder and Crime in Essex*, published in 2011; he has published other articles in a variety of publications. He holds an MA in Policing from the University of Exeter and retired as an inspector in 1996. He took over from Maureen as secretary of the Police Museum in 1994 and currently continues in that role. He is also a committee member of the Friends of Historic Essex and chairman of the High Country History Group.



Brian Burton (1926-2013)

Brian Burton, President of the Essex Archaeological and Historical Congress ('Essex Congress') from 2007 to 2010 and a stalwart supporter of Essex heritage and culture, died suddenly on 27th December 2013 at the age of 87.

Born at North Woolwich on 9th October 1926, Brian was the elder of two sons and grew up in this area of London. He often swam in the docks with his brother until he was evacuated to South Wales at the outset of World War II. After leaving school at the age of 15 he moved to Mold, near Chester, where his mother had settled following the destruction of the family café during the Blitz. He worked in an administrative capacity at the local police station and in an aircraft factory manufacturing Wellington bombers prior to call-up in 1944 under the National Service (Armed Forces) Act 1939. Joining the Royal Navy he trained as a coder and, having missed the conflict in Europe, completed his service at H.M.S. Highflyer, a shore establishment at Trincomalee, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) and the home port of the Eastern Fleet of the Royal Navy following the fall of Singapore in 1942. Following demobilisation he joined the Palestine Police and served in the Force until the independent state of Israel was established upon the termination of the British Mandate of Palestine in 1948.

Returning to Britain he secured a job as a lab technician at Imperial College London where he studied and gained his H.N.C. qualifications in the Electronic and Communications field. It was here that he met Margaret Coatsworth whom he married in 1950. David, their elder child, was born a year later prompting a move to a new house at South Ockendon. Shortly afterwards, Brian joined the Transmission Development Department at the B.B.C. developing equipment to enable the Corporation to broadcast throughout the United Kingdom. In 1963, he was appointed as a lecturer in Electronics and Communications at Thurrock Technical College. His daughter, Joy was also born at this time. Brian spent the remainder of his career developing telecommunication courses primarily for apprentices from Marconi and Standard Telephones and Cables. He gained an outstanding reputation for the College and became Head of Electrical Engineering prior to early retirement.

Brian's interests were many and varied. He took enormous satisfaction from engaging with young and old alike. His activities included becoming an officer in the local Sea Cadets based at Tilbury Docks where he helped youngsters develop an interest in communications and the Navy. He was a

long-standing and active supporter of the South Ockendon Community Forum (a networking group of residents). As a committed Christian in later life he played an active role in his local church of All Saints Belhus Park.

It was his love of history and Essex, in particular, for which Brian is so affectionately known to us. He became a prominent member of the Thurrock Local History Society and especially championed the cause of the Coalhouse Fort Project (a voluntary group established in 1983 to save an important coastal defence at East Tilbury following its purchase by Thurrock Council in 1962). His other county activities included serving on the committee of The Friends of Historic Essex and having a significant involvement with the Essex Branch of the Historical Association. However, it was his association with Essex Congress that brought him to the fore. It was especially gratifying when Brian agreed to serve as Vice-Chairman from 2001-4 at a time when Dorothy Lockwood and I served as Chairman and President respectively. I remember with considerable fondness that 'strategy meetings' were held at Dorothy's then home of 10 Alloa Road in Goodmayes. Brian demonstrated his care and dedication, combined with his generous disposition, by frequently travelling to and from these evening meetings having left home from South Ockendon and travelling via Witham and Writtle to collect the Secretary and Assistant Secretary respectively. This necessitated covering a distance of some 136 miles and all at his own expense. He went on to serve as Chairman from 2004-7 and President from 2007-10. Brian will also be remembered for editing the Newsletter and arranging the highly successful Archaeological Symposium well beyond his period in office.

Brian was a man of intellect, boundless energy and deep commitment with an insatiable love of life. It was a pleasure to have known him and he will be greatly missed.

Martin Stuchfield



Major William Alfred Hewitt, T.D., A.C.I.B. (1923-2013)

William (Bill) Hewitt, Vice-President of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History ('ESAH'), died on 19th December 2013 at the age of 90 having been confined to home for the last two years of his life following a hip operation.

Bill was Essex born and bred and attracted considerable respect and admiration from all who knew and worked with him. He represented the third generation of his family to be born in Romford when he entered the world on 21st October 1923. He was educated at Brentwood School and in December 1939 took up a position with Midland Bank whilst also undertaking service in the Home Guard.

He was called up in 1942 and in August 1943 received a commission in the Royal Regiment of Artillery as a second Lieutenant. As a young gunnery officer he took part in the allied invasion of Italy by the 8th Army and witnessed the aftermath of the battle to capture Monte Cassino whilst liberating vast swathes of the country before reaching the north-eastern city of Padua in April 1945. Following Victory in Europe he served in Greece prior to transferring to the Territorial Army in 1947. In the Army Reserve he was promoted to the rank of Captain in 1950, awarded the Territorial Decoration in 1955 and further promoted to Major in 1957; he retired in 1959. After the War he resumed his career with Midland Bank becoming manager of the branch in Albert Road, Woolwich and ultimately assuming responsibility for the Gidea Park branch.

Following retirement, Bill embarked upon a new career supporting Essex historical charitable causes. He valued the Essex Record Office and became a stalwart member of The Friends of Historic Essex who acknowledged his contribution with a Vice-Presidency. However, it was to ESAH that he made his most tangible contribution utilising his significant skills to very great effect. He joined the Society in 1984 and, having been elected to the Council in 1990, was invited by the late Ray Powell to establish a Publications Development Fund (subsequently renamed as the Publication and Research Fund "PRF") to support the research and publication of historical and archaeological papers. The PRF was duly launched in March 1993 to coincide with the 140th anniversary of the Society. The Fund exceeded all expectations during Bill's tenure as Secretary increasing more than tenfold to over £50,000 during a thirteen-year period. When the Society faced a crisis with the sudden resignation of the Hon. Treasurer in 1995 he stepped 'into the breach' and was called upon on subsequent occasions.

I counted myself as very privileged to be invited as Bill's guest to attend the annual City of London Regiments Royal Artillery dinner for several successive years until these ceased due to declining numbers resulting from the age profile of the membership. These most enjoyable gatherings took place in the wonderful Georgian surroundings of the Royal Artillery Barracks at Woolwich. It was on these occasions that it was possible to witness Bill's training, encompassing his thoroughness for detail, at first hand. Having been shown to the officers' quarters on arrival he would immediately undertake a reconnaissance mission in order to ascertain if any pertinent changes had taken place since the last visit – even to the point of establishing evacuation points in the event of an emergency and confirming the location of essential facilities. This meticulous approach frequently paid dividends when guests, especially ladies, requested information concerning the location of the 'powder room'! Bill was uniquely placed to be able to answer un-hesitatingly. Lessons that I was pleased to learn and continue to use to very great advantage when organising events or functions. This was, of course, in addition to Bill being a most convivial host. He greatly cherished his association with the Royal Artillery that engendered a fierce loyalty and a sense of belonging. Bill was never happier when recounting his wartime exploits to a very willing and admiring listener.

His funeral took place on 7th January 2014 at St. Edward's Church in the market place at Romford where in 1949 he married his devoted Jean whom he had known from childhood and where their two daughters were also baptised. Many from the field of Essex archaeology and history attended the service in thanksgiving for the long life of a comrade who was well liked, totally dependable, and an example to us all.

Martin Stuchfield



Deborah Peers (1970-2014)

I first met Debbie in March 2006 when I was interviewed at ERO for the post of Heritage Development Manager with Essex County Council, and Debbie showed me around. My immediate first impression was that she must be a most capable Publications and Audience Development Officer. After I was appointed and started working with Debbie as her line manager that first impression was constantly reinforced, and contributed to my enjoyment of working with her at ERO.

Debbie's abilities combined qualities that made her so successful in her two demanding and varied roles. Bringing to the position of Publications Officer her enthusiasm for history and archives together with her love of literature, she skilfully managed the production of major works including *The Medieval Mercenary* and *The Impact of Catastrophe*. At the same time she embraced new ways of working in a digital age, and in 2007 masterminded the first ERO digital publication, a booklet commemorating the 400th anniversary of Jamestown, Virginia. It was her idea to publish it virtually to sell to customers as a digital version, a format novel at the time but which has since become widespread. Let us also remember her commitment to the Friends of Historic Essex and her lively editorship of their *Newsletter*.

These skills were complemented in Debbie's second role as Audience Development Officer, where she demonstrated her ability to work with many people, whether professional, amateur or volunteers, and to impart her enthusiasm to them. She threw herself into producing a varied and interesting annual programme of ERO events and outreach exhibitions and workshops. She was liked and respected by all who had dealings with her, who found her always professional, friendly and helpful.

One of Debbie's projects that has been particularly successful and may be regarded as her legacy is the development of the Essex Community Archive Network. Working with Sue Hampson and other library colleagues, together they planned, raised the grants, delivered and mentored the South Essex Community Archive. Debbie's friendly and knowledgeable personality inspired confidence in the many volunteers in the project to carry it forward at a local level.

Debbie had many more innovative and community focused plans which I was keen to develop with her. Although these can sadly not now be realized under her guidance, I am sure she would wish the same dynamic approach to her work to continue in other hands.

Debbie became ill in the summer of 2011 and when she realized that she would not be able to return to work the County Council arranged for

her to take early retirement. We all hoped that with her partner Mark she would be able to realize her wish to move to the West Country, and even perhaps to complete her PhD on James Joyce. Sadly this was not to be, and she died in February of this year in her early 40s, much to the sorrow of everyone who knew her.

Although Debbie is no longer with us her work and spirit is embedded in everything she did and everyone she worked with. So let us remember her when we pick up an ERO publication, attend a workshop or exhibition or log onto an Essex Community Archive. Thank you Debbie.

Stuart Warburton

Debbie – a salute

Monday 10th February was one of those days that you just dread. For those of us who were on duty that morning we knew that very shortly we would have to dash away from work to say goodbye to a very good friend and colleague – Debbie Peers. It was also one of those funny days when the weather couldn't make up its mind and we seemed to have several seasons over the course of an hour – wipers on, wipers off. As we drove towards the West Suffolk Crematorium at Bury St Edmunds I mentally counted off the towns we had to travel through – Braintree, Halstead, Sudbury... When we arrived, the assembled company were fortunate to be bathed in sunshine, just in time for the service.

I worked with Debbie at ERO for the duration of her employment and in that time she proved to be a very able, intelligent and witty colleague but more importantly a good friend. At work Debbie was a great enthusiast for arranging outreach events, getting out and about in the county. I had a lovely afternoon with her promoting the ERO at Halstead Library – a bitter/sweet memory when we drove past it on the day of her funeral.

Debbie also loved life. Many were the times that we snuck out for a slightly boozy lunch, when things got just too much – lunches which I remember as full of laughter and (just a little) scandalous conversation! Many of us also used to go out to the pub, and various beer festivals, and during these Debbie, and her mate Ash, used to drink some horrible looking, thick, black, dark beers (too much for me!) – indeed they seemed to thrive on the stuff although it didn't seem to improve the pool playing! There we were, all friends together, all fun, all laughs.

So the ERO and Records Management Crews will no longer go a-roving with Debbie but I know we all raise a glass to her memory – our friend.

Neil Wiffen

Book Reviews

J.R. Smith,
**The Borough of Maldon 1688-1800:
a Golden Age,**
pp.xviii & 532. ISBN 978-1-85858-513-0,
Brewin Books, 2013, £35.00.

Available from Crackbone Books, in Ansell & Sons, 5 High Street,
Maldon, CM9 5PB.

J.R. Smith is a former Essex Record Office archivist, perhaps best known as the author of *The Speckled Monster*, a historical account of smallpox, and the attempts to control it in Essex. His new book has had a long gestation, dating back to the 1970s when he was approached by the late Bill Petchey to work on a sequel to that historian's *Prospect of Maldon* which was published in 1991 and covered the town's history up to 1689. In his introduction Smith notes that his sequel is intended for two groups of readers – Maldonians with a particular interest in their own town, and a wider audience interested in English urban history.

Only a brief glimpse at the formidable list of references at the end of each chapter is required to show the thoroughness with which Smith has researched this history. After an introduction to the geographical and economic background of the town, each chapter examines a particular theme, ranging from aspects of the town's government to particular trades and professions, and its social and educational organisations. Wherever possible, Smith has identified the buildings occupied by the individuals he describes, often illustrated by an old image or a modern photograph. This will be very informative for residents interested in the history of their own properties, though there is no house by house gazetteer (such as that provided by Hilda Grieve for Chelmsford) to make it easier to glean this information from the text. There is a good index (including a separate one for personal names) though the less important buildings do not appear in the main index. Nevertheless much information about the town's individual buildings and their occupants during the 'long eighteenth century' can be gleaned from careful reading.

For the general reader (into which category this reviewer falls) the development of the town, its trades and its professional services is of considerable interest. One example is the trend to move away from stalls (subject to market tolls and restricted trading hours) into permanent shops, thereby avoiding the market restrictions. Another is the way in which inns became central to a wide range of business activities and dealings. Smith also describes the fluctuations of the economic fortunes of the town which sometimes came from an unexpected quarter. In 1778 Lt John Forth was sent to Maldon to carry out the very unpopular practice of pressing men for service in the navy. This resulted in a marked downturn in trade as men – and shipping – avoided the town for fear of being conscripted. After three months a group of

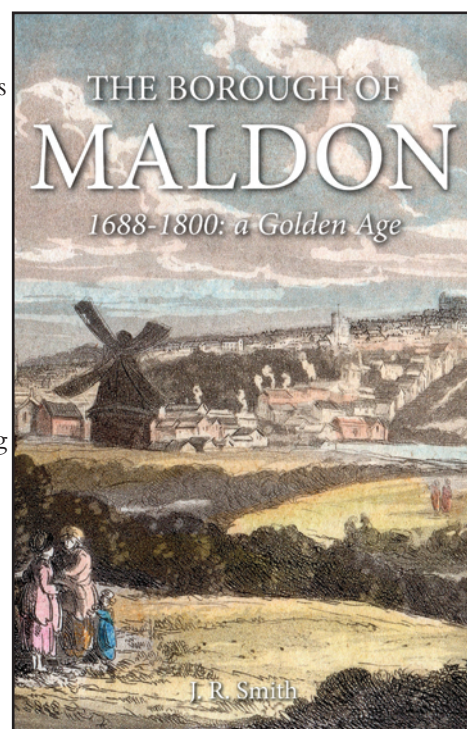
inhabitants petitioned the Admiralty for Firth's removal, claiming that if he remained in the town any longer, trade in coal and corn would completely dry up.

Though the quays were only accessible at high tide, coastal shipping was of great importance to the town's economy. Cargoes were mostly agricultural produce and timber, and coal, which became an increasingly important fuel in

Essex during the period covered by this book. Smith details the town's opposition to the construction of the Chelmer navigation which it correctly feared would take away much of the town's maritime trade by providing direct access to Chelmsford by water. In the period studied, the trade in timber was both significant and varied. Large quantities of Essex oak went through Maldon to the shipyards in Whitby and vast amounts of wood were provided for the construction and repair of Essex's sea walls – over 17 years, some 96,000 timber piles were sent to Foulness island, for example. The import of various types of softwood from Scandinavia grew steadily from the turn of the eighteenth century.

Shortage of housing was a problem for the growing town, as it was surrounded by agricultural land, too rich to sacrifice, or marsh prone to flood, leaving very little space for new development. This resulted in the frequent adaptation of existing buildings by subdividing houses, or adding extensions. Smith describes a number of examples and suggests that the ready availability of imported softwood may have delayed the introduction of brick into house construction.

Several chapters are devoted to the town's governance, and to the political background, which led to the dissolution of the town corporation in 1769. By that date, it had become very corrupt, its largest item of expenditure being feasts for its privileged members. Its passing was probably regretted by few and appears to have had no significant effect on the economy of the town. For the next half-century, all the functions of the old corporation were devolved to the vestries of the three parishes of Maldon, or to the Quarter Sessions in Chelmsford. However no new freemen could be nominated and, by 1807, their number had fallen to 80, with only 11 resident in the town. There was a real prospect that



Book Reviews

within a few years there would be no-one left to elect the town's two MPs and, following a petition to the Privy Council, the charter for a new corporation was granted in 1810.

This is a thoroughly detailed and referenced book, derived from a large number of sources, and will be an invaluable model for those tackling the histories of similar market towns, particularly those lucky enough to retain detailed borough or corporation records. For Maldonians it will provide an invaluable insight into the history of the town during this

period. A lighter touch is provided by extracts from Maldon's own diarist, John Crozier junior, which illuminate and enliven the descriptions of town life. The book has certainly met the two objectives that Smith set for himself in his introduction – as well as providing a model for other town studies – and is a worthy sequel to Bill Petchey's *Prospect of Maldon*.

Michael Leach

Brian Buxton,
At The House of Thomas Poyntz,
Published by the author, 2013
ISBN 9780992673604
pp.91.

Copies available at £10.00 + £2.75 p & p from Swan Books, 27 Corbets Tey Road, Upminster, RM14 2AR, 01708222930 or online from www.swanbooks.co.uk.

This self-published volume is about the Essex man Thomas Poyntz and how he got caught up in the betrayal of William Tyndale and the effects that it had on him and his family.

William Tyndale was a translator of the New Testament in the early sixteenth century. He succeeded in translating it into English and it was published using the printing press. The spread of the printing press through Europe at the end of the fifteenth century was the catalyst for the spread of the book and enabled the success of the translation. Tyndale's translation was published around 1525, a few years after the publication of Martin Luther's *The Ninety-Five Theses* in 1517. The Tyndale translation and those based on it were used extensively in the compilation of the King James Bible in 1611.

Both William Tyndale and Martin Luther were key figures in the reformation movement in Europe. They were both striving for change within the Catholic Church. Tyndale wanted people to be able to have their own relationship with God and they obviously couldn't do this without access to the bible (which was in Latin with access strictly controlled by the clergy). Luther on the other hand, objected to the Church's use of Indulgences, which allowed wealthy people to buy their way into heaven.

Brian Buxton's book is a labour of love and an authoritative text on the life of Thomas Poyntz. He was born in the 1490s in Essex and was a merchant in the early sixteenth century, conducting his business from London and Antwerp. Thomas married a girl from Antwerp and set up a home there where he may have rented out rooms to other English merchants. Certainly, William Tyndale seems to have lodged with him and it is this period that the book focusses on. Tyndale lodged with Poyntz after he had already translated the New Testament into English and would have been working on a much-asked-for revised and corrected version of the translation.

The household of Thomas Poyntz in Antwerp must have been busy as the author suggests; with Poyntz, his wife and four children, along with Tyndale, his supporters, and the general comings and goings of merchants and guests. The author makes extensive use of other texts that have been written on the final years of Tyndale's life and the period at the house of Poyntz in Antwerp. However, Buxton has been very careful when quoting his sources by mentioning where certain events are conjecture, which is very refreshing and professional of the author.

Whilst lodging with Poyntz, William Tyndale was captured and imprisoned. A good part of the book is devoted to the betrayal of William Tyndale by Henry Phillips. Phillips seems to have organised the capture of Tyndale by luring him from the house of Thomas Poyntz in 1535. However, Phillips was not present for the execution (by strangulation) of Tyndale as a heretic in the low countries during 1536. Buxton covers the events leading up to and around Tyndale's death very well and covers all of the available evidence.

As well as focussing on Tyndale's time with Poyntz, the author gives a well-researched account of the Poyntz family and the impact that Tyndale's association had on Poyntz. The family's connections with Essex are well researched and explained clearly. The author provides a good history of the Poyntz family from the available information. From my perspective, I found it interesting to see the beginnings of the reformation and translation of the bible, from the position of Thomas Poyntz; a man not directly involved in either action.

Jason Townsend

AT THE HOUSE OF THOMAS POYNTZ



Con laudem regis apud Antwerpium scripta.
Machinae quae propriis curatibus membra patrum
Puerorum caris sine exitu ducunt
Quia puerorum membra ducunt puerorum
Puerorum membra sine exitu ducunt
Puerorum membra sine exitu ducunt
Puerorum membra sine exitu ducunt
Puerorum membra sine exitu ducunt
Puerorum membra sine exitu ducunt

Brian Buxton

Book Reviews

Arthur Stanley Newens,
**In Quest of a Fairer Society:
My Life and Politics,**

pp.395. ISBN 978-1-84104-564-1,
The Memoir Club, 2013, £20 hardback +
£3-25 p&tp, £12 paperback + £3-00 p&tp.

Available from the publisher, and from the author at 18 Park Hill,
Harlow, CM17 0AE

In this book, the author begins with his earliest memories of family life in the East End of London in the 1930s and proceeds through his education, his move to North Weald in World War Two, and the formative influences which led to his growing awareness of politics and the wider world outside his family circle. He was strongly imbued with the work ethic in his upbringing. Though his father was very supportive of his aspiration to proceed to the sixth form and university, he was expected to assist in the garden at weekends, and to earn modest wages as a casual farm labourer in the holidays. From an early age he had a very strong moral sense, refusing, for example, to eat some black market pork that his father had obtained. Initially a Liberal supporter, he developed firmly held socialist views which were driven by his strong social conscience. When he became active in the local Labour party this caused problems with his family – who strongly disapproved of socialism – and with some North Weald residents. It is difficult now to understand the intensely hostile attitude towards the Labour party which resulted, for example, in the villagers burning an effigy of the Labour MP for Epping after her defeat in the 1950 election. In 1952 his family paid for a notice in the *West Essex Gazette* dissociating themselves from his socialist views.

It is clear that he found university very stimulating, both the teaching and the vigorous discussions with his fellow students. He already possessed an enormous affinity for reading a very wide range of material. After a degree in history and a stint on a building site (where he learnt Polish from his fellow workers) he trained as a teacher and then taught history and English in an inner London school. Though commuting from North Weald, he continued his political activities in his spare time, in spite of local hostility and occasional verbal abuse on the streets. Though not a conscientious objector, he was strongly opposed to the British involvement in Korea and in 1952 he opted to work for four years as a coal miner in lieu of the obligatory two years military service.

Conditions in the Nottingham coal mines were harsh, dirty and dangerous. Miners were expected to provide their own tools, and the system of piece work payment meant that their wages were cut if there was an unexpected roof fall, or delays for any other reason outside their control. Most workers, as well as the National Union of Mineworkers

(which later earned a reputation for militancy), accepted this unquestioningly, but the author strove hard to encourage them to stand up for their rights and was active in taking up their grievances with the management.

At the end of his mining stint he returned to teaching but remained politically very active. Reading the account of his obvious dedication as a teacher, his avid reading and his involvement in a range of political

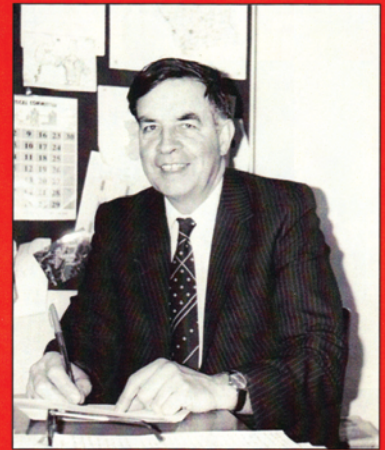
activities, one can only envy his drive. He was a firm believer in the now neglected art of canvassing the electorate and 'knocking up' supporters on polling day, and reckoned to have visited every house in the Epping constituency (the second largest in the country) before winning back the seat for Labour in 1964. He found the arcane traditions of Parliament surprising, as well as the cynicism of some older members, one of whom told him 'you don't want to think you can get anything done in here.'

Apart from a four year gap, he remained a Labour MP (later representing Harlow after boundary reorganisation) until 1983. When he lost his seat he stood for, and was elected, MEP for Central London which he represented until his retirement in 1999. Always to the left of the Labour party, he was involved in most of the key political events of the latter part of the twentieth century, such as the Suez invasion, the Aldermaston marches, abolition of capital punishment, the Vietnam war, the Falklands invasion, and many more to which this review cannot possibly do justice. As an MEP he travelled widely, and stood out against injustices in many of the countries that he visited. He was never intimidated into suppressing his views, and was prepared to disobey the party whip on matters of conviction or conscience, as a result of which he was never offered a ministerial post. All the while, he worked assiduously and loyally for the benefit of the electorate that he represented. In addition, it is difficult not to note his political prescience in predicting the unintended consequences of a number of ill-considered government initiatives.

After the recent adverse publicity over the corruption of a number of our representatives and

IN QUEST OF A FAIRER SOCIETY

My Life and Politics



Arthur Stanley Newens

Book Reviews

their misuse of their parliamentary expenses, it is far too easy to be cynical about politicians. This book is strongly recommended for anyone holding such views, as the author's integrity, his interest in a wide range of issues, and his readiness to confront wrongful decisions, and a willingness to negotiate for compromise without betraying his own principles, is apparent throughout his career. It is excellent, too, in providing insights into the important events of the last half century. But most of all it is inspiring to read of the

author's unstinting dedication to the people he served.

The book is well illustrated with photographs chronicling his career; it has a personal name index though the addition of subject titles would have been helpful, and there are a few editorial lapses. But neither of these minor quibbles detracts from an inspiring account of a life devoted, as the title implies, to the quest for a fairer society.

Michael Leach

Paul Wreyford,
**The A-Z of curious Essex:
strange stories of mysteries,
crimes and eccentrics,**
pp.160. ISBN 978-0-7524-8986-5,
The History Press, 2013, £12.99.

In his introduction Mr Wreyford describes this as 'a book for curious people about all things curious in Essex', and he has certainly collected a fine range of facts, legends and perhaps fiction to inform and entertain the reader.

The contents are arranged as a gazetteer, not quite from A-Z, but from Abberton to Writtle, with one or more curious accounts for each. Thus you may start from your home area and see if you know the local strange story, or dip into the book at random.

Subjects covered include those related to people, places, events or legends. Journal readers may already be familiar with some of the curiosities, e.g. with John Bright, the fat man of Maldon, John Salter, doctor and diarist of Tolleshunt d'Arcy, the Colchester earthquake of 1884, and the nuclear bunker at Kelvedon Hatch.

But while no doubt you know that Cressing Temple was founded by the Knights Templar, did you also know that the manor of Little Maplestead was once owned by the Order of the Knights Hospitaller who there built a round church modelled on the rotunda church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem? And you may well have visited Langley's at Great Waltham, but did you know of the mysterious death there of Miss Lee in the seventeenth century?

Famous people whose association with Essex may not be generally known include John Locke at High Laver, John Evelyn at Warley Place, Nell Gwyn at Newport, and the explorer David Livingstone at Ongar. King Louis XVIII of France, while in exile, lived at Gosfield Hall for two years. Richard Cromwell, son of Oliver and briefly Lord Protector in succession to him, attended Felsted School: the entry explains his connection with the nursery rhyme 'Hickory, Dickory Dock.'

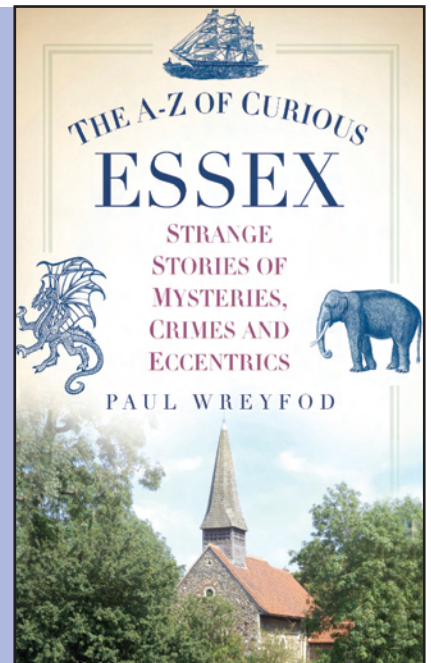
Inventors and innovators also feature: Chelmsford can claim a close association with Guglielmo Marconi of course, but there were earlier pioneers. Thomas Tusser in the sixteenth century came from Rivenhall. His rhyming poem *500 points of Good Husbandry* had a considerable influence on farming methods, though its success came too late for the unfortunate author who died in a debtors' prison. William Harvey, first to discover the circulation of the blood, came from Hempstead, and Henry Winstanley, who built the first Eddystone lighthouse, from Saffron Walden.

Essex also has its fair share of crafty villains; read on to find the connection between John Palmer and Dick Turpin the highwayman, originally from Hempstead. And how did the notorious smuggler, William 'Hard Apple' Blyth of Paglesham, manage to avoid detection for so long? Read this entry too for details of the last days of a famous ship.

No book about Essex would be complete without stories of witches (see Canewdon, Coggeshall and Colchester) and the supernatural (hauntings at St Anne's Castle, Great Leighs, Layer Marney and Hadleigh Castle), and the Devil himself at Runwell. And after his death the late churchwarden had a surprise for the congregation of Stondon Massey...

I could continue, but will leave you to make your own discoveries, impress your friends, or perhaps even devise an Essex quiz!

Jenepher Hawkins



Your Book Reviewers are: Jenepher Hawkins, the EJ Membership Secretary; Michael Leach, a retired GP and local historian; Jason Townsend, a local history enthusiast who is currently helping with the production of the *Essex Journal*.

EJ 20 Questions? Hannah Salisbury

Hannah Salisbury was born in Harold Wood in 1986, and grew up in Kelvedon Hatch. She went to school in South Weald and Shenfield before studying for a BA in History at Downing College, Cambridge, 2006–9, and then an MA in Cultural Heritage Studies at UCL in 2010–11. Hannah first came to the Essex Record Office on school work experience in 2003 and from 2006 worked on a casual basis. She has been doing outreach and engagement work for ERO since 2012. This means that Hannah is always looking for new people to introduce to ERO, and for new ways of helping people to use and enjoy our collections, whether they are 5 or 95.



(Photograph, H. Salisbury)

1. What is your favourite historical period?

I used to think I'd like to live in the past, but realised I'm much happier living with modern medicine, dentistry, and plumbing. For study, I've always been interested in the Great War – it's so extreme and vast.

2. Tell us what Essex means to you?

Home. Access to London and to beautiful countryside and historic towns. And a challenge – to persuade people that it's not all TOWIE.

3. What historical mystery would you most like to know?

It would be interesting to know what the Queen thinks of some of the people she has known. How does she think Blair measures up to Churchill?

4. My favourite history book is... If I can only have one, Robert Harris's *Enigma*, a novel set in Bletchley Park, is something I've read over and over again.

5. What is your favourite place in Essex?

The place I visit most often for enjoyment is South Weald park. It's close to my home and has woodland, open space, a lake, ducks, and deer. I also enjoy the historic towns like Saffron Walden and Thaxted, and the variety of our county. We have everything from stately homes to huge container ports.

6. How do you relax? I got into photography a few years ago, and now have far more pictures of ducks, swans, leaves and odd architectural features than I will ever need.

7. What are you researching at the moment?

At work, a wide variety of things but currently Essex during the First World War. One of my jobs is to keep our blog updated, and that includes highlighting interesting items from our collection.

8. My earliest memory is... Being at playgroup in our local village hall.

9. What is your favourite song/piece of music and why? I love Ralph Vaughan Williams's *The Lark Ascending*. I loved it the first time I heard it.

10. If you could travel back in time which event would you change? My grandmother's father dying when she was just 18 months old, as a result of which she grew up in a Victorian-style orphanage.

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

Vera Brittain, Thomas Cromwell, and a servant named Ann White who worked at Audley End in the 1700s; at ERO we have a bastardy bond that records Ann having a child with an Italian painter, Biagio Rebecca. I wonder how things panned out for her as a single mother then? Also one of the early European settlers in America.

12. What is your favourite food? The *EJ*'s editor makes an amazing bruschetta with chopped tomatoes, olive oil, salt and basil, and garlic rubbed onto toasted slices of baguette. I'd have to say that.

13. The history book I am currently reading is...

Diana Souhami's recent biography of Edith Cavell. I knew about her tragic death, but nothing about her life. Finding out what led to her occupied Belgium where she helped Allied soldiers to escape is really interesting.

14. What is your favourite quote from history?

'Somewhat shall I encomber you with my babling', in a letter from Stephen Gardiner to Lord Protector Somerset.

15. Favourite historical film? How about a TV two-parter? *Longitude*, the story of John Harrison's clocks and the longitude prize, based on Dava Sobel's book, which I also enjoyed. Then I went to university and realised all of the things wrong with it!

16. What is your favourite building in Essex?

Audley End. I did some research for English Heritage on the lives of the servants who worked there, so it has more significance for me as a result.

17. What past event would you like to have seen?

Not an event as such, but I would have loved to have seen London 100 years ago, before all the high rises, and when the Thames was full of ships.

18. How would you like to be remembered?

Hopefully as someone kind and helpful.

19. Who inspires you to read or write or research history?

I was really lucky to have a great dissertation supervisor as an undergraduate, Dr Alexander Watson. Since leaving university it's been good being at the ERO, surrounded by other people with a variety of historical interests and specialisms.

20. Most memorable historical date?

4th August 1914 – when Britain joined the First World War.



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