

# ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

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## ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY NEWS

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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Spring 2005

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 145

SPRING 2005

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**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE  
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The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

Cover illustration:

A Roman charioteer. Reproduced by kind permission of the artist Peter Froste.  
See the article on Colchester Archaeological Trust on pages 8 to 10 for a report  
on the Trust's excavation of the Roman circus as well as their other recent  
excavations.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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It has been an especially busy and important time for many aspects of archaeological and historical services in Essex. The negotiations between Essex County Council and the District Councils on the funding of archaeological planning appear to have proceeded generally satisfactorily. We should also be optimistic that a new agreement between the County Council and the University of Essex concerning the continuation of the Victoria County History, albeit at a lower funding level, should be agreed in the next few weeks. Work at the Essex Record Office has started towards the re-organising of its ground floor spaces to attract more users and supporting income, and the outreach service has also been expanding its activity. Fuller reports on these issues will appear in future newsletters. In March the *Time Team* programme on St. Osyth was televised, and if you missed it then some details have been made available on the Channel 4 website: [www.channel4.com/history/timeteam/2005\\_osy.html](http://www.channel4.com/history/timeteam/2005_osy.html). It is normal practice for a full archive on the work behind these programmes to be deposited locally, and that will no doubt reveal much else of interest. Two *Time Team* 'specials' have also been made, but not yet broadcast, based around post-excavation work on the high status A/S burial at Prittlewell (Editors note: the Prittlewell programme is provisionally scheduled to be broadcast on June 20 at 9pm) and the 'chariot-racing track' recently excavated on the Abbeyfield site at Colchester Garrison (see the report on page 8 of this newsletter).

Since our last newsletter was published many members of the Society will have learnt with sadness of the death of

Herbert Hope Lockwood (1917-2004) or 'Bert' Lockwood as he was known affectionately to all. Bert was educated at Ilford County High School and King's College, London University, and returned to Ilford in 1952 as a lecturer at Tottenham College of Technology. He became a significant contributor to the Essex local history scene and published a great many fascinating and scholarly historical works, most of them concerned with Barking, Ilford and that neighbourhood. He also made major contributions to the running of historical societies and activities. Locally he served as Chairman and President of both Barking and District Historical Society and the Ilford and District Historical Society. Within the wider county he served with distinction as Chairman and President of the Essex Archaeological and Historical Congress and as a committee member of the Friends of Historic Essex. His funeral at Barking parish church in November 2004 was attended by a great many from the historical community in Essex and he is sorely missed.

Two of our Vice-Presidents have recently decided to step down from responsibilities they have ably covered for the Society for many years. One of our most distinguished members, Ray Powell has decided to retire as a holding trustee, a position he has held since 1990. He has, of course, also been a long-serving member of Council, as well as our President (1987-90) and Membership Secretary (1990-93). Along with John Appleby he was the prime mover in developing the Society's Publications Development Fund which has proved so important in underpinning and securing the future of the Society's publication programme. Ray has also been the most prolific and important contributor to our journal *Essex*

*Archaeology and History* in recent years, both through his own meticulous work on Essex history and through the editing of J.H. Round's important unpublished papers. At the same time I must mention William (Bill) Hewitt who Ray persuaded to take on the position of secretary to the Publications Development Fund when it was launched in 1993. Bill has been a stalwart and most effective administrator for the fund ever since, forever chasing donations and especially being bad news for the taxman. Now that he is stepping down we must put on record the Society's thanks for his amazing development of the fund, now called the Publications and Research Fund, which has currently received donations totalling £33,575.90, and which provides income of nearly £2000 yearly for the support of our publications. Like Ray, we will miss Bill's helpful contributions to many of the Society's managerial committees.

In connection with our publications, members will be relieved to know that progress is starting to be made towards the production of *Essex Archaeology and History*. Great efforts have been made to recover the time previously lost by largely unavoidable delays, and we owe a special thanks to Owen Bedwin for his work on this matter, assisted by Andrew Phillips. As I write, Volume 34 (2003) has been printed and bound is starting to go out for delivery. As in past years, officers of the Society will be attempting to deliver as many copies as possible by hand, as the postage cost can be exorbitant for these volumes. Largely due to Owen's dedication Volume 35 (2004) is also now quite advanced and we hope that it may also be produced during the current year or soon afterwards. However, probably the most important question facing the Society at the moment is the

identification of someone willing to fill the role of Honorary Editor of our journal.

Additionally, work on an index for volumes 1-30 of the journal has now got under way and our indexer, Peter Gunn, has already made substantial progress. When the index is finished it is Council's intention, finances and grants permitting, to provide it as an additional, and very useful, free volume for members. The first in our series of occasional papers by John Hunter on *Field Systems in Essex*, has also proved an outstanding success and has sold widely, both within the county and more generally. This is not surprising as it received very good notices, one in the *Agricultural History Review* describing it as a 'splendid illustration of the possibilities and potential worth of this type of research'. That first occasional paper has now broken even and all future sales (and we still have plenty of copies left) will provide a reserve of money towards the publication of future numbers in the series.

Finally, I would like to thank the Society's members for electing me to serve as their President for the past three years. It has meant a lot to an Essex 'boy' to have served the Society in this way. I also wish to sincerely thank all the Chairmen, Secretaries and members of the Society's various committees who have helped me a very great deal and whose dedication never ceases to astonish me. While I will be taking more of a back seat from June this year, I still expect to see many of you on a regular basis in several continuing roles on Society committees. But I must reserve my warmest thanks for our Hon. Secretary, Michael Leach, who is as an efficient, energetic and charming a Secretary as any President could wish for. In my case he has kindly shouldered

much Society work that I have been unable to cope with as other pressures have mounted up on my time over the past eighteen months. I retire wishing all our members a happy time in the future - excavating, researching, writing and reading about Essex archaeology and history.

Chris Thornton

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## **ESSEX PLACE-NAMES PROJECT SEMINAR**

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The 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Seminar will be held in Saffron Walden on Saturday afternoon 12<sup>th</sup> November 2005. The Guest Speaker will be Dr. S. Oosthuizen, Ph.D. of Cambridge University. Her subject will be "Place-names, the end of Roman Britain and the Mercian kingdoms". The seminar will also include talks from local recorders.

Tickets, price £5, are available from the Project Coordinator, 27 Tor Bryan, Ingatestone, CM4 9JZ. Please make cheques payable to the Essex Society for Archaeology and History and enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

James Kemble

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## **URGENTLY WANTED – AN EDITOR FOR *ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY***

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Members will be aware of the delays in the issue of the Society's Transactions, *Essex Archaeology and History*. Volume 33 (for 2002) was issued in the summer of 2003 and it is hoped that, by the time they read this Newsletter, volume 34 (for 2003) will have reached members. The

latter has been produced with the generous and unstinting assistance of former editor Dr Owen Bedwin, assisted by members of the Publications Committee. Council is extremely grateful to them for their considerable efforts, without which volume 34 would not have materialised. Unfortunately the delays in publication have been unavoidable, as, in spite of appeals, the Society still lacks an Honorary Editor, well over a year after the resignation of the last holder of this post. It is particularly frustrating as there is no lack of archaeological articles to publish, the majority of which come with substantial grants to assist publication. The result of this subsidy is that the Transactions are of a much higher standard than the Society would be able to afford from the present level of membership subscription. There is already sufficient material for volume 35 (for 2004), but it will be difficult to publish this until we can find an Honorary Editor.

We are still seeking an enthusiastic person to head a small editorial team, and to be responsible for overall editorial policy. Prior experience is not essential, as he or she would receive as much support and advice as needed from the former editor, and from other members of the Publications Committee. Members have specialist knowledge in a wide range of fields (from prehistoric archaeology to C20 history), and are willing to vet submitted articles, and to see them through the proof stages. Though there are usually sufficient archaeological articles for each volume, we would like to publish more historical material and it would be helpful for the new editor to consider ways of achieving this in collaboration with the editorial team. Council's ultimate intention is to catch up with publication of the Transactions, so that each new volume will be issued in the year to which it

relates. This will be helped by the publication of an index for volumes 1 to 30, for which grants have been obtained. A professional indexer has started work on this and we hope to publish this as a separate volume (possibly with a small amount of historical or archaeological material) next year.

The Society's Transactions have been (and remain) a fundamental part of its function since its foundation in 1852. It is extremely important, both for the Society and for the history of the County, that we should find someone who can ensure that it will continue to be published regularly. Anyone who might be interested in this post can find out more by contacting me initially, by letter to 2 Landview Gardens, Ongar CM5 9EQ, or by phone on 01277 363106, or by e-mail at [family@leachies.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:family@leachies.freereserve.co.uk)

Michael Leach

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## **THE 1616 MAP OF LATTON, DRAWN BY JEREMIE BAILEY**

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Over the centuries, most parts of Essex generated an enormous wealth of historic records. Among those produced in the Harlow area was an exceptionally interesting map of the parish of Latton, drawn by one Jeremie Bailey in 1616 for the landowner, Sir Edward Altham, who died in 1632. Jeremie Bailey was apparently a husbandman of Great Bardfield, whose will was proved in 1625, though little else is known about him.

Harlow as it exists today covers the greater part of five contiguous ancient parishes: Harlow, Latton, Netteswell, Little Parndon and Great Parndon, from east to west. Each of them comprised a

narrow strip of land some three miles in length, stretching from the River Stort in the north to the ridge running east to west in the south from the present M11 roundabout to Rye Hill. Each had water capable of powering a mill and riverside meadows in the north with viable land, common pasture and woodland to the south. The map shows the second of these parishes, as it had developed by the early seventeenth century.

There were three manors - Mark Hall and Latton Hall within easy reach of St. Mary-at-Latton Church and Priory Manor, originally attached to Latton Priory in the south. In 1562, James Altham, a successful City of London ironmonger who had served as Sheriff, achieved the status of a landowner by the purchase of the first two of these. In 1567, he also acquired Priory Manor, which meant he owned the whole parish. It was his grandson, Sir Edward Altham, who died in 1632, who commissioned the survey which resulted in the drawing of the map.

It consists of three pieces of parchment measuring some 7ft. 6ins. in length, when placed end to end, approximately 2ft. wide. The map is in colour and provides an illustrated picture of Latton nearly 400 years ago.

Fore Street and Market Street, in effect the town centre of seventeenth century Harlow, are depicted beyond the Latton boundary, in Harlow parish, with all the houses shown, including the middle row, drawn as they would have appeared to a contemporary. Further south, all the houses in Potter Street are shown - again to the east of the Latton boundary.

Bush Fair appears with stalls set out, animals for sale and people going about their business. Some way off, a priest is

leading his parishioners, apparently singing the litany as they beat the parish bounds. The butts, the whipping post and Harlow potteries are marked.

The hill on which Harlow's Romano-British Temple was situated (although its existence had long been forgotten) is shown in the north and the former Latton Priory in the south. The church of St. Mary-at-Latton, Mark Hall and Latton Hall, Latton Vicarage and all the houses in the parish are quaintly pictured in their actual locations.

Around the Temple site, strip cultivation had survived but much of the rest of the parish, apart from common pasture, had been enclosed. Fields are named and many of the proprietors or tenants are indicated. Many of the field names are familiar, as they were used for new town housing areas, e.g. Broomfield, Great Plumtree, Stackfield and Orchard Croft. An immense amount of information has been incorporated into this map.

It was apparently passed down in the Altham family until 1778, when the last direct male heirs died without issue and another Altham descendant, William Lushington, purchased the estate. However, in 1786 he sold it to Montagu Burgoyne, a progressive in politics and agriculture, and a distant relative of General John Burgoyne who was forced to surrender to American rebels at Saratoga in 1782. In 1819, Burgoyne sold the estate and presumably the archives, including the map, to Richard Arkwright, son of Sir Richard Arkwright, inventor of the water frame, which was crucial to the development of a factory-based cotton spinning industry in Britain.

Richard Arkwright, who set up each of his six sons with a landed estate, purchased Mark Hall and the parish of

Latton for the eldest, the Revd. Joseph Arkwright. The latter's descendants retained and added greatly to it until obliged to sell it to the Harlow Development Corporation as the site for a designated new town in 1947.

Many of the archives passed to the Essex Record Office, but not the map, although the ERO was given the opportunity to photograph it. I managed to make contact with John Arkwright, head of the family, a year or two ago and found that he agreed that the map ought to return to the Harlow area. As a result, a deal was struck and I had the thrill of bringing this precious gem of Harlow's historic heritage back to its original home.

The British Library, whom I contacted, were very anxious to make a digital copy for their records, and provided me with two copies. One of these I had framed and presented to the Chairman of the District Council, Cllr. Ian Jackson, representing the town at a well-attended reception in Harlow Museum on 12th December, 2004. It now hangs in the Museum to illustrate part of the long and fascinating history of the town. The map itself needs to be kept out of the light if its life is to be prolonged, but it is at home here in Harlow as an original and splendid archive of Harlow's past and a tribute to the cartographical skills of its creator.

Stan Newens

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## **ESSEX IN RICHARD BLOME'S *BRITANNIA***

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Richard Blome (1635–1705) was an enterprising C17 publisher who has been treated rather contemptuously by historians as an unimaginative plagiarist.

His *Britannia* was printed in 1673 and was priced at 20 shillings. It is believed to have been the first work financed (wholly or partially, it is not clear) by obtaining the support of subscribers, a practice which was to be widely used in the C18. The coats of arms of 812 of his subscribers fill the first pages of his book. It is clear from his pre-publication prospectus that subscribers were invited to provide answers to a range of questions about their localities, ranging from the healthiness of the air to details of the local markets. Though Blome does not go so far as to admit his debt to William Camden's better known *Britannia*, he does underline his intention to update and add to Camden's work, and to provide better maps than those surveyed by Speed. He emphasised that he was the undertaker, not the author of the work which had received '*its birth from divers Manuscripts, from all Books yet extant that have writ of the same subject; and from some hundreds of experienced Persons ....who have freely contributed their assisting hands....*' This reasonable explanation did not prevent vicious criticism, such as that of Bishop William Nicholson who, in 1696, described it as '*a most notorious piece of theft out of Camden and Speed*'.

Blome indicated in his Preface that his book had been widely welcomed, as copies of Camden's *Britannia* were scarce and expensive, and unlikely to be reprinted. (William Camden first published his work in 1588 in Latin, and it was reprinted in an English translation by Philemon Holland in 1610 and 1637). Blome acknowledged that his maps (one of which was provided for each county) were not newly surveyed but were '*taken*' from those of Speed. They had been re-engraved, with some corrections, at a reduced scale in order to fit into the folio volume. He also

added, for each county, an alphabetical list of the nobility and gentry, apparently obtained from correspondence with his subscribers. He was aware that this could be a potential minefield, as deciding to which county a particular gentleman belonged could be difficult, and accidental omissions would inevitably cause offence. His Preface contains a careful anticipatory apology for any mistakes that he might have made. He ended his introduction with an invitation to readers to subscribe to his next work, a two volume '*Geographical Description of the four parts of the world*', at 20 shillings a volume. *Britannia* does not seem to have been a commercial success, as Blome sold the title, as well as many unbound offprints, to another publisher in 1677.

After a general introduction (including a very detailed description of the legal system, and a list of the current members of Parliament), each county was described in turn. Essex was covered in 4½ pages and was noted to be '*well clothed with wood*'. Its principal commodities were '*Cloths, Stuffs, Hopps, Butter, Cheese, Gun-powder, Cattle, Wood, Oysters and principally Saffron (the dearest Commodity that England produceth)*'. The coastal islands provided '*a great abundance of Fish and Fowl*'. He described the discovery of '*two Gyants teeth*' on the Ness north of Harwich, though noted that these were more likely to have been of elephant, rather than of human, origin. There was a brief but standard description of the county's 21 market towns, though that for Colchester was much fuller and had the flavour of an eye-witness account, possibly penned by a Royalist correspondent; '*twas once beautified with about 15 Parish Churches, many of which are now reduced to ruin, and not made use of; and here were several fair*

*structures, now much ruined, as are its Inhabitants much impoverished, by the disloyal party in the late deplorable times...'. Harwich was noted for its difficulty in obtaining fresh drinking water; and Maldon was (mistakenly) identified as the Roman Camulodunum, and Brentwood as Caesarmagus. Market day was almost invariably mentioned, with a qualifying comment about the market itself, often 'small' or 'indifferent'. The general impression is not one of affluence, with the exception of Saffron Walden where the crocus continued to provide considerable profits. In the appendix was a list of some 240 'Nobility and Gentry which are, or lately were, related unto the County of Essex'.*

Blome has been harshly treated by critics, but he was a publisher, not a historian, and he was perfectly honest in his preface about his sources and intentions. The support of over 800 subscribers suggests that his assessment of the scarcity of Camden's Britannia was correct, and that there was a good market for an updated equivalent. He was not the last to improve on Camden's work, though he may have been the least scholarly. Edmund Gibson, bishop of London, edited a new translation with substantial additions in 1695 and 1722, and there were other derivative works in the C18 in which the same mistakes (and even the same sentences!) can be recognised.

Michael Leach

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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Allan Lewis: *A Country Memoir* (2004) pp30 Pub: Lavers Local History Society, Watermans End Cottage, Matching Green, Harlow, Essex.

This delightful and honest account of rural Essex in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, full of loving memories of individuals and their families, is very reminiscent of that classic, *The History of Myddle*. Rich anecdotes of hardship and eccentricity, of lives lived almost on another planet, bring back a little corner of rural England where times were hard and lives were often bleak in the 1920s and 1930s. A second instalment is promised and recommended

Noel Beer: *The 19<sup>th</sup> Century Rectors of Rayleigh* (2004) pp 58 HTR Publications, 13 Nelson Road, Rayleigh.

This latest booklet from the fertile pen of Noel Beer keeps up the high standard of the earlier volumes: lucid, well-indexed and rooted in contemporary sources. It is worth reading solely for its analysis of the 1851 Census in Rayleigh – which has some very interesting findings, though of course, I will not say what they are: you must buy and read them for yourselves.

Peter Marcan, *South East England: History & Heritage Handbook* (2004), pp154, £35 (plus postage) from author at PO Box 3158, LONDON SE1 4RA.

This is an extraordinarily thorough A4 handbook, a companion to the author's *Greater London History & Heritage Handbook*, covering the 14 counties (including Essex) which ring London. It lists, with addresses, brief descriptions, websites and named officers, the widest possible range of organisations and individuals in the history and heritage fields, plus current and recent publications from public and commercial sources. History, archaeology, archives, family history, churches, gardens – it covers them all. Enlivened with small illustrations, this reviewer found it

extraordinarily sound for Essex, and one is only impressed at the trawling that must have gone on to compile it.

Tim Smith & Bob Carr: *A Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of Hertfordshire and the Lea Valley* (2004), pp 64, Association for Industrial Archaeology.

Nigel Balchin & Peter Filby: *A Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough* (2004), pp 52, Association for Industrial Archaeology.

These two colour-covered A5 booklets provide a detailed gazetteer of the areas they cover with chunky descriptions, map references, maps, illustrations and access details. Given their publishers, these must be presumed quite definitive for what they offer. They join our library as we wait for the volume covering Essex.

Andrew Phillips

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## COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRUST

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The Trust's location of the Roman circus in Colchester has hit the headlines in recent weeks, but before a description of this spectacular discovery is given a survey of the range of other activities is appropriate.

Post-excavation work on the large quantity of material and information gained from the St. Mary's Hospital site relating to a Roman suburb just outside the town wall is in full swing. Nearby, inside the town wall, a plain tessellate pavement uncovered at the Sixth Form College on North Hill has indicated the site of a large town building, another addition to the plan of Roman

Colchester. (Editors note: see <http://www.catuk.org/excavations/bathhouse>)

The former ironmongers shop in East Street, known affectionately by Colcestrians as 'Charlie Brown's', has been converted to residential use. The refurbishment of the medieval building presented many features of exceptional interest to building historians. The Trust found evidence of occupation dating to the 12th or 13th centuries. A small excavation of a hearth produced more questions than answers, but one cannot strip a listed building to the sub-soil!

Lexden Road runs through the west Roman cemetery of Colchester and many of the burial remains in the Castle Museum, including the Facilis and Longinus tombstones, were uncovered by chance during the Victorian development in the area. Opportunities for a modern excavation are not common, but when Handford House in Beverley Road was demolished the Trust was able to dig the foundation trenches for the builders of the housing blocks which replaced it. This limited investigation of ten per cent of the complete area revealed 59 burials and two busta, rarely recognised cremations in which the cremated remains are left in a slot below the pyre. Thus, in spite of the nineteenth century disturbances the cemetery appears still appears to contain much to discover. Indeed, further burials have been found on isolated sites in the area recently.

Excavations at Stanway, adjacent to the site where the spectacular first century native British graves were investigated some ten years ago, has produced a modest number of humbler cremation burials with coin evidence pointing to the Vespaian period or later. Evidently the

area continued to be used as a cemetery, albeit in a small way, at some time after the richer earlier graves.

Excavations to test the archaeological potential in part of the St Botolph's area of the town near the South Gate, as a preliminary to a proposed urban renewal project, have exposed parts of the Roman and medieval defensive ditches in front of the town wall, and evidence of buildings dating from the first century onwards. Along the line of Osborne Street to the south of the wall trenches revealed refuse tips and Roman pits to the west, Roman clay floors, slots and post-holes to the east and, further east, water-logged medieval deposits from which well-preserved timbers and leatherwork were recovered. Osborne Street runs in the valley of a stream now piped.

Parts of the Colchester Garrison are being redeveloped and some of the land has been released for housing. The Trust has carried out a number of excavations in this area to the south of the town, which would have been part of the pre-Roman oppidum within the town's dyke system, and has established a pattern of first century Iron Age fields and tracks with a later farmstead or villa. Nowadays we think of north Essex as primarily arable land, but the features suggest stock management with fences and gates; a system of mixed farming, perhaps. To the north, towards the town, evidence of a first century BC enclosure and roundhouse demonstrates earlier occupation. Inevitably, pre-Roman and Roman burials have been found. Investigation continues as a watching brief.

Excavation yet further to the north at the site of the old cavalry barracks has revealed more Roman burials and a

metalled road. Some of the attractive Victorian buildings including a stable block will be preserved.

To the east of the cavalry barracks the most northern area of Abbeyfield has provided the biggest surprise. Four years ago a service trench dug for electricity cables revealed traces of wall foundation and two years later further traces turned up in test trenches prior to proposed development. In 2004 two planned excavations uncovered longer lengths, one with buttresses to the north and the other more southerly one with buttresses to the south. The latter site also produced ring ditches enclosing cremation urns of late Roman date, suggesting that they were the remains of barrows, not common in this period.

If the lengths of foundation were part of the same structure, it was a large one. Just how large was not appreciated until later in 2004 when stripping of topsoil to the west long the line indicated by the southern excavation exposed a 75 metre length of the foundations of two parallel walls nearly five metres apart, one being lesser than the other.

Plotting all the excavations together suggests an elongated double-walled structure at least 350 metres long and 74 metres wide, with a lesser wall on the inside and a buttressed wall on the outside. Comparison with known similar structures in the Roman Empire indicated that it was a circus, a stadium for chariot racing as in 'Ben Hur'. The double wall, low on the inside and high on the outside, would have supported a tier of seating facing inwards on to the elongated continuous racetrack with a central dividing spine. One of the entrances leading in beneath the seating has been located. An estimate based on the dimensions of the tiers indicates that

the circus may have held 8000 spectators.

The track would have been similar to a modern greyhound stadium with sharp turns at both ends requiring great skills from the drivers to avoid the spills and thrills which were part of the enjoyment for the watching crowd. At one end, there will have been twelve starting gates, one for each chariot team; the limiting extent of the excavations has not allowed which end has the gates to be determined yet. Indeed, the ends themselves have yet to be determined, although the foundation at the westernmost part of the main excavation does seem to be starting to curve northwards.

The number of known circus sites approaches two hundred, the majority in the countries surrounding the Mediterranean with Rome itself having several. Colchester is the first found in Britain and now replaces Trier as the northernmost.

And those late Roman barrows? Saxon barrows, such as at Sutton Hoo, are known. Perhaps they were the graves of Germanic contestants who came to grief on the circus bends!

The excavations carried out by the Trust are part of a project managed by RPS Planning, Transport and Design on behalf of the developers, Taylor Woodrow. The latter, who are funding the work, have expressed their pleasure in the discoveries and have stated that they will endeavour to preserve the remains for future generations. The investigations are still in progress and deliberations on what is to be done are in an early if not premature stage. In the meantime, after a series of arranged viewings the foundations will be buried

again to protect them from the weather until arrangements are made to display the site.

Formal reports are obviously some way off, but, published with commendable speed, issue No 18 of *The Colchester Archaeologist*, £2.95 from the Trust, contains much illustrated and interesting information about the excavations and circuses in general.

James Fawn

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## **NEWS FROM THE ESSEX ARCHIVE USERS FORUM**

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The Essex Archive users Forum, made up of representatives of the major organisations concerned with history in Essex, continues to represent to Essex County Council (ECC) the views and interests of those who use and value the Essex Record Office (ERO).

At a meeting with County Councillor Jeremy Lucas (Deputy to the Cabinet Member for Environment, Heritage and Culture) and officers of the Council on 1 November 2004, up-to-date reports were given on a number of ongoing issues for the ERO.

The review continues of the service that the ERO offers to those London boroughs which were formerly in the administrative county of Essex. Researchers with interests in these boroughs will know that ERO still holds and makes accessible in Chelmsford many records for the area, a historical legacy of the days before local government reorganisation. Discussions have been taking place with neighbouring authorities to look at options for the future, including the transfer of local records to the

appropriate borough, which might well provide a better and more accessible service for local people. It would also, undoubtedly, as I pointed out in my last report, help to resolve what ECC sees as an anomaly, with Essex funding being used to support the history of areas now outside its control and remit.

The Forum has voiced a number of concerns, particularly about the need to ensure that, if they are moved, the archives in question are looked after in proper conditions and with proper supervision. There is concern that the cardinal principle of not splitting archive collections, which straddle different localities, should continue to be respected. We have also pointed out that, while people in the boroughs themselves would certainly enjoy more local access than hitherto, it is also true that those whose research covers many different places and collections would, in fact, be inconvenienced by having to travel to a number of different archives or libraries.

We have been reassured by ECC officers that a consultation phase for users and other interested parties will take place, though it is now likely to be next year before this can happen.

Another piece of thinking currently under way is over the future of archive service-points in libraries, of which the one established at Saffron Walden is very much a pilot. One question being addressed is whether the opportunities offered by the availability of digital images of documents (in which ERO is investing substantially) might provide a means in the future of using the terminals now in all libraries to reach far more local communities than the archive service-point model. Thinking continues on this one.

Similarly ECC is continuing to look at ways of making better and wider use of the ground floor meeting rooms in the Record Office building at Wharf Road.

The Forum members were delighted to hear of the success of a range of events arranged by ERO staff as their contribution to the national Archive Awareness Campaign. So good was the response that ERO is now looking to arrange a programme of similar events stretching throughout the year, surely a good way of bringing new people to Wharf Road and introducing them to the possibilities that they can explore there.

Since the meeting of the Forum in July 2004, the feared cut in the funding provided by ECC to the Essex Victoria County History (VCH) has been confirmed. Almost £50,000 will be taken away, something like half of the previous annual contribution. The Forum members, and the societies that they represent, remain deeply concerned, not only over the future of what has, in many ways, been the spine upon which historical research has been supported, but over the future prospects for individual VCH team members who have worked so diligently to provide an authoritative and detailed history of Essex. It must be hoped that, wherever the root cause lies for this and other cuts in heritage budgets, it is not with the will of the members of ECC to support local initiatives which will help all of us in the county to respect and understand the county's historical legacy, so widely under threat at the moment. Concerned as it is over the proposals for massive new housing development in the county, ECC should perhaps reflect on the contribution which all its 'heritage services', and all the local initiatives which it has previously supported in one

way or another, make to the defence of what everyone – virtually without exception – in the county values; the quality of the present and future environment of Essex.

I would urge members and individuals with views on any or all of these subjects which they would wish to bring to the attention of ECC to write to Cllr Kay Twitchen, cabinet Member for Environment, Heritage and Culture, or to contact the convener of the Forum Maureen Scollan, 22 Abercorn Way, Witham CM8 2UF ([mjscollan@macace.net](mailto:mjscollan@macace.net)). The senior members of ECC need to be reminded and/or persuaded that people feel strongly on these issues. Silence is, inevitably, read as acquiescence. Every voice and every opinion can make a contribution.

Vic Gray  
(Chairman, Essex Archive Users Forum)

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## PROPOSED CHANGES AT AUDLEY END

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Pressure to become less dependant on public funds, and to exploit new forms of income, can have a perverse effect on our heritage. Recent proposals at Audley End, (described by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings as 'one of England's finest Jacobean houses') illustrate this point. This mansion is in the custody of English Heritage who has been under pressure from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to 'exploit new commercial revenue streams'. A direct result of this was a planning application for hospitality marquees (one for up to 56 days a year, abutting the spectacular rear elevation of the house, and large enough to house 550 guests), as well as for new car

parking. The new car park was to be sited north of the walled garden (on land at present in agricultural use), and would involve widening the busy B 1383 road, rebuilding the boundary wall and installing new lighting, signs and weatherproof paths. While there are undoubtedly pressures on the present car park (which is less than ideally sited immediately north of the mansion itself) the proposed new site would have intruded into open countryside, as well as requiring a new access on to the B1383 and all the clutter associated with modern car parks. Local objections, and perhaps second thoughts from English Heritage, led to the withdrawal of this planning application in the latter part of 2004. However the present priority given to funding sport means that the financial pressure on English Heritage will continue, and that there will be further difficult conflicts between the best interests of historic sites and the need to develop new ways of increasing the income from them.

Michael Leach

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## THE COLLAPSE OF SILBURY HILL

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A recent edition of *British Archaeology* addresses the problem of the collapse of Silbury Hill in Wiltshire. While Essex can have no territorial claims, the fate of this World Heritage site (the largest prehistoric man-made mound in Europe) will be of concern to anyone interested in archaeology.

In May 2000, after heavy rain, subsidence left a large crater on the summit of the hill. The hole was packed with a temporary light-weight fill of polystyrene blocks, but it seemed possible that known, and unknown, voids

within the hill could cause further subsidence, or threaten the stability of the entire hill. In order to assess the risks, seven boreholes were drilled from the summit in 2001 and 2003, and analysis of the cores has provided much new information, as well as confirming earlier findings.

In summary, the hill was built in three, or possibly four, separate phases. The first phase was a small mound of chalk and soil, about 0.6m high. This was built up to about 2.5m with a mixture of soil and turf, mixed with plants and bushes, and then capped with several sharply defined layers of soil and chalk which raised the mound to about 5m in height. The second phase, constructed of crushed chalk, considerably increased its size, and raised the summit to about 20m. In the third phase, the mound was surmounted by a complex of concentric and radial chalk walls, forming a series of cells which were later packed with chalk rubble. The spiral path running up the hill may date from the original construction, or from subsequent usage. The final hill was not a pure cone, but was formed of seven straight-sided segments. No reliable dating evidence is yet available for any of these construction phases, as the earlier radio-carbon dates are now regarded as unreliable.

One of the remarkable features of Silbury is the preservation of the organic material sealed in the phase I construction. A wide range of identifiable plant material has survived, showing that the area was mature chalk grassland at the time of construction. Significant numbers of dung beetles confirm the presence of livestock, at a density equivalent to modern farming practice.

It is not clear whether the cellular construction of phase III is threatening the hill. There is no doubt, however, that the many subsequent human intrusions are major contributors to the present problem. In 1776, a pit was dug down from the top of the hill in search of artefacts, possibly reaching as deep as the summit of the buried phase II hill. Late C18 landscape tree planting round the summit has left visible scars and the roots may have caused underground damage. There were excavations at the base of the mound in 1867 and 1922, and a series of shafts were dug in the perimeter ditch in 1886. In 1849 a tunnel was dug from the bottom of the hill to its centre, and a substantial scar at the base on the SW side shows where the tunnel has collapsed. This tunnel was re-opened, and considerably widened and extended in a series of BBC-funded excavations in 1968-70. Unfortunately this last excavation was never fully written-up due to the death of the director. The roof of the new tunnel, large enough to take a dumper truck, was shored up with wooden planking resting on semi-circular steel arches. Pictures obtained by cameras through the recent boreholes show that the timber has rotted, resulting in substantial collapse of the tunnel roof.

It is clear that, without some form of consolidation, there is a high likelihood of further collapse and subsidence. Apart from the preservation of the hill itself, there are two other priorities; firstly, to preserve and to protect from oxidation the remarkable collection of plant and animal material sealed in the phase I mound; and secondly to re-interpret the evidence exposed by the 1968-70 tunnel and to remedy the failure to produce a proper archaeological report at that time. One possible option is the simple expedient of pumping chalk slurry into

the sealed tunnels, though there is no guarantee that all the voids would be filled and there would be no opportunity to re-evaluate the archaeology. These disadvantages would be obviated by a plan to reopen the tunnels, clear the debris and re-excavate, and finally to re-fill with properly compacted material. Cost, and the risk of precipitating further collapses, would be disadvantages. A further, even more expensive, solution would be to reline and support the tunnel with something more durable than steel and timber, thereby providing future archaeologists with ready access for further investigation. The polystyrene infill of the crater on the summit will not be replaced with chalk until the re-stabilisation of the collapsing tunnels has been completed.

This is a timely reminder of the potentially damaging nature of archaeological excavations, and the need to consider the long-term consequences of any invasive investigation. It also illustrates the not-infrequent loss of knowledge due to the failure to produce a full written account after the completion of an excavation, resulting in pressure to undertake further destructive intrusions. For this reason, English Heritage at Bristol (contact Amanda Chadburn on 011 7975 0700) is very keen to hear from anyone who was involved in the 1968-70 dig. Further information about Silbury Hill can be found in *British Archaeology* issue 80, or on [www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

Michael Leach

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## A RIVENHALL PUZZLE – LARGELY EXPLAINED

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William Hatsell, who was rector of Rivenhall from 1734 till his death in

1772, came to the parish from Mitcham, Surrey with his wife (whom he had married about 1720) and five, or perhaps six, children. Hatsell's neighbouring clergyman at Faulkbourne (from 1746 to 1798) was the Reverend John Harrison whose brother, Thomas Harrison, was rector of Ashendon, Buckinghamshire. It is curious that there are three entries in the Rivenhall registers for this Thomas Harrison – the baptism of his son Isaac on 4 February 1746, the burial of his wife Margaret on 13 March 1750, and the burial of another son, Thomas, on 25 January 1753.

"Why are these Harrisons in our churchyard?" I have often asked myself. Outside the church near the east end is a brick vault shaped like a World War II Anderson shelter. A flight of steps now covered by stone slabs and earth leads down to the entrance. I was told in 1966 that, since the tomb had been an empty one, it had been chosen during the war as a safe place to store the precious C12 glass from the east window. This saved it from the damage to the church caused by a German parachute mine.

During the archaeological work in the 1970s, Dr Warwick Rodwell decided to take an auger to the brick floor of the vault to examine the underlying earth (Roman villa remains are very close nearby). He set my son to trowel out the earth deposit on the tomb floor where he soon found some signs of human burial. The work stopped while I had some discussions with our church authorities. Meanwhile excavation on top of the vault unearthed a fragmented tombstone, probably the earliest in the churchyard. The remaining part of the inscription read ".....Margaret Harrison.....They wait in hopes of a joyful resurrection."

Whoever built the vault was someone with money, such as the Western's of Rivenhall Place. They, however, already owned a large vault inside the church which, at that date, still had vacant spaces. The only other likely family were the Hatsell's. William was the son of Sir Henry Hatsell (a judge, 1641-1714) and was a man of influence, and it seems probable that Margaret Harrison was his daughter. Either Hatsell or Thomas Harrison must have paid for the construction of the vault.

Information on Hatsell's children is incomplete. The oldest of his known children mentioned in his will would appear to be Judith, born about 1722, who married at Rivenhall in 1751. her husband was George Shephard, rector of Markshall, Essex. She was buried at Rivenhall in 1811 and her memorial is in the church. Her brother, Thomas, born in 1726/7, was a Cambridge graduate and was serving as his father's curate in 1754. He died in 1763, before his father, and, naturally, is not mentioned in his will. Three other offspring, however, are named, including James (born about 1729) who was employee in the bank of England and was buried at Rivenhall in 1781, aged 51. His sisters, Mary and Sarah, are the other named offspring. I do not know when they were born but it is likely that they and their siblings were born at Mitcham where William Hatsell was vicar before coming to Rivenhall.

This leaves us with a spread of five children born between 1720 and 1735, and a strong probability that there was a sixth – Margaret, who married Thomas Harrison, died in 1750 and was buried in the Rivenhall vault.

David Nash  
(Rector of Rivenhall 1966-1983)

#### Sources:

Some Additions to Newcourt's Repertorium  
 Burke's *Landed Gentry* (1937)  
 Rivenhall parish registers at ERO  
 Rodwell W J & K A, Rivenhall:  
*Investigations of a Villa, Church & Village* vol ii CBA 80 (1993)  
*Dictionary of National Biography*  
 Oxford and Cambridge Alumni  
 Will of William Hatsell (proved January 1773)

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## THE PUBLIC CATALOGUE FOUNDATION IN ESSEX

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The Public Catalogue Foundation was launched at the National Gallery in 2003. A registered charity, it was set up by Dr Fred Hohler with three purposes: to make a complete record of the nation's oil paintings in public ownership, to make this accessible through a series of county catalogues, which will eventually be put on a free website, and lastly, to raise funds through catalogue sales for conservation and exhibition of rarely seen works of art. (The collections in each county will receive 500 free catalogues on a pro rata basis for this purpose.) Dr Charles Saumarez Smith, Director of the National Galleries is one of the Trustees, and Dr Alan Borg, Director of the Victoria & Albert Museum until 2002, is on the Advisory Panel. Two catalogues have already been published: Kent and West Yorkshire (Leeds).

The idea came to Fred Hohler after a visit to the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge. In the shop there he asked if he could buy a copy of their catalogue and discovered that they did not have one available for sale. "I clapped my hands and turned round to the queue behind me – there must have been 30 or 40 people in the shop – and asked if

they would buy a catalogue if one were available." It turned out that about half of them would.

The process begins with the identification of the pictures. This means scouring museums, galleries, civic buildings, hospitals, fire stations, even crematoria for oil paintings in public ownership. The consent of the person in charge must be given and if unavailable, a catalogue drawn up. The pictures are then photographed (nine per page) and the catalogue printed. Despite staff shortages, the guardians of the public collections have so far welcomed the PCF and through their help, we have been able to find and photograph pictures that are not normally accessible to the public. Funding has been forthcoming from the DCMS, local authorities and organisations as well as a number of generous private individuals.

Every picture will be included irrespective of condition or perceived quality and we want to include as much as possible. Paintings in stores and stacks will also be photographed. The benefits to the galleries and collections are considerable *and at no cost to themselves*. In return for providing us with some simple information about the pictures (artist, title, size, dates), collections must allow our professional photographers in. They will be given the copyright of all the digital photographs, which they can then use for any purpose they choose, e.g. insurance, Christmas cards and postcards, on their websites and in education and research programmes.

Dr Hohler has asked me to be the Catalogue County Coordinator for Essex and I am very excited to be involved in such a worthwhile project. I have lived

in Essex for ten years, have a degree in History of Art and I am Vice-Chairman of the Friends of Essex Churches. I have worked for the Landmark Trust for eighteen years and I write a quarterly article for *Historic House*, the magazine of the Historic Houses Association. At present, the idea is to publish the Essex PCF catalogue next year. Happily this will coincide with the appearance of the new edition of the Essex Pevsner; both publications will show what riches may be found in this county and will be a boost to the initiative for rebranding Essex as a cultural centre. Please contact me if you can help identify little-known collections, or if you are a curator/administrator and would like to participate. Our website is at [www.thepcf.org.uk](http://www.thepcf.org.uk)

Julia Abel Smith  
01245 361525 [jasleighs@aol.com](mailto:jasleighs@aol.com)

If you are interested in helping fund the Essex catalogue or know of an organisation which might, please contact Andrew Ellis, Chief Executive on 020 7932 8408

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## FOR SALE

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Substantial wooden Victorian gothic chair, with large pierced finials, provenance unknown but possibly an ecclesiastical throne, 57" high, 28" wide and 26" deep. Needs some restoration. Not suitable for the faint-hearted, or for those living in a small house! Photos can be supplied to anyone interested in making an offer. Proceeds will be donated to ESAH. Please contact Michael Leach on 01277 363106 or [family@leachies.freemove.co.uk](mailto:family@leachies.freemove.co.uk)

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaces the Publications Development Fund. (see page 14) It will support publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at April 2005 the projected value of the fund stands at £33,575.90

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 145

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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Summer 2005

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 146

SUMMER 2005

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**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 28 OCTOBER 2005**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

## Cover illustration:

Thaxted Morris dancers depicted by R.T. Cowern in a British Rail leaflet of 1950 promoting the attractions of Essex then accessible by train. Thaxted was on the 'Gin and Toffee' line.

This leaflet, which shows the picture in colour, can be found in the Essex Record Office under reference T/P 99/1. The leaflet was one of over 200 illustrations featured in an Essex Record Office traveling exhibition of 1996 entitled 'Essex – a county, its people and its past'. This exhibition resulted in the Essex Record Office publication 'Essex Illustrated' in 1997.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Since the end of the Second World War, interest in the past and the scope for historical enquiry have, by and large, greatly increased. Not only have the numbers of young people following courses in higher education been greatly expanded, but there has also been a great upsurge in the pursuit of historical knowledge by mature and retired people. The study of family and labour history has, furthermore, led to a soaring demand for information about previously neglected lives of ordinary people in times past and drawn into historical activity thousands from sections of the population in which interest was previously little developed. Local history has undoubtedly been a beneficiary of this changed state of affairs.

While fully recognising this, however, there are regrettably signs at the present time that the situation is no longer improving and may be starting to change for the worse. It appears that fewer young and middle-aged people are coming forward to participate in the activities of historical societies and interest might, in some spheres, be flagging. A variety of features of modern life may, in fact, be militating against a continuation of the growth of historical interest, particularly at the local level.

Although many primary schools and museums and the Essex Record Office seek to promote a knowledge of local history among younger children, it is not followed up at the secondary stage. The National Curriculum does not require a study of local history; teachers are overburdened with administrative work and the maintenance of school discipline; and history may disappear completely from the timetables of the older pupils.

Even those pupils who are attracted to historical studies, including those going on to university courses, will be unlikely to study local history. After graduating, most are heavily encumbered with the requirements of the careers they embark upon, the need to earn sufficient to pay off loans, take out mortgages and secure the wherewithal for practical living. This may not change very much, in fact, throughout their working lives. This could help to explain why fewer people are persuaded to join in local historical activities before retirement. It may be that modern living encourages people to shun communal activity and concentrate on their individual or family responsibilities.

However, an awareness of the past, including that of localities, is vital to any community. Not only does it create an understanding of how the community developed, which is crucial to the resolution of problems and the shaping of the future; it fosters a sense of the value of our social, cultural and environmental heritage.

Vandalism, on a minor or major scale, demonstrates the complete absence of respect for the heritage. Although it is too much to hope that the small minority who obtain a warped satisfaction from smashing things up could be deterred by learning about their historic value, encouraging appreciation and pride helps to create a community which will value and defend the heritage.

More than this, however, the growth of local historical knowledge contributes to the creation of an enhanced local culture which enriches the quality of life for all. The work of historical societies, the creation of local historical collections, the provision of local museums, the

publication of books and articles and the encouragement of local studies are all aspects of this process.

There is, however, a crying need for new generations to provide the personnel to facilitate this. Those of us at present involved need to consider what we can do further to encourage younger men and women to come forward.

Much more could certainly be done to stimulate interest in and a knowledge of local history in the secondary schools. We should seek to convince the education authorities of the desirability of this and consider what we can do to help.

Many of our representatives on the County and District Councils, as well as in Parliament, should be tackled on the issue. The recent decision to halve the grant made to the Victoria County History project, as well as cuts in other aspects of the heritage provision, make it clear that more needs to be done to educate the decision makers about the importance of local history.

It would be good to recruit more teachers and others concerned with education into the ranks of the Essex Society for Archaeology & History. This is no easy task, but we need to ponder whether we could, at least, make them more aware of our activities and appreciative of our work. We should also give some thought to the possibilities that may exist for promoting our cause among other sections of the community.

The Society has a long and honourable record as a standard bearer for the cause of historical studies in Essex stretching back to 1852. We ought to reflect on what we can do to carry the standard forward at the present time. If I

am correct in thinking that there is a danger of general interest in the past falling off and a decline in the recruitment of younger people into historical societies, we should give some thought to the possibility of combating this. This article is an attempt to stimulate discussion of the problem.

Stan Newens

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## JOHN HUNTER 1932-2005

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Members will be sad and dismayed to hear of the sudden death from a heart attack on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2005 of our past President John Hunter, the foremost authority on the history of the Essex landscape. John was born in 1932 and grew up in Thaxted. He studied architecture at Cambridge and at the Architectural Association in London, and thereafter worked for an architectural practice and later with London County Council where he became involved in conservation activities. He later took a postgraduate qualification in planning and returned to Essex in 1971 to work in Essex County Council's Planning Department, moving to Green Farm, Little Sampford.

This was a time of immense threat to the ancient pattern of the countryside from a combination of spreading urbanism, arable production and Dutch Elm disease. In 1972 John became involved in advising Essex farmers on tree planting in the wake of that disease, and discovered the necessity for evaluating existing landscape features and advising on how they could be retained and managed. He was also one of those involved in the production in 1974 of the well received report *Historic Features: Essex Landscape No. 1*, a first indication of his developing interest in the historic landscape. The Landscape Conservation

Programme his team initiated, that provided grant aid for tree planting and the protection and maintenance of hedgerows and other features, became a model for nationwide schemes. John realised that the preservation of important features such as ancient woodlands, hedgerows, ponds, and historic parks required an understanding of their traditional management. As John was later to write, all this led him deeper into the field of landscape history, which was not only a delightful subject in itself, but also of practical value in providing clues to beneficial management. He therefore set himself the task of exploring 'our forbears' attitudes to nature and landscape, and into their beliefs and their concepts; and to ask whether these have a value for us today'. The result was his stimulating book, *Land into Landscape* (1985), a tour de force journey from ancient Mesopotamia, through Rome, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and much more besides all the way to Essex in the 1980s. During this period he also published widely in reports and articles for Essex County Council and in publications such as *Country Life* and *Landscape Design*.

From 1979 until his retirement in 1996 John was employed as Assistant County Planner and head of the Environmental Services Branch at ECC. His responsibilities included historic buildings, design, archaeology, landscape and country parks. This was a very wide brief and could only have been covered by someone with John's broad knowledge, vision and infectious enthusiasm. Not for nothing was he known, affectionately, as the one-man "University of Essex County Council". With other ECC officers he played a pivotal role in developing innovative policies to protect the historic Essex

landscape and sites from unsympathetic or damaging development or mineral extraction. He had a special talent for collaboration and he deserves special public recognition for fostering the tremendous development of the ECC archaeological service which has done so much to transform our understanding of the county's past.

In the 1990s John emerged as the leading historian of the Essex landscape through the publication of a series of learned papers on the historic landscape of the county, many of them published in *Essex Archaeology and History*. His studies culminated in another fine book, *The Essex Landscape: A Study of its Form and History* (1999), which filled a significant gap for Essex had missed out in the county series inspired by W.G. Hoskins great work *The Making of the English Landscape* (1955). As well as being a work of broad scope, learning and careful reflection it is written in an accessible style suitable for a general audience. Indeed, although rather shy of large audiences and formal occasions, John was a great populariser for his subject and took delight in debating his findings and helping other historians understand the landscapes they were studying. His last publication for the Society – and the first in a series of occasional papers to mark our 150th anniversary – was his paper *Field Systems in Essex* (2003). This provided a marvellous introduction and overview to our county's landscape development from the Iron Age to the late 20<sup>th</sup> century – no simple task – followed by a series of case studies of particular landscapes revealing his mastery of fieldwork and landscape reconstruction. Naturally, it has been widely and positively reviewed, a reviewer in *Agricultural History Review* hoping that it would inspire him to write another larger study. Alas for everyone

that cannot be, but John has laid the foundations for all future study of the subject in Essex.

John gave very freely of his own time supporting a great many voluntary bodies involved with history, archaeology and the countryside. At a regional level he served for 6 years on the National Trust regional committee, and was ESAH's representative on the Scole Committee. County organisations that benefited from his advice included the Essex Gardens Trust and the Victoria County History Appeal Fund, while more locally in NW Essex he supported Easton Lodge and Heritage Sampford. He was particularly pleased to have contributed to the Essex Farming and Wildlife Group (FWAG) from 1973 onwards. He gained much useful knowledge and contacts from many farmers who he realised were themselves the repository of generations of knowledge about the historic landscape. John served as President of our Society from 1996 to 1999, when he proved an excellent person to have in the chair, bringing his extensive knowledge of archaeology, history, conservation and the intricacies of both local government and national legislation and policy to bear on various problems that faced us. After he stepped down from that office he remained an active member of the Society's Council and several committees, frequently shouldering much of the burden of representing the Society's views on newly proposed legislation and consultation documents.

Over the past decades many of us will have spent many happy hours with John in the field (though it seems all too few now), and come away with something new and challenging to think about. And after a tiring morning tramping about

some Essex fields, park boundary or muddy lane, John always seemed to know the best place for essential refreshment before a cheering pub fire. And these were the occasions for wide ranging discussion and development of ideas that will be sorely missed. My personal sense of loss was clearly shared by the many members of the Society who attended John's memorial service and celebration of his life and achievements held on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2005. The moving service also paid due attention to his lifelong interest in folk music and dancing. His ashes have been interred under the East window of the Parish Church of St John The Baptist Our Lady and St Laurence at Thaxted

Chris Thornton

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**(ALBERT) CHARLES  
SPARROW QC, DL, FSA.  
1925-2005**

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(Albert) Charles Sparrow QC, DL, FSA. Charles Sparrow, past President of the Society (1975-1978), Honorary Legal Advisor to the Society, and Patron of the VCH (Essex) Appeal Fund, was born in Kasale, India, on 16 September 1925, the son of Charles Thomas Sparrow and his wife Antonia.

His father was Garrison Sergeant Major at Colchester Garrison in the 1930s and attached to the Essex Regiment. The family lived in Abbey Terrace, St John's Green, Colchester, near to the abbey gatehouse, where I met him, as we both attended the Royal Grammar School, Colchester from September 1936.

With the outbreak of World War II, GSM Thomas Charles was promoted Captain. Charles and I joined the local ARP as messengers; he was at the local

headquarters in Maidenburgh Street, while I was at the Warden's post in Priory Street. We did fire watching duty together at the School. He edited the *Colcestrian* and was a full prefect.

While still at school, I produced the *History of St Runwald's Church, Colchester*, in 1942; he reviewed it in the *Colcestrian*, and went on to produce his article in *Essex Review* LII, 1943, pp 67-70, entitled *The Precinct Wall of St John's Abbey*, followed by *Earthworks at Lexden, Colchester*.

When we left CRGS in July 1943 Charles went as a cadet officer to India Command attached to the Royal Signals Regiment, where he rose to captain; I went as a cadet to the Royal Navy. Two years later I was at HMS Tengra, Mandapam, South India, as First Lieutenant, when Charles, who was at Mhow, wrote to me and sent an "invitation" to reflect and drink to those friends in our school group who were all on active service. I have it still and it shows that he had a wonderful sense of humour, sometimes not apparent perhaps. We both went on to serve in the Far East.

On demob, Charles studied law and took his LLB, gaining several prizes. He was called to the bar (Grays Inn) in 1950 and subsequently was a bencher in 1976; Master of the Pictures and Silver, 1985-2001; Treasurer, 1994; a member of the general Council of the Bar, 1994; and a member of the Senate of the Four Inns of Court.

In his civil life, he became Honorary Legal Adviser to the CBA, and later treasurer and was the one who drafted the Abinger Bill on treasure trove. In 2002 he was Honorary Vice-President. He was elected FSA in 1972, and a

freeman of the City of London. He also undertook work for the RSPCA, the Girl Guide Movement, the Royal British Legion, the St John Ambulance Brigade, the Court of Essex University, the Freemen of England, etc.

In 1949 he married Edith Rosalie Taylor and they had two sons and a daughter. Edith died in 1985 and he never recovered from this loss. Lately he had been unwell, and he died of pneumonia in Broomfield Hospital on 16 May 2005.

Charles was always one who spoke his mind. He was a dominant figure and will be missed and a great loss to the organisations he served so well in Colchester, Essex and beyond.

John Appleby

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## JAMES H G SUNNUCKS 1925-2005

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James Horace George Sunnucks died peacefully at his home East Mersea Hall, aged 79 years, on 16 March 2005. He leaves a wife, Tessa, and sons William, John, David and Andrew, ten grandchildren and his sister Anne. The funeral was at East Mersea parish church on 23 March.

James was a Reader at East Mersea for over forty years and was actively engaged in parish work there. He was also a member of this Society for the same length of time. In addition he was very much connected with the Baring Gould Society and often entertained the members at his home.

He had been ill with cancer for some time and had been at St Helena Hospice, Colchester, where as one of the chaplains, I was able to be with him

and we recalled the Society's past activities and those involved. It was his wish to die at home and he will be sadly missed in many fields.

John Appleby

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## **ESSEX PLACE-NAMES PROJECT SEMINAR**

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The Ninth Annual Place-names Seminar will take place in Saffron Walden on Saturday afternoon 12th November 2005. The Guest Speaker will be Dr. S. Oosthuizen, PhD, of Cambridge University.

Tickets are available (price £5 payable to "ESAH") from the Project Coordinator, 27 Tor Bryan, Ingatestone, Essex CM4 9JZ. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

James Kemble

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## **VISIT TO STANTONS FARM AND FAULKBOURNE HALL**

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On 23 April 2005 members of the Society visited Stantons Farm, Black Notley. The house is noted for its exceptional woodwork which is considered to be some of the finest in Black Notley. The earliest part, c1300, consists of an aisled two bay hall and service bay, with a 17th century crosswing at the eastern end. The high end of the building was lost in the distant past. It was in the possession of Clement Spice in 1483 (Wright's).

Stantons ceased to be a working farm in 1969, when the house and some 240 acres of land were offered for sale. The house and 11 acres were subsequently purchased by an American couple, Mr.

and Mrs. W.C. McLeod, who without consulting the proper authorities proceeded to strip the plaster from the 17th century crosswing, exposing the timber framing and removing the porch from the south side of the aisled hall.

Interior changes included the removal of the inserted floor and interior walls to reveal the extent of the wood framing and hall. These changes resulted in the loss of the Gun room, Breakfast room, Drawing and Dining rooms, dairy, main staircase and two secondary staircases.

According to Newspaper reports in March 1971, Essex County Council wrote to the McLeods enquiring about the porch and the removal of the rendering. The McLeods were perplexed and failed to understand the meaning of the terms used. To Americans a porch is a verandah. Subsequently a Listed Building Enforcement Notice was served on the couple. An appeal made to the Minister of the Environment resulted in the order being quashed after an enquiry was held at Braintree on 30 January 1973. Mr. Jackson said in his report "I am not convinced that if these timbers were to remain exposed their deterioration would inevitably be accelerated as feared by the Council".

Other subsequent alterations which have taken place include making a new entrance to the house from the former Brewhouse at the southern end of the crossway. A great deal of new and re-used timber has been installed at various locations in the house. The present open tread staircase is one such feature.

The alterations enabled us to appreciate the beauty of the previously concealed woodwork and chimney, particularly the octagonal parts of the central truss with moulded capitals and cambered tie

beam supported on moulded arch braces, and the three doorways at the low end between the hall and service rooms.

Mr. and Mrs. Watkins pointed out all the fascinating features of the wood framing.

My late uncle, John Earey, lived and farmed at Stantons until his death in March 1969. For years I visited my grandmother, Mrs. Margaret Earey, her son John and daughter Mary at Stantons. They lived a life style which had probably not changed for centuries.

The house did not have mains water or drainage, or electricity until after the Second World War. Water was taken from a pump beside the Brewhouse wall, lighting was by oil lamps and candles, washing was by using a jug and basin. Baths were taken in the Brewhouse in summer or in the kitchen in winter times - the brick copper being used to heat the water. Butter was made with milk from my uncle's cows and cooking was conducted on a cast iron cooking range. Going to the toilet entailed a trip to the privy in the garden — chamber pots were used at night. During winter time when staying at Stantons, on going upstairs to bed I carried a candle in one hand and a hot brick wrapped in paper in the other. Right up to the time of his death my uncle did not have a TV or telephone.

Appreciation must be given to Mrs. Stanton for her kindness in allowing us to visit her home which she has owned since 1974.

The resident ghost seen by Mrs. Stanton on several occasions is thought to be that of my great aunt Beatrice Batchford, who died at Stantons.

Members then went on to Faulkbourne Hall where Mr. C.W.O. Parker, his son and family members kindly allowed us to view their lovely early brick mansion dating back to the 15th century, when it was owned by John Montgomery, passing to Sir Edward Bullock in 1637, whose family lived at Faulkbourne for 250 years.

The exterior brickwork, the crenellations and the spiralling barrel vaults to the stairs leading to the towers being particularly attractive.

The early c15th century timbers of a timber framed building, being the first phase of the building, caused a lot of speculation and discussion.

In the latter 17<sup>th</sup> century the house underwent one or more periods of renovation which included the extension of the east front, the facing of the south front with brick and the building of another half octagonal turret on the south-west corner to balance the 15th century one on the north-west corner. In the early 19th century further additions were made between the main block and the 17th century wing. The 15th century tower and north front have survived with little alteration except the blocking of some windows and the renewal of others.

If Stantons has had all of its secrets and mysteries exposed, Faulkbourne Hall still retains its secrets and mysteries which offer plenty of scope for future research.

As a bonus to a thoroughly enjoyable day we were given the opportunity to visit Faulkbourne Church, dedicated to St. Germain, and dating from 12th century.

Robert J. Wager

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## LIBRARY REPORT

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The Society has received a substantial donation of books from Frank Clark. The range of the donation is extensive, covering pre-Roman and Roman archaeology, archaeological method, guide books and runs of serials and publications. Mr Clarke has been vice-president of the West Essex Archaeological Group and has excavated and published extensively on the archaeology of south west Essex. He directed excavations at Little London, Wanstead Park and Harlow Temple and has written for the Essex Journal. In 1977, with Julian Litton, he produced '*St Mary's Church, Woodford, Essex*', published by the Passmore Edwards Museum.

Andrew Phillips

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## OFFENDED BY THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS AT INGATESTONE

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C E Keyser's book, *List of Buildings having Mural Decorations (1883)*, is, as its title suggests, a rather spare account of surviving or lost mediaeval wall paintings. It appears to have been compiled from a wide variety of publications, including the *Transactions* of numerous county archaeological societies, as well as from articles on church restorations printed in *The Builder*. There are not a large number of Essex entries in the book, and many of those that are included had been previously reported in our *Transactions* or national journals. The Society of Antiquaries library in London has a 'grangerised' copy compiled by H H Brindley who had a particular interest in

images of St Christopher. Sadly this volume contained little additional Essex material, most of what there was being gleaned from newspaper articles, or letters from local incumbents. One of the latter, dated 26 October 1915, was in answer to an enquiry about a wall painting of St Christopher at St Mary's, Ingatestone.

'I have never seen or heard of any painting of St Christopher in Ingatestone church, and I have been rector since 1886. There were paintings on the walls of the Seven Deadly Sins, but these offended my predecessor, and were covered over, when the church was restored in 1868. Perhaps the painting to which you refer was covered over at the same time.'

Anyone curious to see why these images offended will find them illustrated in an article by J Piggot junior in volume IV of the first series of the Society's *Transactions*. St Christopher, however, seems to have vanished without record.

Michael Leach

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## ST LAURENCE & ALL SAINTS CHURCH, EASTWOOD

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Members will recall plans to move this mediaeval church to a new site in the churchyard in order to accommodate the air traffic requirements of Southend airport. This was opposed by the Ancient Monuments Society, by the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, as well as by the parish itself and numerous other organisations. It is encouraging to report that planning permission for this bizarre proposal was unanimously rejected by the planning committee. Apart from the enormous practical

difficulties of moving a mediaeval building, there are very strong archaeological and historical reasons for retaining ancient buildings on their original sites.

The church is of considerable interest, of several different periods, and has a surviving priest's chamber at the west end of the north aisle. Two doors are of major importance, though Cecil Hewett was unable to give a precise date. The complex ironwork suggests both the C12 and C13 contributions. There is a faint inscription in Lombardic lettering on one of the straps, 'pax regat intrantes eadem regat egredientes' ('may peace rule those entering and also those leaving'). The carpentry is unusual - three vertical planks are rebated together, and held by tapered ledges which are dovetailed in section. The ledges were driven into dovetailed rebates cut across one side of the three planks. Hewett noted an identically constructed - though undated - door at Durham cathedral.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Saunders M & Kelsall F 'The Society's Casework in 2004' in Transactions of Ancient Monuments Society Vol 49 (2005)

Hewett C 'Church Carpentry' (1982) Phillimore

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## **GROWING NEW FORESTS – PLANTING VERSUS NATURAL REGENERATION**

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The last Newsletter reported the Woodland Trust's plan to buy farmland adjacent to the remaining fragment of Hainault Forest, and to plant this area

with native trees in order to extend the area of ancient woodland. Would this be best achieved by planting trees – or would natural regeneration (Oliver Rackham's favoured approach) work better?

The experience in the new Thames Chase forest is interesting. Natural regeneration is surprisingly fast, with a thorn scrub/oak succession, providing there is nearby woodland to supply acorns and jays. In other areas, neglected sites awaiting the developer have been known to reach the point where a tree preservation order could be applied. However, in the majority of cases where public amenity and access are important, tree planting usually gives a quicker result as the saplings can be protected effectively, and nursed through their early years. It also avoids the unkempt appearance of the early phases of the thorn scrub/oak succession, though this untidiness provides better biodiversity than planted saplings. Nevertheless, natural regeneration does occur in planted woodland and it is not unusual for this to result in an apparently nonsensical 110% survival rate. This is because the number of self-sown trees exceeds those lost amongst the planted saplings.

Michael Leach

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## **EAST SAXON CHRISTIANS AND PAGANS – THE PRITTLEWELL FINDS IN CONTEXT**

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Dr Martin Welch gave the Morant lecture on 6 May 2005. Detailed descriptions of the archaeology would be found elsewhere. The site was known as a mid to late C6 Saxon cemetery from earlier

finds, particularly those uncovered when trenching for a sewer in 1923, and digging a railway cutting in 1930 (see *EAH* xix pp 91-116). The recent excavation, in advance of proposed road widening, was done under great secrecy and uncovered an unexpectedly rich burial dating from the early C7. When the national press were briefed, there was considerable interest, with dramatic tabloid coverage describing the grave as that of the "Bling King". The site does not overlook the Thames, but is on high ground above a small valley running north-south. It would not have been in sight of the sea, but most Anglo-Saxon burials were either not far inland, or near a navigable waterway. The burial chamber contained a rich assembly of grave goods – bronze vessels, gold buckles, gold thread, a cauldron, gaming pieces, a drinking horn, a folding stool (the first found in a British Saxon grave) and so on.

The burial goods are a mixture of what one would expect to find, plus several things that are unique. The Prittlewell buckle, though of the typical triangular form, is unusual in being without the usual elaborate filigree patterns and zoomorphic decoration. The brooch is set with three symmetrically garnets (the stones being an import from the Indian subcontinent). The two crosses cut out of gold foil, and found in the face area, are most unusual. All previously discovered crosses have either been much more substantial objects with suspension loops, or foil crosses with fixing holes for sewing to clothing. The Prittlewell ones are totally plain and appear to have been purpose cut for laying on the corpse, lacking any provision for fixing or mounting, and showing no signs of wear or use. There are early C7 precedents in north Italy and south Germany for including crosses

in Christian burials, though the idea may have come from a sub-Roman tradition.

Gold thread was found in the chest area of the body and probably represents the braided edge of an open fronted tunic, which would have overlapped across the chest and have been secured by a belt at the waist. There is other Saxon evidence for such clothing, a Scandinavian tradition. The Prittlewell folding stool is unique. The shield boss is very plain, similar to those from earlier finds nearby (described in *EAH* xix). Other items include a wooden tub (probably for keeping ale); blue glass vessels, similar to one found at Sutton Hoo mound 2, and possibly made in Kent; a drinking horn with a metal mount, but lacking the metal terminal of the Sutton Hoo and other examples; a lyre, not an unusual finding in graves of this period; a metal spoon of Mediterranean origin, with an obscure inscription on the bowl; a lamp stand similar to the ones found at Broomfield and Sutton Hoo; and bone gaming pieces from a game in the backgammon family.

This type of assemblage, with a mixture of weapons and leisure items, is found in Europe from the C3 onwards. The only comparable site in Essex is at Broomfield, excavated in 1888. This too contained a buckle decorated with garnets (though more ornate than the Prittlewell example) and blue glass vessels. (See brief report in *EAS Transactions* ns v p 237). Another site at Taplow, Bucks, was dug in 1882 by burrowing into the side of a mound. Unfortunately a collapse caused considerable damage, but three shields were found (old Icelandic law permitted three shields in a duel), glass vessels, a gaming board, a throwing spear, decorated bronze buckles, bronze lyre mounts and a decorated drinking horn.

There is a possibility that this site may be re-excavated to obtain more information.

Another comparison is with Sutton Hoo ship burials, mounds 1 and 2. The adjoining mounds contain cremation inhumations. There is no Prittlewell equivalent of the striking helmet found in the ship burial (comparable helmets are known from Sweden) or the purse containing coins, believed to be for the payment of oarsmen in the afterlife. Neither is there anything like the decorated whetstone. The gold items at Sutton Hoo, as well as the shield bosses, were much more elaborately decorated. Mound 2 had the burial chamber under the boat and it has been suggested that the prow and stern of the boat originally projected from at each end. Another earlier ship burial from the C6 was uncovered at Snape in 1862, and other rich burials of this earlier period have been found at Lakenheath, some accompanied by the adjoining burial of a fully equipped horse.

The Prittlewell burial has been dated to the early part of the C7. It is of particular interest because of the presence of the gold crosses, the plainness of the metal work (perhaps a Christian modification of the pagan splendour displayed at Sutton Hoo) and the fact that it was part of an earlier extensive cemetery. It is normally believed that C7 princely burials were on separate sites from communal cemeteries, but this is certainly not the case here. It is not possible to say if this was a royal burial or a princely one, but it is undoubtedly that of a wealthy and powerful individual. It is hoped that more information will emerge from the continuing post-excavation analysis, and from possibly further excavations on the site.

Michael Leach

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## HENRY WINSTANLEY'S HOUSE AND GARDEN AT LITTLEBURY

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Henry Winstanley (1644-1703) is best known for his heroic efforts in building, between 1696 and 1700, the first Eddystone lighthouse. The difficulties included raising all the funds himself (Trinity House declined to make any contribution), and supervising the extremely hazardous construction on a slippery rock (only uncovered for a few hours at low tide), some 3 hour's hard rowing from Plymouth. Apart from the obvious hazards of working on an exposed rock in all weathers, there was another unexpected risk. An attack by French pirates in June 1697 resulted in the destruction of the partially constructed lighthouse. The workmen were set adrift in a boat and Winstanley himself was carried off to France as a prisoner until Louis XIV, realising that the lighthouse would benefit French shipping as much as English, ordered his release. During its short operational life, not a single ship was wrecked on the rocks and, though it was swept away (with Winstanley himself, who was attending to some repairs) in a storm on 26 November 1703, it did prove that it was possible to build remote off-shore lighthouses and that they could be of great benefit to shipping.

Winstanley was born in 1644 in Saffron Walden. On leaving the grammar school in 1660, he found employment in the estate office at Audley End house. When the house was purchased by Charles II in 1668, he was disappointed not to obtain the post of clerk of works, and travelled for several years in Europe, not returning home until 1674. He then tried his hand at making engravings of

country houses and their gardens, including a series of Audley End house and its park. Though these are striking (and now an invaluable source for historians) his mastery of perspective was not entirely convincing and this may have been why there were no further commissions. In 1679 he was appointed clerk of works to the royal palaces of Audley End and Newmarket. At the former, he is said to have used his mechanical ingenuity to solve problems of building maintenance, as well as to drain the waterlogged garden. It is likely that he was kept very busy, as both the house and its grounds had been neglected since the disgrace and financial ruin of the 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Suffolk in 1618. When John Evelyn visited in September 1654, he noted *'the Gardens are not in order, though well inclosed'*. He was not impressed by their setting, *'being placed in an obscure bottome'*. By the time that Charles II acquired the property 14 years later, all the roof lead was defective, much timber rotten and (according to Sir Christopher Wren) *'the Fabrick weak, built after an ill manner rather Gay than substantial'*. It was estimated that £10,000 worth of repairs were required, as little had been done to it since it was built. £500 a year was spent until 1688 by which time the roof had been repaired and many chimney stacks rebuilt. Thereafter the budget was cut to £200 a year. In 1695 the Earl of Suffolk (who appears to have been living as a tenant in part of the house) wrote to complain about the daily danger from falling masonry, the collapse of one of the bridges, and the ruinous state of the stables and other outbuildings. As a result of this complaint, Sir Christopher Wren visited Audley End and costed the essential repairs at £2830; these included rebuilding a further 20 chimney stacks, remedying various *'defects within the House requiring Speed'*, making

repairs to bridges, providing a new pale for the garden, and the park wall *'to be amended and new coped'*.

Charles II is said to have made a few unspecified changes to the gardens and park at Audley End (originally laid out in 1618), but these may have been made before Winstanley's time. It seems unlikely that much money was spent on the garden if the house had got into such a bad state. However, Winstanley was also clerk of works at Newmarket where improvements were definitely made to the palace gardens during his term of office, as Henry Wise (1653-1738), the superintendent of royal gardens, was paid £225 in 1698-99 for unspecified works there. The palace at Newmarket was very convenient for monarchs with a passion for horse racing but, though it remained in royal hands until well into the C18, little is known about it. Audley End, for practical or economic reasons, was returned to the trustees and co-heirs of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl of Suffolk in 1701, though the lengthy legal squabbles did not resolve who was to be the new owner until 1708, after Winstanley's death.

About the time of his marriage in the 1670s, Winstanley built a house for himself in Littlebury. He subsequently made an engraving of this, showing a symmetrical two storey building with a central roof lantern. Between the house and the stable block to one side was a windmill, a sign of Winstanley's practical interest in hydraulics. Both house and garden were equipped with a number of eccentric features and by the 1690s, when he was raising money for his Eddystone project, the house had been fitted out with a variety of devices to startle visitors, such as distorting mirrors, mechanical ghosts and chairs that trapped or ejected anyone sitting on them. An artificial stream in the garden

was fed by the windmill which produced mechanical music. When Celia Fiennes passed by in May 1697, she noted 'a house with an abundance of fine Curiosityes all performed by Clockwork and suchlike which appears very strange to the beholders; but the Master was not at home so I saw no more than the Chaire they set in when they are carryd about'. The public paid one shilling a head to see these curiosities and nearly a decade after Winstanley's death, his widow was still opening the house to paying visitors

Though Winstanley did not engrave a plan of his garden, there is no doubt that a plan of 1767 shows what had been his house and garden, by then in the ownership of Gilbert Marshall esquire. The plan includes an engraving of the house, identical in all but a few details to the prints made by Winstanley himself. Obviously some changes had occurred since Winstanley's time – for example, the windmill (and presumably the fountains and the artificial stream that it supplied) had gone. However the eccentric design of the garden (which must have been extremely out of fashion by 1767) suggests Winstanley's hand. It was about 400ft by 260ft with a series of avenues leading from the house. The central one terminated in a building, presumably a grotto or gazebo. In the north east corner there was a quadrilateral structure with ascending or descending steps - it is not clear from the plan whether this was a raised mound or a sunken area, but probably the former, as mounts were a popular feature in C17 gardens. A series of beds, arranged slightly asymmetrically on the line of the main avenue, are probably part of the original scheme.

The house is said to have been taken down in 1778, though the site cannot be

identified on Chapman and Andre's map which was published in 1777. The most likely site seems to be immediately to the south of Littlebury parish church (at grid reference TL 517394). The area is approximately the same shape as the plot shown on Gilbert Marshall's plan and conforms with an early C18 account of its proximity to the old main road to Cambridge. The house and garden had certainly disappeared when the inclosure map was surveyed in 1805 and the field on the presumed site was known as 'The Paddock', giving no hint of its former use, though its shape is similar to the property boundary on the 1767 plan. Thomas Bird of Romford, writing in the *Essex Review*, identified the site to his satisfaction in 1893 and noted that the only remaining evidence of the house or its garden was 'a mound planted with shrubs'. This mound cannot be identified on the second edition of the 25" OS map. Today, if the correct site has been identified, the mound has disappeared and the rough pasture now covering the former house and garden shows various irregular deformities.

*Wren Society* Vols iv, 36 & xviii, 122-3 & 162-3

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Plan of house and gardens at Littlebury, 1767 (ERO: D/Dby P21)

Littlebury inclosure map, 1805 (ERO:  
Q/RDc 6B)  
OS map 25" second edition (1896)

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of England – Essex* (1965)

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## THE THREAT TO ST NICHOLAS'S CHURCH, LITTLE WIGBOROUGH

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This remote late C15 church overlooks the Blackwater estuary west of Mersea Island. It is now in danger of collapse, due to serious subsidence in the NW corner of the nave, with part of the wall 15° off vertical. The building has had structural problems since the C17 at least, and was further damaged by the 1884 Colchester earthquake. Wall scars show that at some point the south porch was removed. During the 1886 restoration, the nave walls were heightened, and the upper two stages of the tower rebuilt, but the RCHM inspector in the early part of the C20 noted its condition as "*fairly good, but some cracks in walls*". It would appear that the 1886 work had not resolved the structural problems, and even possibly aggravated them by raising the height - and hence the foundation loading - of the nave walls. Further repairs were done to the chancel and the north nave roof in 2001.

The parochial church council has called in English Heritage to make a full report on the feasibility of repairing this church. It is likely that substantial work will be required if the building is to be saved.

Michael Leach

Sources:  
Heritage Today (East of England)  
Summer 2005  
Essex RCHM Vol iii (1922)

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## ANCIENT MEASUREMENTS

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This interest started some time ago on reading an article mentioning Dr A Thoms in *Circles and Standing Stones* by Evan Hadingham. Dr Thoms proposed a basic unit, the megalithic yard, exactly 2.72 feet long, and a megalithic inch of 0.816 inches (or exactly 1/40<sup>th</sup> of a megalithic yard). He suggested that trammels or beam compasses could achieve accuracies of a few thousandths of an inch. As a person whose work entailed using precision instruments, this struck me as highly suspect, and further reading showed that this view was shared by others. Apart from the problem of measuring such accurate distances between megaliths which, by their nature, are crude blocks of stone, where do you decide where its centre was established?

This started me looking into the origins of present day measurements and I discovered the following. The **inch** was measured by taking three grains of barley from the middle of the ear, well dried, and placed end to end. The **cubit** was the distance from the elbow to the end of the middle finger (18 inches). The **ell** was fixed in 1101 as the length of King Henry I's arm (45 inches). The **foot** was 12 inches, and the **hand** the width of the palm plus the thumb (4 inches). The **nail** was measured from the second joint of the middle finger to the end of the nail (2¼ inches) and was a cloth measure. The **pace** was five feet, the **palm** the width of the palm (3 inches) and the **span** the distance between the end of the thumb to the end of the little

finger with the hand spread (9 inches). The more familiar **rod** was 5½ yards or 16½ feet.

Weights and measures were first fixed by standard in England in 1257, with statutes passed in the reigns of Henry III, Edward I and Henry VII. The basis was a grain of wheat, corn or barley; 32 grains of wheat gathered from the middle of the ear and dried were to make a pennyweight, subsequently divided into 24 equal which were called **grains**. Measures of capacity were taken with 8 pounds of wheat of a similar kind to make a **gallon**, and 8 such gallons made a **bushel**.

It can be seen from the above that early measurements were defined in a somewhat arbitrary fashion, but it must have been very convenient to use parts of the human body. On looking at the use of the body for measurements, it becomes clear how the 'span' could have been used to define other measurements; for example a 'nail' is quarter of a 'span', four of them make one 'quarter' (a cloth measure). The 'cubit' is two 'spans', the 'foot' one and a third 'spans' and the 'ell' five 'spans'. At first sight the 'rod' does not fit into this scheme, but when converted to inches I realised that it was 22 'spans'.

One paper published in the CBA Research Report No. 60 by Birthe Kjølbye Biddle on the C7 minster at Winchester goes thoroughly into the use of the 'rod' as a measurement, and states that it was used in the charter of Edward the Elder when granting land to New Minster in about AD 904. Berthe mentions it being laid out using the Drusian foot to make the 16½ foot 'rod'. Is it possible that it was based on the 'span' rather than the foot?

Re-reading Adrian Gibson's excellent article in volume 27 of *Essex Archaeology & History*, I wonder if it is possible to establish whether any measurements were multiples of the 'span'? Problems would arise from trying to divide the 'rod' accurately, and any error would be cumulative. As they didn't have precision instruments, such error would have to be allowed for, though this begs the question of whether it was necessary to achieve the level of accuracy expected today.

John Warbis

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## SHIPS, SIGNATURES & SYMBOLS – ENGLISH MEDIAEVAL GRAFFITI

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For many years I have been recording mediaeval incised and scratched drawings, or graffiti, which are found on the pillars and walls of our churches and secular buildings. These are largely worked on the soft limestone, or clunch, used so extensively in the Midlands, eastern and southeast England. They vary in subject matter. Some are pictorial – fighting ships, harps, ladies in elaborate headdresses, knights in armour, windmills, birds and animals. There are also scraps of writing, signatures and dates, and musical notes. Less easy to understand are the symbols which, no doubt, had an underlying heraldic or religious significance. These are a powerful reminder of the important part played by symbolism and imagery in the mediaeval world.

The drawings vary greatly in artistic ability. Some are mere casual scribbles; others are works of art in their own right, the work of a sure hand and purposeful mind, ranking artistically with wall

paintings and stained glass. Sadly, many fine graffiti are being destroyed. Clunch weathers easily, and stone surfaces are constantly being scraped and covered with layers of whitewash. Thus we are rapidly a unique and little appreciated part of our heritage.

In order to gain some idea of the distribution and variety of these graffiti, it is necessary to look at a considerable number of buildings in the eastern and south-eastern side of England, as well as the Midlands.

Will you help with this survey? All that is needed is a seeing eye and an enquiring mind, a torch (for looking in dark corners, or for easier reading of graffiti by oblique lighting), a feather duster (for removing age-old cobwebs) and pencil and paper for recording. Rubbings frequently destroy the outline of the graffiti and should not be undertaken without prior consultation and consent. I have the backing of English Heritage, the National Trust, various county historical societies, and many museums and art historians, NADFAS and various church authorities.

If you would like to help, or know of any graffiti, please contact Rosemary Bowden-Smith, The Chestnuts, Hacheston, Woodbridge, Suffolk IP13 0DR, or telephone 01728 747293. All enquiries are welcome.

Rosemary Bowden-Smith

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## A PLAGUE OF MICE

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I wish the sad casualties may never return, which lately happened in this county: the one, 1581, in the hundred of Dengie (vide Stow's Chronicle anno citat), the other, 1648, in the hundred of Rochford and the Isle of Foulness (rented in part by two of my credible

parishioners, who attested it, having paid dear for the truth thereof); when an army of mice, nesting in ant hills, as conies in burroughs, shaved off the grass at the bare roots, which withering to dung was infectious to cattle. The March following, numberless flocks of owls from all parts flew thither, and destroyed them, which otherwise had ruined the country, if continuing another year. Thus, though great the distance between a man and a mouse, the meanest may become formidable to the mightiest creature by their multitudes; and this may render the punishment of the Philistines more clearly to our apprehensions, at the same time pestered with mice in their barns, and pained with emerods in their bodies (vide 1 Samuel vi, 11).

Rev Thomas Fuller  
(perpetual curate to Waltham Abbey  
1648-58)

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## ESSEX EGYPTOLOGY GROUP

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If you are interested in any aspect of Egyptology you may wish to join this newly-formed group. It meets on the first Sunday of the month at 3pm at Spring Lodge Community centre, Powers Hall End, Witham. For more details, please contact Charlotte Booth on 01621 840171 or [charlotte\\_booth@yahoo.com](mailto:charlotte_booth@yahoo.com)

Future meetings include: A talk/demonstration from Andrew Walpole about the Bronze Age axe in Egypt; Suzanne Bojtos on Middle Kingdom tombs and nomarchs; A practical workshop on Egyptian art; A practical lecture from Rosalind Jansen on the Egyptian laundry.

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Enquiries about delayed or missing publications and about the supply of recent back numbers should be addressed to the Secretary.

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaces the Publications Development Fund. (see page 14) It will support publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at April 2005 the projected value of the fund stands at £33,575.90

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Winter 2005

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 147

WINTER 2005

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**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 20 FEBRUARY 2006**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

### Cover illustration:

This (c.60mm high) copper alloy Hellenistic period figure (323-31BC) was found on the Essex-Herts border and recently reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme in Essex. It shows a life-like sleeping Negro boy. Hellenistic art was enthusiastically collected by the Romans and it was literally taken back to Italy from Greece by the shipload. This could therefore be evidence of antique collecting in Roman Britain. A full report will shortly appear at [www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk)

If you have found an archaeological object and would like to record it for future generations, please contact the Essex Finds Liaison Officer on 01206 282929.

Thanks to the Portable Antiquities Scheme and Colchester Museums for permission to use the illustrations by Roger Massey-Ryan.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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The East of England Plan, which has been produced with Government backing, provides for 478,000 new dwellings to be built in the eastern counties – 123,400 of them in Essex. Chris Thornton, my predecessor as President, drew attention to the extra burden likely to be placed on the Essex County Council's Archaeology and Building Conservation services at a time when funding difficulties could lead to cuts. Fortunately, the County's Archaeology service has since come to an agreement with all district councils, except Colchester, to share the burden. Colchester has its own archaeological unit so it is not dependent on the County in the same way.

The scale of development, to which the proposed expansion of Stansted must be added, however, poses other problems for those concerned with the history of our county. Inevitably, an appreciation of the past is linked to the survival of at least some of its features. Even if large scale development occurs, the preservation of old buildings, street layouts, trees, watercourses and rural fringes, etc., can help to keep the past alive and to give character to new areas. Totally razing everything to the ground destroys all reminders of the past and frequently leads to dull and uninteresting urban landscapes – sometimes to monstrous eyesores. The character of new buildings is also of vital importance.

As a Member of Parliament in past years, I fully accepted the need to build houses for those who were homeless or living in overcrowded or inferior conditions. Nonetheless, I fought countless battles to try to prevent particular buildings or, occasionally, whole areas of historic or architectural

merit being bulldozed. For example, in 1966 I took a stand with Waltham Abbey Historical Society and others against the demolition of Sun Street – the historic main street in the town. Complete redevelopment at that time, according to the authority, was the only feasible way to improve the centre. We managed to avert it, and any fair-minded person can now see that what survives is vastly superior to some cut-down version of Birmingham's redeveloped bullring, which was itself demolished in less than forty years.

While I fully recognise the need for providing new homes in the eastern counties, I believe that the scale of building envisaged in the East of England Plan, plus Stansted expansion, is 'over the top' and totally out of balance. It threatens to engulf huge areas of land, to overload the infrastructure of a number of existing towns and add greatly to congestion throughout the region.

Whatever building does, however, take place, it is to be hoped that those who love our historic county and its rich heritage in urban and rural landscapes will keep a watchful eye on development and be prepared to raise their voices in defence of our heritage and against proposals that seriously threaten it.

The retention of traditional names and their use to designate new areas is an aspect of this in which historians should take an interest.

We are fortunate in Britain that so much of our heritage survives. Along with our beautiful countryside and coastline, it makes an enormous contribution to the attractiveness of our land. Those of us who are forever seeking to delve into our past and reveal its manifold aspects

surely have a duty to strive to ensure that its best features, along with the positive achievements of our time, are preserved. This is in the interests not only of people alive today but also of generations still to come.

Stan Newens

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## ESSEX PLACE-NAMES PROJECT

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The 9th Annual Place-names Seminar took place in Saffron Walden hosted by the Historical Society on 12th November 2005. Lizzie Sanders and Gillian Williamson (**Littlebury** History Group) gave a talk on the place-names relating to mediaeval Littlebury, Ring Hill Iron Age fort probably being the little fortified 'burh' and Littlebury (alias Stretley ) Green being close to the Roman road onto which small fields were aligned. David Everitt spoke about Curiosities of **Belchamp Walter** and considered the possible site of the lost Half-hundred Thunderlow, its moot perhaps at Munt Farm.

Dr. Sue Oosthuizen of Cambridge University gave the Guest Lecture on **Field-names and Field-archaeology** in interpreting medieval land-use in the Bourne valley (SW of Cambridge). At least 3 distinct types of mediaeval topography (woodland, pasture and arable) were discernable from field-names. Domesday Book differentiates *silva* (unmanaged woodland) from *nemus* (managed). Medieval pasture/meadow was indicated by field-names such as *leah* (ley), *heord* (herding), *ruh* (rough) and *offal* (old open field). Arable field-names in the lower valley included *thorn*, *slade*, *starve-goose*, *sour-ditch* etc the latter indicative of unproductive soil. Dentillation of the

parish boundaries suggest that they postdate the arable field layout while the straighter boundaries on the high chalk and clay follow prehistoric field-patterns.

A **Training Half-day** for those interested in reading historic documents and maps will be held on March 4th 2006 at the Essex Record Office. No charge but Pre-booking necessary on 01245-222237.

James Kemble

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## FRANCIS QUARLES

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The Revd. Edward W. Hanson, Rector of St. Peter and St. Paul, Horndon-on-the Hill, whom Society members met when visiting the church after the AGM, is a descendant of the family of the Essex poet, Francis Quarles.



Mr. Hanson, who is also Rector of St. Giles and All Saints, Orsett, and St. Mary the Virgin, Bulphan, hails from Boston, USA, and trained as an historian. He says that the poet's great-nephew, William Quarles, (son of William Quarles of Stifford and grandson of Sir Robert Quarles of Romford, the poet's eldest brother) emigrated to New England in 1664 or thereabouts. There are, as a result, a number of American families - some still rejoicing in the name of

Quarles - who can trace their line back to his seventeenth century relatives, including that of Mr. Hanson.

He feels that in taking over the parish churches at Horndon-on-the-Hill, Orsett and Bulphan he has, in a sense, come home. His direct Essex ancestors actually lived at nearby Stifford.

Francis Quarles, the poet, was born at Stewards, Romford, in the spring of 1592, son of James Quarles, Clerk of the Green Cloth and Purveyor to the Navy under Queen Elizabeth. He took a degree at Christ's College, Cambridge, and went on to study law at Lincoln's Inn. He was Cup Bearer to King James I's daughter, Elizabeth, who married the Elector Palatine and was involved in the events which initiated the Thirty Years War in Germany. Later, the poet served in Dublin as Secretary to James Usher, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of Ireland.

Quarles' main work was *Emblems*, published in 1635 and dedicated to Edward Benlowes, in whose home at Brent Hall, Finchingfield, he composed many of the lines. His book of aphorisms, *Euchiridion*, (1640/4 1) was also well known. He produced a number of other poems and wrote the inscription on the memorial in Westminster Abbey to Michael Drayton, a contemporary poet with whom he was personally acquainted. The theme of most of his writings was religious.

He was a strong royalist during the English Civil War, as a result of which his property was sequestered and some of his books and manuscripts were burnt.

He married Ursula Woodgate, by whom he had eighteen children, nine of whom

survived. His son, John, was a captain in the army of Charles I. The parish registers at Roxwell, where Francis Quarles eventually lived, contain several entries relating to members of the family.

He died on 8th September, 1644, leaving his next-of-kin in straightened circumstances.

Sir William Addison devoted Chapter XI of his book *Epping Forest: Its Literary and Historical Associations* (Dent & Sons Ltd. 1945) to Francis Quarles and his family.

Mr. Hanson is to join the ESAH.

Stan Newens

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## THE WOOL CHURCHES OF NORTH ESSEX?

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Probably the most famous timber-framed house in Essex, one with the most richly carved and moulded timbers, and certainly the most visible inasmuch as it is open to the public, is Paycockes in Coggeshall. Its impressive façade on West Street is to some degree a fiction, contrived by the Maldon architect Percy Munro Beaumont and the Coggeshall woodcarver Ernest Beckwith in 1908/9, for Edward Noel Buxton, who was later to give it to the National Trust. The house is additionally famous for the cloth merchant Thomas Paycocke, celebrated by Eileen Power in her collection of biographies, *Medieval People* (Penguin 1924). Although she may seem to have conferred a status on Paycocke similar to that of Francesco di Marco Datini, Iris Origo's Merchant of Prato, there is, unlike Datini, no Paycocke archive, most of the information on the family being derived from wills and their monuments in Coggeshall church.

Partly because of this lack of documentation, the facts about the Paycockes and their house have not really come together. The first of the dynasty for whom we have records is a Thomas Paycocke who died in 1461. The will of his son, or grandson, John (*obit* 1505), survives. He left a house to his wife and eldest son, the house in which he lived and other property to his second son, and a house in West Street to his youngest son Thomas. Eileen Power assumed that this house was the one we see today, and explained the carved initials 'TP' and merchants marks by surmising that John had had it built for his son. In this, she was mistaken. Tree-ring dating by Ian Tyers of Sheffield University for the National Trust has shown that it was built in 1509.

Thomas Paycocke must therefore have rebuilt the house which he inherited. The house is of long-wall jetty type, and had an attic storey which has been removed. It has an interesting and somewhat unusual plan ; this and the later rear extensions await further elucidation and study. Its imposing appearance, and carved timbers, reflect the wealth to be made in the cloth industry. This may not be true of St Katherine's chapel on the north side of the chancel of the parish church. Here, according to Weever, were memorials to five Paycockes (only two survive), including the earliest recorded, the Thomas who died in 1461, and the last to play a notable role in the cloth industry, the Thomas who died in 1580. The Paycockes seem to have used St. Katherine's chapel rather like a family chapel, and are sometimes considered to have built it. The church was dated by the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments to the first half of the 15th century. If the Thomas who died in 1461

made a significant contribution to its construction, whether or not he paid for the chapel, it is worth noting that his money was derived not from cloth but from meat, for he was a butcher. So too was his son or grandson John, whose will reveals him to have owned considerable property in the town.

David Andrews

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## C17 BUILDING WORK AT EARLS COLNE RECTORY

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Ralph Josselin's diary contains a few glimpses of the work he undertook on his rectory, as well as the hazards involved. The impression is that much of the work he did himself, though he certainly employed a well digger, as well as a number of men in the construction of his 'house on the green'. On 19 June 1646 he noted 'Puld downe part of my old house; escapd one danger in espying the timber flying from mee, I had another fall with a fall upon mee but through mercy I had no hurt, I had provided carts to bring home my trees but the unseasonableness of the next day hindered.' The trees were presumably for the reconstruction of this part of his house, which appears to have been rather unsuccessful as a week later he wrote 'my kitchin wood frame fell downe in the afternoone towards night, and through gods providence no living soule received any hurt, I was at worke in it all the morning my selfe, divers went too and fro in it, it fell into Goodman Brewers yard missd his pumpe, which I feared it would hurt if it fell;....'

Disputes between neighbours about trees clearly predate the problems associated with the fast-growing leylandii, as the same entry continues '...the next day I gott my pale

[presumably the fence destroyed when the kitchen collapsed] sett their and left Goodman Brewer the most part of their bay tree, though it was sett under my eaves droppe;...

It seems that building proceeded uneventfully after this, as there are no further comments. On 7 January 1646/7, a well was begun, perhaps to serve the new kitchen. 'This day wee begun to digge a well, which I let to Fossett at 9d per foote: about 5 foote deepe or thereabouts wee found water and so the spring continued for about 6 foote; we digd about 14 foote, the chardge of them came to about (blank) shillings for digging and (blank) hundred well bricke.....' The term 'well brick' suggests a special, and it is likely that this was a wedge-shaped brick used for building the circular well lining in header bond.

Josselin was building again in 1659, though there no details are given, merely that on 22 April '...I was busy in preparing timber for my building...' and five days later 'Began to felle and barke my trees bought of Mr W Harlakenden,.....' In 1661 a chimney was built and the entries suggest that others were involved, though it seems likely that he helped. He noted, on 5 June 'laid the foundacon of our backhouse chimney with much care and pains it is the lords blessing to make it a sure habitacon to mee and mine', on 17 June 'kitchin chimney beg(un)' and finally on 18 July 'Finisht my kitchin chimney and tooke down the scaffolds all in safety that wrought theron, for which mercy I bless god, the continuance in the like I pray for'. On 23 July, he noted 'I was raising my backe building at my house on the green which was done this weeke, with safety to all persons employed therein.' This work seems to have proceeded rapidly as on 1 August 'I began to tile my house' and on the

following day 'I finishd my second backe chimney.....'

His final entry about building work is dated 1 April 1663 'begun to pull down the old parlor end, the weather very cold.'

Though it is not entirely clear from the text how many of the practical tasks were undertaken by Josselin himself, there seems little doubt that he was actively involved in most of them. One has to admire his practical skills – how many of us would be able to fell, cart and prepare timber to frame their rebuilt home, with or without the assistance of power tools?

Michael Leach

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## ESSEX CHURCH BRASSES

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The first programme event of the year was a lecture given by Martin Stuchfield on 12 March at Writtle. Nancy Edwards introduced him as the secretary of the Monumental Brass Society, and the originator of the series of county inventories which list surviving brasses of all periods (as well as those now lost, but known from antiquarian descriptions). The splendidly detailed and illustrated Essex inventory, in two substantial volumes, was published in 2003 and is still available (and extremely good value) at £25.

Essex has the second largest number of surviving brasses, only outdone by Kent. Even so, vast numbers have been lost and the present survivors represent perhaps only 5% of the original total. Brasses are more common in the eastern counties of England, a reflection of the fact that, up to the C16, brass sheet was imported from the Low Countries to London and the east coast ports. In the north and west they are rare

– Writtle church has more brasses than the whole of Scotland. English brasses, in contrast to continental ones which were usually engraved on a rectangular sheet, have the figures, the inscriptions and the decorative details separately cut out. These were inserted into shallow cut profiles in a stone slab (usually polished Purbeck marble), and attached with a coating of hot pitch applied to the stone and the back of the brass. Symmetrically placed rivets provided additional anchorage. These passed through the brass into pre-formed holes in the slab beneath, and were secured by pouring molten lead into a pre-formed channel chased into the stone. This provided a very secure fixing – often still sound after many centuries – but Purbeck marble has poor wearing qualities, and when the surface of the slab deteriorates, the pitch begins to disintegrate, often resulting in the brass working loose.

This is one of the reasons for the loss of brasses. Once loosened, they break up, become detached and are quickly lost or appropriated. In the past, they were also seen as a useful source of ready cash, and there are records of churchwardens selling old brasses to help to pay for church repairs. Others were attacked by puritan reformers, particularly if the inscription contained the offending phrase “pray for the soul of...”. Today there is a new threat, as they fetch very substantial sums at auction and on the black market, and therefore attract thieves. The Monumental Brass Society has had some notable successes in buying back lost brasses and restoring them to the original church from which they had been stolen. A few suffered the fate of the brass of Sir Robert Swynborne in Little Horkesley church which was blown into many fragments by a German bomb in 1940. In this case there was a happy ending. The pieces

(some of which had been blown over the county border) were collected, conserved and reassembled in Colchester Museum, and are now back in the rebuilt church.

There was a vogue for fixing detached brasses on to wooden boards for preservation. However if a brass is separated from its indent, much useful information about the missing parts of the composition is lost, and generally it is much better to reattach it to its original stone. This is best done in the mediaeval way, with pitch and brass rivets, though the latter are now usually secured with resin rather than molten lead. Re-attachment can be done after many years' separation. The brass of Thomas Stapel (1371) was removed to Sutton when Shopland church was demolished. More than a decade later, its stone slab was rescued from the site of the church and re-united with its brass. Indents which have lost their brasses retain their faint outline (with the shiny heads of the brass rivets, or the lead that secured them) and can sometimes be identified from antiquarian descriptions compiled when the monument was complete.

Essex has brasses of national importance. The oldest is that to Sir William FitzRalph at Pebmarsh, dating from between 1331 and 1338. Almost all are from English workshops, one exception being that to Ralph de Knevyton at Aveley (1370) which is of continental manufacture and engraved on a rectangular sheet. We were shown many fine images of Essex brasses – knights, clergymen, lawyers, civilians and ladies – illustrating developments in fashion, as well as technical improvements in armour. Brasses dwindled in frequency and quality in the latter part of the C16. Engravers used an excessive amount of cross hatching, as

well as thin rolled English made plate (2mms in thickness, compared with the 4.5 to 5mms of the imported sheet brass). These thin brasses are particularly liable to damage. There was a renewed interest in making monumental brasses as a result of the C19 Gothic revival, and there were some fine products from the workshop of Gawthorp of London. C19 and C20 brasses are still undervalued, and three recently came to light in a rebuilt church in Leyton, wrapped in newspaper and pushed behind the church safe.

Palimpsests (brasses re-engraved on the back) are of considerable interest. By their nature, they are not discovered until they become detached from their stone, but suspicions are aroused by asymmetrically placed rivet holes, and unexpected joins. 1535 to 1585 was the major period for re-use of brasses, though there are earlier examples, sometimes surprisingly soon after the first brass was put down. At Barking, the figure of Thomas Broke and wife (1493) are engraved on the back of a brass dated 1442. Occasionally the brass and stone were appropriated by a later client, by the simple expedient of changing the inscription, resulting in absurd anachronisms in fashion or armour. Sometimes the figures were turned over, trimmed if necessary, re-engraved and fixed back into the original indent. Both ancient and modern workshop wasters are sometimes found. After the fire at Whittle church, a number of small fragments of brass were recovered which had been used as spacers on the back of an early C20 wall-mounted brass. Pieced together, they formed a blackletter inscription reading "erected (to t)he Gl(ory).....John King of L.....(h)is affectionate a(nd).....". Monumental brasses have also been re-used as weathervanes and clock dials.

The Monumental Brass Society was founded in 1887, and is very active in the protection and preservation of brasses, as well as researching all aspects of their history. It pursues lost brasses, and restores them to their original site if possible. It is also able to monitor the condition of brasses by comparing sequential rubbings with their present day condition. Further information can be obtained from their excellent website, and enquiries about membership should be made to Mr H M Stuchfield, Lowe Hill House, Stratford St Mary, CO7 6JX.

Michael Leach

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## A FEW NOTES ON MEASUREMENTS

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The notes by John Warbin in the last issue stated that the pace was five feet. The **Oxford English Dictionary** distinguishes between the geometrical pace of five feet and the military pace of about 2½ feet. The latter approximates to a man's stride and so to the Roman mile of one thousand paces (**mille passuum**) which was 142 yards less than an English mile. Scottish miles were not the same length.

Another use of pace was by Philip Morant, who frequently employed it in his descriptions of churches; Marks Tey church he described as small 'bing of one pace with the chancel'. Nave and chancel were built as one whole. Aldham church chancel was of only one pace, having no side aisles.

Of the measurements based on the human body, probably the earliest and most universal method of measuring, the thumb was taken as one inch (**pollex** in

Latin, still surviving as the French **pouce**).

The rod, pole or perch of 16½ feet was not of this length throughout the country. 15 feet was quite common and as the perch varied, so did the acre. In Lancashire and some other northern counties both were much larger. A further variation was the length of the perch used in 'Woodland measure'; this was 18 feet.

The pennyweight was Troy measure, distinct from the avoirdupois weight of 16 ounces to the pound. Troy weight was used for weighing silver which was valued by weight.

Small quantities of corn in receptacles were sometimes measured by volume, by 'strike measure' when levelling off at the surface instead of heaping up. Another measure was the 'long hundred' (120 or six score) used for counting eggs and probably also for other items.

Angela Green

Sources:

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J. L. Fisher, *A Medieval Farming Glossary*, (2nd edn., ed. A. and W. R. Powell) (1997)

P. Morant, *History and Antiquities ... of Essex* (1768)

W. Smith, *A Shorter Latin - English Dictionary*.

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## **CAMULODUNUM IS IN SOMERSET (NOT ESSEX!)**

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The Rev. John Skinner (1772-1839) was rector of Camerton in Somerset from 1803 until his death. An unhappy and confrontational character, his ministry

involved frequent disputes with farmers who were indifferent both to religion and to paying their tithes; with coal miners who were abusive and (as he saw it) morally degenerate; and with the overseer of the poor who was unstintingly mean with the few parishioners whom he considered to be deserving. His chief pleasure was in antiquarian pursuits and, when reading his diary, one can feel his spirits rise when he was able to leave Camerton for a few days to visit his fellow antiquarian, Sir Richard Colt Hoare, at Stourhead. Together they visited barrows and took steps to protect their contents from the depredations of the local miners who were spurred by visions of buried treasure to dig into them. On occasions, ill health or bad weather kept them indoors, but the diary leaves one feeling that a few hours in Sir Richard's library was adequate compensation for missing the shooting, or the antiquarian exploration. However he had a disagreeable experience when confined there on a snowy day on 5 January 1824. He noted 'I was fully occupied in making extracts from Diodorus, except half an hour looking over a recent publication on the Antiquities of Colchester, which Sir Richard put into my hands; unfortunately the author, in his anxiety to prove this to have been the Camulodunum of Tacitus, makes the Romans engaged in forming the walls around the station of the colony, on their immediate settlement on the spot, entirely militating against what the historian states, that the occasion and surprise of their defeat by the Britons was because they had no walls or fortifications. The whole seems a flimsy production.'

By this time Skinner had an unshakeable conviction that Camulodunum and Camerton were one and the same place.

One of his biographers noted that the hall of the rectory was filled with Roman artefacts that he had dug up in the parish and, to strengthen Somerset's claim to Camulodunum, the windows were glazed with stained glass depicting Cunobelin and Boudicea. On his death, he left five iron chests containing 146 journals (mainly related to his archaeological discoveries) to the British Museum. He displayed a level of tact (not often shown in life) by imposing a condition that they were to remain unopened for 50 years 'for fear of giving offence by the free remarks made when writing on passing events.' These manuscripts are now freely accessible, and anyone curious to see his justification for placing Camulodunum in Somerset will find the details in Add. Mss 33659-62 and 33694.

Who was the offending historian who upset him on that snowy day in January 1824?

Michael Leach

Source:

Coombs, Howard & Peter, *Journal of a Somerset Rector 1803-1834* (1971) Kingsmead (with an elegant introductory essay by Virginia Woolf)

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## LIBRARY REPORT

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As members know our library is now at Essex University near Wivenhoe. It is made up of one of the finest collection of archaeological journals in Eastern England and probably the finest collection of books about Essex history that there is. Its books are fully integrated with the university library's electronic index. To use your library you need to take your membership card with you to the University Library where you

will get a card entitling you to use the entire university library collection.

If you travel by car, parking at the University costs £2.10 for 2 hours up until 4.30 p.m.; thereafter parking is FREE (as it is all weekend). During term times the library is open all day until 9 p.m. at night. If you visit the library it is always worth telephoning first (particularly on a Saturday/Sunday), to alert the desk that you are coming, as a librarian has to let you into our library which is housed in a separate area away from the main shelves.

### Essex Archaeology & History

The society hold back numbers of our Transactions for anyone wishing to complete or add to their collection. Prices are as follows:

Second Series (earliest available 1920) £5 per copy.

Third Series (begins 1961) £5 for each part of Vols 1, 2; £7.50 for Vols 3 to 15 (1983) and £10 for Vol 16 onwards. A few Vols are completely out of print. Please ask or telephone your librarian, Andrew Phillips, on 01206\546775.

### New Acquisitions

Deavin, Statira: *A Woodham Childhood Wing, K.R.: A History of Bancroft's School 1737-1987*

Catchpole, Peter: *A Mixed Bag*  
Bills, Leslie W.: *Canvey Island: A Rising Tide*

Valentine, Ian: *Station 43: Audley End and S.O.E's Polish Section*  
Gyford, Janet: *A History of Witham*

### Just Published a new book or booklet?

We would very much like a complimentary copy of any new book on Essex history to put in our library at Essex University. All complimentary copies are given a book review in this Newsletter.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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The latest Phillimore 'town' histories are casting a wider net, a policy we can only applaud, and several Essex volumes have come to us for review. As a history society we have to consider their history content, while recognising that their object is to reach a wider popular audience, usually a local one. Though they rarely include primary research, relying on a trawl through published material, that in itself can be done badly or well. Heavily illustrated (and reproduction quality is very high), their visual content is important. Hard-backed with attractive coloured dust covers, they have 134 pages and are priced at £15.99.

**Ilford, a History** by Sue Curtis, Phillimore 2004.

By its explosion from village to suburbia in under 30 years, Ilford presents a particular challenge to an all-through history which marches from the Neolithic via Domesday manors to Home Front heroics in 1939-45. Sue Curtis meets this by several thematic chapters: the river, the abbey (Barking), the forest (Hainault), transport (coaches, railways, trams). Chronology returns with the last 3 chapters, taking us from suburban explosion via two world wars to 'a multicultural community' today. While long lists of manorial descent do not work, other chapters do, not least some coverage of the men who built it all. The illustrations suffer from repetition: perhaps they were hard to find. Ilford seems trapped in its Broadway, full of Edwardian trams, but some 1799 watercolours of lost buildings and early property developers' adverts are shrewd additions.

**Rochford, a History** by Mavis Sipple, Phillimore 2004

This book benefits from not being over-ambitious. The text is lucid, never seeking to be 'academic'. The modest role of Rochford in history is clearly explored, again with some thematic chapters. Almost half the book deals with the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the period for which most 'history' is known. In particular the dilemma of remaining a backwater – but a picturesque one – is clearly followed as post-1945 Rochford sought to position itself, retaining both its identity and its jobs against devastating alternatives like Maplin Airport or a Southend super-state. The illustrations are generous, slightly inclined to the nostalgic, but including some gems. There are several useful maps, greatly helping the non-resident reader.

**Grays Thurrock, a History** by Brian Evans, Phillimore 2004

Along the North Thames shore stretches an area of major economic importance rarely recognised in popular perceptions of Essex. Brian Evans's book lightly lifts the curtain on chalk, cement and gunpowder works, Bata shoes, Tilbury Fort, the Queen Elizabeth Bridge and the Thames Board Mills - few sited specifically at Grays. Indeed this book should be called Grays Thurrock and District since we are afforded a Cook's tour of villages from Aveley to Corringham, much helped by White's 1848 Directory, and a chapter on important archaeology from Dene Holes to Mucking. While this provides only an outline history, it is helpful to bring it all under one cover. The illustrations are equally varied, several pre-1920 peopled shots being given generous space. Only a short chapter covers the post 1945 period.

**The Church of St Peter's & St Paul, Birch, Essex** by Olive Hazell, Apex Publishing 2004, pp 75.

This is a short commemorative account of an important Essex building, currently languishing under threat of demolition. Colour photographs clearly illustrate what we will thereby lose. From its conception by the remarkable Charles Grey Round to its current redundancy, this is a careful and thorough account.

**The Harveys of Rolls Park Chigwell, Essex** by Richard Morris, Loughton & District Historical Society 2005, pp 50.

Another piece of careful prosopography from Richard Morris (and the latest in the long line of Loughton & District publications) traces the remarkable Hervey family during their long tenure of the now lost mansion of Rolls Park, Chigwell. A family firmly entrenched as City of London merchants also produced lawyers, government servants and the amazing Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey, commander of the *Temeraire* at Trafalgar and perhaps their most famous, not to say eccentric, son. The book is lavishly illustrated, including colour reproductions of an impressive collection of family portraits and beautiful black and white photos of Rolls Park in its pre-1918 splendour, showing what a period treasure we have lost.

Andrew Phillips

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## ESSEX MACHINE BREAKERS

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The outbreak of unrest among agricultural workers in 1830, which began in Kent and spread to most counties, including Essex, has been the subject of several in-depth studies. *The Village Labourer* (1<sup>st</sup> edition 1911) by J.L. and Barbara Hammond, and

*Captain Swing* (1969) by Eric Hobsbawm and George Rude, are probably the best known, but there have been numerous other general and local accounts of the events. In Essex, *Chartism in Essex* (1982) and *Meagre Harvest* (1990), both by Arthur F.J. Brown, refer to what occurred, and other researchers have also delved into this upsurge of riotous protest.

The causes were poverty, low wages, a succession of bad harvests, the harsh winter of 1829-1830 and the realisation among desperately poor people that threshing machines, which were just being introduced, would deprive them of winter work.

A new book, *Essex Machine Breakers: the Story of the 1830 Riots*, by Jill Chambers, refers to these causes but is primarily concerned with compiling a detailed record of the events, the participants, the trials, the punishments and what happened to those involved subsequently. Similar books by the same author have recorded similar information for a number of other counties, namely Buckinghamshire, Berkshire, Dorset and Gloucestershire. To obtain the immense range of detail assembled, the author has meticulously combed through manuscript sources, court reports, local newspapers, census returns, other family history records and many secondary works. She has also managed to trace several descendants of those involved.

This is the most comprehensive account of the events of 1830 in Essex yet produced. Some 145 pages provide an account of individual rioters, arranged in alphabetical order. For example, a report on George Turner, tried at the Essex Quarter Sessions in December 1830 for riotously assembling with others

to demand an increase in wages, gives his sentence of 2 months hard labour and shows him living at Broxted aged 79 with his wife, children and grandchildren 50 years later, as recorded by the 1881 census.

Indictments, petitions for mercy, claims for rewards for the apprehension of rioters, lists of Special Constables, a description of the very age of those transported to Australia and other information are provided in this book.

This is an account which probes beneath the surface of a significant historical event to identify and present the individual people involved. It is also a possible source for family historians in search of ancestors in the ranks of the agricultural workforce in those parts of Essex affected, i.e. the north-west; around Colchester and out to Clacton; and south of Chelmsford around Rayleigh. All those interested in the history of long-suffering agricultural workers in Essex should buy this book or order it through a library.

Stan Newens

**Essex Machine Breakers** by Jill Chambers (ISBN 1-903049-03-2), A5 paperback, 483 pages, published 2005. Price £19 incl. post/packing. Obtainable from the author at 4, Quills, Letchworth Garden City, Herts., SG6 2RJ.

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**PAUL RUSIECKI'S  
ARTICLE, 'THE  
CELEBRATION OF  
BONFIRE NIGHT IN  
VICTORIAN ESSEX'**

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Paul Rusiecki's article, 'The Celebration of Bonfire Night in Victorian Essex',

raises the interesting question of the continuing suspicion of, and hostility towards, Roman Catholics in nineteenth-century England. These feelings were deeply entrenched, and were not ameliorated by the presence, in the Book of Common Prayer, of the state services of thanksgiving for, amongst other events, the failure of the Gunpowder Plot. These services, often anti-Catholic in sentiment, were not abolished until 1859. An indication of popular sentiment is provided by a handbill in the Essex Record Office (T/P 114/9; A.J. Dunkin Collection, dated by him Dec 1851):

**NO POPERY.**

**ESSEX CALVES v. ROMISH BULLS**

Notice is hereby given:— That the Loyal and Protestant Inhabitants of the antient BOROUGH of MALDON – to show their detestation and utter abhorrence of CARDINAL WISEACRE [i.e. Wiseman] and his Papistical Master – have determined to have a BON-FIRE, to burn in effigy those intruding Italian priests, in commemoration of the martyrdom of many good and pious men of Essex who suffered death at the hands of their predecessors in the days of bloody Queen Mary.

The ceremony will take place in DR. PLUME'S FIELDS, MALDON, on the evening of THURSDAY, the 19th instant, at half-past Seven o'clock, when a procession by torch-light will conduct these arch intruders to their deserved doom.

Puseyite Priests are particularly requested to deliver up their Roman Candles to the burned on this occasion.

**GOD SAVE THE QUEEN**

Protestant martyrs were commemorated in more permanent form as well, the most famous example being the Martyr's Memorial in Oxford (1841-3), but Essex has its own examples, including those at

Brentwood (1861), Stratford (1879), Rayleigh (1908). It can hardly be coincidental that Brentwood erected its monument (to William Hunter, burnt there in 1555) in the same year that the Roman Catholics opened their new church, later the cathedral, just down the road. In Colchester, the Town Hall contains a very elaborate marble monument to the town's martyrs, and there is another in St Peter's Church, erected in 1843.

The Protestant 'wing' of the Church of England went to much trouble to draw attention to what they considered Romish and therefore illegal practices by clergy, its adherents attending services in other parishes to observe such rituals as genuflecting to the altar or kissing the stole and then reporting offending incumbents to the bishop. One clergyman who fell foul of these vigilantes was the Revd Ernest Geldart, rector of Little Braxted from 1881 to 1900. His annual dedication services were regularly infiltrated by those who disapproved of his High-Church ways, who fed the local newspapers with highly provocative accounts and followed them up with letters signed with such pseudonyms as 'Protestant' or 'Lutheran'.

Geldart and others were 'exposed' in an extraordinary pamphlet, *Ritualism rampant in the Diocese of St. Albans, with the names of each parish, incumbent, and patron, date of appointment, and details of practices, and a report on St. Stephen's Upton Park*, published by the Church Association (a Protestant pressure group) in 1892 (photocopy in ERO, Box H1). This listed 180 benefices (out of a total of 627) which were 'more or less identified with the Ritualistic movement' because they had adopted one or more

Ritualistic practices, including the Eastward Position for celebrating Holy Communion and the use of altar lights (i.e. candles), linen or coloured vestments, and incense. Bishop Festing was firmly blamed for this state affairs, particularly as he was patron of 34 of the offending parishes.

Anti-Roman-Catholic sentiment continued well into the twentieth century, and the celebration of Bonfire Night in Lewes is an annual reminder that in some places it has persisted into the twenty-first.

James Bettley

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## HARWICH FORT

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Richard Read Barnes, the Barrack Master's Clerk at Harwich, was a prolific letter writer to the magazines of the early 19th century, including *The Gentleman's Mathematical Companion*, *The Juvenile Ladies Pocket Companion*, etc.

He wrote the following to Mr J Raw, Printer, Ipswich:

Harwich, July 23, 1808

Sir,

I understand that you are now about to publish a work entitled *The Harwich Guide* containing a description of the Ancient and present state of that Borough, etc., etc., etc. I beg leave to transmit the following account of the Barracks at this place which, if you think it is worth inserting in this work alluded to, is much in your service.

The Barracks at Harwich are situate on a Promontory about a mile South of the town; they were built in the year 1803, and were occupied by the West Essex and Royal Bucks Regiments of Militia on the 24th day of November of the same

year. The numbers for which they were constructed are as follows -

6 Field Officers

22 Captains

44 Subalterns and Staff

4 Staff Sergeants

1704 Non commissioned Officers,  
Drummers

and Privates

120 Horses

to which may be added 39 rooms for Officers' Servants and a Guard House for a Captain's Guard of 50 men; also an Hospital calculated to contain 76 patients.

You may rely on the accuracy of the above Statement.

Give me leave to express the hope that the Public may be soon favored with "The Harwich Guide" to which I beg leave to remain

A Well-wisher & Subscriber

*John S Appleby*

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## THE ROLE OF THE EUROPEAN ROUTE OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

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ERIH, The European Route of Industrial Heritage, is a new project which has the potential to transform public attitudes towards industrial culture and at the same time provide new venues for tourism and the public use of space. This Europe-wide project was officially launched on September 12th 2005, at the Museum of Iron in Coalbrookdale, Shropshire.

The Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site, where Abraham Darby III first developed the process of smelting iron using coke, is recognised as the crucible of the Industrial Revolution. In addition, it

is now the starting point for the European Route of Industrial Heritage.

ERIH has been under development for the last four years and will immediately link more than 40 major industrial heritage visitor attractions in the UK, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, France and Luxembourg. The ERIH Launch is an important milestone for the realisation of the European project which was made possible through the commitment of the European partners.

### Linking Museums and the Industrialised landscape

The main ERIH Route stretches across the vastness of time and space from Ironbridge Gorge to the modern industrial landscape parks of the Ruhr in Germany. The main sites – called Anchor Points - have been designated as nodes on the network, and from each Anchor Point a Regional Route will radiate.

ERIH will seek to add value to existing industrial heritage by linking all other aspects of the industrial landscape through to the major museums and sites. Through the linking dynamic, the ERIH project disseminates the perceived value of the high-profile sites into the wider industrialised landscape and raises the perception of lesser treasures and monuments.

### Where did the project originate?

The idea originated within North Rhine – Westphalia, as a regional tourist project entitled "The Industrial Culture Trail" designed to lead visitors around the Ruhr's industrial heritage venues.

The basic element is a 400km road route linking all the outstanding industrial culture sites. 25 Anchor Points make up the core network of the trail, including six

important museums of technical and social history. In addition, the trail features 14 panorama points and 13 significant workers' settlements. In addition there are 25 theme trails highlighting and deepening visitors' knowledge of the huge number of other industrial culture sites in the Ruhr.

Even today blast furnaces, gasometers and pithead towers continue to give the Ruhr area a distinctive landscape. They are important witnesses to 150 years of industrial history in the region, and also to the process of structural transformation which has been taking place there for several decades.

The disused factory sites – many of which are under a preservation order – have long been transformed into lively industrial venues and attractive centres for cultural and tourist events. The main visitor centre for the Trail can be found at the Zollverein Pit XII in Essen, a World Heritage site since December 2001.

### **The best examples of industrial culture from manufacturing to monuments**

"The Industrial Culture Trail" of the Ruhr provided the original model for the development of the transnational ERIH project. The concept of the Anchor Point has been transferred to ERIH, linking major sites of industrial culture in traditional centres of industry throughout Europe.

The project is focussing public attention on industrial culture by raising awareness of the best examples of industrial culture. All of the international Anchor Points are important museums of technical and social history. Full details can be obtained by accessing the multilingual project website at <http://www.erih.net>

The Regional Routes will include industrial culture sites of all scales including museums, whether publicly funded or voluntary, and monumental civil engineering structures such as canals and railways. These venues will be supplemented by manufacturing enterprises with a long history in the region, some of which offer factory tours and similar experiences. Ideally, the final route will comprise a representative selection of authentic buildings and structures from all periods of industrialisation as well as museum collections to emphasise our rich industrial legacy.

### **Industrial Landscapes and People**

As well as catering for those with an interest in technology, the ERIH project is being designed to enable people to better understand the past. Awareness of the activity of past generations is seen as helping communities to appreciate "where they came from and how they got here". Moreover, by directing education towards young people the project hopes to develop a growing interest in industrial culture beyond the limits of memory.

This can help to develop and strengthen their identity and their "pride of place" and is also a significant factor in strengthening people's quality of life. By creating an interactive website, where visitors can choose their own sites to visit and save their own "Industrial Route". ERIH recognises that different groups of people approach industrial culture in different ways and with differing personal motives.

A travelling exhibition is being developed that will tour all the Anchor Points focusing on the lives of individual celebrities in industrial history as "Heroes or Villains". The project will be identifying key individuals and

entrepreneurs who had a role in the industrial development. Emphasising industrial achievements may lead to increased local commitment in the conservation of industrial landscapes.

In 2000, English Heritage commissioned MORI to undertake a survey of 3,000 people in England to find out what they think about the historic environment and its future, and what they value. The survey confirmed strong public interest in caring for the historic environment as a vital part of modern life, and as something significant which defines the country's character and the identity of its people. Key findings from the survey include the following:

- ✿ 87% think that the historic environment plays an important part in the cultural life of the country
- ✿ 85% think that it is important in promoting regeneration in towns and cities
- ✿ 96% think that it is important in teaching people about the past
- ✿ 88% think that it has an important role in creating jobs and boosting the economy
- ✿ 76% think that their own lives are richer for having the opportunity to see or visit the historic environment

#### **The added value of ERIH to the museum sector**

ERIH is being marketed using the latest media with a focus on the development of an interactive website and our aim is that ERIH will become a respected brand in European tourism, so that the participating industrial culture sites and museums will benefit from the Europe-wide cross-marketing and therefore be able to attract more visitors.

Until recently industrial culture has lacked an individual, coherent image.

The potential visitor has learnt of potential destinations rather by chance or through their own curiosity. Travel and site information has been of inconsistent quality and in general there has been a lack of commitment to marketing of sites from either local or regional tourism organisations. ERIH will give industrial culture a consistent image, shape it as a concrete product with comprehensive interpretational literature and provide a positioning within the tourism market.

The ERIH project aims to establish a strong brand identity including the use of the ERIH symbol and "strap line", a group of images that is readily associated with industrial culture.

#### **Regeneration through alternative uses for industrial buildings**

By drawing on best practice from museums and sites across Europe the same time, the project aims to encourage creative regeneration in the use of industrial space; to use former factories or pumping stations for new uses, whether commercial or cultural. As well as treating factories as architectural icons, the ERIH project will be encouraging greater use of former factories as museum and cultural space.

The European Community sees Europe's industrial culture of structures and technology as a resource which can and should play a role in the identity and economy of the future Europe, and the ERIH project seeks to implement changes for the benefit of both local communities and stakeholders at the participating sites.

David Morgans  
ERIH Promotions Officer  
[David.Morgans@essexcc.gov.uk](mailto:David.Morgans@essexcc.gov.uk)

**PERSONAL MEMBERSHIP** - Subscriptions due on January 1st each year

Single Member - £18

Two members at one address - £20

Institutions - £20

Associate Member - £8

**NAMES AND ADDRESSES**

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Tel. 01277 363106	Tel. 01206 250894	Tel. 01206 546775

Enquiries about delayed or missing publications and about the supply of recent back numbers should be addressed to the Secretary.

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaces the Publications Development Fund. (see page 14) It will support publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at April 2005 the projected value of the fund stands at £33,575.90

Donations payable to: The Essex Society for Archaeology and History  
By: Cash/Cheques; Gift Aid Schemes; "In Memoriam" Donations; Bequests by Wills  
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Please address enquiries to:  
Bill Abbott, 45 Cambridge Road, Colchester C03 3NR  
Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail [bill.abbott@btinternet.com](mailto:bill.abbott@btinternet.com)

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

**THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY**

**NEWSLETTER NUMBER 147**

**ISSN 0305-8530**

## **Books about Essex**

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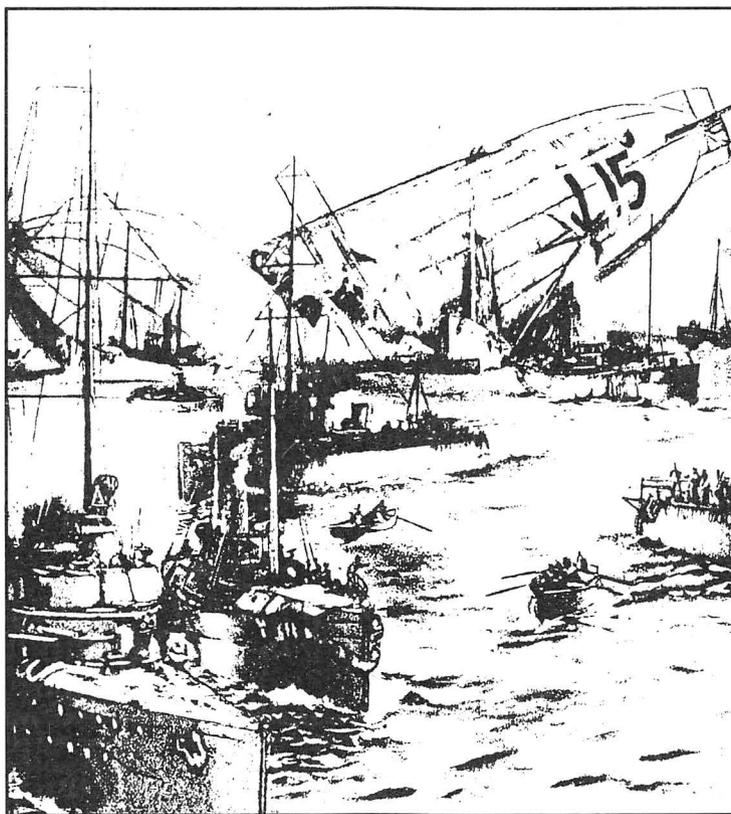
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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Spring 2006

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 148

SPRING 2006

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Assistant Editor: Michael Leach

**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 3 JULY 2006**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

## Cover illustration:

Part of a sketch of Zeppelin L-15 (see 'Bombs over Blackmore' page 16) brought down off the coast of Kent. The original colour illustration is from *The Nations at War* by Willis John Abbot (1917) New York. Willis John Abbot (March 16 1863 - May 19 1934) was an American journalist, and author of naval and shipping books.

Image found at [www.firstworldwar.com/photos/sources.htm](http://www.firstworldwar.com/photos/sources.htm)

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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At our last AGM and subsequently in our Newsletter I put forward the view that more needed to be done in our secondary schools and elsewhere to stimulate an interest in and a knowledge of local history and the heritage among young people. I went on to argue that we should seek to convince the education authority of this and consider what we could do to assist.

As this view found favour at a subsequent Council meeting, we approached the Essex Archaeological & Historical Congress, who agreed to support us, and wrote to County Cllr. Stephen Castle, Education Portfolio-holder, to raise the issue. In his reply, Cllr. Castle expressed general agreement with our concerns and suggested we should meet Chris Christofides, Principal Curriculum Adviser, and Andrew Scoff, Lead Adviser to the Schools Improvement and Advisory Service.

This meeting took place at County Hall, Chelmsford, on 14th December, 2005. Our delegation consisted of Kenneth Neale and Martin Stuchfield for Congress and Michael Leach and me for the ESAH.

Our views were warmly welcomed by the County Officers. We suggested that each school should seek to ensure that a member of staff was responsible for promoting some coverage of local history and heritage by pupils and that he or she liaise with agencies which might assist. These could include local museums, the Essex Record Office and historical societies active in the county. On our side, we would seek to provide help - although we made it clear that our resources, as voluntary organisations, were limited. We suggested that schools should have access to the appropriate volume of the Victoria County History,

where their area had been covered. We agreed with the County Officers that, insofar as the local heritage was not part of the National Curriculum, it could feature as an aspect of Citizenship education.

We were invited to put our views to three meetings of Secondary Strategy Managers (usually Deputy Headteachers with responsibility for the curriculum) in March at Wickford, Harlow and Colchester. This we have done, and we now hope that there will be a positive response. It is our intention to approach appropriate members of our Society and local historical societies to assist in furthering this initiative.

Stan Newens

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## SOCIETY VISITS TO ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIGS

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The programme of visits is arranged about a year in advance, and interesting excavations (such as the princely burial at Prittlewell or the 'circus' at Colchester) come to light at much shorter notice. Some, such as the Prittlewell site, are excavated under high security, or under very difficult conditions, and would be unsuitable for visiting. However, if something both suitable and of interest did crop up, we are handicapped by having no easy means of communicating quickly with members.

It has been suggested that e-mail would overcome the communication problem, and this has been done by other societies, such as the Kent Archaeological Society, to advertise meetings organised at short notice. There are obvious problems with keeping e-mail addresses up to date (they seem to change more frequently than postal addresses), and in ensuring that the database is not unofficially

raided by worms, or some other form of e-espionage. It would be interesting to hear members' views on this. It would also be useful to know if directors of digs would welcome visits of this sort by Society members. Please send your views, pro or contra, to the Hon Newsletter Editor, or to the Hon Secretary on family@leachies.freereserve.co.uk

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## UPDATE ON OUR 2006 EVENTS

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May 19<sup>th</sup> - Morant Lecture - "The development of railways in Essex" by Adrian Wright County Hall, Chelmsford. 7.30pm.

June 17<sup>th</sup> - AGM - Gt. Leigh's Village Hall followed by a talk on "Round Tower Churches" by Anne Haward. 2.00pm.

July 22<sup>nd</sup> - visit to Panfield Hall and Panfield Church - 2.30pm.

August 23<sup>rd</sup> - visit to Hylands House, Chelmsford - talk and tour led by Nick Wickenden. 7.00pm.

September 23<sup>rd</sup> - visit to Edwins Hall, Woodham Ferrers. (Fully booked)

October 15<sup>th</sup> - Morant Lunch - The Bear, Stock - after lunch speaker our patron, Lord Petre. 12.30 for 1.00pm.

All bookings through Pat Ryan - 01245 222237

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## ESSEX PLACE-NAMES PROJECT SEMINAR

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The next Seminar will be held at Maldon on Saturday 18th November 2006. The Guest Speaker will be Mr Edward Martin of Suffolk Archaeology, he will speak on "Medieval Landscapes".

Tickets are available (price £5 payable to "ESAH") from the Project Coordinator, 27 Tor Bryan, Ingatestone, Essex CM4

9JZ. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

James Kemble

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## ESSEX HISTORY FAIR 25 JUNE 2006

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Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June 10am - 4pm Braintree Market Place.

Any enquiries please contact Maria Medlycott on 01245 437641

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## ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY IN ESSEX

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The committee met on three times in the year, under the chairmanship of Cllr Manning-Press, attended by museum curators, archaeologists, local society representatives and English Heritage. The chairman announced his resignation due to pressure of work, and was thanked for his long standing contribution to the committee.

The Portable Antiquities Scheme was recording significant finds brought in by the public for identification; these are entered into a database available from Caroline McDonald at Colchester Museum or [www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk). Museum collections can be explored from the <http://eesopessex.essexcc.gov.uk> site. Information on archaeological and historical sites is available at <http://unlockingsex.essexcc.gov.uk> with a children's section at <http://uepkids.essexcc.gov.uk>

The first Stansted excavation report has been published in East Anglian Archaeology vol. 107. The report on Rochford's WWII defences is complete, and other defence sites continue to be recorded in the Chelmsford area. Essex's Historic Landscape

Characterisation has been completed. Neolithic and Roman remains have been found at Sampford. At St Osyth, a causewayed camp has been excavated, and was filmed by "Time Team". A Roman circus has been excavated at Colchester, as well as further archaeological work near St Botolph's. A Saxon burial chamber has been found at Southend, and some Iron Age roundhouses at the Shoebury 'Danish' camp. The lyre from the Saxon princely tomb at Prittlewell is being reconstructed. Successful events had been held at history fairs at Canvey Island, Hadleigh castle and Tilbury fort. Restoration is being undertaken at Jaywick Martello tower, which was visited, by an international group of archaeologists.

The Essex Field Archaeology Unit has been involved at Great Dunmow Iron Age/Roman site, at Rayleigh Saxon burials, at Maldon within the Saxon burh, and at Harlow Iron Age enclosure.

Satisfactory progress has been made in discussions with district councils regarding contributions to continue the central discretionary planning and recording services. An East of England Co-ordinator has been appointed for the European Route of Industrial Heritage (of which Waltham Abbey is the anchor site). The Countryside Archaeological Adviser continues to foster good archaeological practice with farmers. Plans are in preparation for new museums at Chelmsford and Saffron Walden.

James Kemble

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## THE SCOLE COMMITTEE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY IN EAST ANGLIA

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The Scole Committee, named after the

location of its early meetings in the 1970s on the Norfolk/ Suffolk border, is the regional committee for co-ordinating archaeological and related endeavours in Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex. It acts as a link between organisations, both independent and professional, in the three counties. The Committee provides a meeting ground for archaeologists, including representatives of the county societies, to present reports and debate issues of common interest and to comment upon matters of mutual concern in the region. The Essex Society for Archaeology & History is represented by David Buckley.

The Committee encourages greater awareness of the historic environment in the region, including recognition that material evidence of our past is an essential component of the common heritage and should be accessible to all. It supports education and public awareness in archaeology. The Committee is no longer responsible for publishing the volumes of reports in the "East Anglian Archaeology" series but remains active in promoting this series.

As much of government policy and action is increasingly mediated through the Government Regional Office for Eastern England and various Governmental Regional Agencies the Committee makes representations at a regional level as well as responding to local and national initiatives. Topics discussed include the importance of ensuring that local planning authorities recognise the value of the historic environment. More information on such issues is available through Heritage Link on their website at [www.heritagelink.org.uk](http://www.heritagelink.org.uk).

At its last meeting the Committee agreed that it should be more pro-active over regional issues such as funding and planning, and should appeal to a larger body of the public who are unaware of

archaeology and the potential threats to sites of historic interest. The Committee intends to promote a conference for teachers on the better teaching of archaeology and history. It will also seek the best ways to provide advice to member organisations about obtaining funding from local, regional and European sources, and assist local groups in preparing bids for grants to support archaeology. If you wish to make your views known to the Committee please contact David Buckley or me.

John Fairclough  
Chairman of the Scole Committee  
John.fairclough@ntlworld.com

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## MEMORIES OF JOHN WYMER

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John Wymer sadly died in February and many members will have seen one or more of the obituaries which appeared in the major national newspapers. Of particular significance in his long and varied career was the production of a series of gazetteers and synthetic overviews which remain cornerstones for our understanding of the Palaeolithic; the most recent, The English Rivers Survey in which he worked with Wessex Archaeology was completed in 1999. John was held in high regard both nationally and internationally, his chosen specialist field, of Palaeolithic archaeology, demands a sound working knowledge of a wide range of technical and scientific topics. John had the knack of making this knowledge accessible to general audiences, and was always generous with his time in giving talks to and working with local societies.

John was a member of the society for many years and a great admirer of its library, making extensive use of it when he was preparing the report on his

excavations of Palaeolithic deposits at Clacton. John's connections with Essex were extensive he studied and published widely on the Palaeolithic remains of south Essex associated with the Thames terraces. He contributed papers on the Palaeolithic of Essex and both the 1978 and 1993 conferences on the Archaeology of Essex. Both papers were published in the conference proceedings and remain the best starting place for anyone wanting to understand the earliest evidence of human activity in the county. In the early 1980s John was employed by Essex County Council to direct excavations at a large multi-period site at North Shoebury near Southend when I first met him.

We quickly became firm friends and discovered a wide range of shared interests which included beer and, that well known local delicacy, cockles. I remember just a few years ago sitting, one summers evening, on the wharf outside the Crooked Billet sharing a pint of cockles and a couple of beers watching the tide coming in around Leigh marsh whilst John held forth on his love for the Thames estuary. For him, like me, the appreciation of these things was founded on childhood experience (not the beer of course). Before the war John's father had built a small plotland house in what is now Basildon, and many of John's childhood summers were spent roaming the Langdon Hills and south Essex marshes. Consequently John could recite every station, in order from Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness, throwing in the Tilbury loop by way of an encore. He will be much missed.

Nigel Brown

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## ADRIAN GIBSON

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Of those prominent in the development of timber-framed building studies over

the last 40 years, Adrian Gibson, who died suddenly on 16th March, was outstanding as a teacher and communicator. As such, he was known to a very wide number of people. As well as timber-framed building enthusiasts, property owners, architects, archaeologists, contractors and other professionals came to a greater understanding of old buildings through Adrian, and often to rely on his expertise. Adrian grew up in London's East End. He settled on a career in teaching. Having trained in woodworking and metalworking at Borough Road College, he established the technical department at Parmiter School. But he had also developed a keen interest in archaeology and was working on excavations. Whilst working at Swanscombe with the late John Wymer, it was his spade which found the famous skull. He took an Extra-Mural Diploma at the London Institute of Archaeology, and was persuaded by Professor Zeuner to start teaching extra-mural classes himself. One result of this was the publication of a book, *Instructions in archaeology* (1963), a general introduction to British archaeology for extra-mural students and amateurs. On moving to work at the Richard Hale School in Hertford, he became active in Hertfordshire archaeology with the East Hertfordshire Archaeology Society. A chance meeting with Cecil Hewett at Olives Farm, Hunsdon, when working on a Roman site, was to change the direction of his interests. Adrian became a life-long supporter of Hewett in his research on carpentry history, and a champion of, and propagandist for, his theories and ideas.

Although much of his work was in Hertfordshire, in Essex he worked with the County Council and the Department of the Environment preparing the revised listed building lists for Saffron Walden

and Brentwood. He was actively involved in helping the County Council with Cressing Temple at the time of its acquisition, in particular with the design and content of the Wheat Barn exhibition. He also was instrumental in rescuing the wheelwright's shop from Kedington over the border in Suffolk. He was a regular guide at Cressing Temple, and took a party from the Architectural Association around the site only two weeks before his death. In the publication of the Cressing Conference on *Regional variation in timber-framed building in England and Wales*, he wrote the chapter on Hertfordshire buildings. Recently, he had gained much pleasure from advising on royal palaces, in connection with which he had appeared on television. But Adrian's main contribution was the lectures he gave and the classes he taught, as he had not just enormous enthusiasm but the gift of conveying it to others. He will be sadly missed.

David Andrews

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## PETER COTT 1928 - 2005

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Peter Cott passed away peacefully at home in Great Bardfield on 17 September 2005, having battled with cancer for several years. He leaves his wife Jean, a son, a daughter and grandchildren.

Peter, a member of the Society for many years, was one of those multi faceted, gifted people who excelled in all fields in which he worked, or adopted as a hobby. His early interest in history was fuelled when he and Jean attended a lecture by Ernest Rudge on the Lost Trackway from Grimes Graves to Stonehenge. They both cycled along much of its Essex route in the early 1950's.

Peter was a graduate in engineering and worked for the Marconi Company. In the early days of satellite communication he was responsible for turning basic theories of using the satellite into practical use. The British military Skynet and SCAT systems were largely Peter's work from Goonhilly to Hong Kong.

Later he joined Cable and Wireless where his encyclopaedic knowledge of satellite communications in system design was further extended. His work included the blueprint of the Mercury telephone network.

His next challenge with Cable and Wireless took him to Hong Kong and China where he played a key role in satellite communications in the Asia/Pacific region. During this time he was responsible for masterminding the recovery of a satellite from an incorrect orbit, refurbishing it and subsequently its relaunch.

He was regarded amongst his peers as an engineers, engineer.

When relaxing, Peter's interest were multiple, he was a practising Christian, an accomplished musician and loved playing the organ in his local church. His interest in history extended in his retirement. He purchased his own resistivity meter and later advised the Colchester Archaeology Society on their purchase of a magnetometer. His interest in history centred on the Roman occupation period of the UK. He carried out geophysics surveys on many sites including Vindolanda on Hadrian's Wall, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex to the countryside of Albania. He was particularly pleased with his geophysics survey at Venta Icenorum, modern Caistor St Edmunds, south of Norwich, confirming aerial photography of a Roman amphitheatre on the site. His main archaeological work in Essex was around the Colchester area, particularly Gosbecks. Jean his wife, in the early

days of resistivity surveying recorded the readings manually before the availability of automatic recording. His work on the earliest church site in Pleshey was one of his many successes.

Peter's local interest in retirement included, becoming editor of the Bardfield Times, chairman of the Historical Society and worked on the village appraisal. During the millennium he filmed activities and local characters throughout the year to produce the video, 'A Year in the Life of a Village'. During his busy retirement he continued to expand his quest for knowledge, rewarded by a M.Phil in geophysics.

Archaeological work commenced or suggested by Peter continues in the Colchester and west Essex areas.

Peter Sharp

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## JOHN MEAD

### 24.11.31 - 13.11.2005

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We were sorry to hear of the death of John who was librarian of the Society for many years.

As a mature student he took a degree in history at Essex University. In his later years he had been working on the history of the Mead family, something he was able to do when it became difficult for him to get about.

A celebration of his life was held at the parish church in Boxford. Our sympathy goes to the family.

Jean Blowers

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## ON ICEHOUSES

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*Yonder the harvest of cold months laid up,  
Gives a fresh coolness to the royal cup,  
There ice, like crystal, firm and never lost,*

*Tempers hot July with December's frost.*

Most people will be familiar with these curious underground brick structures, often found hidden by an earth mound, or a plantation of trees, in the grounds of large country houses. Packed with ice during the winter, they provided the means of cooling drinks and making frozen puddings during the summer months. I have always been intrigued by these abandoned and usually ruinous structures and recently, walking through the science section in the London Library, my eye was caught by "The Icehouses of Britain", shelved under 'Refrigeration'.

The book proved as interesting as expected. Icehouses have a long history on the continent, even with some slender archaeological evidence from the Roman period. The first documented one in Britain was the 'snow conserve' built in Greenwich Park for James I in 1619. This was a wide brick well, covered with straw insulation and a thatched timber structure, and was apparently successful, as a second one was built at Greenwich two years later, and another at Hampton Court in 1625. A fourth royal icehouse followed in 1660 in St James's Park and aroused the interest of Robert Boyle and John Evelyn in the newly established Royal Society, as well as inspiring the stanza by Edmund Waller quoted above. However they remained, for another century, an extravagance to which only the very rich could aspire.

During the eighteenth century, many wealthy landowners built icehouses on their country estates, and by the early nineteenth century numerous commercial ones had been built in cities to provide ice for freezing, for cooling drinks and for the confectionary trade. In 1818 the architect J B Papworth was promoting the idea of small ice wells in the basements of London houses and by

the latter part of the century popular publications carried illustrations of suburban timber ice sheds, suitable for the back garden. These were double skinned buildings, with sawdust insulation in the cavity. It would be interesting to know if any have survived as gazebos, though they would have been highly vulnerable to rot from the constant wetness of the thawing ice, and probably had a very short life. Ice was commercially available by this time, so the suburban owner was not expected to rob his local pond during the winter months! Initially ice was imported from America, and later from Norway, in vast amounts, requiring the construction of huge ice stores adjoining harbours. After the development of mechanical refrigeration, it was (and still is) made artificially, though imports of ice from Norway continued up to the early 1950s. Country estate icehouses were built during the latter part of the C18, and throughout the C19. They were expensive to construct and to run, and rapidly became obsolete in the early C20 due to the ready commercial availability of ice, as well as the introduction of domestic refrigerators. Most seem to have been abandoned during the First World War when the labour force, necessary for cutting, carting and packing the ice, was serving in the army. A few were converted to other uses, but the vast majority were filled in or now lie derelict in a forgotten corner of the park. Icehouses were often, but not invariably, sited near a source of ice, usually a lake. The structure was often egg-shaped, with access through a tunnel (with double or treble doors) into the side of the dome, though some only had access through a hatch at the top. Often the dome and the tunnel were covered in earth, and shaded by tree planting. In the southern counties, they were usually built of brick, not infrequently in cavity

wall construction. The cavity was not, as might be expected, for insulation but was an attempt by the builder to overcome the problems caused by ground water penetrating the icehouse itself. Water is a good conductor of heat, and it was essential that the icehouse should be kept as dry as possible to prolong the life of its contents. For this reason, a drain or substantial sump was always provided at the bottom of the structure to take off the melt water. Examination of a number of icehouses has shown internal smoke blackening, and it seems likely that fires were lit to dry out the brickwork before the ice was packed in. Though double or treble doors were provided to exclude warm air, the importance of ventilation (to reduce condensation) was recognised and a variety of provisions were made. The basic form of the icehouse was sometimes elaborated with additional adjoining chambers for storage of food and drink, or even picturesque buildings above ground to enhance the landscape.

The book reports on an interesting experiment. The icehouse at Levens Hall in Cumbria had been cleared out by volunteers and it was decided to assess its effectiveness by filling it with ice in January 1980. Good drainage at the base was ensured, and the walls were lined with straw bales as the flake ice was packed in. Initially this was compacted with pavement rammers but these were abandoned when the volunteers were unable to keep up with the incoming ice. Possibly as a result of this, the icehouse only took 17 tons of ice, instead of the calculated 27 tons. Using commercially supplied ice delivered to the door by lorry, the project required 20 volunteers working for two days. When the pit had been filled, the top of the ice was covered with bales of straw, and straw was also packed between the two doors in the access

tunnel. Regular temperature and humidity recordings were taken, and it was found that the surface of the ice remained at a constant 3<sup>o</sup> C, winter and summer. However the temperature at the top of the dome rose to 15<sup>o</sup> C at the height of summer, supporting the view that icehouses would have been poor places to store perishable food. In addition, the relative humidity within the dome was very high, often reaching 100% with the inner brickwork running with condensation. This would have been exacerbated by the lack of ventilation in this particular structure, and would have also accelerated the melting of the ice. Even so, the last of the ice melted 13 months after filling, showing that icehouses were indeed effective throughout the summer months.

The gazetteer in the second part lists icehouses by county. Essex is poorly represented, but it is clear that the list is incomplete, as at least three known to me are not included – Moynes Hall, Highlands Park and Navestock Park – and it seems likely that most, if not all, country houses would have had some means of storing ice by the C19. There must be many others waiting to be recorded.

Michael Leach

Source:

Beamon S P, & Roaf S, "The Icehouses of Britain" (1990) Routledge

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## SILBURY HILL – AN UPDATE

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Readers of the Spring 2005 newsletter may remember reading about the collapse of Silbury Hill in Wiltshire, the largest man-made prehistoric earth mound in Europe. This was thought to be due to previous archaeological excavations. The most recent of these,

in the 1960s, drove a tunnel large enough to take a dumper truck from the base to the centre of the mound. This was not backfilled, and the partial collapse of the 1970s shoring seems to have been responsible for the worst of the damage. To compound the disaster, the dig was never properly written up due to the death of the director, and there were serious concerns that evidence (both of the complex construction of the hill, and of the landscape that existed before its construction) would be damaged or lost. Now there is better news – English Heritage has agreed (subject to obtaining funds) to re-open the partially collapsed 1960s tunnel in order to properly record the archaeological and ecological evidence. Once this has been done, the tunnel will be re-filled with consolidated chalk to prevent both further collapse and the oxidation of the biological remains of the ancient landscape. When the hill has stabilised, the temporary polystyrene packing at the summit will be removed and replaced with chalk.

Michael Leach

Source: British Archaeology Jan/Feb 2005

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## BOOKS FOR REVIEW

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Any member publishing a book or pamphlet on Essex archaeology or history is encouraged to send a review copy to the editor. This has two benefits. Firstly the publication will be reviewed in the Newsletter, giving the author useful publicity. Secondly, after review, the book will be deposited in the Society's library at the University of Essex where it will make a useful contribution to our growing collection.

It is suggested that anyone submitting a book or pamphlet for review should give

details of the price, and from where the publication can be obtained. Readers sometimes find it difficult to obtain items which have been reviewed (particularly if published privately), and are much more likely to purchase if the details are supplied.

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## HENRY WINSTANLEY'S HOUSE AND GARDEN AT LITTLEBURY

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I am very grateful to Alison Barnes for providing corrections to this article, which appeared in the Summer 2005 Newsletter, as well as additional information about Winstanley and his house. There are a number of myths and misconceptions in circulation about this remarkable man which she is anxious to dispel.

Firstly, in connection with his career as an artist, he did obtain other commissions from estate owners after his series of engravings of Audley End, and there were also four fine costume pieces which can be seen in the Ashmolean museum.

Secondly, his house was built in 1677, two years before his appointment as clerk of works at Audley End. He was married some years later in Little Mundon parish church in 1683 and his house was open to paying members of the public from 1696 until 1738, long after his death. It is shown on the Chapman and Andre map, immediately to the south of the church.

Thirdly, there were no distorting mirrors, or devices that trapped visitors, but there were various mechanical devices such as automatons, and a chair that carried visitors to the basement. Winstanley was a deeply religious man and some of the devices had religious symbolism. The windmill, however, only pumped water to the kitchen from the River Cam, and did

not feed an artificial stream in the garden, or produce mechanical music. There were, however, mechanical jacks which struck chimes for one of the clocks on the front of the house.

Fourthly, the curiosity of travellers on the London/Cambridge road, which turned sharply north in front of the house, would have been aroused by the 40 foot high model of the Eddystone lighthouse in the garden.

Fifthly, the house was sold by auction by Gilbert Marshall in 1764 (Alison Barnes would be very grateful for any details of this auction) and the building was pulled down in 1778. The bricks and some of the interior fittings (such as panelling) were used in the reconstruction of the nearby water mill on the Cam (now a private house), and Winstanley's mound (originally surrounded by a water-filled moat) can still be seen in its garden.

Michael Leach

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## KING ALFRED'S NAVAL BATTLE IN 885 - WHICH RIVER STOUR?

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An article in the recent volume of *Archaeologia Cantiana* re-examines the evidence for this battle, which is usually assumed to have taken place in the Essex Stour. The author looks at the evidence from the various surviving versions of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, as well as Aethelweard's *Chronicon* (written a century or so after the event, possibly based on oral sources, as well as a lost version of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle). She also draws on her personal experiences of crossing the Thames estuary from Kent to Essex in a small boat.

The sources reveal three naval engagements with the Danes before the

advent of Alfred's newly designed war ships in 896. The last of these three battles, in 885, took place after Alfred had sent his army to relieve the siege of Rochester. The besiegers fled "across the sea" and Alfred sent ships from somewhere in Kent to pursue them to "Eastengle" (in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle) or "in orientales partes anglorum" (in the Latin *Chronicon*). After the pursuers' initial success in the River Stour, they ran into a large number of Viking ships on their way home and were soundly defeated.

It has always been assumed that the river was the Essex Stour. One key question is the meaning of "Eastengle". In the first part of the ninth century, this usually meant East Anglia or the East Angles, and there is no linguistic distinction between 'the Angles' and 'the English'. However, later in the century, the terms 'England' and 'the English' were actively cultivated by Alfred and the author suggests that "Eastengle" may have meant 'the eastern part of England', as indeed the Latin of the *Chronicon* suggests. At this time East Anglia was firmly under the hand of the Danish king Guthrum and was far from English, and certainly not part of the new English kingdom. This being the case, "Eastengle" may have been east Kent where two River Stours converged at a place still called Stourmouth on what was then the navigable Wantsum channel separating Kent from the Isle of Thanet. It may be significant that Aethelweard, (unlike the writer of the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle) located the battle at Stourmouth, rather than in the River Stour. There is no evidence that a place of this name ever existed on the Essex/Suffolk coast.

Several sources state that Alfred's ships left from Kent. It seems unlikely that they would have been in the Medway during the Danish siege of Rochester. The

author believes that the most likely point of embarkation would have been from Sandwich, a well-known port at the southern end of the Wantsum channel. The initial fight with the six Viking ships may have taken place across the Thames at Benfleet (where Guthrum was said to have had a presence at this time) with Alfred's fleet being surprised on their return to Sandwich at Stourmouth, the point where the two Kentish River Stours flowed into the Wantsum channel. Though the place-name has survived to the present day, the Wantsum channel has disappeared and is now productive farmland. The Vikings were very familiar with Thanet (one of their over-wintering sites), the Wantsum channel and Sandwich, and the ambush of the Alfred's exhausted crews would have been a simple matter for them.

Crossing to Benfleet would have been relatively simple, involving navigation along the coast line, rarely, if ever, out of sight of land. However the author, from her personal experience of navigating further to the east across the wider mouth of the Thames estuary, believes that the open sea route from Kent to the Essex Stour would have been extremely difficult for primitive ships. She estimates that the return journey was roughly 100 nautical miles, and would probably have taken about twenty hours, to which must be added the time for two sea battles. For much of the voyage the coast would have been out of sight, and the strong tidal flows would have made navigation through the numerous sandbanks very dangerous, if not impossible. Even today, with a small boat, modern maritime technology and marked channels, it is not an easy journey in daylight and in good weather.

The argument in favour of the Kentish Stour seems to be strong.

Michael Leach

Source:

Grainge C 'King Alfred's Naval Engagement with the Danes in 885: which River Stour?' in *Archaeologia Cantiana* cxxv (2005) pp 229-241

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## HORNDON ON THE HILL

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Last year's AGM was held in the Market Hall, Horndon on the Hill, and was preceded by a very informative talk by Anne Padfield on the building and its context in the history of the town.

Horndon on the Hill is the most southerly of the three Horndon parishes. As its name indicates, it is set on a hill, surrounded by the former Essex Thames marshes, once rough grazing land for large herds of cattle and sheep. Its easy access by water (plus road links to Billericay and Chelmsford to the north) established its early importance as a trading centre; there was a yearly fair from 1277 as well as a weekly market by 1281. The rectilinear layout of its street, with the central parish church not adjoining the manor house, suggests a planned town. The parish is divided into four manors which, in the C15, divided the market tolls between them.

A Feet of Fines of 1502 refers to '16 messuages, 60 shops and 70 stalls', indicating that it was the Middle Ages equivalent of a shopping mall, with shops greatly outnumbering houses! Some stalls in the market seem to have been permanent, as in 1527 several stallholders were fined for not repairing them. One required re-thatching. 'Shops' would have included workshops; there were tanners, shoemakers, collar makers and candlemakers, as well as tradesmen associated with the woollen industry, such as shearmen, spinsters, weavers and tailors. Further evidence of the woollen industry in this part of Essex (not normally closely associated with this

trade) is found in 1607, when a labourer was found guilty of stealing 30 yards of kersey (a coarse ribbed cloth) from a house in Horndon.

In 1501 Sir John Shaa, lord of the manor of Arden Hall, obtained a royal licence to import Bordeaux wine and to export wool and woollen cloth. This document contains the first mention of a market house, possibly the building now clad in yellow brick just to the north of the present Market Hall. This was a high quality mediaeval building with shop units on the ground floor and a single public room above. The court rolls of 1563 mention a 'market house' and in 1596 refer to 'the newe Hall alias the Market Hall'. The use of lamb's tongue chamfer stops on the main posts of the present Market Hall suggests a date after about 1570. It was a multi-purpose building with the open space at ground level being used for corn, wool, cloth and leather goods, the upper floor being used for court sessions and by the officials collecting market dues.

The cloth industry collapsed in the mid C17 and in 1688 the Market Hall was converted into a cottage. By 1734 it had been converted into three tenements 'for the use of widows and other poor persons'. In 1883 it was repaired, with part of the building being used for public meetings, but retaining dwellings on the High Street frontage. During World War II, it was hit by an incendiary bomb which failed to detonate. The only damage was the destruction of a jar of pickled onions! In 1969 the last poor widow left and the building was restored to something near its C16 appearance by the architect, John Graham, a Horndon resident, with a new rear extension to provide the necessary public facilities.

Originally the building had a jetty back and front. It has a 4 bay butt purlin roof over a 3 bay sub-structure. The timber is a mixture of oak and elm, adequate for

the job but not of the highest quality. Blocked mortices in the front central bay suggest that there may have been an oriel window here, with a rooflet above. Access to the upper floor, which was divided into two rooms of unequal size, would have been by an external stair at the south end. A join in the main timbers of the north bay suggests later repair, or remodelling, or simply the end of one season's construction. Most of the intermediate studs are later replacements and some of the main posts at ground floor level have been repaired or replaced. However it is a remarkable survival and the only Elizabethan market building in Essex to have been in community use throughout its existence.

Michael Leach

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## FRIENDS OF FRIENDLESS CHURCHES

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This worthy organisation, which must be subject to increasingly difficult demands as church redundancies multiply, has been benefiting several Essex churches recently. Old St Bartholemew's, Wickham Bishops (of late C11 date with later additions, and shown in a very dilapidated state in the 1921 RCHM volume) was being vandalised, and protective grilles have been fitted to the windows. St Mary's, Mundon, (another redundant church with a timber tower, and a C17 north porch, described by Cecil Hewett as the finest of its type in the county) has received an English Heritage grant of £52,000 for underpinning and exploratory work. FoFC always intends to keep churches in their care open at all times, but Mundon has had to be closed for safety reasons.

The future of Mashbury church (dedication unknown) is very uncertain. Redundant for more than a decade, the present owner wishes to dispose of it for possible residential use. FoFC feels that its character would not survive conversion, and is investigating the possibility of taking it into their care.

Though principally concerned with conservation, FoFC has a fund for purchasing religious objects of beauty for churches and has recently purchased a statue carved in lime wood (by Ivor Livi) to be installed in the late Saxon church of Little Bardfield.

Anyone who wishes to support the work of FoFC can contact the organisation at St Ann's Vestry Hall, 2 Church Entry, London EC4V 5HB.

---

## SEWARDS END FARM, SEWARDS END

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This is another C17 listed building in dire peril. When the owner died in 2003, the building showed all the signs of many decades of neglect, with holes in the roof, rotten windows and un-modernised services. However examination by an architect highly experienced in conservation work confirmed that repair was both feasible and economically viable, and the house was sold for £690,000. A temporary scaffolding roof was erected over the building and all seemed set for restoration.

However this was not to be. The structural timbers of the roof were completely removed and destroyed, without being recorded, and all the elm floorboards were stripped out, apparently as an emergency measure. It was claimed that the structure was in far worse state than the original survey had revealed. A new survey claimed that the timber frame was extensively rotten and that there was little historical fabric left to

be repaired. The owner felt that restoration was neither historically nor economically viable, and applied to Uttlesford DC for consent to demolish. This was opposed by the parish council and the CPRE, but the district council does not appear to have approached other organisations normally consulted about the demolition of listed buildings. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings only learnt of these proposals by chance; it remains unconvinced by the economic and conservation arguments for demolition, and believes that the removal of roof and floorboards was carried out without listed building consent, and that prosecution should be considered. It is strongly opposed to the demolition of this building.

Michael Leach

Source: Cornerstone xxvi, no 2, 24-25 (2005)

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## LAWFORD HALL AND CHURCH

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The Society is very grateful to Mr and Mrs Nichols for allowing members to visit Lawford Hall on 24 September 2005. This fine building is hidden at the end of the lane which leads past the church. It is a very substantial late C16 timber framed building, originally on an irregular "H" plan, said to have been built by Edward Waldegrave (d. 1584) in the 1580s. In the C18, the shorter arms of the "H" were cut back about 5 feet to accommodate a symmetrical red brick frontage on the south side of the house, with central 3 bay pediment and slightly projecting side wings. However the survival of an earlier building behind this façade is revealed by the high pitch of the tiled roof behind the parapet, and by the large octagonal chimney stacks at each end. Though these have been

rebuilt in later brick (probably more than once) the square base of these stacks, visible above the parapet, is in C16/C17 brickwork. The front porch was added in 1910.

In the inner angles of the long arms of the "H" are two stair turrets. That to the west was altered in the C18 to take a spacious staircase, but the one on the east retains part of the original solid tread staircase with a box centre – an unusual survival. The roof is original, though altered somewhat on the south side to accommodate the C18 façade. It is of double side purlin construction, with joggled purlins at the lower level. The purlin timbers are of various sizes and were not trimmed to fit, leaving a rather untidy joint with the principal rafters. This is surprising, given the status of the house, and the standards usually expected of craftsmen. Originally the open end of the "H" to the north was closed with a wall to form an enclosed courtyard. The two storey east and west wing are very substantial timber framed structures, that on the east rising from a brick sub-basement.

Internally the height of the rooms indicates a high status building. Most of the timber frame is concealed by plaster and panelling of various dates, and the main hall is of C18 appearance. The main structural timbers exposed by the alterations required for the C18 staircase are boxed into classical pillars, both downstairs and up. The armorial C16 stained glass, reset in the window of the west stair turret, appears to have come from elsewhere, as the families depicted do not correspond with the earlier owners of Lawford Hall. Judging from the pattern of the panelling in the main hall, the fireplace had been reduced in size, probably in the C19. Alterations in the C20 include the refurbishment of the room north west of the hall with C18 panelling, the insertion of a spiral

staircase in the west wing and the addition of a single storey, flat roof extension between (and obscuring) the bases of the stair turrets. There is evidence of wardrobe shutters inserted beside several of the main chimney stacks, including the main stack rising from the fireplace in the hall.

The most interesting room seen was the northernmost in the west wing. The timber frame is visible here. Surprisingly, the main structure finishes about 5 feet short of the end of the building, with a relatively insubstantial timber frame providing the infill. There is no similar break in the roof structure, so there is no obvious explanation for the discrepancy in the framing at ground floor level. Possibly the building was extended backwards after the main frame had been erected, but before the roof was constructed. There is a relatively light load on this end of the building, as the roof end is hipped. The central part of the tripartite window on the north wall contains glass of the C18 or earlier. Two filled-in frieze windows with ovolo mullions survive on each side. Externally the base of the central window is formed from a carved bresummer (decorated with griffons, according to the RCHM). The peg holes indicate that this is not in its original position.

The garden appears to have been laid out (or improved) in 1874, judging by the date on the walled lawn on the north side of the hall. The low brick boundary walls of the gardens to the east and south of the hall have the same ornamental coping as the walled lawn. The wall to the south rises from a shallow ha-ha. On the west side is a croquet lawn and a formal garden with low clipped hedging. From the hall, members descended the hill to look at the extensive range of buildings forming a model farm, built in 1871 in red brick with diaper patterning in blue headers, and a pantile roof. It is

not clear what some of the units were used for, though there was a horse gin in the apsidal end of the long barn. Gins are relatively rare in Essex; for further information readers are referred to the Shire publication on animal powered machines, by J Kenneth Major. Another shed with brick pens was possibly for sheep. There was an attention to detail (such as the bull's eye glazing in the iron framed windows, and the ornamental stones bearing dates, Latin mottos and Victorian aphorisms) suggesting that these model farm buildings were designed by an architect. (There is a similar, but less, elaborate model farm of the similar date at Norton Mandeville by an unknown architect). Adjoining is a matching brick house of the same date, presumably to house the farm manager. The scale and quality of these buildings was surprising, and they are still largely unaltered. They should provide an insight into farming practices of the 1870s.

After tea in the church hall, members were surprised to be guided round church and churchyard by a goodwife in C17 costume!

Michael Leach

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## **RABBITS – WERE THE NORMANS TO BLAME?**

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The usual view is that the European rabbit, *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, was introduced by the Normans and reared in the artificial warrens known to archaeologists as pillow mounds. According to Oliver Rackham, the earliest post-Conquest finds date from about 1100, and were unearthed at Ipswich, and Hadleigh, Essex. The remains of burrowing animals can confuse archaeological stratification, and rabbit bones found apparently sealed in

an early Mesolithic layer at Thatcham, Berkshire, were shown by carbon dating to be of recent date. They were also the larger bones of the present day rabbit.

However a recent dig of a rubbish pit in Lynford, Norfolk, revealed rabbit bones bearing butchery marks, associated with late Iron Age or early Roman pottery. Bones have also been found in the third century AD fill of a bath house at Beddingham, East Sussex and again the evidence is strongly against later intrusion by a burrowing animal. It is significant that both sets of bones are of the smaller southern Mediterranean rabbit, suggestive of Roman introduction of this animal. Perhaps the smaller Roman rabbits had failed to adapt to the British climate, and were extinct by the time the Normans arrived with their larger and hardier north European species. In that case, both invaders can be held responsible for inflicting a third invader, the rabbit, on our countryside!

Michael Leach

Sources: British Archaeology Jan/Feb 2006 p. 7

Rackham, O, The History of the Countryside (1993) Dent

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## **RESIDENTIAL COURSES AT OXFORD**

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Some excellent courses are organised for local historians by Oxford University Continuing Education. Here are some tempting examples:

21-22 October 2006: understanding probate records 1541-1858

27-20 October 2006: gardens of the twentieth century.

4 November 2006: rural England – twentieth century histories

25 November 2006: the art of husbandry 1200-1900.

One or two year part time certificate courses are also run on vernacular architecture, local history via the internet, English local history, and architectural history.

Details can be obtained by writing to the Department for Continuing Education, 1 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA or by visiting [www.conted.ox.ac.uk](http://www.conted.ox.ac.uk)

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## **BOMBS OVER BLACKMORE**

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Memorials are a common feature in church stained glass windows. At the Priory Church of St Laurence, Blackmore, many of the windows date from the first two decades of the twentieth century.

An unusual record is on one, in what is now the kitchen: "This window is erected as a thank-offering to Almighty God for the protection in the Great Air Raid of March 31<sup>st</sup> 1916".

Curious to find out more, I looked at local newspapers for the time, and visited the Essex Record Office.

During the First World War, civilians were subjected to indiscriminate bombing from Zeppelins: large airships which flew at high altitudes. In all there were 53 separate attacks on England, twenty in Essex, which then had army and naval garrisons at Harwich, Colchester and Southend, and docks along the River Thames.

The night of 31<sup>st</sup> March 1916 was to be one of the greatest in terms of civilian casualties, when the L14 and L15 flew over Essex, dropping bombs in Colchester, Braintree, Stanford-le-Hope, Thameshaven and Blackmore. 223 bombs were dropped, resulting in 48 deaths and 64 injuries<sup>1</sup>.

The night, though, marked a turning point for the allies because L15 was the first to be shot down during the War. The

Anti-Aircraft gunners of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Company, Essex and Suffolk Royal Garrison Artillery based at Purfleet were credited with the success. This was a major breakthrough, and the Lord Mayor of London gave gold watches to the members of the gun crew. (He had originally put up a reward of £500). An eyewitness recorded, "It was about 12.15am on April 1<sup>st</sup> 1916 that she came across Essex from north east at a height of about 14000 feet ... shrapnel shells [were fired] at the raider"<sup>2</sup>. An aeroplane failed to hit the target. The Zeppelin "dropped into the sea [near Margate] and sunk while being towed to land. Seventeen members of the crew were rescued and are prisoners of war at Chatham Barracks"<sup>3</sup>. The news must have travelled fast because Robert Taylor Bull, of Burnham, recorded in his diary the following day, "A Zeppelin was brought down at Thameshaven". On 1<sup>st</sup> April he wrote: "A Zepp went over last night about 9 ... with usual noise"<sup>4</sup>.

We must assume that the L14 dropped bombs on Blackmore, because reporting restrictions prevented newspapers giving precise locations. The Essex Weekly News referred to "Friday's Attack On The Eastern Counties". Looking at the Burial Register at the church, it seems unlikely that anyone was killed in Blackmore, but there could have been a few near misses.

During September 1916, two Zeppelins were intercepted by members of the Royal Flying Corps at Billericay and Wigborough, marking the beginning of the end of the raids. Inside the church at Great Wigborough there is a small part of what remains of L33.

Andrew Smith

1. Essex Record Office T/Z 473/1
2. Essex Record Office D/DS 200/7
3. Essex Weekly News. 7th April 1916
4. Essex Record Office T/S 245

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2005 the projected value of the fund stands at £33,671.

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

**THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY**

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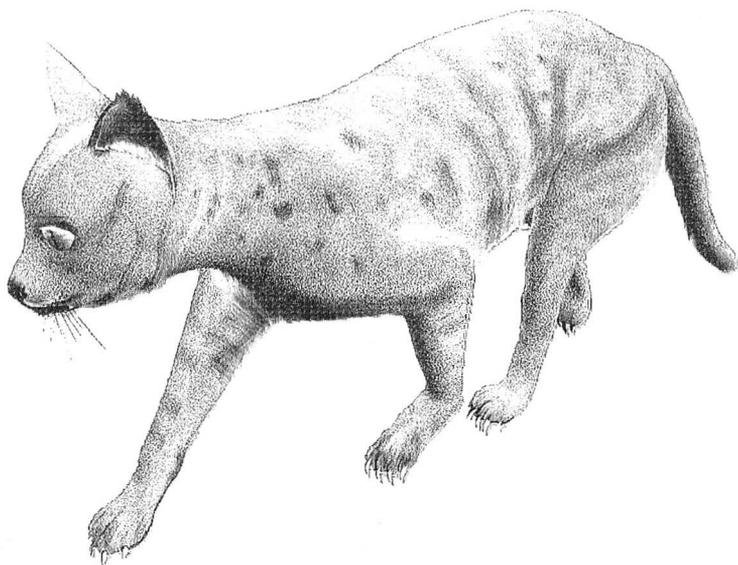
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# Essex Archaeology and History News



**Summer 2006**

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 149

SUMMER 2006

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**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 23 OCTOBER 2006**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

## Cover illustration:

The Aveley Jungle Cat, drawn by Roger Massey-Ryan. A foreleg bone was found in the 1990s on a road improvement scheme for the A13. This was the first record of this species anywhere in Britain. Further information can be found on the National Ice Age Network (see page 5) or in "The finest prospect" The Archaeology of South Essex, by Nigel Brown and Roger Massey-Ryan, published by Essex County Council and available post free (in the UK) for £10.00 per copy. You can send a cheque made payable to Essex County Council to Janet Hill, Historic Environment Branch, Essex County Council, County Hall, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1QH.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Harlow Civic Society, which I chair – in addition to making representations about future development to defend the green wedges and the character of the town, as it was planned by Sir Frederick Gibberd - is also concerned to protect and enhance the local heritage as a whole.

One of our most celebrated historic endowments is the Romano-British Temple site which dates back several thousand years before 80 AD when the Romans erected a square cella surrounded by an ambulatory and other buildings. This lasted some 300 years but then fell into ruins and total oblivion until it was rediscovered in modern times.

Sadly, the site has been neglected since it was excavated and at times it has been totally overgrown. Stones laid down to mark the walls of the Temple have become dislodged or have disappeared.

As the result of local efforts, the Council now cuts the grass at regular intervals. The Friends of Harlow Museum, of which I am a member, has had two explanatory boards erected. We are now in touch with English Heritage and the Council with a view to preparing the ground to apply for a grant to replace and reset the stones. Unfortunately, they were not set very accurately from the outset, but we are hoping to improve the presentation of this important historic monument.

Several miles away – today, just outside Harlow's boundary – is the Foster Street Baptist Burial Ground, established in 1677 by William Woodward, the founder of the Baptist Church in the Harlow area and previously, it would appear, a chaplain in the Parliamentary Army during the Civil War. The graves of a number of local celebrities are situated here, including that of the Flower family.

Benjamin Flower (1755-1829) a prominent radical and Unitarian, edited the *Cambridge Intelligencer*, which spoke up for libertarian causes during the French Revolution. His daughters, Eliza (1803-1846) and Sarah (1805-1848) were poets and composers. The latter wrote the hymn 'Nearer My God to Thee', which was supposed to have been sung as the ill-fated 'Titanic' was sinking.

This graveyard had become completely overgrown but, by dint of the work of volunteers, was cleared and all the inscriptions recorded. Epping Forest Country Care has more recently kept the site in order.

Another local memorial, at the former St. Andrew's Church at Netteswellbury in Harlow, has also been restored. This is the grave of Canon John Lionel Fisher (1887-1969) the celebrated Essex historian. The son of the Revd. Arthur Thomas Fisher, Rector of Skelton in Yorkshire, John L. Fisher was presented to the living of St. Andrew's Netteswell in 1918 and to Little Parndon in 1921. During the 35 years that he discharged his duties as a minister of the church, he became a member of the Epping Rural District Council, of which he became Chairman, and also served as a JP on the Epping Bench. In addition, he carried out intensive and systematic historical research which he incorporated into several books and numerous articles, particularly in the *Essex Review* and *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society*. *The Harlow Deanery* (1922) and *Harlow New Town: a short history of the area it will embrace* (1951) are probably his best known publications, but he did much more.

On 6<sup>th</sup> June we had a well attended event to mark the refurbishment of Canon Fisher's grave, at which a number of us spoke, including Ben Fisher, Canon Fisher's son.

We hope that activities such as those described here will help to conserve our local heritage. Living in a county with such a rich history, we shall never run short of work of this sort, but it is fitting that those of us with a historical consciousness should strive in every locality to ensure that our past continues to live.

Stan Newens,  
July 2006

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## MORANT LUNCH

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October 15<sup>th</sup> - Morant Lunch - The Bear, Stock - after lunch speaker our patron, Lord Petre. 12.30 for 1.00pm. Cost £21 for a five course meal.

All bookings through Pat Ryan by 23 September at the latest - 01245 222237

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## THOBY PRIORY, A SERIOUSLY NEGLECTED RUIN

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The date of the foundation of Thoby Priory, near Mounnessing, is unknown but it was already in existence in the mid C12. It was one of the smaller houses, dissolved in the first round in 1525. It was granted to Cardinal's College, Oxford in 1526 but, after the fall of Wolsey, passed into private hands. A small part of the claustral building of C15 date was incorporated into a dwelling house (probably in the C16) and this was further extended in the late C19 or early C20. Its declining fortunes were reflected by its use as a prisoner of war camp in the Second World War, and its subsequent demolition in 1953 and replacement with a new house.

The site is surprisingly remote and little known. In 1845, Suckling was able to

trace the entire plan of the priory, though the only standing ruins were the south window of the chancel, and the first arcade of the nave on the same side. He reported the cloisters to be to the north of the church, and commented on the monks' refectory surviving within the later house, 'much disfigured by the introduction of sash windows and a modern ceiling of plaster'. A decade or so later, Collier (probably using Suckling's account) noted 'so little has curiosity been gratified here, that the principal antiquarian treasures of this fallen pile remain to be developed at a future day.' He reported the discovery of stone and oak dug-out coffins, knives, coins, and floor tiles, referred to by Suckling. In the late C19, the house was seriously damaged by fire, destroying many of the original features, but it was subsequently repaired. On 29 June 1915, between 50 and 60 members of the Society visited the priory and had lunch in the picturesque grounds. Frederic Chancellor's article, based on a paper read at that gathering, included a scaled reconstruction of the ground plan of the church, noting the standing south chancel window, devoid of tracery, and the single nave arcade arch as described by Suckling and Collier. The accompanying photograph shows the standing ruin heavily mantled in ivy, the nave arcade being surmounted by a weathervane! Chancellor also reported the incorporation of the priory refectory in the core of the mansion and, though his report post-dated the fire, he described various C16 features, such as fireplaces and panelling. However, it was not clear whether these had been salvaged from other parts of the house, or had been imported from elsewhere. The site is now used for various industrial purposes, including a car breaker's yard, a timber yard and a joiner's shop. It is in divided ownership

and, though there have been exploratory negotiations by a developer (who does not own the site) to build a substantial number of houses and to enhance the setting of the ruin, nothing has been agreed. Limited excavations in 2001-2 revealed several graves from the cemetery, and extensive remains of the Tudor mansion, containing remnants of the priory buildings. The report by Essex County Council identified it as a site of 'high archaeological potential'. The freestanding south wall of the nave and chancel (of C14 and C15 date) has suffered from serious neglect, and remains smothered in a very heavy growth of ivy. Recently one of the two remaining arches has collapsed. In response to a recent enquiry by the Society, Brentwood District Council (BDC) stated that it has 'no direct involvement in the preservation of this historic site'. The Society has also approached English Heritage (EH). The buried remains are protected by its scheduled monument status but EH has no powers to enforce repairs, and only limited resources to provide grants or staff time. Its priorities are clearly with more important structures elsewhere, where there is public access. EH have contacted BDC about the priory remains, but the council has serious reservations about any development on this green belt site, and has not been not convinced by EH that the planning gain from preservation and enhancement of the ruins would over-ride these objections. EH is not concerned about potential development, provided that it is preceded by appropriate archaeological investigation and recording. The next quinquennial EH inspection of the standing ruin is due next year but it is clear that there is no immediate solution to this unsatisfactory state of affairs.

It is may be surprising that monastic remains can suffer such neglect in the

C20 and 21, but there is at least one other priory ruin in Essex which has virtually disappeared since the RCHM visited. The largely C12 nave and its C16 roof at Stanesgate Priory, in the parish of Steeple, were largely intact when measured and photographed in the early 1920s. Now almost nothing remains.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Coller DW 'The People's History of Essex' (1861) Chelmsford

*EAH Transactions* second series xiv, 240-244, 262 (1916)

RCHM (Essex) volume iv (1923)

VCH (Essex) volume ii (1907)

Letter from English Heritage to the Society dated 4 July 2006.

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## DR STUKELEY AND THE LEXDEN HEATH EARTHWORKS

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Amongst Philip Morant's letters in the British Library is one from William Stukeley, dated 15 August 1758. It is clear that they had visited the Lexden earthworks together, and it is not surprising that Stukeley differed from Morant's view (expressed in his *History of Colchester*) that they were of Roman origin. The letter is as follows:

'After my thanks for your civilitys to me at Colchester, I have delivered your lter to Dr Ducarol. I have considered these works on Lexden Heath; great indeed, as all works of the Druids were. I have found them at large in my frd Warburton's map, & the admesurements in your book, from the surveyors. I desire you to send me the drawing you show'd me, wh may give some little light more; & answer me at your leisure ths queres.

Pray my best respects to my good frd Mr Gray, & to the literary Society at the Castle.'

The 'admeasurements' referred to were printed in the History of Colchester, from a survey done in 1722 by Rev. T Lufkin and Payler Smith, recorded as measured distances from certain points, and compass bearings. Morant's drawing (which clarifies the interpretation of the survey, and must be the document that Stukeley wished to borrow), was discovered a century ago in Morant's own copy of his History, then in the library of the Royal Institution. A copy of this drawing was published in our Society's Transactions in 1909.

The individuals mentioned in Stukeley's letter can be identified. Andrew Ducarel (1713-1785) was an antiquary, and keeper of the library at Lambeth Palace (with whom Morant doubtless exchanged many letters); John Warburton (1682-1759), herald and antiquary, published maps of several counties, as well as a survey of Hadrian's Wall; and Charles Gray, MP and owner of Colchester castle, will need no introduction

Michael Leach

#### Sources

Letters of P Morant, British Library Add mss 37222 vol vii

Morant, P History of Colchester book 2, 28-29(1748)

Laver, H 'A Survey of Grymes Dyke...on Lexden Heath' in EAT xi ns 19-21 (1909)

Dictionary of National Biography – an epitome (1965)

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## FISHING ON THE RIVER STOUR

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An Act of 4 Anne, c. 15, stipulated that 'for the preservation of the fishery of the River Stower in Essex and Suffolk, it

shall be lawful for the several game-keepers, and others authorized for that purpose, by warrant of any lords of manors, or owners of fisheries upon the said river between Maningtree and Sudbury, to enter into any boat upon the river, and search for and seize all nets and other engines for taking of fish, except such as shall be close packed up in boxes or packs, and carried only as merchandizes'

The Stour regulations were only a tiny part of a vast amount of legislation from the time of Edward I onwards, controlling all aspects of fishing (even the mesh size of nets). Anyone who believes that red tape is a modern phenomenon should study the 30 pages of small print summarizing the controls on fishing that were in place in 1791. Though over-fishing may have been a concern, it is likely that these regulations were framed to protect the landowners' assets, rather than purely for conservation.

Source: Williams, T W, A Digest of the Statute Law from 9 Henry III to 30 George III (1791) London

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## EARLY OBSERVATIONS OF CROP MARKS

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Stukeley's observations of crop marks at Chesterford has already been noted (Newsletter 135) and it is clear that other C18 antiquarians followed suit. In 1765 Dr Foote Gower (?1726-1780), rector of Chignall St James, spent three weeks on horseback tracing the route of various Roman roads in NW Essex. One evening, he dictated a long letter about his discoveries to a young friend of his, Rev. Benjamin Forster, from which it is clear that Gower was familiar with the usefulness of crop marks for indicating buried features.

"In the ground between the encampment (at Great Chesterford) and the river is the spot supposed to have been an amphitheatre; there is no bank or inequality of ground remaining, but Mr Shepherd observed the corn to grow very thin in a circle of about 8 yards wide, including a space of 100 yards diameter. The traces of the streets, and the entrances to the camp, east and west, are plainly discernible by the thinness of the corn, when growing."

Michael Leach

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## ESSEX PLACE-NAMES PROJECT SEMINAR

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The next Seminar will be held at Maldon on Saturday 18th November 2006. The Guest Speaker will be Mr Edward Martin of Suffolk Archaeology, he will speak on "Medieval Landscapes".

Tickets are available (price £5 payable to "ESAH") from the Project Coordinator, 27 Tor Bryan, Ingatestone, Essex CM4 9JZ. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

James Kemble

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## NATIONAL ICE AGE NETWORK

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This is a new initiative funded through the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund, through a grant scheme administered by English Heritage and English Nature. It is based on four regional centres, that for southeast England being at Royal Holloway College (Dr Danielle Shreve and Dr Barbara Silva). Their particular interest is the information revealed about the Ice Age environment and inhabitants revealed by sand and gravel extraction, and it is heavily dependant on feedback

from the aggregates industry, and local archaeologists. This would be of particular interest to any member who has an involvement with the industry, or with rescue archaeology. More details can be found on their website at [www.iceage.org.uk](http://www.iceage.org.uk) or by e-mail on [info@iceage.org.uk](mailto:info@iceage.org.uk)

Michael Leach

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## CHANGES IN SMOKING HABITS

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In 1742, the archdeacon of Rochester had a considerable quantity of silver plate stolen, and posted a reward for its recovery in the *Daily Advertiser*. One of the items was a 'small smoaking candlestick', which the commentator, writing in 1905, noted 'has a displeasing sound. It was what is now known as a taper candlestick, placed together with the tobacco box on round top of a mahogany table. Dignitaries of the church then smoked contemplative long flat-spurred clays from Broseley, like gentlemen, in the quiet of their rooms, a procedure in pleasing contrast with that of the present time, when clergy may be seen with short wooden pipes in their mouths in every third class carriage, and on all public promenades. It is not edifying.'

The writer, Albert Hartshorne, clearly believed that smoking should only occur in the privacy of one's own room. Elsewhere he noted disapprovingly that Lancelot Blackburne (archbishop of York from 1724 to 1743) was 'a prelate notorious for the extraordinary freedom of his manners. It was reported that on the occasion of a visitation at St Mary's, Nottingham, he ordered pipes and tobacco and liquors to be brought into the vestry for his refreshment after the fatigues of a confirmation.' The rector of

the church remonstrated with the archbishop on the impropriety of his conduct and said that his vestry should not be turned into a smoking room. Blackburne's background was somewhat unconventional for an archbishop; he was said 'to have acted early in life as chaplain on board a buccaneer, and many unsavoury slanders were propagated concerning him, and readily credited by the town, and to which his free and easy manners gave colour.' Swashbuckling habits clearly died hard, but attitudes to tobacco have come full circle over the years. Doubtless Hartshorne would give posthumous approval to the recent proposals to ban all smoking in public places!

Michael Leach

Source: Hartshorne A (ed) 'Memoirs of a Royal Chaplain, 1729-1763' (1905) Bodley Head

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## **GOUGH'S ROAD MAP**

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This map, dated to about 1360 and believed to be a copy of an earlier one, is the oldest surviving map to show roads. Nothing is known about its surveyor or the reasons for commissioning it; it was purchased by Richard Gough in 1774 for half a crown from another antiquary, Thomas Martin. Gough left it to the Bodleian, with much else from his collection, in 1809, and it remains there to this day. It is on two skins of vellum measuring in total 22 inches by 42 inches. Rivers are shown in green, towns (according to their status) are represented as houses, churches, castles or cathedrals, and roads as thin red lines, marked with the distances between the towns in the same way as a modern road map. Like most mediaeval maps, east is at the top of the page. The outline of England and Wales is

reasonably accurate and immediately recognisable. However, when it came to Scotland, the surveyor was clearly guessing and the country is represented as a long even tongue of land, cut by a few rivers and surrounded by a scatter of round or oval islands. The road system in England and Wales is tantalisingly incomplete. There is, for example, no road is shown between London and the Kent/Sussex coast, though the bridge over the Medway at Rochester is marked in red. Essex, too, is devoid of roads, though several towns are marked and Foulness is given unexpected prominence. Important roads must have existed (particularly between London and the coast) but the reason for their omission remains a mystery.

The map has now been digitised and can be viewed on line for a limited period. The image was quite fuzzy on my mediaeval PC, but members with better equipment may be better served. Those curious to see the earliest image of the county will find it on the interactive 'Mapping the Realm' site on [www.qub.ac.uk/urban\\_mapping/gough\\_map/](http://www.qub.ac.uk/urban_mapping/gough_map/) or [www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/guides/maps/herf\\_rme.htm](http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/guides/maps/herf_rme.htm)

Full colour facsimiles can be bought from the Bodleian Library shop at £15 (post and packing extra).

Michael Leach

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## **AN EARLY MEMBER OF ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY'S COUNCIL**

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Richard Almack (1799-1875), a solicitor practising in Long Melford, was an enthusiastic and distinguished antiquarian, and an active member of

various learned societies. Not surprisingly, he was a founder member of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology. Less well known is the fact that he was also active in the formation of our Society, and was a member of its first Council. He contributed an article on the de Vere family to the first volume of our *Transactions*. Henry King, secretary of EAS from 1866 to 1893, knew him well and wrote 'I can bear testimony to his unwearied industry in archaeological pursuits, even at an advanced period of his life. I have met him in the Literary Department of the Court of Probate, working assiduously and laboriously in making excerpts from ancient wills for six hours at a time, with but a slight interval. He was always ready to impart any information that he possessed, and has frequently sent me notes and references, quite unsolicited, which he believed would be of use or interest to me.' He was an avid collector of prints, paintings (including a van Dyke portrait of the last Earl Dudley) and manuscripts. His eagerness to share his mss with others must have enlivened railway journeys on the Great Eastern. A writer in the *Suffolk and Essex Free Press* recalled, when travelling on a train with him, 'with what pride Mr Almack showed an original grant of land made to the grandfather of Oliver Cromwell... and how his keen eyes glistened as he pointed to its fine preservation and the beauty of the calligraphy.' His obituary writer believed that he frequently travelled with manuscripts on his person, and remembered fellow passengers on another train being shown 'a receipt signed by the last abbot of Bury St Edmunds.' Perhaps his most important practical contributions were his successful efforts to restore the stained glass of Long Melford church, and his conviction of the authenticity of the

Paston papers which may have helped to ensure their preservation.

Michael Leach

Source: *Proceedings of Suffolk Institute of Archaeology & History* v, i-v (1875)

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## FOR SALE

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Substantial, elaborately carved, wooden Victorian gothic chair, with large pierced finials and a nominally upholstered back. Provenance unknown, but possibly an ecclesiastical throne, 57" high, 28" wide and 26" deep. Needs some restoration, but complete apart from one boss. Not suitable for sybarites, or for those living in a small house, but would look great in a Victorian rectory or similar! Photos can be supplied to anyone interested in making an offer. Proceeds will be donated to ESAH. Please contact Michael Leach on 01277 363106 or [family@leachies.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:family@leachies.freereserve.co.uk)

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## OVERDUE REPAIRS TO COLCHESTER TOWN WALLS

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'Wee – like the Jewes in Jerusalem – with our swords in one hand and our trowels in the other, began to reaire the ruins of our walls which were many, the towne being one of the antientest foundations of the kingdome, for if wee credit historie it was built by Coyle a chiefe king of the Brittaines, whose daughter was married to Constantius, father to Constantine the Great. But the walls are a sufficient record of its antiquitie, being builte after the old artlesse fashion, without flankers and scarce proof against arrows. Towards the north end of the town there was above 500 places without fortification at

all, which the enemy in their furie over sawe.'

[From an account of the 1648 siege of Colchester in the MSS of the Duke of Beaufort, printed in the Historic Manuscripts Commission's Twelfth Report, Appendix IX, 1891]

Michael Leach

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## VISIT TO MISTLEY

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A group from the Society spent an enjoyable sunny and breezy afternoon at Mistley on 29 April, and were given a guided tour by members of the Mistley Local History Group. The present village occupies an attractive position on the River Stour. There is abundant bird life on the river and we enjoyed watching the swans at various times in the afternoon. Although the warehouses on the river-front have now been converted into flats, Mistley still serves as a port and may have done so since Roman times. Shipbuilding used to be an important industry; today the Maltings are still in operation and there are several artists' workshops.

Much of present Mistley dates from the eighteenth century when Richard Rigby planned to build a spa there. His father had made a fortune out of the South Sea Bubble and had built Mistley Hall (which has not survived), and a new church. Richard Rigby was appointed Paymaster-General to the forces in 1768, an office which proved lucrative to its holder. He appointed Robert Adam to make alterations to Mistley Hall and to plan the spa. Although the spa was never built, Adam was responsible for the Swan Basin in the centre of the village and the classical malting office below it. He is especially remembered for the neoclassical towers which he built at either end of the new church, and

which can still be seen as one comes into Mistley from Manningtree; the nave of the church was demolished in the nineteenth century. It was replaced by a new Victorian Gothic church, built further from the river in 1870-1, and this church now serves Manningtree as well as Mistley.

Many thanks to Ken and Ann Newman for organising the event, and to the Mistley Local History Group for taking us round.

Jenny Ward

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## DEVELOPMENT OF RAILWAYS IN ESSEX

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The annual Morant lecture was given with great panache by Adrian Wright on 19 May. He emphasized the very rural nature of Essex in 1840 – Chelmsford's population was about 7000 and Colchester's about 17,000. Maldon and Harwich contained less than 4000 apiece and the rest of the county contained small scattered villages, hardly what a railway entrepreneur would have regarded as 'traffic significant'. The pioneers who built railways in Essex did so mainly to reach more important points outside the county and this is why, apart from the London-Chelmsford-Colchester route, very little was built in the county in the early years. The first proposal was made by H R Palmer in 1825 for a line from Whitechapel to Ipswich. The proposed route avoided Brentwood because of the problems posed by the high ground, and took a rather circuitous route to a station in the centre of Colchester, then crossing the Stour some way upstream from the route of the present-day railway, to avoid the difficulty and expense of a long river bridge. It was probably intended to take horse-drawn traffic, as steam power was

still regarded as somewhat risky. It was not till 1830, with the construction of the Liverpool to Manchester line, that the modern railway emerged – with double tracks, signalling, and separate trains for goods and passenger traffic, run and controlled by the company.

In 1834, the Grand Eastern Counties Railway's surveyor, John Braithwaite, proposed a different route from London to Ipswich, via Chelmsford. The company soon dropped the 'Grand' from its name. The Press was divided, and some landowners were bitterly opposed but royal assent to the bill (a necessity for the construction of any turnpike road, canal or railway) was obtained on 4 July 1836. Assent was given the same day to the Northern and Eastern Railway's line from Islington to Cambridge, with a branch, just south of the university town, to Newmarket. The Northern and Eastern soon realised that getting a line through the hilly area of Barnet would be very expensive, and decided to reach London by joining the Eastern Counties line in the Lea valley.

The Eastern Counties began building in 1837 and had considerable trouble with wet weather, flooding and the problems of crossing the marshy ground of the Lea valley, which required a substantial causeway. The Northern and Eastern had difficulties in raising capital; by 1840 it had only reached Broxbourne and was hiring rolling stock from the Eastern Counties. Landowners also caused difficulties with financial and other demands – at Boreham, the owner settled for reduced compensation in exchange for the right to stop any train at a wooden platform there. The mayor of Colchester threatened prosecution if any labourers worked on Sunday. In 1842 government inspectors were dissatisfied with the construction of the Stanway embankment whereupon the company summarily dismissed the engineer, Mr

Brough. There were numerous landslips and, in 1843 a special train carrying the directors from Shoreditch to Colchester had to be cancelled due to a further landslip at Shenfield. The fate of the feast awaiting them at Colchester is not recorded! However the line was ready for traffic the next day.

There were (and still are) some impressive structures on the line, including the massive viaducts at Chelmsford and Eight Ash Green. Ingatstone station, built in 1846, is a fine neo-Tudor building with diaper brickwork in burnt headers. However the company was in financial difficulties due to the unexpectedly high costs of construction, as well as an unfortunate and expensive mistake. The directors had been persuaded by Braithwaite to adopt a gauge of 5 feet (instead of the more general Stephenson gauge of 4' 8 ½"). He had argued that this would benefit the company by enabling them to run larger carriages and more powerful locomotives, though it is hard to understand why the directors thought that a mere 3 ½" would make a significant difference. By 1844 the company realised the importance of connecting with standard gauge lines elsewhere, and was forced to convert their system to allow through running. Half the stock of locomotives and carriages were taken out of service for modification to standard gauge, while the other half ran on single track, allowing the second line to be reduced to 4' 8 ½". A fortnight later, the modified rolling stock ran on the converted track, and the process was repeated with the remaining non-standard gauge carriages, locomotives and track; the entire conversion was completed within a month.

However it was a costly mistake and construction ceased at Colchester. Ipswich, growing impatient about the

lack of progress, floated the Eastern Union Railway which extended the line to Ipswich in 1846, to Bury in 1847, and finally reached Norwich in 1849. A few branch lines were built in the late 1840s, intended to exploit the coastal traffic. The North Woolwich branch of 1847 connected with a steamer to Gravesend to tap the Kent market, which was poorly served by the London, Chatham and Dover Railway. The extension to Colchester's harbour at the Hythe was laid in the same year. The Maldon and Braintree Railway (originally planned to cross the main line at Witham without connecting lines) was intended to bring agricultural produce to a newly dredged harbour at Maldon. This was a low cost railway, running up the river valley, with wooden trestle bridges which imposed a weight restriction on its traffic. The whole line was a modest affair, and the disproportionately grand neo-Jacobean station at Maldon East is a puzzle. It has been suggested that the promoter, anxious to be elected to Parliament, was keen to avoid local unemployment. The Harwich branch of 1854 was also built with the plan to transfer London-bound sea freight to rail, but these hopes were not realised and the branch lost money. Other projects also overstretched themselves financially - the Sudbury branch of 1849 (ultimately to be extended to Halstead) was crippled by the spectacular but very costly viaduct across the Colne valley - 1066 feet long, and containing 3 ½ million bricks. Remarkably it was built without loss of life, and the engineer was the same Mr Brough who had been dismissed by the Eastern Counties after the problems with the Stanway embankment.

Traffic growth on the main line was slow. Speeds were low and the second hand locomotives were unreliable. Boiler explosions were quite common - one at Maldon in 1852 caused £2000 worth of

damage. Much of the Norfolk traffic chose the longer, but quicker, route via Cambridge. In 1862 the Eastern Counties amalgamated with a number of other East Anglian companies to form the Great Eastern Railway. This resulted in the design of standard station buildings, examples of which can still be seen on the Loughton to Ongar, and the Braintree to Bishops Stortford lines. However independent companies still continued to construct lines. The Tendring Hundred lines were built to exploit the growing tourist trade and, though the new company owned the track and stations, the Great Eastern ran all the trains. The London, Tilbury and Southend route remained a separate company till the 1923 amalgamation, and the Great Eastern built a rival route from Shenfield to Southend to attempt to take some of its business.

The latter part of the nineteenth century was a time of consolidation and improved services. Parkestone quay, served by the unsuccessful Harwich branch, was developed to exploit the North Sea crossing to Belgium, Holland and Germany though, until the Hook of Holland harbour was built, the departure time of boat trains varied each day, being dependant on the tide. Locomotives and rolling stock were steadily improved, with corridor trains appearing in 1901. There were ingenious ways of providing new services; for example, a through train to Saffron Walden was made possible by the guard detaching the last coach from the end of an express. The 'slip coach' coasted into Newport, to be attached to a waiting locomotive which took it on to its destination.

The standard of railway construction in Britain was highly regulated. Unlike the continent, companies were obliged to fence their tracks, as well as to construct the track bed and bridges to high

engineering standards. At the end of the nineteenth century, it was realised that the high costs involved made it uneconomic to build rural lines which would only carry light traffic, and the Light Railway Act of 1896 reduced the engineering requirements for such routes, and permitted mixed goods and passenger trains at restricted speeds. The first light railway in Essex was a short branch at Corringham to serve a munitions factory, followed by passenger lines to Thaxted and Tollesbury. These lines often had ramshackle station buildings constructed from grounded railway carriages, and used a mixture of aged rolling stock. The term 'crab and winkle' was often used to describe them, even on routes far from the sea. It was suggested that the 'crab' referred to the awkward movement of aged locomotives on poor track, and the 'winkle' to the crowded and uncomfortable conditions for passengers. Many of these lines had a short life, and had ceased to operate before the Beeching closures of the 1960s.

The twentieth century saw substantial growth, and then the rapid decline of freight traffic, with most goods yards sold off, or converted to car parks. With increasing urbanisation, commuter traffic continued to grow, causing major problems with the mix of fast and slow trains on double tracks on the approach to London. This was solved by the quadrupling of various lines, and increasing speeds by means of diesel and electric traction. Branch lines disappeared, some before the Beeching closures, as railway economics require a regular supply of passengers throughout the day, seven days a week. A new branch was opened to Stansted airport in 1991; even there, the traffic to the north was very light and through trains to the Midlands were withdrawn two years after opening; even today, it only justifies

an hourly service. The only other major railway developments in Essex are Channel Tunnel link between Thurrock and St Pancras, and the proposed Crosslink which will allow through travel from Shenfield to Heathrow. Both are highly expensive projects, necessitating extensive tunnelling under difficult conditions.

Michael Leach

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## ARTHUR RACKHAM IN EAST ANGLIA

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This is the title of an informative small book recently published by Alison Barnes, and describes a series of late C19 projects to promote, and capitalise on, holidays in East Anglia. The pioneer publication was *Poppy-Land* which appeared in 1886 and sparked an infectious enthusiasm for east coast holidays, as well as a host of other books, magazine articles, songs and postcards. A fourth illustrated edition appeared in 1894, and its publishers decided to bring out a more comprehensive companion volume entitled *Sunrise-Land*, and commissioned two young artists, M M Blake and Arthur Rackham, to draw the necessary illustrations. This was Rackham's first major commission, and he made two leisurely tours of East Anglia in 1893 and 1894 during which he produced over 100 drawings. 74 of these were published and, though the originals seem to have been lost, the excellent reproductions from *Sunrise-Land* printed in Alison Barnes's book have both a fresh and a very period character to them. Only 40 of those originally printed are reproduced her book, of which nine relate to Essex. Most are of the expected topographical nature, but there are surprises – one, for example, shows

women stripping seedpods at Messrs Carter's seed farm at St Osyth. Rackham's fame, from his association with J M Barrie's *Peter Pan*, and Kenneth Graham's *Wind in the Willows*, was yet to come, so it is of particular interest to see examples of his early work.

Alison Barnes has written a very informative introduction to her 64 page paperback book, obtainable through booksellers at £8-95. Its ISBN number is 0 946148 73 2.

Michael Leach

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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*We are indebted to Tony Fox, now of California, U.S.A., for sending us copies of two booklets he has produced.*

**Upminster Hall, its Barn and its Estate**, Tony Fox (2002), pp 24; available Swan Books, 27, Corbet's Tey Road, Upminster.

This is a lucid and succinct account, well illustrated, of our present knowledge of the origin, evolution and current fate of these Essex embodiments of deep history. An estate for 1,000 years (at least), 500 under Waltham Abbey, the present barn and hall both date from a re-build in the 1450s. Today the hall is a gold club, the barn a splendid museum, wedged in a posh enclave of Estuary England. And, happily, they are both still there.

**The Life & Times of Two Georgian Gentlemen**, Tony Fox (2002) pp 40, available Swan Books, 27, Corbet's Tey Road, Upminster.

Tony Fox draws together the separate stories of William Derham, 1657-1735, Rector of St Lawrence's Upminster, a Fellow of the Royal Society who accurately established the speed of sound and published the papers of

Robert Hooke AND James Oglethorpe, 1696-1785, soldier of fortune, who founded the United States colony of Georgia and inherited (from his wife) Cranham Hall, near Upminster, where he lived for the last 41 years of his long life. This is a good read of biographies not otherwise available.

**More Roxwell Revealed** (2005) pp 390, published Roxwell Revealed, Sherwood House, Roxwell; is a second anthology of village history compiled by the energetic Roxwell Revealed Group (authors of *Roxwell Revealed* – see review in an earlier Newsletter).

Chapter 1 provides some authoritative early history, notably by Pam Studd, Mike Roper and Ailsa Wildig, all the more valuable since no VCH volume has covered this district. Chapter 2 looks (topically) at the natural environment, changes in the landscape and declining biodiversity.

Chapter 3 covers recent (i.e. 20<sup>th</sup> century) farming and is an invaluable contribution to this important Essex subject, only thinly covered in most similar books. Chapter 4 covers the church, its early history, its organisation and organisations in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century: the workhouse, reading room, Sunday School – and the Congregational Church. Another chapter covers education. Roxwell's (important) families, Roxwell memories, village organisations from hunting to the Produce Association – the later chapters of the book come from many contributors, giving the feel less of an encyclopaedia, more of a miscellany. Great credit therefore goes to the editor, Mike Roper, who has woven together a range of styles and topics. His careful cross-referencing makes small repetitions not only tolerable but helpful. This reviewer moved in 390 pages from

reluctant reviewer to engrossed reader. Now it is your turn.

*Our ESAH reviews would not be complete without two more additions from the fertile pen of Noel Beer to his studies of Rayleigh.*

### **Rayleigh Parish Room 1863-1981**

follows the ever-changing fortunes of the modest premises built in Victorian gothic in 1863 as a National School adjacent to Rayleigh Parish Church. Beer traces its change of use from school to *de facto* village hall, hosting a literary society, theatrical performances (the 'snowdrop minstrels'), cubs, guides, World War I troops and a range of activities for 'young people'. Twice – in 1912 and 1934 – the parish room was asked to serve as the church while that building was undergoing renovation. And it was always there for ambitious summer events 'in case of inclement weather'. Requisitioning by the War Office in 1939 it needed extensive refurbishment in 1945. During the 1950s the rooms were yet more widely used, but age took its toll. Cracks appeared in the walls. Should the Parish Room not be replaced? The 1970s saw a bureaucratic wrangle between vested interests until the district council refused demolition. Casual vandalism culminated in arson and the near destruction of the complex in April 1980. Carefully restored, in 1981 it began a new life as a restaurant.

### **An Account of Brickmaking in Rayleigh & District**

mainly consists of a manuscript account left by R.K. Clover, a member of the local brick-making family, with an explanatory introduction by Noel Beer. This is a most useful document outlining the technical details of brick manufacture in the 1900-1910 period, as the obliging author not only supplies some original illustrations, but explains the vocabulary peculiar to the trade. It

was hard and irregular work, concentrated into the warmer months of the year, in demand as Rayleigh expanded after the arrival of the Great Eastern Railway in 1889. Brickfields like this flourished all over Essex. Only a handful survive today.

Andrew Phillips

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## **OBSOLETE WEIGHTS AND MEASURES**

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Readers of this newsletter will recall John Warbis's particular interest in obsolete units. This was stimulated by his scepticism about claims that prehistoric standing stones were laid out to very precise measurements. While there seems little doubt that the rod is an ancient measure, it is equally certain that its length varied from place to place, and that ingenuity can make almost any system of measurements "fit" an ancient site. He proceeded to establish when measurements were standardised, with English attempts in the C13 based on the size of a grain of wheat. Thus 32 grains was the weight of a silver penny, from which the ounce, the pound and the gallon were defined. Length was also defined by the grain – 3 making an inch – though many measures of length (possibly much more ancient) were based on the human body (digit, palm, hand, span, cubit and so on). He has traced the legislation which evolved through the Middle Ages to define weights and measures, and prepared a useful summary.

He has also collected a large number of special trade measures which persisted till recently, at least one of which still survives on the nature reserve where I work – the cord of firewood. They were complex and confusing, possibly jealously guarded as part of the mystery

of the trade. Who would have known that a bundle of 4 foot oak heart laths contained 120 laths, and that 37 ½ bundles comprised a load? In the wine trade a hogshead contained anything from 43 to 60 gallons, depending on the type of wine or spirit. Even the greengrocer's peck varied from 9 to 20 pounds. There were more than 25 different sizes of sheet paper, from 'emperor' to 'pott', with different sizes, and names, for writing paper, printing paper and brown paper respectively! Metric units have simplified matters, even if they have removed the poetry, but even now the system remains full of anomalies – the diameter of motor car wheels is still measured in inches, for example, and is encoded on the wall of every tyre.

John Warbis has collected a rich mass of information in a booklet which will be deposited in the Society's library at the university. I have already found it useful. A folding boxwood rule inherited from my wife's grandfather was stamped with the letters HN. These were not his initials, but I had assumed that they were those of an earlier owner. Recently I noticed – partly hidden by a heavy stain – the single letter N, exactly twice the distance along the rule and 2 ¼ inches from its end. John's booklet revealed that the nail was 2 ¼ inches, HN being half a nail rather than someone's initials. The nail is an archaic unit based on the human body – the distance between the proximal inter-phalangeal joint and the nail of the middle finger. I hope that others will find this collection a very useful source of reference.

Michael Leach

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## ST MARY'S, MUNDON

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This redundant Essex church is in the ownership of the Friends of Friendless

Churches – which is just as well, considering its present desperate structural condition. RCHM dated the nave to the C14, and the timber tower and north porch to the C16. The latter was described by Cecil Hewett as the finest of its type in the county. The chancel was rebuilt above the plinth in the early C18 in red brick, with a large round headed oak-framed east window. Recently, funding was obtained from English Heritage towards the costs of repairs to the timber-framed tower. In the meantime, the chancel has developed serious structural problems, with substantial cracks appearing in the east wall of the chancel and serious distortion of the window timbers. A complex scaffolding structure has been installed to prevent the chancel from breaking its back and, understandably, the church has had to be closed to visitors. Underpinning is planned (and may already have been started).

Michael Leach

Sources:

*Royal Commission on Historical Monuments – Essex* vol iv (1923)

*Ancient Monuments Society/Friends of Friendless Churches Newsletter*

Summer 2006

Hewett C A *Church Carpentry* (1982)  
Phillimore

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## NORTH WEALD MANORIAL RECORDS

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When I was engaged in research for my book *A History of North Weald Bassett and Its People*, published in 1985, I was unable to locate the records of the Manor of North Weald (the principal manor) after 1793, although earlier records were in the Essex Record Office. However, in 1982 I noticed that Messrs.

Strutt & Parker were offering for sale the Lordship of the Manor together with documents, including the archives I was seeking, at the price of £4,500.

Although I was unable to buy, I entered into correspondence with the firm about access to these records and was assured that the purchaser would be informed that the Master of the Rolls had a statutory responsibility for the care and safe custody of Manorial Records, as defined by the Law of Property Act 1922, Section 144A. I was further informed, after the sale, that the purchaser intended to abide by these rules and had intimated that he would like the documents to be passed on to the Essex Record Office.

They never were, and in 2003 I resolved to discover what had happened to them. Strutt & Parker informed me that, after twenty years, they did not have the name of the purchaser. The solicitors representing the vendor in 1982/3 gave me the name of the purchaser's solicitor but, sadly, the firm had gone out of existence and its successor did not provide any help. The National Archives Historic Manuscripts Commission, which maintains the Manorial Documents Register (MDR) had no record of the documents later than 1955. It seemed as though I had reached a dead end.

Out of the blue, however, in December of last year, it came to my notice by a circuitous route that two old volumes on the Manor of North Weald were due to be auctioned. I attended the auction and managed to purchase the volumes, which turned out to be the court books for the Manor, 1793 - 1854 and 1855 - 1884. They were in a very parlous condition, although I have now had them repaired as far as possible.

What happened to the other records sold with the Lordship of the Manor in 1983, including another court book (1884 - 1933), rental rolls 1694 and 1702, rental

books, a terrier, a draft abstract of court rolls 1793 - 1818 and an index of court rolls to 1778, however, is still unknown - although I am still pursuing the matter.

This story illustrates the fact that valuable historic archives going back centuries can still, in our day and age, be lost or stored in conditions which allow them to rot. It also suggests that more attention should be paid to keeping the Manorial Documents Record up to date, which is the task of National Archives Historic Manuscripts Commission. This is particularly important when lordships of manors are sold. We also, however, need to ensure that solicitors are kept informed - particularly when practices change hands - that records which appear to have little modern relevance should still be preserved and offered to the Essex Record Office or some other safe repository.

The story of North Weald Manorial Records is a cautionary tale which almost certainly has relevance to other historic archives.

Stan Newens

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## HERTS & ESSEX ARCHITECTURAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

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Ruth Wilcock has asked for the following meetings of HEARS (Herts & Essex Architectural Research Society) to be brought to the attention of ESAH members.

Our winter programme starts  
29 Sep 2006. Jane Pearson & Richard Shackle - *How the House was used: evidence from structures and documents.*

27 Oct. Brenda Watkin - *St. Osyth: The 'Time Team' experience*

Charity Number 213218

Summer 2006

24 Nov. Alan Bayford - *The Vernacular Architecture Group's visit to Somerset*

34 Gordon Square, London WC1H 0PY  
j.sidell@ucl.ac.uk  
Please make cheques payable to: UCL

In 2007 meetings are planned for 26 Jan, 23 Feb, 23 Mar, 27 Apr (in Bishop's Stortford) and 25 May (AGM).

Meetings, unless stated otherwise, are held at Loughton, in Room M6 at Roding Valley High School, near Loughton Station at 8pm.

Further information available from the Hon. Sec. 01708 473646.

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## **ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY OF THE GREATER THAMES ESTUARY**

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Saturday 30 September 2006 10.30am at the Lecture Theatre, Institute of Archaeology, UCL, 31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1. Cost: £3.00

The Provisional Programme of talks on work over the last two years in Essex, Kent and London includes;

*Modelling the Lower Lea Valley for the Olympics and beyond* - Graham Spurr, MoLAS,

*Marvellous Marshland: the historic environment of Essex grazing marshes* -

Adrian Gascoyne Essex County Council  
*Coastal zone surveys in Essex* - Ellen Heppell Essex County Council

*Elizabethan shipwreck from the Thames estuary* - Deanna Groom, Wessex Archaeology

*The industrialisation of the Thames riverside in historical Essex* - David Morgans, ERIH Project East of England Essex County Council

There will be a one hour break for lunch  
For advance tickets please contact Jane Sidell, Institute of Archaeology, UCL, 31-

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## **BRONZE AGE CONNECTIONS: CULTURAL CONTACT IN PREHISTORIC EUROPE CONFERENCE 2006**

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Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 October 2006 at Cruise Terminal 2 in Dover. On Saturday evening there will be a chance to view the Dover Bronze Age Boat Gallery in the Dover Museum including the Ringlemere Gold Cup which will be on loan from the British Museum.

The cost of the conference including a buffet lunch each day is £80 per delegate exclusive of accommodation. Students get a reduced fee of £50.

Further information, including the conference programme and accommodation details can be found at <http://www.dover.gov.uk/museum/babconference.asp>

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## **ZERO TOLERANCE, TUDOR STYLE**

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This penitential litany, to be repeated daily by children, was printed in "Worke for Householdiers" published in 1531.

If I lie, backbite or steal,  
If I curse, scorn, mock or swear,  
If I chide, fight, strive or threat,  
I am worthy to beat  
With a new rod and fine  
Early naked before I dine  
Amend me with a scourging.

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Enquiries about delayed or missing publications and about the supply of recent back numbers should be addressed to the Secretary.

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2005 the projected value of the fund stands at £33,671.

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

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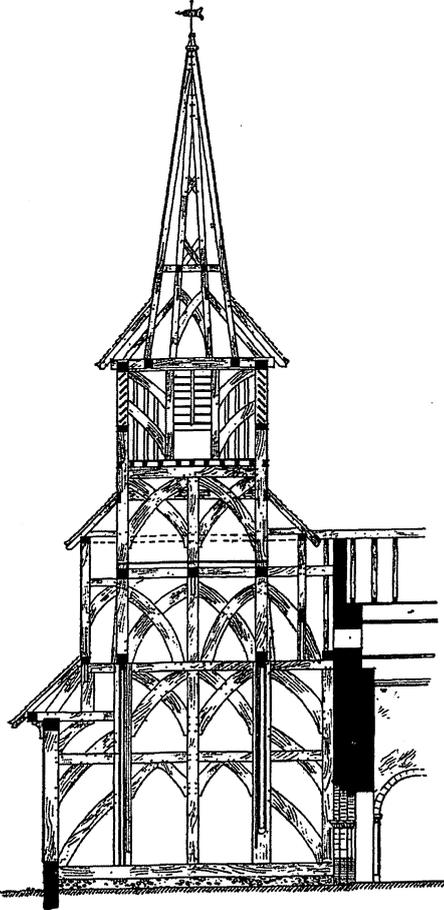
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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Winter 2006

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 150

WINTER 2006

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**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE  
ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 2 MARCH 2007**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

Cover illustration:

Longitudinal section through the bell tower of the Priory Church of St Laurence, Blackmore Essex by Wykeham Chancellor, March 1899. Taken from The Essex Review No 30, April 1899, Vol. VIII. See the Book Review on page 6 for further information.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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### ***The Gibberd Garden at Harlow***

The Gibberd Garden at Harlow, which takes its name from the architect, Sir Frederick Gibberd (1908-1984), who created it with considerable help from his second wife, Patricia, is now rated as one of the most important modern gardens in the country. It was constructed as a series of rooms, each with its own character, from small intimate spaces to large enclosed prospects.

It is, today, owned and run by a trust, which I have the honour to chair, and has thousands of visitors each year. The website ([www.thegibberd garden.co.uk](http://www.thegibberd garden.co.uk)) provides an opportunity to sample its attractions.

Sadly, Lady Gibberd died, aged 79 years, on 19<sup>th</sup> September last, cutting one of the most important links with the origins of modern Harlow. She not only played a key role in the making of the Garden: she acted as the guardian of her husband's master plan for the new town; was a founder member of Harlow Arts Trust; was instrumental in creating the unrivalled collection of modern sculptures that grace the Gibberd Garden and the town as a whole; and helped to shape the town's services, as an Epping Rural District Councillor in the 1950s and in the chair of Harlow Health Centres Trust in the 1980s and 1990s.

Lady Gibberd stood out as a leading personality – a fount of local knowledge and an expert on cultural and artistic issues. Her influence was of great importance as long as she lived. All future historians of Harlow and West Essex will have to take into account the Gibberd impact and that of Lady Gibberd will take its place beside that of her husband as of no mean significance.

### ***Quest to find the records of the Manor of North Weald***

The last issue of Essex Archaeology & History News (Summer 2006) carried an article by me on my quest to find the records of the Manor of North Weald. In this, I explained how I managed, after years of searching, to buy two of the missing court books (1793-1854 and 1855-84) at an auction but that many of the manorial records remained unaccounted for.

To my surprise and delight, the article produced a letter from fellow ESAH Council member, Robert Wager, a most assiduous collector of Essex books, saying that the third court book (1884-1933) was in his possession. He was kind enough to invite me to visit his home to view this book and his library – a thrilling experience for any lover of the county's history.

Furthermore, in view of my long standing interest in the history of North Weald and my possession of two of the court books, he agreed to let me have the third. Thus, after many years, Court Books A, B and C, as they are labelled, have been reunited. I have notified the National Archives Historical Manuscripts Commission accordingly.

However, this still leaves rental rolls 1694 and 1702, rental books, a terrier, a draft abstract of court rolls to 1778 to be located, if they are still in existence. I hope my partial success will encourage others to go after other missing historic archives. I shall be continuing my quest for the records of North Weald.

### ***The Morant Lunch 2006***

This year's Morant Lunch, which took place at the Bear Inn, Stock, marked the Fiftieth Anniversary of Morant Lunches and Dinners. It was also the best attended for a number of years, with 47 participants. Although it was a rather long session, we were compensated by

the conversation and an excellent after-dinner speech by Lord Petre, Lord Lieutenant of Essex. He talked about the varied character of the county and its many attractions from the standpoint of one who has long been most deeply committed. He was justly praised by our secretary, Michael Leach, who moved the vote of thanks.

When Stock is mentioned in my hearing, I always think of the local historian, the late Donald Jarvis, who published his first book on the village in 1934 and his last in 1994, both of which are in my local collection. He was President of the Billericay Archaeological & Historical Society; a Vice-President of the Friends of Historic Essex; a founder-member and later President of the Essex Society for Family History; county co-ordinator of Essex Local History Recorders, and a familiar figure at county historical meetings. He was also a parish councillor for more than twenty years.

When we drink a toast to Philip Morant, the doyen of Essex historians, we should remember that in the two volumes he published in 1768 he brought to fruition the efforts of a line of pioneering Essex historians and his legacy is the foundation on which many successors across the county have built – like the late Donald Jarvis in Stock.

### **William Herbert Dalton**

The Essex Field Club Newsletter No. 51 (September 2006) carries a fascinating article on the life of the Essex geologist William Herbert Dalton (1848-1929). This is by W. H. George, who has made the lives of undervalued Essex naturalists, geologists, fossil collectors, etc., his speciality.

William Herbert Dalton was, in his later years, an internationally known expert on oilfield exploration, but he worked previously on the Geological Survey of Britain and produced many articles on

his native Essex. Many were published in the *Essex Naturalist*.

In addition, he edited the *Essex Review* 1892-94 and contributed articles on such varied subjects as church music, Lord Petre's works, and 'popery in Essex'. He also compiled a catalogue of books, pamphlets, periodicals, manuscripts and scrap collections held by the Essex Archaeological Society and wrote for the Transactions.

Born in Foulness, the son of the Revd. Samuel Neale Dalton, who was Rector 1848-92, W. H. Dalton was associated with Essex for most of his life, despite a nomadic existence. He recorded three archaeological sites on Foulness and made other Essex discoveries. His name should certainly be remembered by all who are interested in the history and environment of the County, and Bill George is to be commended on an excellent article, which is well worth reading in full.

Stan Newens,  
October 2006

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## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AT GREAT LEIGHS**

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This was held in the village hall on a warm afternoon on 17 June. Apart from the routine business, the meeting agreed to an increase in subscriptions from January 2007. This is the first increase since 1998 and is necessitated by three factors. Firstly expenses, particularly postal charges, have increased steadily over the last 9 years. Secondly there is increasing uncertainty about the level of grants likely to be available for publishing *Essex Archaeology and History*, and its continued publication is likely to require a larger contribution from the Society itself. Thirdly, though the

index (which is progressing well) will be largely funded from grants, the cost of its publication will need to be born by the Society. The index has had a long gestation, but is an essential tool for researchers and it is very important to publish it quickly when it has been completed. The new subscriptions from 2007 will be £9 for students and associates (currently £8); £20 for individual members (currently £18); £22 for family members (currently £20); and £25 for institutions (currently £22). Family membership covers all living at the same address. It is hoped that every member will agree that this modest increase is justified, and that the subscription still provides very good value for money.

Unfortunately the speaker, Anne Haward of the Round Tower Churches Society, was unable to attend, but David Andrews (of the ECC Historic Buildings Section) stood in for her at very short notice, and gave a very interesting and thoughtful talk on the subject. There are about 185 surviving round towers in England; 126 in Norfolk (with a further 30 now lost), 42 in Suffolk, 7 in Essex (one of which, Birchanger, is lost), 2 in Cambridgeshire, 3 in Sussex, 2 in Berkshire, all broadly in the East Anglian region. More may be discovered by excavation, but they are still unusual, both here and in Europe. There are a scattering in Italy and Germany, and a small number of round minarets in Iraq (Samara, for example, which is tapered).

Round towers have long fascinated antiquarians and have generated various fabulous explanations. The least likely was that they were former well shafts exposed by the Biblical flood. Others have suggested that they indicate a pre-Christian site but (unlike round churchyards) there seems to be no justification for this idea. They were also thought to be a defence against the

Vikings but, though church towers undoubtedly have had a defensive function in the past, none appear to be old enough. The Essex historian, Philip Morant, stated that they were believed to have been built by the Danes, 'according to their manner of architecture'. What is clear is that they have intrigued antiquarians for a very long time.

More recently, it has been suggested that round towers were built because of problems in forming quoins in flint rubble. This idea is unconvincing in Essex, where so much Roman brick was available, and commonly used, to form the corners of church buildings. Even if Roman brick was not used, churches such as Little Bardfield (of C11 date) show that corners can be constructed perfectly well in flint rubble without the use of ashlar. In the pre-Conquest parts of Hadstock, the window surrounds were formed in rubble. Originally, these buildings would have been covered externally in plaster.

Six round tower churches survive in Essex. South Ockendon was rigorously restored in the 1880s (and probably refaced with knapped flint) but its C12 date is revealed by a wonderfully decorated north door. Broomfield has a Norman nave with brick quoins. If brick was available for the body of the church, why was a square tower not built? The site is an ancient one, but the tower is later than the nave. Great Leighs has a spire (which improves the appearance of round towers). Though Pevsner thought that the spire was added in 1882, it seems likely that Frederic Chancellor's work was the restoration of an older one. The tower has original pilaster buttresses and, where unrestored, these are edged in brick or flint rubble. At Bardfield Saling there is a C14 window in the upper part of the tower, the same date as the main church which was consecrated by the bishop of Pisa in

1380. The tower has been assumed to be C14, but it seems likely that it is of earlier date. Lamarsh has a spire, with gablets half way up. This tower is unusual as it is still plastered, but there is a good reason for this – the upper part is built in timber studwork. The windows are Norman. Finally there is Pentlow, a largely Norman church with an apse at the east end. Structural evidence shows that this tower is later than the main church.

Round towers in general are of early or uncertain date. A significant number are thought to be Saxon, with double splay windows, triangular window heads or shallow blind arcading. Those ascribed to a later date may have been rebuilt on an earlier base. All are small, about 1 rod (16 ½ feet) in diameter. Most do not have external doors, and so have a defensive look. Often the relationship to the church is uncertain; in Suffolk many seem originally to have been originally detached, and in Essex some may be later additions to earlier buildings.

There is an alternative explanation for the origins of round towers. Though not common in Europe, the greatest numbers are found in Germany in Alsace-Lorraine and Schleswig-Holstein. It seems possible that the tradition migrated across the North Sea into East Anglia. Great Leighs church is of particular interest in this context. The form of cross-hatching used on the Norman west doorway of its tower is unique in England, but is found in Schleswig-Holstein. Also it may be significant that three of Essex's round tower churches (Broomfield, South Ockendon and Great Leighs) shared the same patron, Geoffrey de Mandeville.

Towers, apart from their possibly defensive role, were for hanging bells and (by the later Middle Ages) for status. The simplest way of providing for bells was with a timber belfry, of which there

are about 100 in Essex, found mainly in churches without aisles in rural, remote parishes. Timber bell towers are also found and may reflect ample supplies of suitable timber. Surviving square masonry towers generally seem to have been added to existing church buildings, perhaps replacing earlier timber structures. Round towers may also have been additions, but characteristically are early in date, and belong to a particular period in time.

Members then went to examine the church in its remote setting, far from the village centre, and broke up into informal groups. Amongst other things, interest focussed on the round tower itself, a barrel organ, the series of rectors appointed by Lincoln College, Oxford, one of whom was doubtfully commemorated as having removed all the C14 heraldic glass from the east chancel window. The remarkable (and beautifully repaired) pews in the nave were much admired. Some of their shelves bore an annular scar, with a scribed central ring and three marks from fixing screws – possibly for candle holders.

Michael Leach

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## ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY 3RD SERIES INDEX

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Work has been progressing well on this project, which is being supported by the Society and by generous grants from the Hervey Benham Charitable Trust and the Friends of Historic Essex. Our indexer, Peter Gunn, has so far completed the indexing of Volumes 1-19 inclusive. He is just about to start the indexing of Volume 20. Members of the Publications Committee have been helping with the many minor questions that arise from

time to time, but there will still be much editing to be completed towards the end of the project. Volumes 24 to 30 are longer in terms of page length than the average, so there is still a considerable amount of work remaining! At present the index amounts to about 11,000 lines, but Peter guesses that the final length will be in the region of 14,000 to 15,000 lines. The main problem encountered by our indexer are the place names and terminology as expressed in successive volumes, for example the different spellings/designations of the same place. Careful study of OS maps can help solve most of these, and the Society has been fortunate in the gift of a set of OS maps from the family of the late John Hunter our former President. On problems of terminology in successive volumes, a cropmark can become an earthwork, which then becomes a ditch, then an enclosure and later a mound and eventually a putative hillfort. According to Peter, this is all part of the joys of indexing! We wish him well in his continuing endeavours on our behalf and look forward to the final index.

Chris Thornton

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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Victorian Kelvedon: The Photography of the Nichols Brothers, Graham H. Wheldon, & Roger V. Carter, (2005) pp. 74, £7.00 Feering & Kelvedon Local History Museum, Maldon Road, Kelvedon.

Most readers of this review will be aware of some fascinating photos of the Kelvedon district, dating from the 1860s, and the subject of this monograph. What they will not know is the history of their discovery, what we know of the two photographers, and a complete set of the 198 (yes, 198) distinct images held

as glass negatives by the Essex Record Office (ERO). It has been a long wait for such a book, but, believe me, the wait has been worth it. Anyone remotely interested in the subject must buy this volume. Cutting through 'an oral and anecdotal tradition that is fragmented and often erroneous' the authors provide an authoritative and fascinating account of what is so far known of the photographs and the photographers, including the site and identity of most of the photos, as well as a priceless, complete and indexed set of the images, most of which this reviewer had never seen before. In parallel ERO has cleaned and numbered the negatives which can now, through the wonder of scanning, be seen by all and, by the wonder of this index, be properly identified. If you are so daft as to wait till the book is out of print, your only comfort will be to buy volume 2 (pending) in which the authors will track down some additional images from these two pioneer photographers which are not held as ERO negatives and survive only as prints in a variety of places.

Tithe & other Records of Essex & Barking, Herbert Hope Lockwood (2006), pp. 158, ERO Publication 149.

If you are interested in Essex history but cannot tell a quirent from a modus (no, not modern), let alone a bishop's terrier, this book is for you. In this, his last book, Bert Lockwood has provided a magisterial review of tithes in Essex, their origins, complexities, legal niceties and change over time, extensively illustrated by Essex examples and backed up by a formidable bibliography. This is then followed by what is surely a definitive account of the lavishly documented Barking tithes and their descent down to the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836. In doing this the author touches on a host of related issues, not

least the many strategies employed by clergy and landowners – after all, we are dealing with taxation, taxation so complex and lost in the past that disputes and devices were constant companions. This is not always an easy book: should local history be easy? But if you wish to see a seasoned historian, comfortable and clear as he weaves through an undergrowth of partial sources, seeking unwitting truths and passing them modestly on, do not miss this book. Not least among its uses is a chapter on the research potential of the Barking sources. Finally, full marks to the Essex Record Office and its helpers for publishing this important book with colour, clarity and style.

Old Heath Past & Present, Patrick Denney (2006) pp. 96. FRT publications, 13 Abbots Road, Colchester.

The author, who knows the district so well, and has researched it so thoroughly, has brought together a fascinating collection of photos, mostly of yesterday, but with a few 'then and now' comparisons, prefaced by a sharp historical introduction and captioned from personal knowledge, to produce a very complete view of the rise of this Colchester suburb. Chapter headings follow the familiar path of 'Scenes from the Past', 'Schooldays', 'Church & Chapel', 'Occupations and Trade', 'Wartime' and 'Events and Leisure'. The book is co-authored (and co-produced) by the present vicar of the parish, Father Richard Tillbrook.

The Bell Tower at Blackmore, Andrew Smith (2004), pp 32, published author.

Essex, that home to timber-framed history, is blessed with a great deal of impressive timber in its churches. Noteworthy are over 100 timber belfries and the ten central Essex churches with wooden bell towers built outside the

western wall of the nave. Of these the finest is probably at Blackmore and Andrew Smith has provided this up-to-date account of its history and on-going discussion of its architectural relationship with the other central Essex bell towers. The book climaxes with the 2004 findings of dendrochronology that the tower was constructed about 1400, a far earlier date than hitherto expected.

Blackmore: A Short History, Andrew Smith (2006), pp 36, published author

The same author has now written a short, lively and informed history of Blackmore, anchored on the role through the centuries of its church, which began around 1160 as an Augustinian Priory, recent research having shown that its magnificent bell tower significantly predated the Reformation. Under Henry VIII, so early as 1525, the contents and land of Blackmore Priory were granted to Cardinal Wolsey to help finance his proposed Cardinal College, Oxford. Wolsey's fall saw the late abbey pass to the Smythe family who dominated the area for five generations. The church was in a very decayed state when rescued by the Victorians in 1877, followed by major restoration (with additions) in the Edwardian period. Today its wooden bell tower is a national treasure, probably being looked after as well as even since being built in 1400.

Andrew Phillips

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## AN EARLY BIBLIOGRAPHY OF ESSEX HISTORIANS

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Suffolk Record Office has several volumes of notes collected by the Suffolk antiquarian, Sir Richard Gipps (1659-1708). Judging by their numbering, as well as a comparison with the description by the Historical Manuscripts

Commission in 1891, the collection is now incomplete, and the fate of the missing part or parts is not known. The three surviving volumes contain entries in several different hands, and cover a wide range of antiquarian and archaeological interests of mainly Suffolk relevance. However there is some material covering other counties and, during a recent unrelated search, the following undated entry was noted (apparently in Sir Richard's hand):

*Essex*

*The History of Waltham Abbey by Dr Fuller printed in Folio att ye end of his Church History.*

*A Survey of ye County of Essex in a thin Folio MS by John Norden now in ye Library of Sir Edmd Turner*

*A description of Harwich & Dovercourt by Silas Taylour MS.*

*Mr John Ouseley Rector of Pantfield, a person admirably well versed in ye History of Our Nation hath spent many years in collecting ye Antiquities of Essex wherein he hath been much assisted by Mr Nich Zeakill of Castle Heningham.*

*'Tis said yt Mr Strangeman of Hadley Castle in Suffolk hath writt ye Antiquities of Essex, it still remains in MS but in whose hands is not known.*

*John Smith of Nibley in Essex (whom Sir Will Dugdale in his preface to his Baronage so highly commends) wrote 3 vol. of ye Antiquities of Essex*

Most of this information is not new. 'The History of Waltham Abbey' by Thomas Fuller (1608-1661) was published in 1655. 'The Description of Essex' by John Norden (1548-?1625) was printed by the Camden Society in 1840 from the manuscript which was, by that time, in the ownership of the Marquess of Salisbury. The account of Harwich by Silas Taylor (1624-1678) was edited,

and added to, by Samuel Dale before its publication in 1730. John Ouseley (1645-1708) was a friend of Richard Newcourt who used some of his material in the compilation of the '*Repertorium*'. Ouseley ceased to be rector of Panfield in 1694, which may help to establish the date of this note by Gipps. The misnamed Nich Zeakill was Nicholas Jekyll who had inherited part of the vast antiquarian collection of his grandfather, Thomas Jekyll of Bocking (1570-1652). James Strangman (d.?1595) was another antiquarian, one volume of whose notes (mainly related to monastic foundations) was noted by Morant to be in the Cottonian Library.

However the reference to John Smith of Nibley (in Gloucestershire) is puzzling. It seems most likely that he was the John Smith who was born in Leicestershire in 1568, and served as steward to the Berkeley family in Gloucestershire for some four decades till his death in 1640. He spent part of each year in London in connection with his duties as steward, but appears to have had no connections at all with Essex. Dugdale in the introduction to his *Baronage* refers to the 'special industry of a worthy gentleman, lately deceased' who had compiled a history of the Berkeley family of Berkeley castle, Gloucestershire. A marginal note identifies this worthy as 'John Smith of Nibley Esq.' A volume of Dugdale's diaries and letters, published in 1827, contains a footnote describing Mr Smith of Nibley as 'the celebrated Gloucestershire antiquary whose very minute and well digested Lives of the Berkleys were published.....in 1821. He was Steward to the Berkleys, and acquired an ample fortune, justly earned.'

It is improbable that John Smith of Nibley would have had either reason or opportunity to write three volumes of Essex history, particularly as neither he

nor any of his family seem to have had links with Essex. Perhaps Sir Richard Gipps had learnt about the unpublished Berkeley manuscript written by John Smith and, for some reason, mistakenly believed that it was concerned with Essex.

We shall probably never know how Gipps gathered the material for his bibliography. However, comparison of his list with the bibliography in a slightly later edition of Gibson's edition of Camden's *Britannia* shows very close similarities with almost identical phrasing, strongly suggesting that one had borrowed from the other, or that both had used the same source. For example, *Britannia* described Ousely as 'a person exceedingly well vers'd in the Histories of this Nation, spent many years in collecting the Antiquities of Essex, which, at his death, he left in manuscript'. The main significant difference in the *Britannia* account is the omission of Jekyll; neither is there any reference to John Smith, either under Essex or Gloucestershire.

Michael Leach

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## ESSEX PLACE-NAMES SEMINAR

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The 10th Annual Essex Place-names Seminar, hosted by Maldon Archaeological & Historical Group, took place on 18th November. The paper by Local Recorder Mr Roger Kennel traced the silting of the Gunfleet estuary, formerly the estuary of Holland River north of Clacton, clearly shown on Speed's map of 1627. The creation of the sea wall north of Little Holland Hall in the 19th century claimed sea marsh for pasture, but destroyed the estuary. The artificially-created modern sluiced outfall of the river marks the southern end of the former estuary, Sandy Point the northern end.

Mr Derek Punchard illustrated his talk on Maldon Street names deriving Cromwell Hill from Old English *crumb*, crooked, and North Street, formerly Dagger Lane, a dangerous haunt, and Spital Road from the leper hospital founded by Henry II. In Market Hill once stood the butter market, and in Chequers Lane stood an inn of that name.

Mr Edward Martin of Suffolk Archaeological Service gave the Guest lecture on "Historic Field Systems in the East Anglian Landscape". Using geology, field patterns, enclosed and open field systems and records of land use, he showed that Norfolk and north Suffolk had a distinctly different character from Essex and south Suffolk, the line of demarcation approximately along the Gipping valley (Ipswich-Bury St Edmunds). The northern region,

unenclosed, was predominantly flat clay which was best used for pasture, while the southern, enclosed early, was developed from ancient woodland into arable. Tyes (derived from Old English teag, small enclosure) are rare or absent in the north, but in the south by the 13th century were greens of common pasture. Ploughing practices are essentially distinct, in the south stetch-ploughing leaving insignificant ridges, in the north more similar to Midland wide-ridge and furrow. Early post medieval buildings show significantly different carpentry practices between the two regions.

Whether such differences can trace their origin to the Viking settlement of the 9th and 10th centuries or from Frankish influences, or even earlier diversity dating from the Iron Age make for interesting further research projects.

James Kemble.

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## VISIT TO PANFIELD HALL

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Members visited this very interesting house (with a complex constructional history) on 22 July. It had been in the same family (though not necessarily through the male line) from Domesday till 1611. One heiress, Alice Langham, married John Cotton at the end of the C15, and it was probably this couple who began re-building the hall in brick. There was further re-building to the east in brick in the mid C16, and the tower at the east end (with a leaded ogee cap) was added by a C17 owner, Richard FitzSymonds, whose coat of arms is placed over the door. In 1671 the house was taxed on 15 fireplaces, indicating that it was considerably larger than the present building. It was occupied by tenants from the C18 to the C20, having been acquired by Guy's Hospital in the early part of the C18. At some point the house was much reduced in size

(perhaps after Morant's time, as he described it as a 'large building, partly old and partly new'), and was modified with the insertion of internal partitions and new chimneys. Morant described a fireplace with carved initials C<sup>G</sup>F in the dining room, but this has disappeared, and it is not clear which room he was referring to. John Newman took on the tenancy in 1854, and his descendant bought the freehold in 1930 when it was sold by Guy's. A descendant of his, Mr R G Newman, is the present owner. Several additions have been made in the C20.

The outside of the house shows its complex constructional history. The west half of the main core contains the original full height hall constructed about 1500, with some contemporary brickwork (with burnt header diaper decoration) visible on the north side. There is a large blocked round headed window on this side, positioned towards the west, suggesting that this was the high end of the hall, though internal evidence seems to contradict this conclusion. The plinth on either side of this window is capped with moulded brick, and has a course of square stones laid diamond-wise. To the east of this, the wall has been rebuilt, and two windows inserted, presumably when the floor was inserted to split the full height hall. Further east is the floored hall built in the mid C16, with a small truncated C16/17 extension which originally extended considerably further to the north. This short wing must pre-date Richard FitzSymond's addition of the C17, as a window on the east side is blocked by the north wall of his tower.

The south elevation has a massive chimney stack, surmounted by three highly ornamental shafts. These have been rebuilt with bricks made by the Bulmer Brick Co. to match those that were taken down. Such ornamental shafts are unusual for the mid C16, and

here they only serve two fireplaces. The adjoining window has ovolo moulded mullions. Further west is the back of the original full height hall, rebuilt in C18 brickwork. The west end is timber framed with brick infill (but not structurally related to the roof above) all in re-used material, and repaired in the C20. An earlier building may have extended further west where there is now a swimming pool.

We entered the house through the FitzSymonds tower. Beyond it, the mid C16 hall has been partitioned to provide an in-line east-west corridor, though two moulded bridging joists, with lamb's tongue stops typical of this period, still span the original width of the hall. The staircase in the north extension is modern, though it contains much re-used C17 material. There is a doorway with moulded brick jambs where the corridor enters the area of the former full height hall of circa 1500. At the north end of the corridor is an elaborately moulded beam at first floor level; the list description suggests that this is a relic of a low end gallery, but – given the position of hall window described above - it could also be part of a high end dais beam. Upstairs the very high quality of the carpentry of the hammer beam roof, the serpentine wind braces and the perforated ridge piece, was admired. The east gable in the attic room contained a window (now re-glazed) which had been blocked when the barrel vault roof of the adjoining mid C16 hall was constructed. Presumably, if there had been an earlier cross wing here, its eaves line would have been below the bottom of this window.

Members enjoyed tea, sandwiches and cake in the present dining room, and the owners were warmly thanked for their hospitality. After tea, the party visited the rigorously restored nearby church whose pulpit was once occupied by the Rev.

John Ouseley, the early Essex historian who provided material for Gibson's edition of Camden's *Britannia*, as well as for Richard Newcourt's *Repertorium*. Interesting features in the church include the nave roof and belfry, the south porch, and the south door with vertical external battens, all probably of C15 date. The pierced tracery of the pulpit is said to have come from Panfield Hall.

Michael Leach

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## 'BATAVILLE' AT EAST TILBURY

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At first site, a link between East Tilbury and Czechoslovakia seems improbable. However anyone getting lost in East Tilbury may find themselves passing an unusual, if shabby, area of housing which is reminiscent of (but rather more attractive than) the Crittal village at Silver End – flat roofed housing in the style of the C20 'modern movement'. It was built in 1932 by the Bata shoe company which had already built a model self-contained town for its workers at Zlin in Czechoslovakia, in the belief that a happy workforce was a more productive workforce. One of the Bata brothers installed his office in a lift, so that he could check what was going on any of the 16 floors without having to leave his desk.

Czech architects oversaw the East Tilbury town which was based on the Zlin blueprint, though it only reached a quarter of its intended final size. The central shoe factory was surrounded by spaciouly laid-out housing on a grid pattern, with ample green space. The houses are not in straight lines, but staggered to provide each garden with a greater degree of privacy. The town was provided with shops, a cinema, sports facilities, and even its own newspaper.

Residents who failed to keep their gardens up to scratch would receive warning letters from the management. It was a single industry town and there was no other work locally. Employees who lost their jobs also lost their homes. East Tilbury was only one of a series of such factories and towns scattered across the world but, with globalisation and cheaper labour in developing countries, the work has now gone to the places to which Bata used to export. The Tilbury factory finally ceased production last year.

Zlin also no longer makes shoes, and has had to attract new industries, a business centre and a university. The 16 storey former Bata head office now houses the local authority and a museum but, presumably, the 'office in the lift' is no more. East Tilbury faces a similar challenge and is expected to grow and change under Thames Gateway plans, though the architects have stated that they will respect the original principles on which the town was laid out. Doubtless some green space will be lost but the main factory building is listed, so a new use will need to be found for it. In the meantime, for those interested in C20 urban utopias, it is well worth a visit. Indeed it may well become a pleasant refuge from C21 post-modernism.

Michael Leach

Source: *The Guardian* 19/6/06

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## MODEL FARM AT LAWFORD HALL

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We are grateful to Dr James Bettley for supplying further information about the model farm at Lawford Hall, described in the Spring Newsletter after a visit by Society members. It was indeed

designed by an architect, W Lewis Baker. An agricultural engineer, J L Baker of Hargrave Kimbolton (possibly a relation of the architect) was consulted, and Mr Hawkins of Monks Eleigh was the contractor. The total cost was £3255, and the main material was 'good red bricks made by the proprietor on the spot'. The buildings provided accommodation for seventy head of cattle, twelve cart-horses with two or three nags and two colts, sixty pigs, one hundred pigeons, two hundred fowl and fifty duck, as well as a residence for the bailiff. The buildings were fully described in *Building News*, 31 October 1879, page 522, with a bird's eye view showing a train in the background, running on the line towards Manningtree. The accompanying plan of the model farm shows a 'horse wheel room', but it is not in the apsidal end of the long barn. These farm buildings are a remarkable survival and deserve to be listed. There is certainly nothing comparable in Essex.

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## VISIT TO HYLANDS HOUSE, CHELMSFORD

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Members of the Society visited Hylands on Wednesday evening, 23 August, to see the completed restoration. We were taken round by Nick Wickenden who told us the history of the house and showed us the restoration work of the last ten years. Hylands was built for Sir John Comyns about 1728. This was a red brick Queen Anne style house which is embedded in the present building. In the late eighteenth century, Cornelius Kortwright called in Humphry Repton to advise on the house and grounds. The 'Red Book' for Hylands has been lost, but it appears that Repton added a portico and a one storey east wing, and covered the original brick with white stucco. His work on the park included

the Serpentine Lake, and a walled kitchen and flower garden. The next owner, Pierre Labouchère, added a west wing to make the building symmetrical, and the stable block. Major changes were made by the Birmingham ironmaster, John Attwood, who acquired the property in 1839; he heightened the whole building and enlarged the portico. The house continued to be lived in by various owners till the 1960s, but then fell into decay until Chelmsford Borough Council decided on the restoration. Hylands has been made smaller, but the principal rooms on the ground floor have been sumptuously restored, the entrance hall in the neo-classical style of circa 1825, the drawing room, dining room and banqueting hall in the style of about twenty years later.

Many thanks to Ann Newman and Pat Ryan for arranging the visit, and to Nick Wickenden for giving us a most enjoyable and informative evening.

Jenny Ward

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## **VISIT TO EDWINS HALL, WOODHAM FERRERS**

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Members visited on 23 September 2006. Two previous visits are recorded. The first was on 26 September 1899; the short report in the *Transactions* was illustrated with a watercolour by A B Bamford. The second visit (by an astonishing total of 200 members!) was on 16 September 1926, and resulted in a longer article by R C Fowler on the ownership and descent of the manor. Both reports said little about the building itself, apart from suggesting that Edwin Sandys (bishop of Worcester 1559-70, bishop of London 1570-77, and archbishop of York 1577-88) built the main part of the surviving house. He had acquired the manor through his first

marriage to his cousin Mary in 1540. He was appointed master of St Catherine's college, Cambridge and vice-chancellor of the university, but was deprived of the mastership due to his married status by Queen Mary. He went into exile in 1554 to Antwerp, and then to Strasburg where his wife and son died. He returned to England in 1559, remarried, and was appointed bishop of Worcester in the same year. His second wife, Cicely (or Cecile) Willford (or Wilsford) came from Kent. This might explain some unexpected - but typically Kentish - structural features to be found in the rebuilt hall. The Sandys ownership seems to have ended in the mid C17, and subsequently the house was reduced in size (perhaps to make it more suitable for tenant farmers), and various alterations and additions have been made up to the present time. The ornamental plaster in the dining room, and the panelling (said to have been brought from Fremnells, a house inundated by Hanningfield reservoir) have been lost.

The house stands centrally within a square moated enclosure, and is now reached by a bridge on the south side built in the 1970s. There is a second outer moat which encloses a much larger irregular sub-triangular area. The eastern part of the outer moat has recently been cleared by mechanical digger, and a mix of broken concrete, brickyard waste, a large blue coping brick and worked freestone window sections (possibly from a church building) were found in the bank. This may have been imported rubble used to strengthen the bank, or possibly from demolished parts of the house.

The south front, three storeys high in red brick with blue header diaper patterning, was clearly built to impress. The diaper patterning (on the first two floors only) is complex, with diamonds, squares and

rhomboids, and is much more typical of Kentish practice for this period. Several courses of tiles in the brickwork above the front door represents the 'good honest repair' policy advocated by the SPAB, and probably date from the 1920s.

The top storey has no patterning, and the red bricks from which it is built may be slightly different. This may be the result of a different batch of bricks, or may represent a change of plan, or a slightly later addition to provide extra space. A moulded brick string course runs above the upper windows in the shallow parapet concealing the double pile tiled roof. The east end is timber framed above the ground floor brickwork, and may mark the demolition line of the larger original building. All the internal walls are of substantial timber framing, forming large square panels, rather than the close studding typical of Essex buildings. These are infilled with staves morticed and tenoned into the upper and lower beams, or into the arched brace. One side of the staves had laths nailed across to take plaster, while the other side was infilled with daub supported by vertical rods tied back to the laths, and held in a 'V' groove cut into the top of the lower beam. This too is more suggestive of Kent than Essex practice. The west gable of the main range was timber framed with evidence of a large window to the attic chamber that also had access to the attic area of the porch. The main roof was of side purlin form with wind braces, but it was impossible to see the structure of the double pile roof.

The interior of the kitchen, in the north west corner of the house, now has exposed brick walls. These are of late C17 or early C18 date. The chimney however is older, and might be a remaining fragment of the earlier house, though its bricks are more or less contemporary with the Sandys rebuild.

Various brick outbuildings on the north side date from C18, C19 and C20. Though reduced in size and much altered, it remains a complex and fascinating high status building.

The afternoon finished with a visit to the parish church where the link with the Sandys family continued. In the chancel is the monument to Cecile Sandys, wife of the archbishop of York, erected in 1619 after her death in 1610. It is described by Pevsner as an unusual design in alabaster, with an 'exceptional and enchanting' background behind the figure, with the whole area of the pediment carved into an arbour of roses - a truly memorable monument. The demolition or collapse of the early C16 west tower has resulted in the timber belfry being constructed against the west wall of the aisle, supported on a tie beam, rather than on wooden posts as in earlier belfries. Remnants of wall paintings remain above the chancel arch, depicting Christ flanked by angels, with the mouth of Hell in the south corner. This has been the subject of a recent restoration but, to the dismay of many of the congregation, remains (as described by Pevsner) hardly recognisable.

We are extremely grateful to our host, Sharon Hutton-Mason for generously opening her house to us, and for the enthusiastic guidance of local historian Stephen Nunn.

Michael Leach and Brenda Watkin

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## **GIDEA PARK AND THE GARDEN SUBURB MOVEMENT**

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This Newsletter has described the purpose-built communities of Silver End and East Thurrock in Essex, both built by industrialists to house their workers in

the late 1920s or early 1930s. Both were prompted by idealism, though perhaps with an element of self-interest, as doubtless well housed workers were happy and productive workers. There were plenty of C19 precedents for similar provision, such as Saltaire which was begun by Sir Titus Salt in 1851. Port Sunlight (for Lever's, the soap manufacturers) and Bourneville (for the Cadbury's chocolate factory) date from a few decades later.

Apart from a few enlightened industrialists, the unplanned provision of housing was in the hands of the speculative builder throughout the C19. His activities were described in 1910 as '*uncertain, unscientific, uneconomical, unsocial and inertistic*'. Clearly there was a need for better housing as well as great concern about the unhealthy nature of many city dwellings. One of the most influential writers was Ebenezer Howard (1850-1928), a shorthand writer in the Houses of Parliament. He advocated a solution for both the unhealthy overcrowding of cities, and the depopulation of the countryside, by the construction of new towns, containing a balanced mix of housing, schools, shops, community centres and industry to ensure that residents had employment, as well as all the essential services. These were to be called 'garden cities' and would be surrounded by countryside. His seminal book was published in 1898, with the better known second edition of 1902 renamed 'Garden Cities of Tomorrow'. His ideas had a profound influence on town planning through much of the C20. The post Second World War new towns and the concept of the Green Belt, for example, clearly stem from Howard's ideas.

The first practical steps to realise these ideas were at Letchworth in 1903, but growth was slow due to the difficulty of attracting industry to this pioneering

project. In 1907 Dame Henrietta Barnett established the Hampstead Garden Suburb. The masterplan was drawn up by Parker and Unwin, the architects of Letchworth, with the central core of public buildings designed by Edwin Lutyens in 1908. Unlike Letchworth, it was never intended to establish industrial development in this middle class suburb, but the spacious layout, the agreeable design of the housing, and the generous planting of the open spaces, have made it a benchmark for civilised urban design.

These developments are well known. What is much less well known is that Essex was also an early pioneer in this field with the creation of the 'Romford Garden Suburb' in 1910. In 1897 Herbert Raphael bought the Gidea Park estate and by 1904 had given the west edge to Romford as a town park. He also laid out an 80 acre golf course on the eastern side. He was also interested in the idea of the garden suburb, and was already a shareholder of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Company. With two other HGSC shareholders, he formed Gidea Park Ltd to build a garden suburb on the remaining 360 acres of his estate. The Great Eastern Railway was persuaded to build a new station (initially called Squirrels Heath and Gidea Park) to serve the new community. In July 1910 the foundation stone for an exhibition of houses and cottages was laid by the president of the Local Government Board; this was to form the nucleus of the Romford Garden Suburb with houses costing £500, and cottages £350. The objects of the exhibition were '*to demonstrate to housing and town planning authorities, to builders, and to the public generally, the improvement in modern housing and building, due to the advance of scientific knowledge, the revival of arts and crafts, and the progress of the garden suburb*

*movement, and in so doing to assist in raising the standard of housing, not only in the outer metropolis, but in the whole of Britain*'. Eminent writers (including H G Wells, Arnold Bennett and Thomas Hardy), artists, playwrights and other worthies were approached for their views on what was best and what was worst about contemporary housing, and about 160 architects entered the competition, with each designing one or more model houses or cottages. Several of these names are still well known – Clough Williams-Ellis (of Portmeirion fame), M H Baillie Scott, Philip Tilden and C R Ashbee. The houses were built to the north of Gidea Park station, and many of them were furnished (and some provided with completed gardens) before being open to the public in 1911. A handsome and detailed exhibition catalogue was published; the views of the eminent were printed (many in facsimile holograph), and each house was illustrated with engraved illustrations and plans, and a descriptive account written by the architect responsible. Favourable terms were offered to those interested in purchase.

Subsequent growth was slow. It was never completed as planned, and time and commercial pressures diluted the guiding principles of the original concept. Eastern Avenue cut a swathe across the northern part in the 1920s, and the golf course was enlarged. Another 100 houses were built at this time. In 1934 Gidea Park Ltd held further competition, and more plots were sold, mainly along Eastern Avenue. However this was really little more than ribbon development, and the concept of the garden suburb had effectively been abandoned.

Michael Leach

#### Sources:

anon, 1997 reprint 'The Hundred Best Houses: the Book of the House and Cottage Exhibition' Gidea Park & District Civic Society

1968, typescript notes on Romford Garden Suburb produced by Gidea Park & District Civic Society

Powell, W R, 1978 Essex VCH volume vii

Hitchcock H-R, 1958 'Architecture, Nineteenth & Twentieth Centuries' Penguin

Pevsner, N, 1949 'Pioneers of Modern Design' Pelican

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## ACCESS TO ANCESTRY.COM THROUGH ESSEX LIBRARY SERVICE

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This is now available to all Essex Library members and gives free access to all censuses from 1841 to 1901 for the whole of England and Wales; the birth, marriage and death registrations for England and Wales; and various other databases. Use is free and unlimited for library card holders. It is also worth reminding members that various other on line services are available from your home PC, including access to the new Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Encyclopaedia Britannica and various other standard works of reference. All you need is your library card number.

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## OXFORD UNIVERSITY CONTINUING EDUCATION

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The following courses may be of interest to members.

5-7 January 2007: The Villa in the C19 and C20

Charity Number 213218

Winter 2006

20-21 January 2007: Late Mediaeval Handwriting

17 March 2007: Records of the Old Poor Law

24 March 2007: Ancient Plants and Woodlands

13-15 April 2007: Mediaeval English Childhood

19 May 2007: The Local Church

Further details may be had from Rewley House, 1 Wellington Square, Oxford OX1 2JA, telephone 01865 270368, or e-mail [ppdayweek@conted.ox.ac.uk](mailto:ppdayweek@conted.ox.ac.uk)

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## TRANSPORT NEEDED

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John Boyes is a long-standing member of the Society who lives in Chingford. In 1977 he published 'Canals of Eastern England' and he is now keen to update this. However, he no longer drives and wonders if anyone would be willing to take him to ERO in order to continue his research. Any offers of help to assist with this important work should be sent to the Editor or Deputy Editor, please.

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## STUDY DAY ON VICTORIAN GARDENS, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE 28th APRIL, 2007

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A Study Day arranged by the Essex Gardens Trust in collaboration with The Essex Society of Archaeology and History on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> April, 2007

"Victorian Gardens, Public and Private"  
Speakers Hazel Conway, "The Victorian Park Movement" Anne Wilkinson, "The Victorian Amateur Gardeners and their Gardens" Patrick Denney on "Victorian Colchester" and a short introductory talk by Ian Balham on "Colchester Castle

Park" followed by his guided tours of the Park during the lunch break.

The Methodist Church Hall, Colchester  
Coffee and Registration 9:45 a.m. Close of day 4:00 p.m. Cost £10:00

Michael Leach

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## HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, ESSEX BRANCH MEETINGS 2007

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Meetings will be held in Committee Room 1, County Hall, Chelmsford. Members and visitors are asked to arrive 15 minutes before the meetings at County Hall for security reasons.

SATURDAY 13 January 2007, 2.30p.m.  
James Bettley, architectural historian, currently revising Essex Pevsner: *Essex Architects from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.*

SATURDAY 3 February 2007, 2.30p.m.  
Members' Meeting – short talks by members

SATURDAY 3 March 2007, 2.30p.m.  
Dr Chris Thornton, Victoria County History of Essex, Univ. of Essex: *Wartime Life in Clacton and the Clacton VCH Group project for schools* [Illustrated]

FRIDAY 13 April 2007, 7.30p.m.  
Emeritus Prof. Peter Marshall: *Imperial Rule? Colonial Liberty? Civil War? Aspects of the American Conflict 1763-1783.*

Visitors and prospective members warmly welcome - a £2 donation is requested.

Shirley Durgan

**MEMBERSHIP** - Subscriptions due on January 1st each year

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Enquiries about delayed or missing publications and about the supply of recent back numbers should be addressed to the Secretary.

---

**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2005 the projected value of the fund stands at £33,671.

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 150

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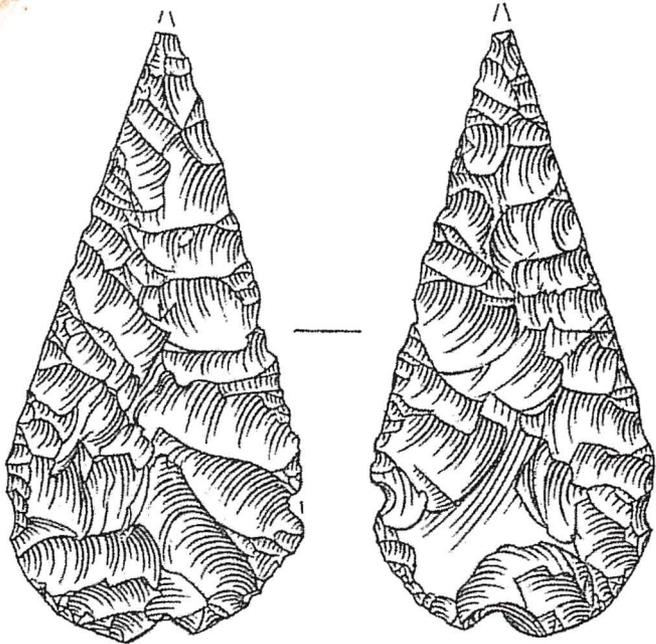
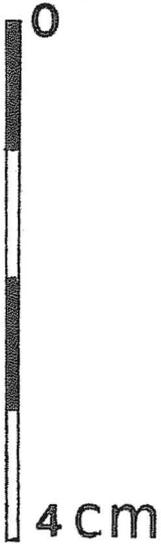
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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Spring 2007

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 151

SPRING 2007

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**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE  
ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 6 JULY 2007**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

## Cover illustration:

One of the Early Neolithic flint blades from the site at Lodge Farm, St Osyth. This illustration is taken from figure 42 of the volume below and is drawn by Hazel Martingell. The features and finds from this site have just been published by East Anglian Archaeology as EAA 117 Prehistoric Monuments and Settlement at St. Osyth, Essex by Mark Germany ISBN 978 184194 070 0 Cost £15.00

See <http://www.eaareports.org.uk/> for details of all publications including forthcoming reports such as EAA 120 Iron Age Warrior Burial at Kelvedon, Essex by Paul Sealey.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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In a speech made at the Tate Modern on 6<sup>th</sup> March, 2007, Tony Blair claimed that his period in office had been a 'golden age' in cultural achievement. Whilst applauding the scrapping of museum admission charges, investment in regional theatres and the allocation of money to subsidise the arts, for which the Government is responsible, however, we cannot shut our eyes to a much less rosy picture at the local level, where cuts in local government expenditure are having a serious adverse effect.

In Essex, in recent years, the County Council has made the County Archivist redundant, cut its contribution to the Victoria County History by a half, closed the Essex Record Office branch at Colchester and imposed economies on its libraries service. The Dictionary of National Biography and national telephone directories have been removed from the shelves of most county libraries, the purchase of magazines was slashed – although this has now been partly countermanded following protests – and specialist library staff are no longer provided for specialist collections. The disposal of valuable historic volumes has long been a controversial issue.

In Waltham Forest, the Council has put forward plans for the closure of the William Morris Gallery and Vestry House Museum on weekdays and for restricted times for access to the archives. In Wandsworth, the Council is closing its museum. In central London, the Family Record Centre's census records are to be transferred to Kew in 2008. For the first time in its long history, the British Library has now warned that further reductions in funding could lead to the introduction of charges.

These developments are reflections of a threat which hangs over many local

historical services if there are further cuts in local government expenditure or the Department for Culture, Media & Sport itself is forced to make serious economies.

While it is of premier importance to provide financial backing for the development of sport and physical culture, it will be a sorry day if the support of historical services came to be regarded as less of a priority. We can, however, already see that the escalating cost of the Olympics may be allowed to hijack Heritage Lottery Funding, leaving only a pittance for other causes.

The fact that expenditure on Archives, museums and related services is discretionary is unsatisfactory, anyway. If we want our population – particularly the up and coming generation, to value their rich local heritage as a part of Britain's unique historic treasure house, we must do more to safeguard our museums and historical services.

More needs to be done to drive this home to our elected representatives, at both the local and Parliamentary level.

Stan Newens

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## HARLOW NEW TOWN 60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

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The establishment of new towns around London under the 1946 New Towns Act led to the designation of two new towns in Essex: Basildon and Harlow.

The idea of building new towns, or garden cities, was the brainchild of Ebenezer Howard, an idealist and social reformer, who set forth his ideas in his book, *Tomorrow: a Peaceful Path to Real Reform*, in 1898. The result was the formation of the Garden Cities Association, founded in 1899, which became the Town & Country Planning Association, and the foundation of

Letchworth Garden City in 1902 and Welwyn Garden City in 1920 – both in Hertfordshire.

Concern that uncontrolled London Sprawl would continue after the Second World War led to the Abercrombie Report of 1944, which recommended a green belt, on which building would not be allowed, all round London. Its corollary was that the expanding London population would be accommodated in planned new towns beyond the Green Belt, and this was the motivation behind the 1946 Act.

In west Essex, Harlow and Ongar were both proposed as possible new town sites, but Ongar was dropped at an early stage. Harlow was finally designated on 25<sup>th</sup> March, 1947, after a Public Enquiry, the master plan was prepared by Sir Frederick Gibberd, the architect and planner, and the first four houses went up in January 1949.

Harlow is therefore celebrating its 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a new town this year – although it is also a very old town, which was granted a market in 1218 and, long before that, was a Roman settlement with a temple on an Iron Age and previously a Bronze Age site.

Although, like all towns, it has its faults and some parts require regeneration, it is by and large a successful new town which embodies all the features of a garden city.

At the time of an anniversary, it is natural that the history of its development should be reviewed anyway. Proposals are, however, under consideration for the building of a further 16,000 homes under the East of England Plan and for regeneration of features which have been run down. Harlow Civic Society, which I chair, and other groups, have strong reservations about some of these proposals and – not surprisingly – the original aims of the Master Planner, Sir Frederick Gibberd, and the way in which

these were implemented are the subject of intense discussion.

For all these reasons, 2007 is a very significant year for Harlow.

Stan Newens

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## LOCAL RECORDERS

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In a separate article, Dr. Ken Aberdour outlines the history of the Essex Local History Recorder Scheme, which he has been running as the co-ordinator, since the death of his wife, the previous co-ordinator, in 1977.

As he indicates, not only is a new co-ordinator required to supervise the system but, in many areas, new recorders are required to replace those who have disappeared from the scene.

We would like to hear from volunteers prepared to take on the task of recording current events in their own localities or prepared in any way to help to reanimate the scheme originally started by the late Donald Jarvis.

Stan Newens

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## MISSING COUNCIL MINUTES

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It is somewhat embarrassing for a historical society to admit that it has lost a part of its own history. On checking the Society's own archives we have discovered, to our horror, that the Council minutes from 1971 to 1987 were missing. Energetic enquiries amongst past and present Council members have succeeded in filling some of these gaps, and we are very grateful for these. However we still lack any Council minutes between 1975 and 1981. If any member has any minutes from this period, the present Council would be

extremely grateful to receive copies.  
Please contact the Hon. Secretary.

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## ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY & HISTORY

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The Committee met on 3 occasions under the chairmanship of Cllrs. Double and Manning-Press, with councillors and representatives of Essex Archaeology, Museums, Local and County Societies. A visit was made to the Museum of Power, Langford.

Mesolithic and Iron Age occupation has been found at Nevendon. A Bronze Age hoard of axes and gold sheet has been found at Margaretting. BBC1 Coast programme featured the Rolls Farm Tollesbury red hill. Further work at the Colchester Roman circus has revealed the eastern end and spina. Saxon fish-traps have been recorded off Pewit Island, Blackwater. A high-status 14th century barn has been surveyed at Great Saling. Boreham 2nd World War airfield, sites at Castle Point, Chelmsford, and Birch airfield have been documented.

Evaluation of Fossett's Camp, Southend, considered for development, has shown both prehistoric and Saxon occupation. Finds from the Prittlewell Saxon tomb have been conserved and are in storage awaiting display in a new museum building which has been promised. The rest of the site will be excavated before the road is widened. Southend Council had not replaced its Planning Archaeologist / Development Control Officer. Saffron Walden castle has had some preservation work.

The European Route of industrial Heritage ([www.erih.net](http://www.erih.net)) has discussed possible sites in Eastern England in addition to Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Mills.

The Essex Historic Environment Record

is available at <http://unlockingessex.essexcc.gov.uk> and is being more regularly updated. Brentwood, Rochford District and Maldon have been assessed for their historic settlements which will be used for development planning purposes. The Stour valley is being assessed for a better understanding of its historic environment landscape. Chelmsford Museum is to have an extension built for which plans were now in preparation. Concern continued to be expressed at the lack of firm strategies for conservation of Colchester's town walls. Advice to farmers about management of their historical and archaeological sites continued to be popular. The exhibition "Marvellous Marshes" about the coastal environment was on tour through Essex.

James Kemble

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## THE 11TH ANNUAL ESSEX PLACE-NAMES SEMINAR

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The 11th Annual Essex Place-names Seminar will be held on Saturday afternoon, 17th November 2007, at Essex University, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester (not at Thurrock as previously publicised). The Guest Speaker will be Dr. Stephen Rippon of Exeter University who will speak on "Landscape of Early Medieval Britain in East Anglia and Essex".

Tickets £5.50 (payable to "ESAH") from the Project Co-ordinator, 27 Tor Bryan, Ingatestone, CM4 9JZ, enclosing a self-addressed stamped envelope.

James Kemble

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## **OBITUARY: COLONEL SIR JOHN RUGGLES-BRISE CB, OBE, DU, TD, JP**

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Sir John was born 13 June 1908 and died in 2007, aged 98. He had a long and distinguished career. After leaving Eton (1921-1928) he went to Alberta, Canada, to an uncle's ranch, but returned to England later in 1928 to join the Employers' Liability Insurance Company. He became Assistant Branch Manager in 1935, and proceeded to Manager in 1937.

Sir John's military career started as a TA gunner with the TA AA Regiment. He was commissioned in 1938 and called up for service in August 1939. Having served with distinction in various posts, he was demobbed in 1945 with an MBE (Military) and took command of the 599<sup>th</sup> Regiment (Essex), becoming Colonel.

In 1942 his father, Sir Edward Ruggles-Brise, died and Sir John took over the Spains Hall estate, dedicating much time to its improvement. He not only entered into a full local and county life, but was also Deputy Lieutenant of Essex in 1944, Vice-Lieutenant in 1947, and finally Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum from 1958 to 1978. As Lord Lieutenant he became involved (as Patron, President etc) with some fifty organisations connected with civil as well as military life.

He was passionately attached to and involved with Essex history and archaeology, and was elected President of our Society in 1958. When the Essex Archaeological and Historical Congress was formed at County Hall, Chelmsford, on 13 June 1964, he was a leading figure, chaired the meeting and was delighted that this Society was involved in its formation. Though it was his birthday, duty called and he was there.

Again when the Society removed the Reverend Philip Morant's gravestone into the parish church at Aldham, and a memorial plaque was dedicated in the former church of St Mary-at-the-Walls, Colchester, he presided at the service held in each church. He was delighted that we had honoured our county historian in this way. Being Honorary Secretary of the Society at that time, it was a great privilege to have his assistance with the details.

On retiring from the Lord Lieutenancy, Sir John accepted the role of the Society's Honorary Life President. He was also the first patron of the Victoria County History of Essex Appeal Fund, again giving time to our county and its forward-looking organisations.

Sir John was held in much honour and affection by all of us who knew him and shared his kindly friendship and his beloved Spains Hall venue. We thank him for his support. He will be remembered as a true gentleman who always had time for everyone and met us with that wonderful smile, and a warm heartfelt greeting.

A memorial service is to be held at Chelmsford Cathedral in July when the numerous individuals and organisations that shared his long and devoted life to his beloved county of Essex will give a sad but grateful farewell.

John Appleby

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## **THE RETURN OF THE FOREST**

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The Woodland Trust's plan to add to the much reduced remains of Hainault Forest has already been reported in these pages (EAH News Winter 2004). Showing a further leap of faith, the Trust has recently purchased three fields adjoining the M11 motorway at Theydon

Bois as the first step in establishing a link between Hainault and Essex's other ancient woodland, Epping Forest. Planting will start shortly, with the ultimate and ambitious intention of linking all the green spaces of north and east London.

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## TILTY ABBEY MILL – A SERIOUS LOSS

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This is a Grade II\* listed watermill, dating from the C18, but almost certainly on the site of the mediaeval monastic mill. Remarkably, it retains intact all its mill machinery and equipment, together with its outbuildings, one of which conceals a World War II pillbox. The main building, partly hidden by trees, is visible from the monastic site itself and is an important part of what is still a tranquil setting, in spite of intermittent intrusions from Stansted airport traffic. Council's attention was drawn to a recent planning application to convert the mill to residential use, necessitating the removal of most, if not all, of the mill machinery. While this would ensure the survival of the shell of the building, it was felt that it would be far better to find another use that would enable the mill machinery to be preserved, used or displayed. It was also felt that special attention should be paid to its important landscape contribution to the adjoining monastic site. A letter making these points was sent to Uttlesford District Council. Unfortunately English Heritage did not oppose the proposal and, in spite of representations from a variety of other organisations, planning consent was granted in February. It is not clear what will happen to the mill machinery, or whether a proper record of the interior will be made.

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## COPFORD REVISITED

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While involved with the Copford church restoration in the 1980's and early 90s, I followed up various leads into the church's past. As invariably turns out, the more one discovers, the more questions arise waiting to be answered, until the whole project becomes one vast jigsaw with many missing pieces. Before they are forgotten or misplaced, I feel I should contribute my pieces to the general picture. One proviso, however, it is most important to separate known fact from what is speculation, even through highly probable. The temptation to indulge in wild surmise, however exciting, should be firmly resisted.

The 21st century demands written or visible proof before allowing the truth of any statement. It is only a little over one hundred years since literacy, in theory at any rate, became anything like universal. Before this, accounts of events were passed on by word of mouth from each generation to the next. Such information should not be discounted. When I came to Copford 40 years ago, I caught the end of this oral tradition which lies now, sadly, almost disappeared. When attempting to analyse and understand the motives and actions of those who came to Copford centuries ago it is as well to remember they experienced aspirations, responsibilities and prejudices as we do today.

From 995 when Ethelred of Bocking bequeathed lands at "Coppingford" to Elfstan, the then Bishop of London, until 1559 when Bishop Edmund Bonner lost the manor and with it the church to the Crown, it remained the property of London.

This church, there *may* have been a previous one but there is no evidence of this, was built in the first half of the 12th century: acanthus carvings round the north porch suggest post 1130: the tunic

sleeves on the soldiers standing sentinel each side of the most westerly window on the north wall are longer than those on the Bayeux tapestry (c. 1070's) but their helmets are pre 1150 when the shape changed.

These are the facts: there is good circumstantial evidence to arrive at a closer date. Who erected such a wealthy building and why, has always been asked. Stone was used in an area with no natural stone: the paintings were lavish in blues and greens - lapis lazuli and malachite, traces of the former were found during the recent restoration. All this was associated with great ecclesiastical buildings.

Professor Fernie, author of *The Architecture of the Anglo-Saxons*, who spoke at the symposium on Copford Church at Essex University in 1994, thought that Copford church was built as a bishop's chapel. This was an era when bishops were vying with each other to create particularly opulent and unusual buildings. The small door on the north wall of the chancel is known as the priest's door; did this provide access from another building? No trace of such a building has been found. Very unusually the priest's room which was generally over the chancel stretched the whole length of the church.

The window high up on the west wall was originally a door - evidence of the hinges was discovered recently. Professor Fernie thought that the door led to a platform which could be used for preaching or the display of relics.

In 1134 Anselm, Bishop of Bury, was appointed Bishop of London but was never enthroned, probably due to a difference of opinion with King Stephen. He only retained the title for two years until 1136. Anselm was nephew of Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury. ('Nephew' at that time was sometimes used euphemistically). Both Anselms

knew Rome; (the elder was Italian by birth) and became influenced by the culture of the time which showed Byzantine influence.

Abbot Anslem caused his sacristan, Hervey, to commission a Master Hugo - the title denotes a degree - who was a bronze caster, painter and sculptor, to oversee the artistic works of the Abbey. He would probably have had a number of apprentices helping him and learning from him. Among the artefacts attributed to Master Hugo were some massive gates with intricate bronze casting: these were considered to be particularly fine, but were melted down at the Reformation. He was also credited with the Bury Bible and it is here that we have a possible connection to Copford.

During my researches into the accounts of the church in various archaeological transactions, I found a mention of the Copford's paintings and their similarity to the illustrations in the Bury Bible. While taking a party round the church in 1994, I mentioned this saying I did not know where the Bury Bible was. After the tour, one member of the party told me that if I went to Bury in the next week, I could see the bible. It was on loan from Corpus Christi, Cambridge, where it had been kept since the Reformation. Of course I went The Bible was under lock and key in a glass case, only one page being visible. I was extremely interested, subsequently obtaining permission to view the Bible at close quarters in the Parker Library, Corpus Christi. The figures in the illustration bore a marked similarity to those in Copford; their stance, the flowing draperies and the elongated fingers. In particular the figure below Christ, in Christ in Majesty surrounded by Evangelists in the Book of Ezekiel is similar to our Jairus. I do not think pattern books are the explanation here. Even more striking was the colour of the Bury illustrations - blues and

greens almost psychedelic in their intensity, rarely having been exposed to light for four centuries. They give a real insight into how Copford must have looked originally, with scenes from the Bible covering the walls from floor to ceiling.

The restorers under Wolfgang Gartner and Tom Organ in the 1990's restoration confirmed that the outlines had been done while the plaster was still wet; a little later - probably within a few days - the plaster was rewetted and the rest of the illustrations filled in. This means that the paintings were executed at the same time that the church was built. Was it perhaps Master Hugo who executed the outlines, leaving his acolytes to complete the paintings? While there is no written proof of such an association, the evident similarity of the Copford paintings to the Bury Bible and the Byzantine influence found here seems to be strong circumstantial evidence to link Copford church's foundation with Abbot Anselm's tenure of the Bishopric of London 1134-1136.

While considering the newly-built church, mention should be made of the skin found on the north door, which had been originally in the south porch. It was the medieval practice to place a layer of skin - generally ox-hide, between the oak door and the metal hinge to prevent rust corrosion. In Copford it is human skin. Tests in London and Leeds medical laboratories carried out during the 19th and 20th centuries proved that it was from a fair skinned male, possibly a marauding Dane, although marauding seems to have taken place two centuries earlier. It has been suggested that it came from an older building. Was it likely that old material of this kind would have been used on such a new and expensive edifice?

This area of Essex had been under Danelaw until the Conquest, after which

the Norman kings regarded much of the country including East Anglia as their personal hunting preserve. Strict laws were enforced to protect the royal rights. Those of Henry I were translated in the reign of Queen Elizabeth by John Manswood. One of these regarding hunting deer, states "...he that do hunt a wild beast and doth make him paunt, shall pay 10 shillings: If he be not a free man then he shall pay double. If he be a bond man he shall lose his skin".

There is in Copford still a field known as Danesfield. Was the skin nailed to the door of the church in the 1130's from a fair skinned native of the region? Was he an outlaw, or just someone unlucky enough to be caught while supplementing his food supply?

If Abbot Anselm, a member of the ecclesiastical nobility was the founder of Copford's church as seems probable, the last Bishop of London to hold the office with all lands including Copford, Edmund Bonner, was an entirely different character. Of humble origin he rose to eminence through his own ability. After taking a law degree at what is now Pembroke College, Oxford, he eventually became chaplain to Cardinal Wolsey. He later was employed by Henry VIII on various missions, including one connected with the Kings divorce which Bonner supported, together with the idea of secession from Rome. He was rewarded with a number of Bishoprics culminating in that of London, which included the manor of Copford in its property.

Like Henry, Bonner always supported the Mass and the old forms of worship. It was the Protestantism of Edward VI and the introduction of Cranmer's new prayer book which aroused his opposition, resulting in the loss of all his privileges. On a more personal level perhaps he disliked the whitewashing of the Copford murals. Reinstated under Mary he

afterwards remained true to the old faith until refusing to take the Oath of Supremacy to Elizabeth in 1559 he was deprived of the Bishopric of London and subsequently imprisoned in the Marshalsea gaol where he remained, a prisoner of conscience, until his death on September 6th 1569.

Always a controversial figure, it is said that Bonner was buried as St Georges, Southwark at midnight to avoid hostile demonstrations. There is no written record of such a burial. In Copford however there has been an oral tradition that the Bishop's body was brought here, lying for a short while at Easthorpe on its way. Copford is said to have been Bonners favourite church and in his will he expressed the wish that he should be buried here. In spite of exhaustive searches both by myself and independently by the late Tony West, we failed to discover any will.

The strongest evidence that the Bishop is buried here is provided by the Rev. Rucke-Keene, who states in his hand book to Copford Church of 1898 that workmen preparing a tomb in 1809 for the Rev. Kelly, himself an interesting character, found a coffin with Edmund Bonner's name on. It was said to be left where it was found, but there is no written record of this. It must be remembered that the incumbent who would properly be the one to record any such unusual event, was himself being buried. Also Bonner had always been regarded with disfavour as Catholicism still was at that time. It should also be noted that Rucke-Keene was writing about 90 years after the alleged discovery, certainly while folk memory was fresh. It does not seem likely that such a story could have been fabricated without some foundation. The evidence added together, although circumstantial, seems to suggest that there is a possibility that Edmund Bonner's final

resting place is to the north of the altar in Copford church.

If the Bishop's body does indeed lie in our church, a more intriguing question should be considered. How did it get there? The ideas I put forward now are entirely speculative but could be given some thought. For centuries, until tar macadam in the 19th century revolutionised land transport, water had been the chief means of conveying goods especially those in bulk, across the country.

I personally think it is more likely the body would have been spirited away before any *initial* burial. A cart with a suspicious looking burden trundling through the streets of London, let alone the muddy ruts of Essex night have aroused comment. In the 16th century the Marshalsea in the Borough was much more accessible to the Thames than today. Fishing was carried out from most coastal villages, as well as main towns on the coast. Wigborough and Salcott, west of Mersea Island were known to be thriving fishing ports, the latter only a few miles overland from Copford. The whole operation would have been clandestine, presupposing Bonner sympathisers at both ends of the journey. The initial part of the undertaking may have been comparatively simple. Once on shore the body could have been taken by an inconspicuous fishing boat, perhaps manned by catholic sympathisers from the Continent used to evading unwanted interference from authority. The first stage of the journey having been negotiated, that at the end could have been more hazardous.

If the story about the Bishop remaining at Easthorpe is true, it could suggest that the whole operation was carried out in stages, possibly at night. In any case the then incumbent of Copford, John Pulleyn must have been in on the operation, as

well as the Rector of Easthorpe arid at least some of the parishioners - perhaps even the whole village! If Bishop Bonner did in some way end here as supposed, it must mean that he inspired both love and loyalty in the village. Perhaps also there had been a reluctance to accept the new prayer book and, I am quite sure, considerable resentment at the obliteration of their familiar wall paintings.

It appears that after the first 150 years, the fortunes of the church were left to the parishioners. As might be expected, reconstruction and renovation were carried out during times of comparative material prosperity. A tower with its massive oak supports was out in places 1390-1400 when Chaucer published his Canterbury Tales. Just as Anselm employed the best materials and craftsmen succeeding generations have done the same. At the end of the 20th century the Parish Church Council decided to commission a top architect to oversee structural restoration and the best conservators for the paintings.

And so Anselm, Bonner and all the unsung forefathers of the village your endeavours remain providing continuity, beauty and stability, mirroring a desire for a more intangible excellence in an ever changing world.

Margaret Cornwall

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## THE EPPING JAUNDICE OF 1965

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In February 1965, a student at St Margaret's Hospital, Epping, was taken ill with stomach pains and mild jaundice. Subsequently it was learnt that his wife, who lived in London, had had a similar illness at the same time. Soon after, a local hospital consultant developed similar symptoms and other cases

quickly followed. It became apparent that there was a small and rather unusual epidemic on hand. The cases were all clustered in the Epping and Ongar areas, and there was no increased incidence of jaundice elsewhere in Essex, or nationally. Blood tests on the victims gave results that were not characteristic of infectious hepatitis, and there was nothing to suggest any other common – or less common – medical cause of jaundice.

It was clear that an epidemiological approach would be needed to explain this localised and unusual outbreak. Various factors emerged that were common to all the cases. Adult couples in the same household both tended to be affected, but their children were spared. There was a strong bias to the professional classes amongst the victims, and all the cases – apart from the student's wife in London - lived in Epping or Ongar, or within a short distance of these towns. The isolated London case was clearly an important clue. Close questioning of the student revealed that he and his wife were fond of wholemeal bread, and that he had taken home a loaf that he had purchased from the Epping baker. Many other victims admitted a partiality to wholemeal bread, though they reported (not surprisingly) that their offspring would only eat white bread. This explained the absence of children amongst the victims, and suggested that the wholemeal bread was the possible cause, although this was (and is) a very rare cause of food poisoning. Small pieces of stale wholemeal bread were obtained from the kitchens of two of the victims, and analysis showed that these were both contaminated with an industrial chemical known to be toxic to the liver. Analysis of the wholemeal flour in the Epping bakery showed contamination with the same chemical. The bakery had a branch shop

in Ongar which sold bread from the same batches, and this clearly explained the second focus of the epidemic.

It took longer to work out how the flour had become contaminated. Analysis of the wholesaler's flour was negative, and there were no cases of jaundice from other bakeries that had been supplied from this source. Nothing was found in the Epping bakery to explain how this chemical had got into the bread. Attention then focussed what had happened to the flour between leaving the wholesaler and its arrival in Epping. After exhaustive enquiries it was found that the flour had been transported in a carrier's van which had also been used to deliver containers of industrial chemicals, one of which had spilt and leaked a week or so before the first reported case. Any contaminated packages had been returned to sender, but the seepage of the chemical into the brown hessian sacks containing the flour had not been noticed. After delivery to Epping, the sacks were stored in a warm place for a week before being used, and this interval would have allowed the contaminated part of the sack to dry out and become invisible before being up-ended and emptied into the flour bin. It also explained the delay between the delivery of the flour and the onset of the first cases.

Fortunately the illness was relatively mild and all the victims made an uneventful recovery. There were no more cases after the temporary closure of the bakery, apart from one man in Ongar who became ill about six weeks later. The victim had been away on a long business trip and his wife, knowing his partiality to wholemeal bread, had bought a loaf and put it into the deepfreeze to await his return, giving a distinctly twentieth century twist to this outbreak! The only reported non-human victim was a dog who had been fed

wholemeal bread crusts, and subsequently developed jaundice. Unfortunately attempts to obtain blood from this animal were unsuccessful, and resulted in the pathologist being attacked and bitten. On a happier note, follow up of the victims two years, and twenty four years, later showed no long term consequences from the incident. This outbreak illustrates the painstaking detective work required to trace the source of new or unusual diseases, particular in illnesses caused by food which may have travelled considerable distances and passed through many hands. The discipline is not dissimilar to historical research.

Michael Leach

Sources:

British Medical Journal 26 February 1966, 514-516

Postgraduate Medical Journal 1968, 44, 78-80

Journal of Epidemiology & Community Health 1992, 46, 327-328

Personal knowledge.

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## A PAROCHIAL DISPUTE

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Letters to and from the archdeacon of Essex shed some light on a dispute between the Rev. W M Oliver (rector of Bobbingworth from 1838 to 1899) and his churchwarden, Mr Cure of Blake Hall. The archdeacon involved the rector of Stondon Massey as his personal intermediary, and dealt with this troublesome affair entirely by letter.

The difficulties seem to have been aggravated by the long-standing structural problems of the parish church. The vestry minutes reveal numerous repairs to the nave, including underpinning in 1842. The two tiered timber framed bell tower at the west end was also in very poor structural

condition; in 1818 a decision was made to pull it down, but it was still standing 20 years later when new plans were discussed to encase it in brick, and to cover the spire in copper. Mr Oliver intervened at this point and presented the vestry with the design for a new brick tower designed by 'Mr Burton' (probably Decimus Burton who was designing a new rectory in the neighbouring parish of Greensted) and he advanced £150 towards its construction. He also paid for six new bells. As a result, a new battlemented tower in yellow brick was completed in 1840 and the mediaeval timber structure was removed. It is possible that these early dealings with his dilatory vestry influenced his feelings about the parish's subsequent reluctance to update the church. In August 1863, he wrote to the archdeacon about his plans for restoring the chancel, which were '*in Mr Chancellor's office in Chelmsford*'. This was completed later in the year, but the nave, of course, remained the responsibility of the parish. Further correspondence indicated that the parish had made an undertaking to rebuild the red brick structure with its timber tracery windows to match the standard established by the rector in the chancel. Red brick was very unfashionable for churches at this date.

The storm broke just before Christmas 1863 with a complaint from Mr Oliver to the archdeacon that Mr Cure was making considerable alterations to the nave without consulting him or the vestry. On Boxing Day the archdeacon wrote nervously to his local intermediary, Mr Reeve (rector of Stondon Massey), mentioning the need for a faculty but asking him not to do anything '*which may aggravate any heal*'. Mr Reeve's report was not encouraging. Mr Cure had taken down the vestry within the nave and built a new one in red brick, on

the site of the former timber bell tower, as well as dismantling and reordering the pews without consulting the rector. It was clear that Mr Oliver wanted the nave to be brought up to the standard of his re-built chancel, as well as having a strong objection to the red brick vestry, about which he had not been consulted. A fellow clergyman had rubbed salt into the wound by commenting '*Well, Oliver, Mr Cure has built you a pig sty*'. The archdeacon conceded to Mr Oliver that he had the law on his side, and that he should have been consulted by his churchwarden, but added '*I venture to say to a brother clergyman (that) when peace is so desirable, much may be conceded*'. His letter to Mr Reeve was more direct; '*our great object must be to smooth over the difficulties and prevent a permanent breach between the two*'.

For a while, all went well. Mr Cure apologised to his rector and plans were submitted for the proposed changes in the nave. However, it was not long before his churchwarden brought up his own grievance. Mr Oliver's '*ornamental works*' to the chancel had taken place over Christmas – ceilings were pulled down, and pews were uprooted, including his own, part of which was taken by the new chancel arch. His new pew was too small for his family, and he doubtless felt very aggrieved about this. There had also been serious disruptions to public worship at an important time of year, with a significant shortage of seats. The archdeacon tried to mollify the rector by indicating that, though he felt that the pews were too high, he had no objection to the plans for the re-ordered nave, but it was too late. At the beginning of February, Mr Cure wrote to the archdeacon to complain that the rector had preached a condemnatory sermon, pointedly aimed at himself. He had read the '*awful denunciations from the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> chapter of the prophet Haggai*' while

nodding meaningfully in his direction. [This book, at the end of the Old Testament, opens with Haggai reproving the people for not rebuilding the temple]. Members of the congregation had '*felt their flesh creep*'. The parish was in a ferment and, more ominously, the wives of the two aggrieved men had had a meeting and made promises which their husbands could not possibly keep. Towards the end of February, in spite of the apprehensions of the wives, the rector and his churchwarden had a stormy meeting in Mr Cure's house to discuss the height of the pews, but it seems that neither dared to broach the subject of the sermon.

Some subsequent letters must be missing, but in early March Mr Oliver sent a copy of his sermon to the archdeacon. It has to be said that his attitude was not very conciliatory. He had been anxious for Mr Cure to hear his sermon which was '*preached for his good and benefit, for his instruction and edification*'. He intended '*to teach him Bible notions on church building, a subject in which I fear he is lamentably ignorant*'. He had agreed with Mr Cure five or six years earlier that they would rebuild the whole church, and share the expense; though he had set his own part of the church in order, little had been done to improve the nave. Frederick Chancellor's letter of the previous year was quoted as further evidence of the ignorance of his churchwarden. The archdeacon's reply was emollient – the rector was within his rights to preach as he had, and Mr Cure had not followed proper ecclesiastical procedures. However the vestry, on 24 March 1864, clearly sided with Mr Cure, and moved a vote of thanks to him for building the new vestry and for repairing the church.

At this point the correspondence ends and presumably the storm had blown itself out. All that remains is the

testimony of the building itself. The nave is still encased in late C18 or early C19 red brick, and the heavily battlemented vestry in the same material ('the pig sty') still stands at the west end. Part of the north nave wall collapsed at the end of the C19, but was skilfully rebuilt in red brick to match the rest. This repair is not discernable today. The only improvement of which Mr Oliver would have approved was the replacement of the timber traceried windows with stone ones to match those in the chancel – but these were paid for by Mr Oliver himself in 1902 after his retirement. The truth was, perhaps, that though Mr Cure lived in a grand house, the parish was poor, rural and sparsely populated, and was simply unable to afford what the rector would have wished.

A drawing of 1862 shows Mr Oliver at the reading desk of the three decker pulpit in the body of the nave. The large Cure family pew (shortly to be curtailed by the new chancel arch) is visible. Many of the congregation are standing, and within a couple of years the nave became even more crowded by the attendance of the navvies who were building the railway between Epping and Ongar. Overcrowding, as well as structural problems and a shortage of funds, must have been a challenge in this parish church, and it was unfortunate that the solution was in the hands of two men who found it difficult to work together, and had divergent opinions on the correct form of church architecture.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Archdeacon of Essex correspondence:  
ERO D/AEM 1/5/8

Bobbingworth churchwarden's accounts  
1820-1863: ERO D/P 127/5/1

Bobbingworth vestry minutes 1808-1911:  
ERO D/P 127/8/3  
Visit to Bobbingworth church on  
3/6/1909: EAT xi, 2<sup>nd</sup> series, 175

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## A BOOK'S PREVIOUS OWNERS, AND THEIR ANNOTATIONS

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First impressions were not promising. The front cover was made from a flattened shoe box, and the first pages were crumbling as a result of contact with the acidic card. The back cover was detached, the spine was badly abraded (but still showed faint relics of delicate gold leaf tooling) and part of the index was missing. However it was the Essex volume of Newcourt's *Repertorium*, printed in 1710, and worthy of rescue from annihilation. Careful examination showed that the detached back cover was in fact the original front board, covered with the decayed relics of a typical early C18 leather binding. On the inside was an inscription in blue indelible pencil, reading 'Ex Archiv. Prov. Angl. 1928', suggesting it had come from an ecclesiastical library or archive. Two partly overlapping armorial bookplates also survived. One is a heavily quartered but untitled achievement of C18 date, now identified as the marital arms of Ralph Standish of Standish, Lancashire (d. 1755). The other, of C19 appearance, indicates ownership by James Francis Anderton. Removal of the bookplates showed that Anderton had applied his name to the pastedown with an ink stamp before covering it with his personal bookplate.

The book itself was extensively annotated in ink, in two different C18 hands. The first (and earlier one) is rather crabbed, with a slight backward slope to the ascenders – perhaps written by a left-hander, if writing masters at that

time permitted such a practice. This must be the handwriting of the first owner, as the earliest entry is dated 4 February 1712, barely two years after publication of the book. A small number of entries, all later in date, are in a more flowing C18 hand, presumably made by a subsequent owner. The majority of the notes are updates to Newcourt's list of vicars and rectors for many (but by no means all) of the parishes, and often include the date, as well as the name of the presenting patron. Though the information recorded largely tallies with that provided later by Morant in his *History of Essex*, certain details, such as the exact date of induction, are rarely given. In particular, the university degrees of new incumbents are almost never noted. The latest handwritten date of an induction is 1740, suggesting that this was the point at which the amendments ceased, though very few parishes were updated as late as this. Both annotators made occasional corrections to Newcourt's printed list, or updated one of the footnotes on the subsequent careers of incumbents. Occasionally there is a more detailed note – under Brentwood, for example, he wrote '*Mr Rice Williams Chaplain - the Chaplain is p'sented by the Lord of Weald who pays him 5L per ann & he hath a house, garden & orchard & a little field*'. Two other entries commenced with the note '*Holman writes that .....*' implying that the writer had either corresponded with William Holman (d.1730), or had seen his unpublished notes on the history of the county. Elsewhere he inserted a correction of one of his own notes, noting Holman as the source.

Newcourt often left a blank space where he did not know the dedication of the church, and a number of these have been completed in the earlier of the two hands, and a few errors corrected. There

are also scattering of notes about the tithe, and the sales of advowsons, often including details or dates of deeds, suggesting that the writer may have had access to original documents. Occasionally the annotation is purely antiquarian - under '*Waltham Holy Cross, Abby*' he wrote '*their Seal was on one side + a crucifix with this inscription: hoc est Sigill Ecclesie sancte Crucis de Waltham. On ye other side two heads facing one an other hoc carte foedus cum Tovi firmat Harold & is affixed to a lease made by Robt ye abbott 1536 of Sewerstonbery to Geo Stonor*'.

The annotations span 30 years, and seem to have been made by two separate owners, one of whom would have been the first owner of the book and probably one of the subscribers listed at the beginning of the volume. There are no clues to his identity. It is clear that his principal interest was in ecclesiastical matters, particularly in the names of later incumbents, and relevant matters concerning tithes and the ownership of advowsons. The entries were made at different times and in different inks, and are scattered throughout the county, though they only cover about a third of all Essex parishes. Judging by the detail given, the earlier of the two writers must have had access to official records, rather than relying on local knowledge. The variations in the ink and the handwriting of the updated list of incumbents suggest that the entries were made as the information became available, rather than being copied at one sitting from a later source such as Morant. A few of the notes are purely antiquarian in nature (such as that concerning the Waltham Abbey seal, quoted above). The owner with the crabbed handwriting had had either personal contact with the antiquary William Holman, or access to his manuscript. His principal interest was

ecclesiastical rather than antiquarian. It seems likely that Ralph Standish of Lancashire, whose bookplate was pasted inside the front cover, was not responsible for any annotations and was the third owner. Though he did have certain antiquarian interests, bequeathing a collection of coins and medals on his death, he was almost certainly a Roman Catholic as he had married into the Howard family and was implicated in the 1715 rebellion. It seems improbable that, living in Lancashire, he would have had the opportunity to access the type of records needed to annotate his copy of Newcourt.

Michael Leach

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## ESSEX MATTERS FROM THE ANCIENT MONUMENTS SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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- a) Mundon church: cracks in the brickwork of the chancel have increased since the last report, and the church remains closed. Remedial underpinning should take place later this year, assisted by a 70% grant from English Heritage.
- b) Berners Roding church: this abandoned church, (when last seen by me it was almost totally smothered in ivy, and occupied by a barn owl), has passed into the hands of a charitable family trust, so its future should be assured.
- c) Victoria Hotel, Dovercourt: this early to mid C19 building has been gutted by fire, and is probably beyond salvation. However it has an important visual role in the townscape, and the quality of its replacement will be very important.
- d) Valentines Mansion, Ilford: the Heritage Lottery Fund have offered

nearly £2M for interior and exterior restoration of this Grade II\* building.

e) A new tile works: the Cambridge Tile and Brick Company has been set up by the Cambridgeshire Historic Buildings Trust to ensure the continued production of the characteristic variegated peg tiles typical of the roofs in the Cambridge area. Further information can be found on their website on [www.cambstileandbrick.co.uk](http://www.cambstileandbrick.co.uk).

Michael Leach

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## **ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRAINING EXCAVATION**

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Five day non-residential training courses will be offered by Birkbeck on their dig at Syon Abbey, Brentford, Middlesex in the weeks beginning 11 June, 18 June, 25 June, 2 July and 9 July 2007. These are suitable for beginners, as well as those with more experience. The fee is £185 for one week, and further details can be obtained from Natalie Ping, Archaeology Desk, Birkbeck Faculty of Continuing Education, 26 Russell Square, London WC1B 5DQ, or on 0207 631 6627, or via [archaeology@fce.bbk.ac.uk](mailto:archaeology@fce.bbk.ac.uk)

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## **ESSEX HISTORY FAIR – SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVE NEEDED**

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Most members will know that this is held every other year. In 2006, it filled the town centre of Braintree, and provided a great opportunity for the public to meet the wide range of organisations involved in many different ways with the heritage of Essex. Paradoxically, though it was a great success, the inability to charge an entrance fee to the town centre has left

the organisation's funds seriously depleted. It is an excellent event for the county, and it would be a great loss if it were to lapse. The Society is looking for a member to represent it on the History Fair committee, and anyone keen to do this is urged to contact me on 01277 363106, or [family@leachies.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:family@leachies.freereserve.co.uk), or by post at 2 Landview Gardens, Ongar CM5 9EQ.

Michael Leach

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## **PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND**

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Though the first priority of this fund is always to subsidise the cost of the Society's publications, grants may be available to assist with setting up, carrying out or publishing members' research projects. Applications to the fund should include a synopsis of the planned project, and should be supported by two referees. Grants are not payable until the paper is in final proof (or the electronic equivalent) and are valid for three years. Anyone requiring further details should apply to the Honorary Secretary.

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## **PLEASE TAKE CARE!**

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During one of the Society's visits in 2006, a table was seriously damaged when a member placed a hot teapot on the French polished surface, causing much worry and distress to both the owner and the Society's officers. The considerable cost of the repair was born partly by the Society, partly by its insurers. This is a reminder of the extreme care which members need to take at all times when visiting private houses, and the importance of warning

others of potential hazards during such visits.

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## ROUND TOWER CHURCHES

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I have read your comments on round towers with interest. I have spent a lot of time going round Norfolk churches, especially those with round towers. The point you make about the use of the rod is interesting, but I am wary about using this as a basis of measurement. The Norfolk round towers vary in diameter from 8 feet to over 20 feet, with walls from anything from 2½ to 6 feet thick. None of them possess staircases and ladders are used to reach the upper stages. Some surviving ladders are of very early construction, just dressed halves of trees with the rungs carried through and pinned. The question of whether the towers are earlier than, or contemporary with, their church is difficult. Some are flat against the west wall, allowing for an entrance from the church. A lot of them show Saxon influences, such as double belfry openings, with true Saxon arches, and doorways going straight through without a knob. It is generally accepted that these churches were built between 1015 and 1115. I think it is fair to say that the round shape was influenced by lack of building stone. All the towers have three stages, bell chamber, ringing chamber and ground floor (the last, in the bigger towers, could have been used as a gathering place). It is difficult to differentiate between different building dates with flint, even the mortar will vary from batch to batch, but it is worth noting how crude the attachment of tower to church is. However it is still difficult to determine which was built first.

John Warbis

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## BOOKS FOR DISPOSAL

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A small donation to ESAH will secure any of the following books. All are used but in serviceable condition, and are seeking a new home.

*An Account of the Decorations of the ECC Council Chamber, 1939;*  
 British Museum Publications – *Flint Implements, 1975;*  
 John Lord, *The nature and Subsequent Use of Flint* vol 1, 1993;  
 Shire Archaeology Series a) *Flint Implements of the Old Stone Age* b) *Mesolithic Britain* c) *Roman Roads* d) *Village Plans* e) *Prehistoric Pottery;*  
 Ordnance Survey map of Roman Britain, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition;  
 Cecil Hewitt, *Church Carpentry, 1982;*  
 Derek Johnson, *Essex Curiosities, 1973;*  
*The Englishman's Pocket Latin Dictionary, 1955;*  
 John Hough, *Essex Churches, 1983;*  
 William Addison, *Essex Heyday, 1949.*  
 Winston Ramsey, *Epping Forest, Then and Now, 1992* (signed by author)

Please contact Michael Leach on 01277 363106.

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## PROGRAMME COMMITTEE – VOLUNTEERS PLEASE!

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The Programme Committee, which meets twice a year to plan the annual programme, is seeking new members. Enthusiasm, but no special expertise, is the chief qualification, and the rewards of working with the present highly knowledgeable team are incalculable.

Please contact David Andrews on [david.andrews@essexcc.gov.uk](mailto:david.andrews@essexcc.gov.uk) or the Hon Secretary.

**MEMBERSHIP** - Subscriptions due on January 1st each year

Single Member - £20

Family Membership - £22

Student - £9

Associate Member - £9

Institutions - £25

**NAMES AND ADDRESSES**

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Tel. 01277 363106	Tel. 01206 250894	Tel. 01206 546775

Enquiries about delayed or missing publications and about the supply of recent back numbers should be addressed to the Secretary.

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2006 the projected value of the fund stands at £40,126.

Donations payable to: The Essex Society for Archaeology and History  
By: Cash/Cheques; Gift Aid Schemes; "In Memoriam" Donations; Bequests by Wills  
Donations of acceptable books

Please address enquiries to:  
Bill Abbott, 45 Cambridge Road, Colchester C03 3NR  
Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail [bill.abbott@btinternet.com](mailto:bill.abbott@btinternet.com)

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

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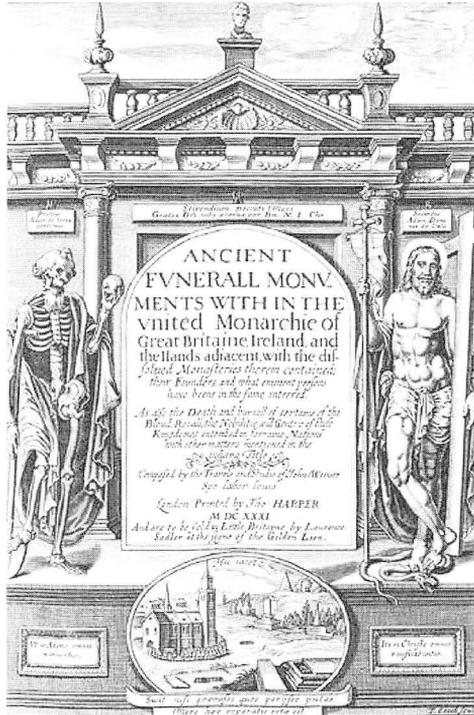
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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Summer 2007

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 152

SUMMER 2007

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Assistant Editor: Michael Leach

**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 19 OCTOBER 2007**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

## Cover illustration:

Frontispiece from John Weever's Ancient Funerall Monuments within the United Monarchie of Great Britain and Ireland, 1631. The engraving by Thomas Cecill portrays Adam as a skeletal Old Man on the left, while on the right the New Man of Christ represents hope. See the article on page 3 to find out more about John Weever's travels through Essex. The image was found on the Folger Institute website at [http://198.104.158.76/html/folger\\_institute/sacred/image18.html](http://198.104.158.76/html/folger_institute/sacred/image18.html)

## Editors Note:

Please find the article by Ken Aberdour on the Essex Local History Recorder Scheme omitted from the Spring Newsletter on page 2. Many apologies for this earlier omission.  
Sally Gale

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Essex is a county with an unending series of places of great historic interest stretching over many centuries.

Earlier this year, on 21<sup>st</sup> April, I attended in the Sampfords Village Hall a celebration of the highly successful community project to investigate the archaeological and historic past of the area, which has revealed an incredible amount of previously unknown information. As Kenneth Neale – an outstanding Essex historian, who has played a key role – explained, a landscape evaluation process has thrown light on a Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Roman and medieval past that no one previously realised it possessed.

At our Society's AGM this year, at the Langdon Visitors' Centre, we heard an extremely interesting talk by Colin Stratford, a veteran, on the history of the Plotlands development. In the first half of the twentieth century, many East Londoners with a desperate craving to live in the country bought plots offered for sale by a few large landowners, who had an eye to making their fortunes, in Langdon Hills and many adjoining areas in South Essex. On these they put huts, bungalows, disused railway carriages, old buses, etc., as rural retreats.

To the plotlanders, it was the achievement of a dream. Immense effort was expended to lay the basis for an Arcadian existence at weekends, or a permanent home when commuting to work daily became possible. The endless toil of construction, contending with the weather – which periodically converted the area to acres of mud and sticky clay – and the work of creating communities, were all cheerfully undertaken. Although more established county dwellers sometimes saw it as

desecration, the Plotlands movement was a significant feature of twentieth century Essex history.

As we saw on a brief tour, after the talk, much of the land at Langdon Hills is now reverting to woodland under the care of the Essex Wildlife Trust. The plotlanders' descendants live in more orthodox dwellings elsewhere. However, we visited an original bungalow which is being maintained as an example of a genuine plotland dwelling – replete with furniture and equipment from the period. This visit was illustrative of the recent past.

In contrast, the AGM of the Friends of Historic Essex this year, on 14<sup>th</sup> July, was held at Great Dunmow Maltings, a timber framed building estimated to date back to 1565. Malting, the process of converting barley into malt for brewing, is a very traditional Essex industry.

Elphin Watkins gave a fascinating account of the manner in which this rapidly deteriorating structure was rescued from the threat of demolition and restored by the community-backed Dunmow Preservation Trust, created in 1996. Securing the necessary funding from English Heritage and other bodies was a major part of ensuring that the building survived, but the actual work of restoration – in which Elphin was personally involved – was a task requiring immense stamina and ingenuity. Today, the building provides a town museum as well as an attractive venue for many different events.

Though a mere sample of the riches and variety of historic Essex, these visits illustrate how much our county has to offer. One of our purposes must be to ensure that a greater proportion of our population appreciates this.

Stan Newens

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## THE ESSEX JOURNAL

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It is now more than a year since it became apparent that The Essex Journal was no longer financially viable. Despite the magnificent work of its editor for seventeen years, Michael Beale, who has very sadly just died, the valiant efforts of the distribution manager, Martin Stuchfield, and the solid support of the editorial committee, chaired by Adrian Corder Birch, the income was just not enough to cover costs.

In response to this crisis, the editorial committee has been enlarged to include representatives of other organisations, including the ESAH, and steps have been taken to put the Journal on a firm footing.

A new editor, Neil Wiffen, MA, has been appointed and has undertaken training which will enable him to set up the copy by computer. This will obviate the need for this to be done by the printer and should reduce costs. Other measures are also in hand to achieve viability.

The only way to ensure success for the Journal is, however to improve circulation. I have given out subscription forms at a number of Essex historical meetings and am struck by the number of committed people who do not subscribe. Many claim that they are not aware of the Journal's existence.

The revamped Journal is to be launched at Ingatestone Hall on the evening of 26<sup>th</sup> October. This will prestage a vigorous drive to obtain new subscribers. At £10 p.a. for two issues packed with archaeological and historical information, it should be taken by everyone with an interest in the Essex past.

The forerunner of The Essex Journal was the Essex Review, first published in 1892. With over a century of publishing on Essex history behind it, it is a 'must' for all who want to be informed about our county. If you already have a

subscription, take one out for a friend or relative as a gift.

Subscriptions of £10 (cheques payable to The Essex Journal) should be sent to: The Essex Journal, 11 Milligans Chase, Galleywood, Chelmsford, Essex, CM12 8QD.

Stan Newens

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## ESSEX LOCAL HISTORY RECORDER SCHEME

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History is a record of the vast jigsaw of life, everything before the present moment. It is available to us as nature and artefacts, and of the latter, writings particularly. From these we form ideas of the past, the accuracy of which is related to the quality and extent of these sources.

Our interest in history may be to satisfy our curiosity about the past or to predict the present and future. Humans play a very large part in all that happens and are interested in themselves in a personal and family way, living conditions, leisure activities, and local, regional, national and international affairs. We, as is very well said, are predictable. This applies to nature too. Computers, with their ability to process masses of information, are of marked value in predicting the weather, hurricanes and the price of shares on the stock market, (i.e. how much people are prepared to pay for them). These and other developments can only go further.

As already said, this depends on the quality and extent of the information. We are interested, particularly, in our rulers, politicians, sport and famous people. This is slanted towards gossip issues. We are interested in crime and its gory details and in war, negative issues. We create, and we are what we think. To

improve we must think positively.

From the history viewpoint this slants the information available. Only a few people and activities are permanently recorded. At a local level where most people live there are records but these tend not to be preserved and many things are not recorded at all. At this level many things are of a positive nature balancing the more negative wider fields. They need to be recorded permanently as availability of this knowledge should be of enormous value to future historians.

Donald Jarvis, an Essex historian living in Stock, undertook a review of the historical associations in Essex and formed the impression that there was need for local history recorders in every parish in the county. Under the umbrella of the then Essex Community Council the formation of the Essex Local History Recorder Scheme was agreed on March 12, 1981. Recorders were appointed for every rural parish in the county. The idea was each recorder to take an active interest in their parish, become aware of its history and be a reference point for their locality. They are expected to make regular reports to form a permanent record for future reference.

Some ten years later Donald Jarvis became blind and unable to continue running the scheme. Jean Aberdour took over. When she suddenly died in 1997 I, her husband, took over and now wish to retire as coordinator. The scheme had gradually bedded down, concentrating in the more rural areas. There is a great problem getting officers for the various branches. There are many parishes without a recorder. There are two very active branches, Tendring and Uttlesford. Recently Epping failed due to inability to get a new chairman. There are scattered recorders elsewhere.

The scheme is a valuable part of Essex and needs new members so that every parish does have an active recorder.

Should its role be enlarged to include preservation groups, restorers, and those studying special artefacts?

Ken Aberdour

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## ESSEX PLACE-NAMES PROJECT

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The 11th Annual Place-names Seminar on Saturday 17th November 2007 at 2pm has been relocated to Essex University. There will be talks by Local Recorders and by Dr. Stephen Rippon of Exeter University. His subject will be "The Medieval Landscape in Essex and East Anglia". Tickets £5.50 (payable to "ESAH") are available from the Project Coordinator, 27 Tor Bryan, Ingatestone CM4 9JZ. Please enclose a stamped self-addressed envelope.

The Place-names Project is looking for Parish Recorders to record field and place-names from old maps and documents. Assistance and Guidelines are provided; no previous experience is needed. Further details from the Project Coordinator.

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## JOHN WEEVER'S TRAVELS THROUGH ESSEX

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During the first three decades of the seventeenth century, John Weever (1575/6-1632) travelled '*at painful expense*' throughout England and some parts of Scotland to record monumental inscriptions. In the early 1620s, he befriended Augustine Vincent (c.1584-1626), then Rouge Croix pursuivant and later Windsor herald, enabling him to gain access to the records of the College of Heralds as well as introductions to Sir Robert Cotton, William Camden, Sir

Henry Spelman, John Selden and other antiquaries. In 1631 he published a part of his labours in *Antient Funerall Monuments*; this included a section covering the county of Essex. In his introduction he regretted the neglect and destruction of funeral monuments –*grieving at this unsufferable injury.... I determined with myself to collect such memorials of the deceased, as were yet remaining undefaced.* It is easy to underestimate the laborious nature of his task with long days on horseback on poor roads, perhaps with Norden's map to guide him. Fifteen miles a day was probably the best that could be expected from a horse on the poor roads of the time. Travellers would have hoped to fall in with someone with local knowledge going in the right direction, and this is recorded on one occasion when he noted *'riding from Ralegh towards Rochford, I happened to have the good company of a gentleman of this country...'*. Nevertheless, his journeys were frequently unproductive, and often met with a surprising local refusal to allow him to record what he had found, or to question people about monuments that had lost their inscriptions. He noted *'having found one or two ancient funeral inscriptions, or obliterated sepulchres, in this or that parish church, I have ridden to ten parish churches distant from that, and not found one. Besides I have been taken up in divers churches by the churchwardens of the parish, and not suffered to write the epitaphs, or to take view of the monuments as I much desired, for that I wanted (i.e. lacked) a commission.'* Both John Leyland and William Camden had had the benefit of royal commissions to overcome such objections on their antiquarian journeys. Weever noted in his introduction that he became *'altogether discouraged to proceed any further in this my laborious*

*and expenceful enterprise.'* It was the friendship and encouragement of Augustine Vincent, as well as access to *'many church collections, with divers memorable notes, and copies of records...'* that enabled him to complete and publish records covering the dioceses of Canterbury, Rochester, London and Norwich.

Often the text contains confirmatory evidence of a personal visit; examples include Corringham *'the monuments in this church...are quite defaced...'*, Rayleigh *'...a monument ..of great antiquity, but who lies entombed herein, I could not certainly learn'* and Rochford *'I am looking for some monument or other in this church, to the memory of some one of the lords...'* and many other similar. There are also incidental comments (about the building, or a decorative detail, or a conversation with a local person) that could only have resulted from direct contact. In addition the book has numerous marginal notes indicating the sources of additional information that he had incorporated. Examples include the College of Heralds, Sir Robert Cotton's library, Camden's *Britannia*, Stow's *Annals*, Hollinshed's *Chronicle*, Speed's *History of Great Britaine*, records in the Tower of London, and so on. Very few entries are solely dependant on such secondary sources. In the introduction to his book, he indicated that he had set out the parish entries in the order in which he had visited them. Though it is not clear whether he did all his Essex visits in a single long journey, or returned to the county at intervals between his other travels (the latter is much more probable), I wondered if it might be possible to establish the route of some of his forays into Essex by careful examination of the 1767 reprint of his book.

The first tranche is fairly clear; starting in

West Ham, he moved steadily through the southern fringes of Essex, never far from the principal roads shown on Norden's map, as far as Prittlewell. The distance from church to church in straight lines totals 55 miles, but this obviously does not allow for less direct routes, or for the numerous trips to places where he found nothing or was denied access. It must have taken at least a week, but probably much longer. In view of his subsequent haphazard journeys across the rest of the county, it is tempting to think that London to Prittlewell represents a single trip. The subsequent two entries are Stansgate Priory (on the north of the Dengie peninsular) and St Osyth, but the text and the marginal notes suggest that he only used documentary sources for these two places.

The next parishes recorded are in and around Maldon, with evidence of personal visits to Woodham Walter and Maldon itself, and perhaps represents a second phase of his exploration of the county. Thence he went to Colchester, a day's ride away, perhaps using the route clearly marked on Norden's map through Great Totham, Tiptree and Stanway. Though he referred to ten Colchester churches, he only found inscriptions worth recording in St Giles.

At this point his journey becomes confusing, apparently zigzagging all over north west Essex, often re-crossing earlier routes more than once. Some distances (Writtle to Finchingfield, or Hatfield Peverel to Harlow, for example) would have been more than a day's journey, and must represent either different expeditions, or entries written up solely from documentary sources. In only one instance is it possible to fix the date of his visit. At Chelmsford he noted *'this church was re-edified about some hundred thirty seven years since, as appeareth by a broken inscription on the*

*outside of the south wall.'* He then recorded the inscription with its date (1489), placing either his visit, or his writing of this note, to 1626.

How many churches did Weever actually visit, rather than compiled from notes made by others? A close reading of the text reveals strong evidence of a personal visit to 32 churches (usually indicated by a comment that could have been made only from direct observation), and presumptive evidence in 29 others (such as recording a very fragmentary inscription, which only an enthusiast like Weever would have noted). Further confirmation of his personal contribution to these 61 entries comes from the absence of marginal notes that would indicate the use of a documentary source. In only 6 churches is there no definite or presumptive evidence of a visit, together with a marginal note making it clear that he had depended solely on another source. It seems clear that he personally visited the vast majority of the parishes he recorded, as well as numerous others unrecorded where he either found nothing of interest, or was denied access by the churchwardens.

It is possible that Weever's two notebooks in the library of the Society of Antiquaries (mss 127 and 128), which contain much unpublished material, might provide further clues about his Essex journeys. No other archive sources seem to have survived.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Kathman, D., 2004 'John Weever' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, OUP  
 Norden, J., 1594 'Speculi Britannia Pars' (Camden Society reprint of 1840)  
 Weever, J., 1767 reprint *Antient Funerall Monuments*, London

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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**Paglesham Natives**, Mark & Rosemary Roberts (2006), pp 144, published by authors.

This engaging book is a labour of love anchored on the remarkable archive of the Wisemans of Paglesham and the related families of Browning and Pettitt: a gold mine of diaries, letters, survey books and ledgers covering the period 1750 to the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. All three families, as the title implies, were engaged in oyster cultivation.

The detail supplied from these sources of domestic, social and business practice is extensive and so verbatim as to render the book almost a primary source. It is very Victorian: family bickering (often about money), churchgoing, childhood deaths, but also respectable drunkenness and domestic violence. The text moves chronologically through thumbnail biographies from Paglesham to Australia, constantly enlivened by archive illustrations – family photos, paintings, drawings and some marvellous sketches surveying the channels of, inter-alia, the Rivers Crouch and Blackwater and the oyster layings along them. Indeed, an extended final section discusses the oyster trade.

**Littlebury: A parish history**, Littlebury Millennium History Society (2005), pp288, Littlebury Millennium Society £15. This large and opulent book is the culmination of a 3-year community project funded by the Local Heritage Initiative. Over 40 authors have contributed and many others have been involved, almost all amateur or first-time historians. It is one of those 'everything' books, telling the story of this small community – which includes Catmere End and Audley End – from the Cretaceous Period to the roar of the M11, though an earlier generation might

have called it a Saturday Book, a miscellany. The editors call it a patchwork quilt. It is lavishly, lavishly illustrated with over 600 images, most in full colour, making skilful use of its A4 format. It is learned, lucid and omnivorous. It is remarkably free from typos or overstatements. If a little rose-tinted, then the genre deserves it. With such a compilation it is invidious to name names, but the central role of its joint editors, Gillian Williamson and Lizzie Sanders, is very apparent. And whoever raised the money is invited to sit on our Council. Can a short book review do justice to its 93 sections? No; nor will I try. The reader must beg or buy themselves a copy. It may well be a millennium before Littlebury gets (or needs) anything like this again. And only £15. Wow.

**Round About Colchester**, Patrick Denney (2006) pp176, Wharnccliffe Books £12.99.

Patrick Denney has again produced a lively and entertaining 'Colchester' book, enriching contemporary topics with his knowledge of the town, his large collection of historic photographs and his work in oral history. From civic events like the Oyster Feast and the building of the town hall to personal stories of World War II, Colchester Zoo, the 1953 floods, and transport from trams to barges, words and pictures present the background to articles originally published in the East Anglian Daily Times.

**The Old Rayleigh Rectory**, Noel Beer, (2006) pp 42, HTR Publications, 14 Nelson Road, Rayleigh.

Noel Beer's latest booklet covers a neglected subject and he assembles, as ever, a lucid and thorough account of the fall of one of Rayleigh oldest building (c. 1400?) 40 years ago and the rise of its

modern replacement.

**Rooted in Essex: A Gazetteer of Designers, Nurserymen, Writers & Artists associated with the historic gardens of Essex**, Twigs Way [Ed], (2006) pp66, Essex Gardens Trust. c/o 2 Landview Gardens, Ongar, £6.50

This admirable compilation's subtitle is wholly explanatory, yet does not convey the thoroughness and scholarship with which this biographical dictionary has been put together by its team of Essex authors. Covering 500 years of our history, entries range from one of the earliest garden writers (Thomas Tusser) to Edwardian eccentrics like Ellen Willmott and previously unrecognised contributors to Essex gardens such as Metcalfe Few. Frequent illustrations intersperse the lucid prose.

#### Recent Library Purchases

The Cistercian Abbey of St Mary, Stratford Langhorne, Essex, Barber, Dyson & White, MoLAS Monograph 18.

John Ray: A Personal Life, Janet Turner & Ann Wood

Robert Surman of Valentines, Georgina Green

Gentlemen Cricketers of Maldon, Richard Cooper

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## BUILDINGS: A CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNT OF THEIR STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS IN C16

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William Harrison (1535-1593), rector of Radwinter from 1559 until his death (and vicar of Wimbish for part of that time) compiled his *Historicall Description of the Island of Britain* which was included in the two C16 editions of Holinshed's *Chronicles*. It is a curious mix of classical

erudition, fabulous stories, antiquarian curiosity, puritan conviction and plagiarism (the last principally from Leland's *Itinerary*). From time to time, he upbraids himself from straying from the point, with a terse reminder to himself, 'but to my purpose, from whence I have now digressed.' However, when writing from his own experience, his account comes vividly to life. His *Description* is a series of short essays on a wide range of topics, from 'Of Sundry Kinds of Punishments Appointed for Malefactors' to 'Of Hawks and Ravenous Fowls' and 'Of Our Saffron and the Dressing Thereof'; all contain much interesting material.

There are essays on buildings, and on stone and on timber.

He makes a clear distinction between timber framed houses in 'plain and woody soils' (those that we now call close studded) and those in 'champaign country' where there was a shortage of trees, and timber had to be used more sparingly. The frame was infilled with 'raddles' (thin woven rods) and plastered with clay which came in three colours – white, red and blue. He refers to the application of lime (made by burning chalk or sea shells) to the exterior, probably as a wash. The best houses had lime and hair plaster applied onto lathes, or reeds or 'wickers' nailed to the main frame; the last two, he noted, carried a higher fire risk. The plaster had a 'delectable whiteness...laid on so even and smoothly as nothing in my judgement can be done with more exactness'. Internal plastering was done with burnt alabaster, 'very profitable against the rage of fire', but the best houses were panelled with English oak, or 'wainscot' imported from the 'East countries' (i.e. the Baltic). The internal plastered walls were covered with tapestry, arras work or painted cloths 'wherein divers histories, or herbs,

beasts, knots and suchlike' were depicted. It is interesting, though not surprising, to note his concern about fire which must have been an ever-present risk.

He then discusses window openings which, before the widespread use of glass, were filled with 'fine rifts of oak in checkerwise', or horn or 'specular stones' (mica, perhaps?). However the use of glass, mostly imported from Normandy, Burgundy and Flanders, was already widespread by his time. English glass was inferior in clarity, but he considered that it could be improved if 'we were diligent and careful to bestow more cost upon it'. This is by no means his only complaint about this country's readiness to import, rather than to manufacture, its goods, some of which deeply offended his puritan sensibilities. These included 'twopenny tabors, leaden swords, painted feathers, gewgaws for fools, dogtricks for dizzards, hawkshoods and suchlike trumpery...'

He has much to say on stone, and clearly disapproved of brickmaking 'whereof a great part of the wood of this land is daily consumed ... to the no small decay of that commodity, and hindrance of the poor, that perish oft from cold'. He is equally disapproving of the practice of importing stone, when excellent and varied materials could be quarried locally. Clearly fascinated by reports of fossils, he noted 'I myself have seen stones opened, and within them the substances of corrupted worms like unto adders (but far shorter) whose crests and wrinkles of body appeared also therein...'. He must have been describing ammonites.

Conversations with his elderly parishioners in Radwinter had revealed that three things were much changed during their lifetime. The first was the 'multitude of chimneys' though he did not see this as entirely beneficial, observing

'now have we many chimneys, and yet our tenderlings complain of rheums, catarrhs and poses. Then we had none but reredoses, and our heads did never ache. For as the smoke in those days was supposed to be a sufficient hardening of the timber of the house, so it was reputed a far better medicine to keep the goodman and his family from the quack or pose, wherewith as then very few were oft acquainted.' The second change was the great improvement in bedding; straw pallets, with 'pricking straws that ran oft through the canvas' being replaced by flock or down mattresses. Coverlets of 'dagswain or hop-harlots' had been replaced with finer materials, and pillows were no longer regarded as only for women in labour. The third change was the replacement of wooden platters and spoons with pewterware or silver, as well as a significant increase in the number and the quality of household furnishings in the wealthier homes. He gives a strong impression of a marked increase in living standards. Costly furnishings were to be found not only in noble houses; 'now it is descended yet lower, even unto the inferior artificers and many farmers, who have... learned also to garnish their cupboards with plate, their joint beds with tapestry and silk hangings, and their tables with carpets and fine napery.'

His essay, 'Of Woods and Marshes', has much to say about timber, only a little of which is relevant to its use in building. As already noted in connection with brickmaking, he was concerned about the reduction in woodland, which he partly attributed to a much increased demand for oak for construction. 'In times past men were content to dwell in houses builded of sallow, willow, plum tree, hardbeam and elm. Nevertheless... of our time ..every man almost is a builder... and will not be quiet till he have

planned down the old house... and set up a new after his own device.' He refers to hedgerows as an important source of timber, and notes that oaks grown in parkland are more prone to 'spalt and brickle' than hedge oak. However, in his view, the best oak in Essex for joiner's work came from Bardfield Park, 'for oftentimes have I seen of their works made of that oak so fine and fair as most of the wainscot that is brought hither out of Dansk, for our wainscot is not made in England.'

Much can be gleaned, on a wide range of other topics, from Harrison's essays. I would recommend the unabridged edition by Georges Edelen, published in 1994, which is indexed (though not perfectly) and can be obtained new through [www.abebooks](http://www.abebooks).

Michael Leach

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**JOSIAH EDWARD  
MICHAEL BEALE, M.A.  
(1928-2007)**

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Michael Beale, Hon Editor of the *Essex Journal* from 1990, died on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2007 at Broomfield Hospital, near Chelmsford. He was tended by his devoted family to the last. With his passing our beloved county of Essex has been deprived of one of its most dedicated servants and a scholar of distinction.

His life may be briefly summarised. He was born on 29<sup>th</sup> September 1928 at Upminster, his father being Josiah Edward Beale and his mother Phyllis Newell. His childhood remained in the county where he was educated at Brentwood School before gaining a scholarship to Jesus College, Cambridge. Completing National Service in the Intelligence Corps he embarked, in 1952, upon a distinguished career in the

Civil Service where he served in the Civil Aviation Department and the Department of Trade and Industry, the latter included a three year secondment in Singapore, before retiring in 1985.

He married Jean McDonald at South Weald church in 1958 and was the proud father of two daughters, Stephanie and Harriet, and three granddaughters. He was above all a man who loved and cared passionately about his wife and family who always assumed the highest possible priority.

He was also seized of a deep and committed faith - no doubt heavily influenced from an early age by virtue of his father, who served as churchwarden of St Laurence's at Upminster, and his maternal grandfather who was a churchwarden at St Anne's, Limehouse. He was a regular worshipper at Shenfield parish church and upon moving to Great Waltham in 1987 promptly immersed himself in church life where he also became a churchwarden. The love of his parish church manifested itself in the authorship of a, recently published, historical guide to the building of great erudition.

His abiding interest was history and most especially that concerned with Essex. He cared passionately about the Essex Record Office and served as Hon Secretary of the Friends of Historic Essex from 1987 until 2002. During this period he enjoyed an excellent relationship and personal friendship with Kenneth Neale whom he ultimately succeeded as Chairman.

His modesty precluded committing his vast knowledge to print, for he rather preferred to act unselfishly as a facilitator and motivator in encouraging others. Notwithstanding, glimpses of his undoubted scholarship did emerge into the public domain. A case in point was his accomplished essay concerned with the *Religious Census of Essex in 1851*

contributed to the *festschrift* volume published in 1996 by the Essex Archaeological and Historical Congress ('Essex Congress') as a tribute to the former Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Sir John Ruggles-Brise, its Patron. However, his most important contribution was to assume the heavy burden of responsibility as editor of the *Essex Journal* at a pivotal time when this title had been rescued from collapse by a consortium led by Jerry Knight who initiated publication under the management of an Editorial Board consisting of representatives of Essex Congress, the Friends of Historic Essex and the Essex Record Office. In his first editorial Michael modestly declared: "I feel humble, and thoroughly unqualified, in taking over the editorship". His achievement as the longest serving editor of the *Essex Journal* bears ample testimony to his understated ability and serves as an enduring legacy. I was privileged to be able to work with Michael, in all but the first issue under his editorship, and in so doing embarked upon a highly valued relationship where it proved possible to witness at close quarters his noble qualities of modesty, commitment, integrity and sense of duty which characterised this quintessential gentleman of Essex.

*Requiescat in pace.*

Martin Stuchfield

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## VISIT TO BROADOAKS, WIMBISH

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Members of the Society visited this house, previously known as 'Braddocks' or 'Braddox', on 21 April 2007. It is a brick-built mansion of two storeys with attics, on a moated site on high ground, remote from any settlement. Some, but

not all, of the window mullions and transoms are of clunch, rather than the lime-plastered brick more often found elsewhere in Essex. Dendrodating suggests construction in the last quarter of the C16, probably by Thomas Wiseman who died in 1585. A C19 lithograph (a copy of an earlier image) shows that the present house is the north wing of what had been a much larger building. This makes the interpretation of the internal arrangements of the surviving fragment much more difficult; a further complication is that the C17 or C18 infill on the south east side was built using C16 bricks. In 1662 the house was taxed on 15 hearths and an inventory of 1703 (before the house was reduced in size) lists numerous rooms and passages, now impossible to identify, as well as between 30 and 40 locks and keys, including a set at the foot and at the head of the main staircase. There are substantial original chimney stacks with octagonal shafts, with projecting pipes just below the cap of each stack. These are said to date from the 1960 restoration (supposedly to reduce wind resistance after the collapse of one stack) but the photograph from the RCHM visit in March 1913 shows similar projections. It would seem that the 1960 rebuild may have copied what was there before.

Internally there have been many alterations since the RCHM visit. The cellar has been filled in, and two separate staircases (with their oak battened doors) have been replaced by a single new staircase against the north wall. One staircase had provided access to a mezzanine floor (now removed) over the north-east room. A number of internal partitions have also gone, notably in the north-west and south-west rooms on the ground floor. The north-west room (which was two rooms,

kitchen and dairy, when the RCHM visited) has a C17 panelled fireplace surround which has either been truncated or is not in its original position. A beam running east-west across the middle of the hall has mortices and pegholes suggesting that there was a substantial internal timber-framed wall here, not unusual in brick-built buildings of this date. However the corresponding timber frame on the first floor has evidence of a possible high level window opening, suggesting that it may have been an external wall.

Upstairs there were more questions than answers. The west half seems to have been a substantial single chamber with high ceiling (now two rooms), with a large three tier six light mullion and transom window in clunch at the north end, perhaps the solar of the now lost great hall. The east half of the first floor has lower and smaller rooms with some C17 panelled oak doors of various patterns (some probably with their original nail-fixed loop handles), and some dado panelling of similar date in one room. In the light of the 1703 inventory, it was not surprising to note that several of the doors had evidence of up to three keyholes!

In the attic, the north-east room is narrow, and may have had a dormer to the north, but originally appears to have been narrower still as the purlins on each side had been cut to take studs. This would have reduced the room to corridor width. From the attic landing, a few steps of quartered oak logs lead to a long attic room over the great chamber below. This is lit from the north and south gable ends, and possibly at one time by dormers in the roof slope to the west – the structural evidence for this was inconclusive. This room contains the famous priest hole discovered in 1931, said to have been constructed by Nicholas Owen who was noted for his

ingenuity in creating unexpected spaces, ingenuously concealed within the structure. Here, a space 2' wide by 5' 6" high had been formed below floor level within the chimney stack, accessed by sliding back part of the hearth of the attic fireplace. The Jesuit priest, John Gerard, spent four days hidden here in 1594, and recorded this experience in his diary.

Descendants of the Catholic Wiseman family continued to occupy the house until 1742 when it was leased to the Moravian church for use as a school. It was vacated three years later and sold in 1749 to Lord Charles Maynard. It was during the Maynard's ownership the house was considerably reduced in size. We are extremely grateful to the owner for allowing members free access to this interesting house, and to Anne and her team for organising the practical and edible aspects of the visit.

Michael Leach

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## EARTHQUAKE AT COGGESHALL

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“September 8 1692, being Thursday, and the same day that Jacob Cox dyed, about 2 o'clock, there was an earthquake in Coxall, and many towns besides hereabouts, and at London and severall other countries, we heard, and in the news letter said it was at ye same time in Holland, and ye rest of ye provinces of ye Netherlands. I was in our garret at that time, and heard the house crack, and perceived it shake, and was afraid it would fall, and therefore ran down staires.”

Quoted from 'Curious Extracts from an MS Diary of the Time of James II and William and Mary' by Rev. E. L. Cutts in *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society*, first series, i, 125. The diarist was John Bufton of

Coggeshall and the diary at that time was in the possession of a descendant, Miss Hunt, though one volume had already been lost. It would be interesting to know what other accounts of this earthquake have survived, the details of the 'news letter' which reported the tremor in Holland, and whether any of these manuscript diaries are still extant.

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## **STOUR VALLEY LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP**

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This is a project shared by Essex and Suffolk, mainly supported from Heritage Lottery funds but with some funding from the main partners. A grant of £50,000 has already been obtained for preliminary work to inform the main bid itself. The intention is that groups or organisations will put up projects to form part of the main bid. Such projects could cover a variety of topics related to the landscape of the area, such as;

- The landscape of the valley, and its representation by artists
- The history of the landscape, and the development of its agriculture
- Oral history, photographic and archive collections
- Archaeological investigations, such as field walking
- Research or conservation work on historic structures, landscape features and habitats
- Interpretation of the valley's heritage
- Events to celebrate the valley's cultural history
- Schemes to promote better access, as well as understanding the area's significance.

The relevant Essex parishes covered by the project are Alphamstone; Ashen; the Belchamps (Otten, St Paul and Walter);

Birdbrook; Borley; Boxted; Bulmer; Dedham; Foxearth; the Horkesleys (Great and Little); Lamarsh; Langham; Lawford; Liston; Little Yeldham; Ovington; Pentlow; Steeple Bumpstead; Sturmer; and Wormingford.

At the time of writing, the Society was considering the possibility of becoming involved through the Essex Place-names Project. Any individual or group wanting further information should contact the Operations Manager, Simon Amstutz, c/o Suffolk County Council, Endeavour House, 8 Russell Road, Ipswich IP1 2BX as soon as possible, or visit [www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org](http://www.dedhamvalestourvalley.org)

Michael Leach

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## **JOHN HERSCHEL, THE CAMERA LUCIDA AND STONEHENGE**

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John Herschel (1792-1871) is perhaps best known for the haunting and atmospheric photographic portrait of him by Julia Margaret Cameron. His achievements in chemistry, physics, astronomy, mathematics and education were very considerable but are now largely forgotten. He was also a photographic pioneer, being the first to describe the effect of 'hypo' on silver salts (which became the basis of fixing photographic images on light sensitive film). Within a week of hearing of Daguerre's success in fixing an image on a silver iodide plate, he had not only made his first negative but had also made a positive print from it on sensitised paper. He was also a pioneer in the use of the light sensitive vegetable dyes for use in colour photography. Though he never took up photography seriously, he made a considerable number of topographical drawings using

the camera lucida. This optical instrument had been patented in 1806, but was almost certainly a much earlier invention, and was probably used by some Renaissance artists to overcome the problems of perspective. It was light and easily portable, unlike C19 plate cameras, and required no chemicals. It had an adjustable arm which could be clamped to a board; this arm carried a partially mirrored prism and viewing lens, which enabled the user to see simultaneously both the image in front of him, and the surface of the drawing board below. This made it possible to swiftly outline an extremely accurate drawing. He made a camera lucida drawing of Stonehenge in 1865, and a modern photograph taken from the same viewpoint confirms the precision and accuracy of his drawing. Apart from the re-erection and straightening of various stones during the C20 (and the patching of one with concrete), it is clear that there has been a significant rise in ground level since Herschel's time. It is not obvious how this has happened. It could be due to the spoil produced by various archaeological digs, or to deliberate landscaping of the site to improve its setting or access. In addition, it is very likely that earthworms have been a significant factor. In the mid C19, Charles Darwin observed how the activities of these creatures contributed to burying archaeological features by raising ground level; also how the process of burrowing under large objects results in their gradual subsidence into the earth. Careful observations by Darwin and other naturalists over many years indicated that the weight of worm casts over an acre of ground averaged about 10 tons a year, sufficient to raise ground level by about one fifth of an inch annually. Darwin himself had made observations at Stonehenge (probably at about the time Herschel was making his

drawing) and concluded that it was earthworm activity that had caused the partial burial of the large fallen stones. Herschel was a prolific artist and he himself catalogued 763 of his own drawings (the majority made using the camera lucida). However his list must have been incomplete, as the Getty Museum now holds over 2000 of his drawings and prints. Do any relate to Essex? And were there any Essex users of this elegant and accurate instrument?

Michael Leach

Sources:

*British Archaeology* July/August 2007  
 Graham, E C, 1965 *Science Dictionary in Basic English*, Evans Brothers  
 Crowe, M J., 2004 Sir John Frederick William Herschel in *ODNB*  
 Darwin, C., 1881 *The Formation of Vegetable Mould through the Action of Earthworms*, John Murray

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## DISCOVERY OF WALL PAINTINGS AT ST PETER'S, WICKHAM BISHOPS

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This mediaeval church, now in the care of the Friends of Friendless Churches (FoFC) and tenanted by a stained glass artist, was superseded in 1850 by a new church designed by Ewan Christian. Recently, traces of wall paintings of C13 date have been observed. These are not figurative, but consist of a complex pattern of repeated geometrical shapes, suggesting that this was a high status church, perhaps serving the Essex estates of the Bishop of London. Mediaeval plaster survives in the window reveals but there is no trace of decoration here – possibly lost from weathering when the windows were

unglazed. FoFC are investigating the best way of stabilising these fragile but unusual survivals.

Michael Leach

Source: Ancient Monuments Society Newsletter, Summer 2007

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## **2007 AGM AND THE ESSEX PLOTLANDS**

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The AGM was held in the Langdon Visitor Centre near Basildon. After completion of the routine business, the President expressed his concern about cuts over the last year in various heritage services that we have come to take for granted. These include repercussions from Essex County Council's funding cuts to the VCH; ECC's decision to cease to employ specialist librarians in the county; the weekday closure of the Vestry House Museum and the William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow; the planned closure of the Family Record Centre in central London; discussion of charging for use of the British library; and the transfer of large numbers of local history books from open shelves to closed storage in Essex libraries (combined with the loss of specialist librarians, users now have considerable difficulty in getting access to these books). The President asked members to be vigilant, to inform the Society of any further cuts or threats, and to write to their District or County Councillor.

Colin Stratford then spoke about the plotlands movement. Eighty years ago the adjoining area was called as 'three horse land' – the clay was so heavy that it required that number of horses to pull a single furrow plough through it. Corn prices were low and then, as now, farmers were looking to diversify to cut

their losses. A large area of poor land was sold to an entrepreneur who divided the fields into plots (usually 20 feet wide by 150-180 feet in depth). Potential purchasers were brought by special trains from London (and plied with champagne on the way!); many signed up on the spot, often buying more than one plot (initially at £20 apiece). There was no road, and no services – the route of the road (40 feet wide) was pegged out, but not tarmaced till much later. Many of the branch roads were never surfaced, and the winter mud was formidable. Gradually tiny bungalows were built over many weekends; on other plots, old bus bodies, railway carriages, and the backs of lorries were installed. The structures varied hugely – one shack was faced with Italian marble. There were a limited number of standpipes, and most residents collected and stored rainwater. In dry summers, water bowsers were required to fill the wells at 7/6d for 500 gallons. In the absence of running water and any form of sewerage, earth closets were the norm. Orsett RDC, Grays UDC and Essex County Council, alarmed by the unplanned spread, bought up surrounding land to stop any further growth.

During World War II, many owners moved out from London and lived here permanently. Most commuted to work, as there was very little local employment and, on winter weekdays, the waiting room at Laindon railway station was notorious for the large number of muddy Wellington boots left by commuters. With the development of Basildon new town after the war, and an increased expectation of the services that we now take for granted, residents were gradually moved out, sometimes without explanation, and often with very inadequate financial compensation. Those who had lost their deeds of sale

often received nothing, though many had rosy memories and, even now, sometimes return to find the overgrown plot where they had grown up.

It is now managed as a nature reserve, and is slightly eerie, with ruins half visible in the encroaching scrub. After the talk, members were able to visit the nearby museum, the last remaining bungalow, furnished as it might have been in the 1930s and 1940s.

Michael Leach

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## **SILBURY HILL, WILTSHIRE**

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Previous Newsletters have reported on this hill, probably the largest man-made prehistoric monument in Europe. There have been concerns about its stability as a result of damage caused by various invasive investigations in the past to discover the purpose and structure of this enigmatic monument. There has been a collapse of the top of the hill, partly due to an earlier shaft sunk from the summit, and partly due to a substantial tunnel (large enough to take a dumper truck) which was driven into the base in 1968. The latter was inadequately backfilled and the steel shuttering is beginning to give way. Sadly the 1968 exploration was never written up, and the opportunity to learn more about the archaeology and palaeobotany of this unique site was wasted.

Recently funds have been found to re-open the 1968 tunnel, to rescue and record some of the potential archaeological information, and to properly repack the void to prevent any further collapse. Progress can be followed on the English Heritage website [www.english-heritage.org.uk/silburyhill](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/silburyhill). This will be regularly updated as work proceeds.

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## **VISIT TO STANLEY HALL, PEBMARSH**

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Members visited Stanley Hall on 7 July 2007. We were warmly welcomed by the owner, Christopher Stewart-Smith, who was our most hospitable guide to the house and its grounds. The site is of considerable interest, with a substantial moat enclosing what were originally two islands of about an acre each. The western one is presumed to have been the site of an early timber framed building (of which no trace remains); the present house was built on the eastern island in about 1570. As with numerous Essex houses, it was reduced in size by demolition of its NW wing in the latter part of the C19. Panelling from the old building was used to construct new pigsties. In the 1920s, the house was purchased by the artist, Percy Middleditch, who restored and improved the building. In the 1950s there was a one-room extension on the NE corner designed by Andrew Butler, and recently a larger extension northwards designed by Charles Morris.

Middleditch's improvements to the four bedroomed Tudor remnant involved removing the plaster from the south front and opening various windows (noted to be blocked in the RCHM report of 1922). It is not easy to distinguish between the original structure and the C20 repairs and modifications, but the two gable bressumers with billet ornament are mentioned in the RCHM report which pre-dates Middleditch's alterations. Internally, some old woodwork was imported, and much new woodwork (of a very high standard) was carved by Ernest Beckwith. Downstairs the original hall, and the shadow of screens passage partition on the ceiling joists, were clearly visible. The original hall fireplace (and chimney stack) on the N wall has been

removed and replaced by a doorway though to the 'pillar hall'. The main staircase is said to be a copy of one in Beddingfield Hall. Upstairs there was the same mix of old (probably partly re-used), and well blended new work; second-hand oak panelling must have been available by the acre in the 1920s! The top-lit 'pillar hall' made a light and airy contrast, and its bold external detailing was interesting and visually effective. There is a substantial well (now glazed over) with visible water movement at the bottom; the vigorous springs on this hill top site (which also feed the very substantial moat) are difficult to explain. Research by the owner's father, who bought the house in 1938, suggested that NW Essex had the lowest annual rainfall in the country (at 22 inches).

Tea was followed by a general reluctance to leave, encouraged by the enthusiasm of our host, the excellent tea, and the rare appearance of warm sunshine after weeks of rain and grey skies. Some stalwart members eventually proceeded to Pebmarsh church.

Michael Leach

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## HELPERS NEEDED

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We are still looking for members to join the Programme Committee. If you enjoy the Society's outings, this is a chance to join a friendly committee which meets only twice a year in Chelmsford under the skilful guidance of David Andrews. Special knowledge is not needed, just an enthusiasm to contribute something to the Society's main social (and educational) activity. Don't be reluctant to offer your help – you will be made very welcome by the committee. Please contact Michael Leach on 01277 363106 or [family@leachies.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:family@leachies.freereserve.co.uk)

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## HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, ESSEX BRANCH, LECTURE PROGRAMME FOR 2007-8

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All lectures are at County Hall in Chelmsford. Please arrive by 2.15 in order to be escorted to the lecture room. *Visitors and prospective members warmly welcome - a £2 donation is requested.*

Sat. 8 Sept. 2.30 AGM and Dr Timothy Ryder, Department of Classics, University of Reading, *Ancient Athens' Finest Hour? The Battle of Marathon, 490 BC.*

Sat. 6 Oct. 2.30 Mr Roy Chandler, *The Chelmer Navigation.*

Sat. 3 Nov. 2.30 Prof. David Bates, Director, Institute of Historical Research, University of London, *The Bayeux Tapestry and the Norman Conquest* [illustrated]

Sat. 1 Dec. 2.30 Short Talks by Members

Sat. 12 Jan. 2.30 Dr Rohan McWilliam, Department of History, Anglia Polytechnic University, *A Victorian Imposter: The Tichborne Trials 1867-1886.*

Sat. 2 Feb. 2.30 Dr Patricia Heal, Jesus College, University of Oxford, *Charles I and Images of Monarchy* (illustrated)

Sat. 1 Mar. 2.30 Dr Paul Rusiecki, *Commemorating Sacrifice: the War Memorials of North and Central Essex* (illustrated)

Fri. 4 Apr. 7.30 Dr David Noy, *Roman Deathbeds* (illustrated)

Further information from:  
Mrs. D. Cresswell 01245 355409

**MEMBERSHIP** - Subscriptions due on January 1st each year

Single Member - £20

Family Membership - £22

Student - £9

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Enquiries about delayed or missing publications and about the supply of recent back numbers should be addressed to the Secretary.

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2006 the projected value of the fund stands at £40,126.

Donations payable to: The Essex Society for Archaeology and History

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Please address enquiries to:

Bill Abbott, 45 Cambridge Road, Colchester C03 3NR

Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail [bill.abbott@btinternet.com](mailto:bill.abbott@btinternet.com)

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 152

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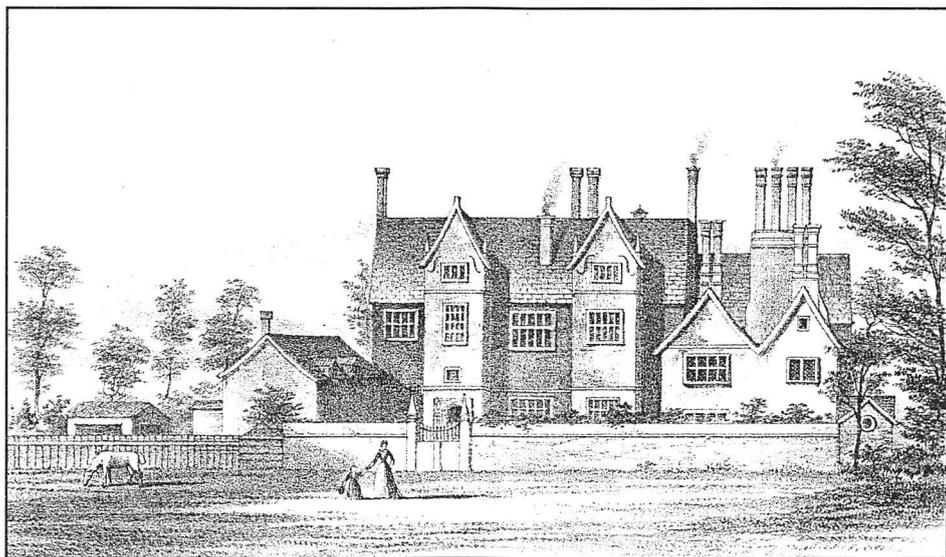
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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Winter 2007

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 153

WINTER 2007

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**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 29 FEBRUARY 2008**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

## Cover illustration:

Broadoaks, Wimbish as depicted in a print from 1853 by W Dicks, Old Fish St, London. This engraving was "dedicated to the Director and Teachers of Fulneck Schools" (in Yorkshire), "as a memorial of the celebration of the Centenary Jubilee of those Institutions". Broadoaks was a Moravian Boarding school for both girls and boys between 1742 and 1746 before the schools were relocated.

See Newsletter 152 pp10-11 for a report of the Society's visit in April 2007. A follow up to the inventory of the number of locks in 1703 at Broadoaks is featured in this issue pp 11-12.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Ensuring that historical and archaeological sites, remains and buildings are properly looked after and maintained is as important as the work of discovering them. Essex is very richly endowed with such features, but many are at constant risk from developers, vandals and sheer neglect.

Michael Leach drew attention to the threat to Thoby Priory, near Mountnessing, in our summer 2006 edition. In the same issue of the *News*, I cited earlier neglect of the Harlow Romano-British Temple site and the Baptist Burial Ground at Foster Street, near Harlow. Across the county, there are all too many examples of important survivals of our historic past which are in danger of deteriorating, or even disappearing entirely.

It would, however, be wrong not to recognise the immense amount of positive effort which has been exerted – often with considerable success – to defend and enhance our county's heritage. I would also pay tribute to English Heritage and the Essex County Council's Historic Environment services for all the excellent work that they do.

However, it should become one of the objectives of all local historical societies, which cover so much of the county's territory, to defend the local heritage. Many already achieve a great deal in researching, recording and publishing at the grass roots level. Defending what is of historic importance is also vital.

Many of our representatives on local authorities are too preoccupied with other issues or are not even aware of what is of historic value in their localities. Where a problem arises because of

planned development, the activity of vandals, or negligence, local societies and others concerned with the historic environment should alert councillors or council officers and seek to persuade them to act in defence of their local heritage. Sometimes financial stringency is advanced as a reason for inactivity, but grants are available in some cases to help remedy the situation and other positive responses are possible.

Local historical societies and members of this Society should keep a weather eye on the local situation and speak out.

Stan Newens

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## LATE DELIVERY OF THE TRANSACTIONS

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We again apologise to members for the late delivery of volume 36. Members will be aware of the very considerable difficulties that we have had in recruiting an Hon Editor to replace Owen Bedwin, who resigned the post over seven years ago. With great generosity, he has continued to act as caretaker editor, being very reluctant to witness the only alternative which would have been the complete collapse of the publication. We are enormously grateful to him. However his work pressures, and numerous problems and delays with the printer, have resulted in increasing intervals between the production of each volume. This is deeply regretted by all concerned.

However the future looks considerably brighter. We can now welcome an able new Hon Editor, Dr Christopher Starr, who will already be known to some members for his academic interest in the mediaeval soldier, Sir John Hawkwood.

There is already sufficient material for Volume 37, which he hopes to issue in the first half of next year, as well as some material for Volume 38 (estimated publication in late 2008). In addition, the index for the third series of the *Transactions* has been completed up to Volume 21, with funding already in place for the next nine volumes. It has been agreed to publish this index in two parts, and work has already started on preparing the first part for publication. This will cover Volumes 1 to 20, and should be in members' hands during 2008. It will be an overdue but invaluable tool for all researchers.

We ask again for members' forbearance, and hope that the continuing high quality of our *Transactions* will be some compensation for the delay, coupled with the anticipation that there is now, for the first time in eight years, a real prospect of catching up.

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**EAST OF ENGLAND  
REGIONAL RESEARCH  
FRAMEWORK**

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This is currently being revised by Maria Medlycott of Essex County Council, and needs to take into account the key projects which have taken place over the last ten years. It also details new ideas about the approach to the historic environment which have been developed over that period. The Society has been invited to make observations, and I would be very pleased to hear from any member who would be interested in commenting on one (or more) areas. These are a) Palaeolithic b) Neolithic c) Iron Age d) Roman e) Saxon f) mediaeval g) post-mediaeval h) landscape i) urban. The task is not onerous as each document is quite short, but some specialised knowledge

in the field would be useful. There will be a workshop on 30 January 2008 at which contributors would be welcome.

Michael Leach

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**THE HISTORIC  
ENVIRONMENT OF ESSEX:  
FROM EARLIEST HUMANS  
TO THE 20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY. A  
CONFERENCE TO BE  
HELD AT THE ESSEX  
RECORD OFFICE,  
CHELMSFORD 19<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup>  
SEPTEMBER 2008**

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The first conference on the Archaeology of Essex was held in 1978, subsequently published in 1980 as *The Archaeology of Essex to AD 1500* (ed D. Buckley), fifteen years later a second conference was held in 1993, subsequently published in 1996 as *The Archaeology of Essex: proceedings of the Writtle Conference* (ed O. Bedwin). Fifteen years further on again, takes us to 2008 and a third conference is planned for September 2008. The conference venue will be the Essex Record Office in Chelmsford and the conference will run from the afternoon of Friday 19th to Sunday 21st September. There will be a wine reception on the Friday evening and a conference dinner on the Saturday evening.

Continuing the changing emphasis over the years from a cut off point in 1500 in the first conference, to extensive coverage of post-medieval matters in the second, the third will aim to touch upon most aspects of the historic environment of Essex, archaeology, historic landscape and historic buildings, from the Palaeolithic to the 20th century.

Whilst the proceedings will focus on experience in Essex, what is known and what are key directions for future research, it is intended to take an expansive view relating Essex evidence to the rest of the east of England, London, the south-east, the North Sea basin and the wider world.

Tickets are available from Frances Van Keulen, Essex County Council, Field Archaeology Unit, Fairfield Court, Fairfield Rd, Braintree, Essex, CM7 3YQ, Tel. 01376 331431, e-mail [Con2008HE@essexcc.gov.uk](mailto:Con2008HE@essexcc.gov.uk). The prices are; the whole conference, including conference dinner £88, the whole conference, excluding conference dinner £70, day ticket £42. The ticket prices include VAT, tea/coffee, lunch and wine reception on the Friday night.

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## SIR RONALD STORRS

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The Essex associations of Thomas Edward Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia) are well known in Chingford. After the First World War, Aircraftman Shaw, as he was often known, purchased some fifteen acres of land at Pole Hill – one of the highest points in Essex – and lived there, sporadically, in two huts and a bell tent. He eventually sold out to Chingford Council, but his name is commemorated in Lawrence Hill and Arabia Close.

One of those whose name has been most closely linked with Lawrence, Sir Ronald Storrs, also has Essex links. Appointed Military Governor of Jerusalem in 1917, later Governor of Cyprus and then Northern Rhodesia (today Zambia), Sir Ronald was a great linguist, an expert on the Middle East and a very cultured man.

In his memoirs, *Orientalisms*, published in 1937 by Nicholson & Watson, Sir

Ronald, looking towards retirement, wrote:

*Still unfulfilled is the dream of some little old house with its garden and tennis courts in the quiet English country ... [Orientations, p.610].*

He found it at the Old Mill, Pebmarsh, where he lived out the remainder of his days. He died on All Saints Day 1955 and his grave is to be found close to the church of St. John the Baptist.

Stan Newens

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## ESSEX PLACE-NAMES PROJECT

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The 11<sup>th</sup> Annual Essex Place-names Seminar was held at Essex University on 17<sup>th</sup> November. Miss Phil Hendy, Recorder for St. Osyth, gave a fascinating talk about St. Osyth's dead of the 1<sup>st</sup> World War and how war broke out in the village after the decision to site the war memorial for all denominations and faiths in the Anglican churchyard. Omissions and misspellings resulted in a second memorial being erected in more 'neutral ground' with little reconciliation between the warring parties.

Mrs. Wendy Hibbit, Writtle History Group, spoke interestingly of the history and excavations of medieval Writtle and King John's Hunting Lodge with archive pictures, and of recent excavations of a Roman site originally detected by cropmarks.

The Guest Speaker, Mr. Simon Amstutz of the Dedham and Stour Valley Project, gave an insight into the development and variety of landscapes encountered from the Stour estuary to the Cambridgeshire border, how they are being managed and protected as a

designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the only one so designated in East Anglia to date.

A Training Half-Day for those wishing to know more about the reading and interpretation of historic Maps and Documents will be held at the ERO on Saturday morning, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2008. No charge but prior booking necessary on 01245 222237.

James Kemble

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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### **Heritage Sampford: Report 2002-2006, K Neale [Ed.] (2007) pp 52 (A4).**

This slim, lavishly illustrated volume represents a final report on the achievements of Heritage Sampford, an ambitious, wide-ranging and resoundingly successful exercise in community archaeology, historical research and landscape evaluation, which involved an impressively large number of this rural community, backed up by the best expertise that Essex can offer and resourced by the Heritage Lottery Fund, English Heritage, the Countryside Agency and our own County Council.

In the process fieldwalking had been completed over 193 of the parishes' 204 fields, surviving historical documentation reviewed, a community persuaded to bring forward all sorts of archaeological and archival treasures and the pre-history of this area transformed. Lithic and other findings, some of them rare, have demonstrated a Paleolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic past, far richer than had been appreciated. A Neolithic stock raising farm, a new Roman villa site, a host of new Iron Age/Roman sites, a pre-historic origin for Great Sampford, a possible pre-historic crossing of the River Pant and medieval

moat locations have been traced, and medieval strip-farming and intercommoning have been demonstrated.

In short the Sampford Society has set down a marker for what a small, rural and dormitory community can achieve. Resounding congratulations: the challenge is now for others to follow suit.

### **The War Years 1939-45: Recollections of Members of Great Dunmow Historical Society, K. Drury (Ed.) (2005) pp179, Great Dunmow Historical & Literary Society, 18 Jubilee Court, Gr. Dunmow.**

We are indebted to the Great Dunmow Society for compiling this collection of personal recollections, covering all three services, all parts of the globe and all manner of experiences (including those of children), during the dramatic years of the Second World War. In that sense this is not a book of Essex History, but it is a product of an Essex History Society, and further enriches our understanding of the way in which those six years have, while survivors last, come to signify an epoch turning moment, and why, for a later generation, "Don't mention the War" has come to be a comedy cliché.

Although described as Oral History (and a CD of three respondents accompanies the book), it is clear that some editing has helped turn the spontaneity of recollection into the order of narrative prose, helped surely by the fact that, in many cases, this is a story told before. The editor has skillfully woven them into themes, while the book's dedication to Peter Street doubtless acknowledges the group's main driving force.

### **Get Some In: Memories of National Service, K Drury (Ed) (2006) pp 196, Great Dunmow Historical Society, 18 Jubilee Court, Great Dunmow.**

This parallel Great Dunmow book looks

at that great British institution, National Service, with a further collection of personal experiences. It owes much to its editor and more to the wit and insight of its contributors, many of whose entries once more read more like the crafted written word than the spontaneous delivery of oral history. They are not, let it be said, a random sample of National Servicemen, but made up overwhelmingly of the articulate and upwardly mobile (we used to say 'Middle Class'). However, the editor has done a job by giving us initially several traditional stories of square bashing and ear bashing; subsequent secondment to all parts of the globe (notably Korea, Cyprus and West Germany), or bleak corners of the U.K.; with the familiar story of a discipline learnt, a comradeship forged, a boy made a man. After an array of these increasingly familiar versions, the editor has given us the mavericks, the doubters and the witty, never quite rubbishising National Service, but providing a string of anecdotes which make us all un-nostalgic for the mindless bureaucracy and needless bullying, and the sheer unfairness of the class system. This reviewer's favourite (printable) story is of the mother foolishly accompanying the serviceman to embarkation at Felixstowe, loaded with full kit. "Can't you get a porter to carry all that", she said, in the presence of other servicemen, as her son quietly died beside her.

**Surgeons and Apothecaries of Castle Hedingham, Essex, Jane Greatorex, (2006), pp 65 (A4), Browser's Bookshop, Woodbridge.**

This is a first and ambitious attempt to trace all those practicing the medical profession in Castle Hedingham since c.1100. The problem is that the number concerned is not large and the records

themselves, at least until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, often tangential. The author's solution is to quote at great length from these primary records, given us more a source book than a distilled historical analysis – though this is in part redeemed by quoting at length from secondary sources on the medical profession in general already in the public domain. Having made these caveats, this reviewer found this an interesting book, if only from its unusual approach, and we finish up knowing more about Castle Hedingham over the centuries, thanks to research which has been thorough and very extensive. Copies can be obtained from the author or Browser's Bookshop, Woodbridge.

**Grandad Played the Cornet: a History of Brass Bands in North East Essex, David Cawdell, (2007) pp 80 (A4) Pub. by author; Red Lion Books, Colchester £6.95.**

Between 1880 and 1914 brass bands were quite widespread: village bands, church bands, works bands. It was the greatest example of amateur mass music-making the country had ever seen. Yet they remain a somewhat neglected subject. Thanks to this book this is no longer true for North East Essex. The author has traced over 30 bands within the villages concerned, all active in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, backed up by over 100 surviving photographs. For good measure there is also a history of uniforms, of bandstands and their design, also illustrated by local examples. It was, of course, an all-male activity; it fitted the wearing of uniforms which characterised this period (think of the Salvation Army), and it had strong roots in church and chapel – indeed the very origin of brass bands may lie with those church choir bands, poised on balconies at the back of church to lead the congregations in worship, before the

universal organ, especially the American organ, swept them aside. Brass bands remained an important, but declining, inter-war activity, slumping most noticeably in more recent, casual days. But the bands are still there, even in Essex: they are not all the product of long-closed Lancashire mills. This is a fascinating book of original research, modestly priced and recommended.

**Rayleigh Tower Mill, Noel Beer (2007) pp 42, HTR Publications, 13, Nelson Road, Rayleigh.**

Another fascinating publication by Noel Beer about Rayleigh looks at its sturdy tower mill, which is one of nine remaining windmills in any reasonable state of preservation in our county. When the mill was built between 1810 and 1811 there were, amazingly to our minds, already three other mills in Rayleigh. Despite its impressive structural strength (the highest in Essex) the mill had a largely unsuccessful economic life, made worse in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century by the demise of Essex grain farming. The sails were removed, steam, then oil, engines drove the stones, but eventually the last owner was blown up in his wheelchair by his insane son. The post-war story of renovation began in 1964 when the mill was acquired by the local council and became a Museum. Extensive restoration in the early 1970's had to be done all over again (and at vast expense) in 2004. Though no longer a working mill, floodlit and open to the public, Rayleigh mill now looks, externally, just as it once did.

**Reverence My Sanctuary: History & Guide to the Parish Church of ..... Little Bardfield, R. Beaken (2007) pp 50, Taverner Publication [copies from the Rector, Rev. Robert Beaken.]**

This is rather more than a church guide. Lucidly written by the present Rector and marvellously illustrated with colour photos, we see one of the glories of our Essex parish churches, beautifully restored in recent years and active in its community today. With an Anglo-Saxon nave and tower one cannot look for greater historical continuity. That history the author sets in a wider and well-informed history of the English church, as he seeks to instruct as well as inform, from the standpoint of the High Anglicanism long practiced there. A separate chapter covers the Brotherhood of St Paul, a theological college to train priests in the Anglo-Catholic tradition, established in the parish by the remarkable Rev Edward Mears, incumbent from 1910 to 1940.

Andrew Phillips

***Harlow Recollections by Jim Priest. Museum of Harlow and the Friends of Harlow Museum, 2007, £5.***

During 2007 the people of Harlow have been celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> year of its designation as a new town. Much attention has accordingly been focussed on all that has happened since 1947.

However, there is also much interest in ascertaining what existed beforehand. What was the character of the five rural parishes – Harlow, Latton, Netteswell, Great and Little Parndon – which made up the site of the new town before it was designated?

Prior to his death in 1984, Jim Priest, who was born in Great Parndon in 1906 and lived much of his life in the area, penned some of his memories, which were published as *Parndon Recollections* by the Harlow development Corporation in 1980. I met the author, attended the launch of his book and discovered a fascinating

description of the terrain and its people before the New Town.

I was informed that Jim Priest had recorded further memories, but I never saw them and the years passed away. Now, 27 years later, local historian Ron Bill has edited a second volume entitled *Harlow Recollections*. Others have assisted him and funding has been provided by the Friends of Harlow Museum and Museum of Harlow.

The new volume, although slim, contains an invaluable description of early twentieth century Harlow, illustrated by often original photographs and sketch maps. The schools, the churches, the shops and many of the residents and other features are recalled in a unique form.

For anyone who knows Harlow but is curious about what it was like before the New Town, this book is a veritable goldmine. Ron Bill has done an excellent job in presenting this fascinating account.

Stan Newens

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## ASHDON RECORDS

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We are very grateful to the owner (who lives in Gloucestershire) for making five documents relating to Ashdon available to the Society. They were acquired about 20 years ago with a collection of postal history material which had, apparently, come from a solicitor's office in Horsham. All are in excellent condition.

The earliest is dated 1475 and is a confirmation of a settlement of the manor of Mortyvaus, later Mortimers, in Ashdon on Isabel, widow of Edmund Bendyssh esquire, during her life. Afterwards it was to descend to his son, William, and, failing heirs, to revert to Edmund's brother, Thomas, of Bumpstead, in accordance with the will of Edmund

Bendyssh, senior, grandfather of Edmund and Thomas. The family had held the manor since about 1392.

This branch of the Bendyssh family were then living at Barrington in Cambridgeshire where they later held a small manor called Bendyssh Hall and were still there in the early C19. An interesting digression is that Thomas Peyton, of Isleham, Cambs., the surviving trustee who confirmed Mortimers manor to Isabel, is probably the subject of the monumental brass dated 1484 in Isleham church with his two wives. The brass is illustrated in Pevsner's Cambridgeshire volume (p.335).

Mortimers was a small manor which later became one of Lord Maynard's group of manors in Ashdon. Its land lay in the south of Ashdon and seems to have adjoined the manor of Bendyssh Hall which included land in both Ashdon and Radwinter.

It is Bendyssh Hall manor with which the other deeds are concerned. Surprisingly the Bendyssh family never appear to have owned it. The name is said to be derived from 'bean field' or 'tilled field'. Bendyssh Hall in Radwinter survives as a C16 timber framed house with later additions. It is a moated site with part of the moat still surviving as a pond. In 1086 the manor was held by Eustace of Boulogne and was later given to Faversham abbey in Kent. at the dissolution it came to Sir Richard Rich, and later to Lord Cobham. The second document is a sale of 1542 of seven acres called Geboundes Croft, enclosed by fences and ditches, lying between pasture land called Mechell on the west, and the lane from Bumpstead to Saffron Walden to the east, and in the parish of Ashdon. Michells was included in the lands held in the manor and sold

to Lord Cobham. The 1542 sale was by Margaret Bankes, a widow of Hadstock, to Stephen Bukk, an Ashdon weaver, for £6 6s 4d paid, and a further 4 marks (£2 13s 4d) to be paid five months later. The name of the croft may be derived from Robert Geboun who held land in Ashdon in 1404.

The other three documents are copies of court roll of the manor of Bendysh Hall. In 1591 six of the tenants were empowered to make a partition of the land of John Curteys, deceased, between his three daughters; in 1594 they asked for this to be enrolled in the manor court records; copies of court roll were the title deeds to all copyhold property, though Curteys also held freeholds. The property divided between Audrey, Joan and Agnes, with their agreement, included a freehold house called Brandes in Winsmer Hill; in 1831 Wismore Hill lay near Goldstones Farm in Ashdon. In 1562 it was held by John Curteys as a toft (where a house formerly stood) so it appears to have been rebuilt; with it he held a copyhold called Craftes and 30 acres which he then passed on to his son, William, who died in 1571. Craftes had been left to the guild of St Mary in 1503. Most of Craftes (14 acres) was Agnes's portion; the remaining 18 acres, including Loves Close, came to Joan, with £18 from the other two portions because there was no house with her portion. The Curteys family can also be found in other documents (in the Essex Record Office). The remaining two copies of court roll probably held the 1594 document as part of their title for Crafts (or Crofts). In 1616 Richard Strachey held this as a house, garden, barn and ten pieces of arable, meadow and pasture (18 acres). In 1618 he also acquired another three acres, part of Bayleys, to be held at an annual rental of 23d and three eggs 'as agreed'.

He appears to have been consolidating his holding; a map of 1665 of the demesnes of the manor shows the land (perhaps by then a descendant's) as a larger area adjoining the common field of Polleys Wick, northeast of the Radwinter road, but in Ashdon. A C17 court roll shows 'Richard Strachey gent.' holding a tenement lately built and 15 acres, part of Crafts, and other land part of Bayleys. Entries on other tenants show a process of splitting holdings as tenants sold parts, or were able to increase their holdings piecemeal; among these were Craftes, Bayleys and Brandes.

These deeds together add interesting further details to the history of Ashdon. The owner has generously agreed to deposit the original documents in the Essex Record Office.

Angela Green

Sources:

Ekwall, E, 1980 *Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-names*  
Green, A, 1989 *Ashdon*  
Lysons, D & S, 1808 *Magna Britannia*, ii, pt. i, Cambridgeshire  
Morant, P, 1768 *History of Essex*, ii  
Pevsner, N, 1954 *Buildings of England; Cambridgeshire*  
RCHM, 1916 *Essex*, i, 216  
VCH, 1903 *Essex*, i

Documents:

BL: Harl. Ch. S.16  
ERO: D/ACR 6 f.347; D/DK M 37;  
D/DMg P13

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## SCRATCH DIALS

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These simple mediaeval sundials are often found, as their name suggests, scratched on the south wall of church buildings. Many will have been lost to weathering, others destroyed in restorations or hidden by later features

such as porches. The canonical day was divided into 12 'hours' between sunrise and sunset – these 'hours', of course, varied in length from season to season, and were only equal to the modern hour at the spring and autumn equinoxes. The midwinter hour would have lasted for 40 minutes, the midsummer one for 80 minutes. The marks on the scratch dial usually indicated the important times – three 'hours' after sunrise (Terce - the correct time for the celebration of mass), midday (Sext), and three 'hours' before sunset (None). Many scratch dials have a horizontal line which marks the shadow of sunrise and sunset on a dial facing due south. Such a horizontal line also shows that the gnomon mounted on this line must have projected horizontally. The angled gnomon, associated with modern sundials is a later sophistication to correct for latitude. Some mediaeval dials had additional divisions and later ones became more accurate with the growth of scientific knowledge, showing, for example, the 'bunching' of the hours around midday which is to be seen on modern sundials. By the C17 sundials were considerably more accurate than contemporary clocks; indeed the owner of a clock would have needed a sundial with which to correct his timepiece! It is believed that the canonical hour, and the modern fixed hour, co-existed for some time, possibly into the C18 by which time most parishes would have had reliable mechanical timepieces, and the canonical hour would have long lost its liturgical significance. Hence the use of the expression 'o'clock' which indicated what type of hour was being referred to.

In many counties, scratch dials have been an area of continuing antiquarian curiosity. Finding them can be difficult; almost all have lost their gnomons, and many are very difficult to identify due to

weathering, repairs or concealment by extensions. Occasionally they are sited eccentrically, as at Rawreth on the jamb of the bell chamber window, and at Sandon on an angled buttress quoin facing southwest. There are inexplicably large numbers in Gloucestershire, though it is not clear if this is due to an unusual local custom, or to assiduous recording by local enthusiasts. In some instances the dial has been angled to compensate for the inaccurate orientation of the wall surface, and at Sandon (mentioned above) the hour marks have been cut differently to allow for its southwest aspect. As far as Essex examples are concerned, a quick search through the indexes of the Society's Transactions reveals no entries (apart from one at Beeleigh abbey) though it is possible that indexers ignored brief references in church articles as being of insufficient importance. The RCHM volumes for Essex mention 26 churches with scratch dials, including 10 buildings with two or more examples. The Essex Review in 1935 noted their presence in 41 churches, and a SEAX search has revealed another three. However it seems probable that every mediaeval church once had an example of a device that was very simple to make, as well as being important for the correct celebration of mass.

Some dials may have been painted, rather than incised, onto a lime-washed wall surface; if so, no known examples have survived. Nearly half the Essex scratch dials described by the RCHM are on door jambs, about a quarter on buttresses, and the rest on windows, parapets and other wall surfaces. Some doorways with dials are now protected by later mediaeval porches (hence perhaps their higher rate of survival) though this would probably have led to the cutting a new dial elsewhere. This

appears to have happened at Chadwell. A few churches have a surprising number of scratch dials; Chickney was noted to have eight!

Other than those now protected by church porches, all must be at risk from loss due to weathering. Should a good photographic record be made of those that do still survive?

Michael Leach

Sources:

EAT n.s xvi, 227

Essex Review, xxxvi (1927), 192; xlv (1935), 135

Williams, C H K, 2007 'The Scratch Dials of Kent' in *Archaeologia Cantiana* cxxvii  
Friar, S, 1998 *Companion to the English Parish Church*, Sutton

RCHM, 1916-23 *Essex*, i, ii, iii, iv

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## THE CHALLENGES OF CONSERVATION – WEST THURROCK MARSHES

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Most readers will be aware of the considerable pressure from central government to develop the southern fringes of Essex from Thurrock to Southend. Compared with the leafier parts of Essex, it would seem to be a reasonable place to provide housing and factories in a crowded land – surely better than releasing swathes of Green Belt? Last November, Thames Gateway Development Corporation granted outline planning consent for a Royal Mail depot (to be re-located due to the 2012 Olympics) on a brownfield site at West Thurrock Marshes. At first sight, this seemed uncontroversial; the area is uninviting as, over the years, layers of pulverised ash from a nearby power station have been dumped on the surface of the original marsh. The result,

to the uninformed eye, is an unsightly wasteland of scummy water, with tussocks of marsh plants, grass and scrub, seemingly a typical brownfield site awaiting development. However the misuse of this marsh has inadvertently created an extremely rich biological habitat for numerous invertebrates, including 36 species whose survival is endangered nationally. This makes it one of the richest wildlife sites in Britain although most of the insects are only visible with a hand lens, and their significance is only apparent to a few entomologists. But does this make the site any less important than a listed building, or an ancient woodland? Brownfield sites have no protection, and planners and developers have no obligation to make an ecological assessment. This is not the first instance of the surprising biological diversity of neglected urban sites; indeed they are often far richer in wildlife than the monoculture of wheat or oil seed rape in the more obviously attractive rural areas of the county.

Anyone doubting the potential of brownfield sites would do well to visit the newly opened RSPB reserve at Rainham Marshes, a former military firing range which, at one point, was on the short list for the Euro-Disney development. After seven years work, and the removal of a great deal of toxic waste and old ammunition, this area is now an arcadian idyll, with cows and sheep grazing the marsh and a great deal of bird life on the carefully managed wetlands. The nationally endangered water vole has flourished here, and the ditch banks are peppered with their holes. It is also well used by people and is a much needed green space in the industrial wastelands flanking the nearby A13. There is clearly a strong case for better evaluation of brownfield sites before giving planning

consent for building, and for a rejection of the presumption that commercial development is always appropriate on such sites.

Michael Leach

Sources:

*The Guardian*, 30 August 2007

*Natural World*, Summer 2007

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## LOCK IT OR LOSE IT?

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Members who visited Broadoaks at Wimbish in April 2007 (see Newsletter no: 152) may recall a surprising reference to an inventory of 1703 which listed between 30 and 40 sets of locks and keys. There is still ample evidence of lock scars on some of the C17 internal doors. Nowadays there is a perception that having to lock everything is a recent phenomenon, and that there was a golden past when you could with impunity leave your home - or your car - unlocked.

A few random findings suggest that this perception may be a delusion. Christ Church Priory in Canterbury owned the manor of Westwell in Kent, and the bedel roll for 1290-91 provides detailed records of the building work that was done on the estate. One unspecified new building (which must have had a domestic function as there is reference to a kitchen and a 'food chamber') was fitted with two locks costing 5d... At the same time, a barn and ox-house were dismantled and rebuilt on a new site. This must have been a substantial building, as 200,000 roof tiles were required. There was one door for the barn and several (the number was not specified, though 11 pairs of hinge rings and pins were required) for the ox-house. It is surprising to find that five locks were supplied for this building,

costing a total of 16d. It would appear to have been necessary to lock up the animals, perhaps when the yard was not supervised, though the term 'lock' might simply indicate a door fastening, rather than something that could be locked with a key.

A report was prepared in 1596 'to a view of the repayryne of the lodgyng houses and offyces' at Havering Palace in Essex. This reveals a profusion of locks; keys (both single and double) are also listed so it is clear that these were locks in the modern sense. Almost every door had a 'barre', or a 'bolte', or lock and key. The presence chamber had five doors 'with boulttes and rings and four double lockes'. Many of the other important rooms also had double locks, and even the minor domestic offices, such as scullery, the wet larder and the spicery had doors with single locks. Royal servants were obviously not to be trusted.

Locks, or their mislaid keys, could sometimes have unexpected benefits. On 21 February 1644 the iconoclast, William Dowsing, recorded in his diary a visit to the Roman Catholic Waldegrave family at Smallbridge Hall: 'at Mr Watgraves chapell, in Buers, there was a picture of God the Father, and divers other superstitious pictures, 20 at least, which they promised to break, his daughter and servants. He himself was not at home, neither could they find the key of the chapell.' Thus by prevarication were religious images saved!

No locks are mentioned in Steer's *Mid Essex Inventories*, apart from one padlock on a hutch (chest) in the corn chamber of a farmer who was wealthy enough to own a clock, as well as two looking glasses, in 1691. The omission of locks from the inventories may be

because either they were not regarded as part of the movables to be valued by the assessors, or they were not fitted in the houses of small farmers and tradesmen at that time.

However, the tradition of lockable domestic doors seems to be a long-lived one. Looking at my own small house (built in 1947 to a 1930s design) I realise that every internal door shows evidence of a lock, although the keys were lost long ago. Doubtless many houses of that period were similarly equipped. Why this obsession with locks which any malefactor could easily overcome with shoulder or boot? In practice, were they ever used? This could be a puzzle for future house historians.

Michael Leach

Sources:

- Semple, J, 2007 'Westwell – the establishment of a village' in *Archaeologia Cantiana* cxvii, p.191-2
- Ogborne, E, 1814 *The History of Essex from the earliest period.....* London, p.114
- Cooper, T (ed), 2001 *The Journal of William Dowsing*, Boydell & Brewer, p. 248
- Steer, F W, 1950 *Farm and Cottage Inventories of mid Essex*, Essex Record Office, p.209

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## A LITERARY ANNIVERSARY, HEDGES, STRAW AND THE ALPS

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2007 was the hundredth anniversary of the publication of *A Countryside Chronicle* the first book of short stories about the Essex countryside and its people by S. L. Bensusan. Over the next fifty years Bensusan continued to publish further volumes of these stories.

The books generally have a short forward, by an eminent local dignitary, which often compares Bensusan with Thomas Hardy, a natural enough comparison for a writer concerned with a particular place and its rural inhabitants. Though Bensusan was not a writer of the stature of Thomas Hardy his stories are often well crafted, resonant of place and frequently accompanied by evocative illustrations, particularly those by Joan Rickarby which adorned the books published after the Second World War.

One of his stories 'Mr Woodpecker strikes it lucky' (published in *Comment from the Countryside* 1928), describes a particular form of hedge management 'It was too wet for ordinary work on the land, but Mr. Smallbone having given him a hedge in return for the stubbing thereof, Mr Woodpecker could see profit. There would be thick pieces for firing, brashy stuff for faggots and perhaps a few dozen straight briars that would root and serve for grafting standard roses. Such wood has a value in Maychester' This sounds very like the hedge management which Tom Williamson (2002) records Arthur Young describing in 1805 '...in Essex the hedges were cut down at intervals of nine, ten or twelve years and that fifty years before they had provided enough firewood to supply the requirements of the county' As agricultural subsidy changes from production to environmental management and Green Infrastructure Strategies are drawn up it is worth remembering that the traditional management of an Essex hedge is not necessarily the same as that in, say, Leicestershire. The same story contains an interesting echo of prehistory; Mr. Woodpecker prepares himself to keep out the wet by reinforcing his clothing with hay and straw which works effectively even though '... the

rain searched for joints in his straw armour'. The use of straw in this way in early 20th century Essex is reminiscent of the way the Ice Man, in the late Neolithic had used straw to keep out the much harsher weather of the Alps.

Nigel Brown

Source:

Willamson, T. 2002 *Hedges and Walls* (National Trust)

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## **COLCHESTER SHIPPING REGISTERS – HELP SOUGHT.**

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Mike Dun from Jersey is interested in Channel Islands shipping, particularly in connection with privateering and smuggling, a profitable sideline for local ship owners, or those having shares in a local vessel. He hopes that someone in Essex might be willing to look at the Colchester Shipping Registers at ERO (A/SR 3/1/2 – 7) for the years 1786 to 1832, and extract details of vessels registered with Guernsey, Jersey or Alderney owners (or vessels with any other obvious Channel Island connections), as well as details of any vessel seized for smuggling (which he might recognise from his present database). Smuggling between the Channel Islands and the East Coast was well known, but no early registers from Kent's ports have survived, and he would like to obtain information from further round the coast into Essex.

Anyone who might be able to help can obtain further details from Mike Dun on 01534 862929 or on [mikedunjersey@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:mikedunjersey@yahoo.co.uk). He assures me that the work should not be onerous and would be a very pleasant

way to spend a wet afternoon in Chelmsford!

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## **ESSEX HISTORY FAIR – SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVE NEEDED**

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Most members will know that this is held every other year. In 2006, it filled the town centre of Braintree, and provided a great opportunity for the public to meet the wide range of organisations involved in many different ways with the heritage of Essex. Paradoxically, though it was a great success, the inability to charge an entrance fee to the town centre has left the organisation's funds seriously depleted. It is an excellent event for the county, and it would be a great loss if it were to lapse. The Society is looking for a member to represent it on the History Fair committee, and anyone keen to do this is urged to contact me on 01277 363106, or [family@leachies.freeserve.co.uk](mailto:family@leachies.freeserve.co.uk), or by post at 2 Landview Gardens, Ongar CM5 9EQ.

Michael Leach

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## **OUTING TO OLD LEIGH- ON-SEA**

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Members were welcomed by members of the Leigh Society at the Leigh Heritage Centre on 22 September 2007. The Essex coast is always a surprise to 'inlanders' with its vast skies, and its prospects of a wide and distant horizon. A plethora of private sailing boats beached on a glittering expanse of mud, as well as the infrastructure necessary for catching and eating various marine

molluscs, added to the sense of arriving in a different land.

Slides of old Leigh, and a talk set the scene. Historically fishing, shipping and boat building had been the main occupations of the town. It had been capable of building ships of 100 tons in the mediaeval period. The arrival of the railway in 1854 destroyed a swathe of properties along the northern edge of the High Street; apart from one level crossing, the town was cut off from mainland Essex! It was densely populated, with high levels of poverty. The prosperous Victorian and Edwardian suburbs spread northwards up the hill and now merge into the Southend conurbation. The damage inflicted on Leigh by the London Tilbury and Southend railway was nearly completed in the 1970s when a proposed relief road along the southern edge of the High Street would have destroyed another swathe of old buildings, and cut the town off from the sea as well! Fortunately this scheme was abandoned after vigorous local opposition.

Cockles (and oysters) are still an important local industry, at one time exported to all parts of the country as well as abroad. The old cocklers cooked the shell fish on the return voyage, and these boats were termed 'boileys'. Modern fishing vessels suck the molluscs off the sea floor (in the interests of conservation, the quantities are now controlled by EU legislation) and deliver them fresh to the shore for preparation. In the past, the quays were busy with Thames barges carrying hay up to London to fuel the city's traffic. Old photographs show the laden barges resembling floating haystacks with a protruding mast and sail; appropriately they were called 'stackeys'. They returned from London laden with manure

and city waste. The manufacture of earthenware storage jars was another local industry, the necessary clay also arriving by boat. As with any coastal town, smuggling was a useful additional source of revenue, though the romantic gloss of 'brandy for the parson, baccy for the clerk' probably concealed a rather more brutal picture.

A walk completed the visit and we were shown a variety of buildings, many of whose facades concealed older cores. Though there was evidence in the old town of damage from the insatiable demands of the motor car, the centre remains attractive and is clearly well used by visitors. We are very grateful to members of the Leigh Society for giving their time to tell us about the town, and to Ann and her helpers for an excellent tea.

Michael Leach

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## BUILDINGS AT RISK IN ESSEX

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a) Tilty Mill, Tilty. Though planning permission was granted earlier this year by Uttlesford DC to adapt this mill and its outbuildings for residential use, the plans were 'called in' by the minister. A public enquiry was to be held at the end of October (the result of which was not known at the time of writing this report). Most unusually, the mill is still fully equipped with its C18/C19 mill machinery. It is probably on the site of the mediaeval monastic mill. Apart from the inevitable destruction of the mill equipment if the building is converted, it is a visually sensitive site, forming part of the rural setting of the ruins of Tilty Abbey itself.

b) Thoby Priory, Mountnessing. The

quinquennial inspection by English Heritage confirmed the dire state of the ruins (probably structurally supported by the dense growth of ivy covering it!). Re-development of the site (now unsuitably used for commercial and industrial purposes) could provide enabling funds to stabilise the ruin. However this approach is blocked by Brentwood BC, who will not agree to alternative uses for the site. The impasse appears to be intractable.

c) The Court, St Osyth. This large C15 timber framed building is Grade II listed, but cannot wait much longer for a white knight to rescue it. It is swathed in scaffolding. An Unauthorised Works notice has been issued by Tendring DC, covering works apparently carried out by its present owner. These include the removal of roof tiles, as well as the destruction of internal lath and plaster walls. The latter work has unexpectedly revealed a large section of an earlier wall covered in trompe l'oeil decoration, believed to date from 1600 or earlier. The house was for sale when this report was written.

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## NO MARKET FOR COLCHESTER'S ANTIQUITIES?

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On 16 November 1720, Mr Great of Colchester visited Robert Harley's librarian (Humfrey Wanley) in London to enquire about some coins and other artefacts that had been found in Colchester. These had been brought in about 18 months previously and offered for sale. Apparently no decision had been made, and Mr Great was asked to return later. He came back on 19 May the following year, asking for a decision, and returned the next day 'asking an exorbitant price'. He was asked to return

two days later, when he could take away the artefacts and would be given a 'gratuity'. Calling again on 22 May, he collected his coins (but left behind the 'tiles & earthen fragments'). As Harley was out, Wanley was unable to give him the promised gratuity and Mr Great (hardly surprisingly) considered that he had been ill used. No more is heard of this Colcestrian who may have been the son of Samuel Great, an apothecary of Colchester who died in 1706.

Michael Leach

Source:

Wright C E & R C (eds) *The Diary of Humfrey Wanley* (1966) London

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## ESSEX JOURNAL

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Readers might want to give their support to the recently re-launched Essex Journal now under the Editorship of Neil Wiffen.

The *Essex Journal* is published by a consortium including the Archaeological and Historical Congress, the Friends of Historic Essex and the Essex Record Office on behalf of the County Council. It is published twice a year, in the spring and autumn, and the articles published in it come from a wide range of contributors.

The origins of the *Essex Journal* stretch back to 1892, when the first edition of the Essex Review was published. The scholarly articles on local history and archaeology which for sixty-four years filled its pages set a standard which the Essex Journal has endeavoured to emulate.

Today articles in the *Essex Journal* attract a wide and varied readership from academic historians to those who are

just interested in the history and antiquities of Essex. Recent editions have included articles ranging from the life of nuns at Barking Abbey to Oliver Cromwell at Saffron Walden. The latest issue, Autumn 2007, includes articles as varied as the discovery of an Iron Age warrior burial in Kelvedon, the provision of childcare in Chelmsford during the Second World War and modern computer archives.

Subscription is just £10 per year cheques payable to the Essex Journal. Please contact the Honorary Treasurer Mrs. Geraldine Willden, 11 Milligans Chase, Galleywood, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 8QD.

E-mail:

[geraldine.wildden@essexcc.gov.uk](mailto:geraldine.wildden@essexcc.gov.uk)

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## **ESSEX CONNECTIONS WITH THE EMANCIPATION OF SLAVES**

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William Wilberforce and others have all been mentioned as being instrumental in the emancipation. There is also another gentleman with Essex connections who should be included, he was Charles Abbot, later the first Lord Colchester.

Charles Abbot, (elder son of the Revd. John Abbot, MA, DD, Rector of All Saints Church, Colchester, from 1753 to his death April 29<sup>th</sup> 1760, aged 43), was MP for Helston, Cornwall. He became Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1801 and was Speaker of the House of Commons, 1802 to 1817. He was responsible for the first Census Act, 1801, and for his services was created Lord Colchester in 1816. He died in 1829.

Charles' mother, Sarah, nee Farr, a widow with two small sons, John, aged six and Charles later Lord Colchester,

married Jeremiah Bentham of Whittian fame (1748 to 1832), at St Mary's, Westminster, October 14<sup>th</sup> 1766. Jeremiah was the father of Jeremy and Sir Samuel Bentham, the naval architect. Sarah was thus mother and step mother and both the family of Abbot and Bentham owed much to her encouragement in their exciting lives.

Speaker Charles' eldest son, also Charles, entered the Royal Navy as a Midshipman on HMS Revenge, (Captain Nash) in 1811. His Midshipman's log book was published by the Navy Records Society, (NAVY RECORDS SOCIETY Volume XCI 1951). He progressed to Rear Admiral, 1854; Vice Admiral, 1860 and Admiral in 1864. He died in 1867.

Thanks to Charles, Lord Colchester, the bill for the Slaves' Emancipation safely passed through the Commons in 1807.

John S Appleby

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## **FOR SALE**

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Substantial, elaborately carved, wooden Victorian gothic chair, with large pierced finials, elaborate armrests, and a nominally upholstered back. Provenance unknown, but possibly an ecclesiastical throne, 57" high, 28" wide and 26" deep. Needs some light restoration, but complete apart from one boss. Not suitable for sybarites, or for those living in a small house, but would look great in a Victorian rectory or similar! Photos can be supplied to anyone interested in making an offer. Proceeds will be donated to ESAH. Please contact Michael Leach on 01277 363106 or [family@leachies.freereserve.co.uk](mailto:family@leachies.freereserve.co.uk)

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2006 the projected value of the fund stands at £40,126.

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

**THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY**

**NEWSLETTER NUMBER 153**

**ISSN 0305-8530**

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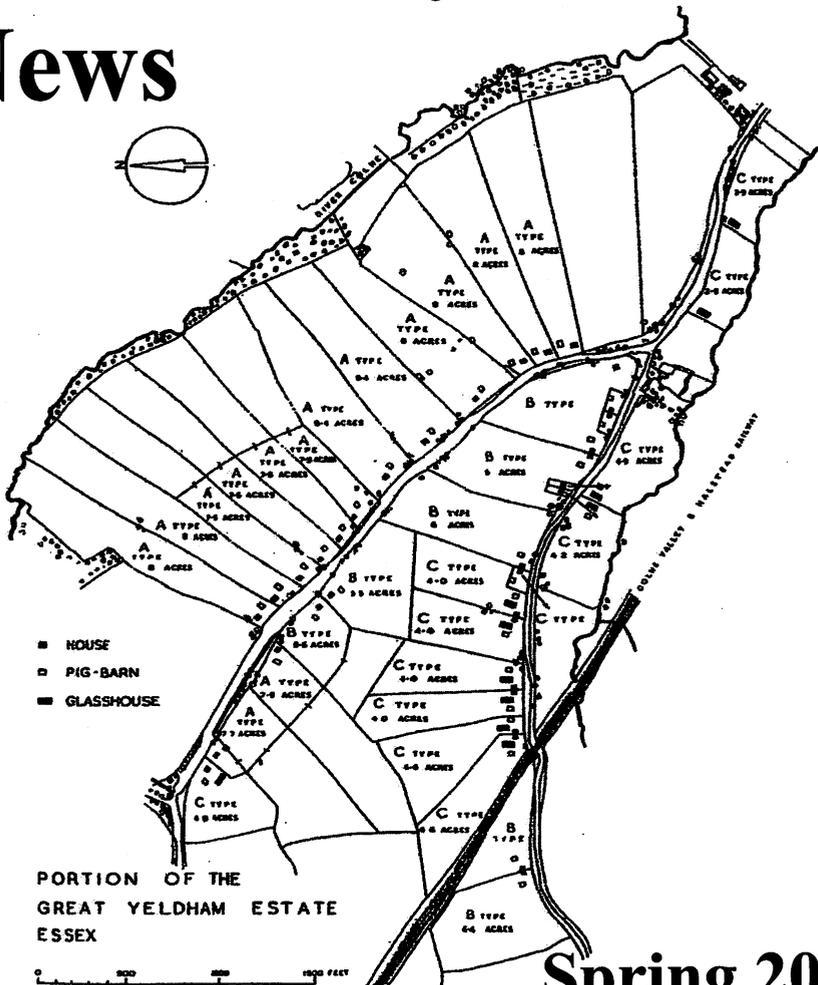
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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Spring 2008

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 154

SPRING 2008

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Assistant Editor: Michael Leach

**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 27 JUNE 2008**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

## Cover illustration:

A map showing part of the Land Settlement Association's Estate at Great Yeldham. This map shows a typical layout of full-time holdings. Taken from the journal of the Royal Institute of British Architects, 22 November 1937. See Essex Smallholdings on pp. 3-4 of this Newsletter.

A floor plan of a typical semi-detached house on the Great Yeldham estate can be seen on p.4.

More information can be found in the 'Market Gardening and Miscellaneous' section of the Industrial Housing in Essex report by Crosby, Garwood and Green, ECC Internal Report, 2006.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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Over the course of recent years, many of us who are involved with the heritage and cultural services have become increasingly concerned about the damage caused by successive cuts. Here in our county, the Essex Record Office Users' Group was formed to voice concern and convey our feelings to the Essex County Council about the detrimental effects of some of its economies.

The problem is, however, by no means confined to our home ground. Throughout Britain, cutbacks are being made which are adversely affecting provisions designed to facilitate the appreciation and study of the cultural heritage.

With this in mind, I have been anxious to ensure that our concern is conveyed to the Government. Through the good offices of Bill Rammell, Minister of State for Higher Education and MP for Harlow, a number of us met Margaret Hodge, MP, Minister for Culture, Creative Industries & Sport, at the House of Commons on 24<sup>th</sup> January, to put our case.

The delegation consisted of Professor John Beckett (Director and General Editor of the Victoria County History), Vic Gray (President of the Society of Archivists and former Archivist at the Essex Record Office), Rodney Bickerstaffe (Chairman of the Modern Records Centre Advisory Committee at Warwick University and former General Secretary of Unison), and myself.

Professor Beckett dealt with the serious threat to future work on the Victoria County Histories, which aim to provide a comprehensive account of history in every English county. In Essex, the County Council has halved its grant and Essex University is withdrawing support.

Vic Gray covered damage being inflicted on local archive services, quoting the closure of the ERO branch in Colchester and proposed budget cuts in Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire and elsewhere.

Rodney Bickerstaffe spoke about library closures, reductions in library opening hours, replacement of specialist staff by general assistants, redundancy threats and disposal of books. Waltham Forest has, for example, discarded or burnt about 240,000 books and vital reference books are being withdrawn elsewhere.

I raised the issue of the two-stage closure of the Family Record Centre at Myddelton Street, Islington, which provided central London access to the paper indexes of births, marriages and deaths from 1837, pre-1857 Wills, census returns, and other records. The Digitalisation of Vital Events (DoVE) Project, which was supposed to compensate for it, was not completed by the end of 2007, as originally promised, and the eventual date of completion is not known. Although much information can be accessed electronically, many would-be researchers lack access to a computer and the necessary computer skills. Family history is of interest to huge numbers of people – particularly following retirement.

I also complained about some museum cuts, e.g. the reduction of hours at the William Morris Gallery and the Vestry House Museum by Waltham Forest Council and the closure of Wandsworth Museum, etc.

In response to our concerns, Margaret Hodge pointed out that many of the services mentioned by the delegation are under the control of local authorities and she is not empowered to intervene. She listened to our arguments, however, and recognised the strength of the case we made.

I agreed to summarise all the concerns

expressed and to convey them by letter through Bill Rammell, MP, which I have done. We believe the Government should give a lead on these issues and seek to prevent further deprecations. We do not accept that this is a matter on which Government can justify standing aloof.

At this stage, I am unable to say whether or not our efforts will produce any positive effect, but I believe it is of great importance to seek to win over the powers that be to prevent the rundown of the heritage and cultural services. It is right that sport generally and the Olympic Games should receive powerful public support. However, it is not acceptable for resources to be lavished on these without limit while aspects of the heritage are sadly neglected.

I believe that every opportunity should be taken to lobby, persuade by letter or otherwise influence our representatives on local councils, the County Council, in Parliament or Government of the importance of support for the cultural heritage.

We are defending our unique inheritance in this country, which is of inestimable value to the population as a whole.

Stan Newens,

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## **PROF. GEOFFREY MARTIN**

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Members will be sad to learn that one of the Society's most distinguished members (and a Vice-president for at least 20 years) died just before Christmas at the age of 79. It is intended to do justice to his highly productive career in *Essex Archaeology & History*, and this short note is merely to record his passing with deep regret. Though his career was national rather than local, his formative education started at Colchester Grammar School and, at an age when many would be contemplating

retirement, he took up the post of Research Professor of History at the University of Essex with which he remained involved till the end of his life. Many will know of his substantial contributions to the new Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, though only a few were aware of his enthusiasm for an Essex biographical index, researched and published by the Society. A wide range of members will have been taught by him, or heard him lecture; others will have benefited from his generously given advice. He was the after-dinner speaker at the Society's Morant dinner in 1998, and those who attended will remember the vivid description that he gave of Philip Morant's last journey down the Thames which resulted in our county historian's final and fatal illness.

Though Prof. Martin was of considerable eminence and, on first encounter, somewhat intimidating, he was very generous in his support of the amateur historian, and a very good friend to the Society. He will be greatly missed.

Michael Leach

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## **REVISION OF THE REGIONAL RESEARCH FRAMEWORKS FOR THE EAST OF ENGLAND**

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The Regional Research Frameworks for the East of England is currently being revised. They were originally developed over 10 years ago and were amongst the first to be published. The Frameworks were never intended to be a fixed point, but rather a dynamic process which could contribute to the understanding and management of the region's historic environment. The project comprises the East of England Region, that is the

Counties of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire and the Unitary Authorities of Thurrock, Southend-on-Sea, Peterborough and Luton. Chronologically it covers the Palaeolithic to the 20th century.

The East of England has enormous research potential. For example, the nature of the region's geography and topography means that it is at the forefront of Palaeolithic studies in Britain. The region is probably one of the best places to consider the origins and development of agriculture, whether its inception and adoption in the Neolithic and Bronze Age, or the post-medieval developments of the Agricultural Revolution. The nature of the Anglo-Saxon archaeology is also of particular significance. The region has more market-towns than any other English region and is well-placed to study the origins and developments of urban life.

A Revised Research Agenda and Strategy is particularly imperative at this time, given the numerous development pressures on the East of England region, including in Essex the Thames Gateway area, the M11/Stansted Growth Areas and Haven Gateway. Also of significance in the East of England are issues of countryside renewal, integrated coastal zone management and flood-risk management, both in river catchments and around the coast.

Maria Medlycott

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## ESSEX PLACE-NAMES PROJECT

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Over 70,000 names are now on the database, and there has been the addition of names from documents earlier than the Tithe Awards, c.1840. The website has been updated to

include entries up to October 2007 and will be again updated later this year.

A Volunteer is needed to help with the distribution to Secondary Schools of surplus Place-name Parish Booklets, currently in the ERO, for use as a teaching resource. A Volunteer is also required to assist with promotion of publicity of the Project. Please contact the Project Coordinator through the Society's Secretary.

James Kemble

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## ESSEX SMALLHOLDINGS

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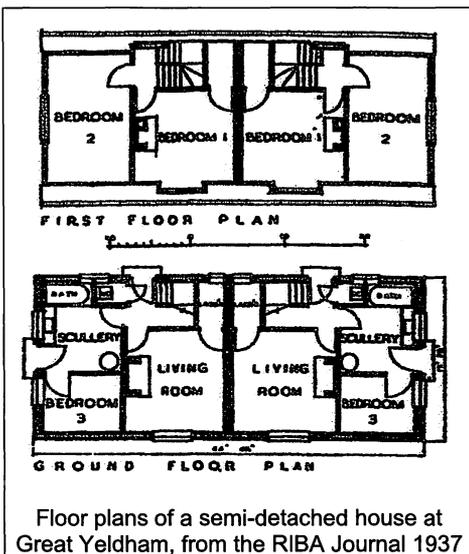
The account of Colin Stratford's talk on the Essex Plotlands at last summer's Annual General Meeting, reported in the summer issue of *Essex Archaeology & History News*, brings to mind other attempts to encourage small scale cultivation in Essex before the 1939-45 War,

At the start of the C20 there was increasing concern about the drift of agricultural labourers from the land and writers, such as Rider Haggard, took Essex as an example of these and other problems for farmers and farm labourers. Competition from foreign imports, transport costs and (even at that time) increasing red tape affected farmers, whether landowners or tenants, and were in turn affecting all farm workers, as well as the small suppliers and businesses dependent on farming.

A Smallholding Act of 1908 gave county councils powers to provide land for renting out in small acreages. Eventually the Essex smallholdings owned by the county council amounted to more than 8,000 acres over 31 parishes, further increased by land acquired for the use of ex-servicemen after the First World War. The average size was then 5 to 7 acres, intended mainly for soft fruit and orchards. North Essex has long been a

fruit growing area. Peter Wormell's *Essex Farming: 1900-2000* gives details of the main areas chosen; Broxted, Braxted, Eastwood, Great Oakley, Beaumont and Romford.

At Romford, visible (at least till recently) from the railway, were houses built to the same pattern, spaced at regular intervals and each surrounded by cultivated land. These were the county council smallholdings.



A similar sight, but funded differently, can be seen by drivers on the A137 on their way to Dedham or Flatford Mill as they pass close to the Foxash estate in Lawford. Here houses, much the same as those at Romford, were built by the Land Settlement Association, a country-wide scheme set up about 1934 under the provident and Benevolent Societies Act by the Carnegie UK Trust to provide smallholdings of 4 to 7 acres for unemployed miners from the North and Wales. There were 59 smallholdings there, and some smaller ones at Yeldham. Intended for horticultural crops, mainly tomatoes and lettuce, it

also included pig raising. The Association provided a packing station at Lawford, with offices, stores and a propagating unit. The miners had little, if any, experience of horticulture, and at first there were failures. By 1970 some of the tenants were former farm workers. They became a cooperative organisation for marketing purposes, and still exist. This was an entirely separate venture from the official county smallholdings, but both had statutory bases and were not commercially based, as the Plotlands seem to have been.

The smallholdings were assisted by expert advisers when needed; some have published memories of their work. The *Essex Farmers' Journal* of June 1983 contains Ralph Sadler's record of work as an agricultural adviser in the mid 1930s in Lawford. High Barrett's *A Good Living* (2000) describes his work as an assistant pig warden.

Angela Green

Sources:

*East Anglian Magazine*, August 1937  
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 Orwin, C S, & Whetham, E H, 1971 *History of British Agriculture, 1846-1914*  
 Prothero, R E, 1912 *English Farming, Past and Present*  
 Wormell, P, 1999 *Essex Farming, 1900-2000*

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## ESSEX JOURNAL

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In the summer 2007 edition of *ESAH News* I drew attention to the problems confronting the *Essex Journal*, which was failing to pay its way despite all the hard work put in by the late Michael Beale as Editor and the dedicated Distribution Manager, Martin Stuchfield. I also outlined the plans that were afoot

to cut costs by having copy set by computer and to boost subscriptions.

Our new Editor, Neil Wiffen, MA, produced the first copy of the revamped *Journal* last autumn and it was re-launched at a well-attended event at Ingatestone Hall on 26<sup>th</sup> October.

So far – particularly thanks to our new Editor – everything has gone according to plan and the future for the *Journal* is bright.

However, we still need to increase the number of subscriptions. At £10 p.a. (post free) for two issues containing a wealth of information on Essex history and archaeology, the *Journal* is a 'must' for everyone interested in our county. I hope that readers of the *News* will take out a subscription, if they have not already done so, and will mention the *Essex Journal* to friends.

Would-be subscribers should send £10 to the *Essex Journal* Hon. Treasurer at 11 Milligans Chase, Galleywood, Chelmsford, CM2 8QD.

Stan Newens

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## MALDON CEMETERY AND THE 85TH CANON

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Maldon's attempts to provide a cemetery for the town were attended by a variety of frustrations. In April 1850 a committee was established and was offered a 2 acre site near the Fambridge Road for £260. This was to be financed by a loan from the Church Commissioners, with a penny in the pound rate to cover interest charges and repayment of the capital. A chapel was to be erected, paid for by public subscription. However these plans were dealt a double blow; the Commissioners refused to make a loan on the grounds that half the site was to be leased to trustees for non-conformist burials, and the Recorder of Maldon

advised that it would be irregular to raise a rate to purchase a site, part of which was to be leased to dissenters. It was clear that, under existing legislation, no further progress could be made, and the committee was disbanded.

The 1853 Burial Act established the basis on which vestries could establish burial boards for the provision of cemeteries for all denominations, financed through the poor rates. The vestries of St Peter's and All Saints formed a joint burial board in September 1854 and placed advertisements in the county papers inviting tenders for possible sites. By the end of the year they had agreed in principle to purchase a 4 acre field called Middle Winterslade on the London Road for £450 from Rev. R Burls. An official from the Office of the Inspector of Burial Grounds visited in December, and approval for a cemetery of 2½ acres was granted by the Secretary of State, Lord Palmerston, early in January. 1½ acres was to be consecrated, with the other acre reserved for non-conformist burials, and the surplus land was to be sold by auction. On this occasion the loan was provided by a private individual, Mrs Anne Bourne of Latchingdon; £1000 at 5%, repayable over 20 years and secured on the poor rates. The burial board and its building committee met weekly, and rapid progress was made with building boundary walls, and planning the drainage, the layout and the necessary buildings. Initially two 'waiting rooms' were planned, but these were soon upgraded to chapels, one for the Church of England, one for the dissenters.

In April 1855, an unexpected difficulty arose. The chairman of the burial board, Rev. E R Horwood, and the clerk, paid two visits to the bishop of Rochester to discuss layout, fencing and the chapel. The bishop approved the chapel but

indicated that, in his opinion, the Ecclesiastical Court would require a wall or substantial fence on the west side of the cemetery before it could be consecrated. He also stipulated that a wall or 'iron palisade fence' must be provided to separate the consecrated from the unconsecrated ground. He explained that this did not arise from any 'unkind or disrespectful feeling' towards dissenters, but from his belief that it was a requirement of the 85<sup>th</sup> Canon and was needed to 'protect the officiating clergyman from disturbance in the performance of the Burial Service of the Church of England by disorderly proceedings that might arise from the unconsecrated ground'.

The burial board was clearly unwilling to accept this stipulation. The clerk promptly wrote to about 20 burial boards in various parts of the country, requesting information about the views of their particular diocesans. Carlisle and Great Torrington, who were known to have refused to comply with their bishop's demands, were also approached. Within a week, replies had been received from most of them – a testimony to the efficiency of both the clerks and the Victorian postal system. These responses revealed considerable variations in requirements, but a Gravesend cemetery, which had been recently consecrated by the bishop of Rochester himself, was only divided by 'small iron posts with crowns only just above the turf'. Carlisle had asked for its reply to be treated as confidential, as they were considering seeking a legal opinion on the matter.

Early in May, it was agreed to send a delegation to the bishop to ask him to reconsider his demand. Though they were courteously received, the bishop remained adamant that Canon Law required the partition of the ground, as it was, in effect, a new churchyard. He

dismissed the other examples as being either extensions to old churchyards, or cemeteries provided by joint stock companies, over which the diocesan had no authority. He stated that, unless a fence strong enough to exclude pigs and dogs was provided, he would refuse to consecrate the cemetery. After further discussion, he agreed that a fence of 'close work iron hurdles' would suffice. He wished the burial board to understand that his requirement did not arise out of any disrespect for dissenters, and that he acted 'solely under a conviction of duty'.

In spite of this minor concession, the burial board passed a unanimous resolution that the fence was not necessary. A letter was sent to the Secretary of State, asking if he could induce the bishop to change his mind. In the meantime, a reply had been received from Great Torrington inviting Carlisle and Maldon jointly to seek a legal opinion in this matter, and this was agreed. A further seven meetings passed before the clerk was able to report further on this difficult problem.

Counsel's opinion was that the existing enclosure of the cemetery site met the requirements of the 85<sup>th</sup> Canon. However, the Burial Acts did give the bishop discretionary powers to insist on an additional fence separating the consecrated from the unconsecrated ground. Such a fence would not affect the burial board's right to use the poor law rates to purchase the whole cemetery. If the bishop's concessionary powers were not agreed to, there was no process in common or ecclesiastical law to oblige him to consecrate the cemetery. Equally neither the churchwardens nor the board members themselves would be liable to proceedings in the ecclesiastical courts if the bishop's demands were resisted. However failure to have the cemetery

consecrated would create an insuperable problem; any clergyman performing the burial service of the Church of England in unconsecrated ground would be subject to admonition, and to subsequent suspension or deprivation.

Clearly the burial board was left with no choice if the cemetery was to be used for Church of England burials. On 14 June 1855, they agreed to provide an iron fence on each side of the driveway that separated the two parts of the cemetery and on 27 September 1855 the bishop consecrated that part which was to be used by the established church. This was by no means the end of the burial board's problem, but the subsequent difficulties were less arcane ones, arising from poor workmanship, a £500 overspend, the need to raise a further loan, and an dipsomaniac sexton. There was also a vehement debate (which nearly split the board) over a proposal to toll the church bell for dissenters' funerals.

Today there is no sign of the bishop's iron fences – indeed most of the wall, deemed necessary to exclude pigs and dogs, has disappeared, and much of the original cemetery has been reclaimed by nature.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Burial board minutes: ERO D/B 3/19/1 & D/DCf/B905-6

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## ESSEX SEEN FROM ELSEWHERE

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The autumn 2007 newsletter of the Ancient Monuments Society and the Friends of Friendless Churches notes the following:

a) the church of St Mary's, Mundon: attempts to reach a consensus with English Heritage, over the problems caused by major structural movement in the C18 chancel, are continuing.

b) a stained glass window has been installed in the east end of Wickham Bishops church, designed by Benjamin Finn, a stained glass artist and tenant of this redundant church.

c) AMS and SPAB presented a joint case against the conversion of Tilty Mill at the public enquiry at the end of October. Though the proposed conversion retained some of the machinery, most of the fittings would be lost and the conversion involved "opening up" the interior to link it with a new house which was to provide the enabling development. These proposals were seen as much too damaging.

d) Heritage Lottery Fund has offered £4,760,000 for conservation projects in Epping Forest, the most ambitious of which are the re-introduction of grazing by cattle, and the construction of a new visitor centre adjacent to Queen Elizabeth's Hunting Lodge at Chigwell.

e) the tradition of serving tea in non-conformist chapels (more recently adopted by the established church) led to the production of numerous items of special crockery, often decorated with images of the chapel. A substantial collection of these has been donated to the History Centre at the URC church, Little Baddow.

f) Essex County Council have published "Mr Pink: The Architectural Legacy of W F Crittall". Walter Crittall was architect of buildings in Braintree, Great Easton and Silver End (the last in collaboration with Charles Quennell). This publication is available from Katie Seabright, Historic Buildings & Conservation, County Hall, Chelmsford CM1 1QH at £10. There is also a recent biography of Quennell in volume 50 of *Architectural History*, which

includes some of his very attractive sketches of Castle Hedingham.

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## TOBY PRIORY, MOUNTNESSING

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The Society has been concerned for some time about the fate of these monastic remains. As one of the minor houses, it was dissolved in 1525 and the western part of the claustral buildings was incorporated into a house. By the early C19 the only other surviving fragment was part of the south wall of the church, with two arched openings. The house was reconstructed in the 1890s, after being gutted by fire which probably destroyed any surviving mediaeval woodwork. Members of this Society visited on 29 June 1915 and had lunch in the 'picturesque grounds'. However, like many other country houses, its fate was sealed by its requisition by the army in World War II, and its subsequent use as a prisoner of war camp. By 1950 it was in very poor condition and unoccupied, and was completely demolished a few years later. A small modern house was built in a different position, south of the standing fragment of church wall, on the site of the monastic cemetery.

The site is remote, and is little known in its rural setting; it is surrounded by trees and invisible from the nearest road. It is also in border country on the fringe of local authority boundaries and, like an unwanted child, was transferred from Chelmsford to Brentwood in one of the reorganisations. Before this occurred, Chelmsford gave planning permission for the site to be used for industrial and commercial use, and it is currently used by a car breaker, and by a scaffold and plant hire firm. The area of the former monastic buildings, including the standing fragment of the church wall, is

now unoccupied, but the owner is seeking commercial tenants. The utilitarian 1950s house, also derelict till recently, has new owners who have begun to clear the immediate area of decades of industrial rubbish. The only clues to its much grander past are a few fine surviving specimen trees.

The standing ruin, covered with (and probably held together by) a heavy growth of ivy, is on the 'buildings at risk' register, and one of the arches has collapsed in recent years. The remaining mediaeval masonry is heavily patched with C18/C19 bricks, and is abutted by a prefabricated concrete building on one side, and tipped rubble and numerous sycamore saplings on the other. It is clearly in a very perilous state.

Attempts to get planning permission for an enabling development to repair the ruin, and to enhance its setting, were rejected by Brentwood Borough Council. The site is in Green Belt (though clearly 'brownfield' under its present industrial use) and the BC considered that the housing density was too high. Two of the present owners (covering about six acres of the site) wish to sell, and, in the absence of consent for housing, their only option is to sell piecemeal for industrial use. There is a considerable demand for this, resulting from the displacement of light industry from the East End of London connected with the development of the Olympic site. This is likely to result in multiple ownership which would make any beneficial development of the monastic site impossible.

We arranged an on-site meeting on 2 November 2007 with three of the present owners, and the chairman and clerk of the parish council, to discuss possible solutions. It was agreed that housing development would be a better outcome, that the original developer should be contacted again, and that Brentwood

Borough Council should be lobbied by the parish council to adopt a more flexible approach to the particular problems of this site. The Society undertook to establish English Heritage's position on the best approach to securing the preservation of the standing ruin. It would seem that this may be the last chance to find a satisfactory solution for this severely degraded monastic site.

Michael Leach

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## THE WILL OF SIR JOHN ROUS

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Almost a century ago, the Essex Review published an enquiry from Ernest Francis about the significance of the will of Sir John Rous of Great Waltham (ER Vol. XXI, pp.41-42. 1912). This will - made in 1627 and proved in 1630 - provided for his burial in the chancel of Felsted Church and for a range of gifts to the 2nd Earl of Warwick and his children, to Sir Nathaniel Rich, to Hugh Everard and his family in Great Waltham as well as to the poor of the parishes of Felsted, Little Leighs and Great Waltham itself. The explanation for the contents of the will is relatively simple. For most of his adult life, Rous was a servant of the 3rd Lord Rich, who became Earl of Warwick in 1618 before dying the following year, and one of the key officers administering his estate in northern central and south-eastern Essex. Sir Nathaniel Rich had played a similar role while Hugh Everard, who held Great Waltham manor and other properties on the Rich estate as a tenant, was as receiver of the money rents on the estate in 1605-1610 one of Rous's subordinates. The will is informative about Rous's personal preferences within the Rich family circle - the 2nd Earl's daughter Anne, wife of Lord Mandeville, was clearly his

favourite while Warwick's second wife was left no token of his regard - and of the care he took to provide for his relatives and servants after his death.

C. Thompson

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## REV EDWARD LEWES CUTTS (1824-1901)

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A recent e-mail from a Canadian descendant of the Society's first Honorary Secretary and Editor provided some information about Edward Lewes Cutts to supplement Ray Powell's article in *EAH* xxxii. The son of a Sheffield optician, he graduated BA at Queens' College, Cambridge in 1848 and was ordained the same year. Apart from a brief curacy at Ide Hill in Kent, he lived and worked in Essex for 15 years from 1850, though his antiquarian interests had already developed before his arrival in the county. He had published his *Study of Sepulchral Slabs and Crosses of the Middle Ages* in 1849. Cutts must have become an active member of the archaeological branch of the Colchester Literary Institution, as in 1852 he was appointed joint secretary of a committee to establish a county archaeological society. Later in the year, at the inaugural meeting of the Essex Archaeological Society, he was appointed its Hon Secretary. The precedent of members exhibiting 'objects of interest' at their gatherings was established at this first meeting where Cutts (amongst others) displayed some of his brass rubbings.

In 1853 he was involved in an antiquarian dispute with the Rev. Henry Jenkins who had published a lecture in which he had asserted that Colchester Castle was built as a temple to the deified Emperor Claudius. Cutts reviewed this lecture, and published

*Colchester Castle not a Roman Temple*. Jenkins then retaliated in print with *An Appendix to the Lecture on Colchester Castle; together with a Reply to the Animadversions of the Rev. E L Cutts*. This seems to have been the end of the dispute.

In the following year the first of his many religious publications appeared in print. Some covered the practical aspects of religious furnishing and decoration (including his popular *Essay on the Christmas Decoration of Churches*), others were studies of various aspects of church history, as well as educational material for children. Some went into several editions. His last publication, *Augustine of Canterbury*, was printed in 1896. It was probably his publications which brought him to the notice of the archbishop of Canterbury who, in 1876, sent him abroad to report on the Assyrian church in Turkish Kurdistan and Persia.

While living in Essex, apart from running the affairs of the Society, he organised, in 1865, the opening of two 'British' tumuli in Norseay Wood, Billericay. His finds of six cremation urns were described in the *Transactions* by his son J E L Cutts. The report suggests that this excavation was typical of the period, with the physical work done by hired labourers.

After leaving Essex in 1865 he maintained his connection with the Society; he was on Council for the rest of his life, and acted as the 'mediaeval Secretary' for a period. Though he contributed no further articles to the *Transactions*, he was the author of *Colchester* (one of Longman's historic towns series) in 1888.

#### Sources:

EAT I o.s. 'Report of Inaugural Meeting'  
EAT iv o.s. 'Paper read before the RIBA  
by Rev E L Cutts'

EAT v o.s 'Notes on Roman & British Remains found at Billericay in 1865' J E K Cutts

Graves R E (rev. Coakley J F) 2004 'Edward Lewes Cutts' in Oxford DNB

van Goozen D E: pers inf

Powell W R 2001 'Our Triple Jubilee' in EAH 3<sup>rd</sup> series xxxii

Waller W C 1912 'Our Diamond Jubilee' in EAT 2<sup>nd</sup> series xiii

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## GENERAL VIEW OF ESSEX AGRICULTURE 1794

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In January 1794 'Messrs Griggs of Hill House, near Kelvedon' published their pamphlet, *General View of the Agriculture of the County of Essex*. At first glance, the format is oddly generous, even by late C18 standards. The page is 8" wide and 9½" long, and the print barely occupies half this space. However the opening memorandum explains the reason for the unusual layout of this pamphlet, 'now printed... in order that every person, interested in the welfare of (the) county may....examine it fully before it is published. It is therefore requested that any remark, or additional observation which may occur to the reader... may be written on the margin, and transmitted to the Board of Agriculture, at its Office in London, by whom the same shall be properly attended to.' The deadline for the return of the comments was 1 March, and it is clear that every other county in the country was involved in a similar exercise.

Though little is known about 'Messrs Griggs', the reasons for canvassing public opinion at this time are clear. During the second half of the C18, Britain had ceased to be self-sufficient in grain and was increasingly dependant on imports, particularly problematic when the country was at war with its

neighbours. Scanty crops in 1789, and a poor harvest in 1790 created much concern, and an outburst of political pamphleteering. The government responded with a new Corn Law in 1791 to regulate the import and export of grain, but it proved unworkable. The following year's harvest was another poor one, and an embargo on the export of grain was imposed. A further poor crop in 1794 was followed by a particularly bad one in 1795, and the price of wheat – 43 shillings a quarter in 1792 – rose to over 108 shillings during 1795. The problem was becoming very serious; the shortage of food, and its high cost, had led to a number of food riots, some of which had required the militia to put them down. With the uncomfortably recent memory of the French revolution just across the Channel, the government urgently needed a solution to this potentially dangerous situation. In 1793 it set up the Board of Agriculture to advise; this body was what would now be termed a quango, a private organisation of gentry, farmers, writers and other agricultural professionals, funded by the government. The Griggs' pamphlet, and similar surveys in other counties, were initiated by the newly formed Board in order to establish how the country might improve the efficiency of its food production. In 1795, recognising the seriousness of the situation, the government imposed restrictions on the use of wheat for making starch, hair powder and various alcoholic beverages. Members of Parliament made their own contribution by pledging to limit the quantity of wheaten bread eaten by their families.

Little is known about 'Messrs Griggs'. The ERO index suggests that the authors were Golding Griggs and (probably) his son John. Golding Griggs (c.1721-1806) was a subscriber to

Chapman and Andre's 1777 map, and his name is inscribed in copperplate under the title of Hill House, at Messing. He rebuilt the house after 1775 in gault brick and, by the C19, the road had been diverted away from the house to create parkland, and the name of the mansion had been upgraded to Messing Park. He was steward to the Honywoods of Marks Hall, and would have had a good working knowledge of agriculture in the area, as well as contacts with other landowners and their agents. He was an obvious choice to comment on the state of agriculture in the county. Even less is known about his son John; he died in 1839 leaving property, said to be worth the enormous sum of £100,000, to Rev Robert Eden, vicar of Leigh.

Messrs Griggs pointed out that the open field system (generally seen as inefficient and inflexible) was unusual in Essex, but estimated that there were 15,000 acres of forest and waste which could be usefully brought into arable production. They described in detail the various forms of crop rotation (and the crops grown) on the different Essex soils, without advocating any particular system, though fallowing was recognised as essential on a two to five year cycle, depending on the type of soil. The substantial increase in poor rates caused by the collapse of the woollen industry due to the war was recognised to be a serious burden to farmers. The Griggs were concerned that the stocks of 'promiscuous' cattle (i.e. a mixture of breeds) suggested that not enough was known about the best animals for purpose in various parts of the county. Epping was noted for its creameries, and the Ilford area for growing potatoes year after year, though the latter could only be achieved with the ready availability of liberal quantities of 'town manure' to keep the land in good condition. A crop peculiar to Essex was described;

coriander, teasel and caraway were sown together and then cropped over a three year cycle. The relative merits of horse and oxen (the latter ready broken to the yoke by Welsh drovers) were discussed – the former were preferred for ploughing, due to their livelier nature, as well as causing less damage on wet ground – the latter for general carting, being less expensive to feed and easier to look after. The merits of land drainage (the technique was described in detail), properly drawn-up leases and the commutation of tithes was discussed. The writers also felt that farming was disadvantaged by labourers being tied to their 'parish of settlement', which prevented them from seeking work elsewhere. Woodland management was seen as far too short term to produce the timber needed for ship building, and it was felt that coppice stools would regenerate better if cut close to the ground, rather than the normal practice of cutting them a foot or two higher. Church lands (presumably this meant glebe) were regarded as unproductive and the church should be encouraged to grant leases to tenants for reasonable terms. The pamphlet contained a plea for the more efficient maintenance of sea walls which were, at that time, the responsibility of individual owners – an unsatisfactory situation whereby the neglect of one owner could cause serious long term damage to the fertility of the properties of adjoining landowners. Finally they extol an Essex practice ('not known in every county in the kingdom') which resulted in a more equitable deal for a labouring man on limited wages – two inspectors of weights and measures paid £25 per annum to check the weights of millers and shopkeeper, and to prosecute those found giving short measure. Curiously the Essex report had none of the sense of urgency which the

government must have felt about avoiding the double threat of starvation and revolution. It had the doubtful distinction of being, at 26 pages, the shortest of all the county reports. Most were regarded as so inadequate that another enquiry was instituted in 1796, and Messrs Griggs were replaced by Charles Vancouver (the author of a much more detailed report for Cambridgeshire in the 1794 enquiry) for the Essex survey. However this second attempt suffered from inadequate financial support from the Board, as well as the landowners' strong suspicions of possible hidden motives. The main contribution of the Griggs' Essex report of 1794 was to identify 15,000 acres of waste which might be put under profitable cultivation.

Michael Leach

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 ERO: D/DU 177/64 & D/DQ 9/9  
 Obituaries: *Gentlemen's Magazine*, 1806, p.678 & 1839, p.443

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## HAVERING-ATTE- BOWER'S MISSING COURT LEET BOOK

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Our President, in the Winter 2006 newsletter, reported his success in recovering some of the missing manorial documents for the manor of North

Weald. It is encouraging that these important records are still coming to light. The editor of the Essex VCH recently received an e-mail from a benefactor of local history who had found, and purchased, the court leet book (1830-1896) for the manor of Havering-atte-Bower on e-bay – missing since 1925, somewhat damp, but generally in good condition. With admirable altruism, she has generously deposited it in the Essex Record Office.

This volume may be of particular interest. The manor of Havering-atte-Bower was owned by the Crown until its sale in 1828 to Hugh McIntosh, a contractor who had built the East India and London docks. Until it was amalgamated with the newly formed Essex County Council in 1888, the Liberty of Havering was an independent administrative entity with its own courts, prison and gallows. As ownership of the manor carried with it the right to appoint the high steward (who was *ex officio* justice of the peace), the sale of the manor created the unusual situation of the Crown losing control of its right to appoint justices for the Liberty. It was not until 1892 that the Havering justices were merged with the Essex bench.

Michael Leach

Source:

Powell W R (ed), 1978 *Essex VCH*, vii, 6

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## REVD. E H L REEVE: CHRONICLER OF THE GREAT WAR

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Edward Henry Lisle Reeve (1858 - 1936) was Rector of Stondon Massey in Essex from 1893 until 1935. In his spare time researched and published from 1900 what many regard as a model parish history. His last volume was published

in 1914, on the eve of the First World War.

While researching for an historical event at Stondon Church\*, I discovered that Reeve did not stop recording events in his parish on publication of his work but kept notes through to 1929. (His notes are held in Essex Record Office: ERO T/P 188/3). We therefore have a fascinating and unique local insight to the First World War (1914–18) as events unfolded.

Reeve lived with his sisters at the Rectory (now Stondon Massey House) where he penned the local history. I understand that his father, whom he succeeded as Rector, forbade him and his sisters to marry. He died, a bachelor, in 1936.

On Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> August at 11pm Great Britain declared War on Germany. Very quickly soldiers were called to arms. With an invasion of England anticipated Reeve wrote in October that, "Artillery and Engineer Officers have been busily surveying the district during the past three weeks with the purpose, I believe, of deciding on the best method of obstructing a possible raid on London. An outer line of defence appears to run through Ongar, Stondon and Doddinghurst: and my little field has received attention. Field guns I think would, on necessity, be brought here, and would range eastward in the direction of Chelmsford".

In November Reeve observed that, "It would hardly be too much to say that Stondon is becoming honeycombed with trenches, and the Church, owing to its being set upon a hill, is a prominent centre. The slopes declining from the Hall to the brook contain a network of passages, giving shelter to riflemen who will give, if necessary, a stern reception to the enemy coming down the opposite hill from Paslow Common. Flanking trenches face toward the Rectory, while

others are taken southward along the course of the brook to the village. In adjacent parishes the same work is observable. On the slopes of High Ongar, and on the confines of Blackmore and Doddinghurst towards Swallows Cross bodies of men are busily engaged”.

Huge numbers of men were billeted in Stondon and the neighbourhood. “Some 600 navvies arrived on the morning of November 2<sup>nd</sup>, some by railway to Ongar, and some by road in motor omnibuses. The plan being somewhat unexpectedly adopted, little or no preparation had been made in the locality for the reception of the men. Some 400 were to commence work at once in Stondon. In the event, at the cost of considerable discomfort, the first few days were successfully surmounted and then tents were erected here and there for the accommodation of the men, or they contrived to find themselves temporary billets. A canteen was put up at Brook’s and Cannons Farm, which to some degree supplied the place of shops. This was afterward moved to a centre at Hooks End, Blackmore. The appearance of a canteen was hailed with delight by the villagers, publican, and all: for it was becoming a real difficulty to know how to meet the wants of the invaders”.

December’s rains caused the trenches to become saturated and caved in. A different strategy was adopted in early 1915 due to the changed nature of warfare in France. “A Guardsman whom I met lately told me that constantly our trenches in France had been no more than 30 or 40 paces distant to those of the enemy: and it had been possible to throw hand-grenades from one to the other. My Guardsman acquaintance told me that Germany is a beaten nation; and it is recognised that an invasion in force becomes daily less likely”.

We know the War to be far more protracted than thought at the time. Men up and down the country joined up. Reeve comments in July 1915, when 44 year-old Ernest Baines signs up, that “he hopes that his example may lead some of the single men who are still holding back to come forward and enlist. So far the Government have procured the services of a vast army without conscription”.

Looking in retrospect, we know that conscription was introduced in 1916 and the events of the Somme caused a tremendous loss of life: the Government deliberately understating the number killed or wounded. Reeve describes the opening day of the Somme offensive (1<sup>st</sup> July 1916) thus: “As I write, the reverberation of the great guns and explosion of mines are shaking the windows of the Rectory and of all the other houses, I suppose, in the southern and south-eastern counties of England. There is evidently a very heavy bombardment in progress”.

In his privileged position as community leader, Reeve learns of letters home to families. Reading his notes one wonders whether this was a cathartic release of all he had learnt. We learn the names and professions of the men of Stondon who went to war. For example, “Mr John White, lately serving as butler and valet at Stondon Place is with the Fusiliers and writing to his wife reports that he is well so far but that a party to which he belonged were lately all but “wiped out”, two officers being killed out of four, and two wounded. This is an astonishing experience for a man not fashioned for a soldier’s life either physically or in temperament”. Gardener at the Rectory, William Penson, was “drafted from Gosfield to Wendover where he will join a class for practice in “bombing and bayoneting”! Strange work for a peaceful citizen!” In all, six

Stondon men were killed in the War including three Hasler brothers. Two of the men died after the end of hostilities from the effects of gas inhalation.

We learn of Leonard Hasler's mother visiting Boulogne in October 1918 to find her son injured by a shrapnel wound to his head. "He was not, however, to live long, and died within a week of her arrival. Leonard was buried with five other soldiers, with military honours: Mrs Conn herself and one other English woman being the only near relatives present. The day previously the funeral service had been read over 60 poor fellows at one time. These are the harrowing accompaniments of the war. Up and down the neighbourhood we are constantly hearing of sad losses".

The "enemy" never made an assault on England on the ground, but carried out a number of Zeppelin bombing raids. Reeve describes these, and the later raids by aeroplane on London, in some detail. As allies gained air supremacy there was success in defence from attacks. Reeve, on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1916, witnessed the end of the Zeppelin shot down over Cuffley as the "whole sky for miles around was illuminated with a pink glow which grew brighter and more brilliant as the vessel neared the earth in her fall of some 2½ miles"; and the aftermath of another at Great Burstead (23<sup>rd</sup> September 1916) when "the numbers of sight-seers was so great that it was difficult, even on foot, to get within distance".

Reeve also saw the craters of bombs which were dropped over Blackmore on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1916. He provides the location of the dropped bombs: "between the Soap House and the corner of Blackmore between the Church and Miss Barrett's house" adding to my notes prepared for an earlier article for this Newsletter (No 148, Spring 2006 p16). Eventually the might of the Americans

was brought to bear and the War, which seemed "a draw" in 1917, according to sportsman Capt. Fred Fane, ceased with an Armistice on 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918. In days before radio, the village learnt of events by "the hooting of sirens and the noise of maroons. Some in Stondon heard the distinct bells at Brentwood. But it was not till the afternoon that definite tidings reached the villages and then it filtered through chiefly the form of private messages. News came to Stondon that flags were being hoisted on the Military Hospital at Ongar, and that the veteran Field-Marshal Sir Evelyn Wood VC had visited the place and communicated the splendid message to the wounded men. As soon as I had this official intelligence the Stondon Church bells were chimed with all the old vigour by Ernest Baines, our sometime sexton". In one sense the War was over.

As a postscript I found that Reeve was a Society member: "4 July 1918. I went by cycle to Romford to a meeting of the Essex Archaeological Society, and passed a large camp the "Hare Hall Camp" about a mile before entering the town".

Andrew Smith

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## MEDICAL NEGLIGENCE?

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On 28 February 1586/7, an inquest was held on William Rayner of Woodham Walter who had died eight days earlier after an accident involving the four horse cart that he was driving. One wheel hit a 'hackethorne stub' and threatened to overturn the cart which was laden with beer barrels. While he was trying to free the wheel, one of the barrels fell and broke his right leg. John Fysshier of Brentwood, yeoman, also described as a 'common surgeon, exercising the art of surgery', undertook to cure Rayner's leg for an unnamed sum of money which

was paid on the spot. Fyssher 'warranted the right placing of the bones... and the perfect health of the leg'. Rayner was obviously impressed by this promise and did not seek a second opinion from another surgeon though probably, in the circumstances, he had little choice.

The inquest heard that Fyssher 'neglected the cure according to his duty in that behalf, (and) wholly absented himself from the said William by reason whereof the leg swelled and was internally corrupted'. The jurors decided that Rayner came to his death 'by misfortune, and by the neglect and bad behaviour of John Fyssher'. It was also noted that the offending barrel of beer, worth 4s., was in the hands of the sheriff. Presumably it had been seized as a deodand.

This case probably had much more to do with the unwritten contract between two men rather than what we would now call medical negligence on the part of the surgeon, but it is interesting to note that Fyssher's warranty implied that some form of follow-up care was expected. From a C21 perspective, it seems likely that the injury would have been fatal, as there was probably a substantial crush injury to the lower limb which C16 surgery would have been unable to deal with – except, perhaps, by amputation, which the victim would doubtless have preferred to avoid.

Michael Leach

Source:  
Coroner's inquest ERO Q/SR 100/27

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## FULL CIRCLE AT WALLASEA ISLAND

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Readers may recall Ellen Heppell's article on Wallasea Island (on the River

Crouch, inland from Foulness) in a recent volume of *Essex Archaeology & History*. Her study was prompted by proposals to build a new sea wall along the north side of this island much of which lies about 2 metres below sea level. The island was probably embanked in the C13 or C14 as a series of small islets, some evidence of which can found on old maps. In spite of major floods in 1736 and 1897, the island supported mixed agriculture and some 13 farms in the C19. Though the number of farms dwindled in the C20, the landscape remained largely unaltered until the disastrous flood of 1953 which covered the island in seawater for several months. After this catastrophe, most of the farmhouses were demolished and, over the next two decades, the landscape was flattened with the removal of banks, ditches, drainage channels and almost all the field systems.

Rising sea level, combined with the general loss of the buffer effect of salt marsh on high tides, means that maintaining sea defences will become uneconomic. The RSPB now has an option to buy the Wallasea Island and plans to reverse 700 years of land reclamation by breaching the sea walls and creating about 1800 acres of salt marsh. Some inland embanking will recreate the original pattern of islets and the area will be managed for the benefit of wildlife. This will, presumably, involve some seasonal grazing in the traditional way, and should considerably enhance the landscape of this part of Essex.

Michael Leach

Sources:  
*The Guardian*, 8 October 2007  
Heppell, E, 2004 'Wallasea Island: the history & archaeology of a marshland landscape' in *EAH* xxxv, 98-113

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This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2007 the projected value of the fund stands at £41,048.

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 154

ISSN 0305-8530

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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Rev. Sr

Amongst ye many noble Undertakings for  
promoting a general Reformation and propagating  
Chian Knowledge, carried on by Divers worthy & vertuous  
Persons, of wch some are of y<sup>e</sup> highest rank both in  
Church and state this before you is judg'd useful for  
those excellent Ends and purposes. I question not  
y<sup>e</sup> approbation of so good a designe. ~~whenever~~ Numbers  
of y<sup>e</sup> Incess you please to write for they shall be sent  
according to order. directing to my house in Earls  
Court in Covent Garden. I am Sr

yo<sup>r</sup> very humble  
servant

Wm: Stuker

Oct. 2 1699

Summer 2008

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 155

SUMMER 2008

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**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 24 OCTOBER 2008**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

## Cover illustration:

A recent find within one of the books in the Dedham Muniments Room was a letter (illustrated, by kind permission) from a certain Henry Shute, dated 3 October 1699, addressed to 'ye Revd. Mr Burkitt at his house in Dedham' (see pages 5 and 6 of this Newsletter), attempting to gain financial support for the printing of religious tracts for distribution in the colonies. The handwriting has been compared to examples of Mr Henry Shute held at the Lambeth Palace Library.

There is a request in the Summer 2008 Dedham Parish Magazine for "Dedham memories, especially photographs, particularly if they have been or can be dated and any people in them can be identified. If you have Dedham photographs or other memorabilia that would not be wanted by your family, please approach the Muniment Room Society before permanently disposing of anything. Tel. 01206 322136"

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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The well-attended and highly successful A.G.M. held in the Keene Hall at Galleywood on Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> June signified the end of Stan Newens three year term in office as President. I speak from personal experience when I state, without hesitation, that Stan has been a most worthy holder of this office. Not only has he fulfilled the various duties with distinction but has demonstrated a level of commitment which represents an example to us all. Stan has also been an outstanding ambassador promoting the Society at every opportunity and in all corners of our county. Thank you Stan for your contribution - we owe you an enormous debt of gratitude.

Perhaps it would be helpful to impart some background information about your new President. I was born in Maldon and spent the early years of my life in Walthamstow (an area then very much part of Essex and which remains integral to the historic county). It was whilst living in the town that my lifetime interest in William Morris and the Gallery dedicated to his life and work was fostered. You will no doubt be familiar with the difficulties of the recent past culminating in the tragic loss last December of the Keeper (curator) of some thirty-five years standing.

It was also as a schoolboy in Walthamstow that I joined the then Essex Archaeological Society at the time when the late Dr Frederick (Derick) Emmison was President and John Appleby was completing his stint as Secretary.

I am immensely proud to have been elected as President of the Society – the thirty-fifth according to my calculations! You are probably oblivious to the fact that you have elected a second brass rubber as your President! The first was, of course, Rev Montagu Benton who

served as Secretary for a thirty year period prior to and post the last War. Benton also served as President at the time of the Society's centenary. Indeed, the President's badge originates from this date having been purchased from the proceeds of a Medieval Feast held in the Moot Hall in Colchester on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1953 as part of the centenary celebrations. Benton is a figure who, very sadly, I was not old enough to have met but one who has featured in my life in a number of ways. Firstly, he was extremely knowledgeable in the field of monumental brasses and especially those which are palimpsest (i.e. re-used and thus engraved on the reverse side). He wrote up a number of discoveries in our *Transactions* including one at Wivenhoe and, most especially, a significant find at Little Horkesley resulting from the destruction of the church by bombing in 1940. I possess a significant quantity of his correspondence in my archives emanating from the vicarage at Fingringhoe and all hand-written! Benton was also an authority on wall paintings and again contributed a number of papers on this subject to the *Transactions*. Indeed, it was Benton who strayed across the county boundary in January 1936 to visit the house where I currently reside in Suffolk. Here he discovered a wall painting of c.1600 date in the drawing room. This exciting discovery was publicised in the *East Anglian Daily Times* with a more detailed account appearing in *The Antiquaries Journal* (vol.XVI, no.2, pp.213-4).

I am also proud to be able to share the distinction (although absolutely no comparison can be drawn) of being one of four people to have served as both President of this Society and also the Essex Archaeological and Historical Congress ("Essex Congress"). I refer, of course, to Sir William Addison, Dr

Frederick (Derick) Emmison and the late William Raymond Powell.

The passing of the latter on 21<sup>st</sup> July at the age of 87 represents yet another terrible loss for Essex history. Ray Powell gained his reputation as the highly energetic, versatile and productive editor of the Essex V.C.H. From 1951 to 1986 he was responsible for seeing no less than six volumes through the press. Ray's contribution to our Society was no less significant. He served as President from 1987 to 1991, was subsequently elected a Vice-President and remained keenly interested in the affairs of the Society until his passing. Indeed, declining health prevented Ray from receiving a special award certificate at the last A.G.M. The Society was very well represented at his funeral held on 30<sup>th</sup> July at Earlham Crematorium, Norwich. A more fitting tribute will appear in due course.

With an interest in archaeology and history it is natural to possess a predilection for the past. Stan Newens has very ably handed on the baton and thus, with the support of fellow officers, members of Council and the membership, we must focus on the future. I look forward to the challenge and to serving our Society.

H Martin Stuchfield

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### **KENNETH HALL (D. 2008)**

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Members will be very sad to learn of the death of Ken Hall, the former Essex County Archivist. Ken was a very good friend to this Society, as well as to anyone interested in local history research to whom he gave his time, as well as excellent and practical advice, unstintingly. At not insignificant cost to his health, he saw through the planning, execution and move to the new ERO premises in Wharf Road which present

and future generations will have great cause to be grateful for. It is hoped that a fuller obituary will follow this brief note in due course.

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### **VALERIE MANSFIELD (D. 2008)**

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Valerie, daughter of Major Alan Mansfield, died on 30 March 2008. Her funeral took place in West Mersea parish church. She illustrated her husband's *Handbook of English Costumes in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 1900-1950* which was published in 1973, and co-authored by Phillis Cunningham. Their other joint publication, with which Valerie was also involved, was *English Costume for Sport & Outdoor Recreations, 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries* in 1969. The costume collection at Hollytrees museum at Colchester was started by Valerie, assisted by other seamstresses, and their expertise was often used in repairs as well as in the making of replicas. She will be deeply missed by her family and friends.

John S Appleby

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### **ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY IN ESSEX**

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The Committee met on 3 occasions in the year under the chairmanship of Cllrs. Higgins and Manning-Press with councillors, museum curators, archaeologists, and local society representatives. At the invitation of Carolyn Wingfield, Uttlesford Museums Officer, a visit was made to Saffron Walden where the collection of antique books in the Town Library, the Fry Art Gallery and Bridge End Gardens were appreciated.

Attention was drawn to the Draft Bill going through Parliament which would make Sites and Monuments Records (EHER) statutory, and to the web sites <http://unlockingessex.essexcc.gov.uk>.

and <http://uepkids.essexcc.gov.uk> which contained the Essex Historic Environment Record database.

The proposals for relocating the Field Archaeology Unit in a new purpose-built Outreach Centre at Great Notley had been suspended for funding reappraisals by Essex County Council. Field projects had shown a significant decline since the slow-down in building development in the county. Bronze Age field systems with waterlogged deposits have been excavated at Priors Green, Takeley. A henge with surviving timbers and a ceremonial avenue were excavated at Boreham. The Colchester Circus has been reassessed as having 8 starting gates, not 12. Crouched Friars church in Crouch Street, Colchester has been exposed with its adjacent cemetery. 11m of an intact and still-functioning Roman wooden drain has been dendrodated to c.62 AD in St Peters Street.

A pilot scheme for national mapping of cropmarks was being undertaken in the Tendring peninsula funded by English Heritage. WWII defences have been recorded in Castle Point and Basildon. 300 hectares are to be field-walked and 5% are to be trenched at Stansted.

Reports have been published on Frogs Hall, Takeley and Park School, Rayleigh. Copt Hall, Epping has been described in "Current Archaeology". Essex publications on Place-name studies are now being included in the annual National Bibliography produced by the English Place-names Society in its Journal. Chelmsford Borough Council was funding an extension to Oaklands Museum.

James Kemble

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## ESSEX PLACE-NAMES PROJECT

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The Essex Record Office has published a series of Parish booklets containing the place-names of each parish. The record relates to the names of fields, inns, woods, hamlets etc. as they were called and spelled about 1840 as well as earlier spellings. The booklets include location maps. How these names have evolved over the centuries - and sometimes become "mangled" by dialect and repetition - gives a clue to their origin and meaning.

The booklets which cover over 150 parishes are available from the Record Office searchroom at very reasonable cost (tel: 01245 244644), in hard copy or on CD.

Bookings are now being taken for the 12th Annual Place-names Seminar to be held in Chelmsford on Saturday 15th November at 2pm when Professor Tom Williamson of University of East Anglia will speak on "Medieval Landscapes in Essex and East Anglia". There will also be talks by Local Recorders. Tickets £6 (payable to "ESAH") from the Project Coordinator, 27 Tor Bryan, Ingatestone, CM4 9JZ. Please enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope.

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## FRANK ALDOUS GIRLING (1898-1966)

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The National Gallery of Scotland has a project in hand for either a catalogue or a specific exhibition about collectors, great and small. I was asked to supply details of Frank Girling who was a collector of art (works by Munnings, Beran etc.) and who made donations to The Minorities at Colchester. Often he was called upon to lecture to the Art

Workers' Guild in London. He also collected flints when walking in Little Bromley and elsewhere, and these were donated to the Colchester and Essex museum. His collection of his own photographs of Essex was donated to our Society and then passed on to the same museum, and his Suffolk photographs went to Ipswich library on his demise. The renowned maritime photography, Douglas Went, was a friend. Girling's collection of Staffordshire pottery went to his wife, Minnie How, whom he had married in 1949.

Frank was born in 1898 at Moverons Farm, Brightlingsea where his father F D Girling farmed. In 1902 the family moved to Hall Farm, Thorrington. Frank was commissioned in to the army in 1917 and saw active service in France. After demobilisation in 1920 he farmed at Holly Lodge and New House Farm, Little Bromley, acting initially as his father's foreman. His judging skills were called on by both local and national bodies.

By 1930 he had collected enough information to publish a book on Suffolk pargetting. He began photography as a hobby as well as collecting merchants' marks. Articles on the subject appeared in many publications. In 1942 he was elected a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. He served on the Council of the Essex Archaeological Society for many years, and was also a member of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology.

When World War II came in 1939 he raised and commanded the Home Guard in the Bromleys and also served on the Tendring Hundred War Agricultural Committee. Farming was his life. He bred Suffolk black faced rams, and in 1949 was awarded two prizes for his barley exhibits at the Brewers' Exhibition in London.

He was a very quiet man who went about his daily work and his hobbies with diligence. I was pleased to know him

when I was Hon Secretary of this Society and I was able to assist him sometimes with his archaeology and photography. When he died in 1966, I took part in his memorial service at Thorrington parish church where the congregation was informed that his body had been donated to a London teaching hospital for research into heart block, a condition from which he had suffered.

There has not really been an equal successor in his many fields. Shall we ever see the likes of him again?

John S Appleby

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## BOOK REVIEW

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Francis, Pat: *Borough Over the Border; Life in West Ham 1895-1915*, (2007) East London History Society, pp 222, £8.40.

This is a considerable undertaking. The author has bravely gone where many local historians will not go and has systematically trawled the local newspapers and periodicals of the period, those rich sources of Victorian and Edwardian studies. It takes a lot of time, but it is worth it. West Ham was a cauldron of change and political drama during these years, its public excesses reported, half in ridicule, half with a shudder, by the more traditional regional newspapers of shire Essex. What we therefore have is, to my knowledge, a 'first', a detailed insight into the unfolding life of this teeming borough, reported by its own press, notably the *Stratford Express* and the *Stratford, Forest Gate and Plaistow Advertiser*. Finally, the author had sought to explore, in some detail, the reading and musical activities going on outside those more familiar West Ham themes of poverty, industrial unrest and left wing politics with which it is associated during these years.

There is always a problem for the writer of such micro-history as to whether to tell their story chronologically or thematically. There are advantages with both approaches, and here, after three introductory chapters, the author divides her story into nine chapters of tight three-year periods, seeking to give each one an over-all theme. 1900-1902, for example, is labelled 'A New Century; a New Reign'. Problems however arise for the reader where the detailed history of West Ham on the ground does not fit these sweeping national themes (or three-year periods), while issues like poverty and labour surplus are likely to recur in every chapter. By and large the author copes with this reasonably well, and the book is happily free of repetition. A second problem, freely recognised by the author in her introduction, is that locals newspapers of this period inevitably reflect the interest of their readership which did not, by and large, include the poorer half (or in the case of West Ham three quarters) of the population. They print in great detail about good-cause public meetings and even more about party politics. While this book avoids too much of the former there is a lot about the latter. In particular we hear a great deal about Will Thorne and Charles Masterman, M.P.'s for West Ham South and West Ham North respectively, and, perhaps inevitably, for this is West Ham, the sectarian divisions of left wing politics. It would be nice to have more analysis of right wing politics in the borough, for, given popular perceptions, it should not have existed. This reviewer would also have liked a more systematic look at occupational and demographic structures. West Ham was a borough full of immigrants – where did they all come from? The author's concentration on musical and reading interests deserves some special mention. Here the *Musical*

*Herald* provides her with a constant source of minutiae, if not trivia. As usual, if you scratch local history hard enough, you find much conventional wisdom challenged. Library provision and library loans reflect more serious reading than might be expected, certainly than this reviewer has found in the contemporary borough of Colchester. Music likewise was never absent from people's lives and public music – choirs, music hall, brass bands – abundant.

All in all then, this is an impressive book, compulsory reading for anyone interested in West Ham history and a credit to the long, long hours of research it must have involved. It is pleasantly printed in A5 format. There is a sprinkling of interesting photos, though it would have helped if they had been placed on the pages of text to which they refer. The book desperately needs a map, ideally one drawn specifically for this volume to help the non-resident navigate the subtle by clear divisions between the Docks, Silvertown, Beckton, Plaistow, Stratford, and all stations between, which made up this melting pot world.

Andrew Phillips

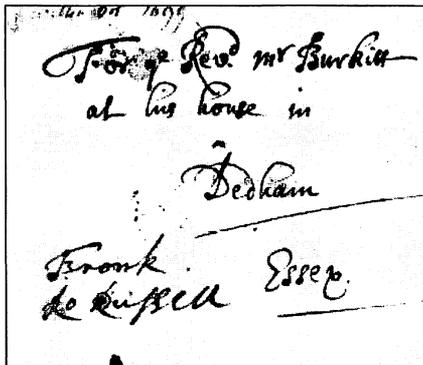
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## ESAH VISIT TO DEDHAM

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Members of the Society met Revd. Gerard Moate and his parishioners on a recent visit to Dedham who gave us a tour of the church and tower. In the area above the porch, the Vicar has created a Muniment Room. When he arrived thirteen years ago it was a storage area for defunct vacuum cleaners and discarded books. But on tidying the area some great discoveries were made, not least a Geneva Bible. Work began on building bookcases, rationalising and cataloguing the contents. The Vicar has concentrated on restoring books with a

Dedham connection, in particular that of Revd. Burkitt, and acquiring other material to illustrate the village's history.



The simple address on the letter from 1699 see cover illustration for details

Revd. Moate writes, "The 'Muniment Room' is certainly a treasure and I am delighted that people outside of Dedham are beginning to appreciate it". The current Vicar is truly a modern-day antiquarian.

Andrew Smith

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## REV. CANON G. H. RENDALL AND THE DEDHAM MUNIMENTS ROOM

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I have recently had the pleasure of preparing a guide to the archives of Canon Rendall at Dedham church. There is no biography of Rendall and today he is largely forgotten, but in his own time he was held in high esteem. His death was noted in *The Times*, and obituaries appeared in various journals and local newspapers. He was the author of numerous works on church history, classical, biblical and Shakespearean criticism, as well as two books on the history of Dedham,

published late in his life. Rendall had retired to Dedham at the age of 60 and died there on 4 January 1945 within 3 weeks of his 94<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Rendall was born on St Paul's day, 1851 at Harrow where his father Frederick was assistant master. His mother was Anna Downes, the oldest of three daughters of Major William Downes of Hill House, Dedham. The second daughter, Elizabeth, married Gerald Thomson Lermitt, headmaster of Dedham Grammar School. Rendall was his godson and named after him. The third daughter, Laura, was the first wife of James Medows Rodwell who was, for many years, a Dedham churchwarden.

In his preface to *Dedham, Described and Deciphered*, Rendall left a portrait of the village as he remembered it in the 1850s. 'Throughout childhood and boyhood, Dedham was for me the world of holiday, in which the Christmas festival was kept with all time-honoured celebrations, when the church was decked with berried holly-wreaths, the hall with mistletoe, the board with roast turkey and plum pudding set-on-fire, to be followed by snapdragon and the Christmas tree in which all members of the household shared. At Dedham in summertime, I learned to blackberry, to fish, to row, to swim, and in winter to slide and skate and dance.' Perhaps it is not surprising that he chose to spend his retirement in the village.

Educated at Harrow, Rendall followed his father to Trinity College, Cambridge. He graduated BA in 1874 and MA in 1877. Scholarships and prizes followed in rapid succession. In 1875 he was elected to a college fellowship and remained as an assistant tutor until 1880. He was then appointed Gladstone professor of Greek at University College Liverpool from 1880 to 1897 and principal of the College. In 1890 he was chosen as vice chancellor of Victoria

(Manchester) University. From 1897 to his retirement in 1911 he was headmaster of Charterhouse, and was ordained deacon in 1898 and priest in 1899.

Rendall acquired Dedham House in 1909 and almost immediately entered into village life. He also left his mark on the wider community of Essex. He became Honorary Canon of Chelmsford cathedral in 1918, and for many years was governor of Colchester Royal Grammar School. In April 1922 he was elected to the Council of the Essex Archaeological Society, and served on this for the rest of his life. He was a member of three Dedham trusts, and for two decades was chairman of the Lectureship Trust. During the First World War he organised a canteen for soldiers in the Village Club (now Duchy Barn). He also formed a detachment of St John Ambulance and was its first commandant.

What are now housed in the Dedham Muniment room are only the materials for a fragment of Rendall's literary output. There can be no doubt that, after his retirement, he intended to write a history of Dedham. The anonymous author of his obituary (in the February 1945 edition of the parish magazine) credits Rendall with these words: 'Dedham, with its woollen industry and its mill, its Grammar School and its Lectureship, touched national life at many points, and offered a particularly interesting example of social, industrial and ecclesiastical development in the history of the English people.' Although Rendall never wrote his projected history, he produced a short book on local topography, and a learned, if slight, volume on feudal and early modern Dedham. His account of the first lecturers is based on impeccable research and a profound understanding of the puritan movement. He was the

author of a number of scholarly essays and several pamphlets, nearly all with a Dedham theme. He was also a popular speaker.

Over many years Rendall accumulated a considerable archive of notes, papers and books relating to Dedham and the Stour Valley. Towards the end of his life he determined to bequeath this collection to the village, and to house this he converted the lumber room over the north porch into a muniment room. The bookcases, panelling and furniture were all designed by the architect, Marshall Sisson, and built by Heals of London. It was opened on 24 September 1938 by Rendall's cousin, Dr Montague Rendall, a former headmaster of Winchester. About fifty people accepted a joint invitation from Rendall and the vicar of Dedham, Rev. F.G. Given-Wilson, to attend the opening.

One other aspect of Rendall's scholarship requires notice here. In the 1920s he was converted to the theory that the real author of the sonnets, classical poems and some of the plays attributed to Shakespeare was Edward de Vere, 17<sup>th</sup> earl of Oxford. Rendall's principal concern was with the sonnets and poems where he deployed his extensive knowledge of Elizabethan literature to considerable effect. His most important works were *Shakespeare's Sonnets and Edward de Vere* and *Personal Clues in Shakespeare's Poems and Sonnets*. In his *Shakespeare in Essex and East Anglia* he proposed that scenes from *Henry VI* and *Cymbeline* were set in the Stour Valley, stating that 'names, places and distances, even personalities are thinly disguised, and both plays contain unmistakable evidence of Oxford's handiwork.' The de Veres flourished in Essex from the Conquest to the death of the 20<sup>th</sup> earl in 1703, and this may have had a subliminal part in strengthening

Rendall's view that some of the works attributed to Shakespeare were in fact written by the 17<sup>th</sup> earl. A number of papers in the Dedham archives touch on the question whether Shakespeare wrote anything that bears his name.

Rendall was reticent about himself. His papers reveal little of his personality apart from his relish for historical and literary research. His correspondents on Dedham, and on Essex matters generally, were the antiquaries L C Sier, Rev. Montagu Benton and Sir Gurney Benham, all of whom are represented by letters in the collection. Periodically he corresponded with other scholars – there is an interesting exchange of letters with Sir George Sitwell – but in the main, the letter writers are like minded clergymen, often with an interest in the ecclesiastical history of Dedham.

The Rendall archive at Dedham consists of the following: eight box files; six manuscript books; books and pamphlets of which Rendall was the author; long runs of the *Essex Review* and the *Transactions* of the Essex Archaeological Society containing material by Rendall, or pertaining to him; books in which Rendall material survives (usually in loose leaf form); and maps once in Rendall's possession. He also compiled a catalogue of books donated to the muniment room, the great majority of which were purchased by Rendall or presented to him by other scholars. A few volumes were added in the years after his death, and some printed material on other Essex and Suffolk parishes has been disposed of. The present incumbent has recently acquired more material specific to Dedham and its puritan heritage. This is expected to continue in future. There is also a programme to conserve C17 and C18 volumes which have suffered the depredations of time.

I have resisted the temptation to re-order the archive. This decision carries with it some disadvantages for the user. Some topics are treated in more than one box file or notebook. Rendall often returned to a subject that he had examined before and as often without consolidating his papers. On occasions he filed material under more than one heading, and even placed on-going correspondence in two different locations. These are working papers and it seems most appropriate to treat them as such.

Who will benefit from access to this archive? Local people with an appetite for the history of their community will find much of interest here. Students of local topography will be equally gratified. Anyone contemplating a history of Dedham will find Rendall's papers indispensable. Scholars of Elizabeth I's church settlement or the Caroline puritan movement will gain considerably from his research. Rendall's industry was exceptional and his scholarship rigorous. Authors, editors, cataloguers and researchers incur obligations. I should particularly like to thank Caroline Merriam for her company on the journey through the Rendall archive. We both hope that future researchers of the history of Dedham will feel that the present modest exercise has been worthwhile. I should also like to thank Dr Michael Leach for his invaluable help bring the guide to this archive into a final and, I hope, comprehensible form.

Mark Lockett

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## MISSING COUNCIL MINUTES

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Readers will be aware that a very embarrassing problem came to light in 2006 – the Society had no copies of any of its Council minutes between March

1972 and October 1987. After extensive enquiries of former Council members, it is good to report that a virtually complete set has now been assembled from several different sources and that, when these have been sorted (and copied where the original is very tatty), it will be properly bound by a professional bookbinder. There are still a few gaps between 1974 and 1980 and, if any member has Council minutes from this period, please contact Michael Leach on 01277 363106, or leach1939@yahoo.co.uk . We are particularly grateful to Elizabeth Sellers (a former Hon Secretary of the Society) and Peter Sharpe for their hard work in successfully retrieving this missing part of the Society's past.

Michael Leach

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## TILTY MILL

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Many members will be familiar with the beautiful monastic site at Tilty. Most will be less familiar with the Grade II\* listed mill on the edge of the site, a late C18 watermill containing an almost complete set of mill machinery. This comprises a cast iron waterwheel with a complete set of gearing to three pairs of millstones, a sack hoist, a modern hammer mill and a fourth pair of stones which were installed but never connected. There is also a World War II pillbox concealed in one of the outhouses! The mill pond and leet are intact, though now without water.

The mill last worked in the 1950s and has lain disused since then. It has been on Essex County Council's Buildings at Risk register since 1986 with unspecified structural problems, decaying windows and invasive vegetation. In 2007 there was a successful planning application to convert the mill and its outbuildings into two dwellings (involving a significant amount of new building on the very

restricted site) in spite of opposition from a number of organisations, including this Society. The application was opposed for two reasons. Firstly the mill and its machinery were a most unusual survival, and domestic conversion would result in the destruction of many of the historic features. Secondly, though it may not be on the exact site of the mediaeval abbey mill (referred to in 1224 as 'newly built') it is a very important part of the setting of this monastic site, and the intrusion of much new building would inevitably detract from this. After Uttlesford District Council had granted consent, all the groups which had opposed this development made representations to GoEast, the regional planning authority based in Cambridge.

Crucially the application had not been opposed by English Heritage, allegedly on grounds of the costs involved. However the Ancient Monuments Society and the Mills Section of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings were actively involved and, probably as a result of the well-organised opposition to this development, the planning application was subsequently 'called in' by the Secretary of State. A public enquiry was duly held at the end of October last year. A representative of the Society attended and was impressed by the inspector's thoroughness and keen interest in the whole matter. As a result of the inspector's report, the Secretary of State overturned Uttlesford's decision, and revoked the planning consent. In doing so, a useful precedent may have been set. The proposed new building, on this very remote rural site, was on a substantial scale, occupying three times the ground area of the existing ones. The applicant justified this on the grounds that it constituted 'enabling development' – in other words, that it would provide funds to finance the

preservation of the mill. However the plans for the new housing involved using part of the old mill, with the loss of its machinery. Amongst other reservations, the inspector pointed out that this 'enabling development' actually damaged part of the building that it was supposedly setting out to save. This was one of his reasons for advising that the local authority's consent should be rescinded.

The challenge now will be to find a new and more appropriate use for this remarkable survival; most conservationists would prefer to see it retained as a preserved mill. Many problems will need to be overcome before this can be achieved, not least the problem of obtaining adequate access for vehicles. However it is very encouraging (and somewhat unusual) that the planning consent has been overturned, and it will give interested groups both time and opportunity to set up a viable scheme.

Michael Leach

Source: *Cornerstone* (The Magazine of the SPAB) vol. xxix, no: 1

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## **THE LOST ROMAN TOWN OF GREAT CHESTERFORD**

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This was the subject of this year's Morant lecture given by Maria Medlycott. Trained as a field archaeologist, she has updated Essex County Council's historic towns reports, as well as doing much new work on village settlements in the county. Recently she obtained an English Heritage grant to pull together all the disparate information on Great Chesterford, and to publish a report which will appear in the East Anglian Archaeology series later this year, or early in 2009.

This is the second largest Roman site in Essex, now ploughed flat with a faint pale line as the only visible evidence of the line of the town wall on the west side. The present mediaeval town lies south and south-east of the Roman site and the curve of the Newmarket Road on its northern edge marks the line of the wall on the south and east sides of the Roman settlement.

Over the last 300 years many have studied this site, commencing with William Stukeley in 1719 who drew a rough plan of the flint rubble walls, then being demolished for use as road-making material. He also noted a 'ghost temple' visible as a crop mark. As part of his enquiries, he supplied locals with a pint of beer and a pipe of tobacco, and plied them with questions. The next serious enquirer was the Hon. Richard Cornwallis Neville (later Lord Braybrooke) who had given up beagling due to poor health, and enthusiastically embraced archaeology instead. By the standards of the time, he kept good written records but – frustratingly for the modern researcher – made no plan, and it has proved impossible to establish where he made some of his finds. He only kept whole pots, throwing away the contents and discarding broken sherds. He lifted the mosaic from the temple site 1km to the east of the town (a ploughman had reported hitting an underground obstruction here) and, though this has subsequently been lost, a coloured engraving was prepared so we know what it looked like. His findings were published in the *Archaeological Journal* in 1855, and elsewhere.

There were sporadic digs in the 1920s, and a well organised rescue dig by Major Brinson (a past President of the Society) in 1948, necessitated by gravel extraction from the northern sector of the town site. This was conducted in appalling winter conditions and box

scrapers had already done some damage. There were rumours of a coin hoard being distributed amongst the quarry diggers. A summary of the findings was written for VCH volume iii, and the pots were rescued after Major Brinson's death, though unfortunately mice had eaten the labels. Then in 1953 an Anglo-Saxon cemetery was found adjacent to the town site.

During the 1970s and 1980s, the Great Chesterford Archaeology Group did a number of excavations and kept a watching brief whenever the ground was disturbed by services or by new building. They kept good records but, as often happens with amateur archaeology, the final analysis and write-up proved too difficult. Knowing the importance of the site, they wisely enlisted the help of Essex County Council.

It was decided that the best starting point would be to obtain a geophysical survey of the whole site. Fortunately the soil proved to be ideal and, apart from those areas already destroyed by gravel extraction, the survey showed the town plan in remarkable detail - the walls, the main roads converging on the forum, the forum itself, a maze of back alleys and various buildings, including an unidentified, possibly octagonal, building. It also showed some non-linear features not aligned with the Roman layout, and these may be evidence of an earlier Iron Age settlement.

When all the evidence had been brought together, the history of the town's development began to emerge. The first Roman construction was a rectangular fort with evidence of a gate, dated to about 60AD and only in use for a few years. This was superseded by a civilian town protected by a roughly oval bank and ditch. The important buildings were in masonry, but the majority of the smaller ones were only represented by beaten clay floors and were presumably

constructed in timber. Major Brinson had identified a few of the latter, but many must have been lost to box scrapers in the foul weather of the winter of 1948. The town wall was a later construction, dating from the mid to late C4 and its building was preceded by the clearance of a 20m wide swath, with most of the residual pits and holes being filled with rammed chalk to provide a good foundation. One that was missed provided dating evidence of c. 360AD. The wall was of flint rubble with lacing courses of tiles, 3 to 4m wide, with no evidence of towers. A single arch gate was provided, later a second arch was added, suggesting perhaps increased traffic and growing prosperity. It is not clear why the wall was built so late, but it was a time of Pict and barbarian incursions, and the town may have required defence if it was a tax collecting centre. It was also quite near to the Fen waterways which would have provided convenient routes for incursions.

There was also a considerable extramural settlement, with suburbs to the south and south east. These include a walled enclosure (now the site of the parish church - probably a Saxon minster site - and its churchyard) in which an iron working hoard buried in a deep sealed shaft, and wells with ritual deposits have been found here. This suggests that the Christian church was established on a site which already had ritual significance. 1km to the east is the temple site discovered by Neville's ploughman. It was excavated by him, the mosaic was removed and the walls were lowered for the benefit of the ploughman. It was re-excavated in the 1980s. The building is a square within a square, of typical early Romano-British form, and it was built on top of a probable Iron Age shrine. A porch was added later on the east side (i.e. facing away from the town). There was a major refurbishment

in the mid C3 or early C4AD, including re-roofing and re-plastering. The temple was contained within a precinct ditch, in the south west corner of which were some substantial pits containing about 2000 front right sheep legs. Doubtless the rest of the animal was eaten. Raised iron content of the infill suggested the possibility of blood libations here. Part of the temple refurbishment included the building of a gateway in the east side of the precinct enclosure, as well as a curious 'half temple' between this and the main temple. The dedication remains obscure but the discovery of votive offerings (including a silver plaque bearing a god's head, silver foil leaves, letters of the alphabet and non-functional brooches) leave no doubt about its function. There may well be other features in the precinct but unfortunately the farmer refused permission for a geophysical survey.

Paleo-botanical evidence from the surrounding area suggests that in Roman times it was an open landscape with little woodland, meadows for hay and for grazing, and some arable (oats, barley and two types of wheat). There is cartographic evidence of a near-circular boundary several miles in radius, part of which was described in a Saxon charter. It is not clear if this was a Saxon boundary or the edge of the Roman territorium.

The temple was in ruins by the late C4AD, though curiously a Saxon spear was left in it at a later date. Was this an accidental loss or a deliberate ritual deposit? There were mixed burials after the Roman period (some Saxon, some associated with Roman material, others with Frankish goods) suggesting that the population was of varied ethnic origin. One high status Saxon was buried with his horse.

There is undoubtedly much more to be learnt about this complex site, and future

archaeologists will be deeply indebted to Maria for organising and interpreting the mass of information (much of it unpublished) gathered over the last 150 years.

Michael Leach

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## **ESSEX HISTORY FAIR – SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVE NEEDED**

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Most members will know that this is held every other year. In 2006, it filled the town centre of Braintree, and provided a great opportunity for the public to meet the wide range of organisations involved in many different ways with the heritage of Essex. Paradoxically, though it was a great success, the inability to charge an entrance fee to the town centre has left the organisation's funds seriously depleted. It is an excellent event for the county, and it would be a great loss if it were to lapse. The Society is looking for a member to represent it on the History Fair committee, and anyone keen to do this is urged to contact me on 01277 363106, or [leach1939@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:leach1939@yahoo.co.uk) or by post at 2 Landview Gardens, Ongar CM5 9EQ.

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## **HILL FARM, GESTINGTHORPE**

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Society members visited this delightfully remote and peaceful part of Essex on 10 May. We were first shown the Roman villa site, discovered by Mr Cooper during post war ploughing. This was the beginning of a lifetime interest in archaeology – 30 years of excavation, followed by a similar period of regular field walking after the scheduling of the

site by English Heritage in the 1970s. The villa was relatively modest (no mosaics, for example, merely opus signinum floors) but nevertheless it had a bath house and a hypocaust heating system. It occupied a site 20m by 30m, an area sufficient for 3 or 4 modern town houses. Footings consisted of substantial flint walls, and the roof appears to have been supported by two lines of aisle posts, for which one set of post holes were found. The superstructure was probably a substantial timber frame, as the estimated weight of the tiled roof was about 40 tons. The villa was surrounded by a settlement which included various workshops, including iron working, but also one used for casting bronze figurines – the only one known in Britain. A paved area, where many coins were found, suggests a possible market. To the northeast was a building orientated exactly east-west, and floored with red tesserae, tentatively thought to have been a temple. The whole site is close to the supposed line of the Braintree to Sudbury Roman road, the exact course of which has still not been established. Quantities of roof tiles, glass, pottery, jewellery, carpenters' tools and domestic equipment, recovered from the site both by excavation and field walking, are now displayed in the farmhouse.

There are hints of earlier occupation and possible use as a Celtic votive site. The soil is highly variable, and the modern plough sometimes turns up a striking red sand. Unexpected sink holes periodically appear in the fields, probably caused by the collapse of eroded layers in the deep chalk strata. The nearby stream also disappears from time to time (presumably by the same process) and all these phenomena might have contributed to its significance in Celtic eyes.

We then examined the substantial collection of artefacts in the farmhouse. On display was a white roof tile (perhaps made from the local clay, used more recently for making white bricks), an entire storage jar found in the kitchen, and elegant jewellery, as well as a wide range of other artefacts.

After lunch we had a tour of the farm buildings, considerably modified by Frederick Chancellor in the 1870s and 80s. The farmhouse itself was a new build by him, as were the symmetrical ranges of brick farmyard buildings on the south side of the C18 barn. The quality of the Victorian brickwork was striking – gauged brick lintels to windows and doors are not normally to be found in farm buildings! The C18 barn contained much reused timber, some showing mouldings, joist mortices and shutter grooves from earlier domestic use. Tie beams and wall plates are fixed together with iron straps – typical C18 practice. Barns are usually found on the north side of the farm yard, with the central drive-through orientated north-south, to exploit the prevailing wind to blow away dust and chaff after threshing. Adjoining the barn was another re-used timber building, formerly jettied, and with upstairs windows with shutter grooves and mortices for diamond mullions. The quality of the carpentry, as well as the substantial size of the timbers, and the absence of downstairs windows, suggest that it may have been a re-used guildhall. Members were diverted by a well-cut mortice with peg holes in one main beam – in that position it could never have received a timber and seems to have been cut in error, not an unusual finding in timber framed buildings. Outside, two cylindrical corrugated iron grain silos, with pyramidal roofs, dating from the 1970s, are redundant (being far too small for present yields) and are due for demolition – a reminder of the rapid

progress of farm technology and productivity since World War II. We were very indebted to our hosts at Hill Farm, and deeply impressed by their enthusiasm for the archaeology and history of this working farm.

Michael Leach

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## SUCKLING REVISITED

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The first half of the C19 saw the publication of a number of histories of Essex – Britton and Brayley in 1803, Elizabeth Osborne in 1814, T K Cromwell in 1818/19, Thomas Wright in 1836. With the exception of Elizabeth Osborne, these were largely derivative works with only a limited amount of new material, though all were more generously illustrated with engravings than the C18 histories from which they had obtained much of their material.

The Rev. Alfred Suckling's *Memorials... of the County of Essex* of 1845 is in a different category. To start with, it is an oversize folio, lavishly illustrated with engravings made from the author's own drawings. It is clear from the text that his descriptions were based on personal observations. He tested the toughness of Greensted's timber walls with 'a good pocket knife', and commented elsewhere on dirty or ill-kempt churches, and dishonest parish clerks who had sold off monumental brasses for their own profit. He was very upset by official vandalism, and noted that Messing church had 'a few years since, contained the effigy of her founder, a wooden figure of a crusader in chain armour, which occupied a niche in the north wall. My sole object in visiting this village was to draw this ancient monument, and my regret may easily be conceived, on learning that the late vicar had given it, a short time before, to the parish clerk, to be burnt as a piece of useless lumber;

[he] obeyed the directions of his tasteless superior to the very letter.' At Little Horkesley, three oak effigies had been 'removed from their original situation and barbarously thrust into an obscure corner of the church, covered with dust and rubbish.' Remarkably these figures survived not only this neglect, but also the almost total destruction of the church in World War II. Suckling's antiquarian zeal is evident. At Layer Marney he noted 'as the writer had already walked nearly twenty miles, and seven more lay between him and Colchester, the ultimate and most important object of his tour, the shades of an October evening warned him that any attempt to draw these effigies with accuracy and care would be fruitless ... lest, however, he be charged with apathy on this score, let the reader understand, that having breakfasted at six that morning, he had subsequently already visited the churches of Great and Little Braxted, Inworth and Messing, had made sketches of those portions to be found in this volume, with the brasses, arms and inscriptions associated with them; had also drawn a view of Layer Marney tower, the exterior of the church, the arms and font, and copied all the monuments, without any assistance.'

The printer's introduction explained that this book was reprinted from his series of *Quarterly Papers on Architecture*, without any further input from the author – perhaps not even with his consent. The relationship between the two does not seem to have been a very happy one, and in 1846 they fell out over Suckling's *History of Suffolk* which stalled after the second volume. It has to be said that the Essex volume is very patchy – some parishes are dealt with at length, others with great brevity, and many not at all. The index is surprisingly inadequate, and omits ten parishes, some of which (Danbury, for example)

are covered in considerable detail. His main interests were church architecture, heraldry and monumental inscriptions. He also gives an interesting insight into the state of church buildings before later C19 restorations unblocked bricked-up east windows, and replaced timber mullions and transoms with stone tracery. He attempted to date buildings accurately from their architectural details, made careful drawings of surviving tracery, had a particular interest in fonts, and usually assiduously recorded monumental inscriptions. With the last, he was occasionally frustrated, as at Willingale Doe where he noted 'it is impossible to read what filial piety has here inscribed without the assistance of a ladder' but added with some asperity, that 'a perusal of the inflated language on a lower slab of marble will be amply sufficient.'

Occasionally he wrote in considerable detail. The entry for Thoby Priory, for example, covered eight pages and included a detailed transcript of an inventory of the priory lands, including acreages, field names and abutments. Elsewhere he ran out of time. Having described Colchester castle, St Botolph's Priory and St John's Abbey, he noted that he had insufficient time to look at any of the town's churches. The published engravings sometimes bear the date of Suckling's original drawing, and this evidence suggests that he made many of his visits to Essex between December 1833 and March 1835. All the illustrations are detailed and accurate (he himself noted the trouble he had taken to delineate the courses of Roman brickwork in the drawing of Colchester castle) and contain the occasional quirk. The Little Braxted font, for example, showed a floor slab bearing his name and the date, with the inscription 'Requiescat in Pace' suggesting that it was his own gravestone!

Generally his style is plain and factual, but there are periodic flights of rotund verbosity. At Danbury he noted '...the same tough and knotty oaks yet flourish, and adorn the park of the nineteenth century, which beheld the stern era of the Norman rule. Long will they yet flourish! For who can deploy the axe in the destruction of the monarchs of the grove, which Norman tyranny could spare, which the taste of our forefathers has respected, and which time, which antiquity, has rendered sacred?' Nevertheless, there is much useful material in the somewhat variable text, as well as useful information from the engravings about the condition of church buildings before their Victorian restoration.

Alfred Inigo Suckling was the only son of Alexander Fox, and adopted the surname of his maternal grandfather on inheriting the latter's Norfolk estates in 1820. Through his maternal grandmother he was related to the famous C17 architect, Inigo Jones, hence his unusual second name. Though ordained in 1820, he was not beneficed until 1839, so he had ample time and sufficient income to pursue his antiquarian interests. A collection of his notes survives in the British Library as Add. MSS 18476-18491, and might be worth further examination for unpublished Essex material.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Blatchly, J M, 2005 'Suckling (formerly Fox), Alfred Inigo (1796-1856)' in *ODNB*, Oxford

Suckling, Rev A, 1845 *Memorials of the Antiquities and Architecture, Family History and Heraldry of the County of Essex*, John Weale, London

## A CELEBRATION OF WILLIAM WINSTANLEY

On Saturday 29 November 2008, Quendon village will be celebrating William Winstanley (?1628-1725), the 'barber poet', pioneer of publishing almanacs and chapbooks, and uncle of the Eddystone lighthouse designer. From 10am to 4pm there will be stalls and events round the church, and two new books will be for sale – a book of Winstanley's unpublished rural Essex poems, and Jackie Worthington's biography, *The Man who saved Christmas*. At 7pm, in the church, Caroline Wingfield, curator of Saffron Walden museum, will give a talk on 'William Winstanley – family life in the C17.'

## HEDINGHAM CASTLE – NEW LIVING HISTORY DISPLAY

A new living history display has recently been opened here, providing an idea of the work involved in running a castle as a business centre, a family home and a final point of defence against an attacking enemy. The owners have researched family records for images, material and information about the important episodes in the castle's history since its first construction by Aubrey de Vere in 1140. The castle is open from 10am to 5pm, from Sundays to Thursdays between Easter and the end of October.

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Enquiries about delayed or missing publications and about the supply of recent back numbers should be addressed to the Secretary.

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2007 the projected value of the fund stands at £41,048.

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Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail [bill.abbott@btinternet.com](mailto:bill.abbott@btinternet.com)

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

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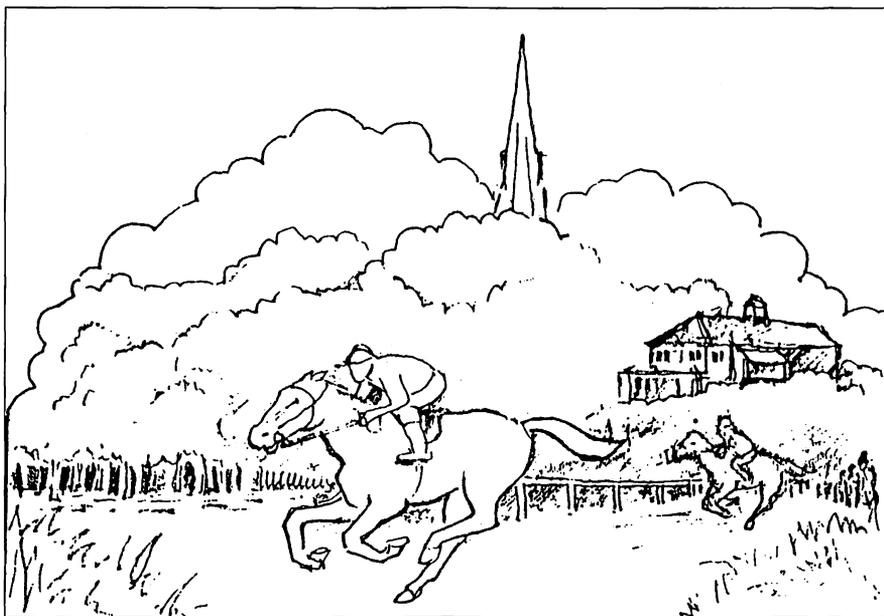
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# Essex Archaeology and History News



**Winter 2008**

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 156

WINTER 2008

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**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 6 MARCH 2009**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

## Cover illustration:

The Galleywood village sign, from "Glimpses of Galleywood" by Muriel Sanders, 1993, depicts the racecourse on the Common with the spire of St Michaels behind the trees. See the write up on the AGM on page 3 for more on the history of the racecourse.

There is a modern poem by Art Scmauz in "The Essex Hundred", 2007, pp62-63, compiled by Andrew Summers and John Debenham which evokes the action and atmosphere of 'The Queen's Plate race. This poem is illustrated by Elizabeth Summers.

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

I hope and trust that all members would have by now received copies of volume 37 of the *Transactions* (2006) and the Index covering volumes 1 to 20. I mention this as I would like to pay tribute to our new Editor, Dr Chris Starr, who has seen these publications through the press. The task has been further complicated by the appointment of a new printer. This decision has resulted in being able to maintain our customary high standards combined with prompt service and delivery. Moreover this change has also resulted in a substantial reduction in our capital expenditure for this flagship publication. Dr Starr, with the full backing of the officers and executive council, is determined to ensure that the publication programme for *Transactions* is brought fully up-to-date. It is therefore anticipated that volume 38 (2007) will be published in April/May 2009 with volume 39 (2008) appearing towards the end of next year. The latter represents the 150<sup>th</sup> volume, a significant milestone in the history of the Society. It is also fitting that it is proposed to dedicate this anniversary volume to the late Ray Powell, a short tribute to whom appears elsewhere in these pages. We are resolved to making an occasion of this landmark and I look forward to sharing our plans with you shortly.

I have imparted this information because I am committed to keeping the membership fully informed of developments – after all you are the lifeblood of the Society. So far I have concentrated on the catch-up process which is largely retrospective but essential to the well-being of the Society. However, you may remember that I concluded my last contribution to this newsletter with the intention of focusing on the future and, in this regard, I wish to

advise you of two future initiatives.

Firstly, it is proposed to reintroduce the long discarded practice of producing a "List of Members" which it is anticipated will be circulated with volume 38 of the *Transactions*.

Inclusion is not a mandatory requirement but it is hoped that members will consent to the inclusion of their names, addresses and email address (the latter if known or supplied). It is also proposed to include the year of joining together with, if possible, full initials and post nominals (M.B.E., J.P., M.A., etc.). Please could I therefore ask you to carefully check the label on the envelope in which this newsletter arrived and advise me of any corrections/amendments/additions that you may wish to make? I can be reached by email at [martinstuchfield@btconnect.com](mailto:martinstuchfield@btconnect.com) or by post at Lowe Hill House, Stratford St Mary, Suffolk CO7 6JX. **For logistical purposes it will be assumed that you consent to inclusion unless notification is received to the contrary. Please be assured that this document is intended strictly for membership use only and will not be made available for use by outside individuals or organisations in compliance with the Data Protection Act 1988. Members should securely dispose of lists which are not required or have been updated.**

Secondly, it has been agreed by the College of Arms (founded by Richard III in 1484) that the Society, with its distinguished pedigree dating back to 1852, may successfully petition for a Grant of Arms. The Society is further honoured by the fact that Mr Thomas Woodcock, who is one of the senior

Officers of Arms in his capacity as Norroy and Ulster King of Arms, has agreed to act as agent. The whole process is expected to take approximately one year to complete with many hurdles to overcome! The first step in the process is for the Earl Marshall to grant a Warrant authorising the King of Arms to proceed with the design of the shield, crest and mantling. It is at this stage that Norroy and Ulster will work with the Society to devise arms which are pleasing, representative and heraldically correct. Interestingly, the customary motto, yet to be devised and adopted by the Society, will not be subject to heraldic jurisdiction. Eventually, Letters Patent (a colourful illuminated and decorated document) will be granted authorising the Society to use the arms for posterity. It is anticipated that it will be possible to invite members to a special presentation of the Letters Patent.

I hope that you can see a picture emerging whereby we are combining our traditional interests in archaeology and history with new initiatives for the future. Enclosed with this newsletter is yet another exciting and varied programme of meetings. I look forward to meeting as many members as possible at these events and to reporting further in the Spring 2009 Newsletter.

H Martin Stuchfield

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**INDEX TO ESSEX  
ARCHAEOLOGY &  
HISTORY VOLUMES 1-20  
(THIRD SERIES)**

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This will have been delivered to all full members before the receipt of this newsletter. The last cumulative index, covering volumes 6 to 15 of the Second series was published over 80 years ago,

though indexes to the subsequent individual volumes of this series were produced, up to (and including) the first volume of the Third Series. These still occasionally turn up in second hand book shops. Indexing ceased after the first volume of the third series and Council has been aware for some time of the urgent need for a proper index to make the material contained in *Essex Archaeology & History* accessible to researchers. A brave, but ultimately unsuccessful, attempt was made by Isobel Thompson, Ray Powell and others in the 1990s, though their rough draft (on large slips of paper) proved very useful for answering outside enquiries until very recently.

Indexing, however, is a complex matter and needs to be in a form that is widely used and recognised, in order to make the material available to a wide range of researchers, particularly in archaeology. There have been vast changes over the years. The 1926 index, for example, has just two entries for "pottery" whereas the present one has many columns over several pages. It became clear that we would have to use a professional indexer and that this would necessitate fund raising. The Society is deeply indebted to Chris Thornton, editor of the *Essex VCH* (and one of our past Presidents) for his perseverance in chasing up sources of funding (their generosity is acknowledged in the index), as well as in identifying a suitable indexer and coordinating the entire process from start to finish. Without the considerable time and effort that he gave to this, it is unlikely that the index would have been completed.

Every full and institutional member will receive a free copy, but additional copies will be available at cost (the price was not available at the time of writing this note, but please contact the Hon Secretary for details). It may be that

members, looking at the index, will wish to obtain a particular back number of *Essex Archaeology & History*. Unfortunately some of the early ones are out of print, and others are in very short supply. If you are looking for a particular volume, please contact Dr Jane Pearson, Hon Librarian, at Cob Cottage, Great Tey, Colchester CO6 1JS. If there is no remaining stock, an internet search or any good second hand book shop may be able to help.

As the Third Series has now reached volume 37, we need to continue the indexing and a start has already been made on the next ten volumes (21-30). When that is complete, we will have to tackle the volumes from 31 onwards. This is an expensive process – the indexing alone for the first 30 volumes will cost between £15,000 and £20,000 and, though most of this is covered by grants and the Society's reserves, the cost of publication must be covered, as well as the professional indexing costs after volume 30. Any contribution (payable to ESAH) towards the index fund - great or small - should be sent to Bill Abbott, Hon Treasurer, 45 Cambridge Road, Colchester CO3 3NR.

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## VCH ESSEX

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On June 1<sup>st</sup> the institutional base of VCH Essex moved to the Institute of Historical Research, University of London (for employment and management) and to the Essex Record Office, Essex County Council (for core funding and office facilities). We are looking forward to collaborating more closely with the ERO and other relevant sections of ECC, both to forward the progress of the VCH series and to enhance the position of Essex at the forefront of historical research, understanding and debates. The County Editor and Assistant Editor remain on half-time contracts, and an

additional consultant is being employed for two days a week. Additional money from the VCH Essex Appeal Fund has remained critical to supporting the employment of staff. A new provisional timetable has been agreed with a view to completing and publishing Volume XI within the course of the 3-year funding contract with ECC. We can then look forward to re-starting work on Volume XII for which there is already a considerable amount of material in draft. Work is already proceeding in planning following volumes in the series, and additional offers of voluntary help have been received.

For more information ESAH members are invited to view the next issue of the newsletter of the Appeal Fund, *Essex Past* No. 11, which will be available very shortly and can be provided in hard copy and viewed on our website.

Please remember that our old postal and e-mail addresses have expired and we should now be contacted on:

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[www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/Essex](http://www.victoriacountyhistory.ac.uk/Essex)

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## AGM AND THE GALLEYWOOD RACECOURSE

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The AGM was held at Keene Hall, Galleywood on 28 June 2008. Stan Newens, having very ably served his three-year term as President, stood down and Martin Stuchfield (well known for his involvement with Congress, the

*Essex Journal* and the Monumental Brass Society) was elected in his place. Presentations for outstanding contributions to the Society were made to Andrew Phillips (past President, and Hon Librarian since 1986), Owen Bedwin (past President, and Hon Editor since 1987 till 2000, and his own locum till last year), Ray Powell (former VCH editor and past President, who has made numerous contributions to the Society, but was not well enough to attend the meeting), John Appleby (past President, and Hon Secretary for 13 years from 1959, as well as founder of the Newsletter) and Bill Hewitt (driving force and first secretary of the Publications Development Fund which has done so much to enhance the Society's *Transactions*). After the formal business, Ted Hawkins of the Galleywood Historical Society gave an illustrated lecture on the history of Galleywood racecourse.

Horse racing has a long history, going back to Roman times at least. In the Middle Ages it usually took the form of a race between two riders, each of whom put up a purse which was forfeit if the horse did not run. King Charles II is normally regarded as the father of the English turf, and remains the only reigning English monarch to have won a race at Newmarket (the Town Plate in 1664). Racing possibly began on Galleywood Common in the C17, but the first known record of the Chelmsford races dates from an announcement in the *Chelmsford Chronicle* in 1759. The establishment of organised racing was probably stimulated by the formation of the Jockey Club in 1751, an association of owners which established sets of rules for racing, acted as an arbitrator in disputes and, from 1763, published the official racing calendar; its membership was aristocratic and establishment or, in the words of one commentator, 'a

relation of God, or a close one'.

In 1764 the Chelmsford races were a three day event in August, though in subsequent years this was reduced to two days. In 1770 they received the royal stamp of approval when George III gave a 100 Guinea Plate. Races at this time were usually decided on the best of three, though towards the end of the century single races were introduced ('dash racing'). Race days were a great social event, an opportunity to show off fine clothes, to dance and to indulge in a wide variety of other entertainments such as bare knuckle boxing and cock fighting (until the latter was made illegal in 1849). The wealthy arrived in carriages which were lined up alongside the race course to act as a grandstand. At the beginning of the C19 the racecourse was disrupted by the construction of a redoubt built on the common to stop a feared French invasion, but this risk dwindled after 1805; the fortifications were dismantled soon after and the race course re-aligned. This circuit, a little short of two miles, remains intact apart from a small piece nibbled off at the southern end by the A12 Chelmsford bypass. It was a hilly course, unequalled in England, and required special skill and judgement by jockeys to get the best out of their mounts.

The hay day of the Chelmsford races was probably in about 1860 when a new grandstand was constructed. One unique of the course was that the circuit contained Galleywood church, built by Arthur Pryor of Hylands House in 1873, as well as a brickworks, a windmill and Chelmsford's first golf course! However two decades later there was a financial crisis. It was difficult, on open common land, to meet the safety requirements to enclose the racecourse after 1870, and the Royal Plate was discontinued in 1887, so in 1892 it was decided to

change to install a steeplechase with nine hurdles and one water jump.

In the First World War, the grandstand, racecourse and much of the common was taken over by the army for training purposes and, four years after the end of that war, the company put the course up for sale. It was revived in new company in 1923 at a cost of £10,000, with renovation of the old grandstand and construction of a new one for members. There was new accommodation for course officials, jockeys, trainers, horses and the press. The course was also improved and was deemed excellent, but was still unusual as there were four public road crossings where the tarmac surface was covered with oak bark from the Baddow Road tannery. But the main disadvantage was that, as the course ran over common land, it was only possible to charge people in the grandstand area, and most people could watch the races for nothing. They were run at a loss for some years, and the last steeplechase was in 1935, followed by another four years of pony racing. The axe finally fell in 1939 when the course was put up for sale, and in 1942 Chelmsford Rural District Council acquired 116 acres of the common for £2000, to be maintained for public use in perpetuity. It was used for growing food for the duration of the war.

Mr Hawkins, and his assistant Mr Stacey, were warmly thanked for their informative lecture, and members then enjoyed an excellent tea provided by Ann Newman and her helpers.

Michael Leach

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## ESSEX PLACE-NAMES

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The well-attended 12th Annual Essex Place-names Seminar was held in Chelmsford. It heard a thoughtful talk by Mr David Bloomfield, until recently a

farmer near Brentwood, tracing the bounds of South Weald as contained in the copy of the charter of 1062 of Earl Harold's foundation grant to Waltham Abbey. Following the Weald Brook to the junction of two tributaries, the bounds are then defined by the Chafford-Ongar Hundred boundary. He suggested that Howgate might contain the Scandinavian element 'gata' (street), here near its most extreme southern limit. A boundary stone shown on an OS map but apparently no longer extant probably marked the change of direction near the 'wulfpitte'. The curious ear-shaped deviation on the eastern side described as 'purce' he proposed was enclosed land allowing the neighbouring manor access to the spring. He dismissed the fanciful interpretations of 'freobearnes' leap relating to pastime pursuits and preferred a hurdle-gate to contain livestock in the Common.

Mr. Andrew Luce, a retired mechanical engineer, had been researching the origin of street names in Springfield and along the Chelmer Navigation. He had traced Berkley Drive, now on what was in 5000 years a 'Neolithic cursus', to a sponsor of the construction of the Navigation, a Rev. Roland Berkley (born 1742), and Salter Place to Rev Phillip Salter of Shenfield. Similar origins from interested parties and individuals have given their names to names in the district, many seemingly dating from the 18th century.

Dr. Tom Williamson, professor of Landscape History at University of East Anglia, gave a lively and stimulating lecture about medieval settlement in Essex and East Anglia. An understanding of the geology was key to the development of settlement, river valleys being preferred. Medieval social groupings related to river drainage patterns. He warned against the acceptance of the theories that Roman

roads cutting across field systems necessarily implied the pre-existence of the fields, since post-Roman lines of communication may have led to ignoring the presence of the Roman road producing patterns independent of them. As John Hunter had pointed out, open fields predominated in river valleys. Champion land, of two types, on light soils and on Midland clays, implied different settlement patterns, the former resulting in strips fields as water was in short supply and depended on creation of artificial ponds or localised springs, the latter in clustered settlements when sharing of ploughing resources was necessary to exploit the short window of opportunity for harvesting. Where peat soils as in Norfolk provide poor arable, large Commons were necessary to allow for the manuring of the land by sheep.

There was a significant divide, explicable by the geology and soils, roughly along a line Bury-Ipswich, to the north of which open fields were the norm, and south of which the pattern of smaller irregular fields typical of Essex. Early piecemeal enclosure of strip fields has given rise to long wider fields and many can be dated to the 14th and 15th centuries. A difference of settlement names was also detectable, 'tuns' being commoner on Norfolk clays than in Essex, while 'tyes' predominate in the south. Indeed this division is detectable in other aspects, such as the border between the Iron Age Icenic and Trinovantes, the use of pantiles for roofing in Norfolk rare in south Suffolk and Essex, the frequency of Scandinavian influence on place-names in the north compared to that further south.

The interest generated by this speaker was apparent by the questions posed of him at the conclusion.

James Kemble

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## THE EARLE COLLECTION AT THE SOCIETY OF ANTIQUARIES OF LONDON

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Joseph Sim Earle (1839-1912) was elected a fellow of the LSA in 1893. Though not a native of Essex, he was a keen competitive yachtsman (a member of the Royal Harwich Yacht Club, amongst others). This enthusiasm led to extensive explorations of the Essex and Suffolk coastline in the company of a fellow antiquarian, the Rev Edward Farrer. When in port the two men explored the inland villages and churches, recorded by Earle in watercolour paintings of variable quality. He also collected – somewhat indiscriminately, it would seem – a large number of maps from a variety of sources (one Essex map bears the stamp of the Hull Police Library), as well as an assortment of sundry material such as prints, drawings, visiting cards, newspaper cuttings, brass rubbings and sales catalogues. On his death this collection, together with his library, was left to the LSA. There are 37 boxes relating to Suffolk, and 21 for Essex, each containing about 70 mounted sheets, and though the Suffolk material is better known to researchers, that relating to Essex is of considerable interest. Examples include a manuscript journal of a tour of Suffolk and Essex in 1711 made by Sir James Thornhill, a detailed parish survey of Chigwell dated 1727, and a series of Essex topographical drawings by Charles and Henry Warren made between 1815 and 1817.

Michael Leach

Source:

Mc Hardy, G, 2004 'Joseph Sim Earle, FSA and his Bequest to the Society' in *The Antiquaries Journal* lxxxiv, 399-410

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## THE SINKING OF THE MARY ROSE

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The sinking of the Mary Rose during a battle with the French in the Solent in July 1545 is very familiar. It is generally believed that the disaster occurred during a sharp turn which caused the vessel to heel over and to ship large amounts of water through the open gun ports. Recent palaeopathology on some of the skeletal remains recovered from the wreck have added an interesting extra dimension to this theory. Dental analysis can provide an indication of the long term dietary habits of the individual, and these tests suggest that a large proportion of the crew were of south European origin. It is conjectured that they may have been some of the 600 Spanish soldiers who were shipwrecked off Cornwall six months earlier and subsequently pressed into service in the English army.

Ships of this type, with multiple gun ports close to the water line, required a well disciplined crew able to close the shutters promptly before any manoeuvre that was likely to cause the vessel to list. The suggestion is that the pressed Spanish gun crews, with a poor understanding of English, failed to act quickly enough to prevent the shipping of a catastrophic amount of sea water. This might also explain Admiral George Carew's enigmatic last words, shouted to another ship as he sank, that his men were "knaves I cannot rule".

Michael Leach

Source:  
*The Daily Telegraph*, 1 August 2008

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## THE ESSEX PAMPHILON VIOLIN MAKERS AND DENDROCHRONOLOGY

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In 1924, W. Minet contributed an article to the *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society* on the Pamphilon family. Nicholas Pamphilon, a musical instrument maker of Rickling, bought a house in Little Hadham in 1694, and lived there until his death in 1726. Until the early C19, his house was, very appropriately, known as Fiddler's Croft. In his will, he is described as a violin maker, and names three Pamphilon cousins who were also violin makers – Nicholas and Francis of Little Hadham, and Richard of Clavering. C17 parish register entries show a concentration of Pamphilons in Rickling, Quendon and Clavering and, though the surname does not sound English, J H Round noted that a member of this family, who was hanged for felony, was living in Thaxted in 1306. It is also surprising to find that there is still a Pamphilon listed in the 2008 Chelmsford telephone directory.

However the most noted Pamphilon violin maker was Edward, active in London between 1660 and 1690. Nothing is known about his origins, though with such an unusual surname it seems probable that he came from the Essex family. It is said that his workshop was on old London Bridge, but it may be merely that his instruments were sold there in the premises of John Miller. A. F Hill, an early C20 violin expert, believed that Edward was apprenticed to Thomas Urquhart about 1660, and that he became an itinerant violin seller at country fairs. Some of Edward's instruments have survived, though most, if not all, have been subsequently modified. Makers' labels are highly problematical, often being forged or moved from one instrument to another.

As some of Edward Pamphilon's violins had a very high quality varnish, dealers may have removed labels in order to pass them off as more valuable north Italian instruments, with which they have strong similarities. However there are certain construction techniques unique to the Pamphilon violins, making them recognisable to experts.

A musician friend of mine owns a violin, believed to have been made by Edward Pamphilon, though it has long lost its label, if it ever had one. It had been bought as a Pamphilon by one of his forebears at the end of the C18 when its purchase (and attribution) were noted in a contemporary account book, still in the hands of his family. A recent accident to this violin necessitated some repairs, and the instrument was examined by a musical dendrochronologist, with very interesting results. Most of the body of the violin is made from sycamore or maple, and is unsuitable for dating purposes. However, the front of instrument is usually spruce and, because of the way it was cut to display the radial grain, dendrochronology is useful for dating, and a good database has now been established. It is therefore possible to establish an earliest possible felling date (*terminus post quem*) for the timber from which violins are made (1671 in the case of my friend's instrument). Additionally, comparison of the growth patterns of wood from different instruments provides clues about common sources of timber, and in this case the nearest matches were a violin made by Thomas Urquhart (Edward's alleged erstwhile teacher) in 1690, and two Dutch instruments made at about the same time. This synchronicity has been noted before, and it has been suggested that the wood was imported via the Low Countries, with perhaps the Dutch musical instrument makers getting the first helping of the

best pieces. A similar match has not been found with instruments from this period made in other European countries, suggesting that their spruce came from another source. However, by the early to mid C18, this pattern had changed and English, Dutch and other European instrument makers all appear to have been getting their wood from the same vicinity (possibly the Italian Dolomites).

More information is badly needed on the sources and import routes of spruce in the C17 and C18. Spruce was highly prized for the masts of sailing ships, obtained from cold places where the slow growth of the trees ensured the essential attributes of strength, elasticity and straightness of grain. Similar qualities were required by violin makers for their tone wood, and it is a possibility that the small quantities of wood they needed were obtained as offcuts from shipyards. No comparative dendrochronology exists for contemporary masts which have a much poorer survival rate than violins for obvious reasons! One prime source for masts during this period was the forests of the Dolomites, and modern violin makers still obtain excellent spruce from here.

Any information on spruce imports in the C17 and C18 would be most welcome, and will be passed on to my friend's musical dendrochronologist.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Minet, W., 1924 'The Pamphilons: an Essex Family of Violin Makers' in *EAT*, xvii, 73-82

Round, J.H., 1926 'The Pamphilons' in *EAT*, xviii, 137-8

Dilworth, J. 'Pamphilon, Edward' in *Grove Music Online* [[www.oxfordmusiconline.com:80/subscri](http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com:80/subscri)

ber/article/grove/music/41514 accessed 3/09/08]

Ratcliff, P., 2008 dendrochronology report on Pamphilon violin (unpublished typescript) & personal communications

Department of History, University of Essex, Wivenhoe CO4 3SQ  
([pigurney@essex.ac.uk](mailto:pigurney@essex.ac.uk))

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## MA IN HISTORICAL STUDIES

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The Department of History at the University of Essex at Colchester is offering an MA in Historical Studies tailored especially to meet the needs of part-time learners. Taught in the evening over a minimum of three years, students can choose from an exciting range of modules in early modern and modern British, European and world history, reflecting the expertise of an internationally renowned team of historians.

There are also summer schools held over one weekend each year. Study is by credit accumulation so students can take a break if necessary, and fit the degree round their working and home life. Course leader Dr Peter Gurney said; 'we have run some one-off history lectures for the public this year which had a very enthusiastic response, and this course is the next step. There is a great deal of interest in history and many people would like to study the subject at postgraduate level but aren't able to commit to a daytime course because of family and work commitments. This MA will hopefully help to overcome those hurdles.' The course will appeal particularly to people seeking career enhancement in teaching and other professions, as well as those who simply wish to keep their brain cells active.

Applications from individuals who do not meet standard entry requirements will be given sympathetic consideration. If you wish to find out more about the course please contact Dr Peter Gurney in the

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## HUMPTY DUMPTY SAT ON THE WALL AT COLCHESTER

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A new book by Albert Jack on the origins of nursery rhymes suggests a close link between the ill-fated egg and Colchester. According to the author, Humpty Dumpty was the name of a cannon which was used by the Royalists during the siege of Colchester in 1648, and was mounted on the church tower of St Mary at the Walls. The gunner, One-Eyed Thompson, managed to bombard the besieging Parliamentary troops for several weeks until the latter scored a direct hit on the church tower, and the cannon fell down outside the town walls to be embedded in the marshy ground outside. Subsequent attempts by the 'all King's horses and all the King's men' to retrieve the cannon were successfully repulsed by the besiegers. The familiar verses of the nursery rhyme are preceded by two rarely-quoted (and rather ill-scanning) stanzas:

In sixteen hundred and forty eight  
When England suffered the pains of  
state

The Roundheads laid siege to  
Colchester Town  
Where the King's men still fought for the  
Crown

There One-Eyed Thompson stood on the  
wall

A gunner of deadliest aim of all  
From St Mary's tower his cannon he  
fired

Humpty Dumpty was its name.

Morant, in his History of Colchester, confirms the broad details of this

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## ESSEX VCH IN CRISIS – A CENTURY AGO

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account, in particular the damage inflicted on the Parliamentary forces by a brass saker which was mounted on the bell frame of St Mary's church, and was operated by a one-eyed gunner. The tower came under repeated attack, but the gunner had wisely posted a skilled observer who was able to direct his fire at the Parliamentary attackers with such effect that they were forced to desist. It was only later that heavier artillery, in the form of two demi-cannons and two culverins, were successfully deployed at St John's Green. These were presumably safely out of range of the saker (which was a smaller gun), and the besiegers were finally able to silence both the one-eyed gunner and his piece. The church lay in ruins until being rebuilt, in a slightly different position in the churchyard, in 1713; the tower itself was repaired later, the upper part being rebuilt in brick. Morant would have had a particular interest in this event as he was rector of the parish from 1738.

Curiously the Oxford English Dictionary gives the earliest recorded use of humpty dumpty as 1698 and defines it as a) a drink; ale boiled with brandy b) a dumpy hump-shouldered person. According to Albert Jack, the association of the name with an egg was an invention of Lewis Carroll, and his illustrator, John Tenniel, in *Through the Looking Glass* which was published in 1871.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Jack, A., 2008 *Pop goes the Weasel: the Secret Meanings of Nursery Rhymes*, Allen Lane

Morant, P., 1748 *History and Antiquities of Colchester*, London

Shorter Oxford English Dictionary (1973 edition)

The General Meeting of the Essex Archaeological Society was held on 23 April 1908 in Colchester Castle. After the normal business, a paper by JH Round was read (in his unavoidable absence) on the plans for publishing volume III of the *Victoria County History of Essex*. This was to be in two parts. The first section would complete the series of general articles on the county published in volumes I and II, including in particular Dr Haverfield's account of Roman Essex. He, was, however, too busy to provide more than an overview of this subject, and detailed information from local sources would be essential to provide the details. It was also intended that this section should bring up to date all the manorial descents in the county since Philip Morant's time, and Round appealed for the necessary information from antiquaries, landowners, solicitors, land agents and anyone else able to assist. It was hoped that press publicity might also be helpful in eliciting this information.

The second part of volume III would cover the three hundreds of Lexden, Witham and Chelmsford, together with the town of Colchester itself. Round appealed for the loan of estate maps, as well as other sources of information for the relevant parishes. He was also keen to recruit local historians to correct the proof sheets of the parish histories of the areas to be covered, and he emphasized the vital need for conciseness, in order to produce a volume worthy of the county.

By modern standards this would seem to be a hopelessly ambitious target for a single volume. Ultimately, Colchester required a whole volume to itself, and Lexden hundred was only partially

covered by another. Ray Powell, in his biography of JH Round, provides the background to Round's impassioned plea for local involvement in the production of volume III. At that time the VCH was centralised, and the parish histories were written by its own staff in London, largely based on the printed calendars of public records. Very little use was made of local records, or local informants, and VCH staff were not expected to visit the parishes that they were writing up. By the autumn of 1907 Round, having seen some of the drafts prepared for the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire volumes, began to have serious concerns about the limitations of this approach. Though his paper at the EAS General Meeting had asked for help in bringing the manorial descents up to date, he had already expressed grave doubts about the benefits of this, other than to 'the occasional lawyer', and felt that it would make very dull reading.

By the end of 1907, he had received from the VCH the first drafts of parish histories for the hundred of Clavering. He was highly critical of these, commenting that they 'might have been written in Berlin with the aid of a map'. Ray Powell notes that, though this may have been an unkind swipe at Miss Niemeyer, the staff assistant responsible, his real target was William Page, the general editor, whose policy was the swift and centralised production of the county volumes. An astonishing 74 volumes were produced in the 15 years up to 1914. Though Page did make some concessions to Round's criticisms, the financial position of the organisation deteriorated rapidly during 1908 and, by the end of the year, work on most counties (including Essex) had ceased.

In spite of this, Round remained enthusiastic about restarting the Essex VCH and as late as 1925, towards the

end of his life, he wrote to Page suggesting possible sources of private donations from Essex families. Nothing came of this, and it was not until 1951 that the Essex VCH was reborn, thanks to the establishment of an energetic county committee and the generous support of local authorities. The long delayed volume III finally appeared in 1963, and was devoted to Roman Essex. It included a large amount of new material that had come to light since Dr Haverfield's death in 1919; his notes, however, were not wasted and were of assistance to the compilers of the volume. Volume IV had appeared seven years previously, edited by Ray Powell and incorporating all of Round's suggestions, including the use of a wide range of local sources and local volunteers.

Michael Leach

Sources:

EAS General Meeting, 1908  
*Transactions of Essex Archaeological Society*, n.s. x, 358-9

Powell, W R (ed), 1963 *Victoria County History of Essex*, iii, introduction xv, OUP  
Powell, W R, 2001 *John Horace Round, Historian and Gentleman of Essex*, 159-164, ERO

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## W. RAYMOND POWELL (1920-2008)

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Members will be deeply saddened to learn of the death in July of Ray Powell, former editor of the Essex VCH, and a very great friend of this Society. Though a mediaevalist by training, his interests covered the entire compass of historical research.

He was born in Somerset, son of a Baptist minister whose missionary work took the family to South Africa in Ray's

early years. On the death of his mother, his father returned to England and remarried, providing Ray with some step-siblings – perhaps the root his life-long love of children. He went to Kingswood School, Exeter and obtained a place at Merton College, Oxford to read history. However World War II intervened and he volunteered for the RAF, training as a radar operator and seeing service in West Africa. He returned to Oxford in 1945, graduating in 1947 and proceeding to a DLit thesis. He joined the VCH in 1949 and was appointed editor of the Essex VCH (which had been in the doldrums for several decades) in 1951. His energy had very productive results, with volume IV published in 1956, the first bibliography in 1959, and volume III (on Roman Essex, but including an index to volumes I and II) in 1963. All this was done on the financial shoestring, requiring the renegotiation of grants every year and the recruitment of a number of voluntary helpers. Only later was some security provided by support from ECC. Meanwhile his family grew, and he proved to be a calm, kind, sympathetic father who engaged with all aspects of family life at a time when that was much less usual than now. Further VCH volumes were published (six, plus two bibliographic volumes by the time he retired) and his work on metropolitan Essex, for the earlier VCHs, had led to a strong interest in Keir Hardie. His determination and stoicism saw him through an early heart attack, and later major cardiac surgery. After retirement he was busier than ever, publishing numerous articles, as well as a major biography of the noted acerbic mediaeval historian, JH Round, in whom he had long had a deep interest. He had previously edited, for the Society's *Transactions*, a number of articles which had remained unpublished at Round's

death. In the last weeks of his life, Ray was busy editing letters from Round's cousin, written from the First World War trenches. This article will be published in the *Transactions*.

Ray was President of this Society from 1987 to 1990, and remained active on Council, on the Library sub-committee and as a trustee. Even after his exile to Norwich, he continued to write on various aspects of Essex history and remained a very loyal supporter of everything that the Society stands for. He made numerous behind-the-scenes contributions – by providing encouragement, practical and financial support, by recruiting officers to serve on Council, and by generally acting as a custodian of the continuing well-being of the Society. He was a kind, supportive and generous friend to all who knew him, and he will be deeply missed.

It is intended to publish a fuller obituary in the Society's *Transactions* (volume 39) which will be dedicated to him.

Michael Leach

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## ESSEX FROM ELSEWHERE

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There are two matters of Essex interest in the recent Ancient Monuments Society newsletter. Firstly, a start has been made on the underpinning of the chancel of Mundon church, though the job is so extensive that, for funding reasons, it will be done in two phases. The building, in the hands of the Friends of Friendless Churches, will remain closed to the public for some time yet. Secondly, a new use has been found for the garrison church at Colchester barracks. This spartan and unusual building of 1865, timber-framed and weather-boarded, is to be converted into an Orthodox church

and will be enhanced with gilding and a full length iconostasis.

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## HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND

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This fund continues to make grants to projects great and small. Major beneficiaries in the recent round were the Mary Rose Museum Project in Portsmouth, and the continuing restoration (after last year's disastrous fire) of the Cutty Sark at Greenwich. Several smaller, but not insignificant, Essex projects have benefited. A grant of £50,000 was awarded to carry out essential repairs to the Electric Palace Cinema in Harwich. This was built in 1911 and is one of the oldest purpose-built cinemas in the country. It re-opened as a cinema in 1981, after much effort and campaigning by a local trust. A grant of £990,000 was made for the creation of a new museum within one of the remaining sections of the old Romford Brewery. And Saffron Walden museum has also benefited from a grant of £976,500 to build an outstore and resource centre on the outskirts of the town.

Michael Leach

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## THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT OF ESSEX; FROM EARLIEST TIMES TO THE 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY

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This conference took place in the ERO from 19 to 21 September and was the third to be organised by the county council on recent developments in archaeology. The first took place in 1978 at Clacton<sup>1</sup>, the second in 1993 at Writtle<sup>2</sup>, and both proved to be

invaluable for sharing new ideas and discoveries about the county's past. The third conference this year followed the excellent precedents of the previous two, and the details will be published in a full report in due course.

It is impossible in a brief report to do anything like justice to the wide range of papers that were read and I will only touch on two matters which particularly caught my attention.

The first is the immense progress that has been made in our understanding of the very distant past, known only from findings of worked flint and fossil remains. The earlier idea of 'an Ice Age' has been replaced by one of a multiple series of ice ages, alternating with a semi-tropical climate. During this period, Britain was repeatedly colonised in the interglacial periods, and then abandoned in the face of the advancing ice. It was a climate of extremes, ranging from hippopotamuses roaming in the Home Counties in the interglacials, to icebergs drifting as far south as Portugal when the ice cap covered northern Europe. In a world very different from our own, much of what is now the North Sea formed a land bridge between Britain and the continent. Research has resulted in a much better understanding of the geological consequences of this repeated climatic turmoil, and its effect on the movement and re-deposition of human artefacts and fossil bones. Because of its rich deposits of gravel deposited sequentially by each Ice Age, Essex archaeology is in the forefront of this new understanding of the Palaeolithic and Pleistocene periods. Dating the different phases of this geological turmoil has been possible from the study of fossil animal remains, combined with a better understanding of the timescale of evolutionary change. Voles are particularly good news here – being very fast breeders, the evolving

changes in their skeletons take place at a predictable rate and has proved invaluable for dating different deposits.

Our knowledge of this very remote period has also been assisted by the changing pattern of gravel extraction by the construction industry. Inland quarrying has become increasingly difficult due to the shortage of suitable sites, and contractors have turned to dredging gravel off the bed of the North Sea. From an archaeological point of view, this is a very destructive process but it has produced much evidence of human occupation of what is now the sea bed, in the form of large numbers of worked flint tools spotted by sharp-eyed archaeologists working under difficult conditions in this country and in Holland. The pressure to find new sources of oil has also greatly expanded the understanding of the Mesolithic landscape of the submerged lands of the North Sea. Seismic surveys of the sea floor have revealed the complex patterns of a vast estuary, interspersed with shallow lakes and salt domes. Further information has come from the erosion of the Essex coast which has exposed ancient features, such as the remains of forests killed by saline water-logging.

The second matter which caught my attention was also related to coastal archaeology. With climate change, rising sea levels, the steady sinking of the south east and the increasing necessity for 'managed retreat', coastal archaeology is under constant threat. Though we now understand the process of prehistoric and Roman salt extraction (vitaly important for the preservation of food) reflected by the 'red hills', little is known about the later techniques of production by filtration and concentration which has left large mud mounds (known as 'sleaching mounds'). The vast coastal fish traps, still visible at very low tides, have been dated to between 650 to 850

AD, after which they seem to have been abandoned for reasons which are not understood. Were they replaced by smaller traps that have not survived? Were they so efficient that they depleted coastal fish stocks? Did improved boat building make off-shore fishing a more economic option? Did Viking raids result in a withdrawal of population or discourage monastic involvement? It might have been a combination of any (or none) of these factors.

Development imposes another threat to coastal archaeology. Nuclear generation at Bradwell is likely to be expanded and this part of the coast will have to be permanently protected from erosion, with consequences elsewhere. Meanwhile developments at Shell Haven (as well as other ports) will require detailed surveys of the underwater landscapes before their destruction. Managed retreat (the deliberate destruction of sea walls to create new saltmarsh) will threaten various sites, but will also bring opportunities for research. At Wallasea Island, for example, it should be possible to gain much information on the soil profile changes and the formation of new saltmarsh if the sea is allowed to flood areas of arable farmland.

The next conference should be in 2023. What major shifts in our understanding of the past will be reported then?

Michael Leach

<sup>1</sup> published in 1980 as *Archaeology in Essex to AD 1500*, edited by David Buckley

<sup>2</sup> published in 1996 as *The Archaeology of Essex*, edited by Owen Bedwin

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## MORE STRAW

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Regular readers may recall in the newsletter a year ago I mentioned that the works of SL Bensusan contained an

interesting account of an Essex farm worker using straw to enhance the weather proofing of his clothes in a similar way to the prehistoric 'Ice Man' whose remains were recovered from an alpine glacier. Recently rereading the Thomas Hardy novel 'Under the Greenwood Tree' I noticed that members of the Mellstock Quire do exactly the same in preparation for going out carol singing on Christmas Eve '...a thin fleece of snow having fallen since the early evening, those who had no leggings went to the stable and wound wisps of hay round their ankles to keep the insidious flakes from the interior of their boots.' Perhaps since the adoption of farming down to the 20th century people had recourse to the weather proofing and insulating properties of hay and straw when venturing out into the winter cold.

Nigel Brown

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## **ST NICHOLAS'S CHAPEL, COGGESHALL – AN INTERESTING DILEMMA**

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This was built as the gatehouse chapel to Coggeshall abbey in about 1225, and has been described by Warwick Rodwell as the finest piece of Early English brickwork in England. After the dissolution, it was adapted for use as a barn by making a large opening for wagons in the south wall. This was closed in the restoration of 1863 when a new south door was inserted. There was a further restoration in 1897. During one of these restorations, three crude and visually intrusive square brick piers were built to support the arches of the three sedilia. Recently the parish has instructed an architect to improve the appearance of this very inelegant repair. This poses an interesting dilemma.

Though the repair, in large pale mottled Victorian bricks, is certainly very unsympathetic to the modern eye, there are no structural or conservation problems which require attention. The C19 brick piers are very much part of the history of the building's rescue from agricultural use. There is no surviving evidence to show how the arches were originally supported, so that any plan for reconstruction would be highly conjectural. It is obviously important that any new alterations should be less visually intrusive than the Victorian repairs. One proposal is to rebuild the piers in a more appropriate thin red brick, with column bases and capitals in stone based on contemporary examples in Canterbury cathedral. The brick arches that they would support are also very damaged and largely incomplete, and were probably originally finished in lime plaster. Placing perfectly formed new columns beneath, with stone capitals and bases, might look as incongruous as the Victorian repair. There is also a risk that the removal of the existing brick piers could damage parts of the original structure to which they are attached. A less invasive solution might be simply to reduce the visual impact of the Victorian brickwork with a coat of limewash. It would seem that a very careful evaluation is needed before any work is done, particularly as there are no pressing structural problems to be remedied. Negotiations to find a satisfactory solution are continuing.

Michael Leach

Sources:

*Cornerstone* (the magazine of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) vol 29, no. 3, 2008

Bettley, J & Pevsner N, 2007 *The Buildings of England: Essex*, Yale University Press

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**HISTORICAL  
ASSOCIATION, ESSEX  
BRANCH PROGRAMME  
2009**

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All lectures are in Committee Room 1,  
County Hall, Chelmsford.

*Members and visitors are asked to arrive  
15 minutes before the meeting in order  
to be escorted to the lecture room.*

Sat. 7 Feb. 2.30 The Horses of  
Venice (illustrated)

Mr Charles Freeman FSA, historian of  
the Ancient World

Sat. 7 Mar. 2.30pm Parish Constables  
versus Police Constables?

Dr Maureen Scollan, Chairman, Friends  
of Historic Essex, and former police  
officer

Fri. 3 Apr. 7.30pm The Essex Journal:  
Past, Present and Future  
Mr Neil Wiffen, Essex Record Office.

The branch is pleased to announce that  
Dr Paul Rusiecki, our Programme  
Secretary, is having his book published  
by the Essex Record Office in October.  
Its title is *The Impact of Catastrophe: the  
People of Essex and the First World  
War.*

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**WANTED**

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I am looking for an index for the  
Society's *Transactions* volume xvii,  
second series. If anyone has a spare for  
sale, please let me know on 01277  
363106 or [leach1939@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:leach1939@yahoo.co.uk)

Michael Leach

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Enquiries about delayed or missing publications and about the supply of recent back numbers should be addressed to the Secretary.

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2007 the projected value of the fund stands at £41,048.

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 156

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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Spring 2009

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 157

SPRING 2009

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**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 3 JULY 2009**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

## Cover illustration:

An old sketch of Mountnessing Windmill. From 'discover Mountnessing mill' ECC 2007

"From being a friendly focus of village life, the wind-mill has dwindled to an 'ancient monument'". These words were written by C. Henry Warren in 1940 in his book, 'Corn Country'. The miller at Mountnessing in Essex – the last of four generations of the Agnis family – had ceased business only a few years earlier. It is a post mill, built in 1807, replacing an earlier one on the same site. Chapman and Andre's map of 1777 has a mill mound but no windmill. Ownership was passed to Mountnessing Parish Council in 1937. Such was its importance that in 1947 the mill was given Grade II listed building status. However a lightning strike a few years later damaged one sail and the building sank towards dereliction (see illustration c1950). Its fortunes changed in 1975 with the formation of the 'Friends of Mountnessing Windmill' and an ambitious project of restoration began in 1979 which lasted four years. The windmill was officially opened to the public in April 1984 and it remains a fine example of village industrial past. The mill is open to the public during the summer on the third Sunday in the month.

Andrew Smith

The Society's programme includes a visit to Mountnessing Mill on Saturday 4 July.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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I commence this Spring message by paying tribute to two long-standing and prominent members of our Society who sadly passed away in January.

Paul Buxton died of pneumonia at Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow on 5th January at the age of 83. Paul was descended from Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, 1<sup>st</sup> Baronet, (1786-1845), a Member of Parliament, social reformer and eventually the sole owner of a brewery (Truman, Hanbury, Buxton & Co.). The Buxton family are steeped in Essex history, especially in the Coggeshall area and in the western regions of our county (the family seat was at Woodredon, Upshire). Paul, following service in the Coldstream Guards during World War II and graduation from Balliol College, Oxford, entered the diplomatic service with appointments in India and Guatemala. He joined the Society in 1961 at the conclusion of his father's term as President. Indeed, the recent Index (volumes 1 to 20 of the Third Series of *Transactions*) was published with the financial assistance of the Denis Buxton Trust and in memory of his father, Denis A. J. Buxton, J.P., D.L., M.A., F.S.A. (1895-1964). The cover appropriately features an early 19<sup>th</sup> century engraving of Paul's home in Chipping Ongar. Paul and his wife Margaret (an eminent historian), were very keen supporters of the Society, especially deriving considerable enjoyment from the meetings programme. The funeral took place on 28<sup>th</sup> January at the parish church in Chipping Ongar where the Society's representation included Michael Leach, Stan Newens and Jennifer Ward.

Nancy Edwards (née Briggs) was tragically killed a few hundred yards from her home in Chelmsford as a result of a

road accident on 23<sup>rd</sup> January at the age of 79. Nancy adopted Essex as her county in 1953 following graduation from St Anne's College at Oxford and subsequent training as an archivist at the Bodleian Library. She joined the staff of Dr. F. G. 'Derick' Emmison as Assistant Supervisor and served at the Essex Record Office until her retirement as Supervisor of the Search Room in 1987. Nancy became a member of the Society in 1960 and, subsequently, a frequent member of Council serving on the Library and Programme Committees with distinction over a considerable period of time. Indeed, I was highly honoured when she accepted an invitation to be my guest at a most enjoyable and well organised Morant Lunch held last October at the "Old Ship", Heybridge. A thanksgiving for Nancy's life was held on 25<sup>th</sup> February at Chelmsford Cathedral where the Society was extremely well represented. A more extensive appreciation of Paul Buxton and Nancy Briggs will be published in the *Transactions*.

Volume 38 of our flagship publication will be dispatched during the course of this month. I mentioned in the last newsletter that a change of printers had resulted in a substantial reduction in costs. I am, therefore, delighted to be able to report that some of these economies have the ploughed back enabling the introduction of colour. I am most grateful to our Editor, Dr Chris Starr, who deserves full credit for this initiative and for his diligence in seeing another worthy issue through the press. Once again, Chris was ably assisted by Helen Walker and I am thrilled to be able to report that this highly valuable contribution has been officially recognised with her appointment as Deputy Editor. By way of background, Helen is an archaeologist who commenced her career as a volunteer digger on a multi-period site at

North Shoebury. After working on various excavations around the country she worked on pottery and other finds from sites at Winchester, Carmarthen (West Wales) and for the Wessex unit before joining the team at Essex County Council in 1985 as a medieval and post-medieval pottery specialist. Her most recent publication is a monograph concerned with the Harlow pottery industries which she co-authored with Wally Davey.

As previously advised, a "List of Members" has been produced to accompany the *Transactions*. The response to my appeal in the Winter Newsletter was most encouraging and I am extremely grateful to all who responded. I hope that you will approve of the outcome! Please could I ask you to carefully check your entry and advise me ([martinstuchfield@btconnect.com](mailto:martinstuchfield@btconnect.com) or by post at Lowe Hill House, Stratford St Mary, Suffolk CO7 6JX) of any corrections or amendments. **I do wish to draw your attention to the "health warning" printed on the inside front cover. Please can I also take this opportunity to assure you that copies of the membership list have not been mailed to the institutional members in order to ensure that this document is not placed at risk of display in a public place.**

I am finding it extremely difficult to come to terms with the fact that my first and a most enjoyable year as President is rapidly approaching a close. This conveniently enables me to draw your attention to the Annual General Meeting to be held on **Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> June** in the Marriage Feast Room at Matching. This venue, with the church as a backdrop, constitutes one of the most evocative of Essex scenes. This elicits many happy cycling memories as a teenager which must have given my parents considerable cause for anxiety! Anne

Padfield and Alan Bayford will bring the history of this wonderful 15<sup>th</sup> century building to life. I am also delighted to report that the church contains a fine 17<sup>th</sup> century brass! I am looking forward to the occasion with relish. Why not join us - you will be assured of a warm welcome and considerably more besides.

H Martin Stuchfield

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## ENQUIRIES RECEIVED BY E-MAIL

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Most members will know that the Society has a website, kindly hosted by the University of Essex [www.essex.ac.uk/history/esah](http://www.essex.ac.uk/history/esah). This provides my e-mail address and, as a result, I receive a steady flow of enquiries. These come in all shapes and forms. The most common are requests from potential volunteers looking for archaeological digs - most, as far as I can tell, are from youngsters. Unfortunately the Society has no provision for such enthusiasts, and I can only refer them to their nearest archaeological group. Less frequent are enquiries about back numbers of *Essex Archaeology & History*, or about membership of ESAH.

From time to time there are enquiries from individuals with specific interests. These are often family historians wanting to know about particular Essex places or Essex ancestors. Some, from overseas, clearly hope I will do their work for them. I usually make a quick check of the indexes that I have available at home (such as Morant, the RCHM and the VCH bibliographies) and provide them with possible sources of relevant information. It is most unusual to receive any thanks for these suggestions - clearly I disappoint most of these enquirers!

Another special interest group is those opposing a local planning application who are seeking specific information about a particular building or landscape. These are often difficult to answer without local knowledge, but I can usually suggest possible sources such as libraries or statutory authorities. I often receive grateful replies and, sometimes, useful additional information. Recently there was an unprecedented request from a firm of structural engineers who were dealing with a subsidence problem on an old property. They discovered that an excavation in the back garden had been written up in *Essex Archaeology & History* in the 1970s, and they wanted a copy of the relevant back number in the hope that there might be some useful trench sections. Having cautiously established that the Society could not be held liable for undermining the building, I supplied photocopies as the relevant volume was out of stock. Two sections did provide useful information about the soil in the back garden as well as the presence, near the house, of a deep post-dissolution robber trench on the site of the monastic boundary wall – clearly not ESAH's responsibility!

Finally there are a few very eccentric enquiries which I usually leave unanswered. However the strangest of these caused me some anxiety. The correspondent explained that he was investigating extra-terrestrial visitors, and that he had uncovered in his garden the top of a large green metallic object with fins. He was convinced that this was a buried spacecraft and was very keen that ESAH should come and excavate. Initially I dismissed him as another crank but then had a rather disturbed night, dogged by the thought that he might have uncovered the top of an unexploded bomb. The next day, with some trepidation, I phoned the police to

explain my concern. I detected a certain patient weariness in the voice that answered me, and suspected that I had been identified as yet another time waster. I heard nothing more from the police, but did feel relief when the days passed with no reports of an unexpected explosion in an Essex coastal town, or a summons for wasting police time!

My impression is that the website is a useful window for the Society. It has certainly attracted a number of new members, as well as several articles for the Newsletter and for *Essex Archaeology & History*. Suggestions for its improvement are always most welcome from members (and other users).

Michael Leach

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## JOINT MEETINGS WITH OTHER SOCIETIES

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There is, perhaps, a tendency for county societies to be insular and never to stray beyond their borders. However there are occasional welcome exceptions, and one came to light recently in a slim pamphlet published by our sister society in Cambridgeshire in 1889. On Friday May 24, thirty members of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society boarded a special saloon carriage, attached to an ordinary train and, after a 30 minute journey, arrived at Bartlow station at 2.15pm. They joined the Essex Archaeological Society in the school house at Bartlow, and the meeting was presided over by the Essex Society's president, G A Lowndes. The Rev. Dr H B Swete, rector of Ashdon, read a paper about the site of the battle of Assandun in Essex, where Cnut defeated Eadmund in 1016 and (according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle) 'all the nobility of the English race was then destroyed'. In 1020, King

Cnut and Archbishop Wulstan consecrated a new Minster at Assandun, 'built of stone and lime for the men who there were slain'. Ashdon and Ashingdon still contest the doubtful honour of being the site of this brutal battle though, in 1889, Mr Swete (not surprisingly, as the rector) favoured his own parish. His paper was published in full in volume 4 of our Transactions (Second Series).

The meeting then adjourned to the Bartlow Hills where Prof. Hughes talked about mounds, place names and the various discoveries made by the series of excavations in the 1830s carried out by John Gage on behalf of Viscount Maynard. These digs had clearly attracted a lot of interest at the university, as in both 1838 and 1840, Adam Sedgewick (professor of geology), William Whewell (professor of mineralogy) and John Henslow (professor of botany, and formerly tutor to Charles Darwin) all made day visits. The pamphlet prints a light-hearted letter of 1840 from Sedgewick to a young relative, describing some of the finds, and including a drawing showing a hobbit-like 'new door' in the base of the largest mound. This was one of the tunnels made by the archaeologists, and was probably responsible for the later partial subsidence of the top of the mound.

The next destination was the church at Hadstock (where the door, then believed to have been covered with the skin of a Dane, was admired) and a paper on the history of the parish was read. The meeting moved to the rectory for afternoon tea, and inspected the church plate and the registers. Then they drove back to Bartlow, to be reinforced with a more substantial tea at the Three Hills inn, and a visit to Bartlow church where another paper was read. The 7.41pm train delivered the Cambridge visitors back to the university town at 8.30pm.

There is no report of how the Essex members found their way home, but doubtless many would have also arrived and departed by train

It is interesting to note that this account was not published in the Cambridge society's transactions, but was reprinted from the detailed report which had appeared in two separate editions of the *Cambridge Chronicle*.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Papers read at a Joint Meeting of the Essex Archaeological & Cambridge Antiquarian Society (reprinted from the *Cambridge Chronicle* of 31 May & 7 June 1889)

Powell, W R (ed), 1963 *Victoria County History of Essex*, iii, 39-43

Swete, H B, 1889 'Identification of Assanduna with Ashdon' in *EAT*, iv, 5 et seq

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## ESSEX SEEN FROM ELSEWHERE

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The Autumn 2008 Newsletter of the Ancient Monuments Society has a few notes relevant to Essex.

- a) The first stage of work on the serious subsidence of the chancel of Mundon church (now in the care of the Friends of Friendless Churches) has been completed at a cost of nearly £106,000. However further work remains to be done.
- b) Two silver candlesticks and a cross, commissioned in about 1910 for a church in Ingleby Road in Ilford (destroyed by bombing in WWII) have been purchased for the parish church of Great Barrington in Gloucestershire.
- c) Colchester garrison church in Military Road is to be adapted as a place of worship for the Russian Orthodox Community.
- d) Some good news for rural communities beset by loss of shops,

post offices and services generally; the vestry of St Giles church at Langford has been converted into a new village shop, replacing the last one which closed over 20 years ago. Incidentally, the C12 church, much restored in the C19, is remarkable for having a surviving apse at the west end.

Michael Leach

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## **BADYNGHAMS, GREAT WALTHAM – A TALE OF TWO RESTORATIONS**

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An article in *Cornerstone*, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings magazine, discusses the complex problems facing the restorers of this much-modified mediaeval building. This was originally 'H' shaped, of which only the east wings survived into the C20. It was described as 'a range of three tenements' by the RCHM in 1921. A modest photograph in the Essex volume shows that the space between the east wings had been filled in with a shop front and sash-windowed accommodation above. The cross wings had gothic windows in the gable ends, and the whole frontage was plastered, or painted white. Three spectacularly tall brick chimney stacks dominated the building and were the only external manifestations of its age and status.

In the 1960s all these later accretions were cleared away (including the infilling of the courtyard). The timber frame was exposed externally, and all the C18 windows were removed and replaced with Tudor leaded lights. Cement mortar, decorated with an impermeable plastic paint, was used to infill the newly exposed timber frame.

This treatment of timber frame walls, common in the 1960s, frequently causes serious trouble. Movement of the timber

causes small cracks in the rigid infill, allowing water penetration which is unable to dry out due to the impermeable nature of the cement mortar and the modern paint. Forty years on, this timber frame, which had survived intact for 500 years, was showing serious signs of decay. Some panels were breaking away, and there was also evidence of damp penetration inside the house. It was clear that major repairs would be required.

Three options were considered. Examination of the external timbers showed numerous nail holes, as well as fragments of surviving lime plaster under the eaves, indicating that the whole exterior had, at one time, been protected by a lath and plaster skin. The first option was to cover the exposed frame with a new layer of lath and plaster, but the owner was unhappy about such a radical change to the appearance of his house. The second option was to remove the cement infill, to replace it with lime plaster and then to lime wash the whole (including the timber frame). The third option was the same, apart from leaving the timber frame unpainted. Both the first and the second options were chosen for different frontages. The first task was the exploratory removal of a cement panel in order to assess the problems likely to be encountered. This revealed a further complication; beneath the cement render, most of the timber frame had been infilled with breeze block or new brick during the 1960s restoration. There were concerns about whether the frame was capable of taking the additional load. Removal of the infill was considered, but this would have caused considerable disruption to the interior of the house. Careful examination of the frame showed no sign of movement over the last forty years. It was decided to reduce the thickness of the modern breeze block

infill in order to reduce the weight, as well as to enable the insertion of sheep's wool insulation under the battens for the external lime plaster. The discovery of death watch beetle, as well as an extensive area of rot, necessitated the demolition and rebuilding of the north-west corner of the building. After all the necessary repairs, the exterior was plastered with three coats of lime putty mixed with copious quantities of animal hair. Spalled bricks in the immensely tall chimneys were replaced, and other essential external repairs and maintenance were done while the scaffolding was in place.

Judging from the photograph, the appearance of the restored building belies all the changes which have been made to it over the last 200 years. Even the brick gable ends show no signs of the gothick windows which had been punched through, and were so obvious in early C20 photographs.

Michael Leach

Sources:

*Cornerstone* vol 29, iv, 2008

RCHM, 1921 *Essex*, ii, facing p.129

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## PREHISTORY, GIANTS AND ANTIQUARIES

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Much of our shared interest centres on trying to make sense of the enigmas presented by the fragmentary evidence from the past. It is interesting, in this centenary year of Charles Darwin, to see how earlier thinkers - dating back to the monk chronicler, Ralph of Coggeshall, in the early C13 - struggled to interpret the puzzling faunal remains from the past that were being turned up by human activity and by coastal erosion. William Camden in 1607 (in his *Britannia*) noted: 'From Colchester, the shore thrusts itself

out in a vast way, to Nesse-point.....What was once found hereabouts, let Ralph de Coggeshal tell you, who wrote 350 years ago. *In the time of King Richard, on the sea-shore, in a Village call'd Edulfinesse, were found two teeth of a Giant, of such prodigious bigness, that two hundred of such teeth as men ordinarily have now, might be cut out of one of them. These I saw at Cogshal, and handled with great admiration.* Another, I know not what Gigantick relique, was dug up near this place in Queen Elizabeth, by the noble R. Candish. Nor shall I deny that there have been men of such extraordinary bulk and strength, as to be accounted Prodigies; whom God (as St Austin tells us) produc'd in the World, to show that comeliness of body and largeness of stature, were not to be esteemed among the good things, because they were common to the Wicked, with the Virtuous and Religious. Yet we may justly suspect, what Suetonius hath observ'd, that the vast joints and members of great beasts, dug up in other countries, and in this Kingdom too, have been called and reputed the bones of Giants.'

A century later (in Bishop Gibson's revision of Camden's *Britannia*) the religious significance of these relics, and the acceptance of the erstwhile existence of giants, had been replaced by a scientific and historical interpretation. In the summer of 1701, the rector of Wrabness, Rev. Robert Rich, sent off some newly discovered bones to John Luffkin, a member of the Royal Society of London, and to Dr Samuel Dale of Braintree, physician, botanist and antiquary. The bones had been found during gravel digging, some 15 or 16 feet below ground level. The two men had different views (or possibly were sent bones from different animals) – Dale considered that they were whale bones "from the thickness, shortness

and largeness of them”, while Luffkin thought that they were from elephants which, he presumed, had been brought over by the emperor Claudius in his invasion of Britain. Anyone familiar with Samuel Dale’s edition of Silas Taylor’s *History of Harwich* will know that the problem of explaining the presence of marine fossils well above sea level, and a long way inland, was exercising the natural philosophers of the time. Some felt that, as fossil shells bore no resemblance to any living species, they were merely artefacts caused by geological processes. Others thought that they were living organisms which had been deposited after the turmoil of Noah’s Flood. Both Dr John Woodward, a distinguished doctor, antiquarian and professor of physic at Gresham College, and Rev. Adam Buddle, the Essex botanist, had been collecting marine fossils in the Harwich area. Woodward himself firmly ascribed to the ‘antediluvian deposition theory’.

Philip Morant wrote about the discovery of elephant bones near Harwich, he himself having picked up a tooth weighing about 7 pounds. He reported that such finds were commonly thought to be from giants. However he added that naturalists considered them to have been buried, if not during Noah’s Flood, then at a time when “the earth suffered some great alteration in its surface”. He himself seems to have been aware of the stratification of some of the finds, and noted the association of some of them with Roman deposits, leading him to agree with Luffkin that they were probably animals brought over in 43AD. There have been C20 finds from coastal erosion at or near the same site, and these are now recognised as bones from the Ipswichian interglacial of about 120,000 years ago. The species represented included straight tusked elephant, mammoth, bison,

hippopotamus, red deer and whale. It would seem that both Dale and Luffkin had come to very reasonable conclusions about the species represented, but the latter could have had no idea of the immensity of the prehistoric timescale, and therefore came to his understandable, but incorrect, conclusion about their Roman origin.

Michael Leach

Sources:

- Camden, W. (rev. Gibson, E.), 1722 *Britannia*, London, 423  
*Essex Field Club Newsletter*, xxi, May 1997, 4  
 Kemble, J., 2001 *Prehistoric & Roman Essex*, Tempus, 163  
 Morant, P., 1768 *History of Essex*, ii, 502  
 Taylor, S. & Dale, S., 1732 *History & Antiquities of Harwich & Dovercourt*, London, 273-326

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## LOCAL HISTORY IN BRITAIN AFTER HOSKINS

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This conference, from 9 to 12 July 2009, is the result of collaboration between the Centre for English Local History (University of Leicester) and the British Association for Local History. It aims to bring together local historians of all kinds – including academics, research students, and members of local history societies – to discuss eight themes in local history. Sixty papers are planned over the three days, and there will be excursions, receptions and plenary lectures. The aim is to remember W.G. Hoskin’s major contributions to the study of local history as an academic discipline, to survey the current state of the subject, and to look forward to new developments. It will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the publication of Hoskin’s *Local History in England*.

Information is available from the local history website at Leicester, [www.le.ac.uk/elh](http://www.le.ac.uk/elh) or from Dr Christopher Dyer, Centre for English Local History, University of Leicester, 5 Salisbury Road, Leicester, LE1 7QR

And thirdly his thesis was for M.Litt. (not D.Lit.). We apologise for these errors.

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## THE MONETARY CRISIS OF THE LATE C17

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### AN UNOFFICIAL ESSEX VCH BIBLIOGRAPHY

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I recently acquired a foolscap typescript bound between hard boards in VCH scarlet, entitled "V.C.H. Essex Bibliography Supplement No 1" and produced by J. G. O'Leary of Valance House in 1962. It seems to have spent all its life in Finchley Public Library and its loan label (threatening a fine of 3 old pence per week for overdue books) shows that it had never been borrowed. It is laid out in exactly the same way as the official first Essex VCH Bibliography of 1959, and each entry has a page reference relating to that first volume. Many - but by no means all - of these entries are included in the official VCH Bibliography Supplement which was published in 1987.

Having never previously heard about this unofficial supplement, I wondered if any others had been produced.

Michael Leach

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### RAY POWELL – A CORRECTION

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We very much regret that there were a number of errors in Ray Powell's obituary in the last Newsletter (something that he himself would never have allowed to creep into his publications). Firstly it was erroneously noted that his father was a Baptist. He was, in fact, a Methodist. Secondly Kingswood School is in Bath, not Exeter.

Up to 1662, English silver coins were made from sheet metal, cut by hand into a round disk and hammered between two dies. Inevitably such coins were never perfectly circular, and each varied slightly in size and metal content, a situation which tempted the unscrupulous to snip a sliver of metal off the edge. After all, a clipped shilling would still buy a shilling's worth of goods, even when underweight, so the fraud was very tempting and, as some would wrongly think, a victimless crime. Coins had a surprisingly long life and became naturally worn and battered. An indictment at the Essex Assizes in 1675, for example, contains a list of coins alleged to have been clipped, the oldest of which dated from the reign of Edward VI. This would have been in circulation for well over a century and trimming such a worn coin could easily go unnoticed, yielding a useful profit to the clipper.

Clipping had been a long-standing problem, and was serious enough to have been made a treasonable offence in the reign of Elizabeth, though there seem to have been very few prosecutions in Essex, where only two cases were presented at the Assizes before 1660. However coin clipping continued, and at the Restoration mechanically stamped coins were introduced. These were perfectly round, with milled or inscribed edges, and were much harder to forge than hand stamped coins, and impossible to clip without inflicting obvious visible damage. It was assumed that the new coins would drive out the bad, battered and clipped ones,

but this proved to be a grievous mistake. Vast numbers of the new coins disappeared from circulation, to be sold at a profit, contrary to statute, in the Europe market where silver commanded a higher price. Clippings continued to be sold to dealers who asked no questions, or to be melted down, adulterated with copper and white arsenic, and made into forged and inferior hammered coins. Thus clipping and forgery were encouraged and the profits were such that the occasional risk of detection and execution had little deterrent effect. One accused forger was said to have offered a bribe of £6000 for his reprieve, and juries were notoriously reluctant to convict.

Though there was one Essex indictment for clipping a sovereign in 1607, gold coins were not usually subject to clipping, as they were valued by weight. However the heavy demand for a more reliable form of currency was a factor in driving up the parity of gold coins against silver. This could even vary across the country; a guinea worth 22 shillings in the north might realise as much as 30 shillings in London and eventually, in order to protect tax receipts, the value of the guinea had to be set by statute to a maximum of 30 shillings. A further problem was that any successful attempt at reforming the silver coinage was likely to reduce the value of the guinea – an unattractive prospect for anyone holding a significant amount of gold coin. In 1696 the diarist John Evelyn noted his concern about the fall in the value of the guinea to 22 shillings, as well as the wholesale export of currency to Europe where it realised more than its face value at home. Large fortunes were made (and probably lost) in currency speculation. The official and unofficial value of the guinea fluctuated considerably until it was finally fixed by statute at 21 shillings in 1717.

From 1690, England had been at war with France, and large quantities of silver coinage crossed the Channel to pay the soldiers and to provide for their essential supplies. This aggravated the shortage of coins, a factor aggravated when traders began to mark down the value of clipped silver coins, so that a damaged shilling could be valued at much less than its face value – sometimes at as little as four pence. This was a grievous situation for someone who had been paid at face value in clipped coinage, and then found that his purchasing power had been reduced by a third or a half or more – a perverse form of rampant inflation. It led to countless arguments and great ill feeling. There were protests from groups such as the shipyard workers at Chatham, and from individuals such as the poet Dryden who pleaded with his publisher for payment in milled coin. The philosopher John Locke, concerned about the repayment of a loan due to him, wrote to a close friend in 1695 to ask whether he was entitled to refuse payment in clipped coinage, and was advised that he was.

Government committees sat and made reports, and there were various attempts at legislation towards the end of the C17 which focussed (as ineffective government often does) on increasing the penalties and encouraging informants, rather than addressing the fundamental cause of the problem. Branding the letter “R” on the cheek was added to the list of penalties, but it is hard to see how this would have acted as a deterrent when the offence was already a capital one. Perhaps it was hoped that juries might be more likely to convict if there was an alternative to hanging.

Other solutions were considered. Devaluation of the coinage was an option which had been used before, notably by Henry VIII who had

adulterated the silver with copper, leading to his nickname of 'old copper nose' from the bizarre effect of wear and tear on the royal portrait on his coins. In 1695 William Lowndes, the Secretary of the Treasury, proposed a new devalued shilling, with seven coins to an ounce of silver rather than five. Though this would have removed the incentives to profit from selling coins abroad, it would have increased the cost of imported goods, as well as reducing the government's tax revenues at a time when there were already difficulties in financing the war with the French. John Locke suggested an alternative proposal, namely that a date should be fixed when hammered coins would only be accepted at their value by weight. This would immediately remove the incentives for clipping, and would encourage the return to circulation of proper milled coins. The main drawback was the personal loss to the individual who possessed clipped coins. A proposal to exchange clipped coinage for milled at face value was rejected, as it would have provided a strong incentive for the clippers to continue their work, and to be rewarded for their misdemeanours at the expense of the state. However it was becoming clear that something had to be done and that the state would have to find a way of bearing the immediate cost of reforming the currency.

Eventually it was agreed that, from the 4 May 1696, the government would refuse to accept tax payments made in hammered money, which itself would cease to be legal tender within two years. Before this date a flood of old battered and clipped money poured in, and large amounts were melted down for recoinage. Those who were too poor to pay tax to the government were obliged to dispose of their hammered coins through intermediaries who charged a commission, so it would appear that the

disadvantaged were, in the end, disadvantaged, though not as much as they might have been. There was a serious shortage of silver coin for about three years, forcing the government to peg the value of the gold guinea at a maximum of 22 shillings, though it was unofficially trading at up to 30 shillings. The cost of the re-coining was met by a loan from the newly formed Bank of England, secured on a new tax on property to be raised by the government – the Window Tax, which was not finally repealed until 1851.

Considering the scale of the problem, there were remarkably few indictments at the Essex Assizes, some 14 cases in the last 40 years of the C17. The outcome was two death sentences (one of which was later commuted to transportation), one transfer to face charges in Middlesex, five acquittals and six cases where the outcome is not indicated. The majority of the last group were probably rejected by the Grand Jury, and never came to trial. Many of the indictments seem formulaic, suggesting a lack of solid evidence. For example, in 1695 Edward Pamphilon of Rickling, and others, were charged with clipping 100 half crowns, 100 shillings and 100 sixpences in 1695. There seems little doubt that evidence was difficult to come by (and in at least one case the principal witness failed to attend court), and that juries were cautious about returning a guilty verdict. All three women accused (two of whom were widows) were acquitted. There appear to have been no prosecutions after 1698, by which time hammered coin had ceased to be legal tender and the milled coinage was universal.

Michael Leach

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## BOOK REVIEWS

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**Essex Place Names: places, streets and people, James Kemble, Historical Publications (2007), pp 160 £14.95.**

Here is a lively legacy of James Kemble's hugely important Essex Place Names Project, which he has led for over 10 years. A full review will appear in *Essex Archaeology & History*.

**Essex Excellency: The Election of two Knights of the shire for the county of Essex August 1679, Richard Morris, Loughton & District Historical Society (2007) pp 40 (A3).**

Richard Morris has given us a close analysis of this significant election at the height of the Exclusion Crisis, providing, for the first time, the full text of rival election pamphlets produced by the Court and Country Parties respectively, the latter providing the title of this study. After a lucid introduction to this often neglected, indeed misunderstood, period of history, including a useful description of the sheer mechanics of the electoral process, Richard gives us close biographies of the four candidates and their two aristocratic backers – crucial figures at this period. Biography is a field of history Richard has made his own and in detail these are comprehensive and masterly. We then have an account of the election itself, followed by the full text of the two pamphlets. The outcome is a

welcome addition to the corpus of Essex history, clearly expressed, well argued and a pleasure to read. This reviewer was interested to see how many features of the electoral process, in all its course arts, which were to enliven the 18<sup>th</sup>, and much of the 19<sup>th</sup>, centuries were well established at this early date of party politics.

**The Churchyard of Holy Trinity Rayleigh: A biographical tour, Noel Beer, HTR Publications (2007) pp 47.**

The fertile pen of Noel Beer has brought us yet another Rayleigh booklet, this time putting some flesh on the bones of the churchyard tombstones. A selection of former residents, mostly Victorian, have what we know of their lives reviewed, with a little discussion of tombstone design.

Andrew Phillips

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## ANOTHER LOST ESSEX CHAPEL

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The muniment room of Dedham church contains a small cache of papers, once the property of Canon Gerald Rendall, concerning 'the Lord's Chapel' on Chapel (or Gun Hill) at Dedham. Over many years Rendall accumulated a considerable archive of books, papers, other records and memorabilia relating to Dedham and the Stour valley. Towards the end of his life he determined to bequeath this collection to the village and had the room above the north porch converted to accommodate it in 1938. Rendall continued to add material to the muniment room until his death on 4 January 1945, within three weeks his ninety fourth birthday.

On 30 January 1924, the Colchester based antiquary, L C Sier, wrote to Rendall with the startling news that 'the Lord's Chapel – or the remains of it – is

still in existence. I find that in 1867 it was sold to Mr George Ringe, a gardener of Dedham, by the following description: "All that double tenement cottage and garden containing about 23 rods situate near the Toll Gate at Dedham described in the Court Books as all that messuage called the Lords Chapel being demesne at and under the yearly rent of 2/-." Mr Ringe apparently survived until 1916 and his Executors sold the property to Mrs Mary Arnold on The Grove, Dedham, in January 1917. One of the cottages was occupied by Mr George Ringe and the other by William Clarke. I remember some years ago noticing that one of the windows in a cottage on the left of the road leading from the bottom of Dedham Gun Hill to Dedham had an ecclesiastical appearance. I shall certainly take the opportunity of asking the occupants of the cottages to allow me to inspect the interior the next time I am in that neighbourhood, and probably you may like to do likewise.'

It is not certain whether Sier or Rendall visited the cottages but in all probability they did. In the *Essex Review* of July 1937 Sier published a short article titled 'Dedham Gun Hill and Vicinity'. He gives an account of the buildings on the Dedham side of the Stour, including a woadhouse or dyehouse demolished in 1775, the toll gate, 'Leggs' (otherwise 'Talbooth') also demolished in the C18 whose site was used as a limekiln and wharf for landing chalk, and another part of the estate which by 1678 was known as 'Le Talbooth'. In 1928 it consisted of a detached cottage, and a pair of semi-detached buildings then known as Lime Kiln Cottages. It is now, of course, the prestigious 'Le Talbooth' restaurant.

The Lord's Chapel stood within a few yards of the bridge on the left hand side of the road at the foot of Gun Hill leading to Dedham. However by 1937 Sier had discovered that this was only the site of

the chapel and that none of the original building had survived. The chapel was mentioned in the will of John Webb, clothier, dated 2 April 1523, in which he directed that his executors 'should make substantially the highway from St John's chapel in Dedham to the church gate at Dedham next unto the vicarage of the said town.' He also gave forty shillings for the repair of Stratford bridge.

According to Sier 'in 1671, William Downes was admitted to this 'Chapel' and one acre of pasture called 'Chapell Hill' on the death of his mother Susanna, wife of Allen Downes, and as their youngest son. Thereafter the property is called 'the Lord's Chapel' on the court rolls. In 1826 the building and all evidence of its original use was demolished, and the present double cottage erected, the date being put at the top facing the road leading to Dedham. The Chapel occupied 23 rods....the Chapel and Chapel Hill were immediately opposite, with the road to Dedham separating, and were part of the demesne of the Manor, and usually held together, and the latter consisted of a strip of land on the south side of Gun Hill extending from the bottom to property belonging to the 'Gun' Public House.'

Until 1788 Gun Hill was very narrow. A portion of the Chapel land along its whole length, and consisting of one rood and 13 perches (143 yards), was incorporated into the hill 'for the purpose of making the turnpike road called Gun Hill more commodious.' Both the Chapel and Chapel Hill belonged to Palmer Firmin of Dedham. All this occurred shortly after the new bridge was built at Stratford St Mary.

In the year that Sier's article appeared, Rendall published his *Dedham Described and Deciphered*. It contains two photographs of the cottage that replaced the Lord's Chapel, one taken from the front, the other from the lane

that led to Dedham. Rendall followed Sier's account. 'In 1671 the name of 'St John's Chapel' had been exchanged for that of 'Lord's Chapel', by which it was known till it was demolished in 1826, and replaced by the present cottage which contains faint reminiscences of its predecessor in the interior structure, the re-used ceiling beams, and the carpenter's Gothic of the window frames. Opposite the cottage was the acre of land called Chapel Hill, a strip which was conceded for widening the road.'

Rendall preserved Sier's notes 'Re St John's Chapel, Dedham.' Sier obtained much of his information from the court rolls of the manor of Dedham Hall. He treated the evidence of John Webbe's will with caution. 'John Webbe was interested in Stratford Bridge and in St John's Chapel. Probably, his journeys often took him along the highway from Dedham to Stratford Bridge and the bequest & direction contained in his Will, before quoted, may have been prompted from worldly as well as religious motives. An objection can be raised from the assignment of the site of St John's Chapel as at the foot of Dedham Gun Hill on account of the distance from Dedham Church gate, but there is nothing, it is submitted, in the direction in the Will which makes it at all certain that John Webbe's Ex[ecutors] would have had a very expensive or onerous duty to perform if they "made substantially the highway" between these points. It is clear that the duty was only to be performed once and it may have involved little more than filling up holes and placing stones (obtained from local gravel pits) where the road required same, so that the expense was probably small.'

On 12 July 1943 Sier wrote to Rendall again on the same subject. His letter is worth quoting in full. 'Mr Charles Partridge recently kindly lent me a most

excellent pamphlet on Stratford St Mary church by the Revd Brewster in which I noticed that, in January 1504, the Bishop granted licence "to Margaret Mors (widow of Thomas Mors, and mother of Edward) to have divine service celebrated by Robert Kerver in the Chapel of St John Baptist in the same parish, provided it be not to the prejudice of the parish church." The author goes on to say: "It is not easy to decide to what building this refers, but no doubt it is the same as that mentioned in Edward Mors will as 'the chapel edified by my said father sett and being in Stratford Streete.' This seems to indicate an altogether separate building in another part of the parish." In a footnote the author states: "Edward Mors was one of the Executors appointed by John Webbe, of Dedham, his brother in law." This leads me to suppose that the building was the Chapel on the site of the cottage at the bottom of Gun Hill and, although not strictly in the parish of Stratford St Mary, it may (perhaps erroneously) have been considered in 1504 as in Stratford Street and in that parish by the person drawing up the Licence.'

It is by no means certain that Brewster was correct in identifying the Chapel referred to in the will of Edward Mors as one and the same as St John's Chapel at the foot of Gun Hill, Dedham. Another site in Stratford from an early date bore the name 'Chapel Field'. It was in the centre of the village, abutting the 'Streete' and close to the Mors' family home. Dedham was on the northern edge of the vast diocese of London. Stratford was on the southern border of the equally vast Norwich diocese. Margaret would have made her application to the bishop of Norwich to have divine service celebrated at the 'Chapel of St John Baptist'. He would have had no jurisdiction over a chapel in

Essex. Of course, as Brewster noted, geographical proximity may have led to confusion but this seems unlikely.

In the C20 the area below Gun Hill changed irrevocably. Quoting again from *Dedham Described and Deciphered*, 'the demands of modern traffic decreed the removal of the fine old 1786 pile-bridge, and its replacement by girders and concrete. Sentence of superannuation was passed on two landmarks of the past. The first was the quaint little tollhouse, which during the turnpike era guarded the entrance to the bridge, and bore the inscription:

*Rest drivers, rest on this steep hill,  
Dumb beasts pray use with all good will,  
Goad not, scourge not, with thonged whips,*

*Let not one curse escape your lips.*

More than once it was battered, and all but demolished, by motor lorries which had lost control, and skidded on the Gun Hill curve. The second, Gun Hill cottage, now menaced by road improvement schemes.....' In the event the menace turned into reality, but only many years after Rendall's death. In the 1960s the A12 trunk road was built and the cottage swept away. The lane that led to Dedham was re-aligned over a newly constructed bridge and the sharp corner, where Gun Hill begins to climb, softened and a cul-de-sac made from the old roadway. Photographs of the cottage suggest a building much earlier than 1826, but it would be wishful thinking to believe that 'St John's Chapel', or part of it, survived into our time.

Mark Lockett

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## AQUITAINE AND ESSEX

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The Duchy of Aquitaine, around the City of Bordeaux in south-western France, was held by the English Crown for three hundred years from 1154 to 1453. King Henry II, who ascended the English throne in 1154, had acquired it in 1152 by marriage to Eleanor of Aquitaine, previously wife to the French King Louis VII. It was not taken back until 1453 when King Charles VII of France finally defeated the English at the end of the Hundred Years War.

The English Kings, Richard I (1189-99) and John (1199-1216) were, accordingly, Dukes of Aquitaine, and the Black Prince (eldest son of Edward III), made Bordeaux his political capital prior to his death in 1376.

The English connections were firmly impressed on me when my wife and I visited our son, who has been studying at Bordeaux University. In Place Pey Berland, near the Cathedral, a plaque records the granting of rights to the townspeople by King John, from whom the English were hard put to extort Magna Carta in 1215.

Then, in the Musee d'Aquitaine, we were suddenly confronted by a large photograph of brasses from the tomb of Sir Robert Swynborne and his son Thomas in the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, Little Horkesley, in our home county of Essex. Both were Maires of

Bordeaux in the late 14<sup>th</sup> and early 15<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Martin Stuchfield and his collaborators in *The Monumental Brasses of Essex* (Monumental Brass Society 2003) have reproduced a similar picture (Vol. I, p. 362).

Probably the most notable connection is, however, the massive export to this country over centuries of Aquitaine's most famous product, wine – also represented in the Museum. We could hardly be unaware of the English links after our visit to Aquitaine.

Stan Newens

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## ROGATIONTIDE IN STONDON MASSEY: 1909

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Five weeks after Easter is the ancient celebration of Rogationtide when the fields are blessed within the parish boundary in the hope of a good harvest.

At that time of year the Annual Perambulation (or 'beating the bounds') was held. It marked the area of the parish and declared the territory which was subject to tithing to the Rector. This custom continued until about 1834 when it was superseded by the Tithe-Rent-Charge Map. The payment of tithes ceased in 1936.

In May 1909 Revd. Reeve, the Rector of Stondon Massey and a keen local historian, decided to re-enact this event using the perambulation of 1828. "I myself was still in good health", he wrote, "and in possession of perhaps an unusual store of minute and local information: our new lord of the manor, Mr Herman J Meyer, has just succeeded to his responsibilities and was anxious to see what he could of the Parish, and a number of Parishioners were willing to give up the day to accompany us".

The party assembled at Stondon Place

at 10am. "The round was, of course, taken at a leisurely pace, as we wanted if possible to identify all the old land marks. We did not think it necessary, as no legal issues were involved, to beat literally every corner and to crawl along brambly ditches or brave the Roding's flood; but we took care to go so near to every boundary as to satisfy ourselves of it. We probably walked about seven miles in accomplishing the round.

Ancient Religious aspect of the Perambulation was observed in a short service of a few special Prayers and Collects held before luncheon at Woolmonger's Farm".

Reeve tells of the capital luncheon provided by Mr Brace and the loyal toasts given to the lord of the Manor and himself.

"It was many times remarked that a suitable time was this of Rogationtide for a Perambulation, the country was looking at its best, and yet the crops not being sufficiently advanced to impede progress".

Andrew Smith

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## HUMPTY DUMPTY HAS A GREAT FALL

---

As defender of Colchester's true history I have spent 30 years seeking to dispel the Humpty Dumpty myth. I know I will fail. However, I am indebted to our indefatigable Secretary for bringing it to the attention of our learned society. Here is the true story – an instructive tale of how modern myths are born.

In 1956 Professor Dennis Daube wrote a series of spoof explanations of common nursery rhymes for the Oxford Magazine, saying that Humpty Dumpty was a siege tower blown down during the English Civil War. This was taken up by the composer Richard Rodney Bennett, who

in his operetta 'All the King's Men' (1968) claimed it referred to the Siege of Gloucester (1). By the 1970s the story had been transferred to the Siege of Colchester (by whom?) and to the firearm used on top of St Mary's Tower by a one-eyed gunner (sometimes called Thompson), shot down by Parliamentarian cannons. Incidentally, his weapon was actually a saker, a smallish firearm, not a cannon. In any event, there is no evidence whatsoever that it (or Thompson) was called Humpty Dumpty. The story was hi-jacked between 1956 and 1970.

Needless to say, the appearance of Mr Jack's populist book has led to a fresh outburst of Humpty Dumptyitis in Colchester and on Radio Essex. Of course, the essential story is correct. There was a one-eyed gunner on St Mary's tower in 1648, which led to the

still visible destruction of the top of the tower. People are then hungry to believe the rest. Personally I would be more impressed with Mr Jack's scholarship if he could give us the source of the two extra (hitherto unknown) stanzas to the Humpty Dumpty poem he quotes, or to any reference to this modern myth before 1960.

By the way, there is no evidence that the poem Old King Cole (an Irish drinking song) is anything to do with Colchester either. Only Jane Taylor's 'Twinkle Twinkle Little Star' can be claimed by the town.

Andrew Phillips

(1) I am indebted to Don Scot for bringing a relevant press reference to my attention.

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In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Summer 2009

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 158

SUMMER 2009

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**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 23 OCTOBER 2009**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

### Cover illustration:

The front cover of the first Girl Guides Gazette published in January 1914.

This September sees the launch of the centenary year celebrations for the Girl Guides. Who could have thought that 100 years ago a group of girls gate-crashing the first Boy Scout rally at Crystal Palace on 4 September 1909 and demanding to join would have had such an impact. This momentous event is being celebrated with a specially designed maze in Crystal Palace Park being opened in September as well as other events throughout the UK.

Today, as it did a hundred years ago, the movement provides a girl only space, promotes diversity and equality, is relevant to today's girls and, girls and women are given a voice. There are half a million members of the guiding movement in the UK with ten million members in 144 countries around the world.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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I trust that members have safely received copies of volume 38 of the Transactions (2007) and the List of Members following despatch of the last newsletter. Once again, we owe an enormous debt of gratitude to our Editor, Dr Chris Starr, and his Deputy, Helen Walker, for seeing this bumper issue through the press. I hope that you approve of the introduction of colour which, in my opinion, greatly enhances the presentation. As previously reported, the editors are on schedule to produce volume 39 (2008) prior to the year-end. This will complete the catch-up process and will signify a significant milestone in the history of our Society. This edition represents the 150th volume and concludes the third series which commenced life way back in 1961. Exciting enhancements are under consideration for the first volume of the fourth series which it is anticipated will appear in autumn 2010. I hope to be in a position to elaborate on these plans shortly. However, what is crucially important is that future issues of the Transactions appear on a regular basis in the autumn of each succeeding year. I hope also that the accompanying List of Members proves useful. I am personally very encouraged by the considerable level of interest which this initiative has generated for it has prompted much welcomed and valued contact with fellow members. In this regard, I wish to congratulate our long-standing member, Professor Warwick Rodwell, on his appointment as an Officer of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (O.B.E. - Civil Division) awarded in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours List for services to ecclesiastical archaeology. Warwick, although now residing in Somerset, has consistently shown a keen interest in Essex archaeology.

Most notably with his outstanding work relating to the excavations and structural analysis of the churches at Hadstock and Rivenhall. I am especially indebted to our member, Adrian Corder-Birch, who thoughtfully brought this joyous news to my attention.

To my mind, people are fundamental to life and are the most crucial ingredient. I am delighted to report that recently we have enjoyed a considerable influx of new members. To each and every one may I extend a very warm welcome and an earnest desire that it will prove possible to greet you personally at one of our events.

In the context of events those members attending the Annual General Meeting last June were richly rewarded. Firstly, the enchanting location – the fifteenth century timber-framed Marriage Feast Room at Matching. Secondly, following the formal business, Anne Padfield and Alan Bayford captivated the assembled company with their knowledge so eagerly imparted. If this were not sufficient reward a sumptuous tea followed. It is a high risk strategy and often invidious to single out individuals but this aspect of the day was so very much appreciated that I must place on public record our gratitude to Ann and Ken Newman.

I would like to take this opportunity to draw your attention to the forthcoming Morant Lunch to be held on Sunday, 18th October. The Rev Philip Morant (1700-70) is, of course, renowned as the county historian. Morant's first major work was his History and Antiquities of Colchester published in 1748. This was followed by his magnum opus entitled The History and Antiquities of Essex, based on the manuscripts of the Rev William Holman, which appeared between 1760 and 1768. Morant held numerous Essex livings including Shellow Bowells (1733-4), Broomfield

(1734-8), Chignal Smealey (1735-43), St Mary-at-the-Walls, Colchester (1738-70), Wickham Bishops (1743-5) and Aldham (1745-70). In 1966 the Society removed, at its sole expense, the marble monument commemorating Philip Morant from the chancel of the old church at Aldham and resited it in the sanctuary of the new building erected in 1854-5. The east window of Aldham church also contains a memorial window financed by subscription in 1854. On the same March day in 1966 the Society also dedicated an oak tablet near the tower of St Mary-at-the-Walls church in Colchester to Morant's memory. The Society annually commemorates the life and work of Morant with a Lecture in the spring and a Lunch in the autumn. The guest speaker this year will be appropriately focusing on the nearby gardens at Easton Lodge immortalised by Frances Evelyn Maynard, "Darling Daisy", the Countess of Warwick who was the renowned mistress of King Edward VII. The venue for the Morant Lunch is the delightful fifteenth century Swan Inn at Great Easton. Here you will enjoy a comfortable environment, excellent sustenance and, above all, fellowship. Numbers are limited to thirty so please book early to avoid disappointment. Guests are welcome with tickets available at £23.50 from Pat Ryan (60 Maldon Road, Danbury, Essex CM3 4QL – telephone: 01245 222237).

I look forward to advising you on the developments regarding the Society's grant of arms and a new corporate identity in the next newsletter. In the meantime I hope that you enjoy the remainder of the summer season

H Martin Stuchfield

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## ADVISORY COMMITTEE IN ARCHAEOLOGY

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The Committee met on 3 occasions in 2008-9 with County Councillors, archaeologists, museum curators and representatives of Archaeology Societies in attendance. The Committee stood in memory of the late James Fawn. On his retirement, the contribution of Cllr. Manning-Press to the Committee was acknowledged.

A visit was made to **Walton-on-Naze** Navigation Tower built 1720, Grade II\*, where cliff-fall was endangering its future existence and adequate funding for protection was to date not forthcoming.

The Chelmsford Archaeological **Conference 2008** had been well-attended; papers should be published in 2010. Work continues on evidence about the proposed 2<sup>nd</sup> runway at **Stansted**. Clay-moulds for bronze castings have been recovered from **Springfield** Lyons Chelmsford. At **New Hall** Chelmsford, Tudor gardens and paths have been identified. **Stebbing** Park Barn is a 17<sup>th</sup> century reuse of a medieval aisled building. At **Hadleigh** Castle the impact of the 2012 Olympic biking event is under evaluation.

**World War II** defences: surveys Chelmsford, Clacton, Colchester and **Dengie** peninsula have been completed. Amongst others, a block-house near **Southminster** was discovered.

Work with **schools** continues to highlight East of England's **industrial** heritage. Secondary schools have received Parish books containing their local parish's documentary **place-name** records.

European Route of Industrial Heritage: In addition to **Waltham** Abbey Gunpowder Mills, **Duxford** War Museum has been added to the Route

Field Archaeology Unit: Roman gulleys at Anchor St, **Chelmsford**, contained a

human skull. Hall Barns, **Fyfield**, c.1600 barn and dovecote have been recorded. Development stagnation has led to a downturn in archaeology.

**Colchester** Archaeology: Urban streets had been revealed at Colchester Institute where funding for further work has now been withdrawn. The Roman City walls are being consolidated. Due to lease end, new premises were being sought urgently for the Colchester Trust.

**Southend**: WWII air-raid shelters survive at EKCO radio and TV Works and were recorded prior to destruction.

**Prittlewell** Priory refurbishment was to begin. A probable Neolithic cursus and houses have been found at **Nevedon**. The site for a new Museum which would house the "Prittlewell Prince" has been identified near the pier.

**Uttlesford**: Fieldwalking at Clavering has revealed a probable Iron Age enclosure. A Bronze Age hoard has been found at **Littlebury**. **Saffron Walden** castle is to be consolidated, and the new Heritage Quest Museum is due to open in 2011. A conference for metal-detectorists and landowners was well-attended.

**Chelmsford** Oaklands Park Museum extension is due to open in late 2009/early 2010.

The **Foulness** Heritage Centre was opening on first Sunday of each month in summer.

The **Harlow** Pottery Industry report has been published.

James Kemble

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## BETTER THAN A PERSIAN CARPET?

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Lord Dacre (1717-1786), of Belhus at Aveley, antiquary and friend of Philip Morant, wrote to the Essex historian on 26 December 1762 about the recent

discovery of a Roman mosaic floor in Colchester:

'I wish you joy of your tessellated pavement. I know you will value it and step upon it with more pleasure than on the finest Persian carpet: as it raises.....up in your imagination Proconsuls, Generals etc... in all their Glory, who have been dead and gone above these sixteen hundred years.'

(Thanks to Mark Lockett for discovering this)

Source:

British Library Add MS 37220, f.46v

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## THE LINCOLN ORGAN AT THAXTED

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Apart from church organ enthusiasts, and residents of the Thaxted district, few realise that this parish church possesses the oldest unmodified Georgian church organ in the country. Very few Georgian instruments survived the restorations and re-orderings on the later C19. The Thaxted organ also has the distinction of having been played by Gustav Holst and Vaughan Williams who, on occasions, would take turns in playing or conducting the choir.

The instrument started life elsewhere. It was built by the High Holborn organ builder, Henry Cephias Lincoln, in 1821 and was installed in St John's chapel, Bedford Row, London, at a cost of £500. Here it served well until one Sunday in November 1856 when the minister, with remarkable insight from the pulpit, realised that the building was in a structurally dangerous condition, and hastily evacuated the congregation. Soon after, the fittings were sold and the chapel was demolished. The organ was purchased by Thaxted church for £230, and installed in 1858. Remarkably,

although by that time it was a distinctly old-fashioned instrument, it was not modified in any way and continued in use (with minor repairs in the 1880s and in 1907) until the early 1950s when it finally succumbed to the accumulating problems of old age. Though replaced by a new organ, remarkably the old instrument was left in situ. Apart from the occasional attention of an intrepid enthusiast, it has slumbered in benign neglect in the north chapel ever since. Recently its importance has been more widely recognised, and an appeal has been launched for £300,000 to fund its restoration. It has a fine Regency case in original condition, and the longer keyboard (with an extra seven notes at the base end) is typical of the period. Though it has a pedal keyboard of 20 notes, this is much smaller than on later instruments. Some pipes have been lost over the last century, wooden components have cracked, metal pipes have sagged and all the mechanical components are worn or clogged with dust. However it is exciting to know that we may again hear the authentic Georgian sound from such a rare survivor. Members who wish to know more, or are eager to contribute to the restoration fund, can obtain information from various websites, from which most of the information in this brief note was obtained.

Michael Leach

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## MUNDON CHURCH

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The saga of the heroic rescue of this church by the Friends of Friendless Churches has ended. A photograph of the chancel, taken when FOFC took over responsibility for the church in 1975, showed that heave had already caused detachment of the panelling behind the altar. The primitive C18 painting on the

east wall, which depicted draped curtains around the east window, and simulated painted boards with the Creed, Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments, was in poor condition. The structural problems had become worse over the last three decades, with the upward thrust on the foundations threatening to break the back of the building. Underpinning had to be undertaken with great caution, due to the risk of precipitating collapse, but this delicate work has now been completed successfully. Also the trompe l'oeil paintings at the east end have been conserved; this work showed that though there had been some over-painting in the C19, the design was very much as originally executed in the C18.

Michael Leach

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## THE WARRENER'S LODGE IN 1589

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The Thorndon Hall estate had been acquired by Sir John Petre in 1573 and was to become the main family residence for three centuries. A glimpse of the other end of the social order is provided by an inventory of the warrener's lodge at Thorndon, made in 1589. The warrener's job was supervising the estate rabbit warren which provided fresh meat in the winter months, as well as being a source of valuable fur. Generally warrens were enclosed by walls, fences, hedges or ditches (or any combination of these), and the duties of the warrener would have included maintaining the enclosure, possibly feeding the rabbits in the winter months, building special mounds for them to burrow into ('pillow mounds'), dealing with vermin and poachers, and catching rabbits for fur or meat when required. Dealing with poachers could be

unpleasant, as they could be armed and were usually prepared to use violence to avoid being apprehended.

The warreners' lodge at Thorndon was a modest building of two rooms and a loft. Though there were bins for fuel (which would have been logs from the estate) in the two downstairs rooms, there were no cooking utensils, so the warreners may have eaten with the servants in the hall, or lived on whatever he could roast in front of an open fire. The loft had a lockable door (with a key) and was used as the bedroom. The bed was boarded (not even the luxury of a corded base), and the bedclothes were well used, from the 'thyn' featherbed, the 'verie olde pillowe peced with manye pece', an old rug 'full of holes newed at both the ende with blew, red & yellow' and an old mat. With a few other items of bedding, a plain press for clothes and four sliding windows, this completed the inventory of the bedroom.

One of the downstairs rooms, with a 'hanging' window, had what was probably a trestle table, a bin for fuel, a boarded door without lock or key, and very little else. The second room, with a sliding window, was lockable and contained a table, an old turned chair and a four-legged stool, as well as the tools of his trade. These included a yew bow 'with one band somewhat above the hande place', five watching arrows and one bolt. The latter must have been a heavy arrow with a piercing tip, more often associated with crossbows and probably for killing vermin or large game, rather than rabbits. The purpose of the 'watching' arrows is not clear. A bill, an axe and a spade, would have been used for maintaining the warren fence or hedge, and possibly for digging out recalcitrant ferrets. There were three hayes; these were long nets which were fixed with pegs or stakes so that rabbits could be driven into them by dogs or

men. One Essex example noted by F H Emmison was 120 feet long. A dozen purse nets completed the inventory. These tubular nets would have been pegged over the burrows to catch the rabbits which had been flushed out by ferrets.

Little is known about warreners who continued to be employed on Essex estates into the early C18, after which the importance of providing rabbits on gentry estates seems to have dwindled. Essex had a few commercial warrens on the metropolitan fringe, and pillow mounds for rabbits were still being constructed in Epping Forest towards the end of the C19. However it would have been difficult to compete with the massive warrens of Suffolk and the Norfolk Brecklands, some of which survived up to the Second World War. In the long shadow of myxomatosis, it is easy to forget that there was a substantial market for rabbit meat well into the C20.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Inventory of the warrens lodge 1589: ERO D/DP E2/14

Quarter Session Rolls up to 1714: ERO Q/SR

Emmison, F. G., 1970 *Elizabethan Life and Disorder*, ECC

Rackham, O., 1986 *The History of the Countryside*, Dent

Warren, H., 1927 'Excavations in pillow mounds at High Beech' in *Essex Naturalist*, xxi

Williamson, T., 2007 *Rabbits, Warrens & Archaeology*, Tempus

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## DEMOLITION REFUSED

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Grade II listed buildings often do not receive the protection they deserve, so it is very encouraging to report that Epping

Forest District Council has refused listed building consent for the proposed demolition of Thrift Cottage in Waltham Abbey. The applicants had argued that this C17 house had deteriorated to such an extent that it no longer had any historical or architectural value. A supporting report from an engineer contended that, in view of the structural defects, demolition and rebuilding were the best option. The report, however, failed to show why the building was considered to be beyond repair, and the owners had not put the building on the open market to see whether anyone would be interested in taking on the challenge. The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings objected strongly to the proposal on the grounds that the proposal for demolition had not been justified, and that no proper survey had been carried out by a suitably experienced surveyor. The Society believed that detailed costings should have been provided if the building was considered to be beyond economic repair.

Epping Forest District Council is to be applauded. It had already shown its teeth over the unauthorized destruction of the interior of a listed building in Ongar High Street in 2008. It is to be hoped that its example is catching!

Michael Leach

Source:

*Cornerstone*, vol 30, no 1, 2009

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**VISIT TO LAMBOURNE  
CHURCH, STAPLEFORD  
TAWNEY CHURCH &  
RECTORY**

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This outing started in the remote rural setting of Lambourne church, externally

a plain lime-washed church of C12 (nave) and C13 (chancel) date. An enormous cedar of Lebanon in the churchyard (estimated to be 250 years old) was the first hint of the unexpected. Entering through the west door (dated 1726) and passing under the elegant gallery of 1704, there is an elegant Georgian ornamental plaster interior. A three centred chancel arch rests on boldly enriched voluted brackets, and the medieval crown post in the nave improbably bursts into florid acanthus foliage. The chancel is covered with a faintly Gothic rib vault, with an ogee surround to the round-headed east window. Tie beams are enriched with decorated plasterwork. There are numerous C18 and C19 monuments, and a good collection of hatchments. A fragment of a medieval St Christopher wall painting (discovered in 1951) has survived, as well as the upper parts of the frame of the C18 painted Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments on each side of the east window. Perhaps its remote position and the close proximity of two family mansions (one now lost) explain its remarkable escape from Victorian re-ordering. The timber framed C15/16 belfry has an unusual decorated corbel table (to take an arched brace) on its SE post, just below the gallery. The next posts west at ground level have a vertical rebate, presumably for timber panels to close off the belfry at this level, perhaps removed when the west door was inserted in 1726. The upper parts of the belfry are an intriguing mix of original and reused materials, with eclectic repairs in various materials including plywood, galvanised mild steel brackets, and a sawn beam stencilled 'PRODUCE OF MALAYSIA'. Externally lime wash on lime plaster conceals the evidence of the extensive internal alterations, though the rusticated quoins, at the junction of chancel and

nave on the south side, probably date from the 1720s improvements.

Between 1993 and 1996, the hard cement render that had covered the external walls was removed, providing an opportunity to examine the fabric. This confirmed the RCHM dating of the chancel and nave (C13 and C12 respectively). Both roofs (hidden internally by ceilings) had been replaced in the C15. The brickwork of the C18 alterations appeared to date from a number of different periods, and included some London stock brick which is unlikely to predate 1800. This evidence suggests that the improvements took place sporadically over much of the century. The parish documents shed no further light on this, though there was a dispute over the churchwardens' accounts for the building work in the 1720s and this could have stopped work for a time. A detailed report will be found in *Essex Archaeology & History*, xxviii (1997) pp.250-55

A short migration under the M25 took the party to Stapleford Tawney church where Anne Padfield gave an introduction to the church and parish. Nave and chancel date from the C13 but there must have been an earlier building. During the construction of the parish room in 1998, the base of an earlier north wall was found. There are also two C12 stone coffins which flank the south nave door. The south chapel (dedicated to St Agnes) postdates the rebuild of the main church. The function of the blind arch in its east wall is not clear, possibly an altar recess. Its roof has been much altered and has a ridge board – some of the rafters are clearly of sawn timber, and the nailed soulaces vary in size and position. The timber framed belfry of C15/16 was inserted within the body of the church but was badly damaged by fire in 1968, necessitating extensive rebuilding of the upper parts by Bakers

of Danbury. The surviving original timbers have traces of red ochre paint. An aumbrey on the north side of the altar bears the initials RN and the date 1638 – perhaps Richard Nicholson, rector from 1637 to 1643. The living was sequestered after he was charged with being a 'common drunkard'. In the colourful language of the period, he was alleged to have said to have had 'three wicked and scandalous libels against the Parliament, found in his study and (that he) did sing one of them in an alehouse'. For these offences, he was committed to Newgate prison but was eventually restored to the living in 1660. The altar rails date from the C17 and examination of their construction suggests that they originally surrounded the altar on three sides. The present appearance of the church interior dates mainly from the 1862 restoration, with a few later features; the 'Father Willis' organ of 1873, the nave ceiling of 1882 and a mosaic reredos by Salvati & Co of 1883. Most of the C19 stained glass was destroyed in World War II, though a beautifully vivid piece remains in the north chancel lancet. Externally, some of the hard cement pointing (presumably of 1862) has fallen away, and one fragment of Roman tegula was noted in the south nave wall, east of the porch with its diminutive crown post roof.

In 1754, one of the younger Smythe sons from nearby Hill Hall became rector. The living, and the glebe, was combined with that of Theydon Mount, providing a rich endowment of about 150 acres of land. This was reflected by the surviving farm buildings sited round a yard, immediately north of the old rectory – stable for riding horses, chaise house, working horse stable (with central cottage), a granary on saddlestones and an open fronted cart shed. The tithe barn (shown on C19 maps) has gone. The old rectory itself wears a C18 brick front but

the irregular spacing and size of its windows, and a C16 concertina chimney stack rising through the roof, betray its earlier origins. Very little of the timber frame is exposed internally, but the roof is of late C16 side purlin construction and, behind the brick façade, the two cross wings can be identified. The canted bay on the south side was probably added c.1820. The garden looked magnificent in the early spring sunshine.

The Society is very grateful to Rob Brooks and Anne Padfield for their enthusiastic guidance, to the owners of the Old Rectory for allowing us to enjoy their garden, and to Anne Newman and her helpers for the welcome tea which rounded off the afternoon.

Michael Leach

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## **ROBERT THE BRUCE, KING OF SCOTLAND, AN ESSEX BOY!**

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I wonder how many people are aware that Robert the Bruce, king of Scotland from 1306 to 1329, victor over Edward II at Bannockburn and architect of Scottish independence, was alleged to have been born at Writtle, in Essex, on 11 July 1274. I discovered this while indexing one of the volumes of *Essex Archaeology & History*. The article in question, recently revised, was originally written by the medieval historian J.H. Round in 1920, an expert in the family history of the period.

The English possessions had come into the Bruce family via Robert's great-grandfather, also named Robert, who had married Isabel, one of the sisters and co-heirs of John le Scot, earl of Huntingdon and Chester. John le Scot's father was David, earl of Huntingdon, a younger brother of the Scottish king,

William I ('the Lion'). When John le Scot died in 1237, the English king Henry III refused to allow his Cheshire lands to be divided amongst co-heirs, and promised them other territories in compensation. Thus, in 1241, Isabel received the Essex manors of Writtle and Hatfield Broad Oak, and the half hundred of Harlow. These sizeable estates were still in the possession of the Bruce family when Sir Robert, Isabel's grandson, died in 1304. His son and heir, Robert (believed to be the thirteenth Robert in the family) had little time to enjoy his inheritance as he forfeited his English lands on being crowned as king of Scotland in 1306.

The Writtle website acknowledges the connection between Robert Bruce and Writtle, and even mentions the reputed site of his birth, Montpeliers Farm on the Margaretting road. These claims are rejected by the Bannockburn museum in Stirling, in favour of Turnberry Castle in Ayrshire as the site of the future king's birthplace (this was also part of the Bruce estates). Perhaps in the absence of further evidence there should be a twinning arrangement between Stirling and Writtle – respective local authorities take note! One intriguing thought – did Robert the Bruce have an Essex accent?

Peter B. Gunn

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## **COLCHESTER'S 1909 PAGEANT AND COLCHESTER ROYAL GRAMMAR SCHOOL**

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The idea of a Colchester Pageant began in 1907 after a visit to Colchester from Sir Henry Howarth, President of The Royal Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, who in a speech said that *'the Corporation was perhaps without exception the oldest in England'*.

He also said that Colchester was "*perhaps, without exception, the oldest town in England*".

The challenge was taken up by The Mayor, Cllr William Gurney Benham, OC. and Ald William Marriage. There had previously been successful pageants at Sherborne, Warwick, Bury St Edmunds and Dover.

Benham invited the Earl of Warwick, Lord Lieutenant of Essex, to be the President; The Rt Hon James Round, a noted historian. Brig-General Robb, Commander of the Garrison, P. Shaw Jeffery, Headmaster of the Grammar School, became involved and the Colchester Town Council members gave full support.

Cllr A. M. Jarmin, and P. Shaw Jeffery, were enrolled to become authors with Gurney Benham of the book of the Pageant. The Staff, parents and scholars of CRGS were asked to become actors; together with the local Clergy and their wives and families; local firms and their employees.

On 23 September, 1907, at 3 p.m. the first meeting of the Pageant Committee members met in the Grand Jury Room in Colchester's Town Hall. There it was agreed that The Pageant House and Office would be at The Holly Trees in High Street, residence of the Round Family; the rent was agreed at £75 per quarter. A grandstand with seats at 2/6, 5/6, 7/6, 10/6 and 21/- was to be purchased from Dover at the cost of £1,200. The experienced Louis Napoleon Parker would be approached to become Pageant Master and Major E. A. Jackson would act as assistant. The poet James Roades would be asked to write the choruses for the songs as well as the Triumphal Song.

A telephone, No 116, was installed at Holly Trees by the National Telephone Co., at the cost of £8 *with an unlimited number of calls*. Mr Rose offered the

Pageant Master a bedroom and a sitting room at 8/6 per night but the Cups Hotel in High Street offered the same terms which were accepted. Armour for the actors in Roman and Seventeenth scenes was obtained from Dover for £10. A chariot for Boadicea was bought from Gorleston for £10. The Northamptonshire Regiments band was willing to attend for £50. My own great grandmother Ellen Wilson of Clarkson and Wilson, Photographers of The Royal Studio, High Street, was appointed Official Photographer having paid £60 for this privilege.

Posters were designed by W. Gurney Benham. Coloured postcards with images of the actors were by Miss M. Irvin from St Mary's Church Rectory. Souvenirs were designed by H. Elwes and sold by Cheshire's China Shop at St Botolph's Corner.

Advance ticket sales made £6,000, which shows the interest of the public.

Rehearsals were held from 26th April, 1909 and the first dress rehearsal, to which the local schools were invited, was on Saturday, 12th June.

The Pageant was presented to the public from 21st to 26th June, 1909. The total attendance was 55-60,000 of which 5,000 per day paid for Grand Stand seats. Performances lasted from 3 p.m. to 6 p.m. The Great Eastern Railway Company offered tickets at a fare and a quarter for return tickets from anywhere up to 150 miles from Colchester on production of a Pageant Ticket slip. These tickets were available from Saturday 19th June to Saturday 26th June, the last day of the performance.

The model of the Temple of Claudius was 60' by 30' and built up in "Lego" fashion by "slaves" in the sight of the audience.

Banners were used and made by Misses Bawtree and Montague, Mrs Reginald Beard and Mrs Edward J. Sanders and

Mrs R. Stanyon, mother of Miss Stanyon, a mistress in the Prep Section of the Grammar School, between 1907 and 1909. It was the first time the House Banners were on display.

Dr Salter of Tollesbury noted in his Diary, "Colchester Pageant - Wonderful but very wet". In fact there was rain every day. On Wednesday, 23rd June, Princess Louise and the Duke of Argyll attended. Despite bad weather and the London Church Pageant a profit was made of £653 9s 1d.

The Colchester Central or Blue Coat School scholars sang "Old King Coel" and the Royal Grammar School scholars sang for the very first time in public "Carmen Colcestriensis". The words were by P. Shaw Jeffery, the Headmaster, and the music by Mr Cuthbert Cronk, ARAM, the music master. Boys and girls from The Colchester High School took part in dances which their Headmaster Mr C. Harold Watkins composed.

Many members of The Old Colcestrian Society took their place among the organisers or cast.

At the end of the final day, 26th June, 1909, everyone turned to the Pageant Master's box and cried "Hail" Louis Napoleon Parker was then put into Boadicea's chariot and pulled by the Grammar School Scholars to the Town Hall for a reception.

It was not until the issue of THE COLCESTRIAN No 24 New Series in August 1909 that any mention is made to the part played by the Grammar School scholars in the Pageant. The Editorial is then full of the matter.

*Opinions may differ as to the merits or demerits of Pageants in general, but that the Colchester Pageant was the one outstanding feature of the Summer Term is a position admitting of no difference of opinion whatever ..... King Willow had*

*perforce to abdicate ..... the School actually made an extra attendance in Pageant week, ..... it is a record to be proud of, unequalled nay! unrivalled in the whole history of the revival of Pageantry.*

*Moreover in the arena the School made a brave show, the purple tunics and scarlet cloaks of its present boys formed a brilliant group, even amid that brilliant spectacle.*

*The object of Pageantry is to diffuse a knowledge of a town's peculiar past, and thereby to foster a local patriotism.*

*We have seen with our eyes Boadicia driving the legions of the oppressor in headlong route; we have seen OUR SCHOOL and the first Master presented to Queen Elizabeth, the Good Queen Bess, who granted the charter, and Dr William Gilbert of Colchester striking forth the spark which has transformed the world; we have seen the quixotic loyalty of Lucas and Lisle quenched in blood, and Cromwell's East Anglian Ironsides charging home whose name and honour must be kept untarnished and augmented in the future to which we, as schoolboys, belong then Colchester Pageant will not have been in vain.*

John S. Appleby  
Old Colcestrian

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## SWEARING OATHS & SIGNING PETITIONS

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The Morant Lecture was given on 15 May by Professor John Walter at the Methodist Church hall at Colchester. He opened his stimulating account by reminding us that Morant had attracted both praise and blame for cutting up some of Colchester's records and pasting them into his scrap book - praise because the material might

otherwise have been lost, blame because of what he threw away. As a loyalist Anglican, he was troubled by the 'spirit of sedition and disloyalty' shown by C17 Colchester's support of Parliament. Today, the county's role in the politics of the early 1640s is seen in a very different light, and this lecture focused on the period from May 1641 and August 1642.

Charles I had governed without Parliament for 11 years, but was forced by events north of the border (and a serious lack of money) to recall Parliament in 1640. Initially this was greeted with joyous celebrations but things quickly turned sour. It was feared that the king was intending to impose a political settlement, possibly by using the army, who were still in arms in the north, to dissolve Parliament. With a Catholic wife, and an Arminian-dominated episcopacy, it was believed that he planned the imposition of the Catholic religion by stealth. There was a considerable amount of communication between London and the provinces, but with Essex in particular. There were three reasons for this a) Essex was noted for its godliness b) Essex had experienced great hardship from the disruption of continental trade (particularly cloth manufacture), a problem which only central government could put right and c) many Essex leading families were key Parliamentary supporters.

In May 1641 the Commons, with the earl of Warwick of Leez Priory as a key player, drafted the Protestation Oath to be taken by MPs to show their allegiance to 'the true reformed religion ...against all Popery and Popish innovations'. It also pledged support for the king, defended the rights of Parliament and the liberties of the individual. Most of the Lords also subscribed, and copies, official and unofficial, were widely

circulated. The enthusiasm in Essex was quite extraordinary, and copies were signed during the Sunday services in parishes led by the godly ministers of the county. Fourteen parish copies listing the signatories have survived, and they are remarkable documents. In an age when only male householders had a political identity, the Protestation was signed (or marked) not only by women, but also by young unmarried men. It is difficult now to appreciate how radical this was.

In January 1642, Charles I tried unsuccessfully to arrest the leaders of Parliament. This led to Parliament's insistence that all must subscribe to the Protestation. Unfortunately much of the material from this period was burnt in the C19 fire which destroyed Parliament, but 45 local parish lists survive for Essex. Again analysis of the signatories shows that unusually large numbers of women subscribed – 100 in Sible Hedingham, for example. Not everyone was in support, and in Radwinter the minister Richard Drake (whose living was later sequestered) did not sign. Different versions of the petition went to the king, the lords and the commons, the wording of the first two being tactfully adapted. The Essex roll was the first to be submitted and contains signatures (about 7000 in total), sometimes with short comments, were cut up, shuffled and stuck onto the document with no parish identification. Professor Walter has been trying to unravel this complex document in the House of Lords library for several years by tracing names of signatories to particular parishes. Some names are unusual enough to be linked with confidence, others (such as Silence Moulthood) have so far defied identification. When finally unravelled, this roll will provide a considerable amount of information about the inhabitants of Essex and their views in 1642.

There is other evidence of the radical views that were held in Essex, and Professor Walter gave a few examples. In August 1641, Ralph Josselin, rector and diarist of Earls Colne, had trouble with Thomas Harvey, a weaver. He entered the church, took the book of common prayer and threw it into the village pond. The next day he tried to burn it – not an obviously logical sequence, but possibly akin to a witch trial – if the book floated, it was guilty and needed to be burnt. Puritans believed that this edition of the prayer book was seriously contaminated with popery.

There were various disruptions in Radwinter where the minister, Richard Drake, had refused to sign the Petition. One of his curates was attacked, during a burial service, by several women armed with shears; their intention was to snip off his surplice which was regarded as an attribute of popery. There were several incidents at baptisms, in one of which the curate was prevented from making the sign of the cross (regarded as 'the mark of the beast') by a cloth being thrown over the infant. Much information comes from the accusations laid against Drake by his parishioners, which were recorded in his diary together with his refutations.

There was another petition, in June 1642, from the train bands which had been called to Dunmow by the earl of Warwick. This noted that the king had been 'seduced by wicked counsels' and affirmed its willingness to defend Parliament against any threat.

Morant gives an account of Sir John Lucas's attempt to leave Colchester, to join the king early on the morning of 22 August 1642. A large crowd surrounded his house at St John's Abbey, which they plundered, and 'barbarously used his mother' who was held at sword point. Lucas and his chaplain were taken off to

London as prisoners and elsewhere in the area, there was a series of attacks on Catholic families, generally known as the Stour valley riots.

It was a time of extraordinary political ferment, with Essex very much in the forefront. There was also an explosion in the number of printed publications at this time – more were published in 1642 than had been printed since the invention of moveable type, and it included pieces of polemic Royalist propaganda such as *Mercurius Rusticus*. Many contemporaries felt that the people were not to be trusted, that the rabble were a serious threat to social order, and that king and church were the only defence against chaos. Others were equally convinced that the king had been seriously misled, and that there was a real threat of the re-introduction of Catholicism and the curtailment of Parliament and English liberty. The part played by Essex in the political and religious debate which set the scene for the Civil War was extremely significant.

Michael Leach

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## ESSEX ELSEWHERE

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As usual the Ancient Monuments Society newsletter contains brief items of interest to Essex members.

The Friends of Friendless Churches now have funding to conserve the early C13 wall paintings at Wickham Bishops church (now in use as a stained glass studio). The newsletter contains a photograph of a reconstruction of the original bold and complex geometrical design, now only faintly visible on the north wall.

AMS reports hopeful news about the Petre's cemetery chapel at Thorndon. Though it is little known and not accessible to the public, it has suffered from serious vandal damage over many

years. It is a spectacularly decorated building of 1854 by the Puginian architect, William Wardell with much carved stone, and a hammerbeam roof heavily ornamented with gilded and painted angels. Most of the stained glass has been destroyed, but recently agreement has been reached between Lord Petre, the Roman Catholic diocese and the Historic Chapels Trust for its preservation and possible re-use. This is excellent news.

Michael Leach

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## LOOKING FOR A GOOD HOME

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There comes a time when the bibliophile with finite shelving has to grow ruthless. The Transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society (2002 to 2008 inclusive) and Industrial Archaeology Review (1996 to 2008 inclusive) now need to find new homes, and will be given to anyone willing to collect from Ongar (or pay postage). Please contact Michael Leach 01277 363106 or [leach1939@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:leach1939@yahoo.co.uk)

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## AGM AT MATCHING

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The 2009 AGM took place in the magnificent Marriage Feast Room at Matching. After the conclusion of the formal business, two speakers told us about the history of Matching.

Alan Bayford spoke first about the history and landscape of the parish. Matching was large parish of 2417 acres, with a detached 1½ acres in adjoining Sheering. At Domesday there were six manors (later reduced to five), wholly or partly in the parish. Some of their boundaries are probably very ancient. Most of the manors are near the parish boundary, many would have had

their own chapels (Housham Hall's was noted in 1720). There were scattered settlements throughout the parish (named greens, ends and tyes) which were probably fully formed by the C13. Domesday arable acreage is below average, as is the amount of woodland, so there were probably common fields on the higher ground in the south of the parish. Many of the major farms scattered across the parish, and some of the smaller houses on the greens, have moats.

Sue Oosthuizen, of Cambridge University, advocates the use of contours when studying landscape history. There is an E/W watershed running across the southern half of the parish (but not forming the parish boundary) and almost all the manors are situated on the 250 foot contour line, with the arable land below. This is practical, being the spring line where the high level gravels rest on the head deposits.

Though Matching is now at the end of the road, footpaths radiate out from the church and probably represent former roads. A pond just to the north was not shown on the 1777 map, though the avoiding kink in the road is present. It is fed by an iron-rich spring, and the kink probably indicates that there was a pre-existing pond which was remade after 1777. The moat round the hall is not symmetrical and was probably fitted round the existing buildings and orchard when moat building became fashionable. Map evidence suggests that there was also a small attached green. John Hunter had commented that these attached greens were not unusual with other Essex manors. The church, as usual, adjoins the manor, but it is interesting to note that it is well adrift of an E/W orientation.

Anne Padfield then spoke about the buildings of Matching itself. The church

is the least interesting, having had a very heavy restoration (and a rebuilt chancel) by A W Blomfield in 1875. An octagonal Perpendicular font, a Jacobean pulpit, two brasses a C15 tower and the nave arcades survive.

The nearby Hall is a large farmhouse with two crosswings of varied C16/17 dates, with a central façade gable added later. At the back is a corner-to-corner addition (overlapping by a door width) which is half of a crosswing from another house, modified, re-erected and provided with a pyramidal roof. This “backhouse” would have been a combined kitchen, brewhouse and washhouse. There is a second free-standing building nearby, also with a pyramidal roof. Dating is impossible as it is plastered internally, and its original function is unknown.

The Hall has a fine collection of outbuildings, starting with an aisled barn (probably for the lay rector’s tithes) of 8 bays of C16/17 date, with two wagon porches. There is a marked deterioration in the quality of the timber from one end to the other. Though the reason for this is unknown, it is not an uncommon finding in Essex. C19 shelter sheds were added to maximise manure production for use as a fertiliser – a priority on farms at that period. There is also a modest thatched stable built of re-used timber, a granary and a C18 brick dovecote.

The vicarage is probable mid C16, originally jettied but subsequently underbuilt. A diagonal dragon beam internally shows that the jetty originally ran round the side. It is a small house with basic parlour, hall and service wing, reflecting the poverty of the living. The incongruous brick crosswing, which dwarfs the timber framed building, dates from 1884, and there is a little barn for the small tithes, probably C17 in date.

The Marriage Feast Room is late medieval in date, of four bays and with a crown post roof. The two floors have separate access, though there is structural evidence that the stairs to the first floor were originally at the other end of the building, facing the church. The first floor windows are in their original position, and the shutter grooves can still be seen. There is evidence that suggests it was originally built against another building, a crosswing perhaps containing the chimney (the present chimney being a later addition). Though Morant described it as a marriage feast room, it was probably originally the hall of a guild with an upstairs meeting room, and provision downstairs for storing equipment, catering and the brewing of “church ales”. In the C19 it accommodated the church clerk, and part of it was lived in until the 1970s.

After an excellent tea, members were free to explore the immediate vicinity, and to enjoy the efforts of a team of bell ringers who had fortuitously arrived.

Michael Leach

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## **COURSES IN NAVAL & MARITIME HISTORY AT UNIVERSITY OF GREENWICH**

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The University of Greenwich, in the superb setting of the Old Naval College, offers a number of interesting courses on these topics, two in the autumn term and another two in the spring/early summer, for 2 hours weekly over 12 to 15 weeks. The focus is mainly on the Royal Navy and the Merchant Navy from the C18 to the C20. There is also a full time or part time MA in maritime history. Further details can be found on their website at [www.gre.ac.uk/gmi](http://www.gre.ac.uk/gmi)

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## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

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Essex County Council requires volunteers to help complete a survey of all railway lines in the County. The project aims to record all remaining architectural features along the lines and is therefore a substantial task. Any help would be appreciated.

Routes already recorded include the Flitch Way, the Saffron Walden Branch Line, the Shenfield to Southminster Line, the Woodham Ferrers to Maldon East Line and the Witham to Maldon Line.

If you would like further information, please contact Laura Belton on 01245 437613, [laura.belton@essex.gov.uk](mailto:laura.belton@essex.gov.uk)

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## **PUBLICATION & RESEARCH FUND**

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The Publications Development Fund was set up in 1992 to provide financial support for the Society's publications. Due to the energy and enthusiasm of its first secretary, Major Bill Hewitt, and the generosity of members of the Society, the capital raised over the first ten years exceeded Council's expectations by a considerable margin. The Fund was further augmented in 2003 by the incorporation of other funds held by the Society, and it was decided to expand the scope of the fund to provide for the possibility of making grants towards members' research projects. It was accordingly re-named the Publication & Research Fund but it is still operated in the same way, granting only the interest which is generated by the capital. It was agreed that the first call on the Fund should always be the Society's publications, and over the years only one small grant has been requested to assist in the publication of a member's research report.

Members may not be aware of the broader nature of the PRF, but it can make grants towards the cost of collaborative research projects organised by, or run in association with, the Society. It can also be made to individual members to assist research, or the publication of research, on Essex history or archaeology. Applications should be made in writing and supported by two referees. Grants may be allocated in advance, but will only be paid when the project is in corrected proof for publication (or its electronic equivalent), and will lapse after three years if not claimed. Applications should be made to the Hon Secretary of the Fund, Dr Chris Thornton at 75 Victoria Road, Maldon CM9 7HE.

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## **FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE – THE CREATION OF A HISTORICAL MYTH?**

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Everyone knows about the angel of Scutari, the genius behind much C19 medical reform and the principal driving force behind the creation of nursing as a respectable profession. It is therefore surprising that examination of the primary sources provides a very different picture. Florence Nightingale's reputation was largely created by the press at the time of the Crimean war (she was, perhaps, the world's first 'media celebrity') and was further boosted by E. Cook's biography of her, commissioned by her family soon after her death in 1910. This was reinforced by Cecil Woodham-Smith's *Florence Nightingale*, published in 1950. This was one of the formative influences of my childhood and I vividly remember its blue cloth binding, with elegant silver lettering on the spine.

A recent article in the British Medical Journal looks more critically at her

career. She came from a very well connected family with close links to Lord Palmerston (prime minister during much of the Crimean War) and was a close friend of Sidney Herbert, who was a strong ally, as well as secretary for war. She was imbued with her class's attitude towards any who rose above their station in life and had a very poisonous relationship with army doctors, of whom nearly three quarters were Scottish or Irish, many from humble backgrounds. She took a particular dislike to 'that old smoke-dried' Dr Andrew Smith, director-general of the army medical department, whose father was a shepherd. She was bitterly scathing of Dr John Hall, principal medical officer in the Crimea, whom she incorrectly accused of having no medical qualifications (in fact, he was an FRCS by examination, unusual at that time); when he was later honoured with a KCB, she sourly observed that this stood for 'Knight of the Crimean Burial-grounds'. It is suspected that much evidence of her prejudice and her antipathies would have been found in her letters and papers, but these were destroyed later in her life, perhaps in the interests of protecting her reputation.

The press had a very considerable influence in creating her image. This was the first war that had had extensive press coverage, the first to attract war 'tourism' and the first to be recorded photographically. The press, then as now, was eager to extend its influence and to expand its readership with sensational stories, and accounts of scandals, and appears to have been largely responsible for establishing the Nightingale canon. Her recruitment by Sidney Herbert was part of the government's attempt to assuage the public criticism whipped up by the press, but her actual contribution, with only 38 nurses to help her, must have been very

thinly spread amongst the 5000 patients awaiting them. There is some evidence to suggest that she may have done more harm than good, but the image of the 'angel of Scutari' – largely a creation of the contemporary press – still has a strong hold on popular belief.

Even her proposals to reform army medical practices, as well as the training of nurses, appear to have been significantly exaggerated by the press and her adoring public. Her idea of establishing a Medical Staff Corps (mentioned in a letter to Sidney Herbert in January 1855) had already been suggested by the detested Dr Andrew Smith, and agreed by the War Office. Similarly her proposals for a medical statistical branch had been pre-empted and already put in place by Dr Smith, and her suggestion for the need of an army medical school had been recognised half a century earlier (though she did provide active support to this enterprise). As for nurses, the British army had employed women in this role from the beginning of the C19.

Though this has little to do with Essex, it has a great deal to do with the understanding and interpretation of history, as well as the need to evaluate facts critically, and to be very cautious about accepting established traditions.

Michael Leach

Source:

Williams K, 2009 "Reappraising Florence Nightingale" in *British Medical Journal* vol 337, 1461-1463

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Enquiries about delayed or missing publications and about the supply of recent back numbers should be addressed to the Secretary.

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2008 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £48,930

Donations payable to: The Essex Society for Archaeology and History

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Donations of acceptable books

Please address enquiries to:

Bill Abbott, 45 Cambridge Road, Colchester C03 3NR

Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail [bill.abbott@btinternet.com](mailto:bill.abbott@btinternet.com)

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

**THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY**

**NEWSLETTER NUMBER 158**

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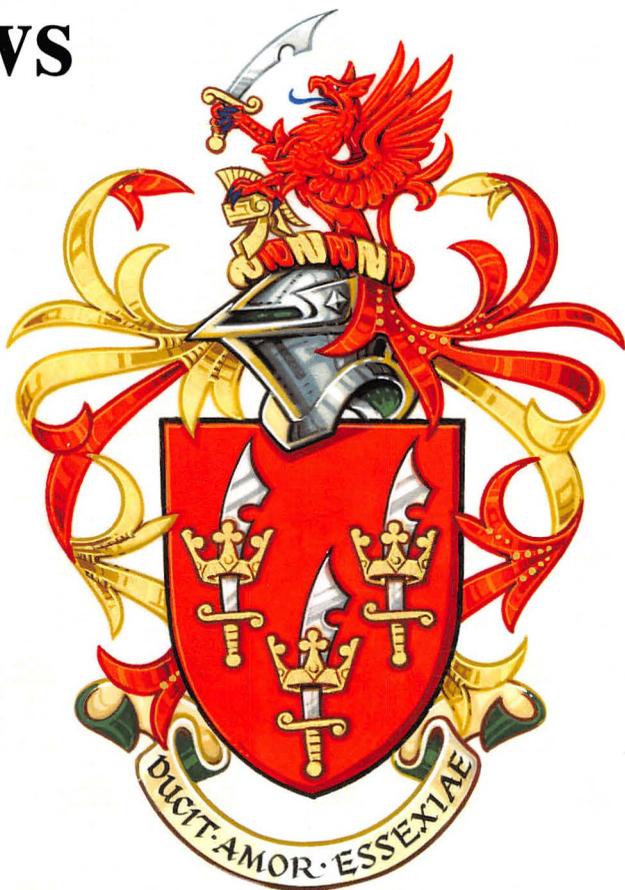
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# Essex Archaeology and History News



Winter 2009

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 159

WINTER 2009

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Assistant Editor: Michael Leach

**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 12 MARCH 2010**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

### Cover illustration:

The Society's coat of arms in glorious colour.

The Letters Patent, authorising the Society to use the arms, will be presented to the Society early in 2010. See 'From the President' on p1.

The arms have three upright seaxes and three crowns to represent the Saxon origin of the county. The seaxes are upright to differentiate from the county's arms.

The crest consists of a griffin, representing knowledge above and below the ground, with its dexter foreclaw holding a seax and the other clasping a Roman helmet.

The motto 'Ducit Amor Essexiae' or 'led by a love of Essex' was suggested by Chris Starr.

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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I announced in the Winter 2008 issue of the Newsletter that the College of Arms had consented to the Society receiving a Grant of Arms. I am delighted to announce that the process of devising "arms which are pleasing, representative and heraldically correct" has now been completed. The Letters Patent (a colourful illuminated and decorated document) authorising the Society to use the arms for posterity has been prepared bearing the seals of the three Kings of Arms (Garter, Clarenceux and Norroy and Ulster). Classical scholars may be interested to learn that the Society has adopted the motto "DUCIT AMOR ESSEXIAE", which is not subject to heraldic jurisdiction. It is very gratifying to be able to report that Her Majesty The Queen has appointed our agent, Thomas Woodcock, as Garter Principal King of Arms (the senior Officer at the College of Arms and a position which has existed since 1415) with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2010. This is a well deserved promotion for Thomas Woodcock who has very kindly offered to present the Letters Patent to the Society early in 2010. Members will receive an official invitation to a reception which it is anticipated will be a memorable occasion in our distinguished history. Unfortunately, Mr Woodcock will not be wearing his highly elaborate heraldic tabard as these can only be worn in the presence of the Sovereign!

I am delighted to be able to report that volume 39 (2008) of the *Transactions* has been produced as forecast with mailing taking place during the first week of January. I stated in the last Newsletter (Summer 2009) that this volume (the 150<sup>th</sup>) would conclude the Third Series. Since that time our Editor, Dr Chris Starr, and his Deputy, Helen Walker, have

worked at such a prolific rate that it now seems highly likely that it will prove possible to despatch the 2009 issue of *Transactions* in spring 2010. In the light of these welcomed developments a decision has been taken to conclude the Third Series with volume 40. I hope you will agree that this is a rather more convenient number! As previously reported, future issues of the *Transactions* will appear on a regular basis in the autumn of each succeeding year. It is now proposed to introduce the exciting enhancements, to which I have already alluded, for the first volume of the Fourth Series (the entitlement for 2010) which it is anticipated will appear in autumn 2011.

I am also delighted to report that our Indexer, Peter Gunn, is working at a prolific rate to the point where he has almost completed the indexing of volume 28. It is hoped that during the course of 2010 it will prove possible to produce a further Index Volume for the Third Series covering volumes 21 to 30 (1990-9).

Whilst writing, it gives me great pleasure to be able to announce that Chris Starr has been appointed Project Officer for the Manorial Document Register (M.D.R.) for Essex, a major new project to put full details of Essex manorial documents on-line. The project constitutes a partnership between the Essex Record Office, The National Archives (T.N.A.) and Royal Holloway, University of London and is part of a wider national scheme. The Manorial Documents Register, maintained by T.N.A., is the official register of manorial documents in England and Wales and is a particularly useful source of information for those wishing to research manorial history. It has been estimated that Essex possessed more than 1,200 manors with one aim of the M.D.R.

project to locate the whereabouts of every known record relating to them. On completion of the Essex project, the M.D.R. database (which is accessible on the T.N.A. website) will have particulars of the nature and location of the county's surviving manorial documents, an exciting new resource for everyone with an interest in Essex history. The main funding for the project has been provided

by the T.N.A. and The Marc Fitch Fund. The Essex Society for Family History and The East of England Regional Archives Council have also contributed. I am pleased to be able to advise that the Society has donated the sum of £500 for the purchase of a notebook pc to assist Chris Starr with the task of researching Essex manorial documents for the M.D.R. project.

Your Society is structured on the basis of three separate committees, namely Library, Publication and Programme which each meet twice per annum and report to the Council. The Library Committee normally meets in March and October at Hollytrees in Colchester to consider such issues as acquisitions, book reviews and the management of the Society's Library which is housed on permanent deposit in the Albert Sloman Library at the University of Essex. The Library is our most important and valuable asset with a conservative valuation of £100,000 placed on it in the Society's accounts.

It is hoped that it will prove possible to hold the 2011 Annual General Meeting at the University of Essex with the intention of providing members with an opportunity to see the Library and learn more about its operations from both our Hon Librarian, Dr Jane Pearson, and Nigel Cochrane, the Deputy Librarian at the Albert Sloman Library. **I should, of course, remind you that the Society's Library is ordinarily available for your use during normal opening hours. In fact, members can obtain reader tickets permitting the use or to borrow books from all parts of Essex University Library upon application to the University Librarian.**

My purpose for providing this background is two-fold. **Firstly, we are eager to recruit new members to the Library Committee and secondly, we are anxious to create a panel of individuals to whom we can call upon for the purpose of reviewing books for publication in either our *Transactions* or *Newsletter*.** Jane Pearson (Cob Cottage, The Street, Great Tey, Colchester, Essex CO6 1JS [drjanepearson@hotmail.com](mailto:drjanepearson@hotmail.com)) or I (Lowe Hill House, Stratford St Mary, Suffolk CO7 6JX [martinstuchfield@btconnect.com](mailto:martinstuchfield@btconnect.com)) would be delighted to hear from you if either of these areas are of interest.

H. Martin Stuchfield

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## IN SEARCH OF THE HAVERING PALACE FISHPONDS

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Havering was a royal manor before the Conquest and, after passing through the hands of many royal consorts and subsequent tenancies, was finally sold by the crown in 1828. The park was divided during the Commonwealth and remained in divided occupation after the Restoration. Though James I had used the palace as a hunting lodge, by 1650 it was described as a 'confused heap of old, ruinous, decayed buildings'. Some repairs were done by its tenant after the Restoration (it was assessed for 58 hearths in 1670) but, by 1719, it was in ruins and uninhabitable. By the beginning of the C19, nothing remained, and an Italianate mansion was built on its site in the middle of the century. This in turn was demolished in 1925 and the gardens to the west were divided up and sold off as plotlands. The C19 stables and lodge, part of the wall of the vegetable garden, a stuccoed terrace retaining wall and a gate pier, and a still impressive Wellingtonia avenue from this period have survived within the present country park. The site, high on the angle of an 'L' shaped ridge, has spectacular views to south, west and north – that to the south now being fortunately screened by trees from the Romford conurbation.

In the early Middle Ages there were three royal fishponds in Essex – Newport, Writtle and Havering. The last appears to have been the most important. 3000 pike were ordered for restocking in 1245-51 and 400 bream were despatched to the royal households in London during the same period. Pike and bream were a popular mix, as the former reduced the prolific numbers of fry from the latter, enabling decent-sized

bream to be produced. There are records of gifts of smaller numbers of bream to the bishop of London and others. In 1260-67 the keeper was ordered to repair 'the pond outside the manor, the stew within the gate and the wall of the manor'. The stew would have been a small pond near the palace kitchens for short-term storage of fish destined for the table, but there must have been a substantial pond or ponds elsewhere with access to running water, essential for the breeding and fattening of substantial numbers of fish. The nearest possible site within the park would have been in the valley of the River Rom, over a mile away.

Fish were easily stolen and Oliver Rackham maintains that, for reasons of security, medieval fishponds were always near a dwelling. A map of the Liberty of Havering made in about 1618 shows, within the park, 'the greate poole' on the River Rom adjoining the Great Lodge. Further upstream, but still within the park, is the moated site of Little Lodge. There is also 'the neue pond' on an eastern tributary of the Rom but this has no building nearby. Neither lodge has survived but the modern map shows two areas of woodland, Roseberry Wood North and Roseberry Wood South which are approximately in the position of the moat and the 'greate poole' respectively. Roseberry Wood North is triangular in shape with the Rom running along the east edge on a gravelly bed. The wood slopes slightly upwards towards the west, making it an unlikely site for a pond, though a moat might have been possible. However, apart from a narrow east-west drainage ditch near its southern end, and what looked like the former line of the river bed near the present stream at the north end, there were no signs of embankments or moats within the woodland. The nearby Park Farm was built about 1869 as a model

dairy farm to supply the London milk market, so it is possible that any remains of Little Lodge and its moat were destroyed at that time.

Roseberry Wood South is roughly square, and the Rom takes a dead straight line diagonally across it, suggestive of a diversionary or re-cut channel. The river has been supplemented by a tributary and has a significantly greater flow than at Park Farm. There are several high earth banks at the edge of the wood at the southern end, but most are steep and regular, with scanty vegetation, and look to be of recent construction for farming or horse livery purposes. Some are surprisingly high, and could be on top of an older bank. Within the wood, near the southwest corner, is a short length of substantial bank of much more slumped form, and more mature appearance. The line of the river is 50 feet to the east but, as already noted, this might be a diversionary channel to take off surplus water, an essential protection for fishponds. There is a wet area on the western edge of the wood which may be part of the former channel leading to this old embankment, so there is a possibility that this is a remnant of the 'greate poole'. However a considerable amount of earthmoving has taken place relatively recently and it is difficult to be sure. The nearby buildings, marked as Lower Park Farm, are now used for light industrial purposes, and the farm house, perhaps the site of Little Lodge, no longer exists. To the south are the flat valley bottom and the urban fringes of Collier Row.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Powell WR (ed.), 1978 *Victoria County History of Essex*, volume vii  
 Pevsner N et al., 2005 *Buildings of England: London 5: East*, Yale UP

Rackham O, 1993 *The History of the Countryside*, Dent  
 OS Pathfinder map 1:25,000 (1976, from surveys dated 1954-73)

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## THE HARLOW POTTERY INDUSTRIES – A NEW MONOGRAPH FROM THE MEDIEVAL POTTERY RESEARCH GROUP

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A study of the Harlow pottery industry (centred on the appropriately named Potter Street) has been long awaited. This industry was active between the C13 and C18, though it is the C17 wares that are best known, particularly Metropolitan slipware which found its way as far afield as the North American colonies. The kilns and their products have been researched, recorded and collected by dedicated enthusiasts since the 1950s, in particular by Wally Davey. This new monograph is compiled in collaboration with Helen Walker, the pottery expert at the ECC Field Archaeology Unit at Braintree. It classifies four groups of Metropolitan slipware to assist identification and dating of finds from excavations. There are also other sections on earlier products, as well as the technology and organisation of the Harlow potteries. This important monograph will be reviewed in *Essex Archaeology & History* in due course.

Meanwhile copies may be obtained from Lyn Blackmore, Museum of London Archaeology, Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED or [www.medievalpottery.org.uk/occpap3.htm](http://www.medievalpottery.org.uk/occpap3.htm) It is in A4 format, has 198 pages and costs £16 including p&p.

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## PROGRAMME OF THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, ESSEX BRANCH

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Meetings are held at The Link, Trinity Methodist Church, Chelmsford and are open to visitors and prospective members. A donation of £2 is requested. Saturday, January 9 at 2.30pm: Anne Curry, professor of history at Southampton University and president of Historical Association, "Women and work in the Middle Ages"

Saturday 6 February at 2.30pm: Dr Colin Haydon of University College, Winchester, "Robespierre"

Saturday 6 March at 2.30pm: Prof Hugh Brogan of Essex University, "Tammany Hall, the historical implications"

Saturday 10 April at 2.30pm: Dr Bob Bushaway of Birmingham University, "1830-33: Captain Swing and the rising of agricultural labourers in southern England, and Sam Sharpe and the largest British slave revolt in Montego Bay, Jamaica: free and slave labour – a case of mistaken identity"

Friday 14 May at 7.30pm: Dr Herbert Eiden of the Victoria County History of Essex, "The hurlyng time: the Peasants' Revolt of 1381"

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## COUNTESS OF WARWICK'S TREE HOUSE AT EASTON LODGE

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Those familiar with the gardens at Easton Lodge may remember that the Countess of Warwick commissioned the architect, Harold Peto, to design a rustic thatched tree house as a suitable place for adults to partake of afternoon tea. Not surprisingly, with the decline and post-war demolition of the mansion itself,

the tree house fell into serious decay and, about 20 years ago, all that remained was the twisted frame of one wall perilously perched in the dead oak tree. However a professional enthusiast for timber-framed buildings was intrigued by the possibility of restoration and discovered much of the rest of the frame stacked on the ground nearby, covered in moss but in remarkably good condition. Surprisingly the original carpenter's assembly marks were still legible on the bottom tenons of the posts, as well as on the corresponding cill mortises, and it was relatively easy to assemble two of the original six walls. These, together with one surviving roof rafter, contemporary photos and Peto's original sketch, provide enough information for a complete restoration. Realisation of this will depend on finding funds, but in the meantime the partially assembled tree house has found safe and secure shelter in a barn on the Writtle College campus. The prospect of its ultimate restoration is eagerly awaited, though much will depend on resolving the problems which have led to the regrettable closure of Easton Lodge gardens.

Michael Leach

Source:

*Cornerstone* (the magazine of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) xxx, no:2, 2009.

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## RECOGNITION FOR ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGIST

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The name Tony Wilkinson will be familiar to members of the Society for the contribution that he has made to the archaeological study of Essex. Following many years on the staff at the University of Chicago he recently

returned to Britain and is now professor of Archaeology at Durham University. Two years ago he was elected a fellow of the British Academy and now the Academy has recognised his contribution to landscape archaeology by awarding him one of the medals which it gives for academic excellence in the humanities and social sciences to reward those who make an outstanding contribution or achievement in their particular field of research. At the award ceremony on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2009 Tony received the John Coles Medal for Landscape Archaeology which is given for "distinguished achievements, by any scholar based in Britain and Ireland, in landscape archaeology in any part of the world and in any period". The explanation for the reward was as follows:

"Tony Wilkinson has carried out over many years fundamental and innovative research on landscapes, including dry lands and submerged landscapes. His work ranges from temperate Europe to the arid zones of the Near and Middle East. In the UK, he investigated a submerged landscape on the Essex coast and related it to long-term trends in sea level change. In Iran, he demonstrated that the Gorgan wall of baked brick was constructed in conjunction with major water supply systems, and cut through a heavily populated landscape. In Syria, he illustrated the fundamental landscape changes that took place between the city states of the Syrian Bronze Age and the territorial empires of the Iron Age and later. He has shown how early cities co-evolved in an intimate relationship with their environment, involving the aggregation of smaller household units. His recent book *Archaeological Landscapes of the Near East*, (University of Arizona Press, 2003) won several major prizes. He has set the agenda for

landscape studies in archaeology, setting the highest standards of practice, indicating the many outstanding problems, and pointing the way for future work."

His contributions to Essex archaeology include a review of the development of the landscape of South Essex based upon rescue excavations in advance of new road construction (Wilkinson 1988) and the fieldwork referred to above carried out on the Essex coast which was designed to investigate its evolution since the end of the Ice Age (Wilkinson and Murphy 1995): Wilkinson et al forthcoming).

David Buckley

Wilkinson T. J., 1988, "Archaeology and Environment in South Essex: Rescue Archaeology along the Grays By-pass, 1979/80" *East Anglian Archaeology* No 42

Wilkinson T.J., and Murphy P.L., 1995 "The Archaeology of the Essex Coast, Volume 1: The Hullbridge Survey" *East Anglian Archaeology* No 71

Wilkinson T. J., et al Forthcoming "The Archaeology of the Essex Coast Volume II" *East Anglian Archaeology* No xx

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## **HAROLD CURWEN, THE CAREFUL PRINTER (1885-1949)**

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On 27 March 1973, members of the Double Crown Club were addressed after their dinner by Herbert Simon of Chipping Ongar. His speech was later published as a booklet in a limited edition of 120 copies and was, most appropriately, printed by the Curwen Press of Plaistow (formerly in Essex, in the extreme south west corner of the historic county).

In 1863, Harold's father, founded the Plaistow printing works (later J Curwen & Sons Ltd) to print music. A former Congregational minister, he had devised (from other systems) the Tonic Sol-Fa system for teaching singing to amateur church choirs. He was an unconventional man, an admirer of William Morris, and a believer that happiness came from the production of good and useful work. Harold himself was born in 1885 in the family home of Upton House, Loughton (which had been the birthplace of Joseph Lister) and in due course was sent to the New School at Abbotsholme, a pioneer public school where the teaching of handicrafts went hand in hand with the more usual subjects. Here he excelled in metalwork and furniture making, and was introduced to the Arts and Crafts movement. After a brief spell with his father's firm as an unpaid assistant, he worked for a year for a music printer in Leipzig, after which he returned home and attended Edward Johnston's classes at the Central School of Arts and Crafts in London. Johnston was a fine printer, and subsequently the designer of the sans serif typeface still used on the London Underground. He brought an almost religious zeal to printing, sharing the Arts and Crafts view that making beautiful things would improve both individuals and society, and would make England a better place to live in.

Harold worked full time at Plaistow from 1908 and was made a director in 1911. He brought Johnston's zeal to the works, encouraging the staff to take an interest in good design, and generally to improve standards of typography. He was influenced by Emery Walker (who had assisted William Morris at the Kelmscott Press) and was an expert in the technique of spacing. Much printing at that time was disfigured by 'rivers', serpentine white spaces snaking down

the page between the type. This could be overcome by careful adjustment of the spacing between letters, but these skills took some time to master and the Curwen Press did not entirely avoid 'rivers' until the early 1920s.

The firm had a wide range of badly designed typefaces of poor legibility. The First World War brought an unexpected bonus – due to the scarcity of metal, the Ministry of Munitions were willing to buy any unwanted type metal, and Harold persuaded his co-directors to dispose of large amounts of the old stuff, and to replace them with a limited range of well designed types such as Caslon and Garamond. Not all their customers were pleased with the result. One of their best clients, the West Ham Corporation Tramways, was furious to find their accounts sheets clearly and legibly laid out in Caslon Old Face without due notice, and promptly took their custom elsewhere. The war also solved another of Harold's problems. The firm's traveller, who brought in all kinds of unwanted work such as boot polish labels and Jeyes Fluid posters, joined the Royal Naval Reserve and, after war service, emigrated to Australia.

Harold brought an infectious enthusiasm to his work, and his promotional material must have startled his more conventional clients. One of these stated 'It is a great pleasure to arrange fine type, and still finer artistry, to convey the spirit of your message. And work that is a pleasure is usually a success. Will you allow me to arrange and execute your printing at the Curwen Press, Plaistow, E13?' Another leaflet must have been even more surprising to East London manufacturers. Headed with an image of a boy and girl dancing wildly, the text exhorted clients to 'Get the Spirit of Joy into your printed things. The World's dead tired of drabness in Business Life. Give your customers credit for a sense

of humour and some understanding. Take courage in both hands and have your printing done cheerfully. I arrange and make courageous printing at the Curwen Press.' Even today, such an approach would have the ability to astonish! His enthusiasm also extended to the design of new typefaces – a sans serif (some years before Johnston's Underground Sans) and a particularly beautiful poster type, cut in wood and patented in 1919.

In the second quarter of the C20 the Curwen Press established a formidable reputation in the world of fine printing, entirely due to Harold's drive and vision, and it deserves to be much better known. It had a strong influence in pushing up the standards of printing throughout the industry. Harold retired in 1940 to the West Country, having lived for most of his working life in Loughton. In the 1970s the Curwen Press abandoned letterpress, and moved to Cambridgeshire to specialise in the production of high quality prints.

Michael Leach

Source:  
Simon, H., 1973 Harold Curwen, the Careful Printer, The Curwen Press

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## VISIT TO HOLBROOKS AND MOUNTNESSING MILL

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On July 4 members visited this interesting house not far from the mill. Brenda and Elphin Watkin explained that its unexceptionable external appearance belies much of interest within. Originally it faced east onto what is now a short drive which dwindles into a public footpath running north/south down a shallow valley. The present building is the service crosswing of a vanished hall

house which would have had a second crosswing at its southern end. There is internal evidence of a garderobe stack attached to the north side, accessed by a narrow and low-headed doorway on the first floor. There is also another unusual feature, a room under the jetty on the east side of the present building, originally with no access from inside the house. It had an external doorway in the north wall, opening near the lane. It is unlikely that this was a shop in such a rural location, but it must have had some special and clearly defined function. Nothing is known of the early history of the house but it, and its surrounding land, were not tithe-free so it would appear that it was not owned by the nearby Thoby Priory in the medieval period.

Internally, the removed partition between the two service rooms is marked by a line of mortice holes in the underside of one of the large cross beams, and slots for wattle housing in the upright posts. Part of one of the four centred arched doorways into the lost hall, as well as the opening of the other door, is visible. There was a third door from the hall, to provide access to the original staircase leading to two upper chambers. The square section ceiling joists have central tenons, dating the construction to about 1400. Most rooms have evidence of the window shutter grooves (some partly filled in) with mortices for substantial diamond mullions.

Upstairs the position of the window in the west chamber shows that the hall would have been of single story height which is usual for Essex (unlike neighbouring Kent or Suffolk). The crown post roof has substantial foot braces, and was originally open above the tie beams. There are also axial braces to the crown post.

The party then moved on to Mountnessing windmill for an informative

and entertaining guided talk by Geoff Wood who looks after the other mills in the care of Essex County Council. In 1850 almost every Essex parish had its own water or windmill, but exactly a century later the last windmill in the county ceased working after a fatal accident to its miller. The trade was arduous and hazardous, and constant vigilance was required to avoid potential disaster to the mill, including the need to keep it facing into the wind at all times. At Mountnessing this had to be done by lifting the access ladder off the ground, and manually rotating the entire mill on bearings which were liberally greased with tallow. The mill, which is in working order, was a joy to see with everything neat and tidy, and in good order. After doing some real milling, though, it takes several days to clean up – “Dusty” was an apt soubriquet for the miller!

One of Ann Newman’s excellent teas followed. The Society is ever grateful to her and her helpers, as well as (on this occasion) to Geoff Wood, Brenda and Elphin Watkin, and to the owners of Holbrooks for allowing us to look all over their house.

Michael Leach

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## **GEOFF WOOD 1941 – 2009**

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It is with deep sadness that I write of the death of Geoff Wood, Essex County Council’s Mills Support Officer. Geoff joined the County Council Mills team in 2001 and with his antecedents being millers he had a wealth of knowledge and experience which he endeavoured to pass on to all who met him. His enthusiasm and sense of humour will be much missed by all who worked with him and those who had the pleasure of meeting him on a visit to a mill.

Sally Gale

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## **VISIT TO TIPTOFTS, WIMBISH**

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On 15 August 2009, members visited this exceptionally interesting house on a perfect summer’s day. Tiptofts is a timber-framed manor house with aisled hall and two cross-wings, and is on a moated site, the moat surviving on all four sides. The southern cross-wing has been tree-ring dated to 1287-1329, and the hall’s west spere post has given a similar date. This is the earliest dated English house of its type.

Much of the aisled hall survives, including the west aisle and the head of a fourteenth century window. The hall is open to the roof, with a hammerbeam centre truss and moulded spere posts. Originally there was a hearth in the centre of the hall, the smoke escaping through a barrel type louver. A brick chimney was inserted in the sixteenth century. One of the three doors into the service wing (the southern cross-wing) survives; traces remain of the other two. At the dais end of the hall, the line of an oriel window can be seen on the exterior. The southern cross-wing was built by a different carpenter, with widely spaced timbers, infilled with planks rather than with wattle and daub. Extensions were made in the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries which conceal much of the medieval front of the house.

The decoration in the hall on the aisle piers, crown posts and spere posts indicate that the house was intended to impress the local gentry. It is not known who was responsible for the building. At some point, it was in the hands of Sir John de Wauton (d.1347) who was a knight of the shire for Essex in the parliaments of 1330 and 1341, served as sheriff in 1330-2, and at other times acted as a commissioner of array and keeper of the peace. He fought as a

member of Earl William de Bohun's retinue early in the Hundred Years' War, was at the battle of Crécy, and died at the siege of Calais in 1347. His funeral took place at Wimbish church where his brass can still be seen.

After looking at the nineteenth century barns, we went on to Radwinter, and after tea, provided by the Radwinter Women's Institute, looked at the church. Much of it was restored and rebuilt in the second half of the nineteenth century, with several High Church features. The central part of the reredos, originally carved in Brussels in about 1510, was purchased by the rector in 1888. It depicts scenes from the life of the Virgin Mary, and sets her life in the midst of fifteenth century people.

The afternoon was extremely interesting and varied. Many thanks to John Walker for guiding us at Tiptofts, and to Ann Newman and Pat Ryan who organised the visit.

Jennifer Ward

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## VISIT TO HADLEIGH

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Members of the Society visited Hadleigh on 19 September 2009 in a perfect early autumn weather, meeting at the reconstructed Iron Age roundhouse in the country park. It was closely based on the building excavated by Paul Drury in the 1970s at Little Waltham, modified slightly to meet modern requirements (a second door for a fire escape, for example, and a wider porch for practical reasons).

Gary King described the reconstruction. The timber came from ECC country parks (apart from the chestnut from Norseley Woods, Billericay) and the thatch from Great Yarmouth. Setting out was done with rope anchored to a central peg, and the six posts of the inner ring were erected. The post holes for these

were three feet deep to ensure stability during construction. The bridging pieces across the top of these posts were notched to get a better fit, and then secured to the tops of the posts with seasoned 2" oak pins, driven into the posts to a depth of 18 – 24". Then the outer ring was marked out, and the frame of the porch constructed.

The next stage was the erection of the posts of the outer ring, and weaving of green hazel rods between. The wallplate was fixed to the top of these posts with oak pins. Having a stable outer wall, the roof timbers (at 45° pitch) could be put in place, lifted by machine and lashed into position with rope, and pegged to the wall plate. Considerable physical strength would have been required to do this manually. The rafters, being slightly irregular, had to be jiggled into position to get the best fit over the wall plate and bridging pieces to meet neatly at the apex. A woven hazel ring was made up on the ground between pegs, and then roped into position half way between the bridging pieces and the apex to give greater stability.

Daubing the outer wall came next. Suitable clay needs to be exposed for several months to make it workable, and as this was impractical, ready-mixed daub, containing small amounts of chopped straw and sand, was bought in – 22 tons of it, at about £100 a ton. For health reasons, dung was not added. The daub was made into balls and hurled the wattle wall, and this required a team of one thrower and three ball makers each side.

Fixing the hazel rod battens across the rafters proved tricky, as the lashings tended to work loose, allowing the battens to slip down. This was solved by screwing the battens into position, though lashings were used as well, consuming about 1½ miles of rope! Half a mile had already been used, a

reminder that adequate supplies of rope would have been essential (probably originally made from retted lime tree bark). Finally the roof was thatched professionally, using about 5 tons of Norfolk reed. This was chosen as being more durable and more fire resistant than straw, and was expected to last at least 30 years.

The kitchen area was placed inside the door on the left, the traditional place in round houses throughout the world. A central fire pit was deemed unsafe, so a raised hearth was formed from left-over daub in a timber box, and is now as hard as brick. No smoke hole was provided as it is thought that a hole in the thatch would have made that part of the roof vulnerable to sparks from the fire, and to weather. High levels of smoke would have fumigated the thatch and assisted its preservation. Perhaps burning dry seasoned wood might have made conditions a little more tolerable for the occupants.

The party then moved on to Hadleigh castle. David Andrews briefly outlined its history, Susan Westlake from English Heritage described recent work on the surrounding landscape (potentially threatened by the construction of a cycle track for the 2012 Olympics), and Ken Newman outlined the reasons for the geological instability of the site. Deep cracks in the approach path had already hinted at the unstable nature of the ground on which we stood. Hubert de Burgh was granted the land in 1215, and it seems likely that the castle was largely complete when a licence to crenellate was granted in 1230. The castle, characterised by square towers, was acquired by the crown in 1239, and Edward II made internal improvements in 1311-1312.

Edward III, in a period of peace and considerable affluence, undertook major reconstruction between 1360 and 1370,

with round and 'D' shaped towers. This building was largely for spectacle and for the display of power, rather than for defence, and was matched by a similar (but now lost) castle on the other side of the Thames at Queenborough. Unlike the latter, Hadleigh is asymmetrical, probably due to the difficult topography of its site. The east entrance was blocked, and a new barbican formed on the north side. The castle mill and wharf (with a sunk boat full of Kentish ragstone) had been identified, on the now drained marsh near the railway line. It is not clear if the mill was powered by the nearby stream, or by the tide. There were royal hunting parks at Thundersley, Rayleigh and immediately adjoining the castle itself. No pales survive for Hadleigh park, but Park Farm, on high ground, has been suggested as the site of the park lodge. The stream, running diagonally north-west/south-east through the park, was found to have three dams along its length. Map evidence shows that one is of C19 date, the other two may be medieval fishponds. The dry valley running to the west of the castle was probably formed by human activity (a road from Hadleigh to the quay, deepened by natural erosion) rather than by a stream. It is marked as Castle Lane on a late C19 map. The extensive excavations and tramways of the brickworks were further to the west, and do not appear to have intruded on this valley.

In 1552 Edward VI sold the castle to Richard Rich and large scale demolition followed (some of the stone may have been used to build his mansion at Rochford Hall). During the C17 and C18 the cliff face below the castle became well vegetated but, though the south wall was still in place in 1863, the 'D' shaped tower on this side had already toppled. Between 1890 and 1895 there was a major landslip which carried away the

entire south side of the castle ruins. Another slip between 1930 and 1955 split and tilted part of the north-east tower. Construction of a counterweight berm in 1965 failed to stop a further partial collapse of this tower. There was a further slip on the west side under heavy snow in 1969. Spoil from the 1971/2 excavations inside the castle, dumped on the true rear scarp to the north, caused further slippage in 1975. In 1973 vegetation was removed from the south slope by bulldozer and, within two years, there was further movement along the line of the 1890s landslide. There were further slips on the south slope, and on the west side, in 2001/2. It is clear that the castle site is being slowly disembowelled from the south, and that it will only be a matter of time before the south-east tower collapses down the slope.

The reasons for this progressive instability are complex. The hill on which the castle stands is London Clay, dipping about 1° to the south, and containing small amounts of altered volcanic ash liable to expansion and contraction during wet and dry periods. Movement of the River Thames and changes in climate and sea level in geological time have caused erosion and slipping of the cliff. However it seems that the cliff has remained relatively stable from about 2000 years ago until the mid C19. There is no simple or single explanation for the 1890s slip, but probable factors are a) natural weathering of London clay on slopes, which decreases stability b) creep on the steep face of the slope at 17-20° (fully stable at no more than 8°) c) some unrecorded event at the base of the slope d) cool wet weather in the 1890s lubricating and destabilising the upper slope e) an extreme local event, such as the 1884 Essex earthquake, floods in the 1880s and 1890s, and vibration from explosions, or low

atmospheric pressure, or tidal bounce in the nearby estuary f) human disturbance, such as the nearby Salvation Army brickworks in the late C19 and g) clearance of vegetation from the slope in the latter part of the C19.

It is clear that little can be done to prevent the eventual loss of the south-east tower.

Michael Leach (with many thanks to Ken Newman)

Source

Hutchinson, J.N. & Gostelow, T.P., 1976 P.T.R.S.L. series A 283, pp.557-604

Ryan, P., 1999 *Brick in Essex: a Gazetteer of Sites*, Pat Ryan

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## CONSERVATION AT ST ANDREW'S, HATFIELD PEVEREL

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The complex conservation of the west nave doorway of this church has recently been completed by Bakers Conservation of Danbury, and achieved national distinction as runner-up in the SPAB John Betjeman Award 2009. The Norman door arch had been built with alternating blocks of Caen and Reigate stone, with clunch columns and imposts below. Bath and Ancaster stone had been used for subsequent repairs. The principal problem was in the arch where the Reigate stone had decayed far more than the adjoining blocks of Caen stone, with almost total loss of the chevron pattern in places. Problems had been exacerbated by the use of a cement-based mortar for pointing the doorway, as well as the surrounding rubble walls, causing damage from water retention and efflorescence of dissolved salts.

As the contrast between the mouldings on the alternating stones used in the arch was so severe, it was decided to

build up the eroded detail using a colour-matched lime mortar over a fine stainless steel armature. This was then tool-finished to match the worked stone, and given an appropriately coloured shelter coat of lime wash (which will need to be repeated every few years). Loose cement mortar was removed, but the sound areas were left to avoid damage by hacking out this hard material. The end result, which belies the considerable skill which went into this repair, is of a naturally weathered doorway, without the previous sharp contrast between the severely weathered Reigate and the sharp detailing on the Caen stones of the arch voussoirs.

Michael Leach

Source:

*Cornerstone* (the magazine of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings) xxx, no:3 (2009)

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## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

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Essex County Council requires volunteers to help with a survey of railway architecture. Volunteers are especially needed for the south west, north east and central areas of the county. Please contact Laura Belton on 01245 437613, [laura.belton@essex.gov.uk](mailto:laura.belton@essex.gov.uk).

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## BOOK REVIEW

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**Havering Village, Ardleigh Green and The Harolds: a Pictorial History**, Chris Saltmarsh and Norma Jennings, Phillimore, 2009, ISBN 1860775527, pp120, Illustrated and Indexed, £16.99  
Books consisting of old photographs of particular localities have multiplied greatly over the last two decades, driven

by a curiosity about the past as seen through the lens of the camera. This well-presented hardback is a sequel to *From Havering to Harold Wood* which was published about 15 years ago, which stimulated the offers of previously unknown photographs and led to this publication. This in itself is a useful function of such books and one hopes (possibly over-optimistically) that the better images will find a permanent home in a local library or record office, as the reproductions suffer an inevitable loss of quality. This book has a useful and thoughtful introduction, covering the social history and development of the area in the C20. It includes some non-photographic illustrations, such as maps, which are very welcome, but also some rather odd choices, such as a Great Eastern Railway parcel label. The photographs vary considerably in quality and, while appreciating the need to appeal to local purchasers, one feels that there are too many stiffly posed and amateurish group photos. Not unexpectedly, the skilled photographer stands out, and those of the magnificent Mr Bell of Leigh-on-Sea (usually with his trade-mark 1930s box saloon parked in view) deserve a volume of their own. To its credit, the book does have an index though it is an inconsistent one, lacking (for example) an entry for railways while having group entries for churches, clubs, parks and so on. Neither is the splendid Mr Bell included. However this book will have a strong appeal to those familiar with the area.

**Rayleigh in 1809**, Noel Beer, HTR Publications, 2009, pp52.

This latest booklet from the fluent pen of Noel Beer recreates the distant world of Rayleigh in 1809. After a succinct village topography, he begins with the nation's war with France and the effects it had on Rayleigh to supply troops and to man the

militia; on the profits of grain farmers and the lot of the poor. This leads to a discussion of the work of parish officials, making good use of surviving parish records: churchwardens, overseers of the poor and the pressing issue of the poor house, as poor rates rose and poverty increased. The four constables were busy people with the increased movement of people during the war. Thence to the work of surveyors, the difficult job of road maintenance, helped by the spread of Essex turnpikes. Two inns housed overnight travellers. Coaches, carriers' carts and slow wagons made London in a day. Rayleigh was not quite at the end of the world. And their children went to school. There was a Church school, a Baptist school and a Sunday School. Of those married in Rayleigh in 1809 39% signed their name.

In 1809 Rayleigh (and the nation) celebrated the Jubilee of George III. Military displays, a church parade, feasts (with toasts) and fireworks, for which 'the poor of the parish appeared to outvie each other in gratitude.'

Two useful appendices cover the work of the Manor Court and the details of the 1809 rate books.

As ever, this is a good read and a must for all Rayleigh citizens.

**The guide to Suffolk churches**, D.P. Mortlock, Cambridge: Lutterworth Press, 2009, ISBN 0718830762, pp607, Illustrated and Indexed, £30

For Essex buildings, we are fortunate to have James Bettley's new edition of Pevsner. On the subject specifically of churches, we have the benefit too of older publications, not least John Fitch's 1996 *Select guide* published by the Friends of Essex Churches. We await, however, an enterprise on the scale of D.P. Mortlock's *Guide to Suffolk churches*. (Suffolk, it should be noted,

has about 100 more medieval churches than Essex). This book contains what was originally a three volume work published from 1988-92 in a single volume, which has been revised to include, *inter alia*, more information on bells. One change the author notes that has occurred in the intervening time is the way churches have increasingly become community buildings, provided with kitchens and toilets to service what Private Eye has called the 'rite of coffee' and some clergy the 'ministry of catering'. A change he does not comment upon, one which will frustrate users of his book, is the growing number of churches which are kept locked and without information on where to obtain a key.

Mortlock describes himself as 'an enthusiast rather than an expert'. Enthusiasm makes the text a lively read, and as to not being an expert, that is false modesty. True, a crown post may be described as a king post, but the author's knowledge of churches and local history is profound. Each church entry is a comprehensive vignette, a model of observation and a miniature guide book in its own right, covering everything from its setting to architectural features to woodwork, glass and monuments. Mortlock is keen on monuments, and often quotes the more interesting and curious verse epitaphs. The only limit to the scope of the book is that it is confined to Anglican churches. There are brief notes on the styles of architecture, and a combined glossary and index provides further technical explanation and also makes it possible to search for architects and artists. But in a book of this length, an introductory overview would have been welcome, as would a bibliography to point to where that information might be found, such as the excellent old one published by the Suffolk Historic Churches Trust, or the

work of Munro Cautley, or the books by Birkin Haward on Suffolk roofs and arcades.

Michael Leach, Andrew Phillips and David Andrews

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## A SINGING COMPETITION IN 1773

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On 6 November 1772 an advance notice appeared in the *Chelmsford Chronicle*:

'To all LOVERS of MUSIC. AT Mr. WILLIAM KIRKHAM'S, at the Sign of the *Horse and Jockey*, on WARLEY COMMON, near Brentwood, Essex, on THURSDAY in *Whitsun-Week*, 1773, will be GIVEN GRATIS a fine large CHINA PUNCH BOWN and SILVER PUNCH LADLE, to be sung for by any Company of Singers in this County, each Company to sing three Songs in two Parts, and three Catches, in three Parts; the Catches to be sung out of Mr. ARNOLD'S *Catch Club Harmony*; Sold by Messrs. Longman, Lukey and Co. No. 26, Cheapside, and by Messrs. Hawes, Crowder, and Buckland, in Pater-noster Row, London; also by Messrs. Clachar and Frost, and Miss Hassall, Booksellers, in Chelmsford. A good Ordinary will be provided, and Dinner upon Table at One o'Clock precisely; the Singing to begin at Two, and to be decided by three proper Judges of Music; After which will be a CONCERT of *Vocal and Instrumental Music*, by some Gentlemen Performers.'

Thursday in Whit Week was a holiday in this part of Essex and in 1773 it fell on 3 June. Expanded descriptions of the competition were in the *Chelmsford Chronicle* and the *Ipswich Journal* in May. Each choir was to have at least six singers, dinner was to cost 2s. 6d and 'half a Dozen Drinking Glasses, Ornamented with Musical Trophies' had

been added to the prize. Choirs now had to choose only two of their three catches from *Catch Club Harmony*, but two of their songs were to be from the first and second volumes of Arnold's *Essex Harmony*. 'Great variety of Singing by several Country Choirs' was to be heard afterwards, in addition to the music by gentlemen performers. It seems likely that each choir limited itself to its six best singers for the competition, but all members got a chance to sing later in the day.

John Arnold (1720-1792) lived all his life in Great Warley, near Brentwood, where he was a gentleman farmer, a member of the vestry from the age of 21 and a church warden for many years. The *Horse and Jockey* was re-named the *Horse and Groom* when there were no longer annual race meetings on Warley Common. It lay just outside the parish boundary, on the road to Brentwood, and presumably had better accommodation for the competition than Great Warley's two public houses, the Thatchers Arms and the Magpie (now the Headley).

Arnold is generally described as a psalmist, because of his very successful compilation *The Complete Psalmodist*, which included tunes for all 150 psalms, some composed by himself, and went into seven editions between 1740 and 1779. However, his church choir, like other 18th century companies of singers, also enjoyed more secular fare, for in 1753 he published *Essex Harmony*, containing 32 convivial part songs and 14 catches. Three of his own songs appeared, with works by 15 other composers from Henry Purcell to Maurice Greene. By the time of the competition a third edition, with almost twice as many pieces, had been published, and the first edition of the second volume had come out in 1769. So the competitors had plenty of choice for their two songs from *Essex Harmony*.

Arnold's *Catch Club Harmony, being an entire New Set of Catches, &c. for Three and Four Voices* contained another 74 pieces and had been published three years before the competition. The only known surviving copy is in the Danish Royal Library and has Arnold's signature and the control number 205.

In the 1760s Arnold had begun organising concerts at the new music room he had added to Hulmers, his home in the south of the parish. Stabling and hay were included in the ticket price and refreshments were provided by William Kirkham of the Horse and Jockey. It is clear that the competition was designed to increase the sale of Arnold's books, but he also seems to have had wider social aims. In the preface to the second volume of *Essex Harmony* he had described how 'in some Places are given gratis, by Gentlemen, a Silver Cup, &c. to be sung for by Country Choirs, on Holidays, at some Inn, or Publick House ... which provided this was more encouraged and pursued, it would not only prevent the many Accidents, Mischiefs, and other bad Consequences, generally attending those Diversions of Heroism, Cudgeling, Football Playing, &c. but would be a means of encouraging the Practice of one of the greatest of Sciences; and what can be more agreeable or commendable for Country Choirs, than to meet once a Week, Fortnight, or Month, and thereby entertain themselves and Friends, with such harmonious and inoffensive Mirth; which may not only introduce Peace and Tranquillity in a Neighbourhood, but the Practiseing of Part Songs and Catches, will be a means of greatly improving several Country Choirs in their Knowledge of Musick'.

Eighteenth century newspapers seldom report local social events, being more interested in robberies, suicides and

murders. So we do not know who won and we wonder if any readers have found a reference to this event in their local records or know the whereabouts of the china punch bowl, silver ladle and glasses adorned with musical trophies.

Olive Baldwin, Thelma Wilson

Sources:

*Chelmsford Chronicle*, 6 November 1772, 14 and 28 May 1773

*Ipswich Journal* 15 and 22 October 1763, 12 May 1764, 15 May 1773

Minutes of the Vestry of Great Warley: ERO D/P 195/8/1 and 195/8/2

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## ROMAN SALT PRODUCTION AT STANFORD-LE HOPE

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Rescue archaeology by Oxford Archaeology on a 40 hectare site (in advance of the London Gateway port development) has revealed the largest salt-working complex of over 300 known sites in Essex. A range of large drying tanks, and the foundations of a Roman roundhouse and a boathouse (radiocarbon dated to between 40BC and 240AD) have been uncovered. The site may have late Iron Age origins but remained in use into the C4, when a large hearth was constructed from second-hand tiles. It is suggested that this was used to heat lead pans for the final evaporation. The site is destined to be flooded to provide a wetland area to replace that which will be lost to the new port.

Michael Leach

Source:

*Current Archaeology* Nov. 2009, issue 236, pp.8-9

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Enquiries about delayed or missing publications and about the supply of recent back numbers should be addressed to the Secretary.

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2008 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £48,930

Donations payable to: The Essex Society for Archaeology and History

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Donations of acceptable books

Please address enquiries to:

Bill Abbott, 45 Cambridge Road, Colchester CO3 3NR

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**DATA PROTECTION ACT**

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

**THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY**

**NEWSLETTER NUMBER 159**

**ISSN 0305-8530**

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# Essex Archaeology and History News



**Spring 2010**

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 160

SPRING 2010

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**COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 10 JULY 2010**

The opinions expressed in this publication are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

Cover illustration:

Perspective view of the new scheme for Oaklands Museum by Thomas Ford and Partners July 2007. See Nick Wickenden's article on p.12.

David Buckley writes of Oaklands Museum that "it is particularly pleasing to see the emphasis given to the importance of Chelmsford's industrial past. This could be developed further since the Council's Cabinet member for Parks and Heritage, Christopher Kingsley, has spoken in the press about further extending the museum resource if arrangements can be negotiated for more of the Chelmsford Marconi archive, which was controversially given to Oxford, can be returned to Chelmsford for display."

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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I stated in the last newsletter that our Grant of Arms would be presented to the Society by Thomas Woodcock, Garter Principal King of Arms. I hope that you have received an official invitation to the reception to be held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> May. Our Patron, Lord Petre, has agreed to accept the Letters Patent on behalf of the Society and has very generously permitted the presentation to take place at Ingatestone Hall, his family home. This is a significant occasion in the long and distinguished history of our Society and is surely one not to be missed! I greatly look forward to seeing as many members as possible on 13<sup>th</sup> May.

An excellent colour reproduction of the illuminated and highly decorated Letters Patent will be reproduced in volume 40 (2009) of the *Transactions*. This will be accompanied by a short account of the heraldic background relating to the Grant prepared personally by the Garter Principal King of Arms. I announced in the winter 2009 issue of the Newsletter that it was intended to publish this issue of *Transactions* in spring 2010. In the event, a decision has been taken to defer publication until the autumn. Future issues will appear at approximately the same time each succeeding year. Notwithstanding, members will still receive two issues of *Transactions* in one year! We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to our Editor, Chris Starr, and his Deputy, Helen Walker, for ensuring that our flagship publication is produced punctually and to the highest possible standards.

I am delighted to report that our indexer, Peter Gunn, continues to toil away on indexing the Third Series of *Transactions*. Having now reached volume 30 (1999) a further Index Volume will be produced. It is hoped that this will also be despatched with volume 40 in

the autumn. Peter is continuing to index the final ten volumes in order to bring this highly valuable work to a conclusion.

I previously made mention of the fact that the Society is structured on the basis of three separate committees, namely Library, Publications and Programme. The response to the appeal in the last Newsletter was highly productive and I express gratitude to those who have volunteered their services. Owen Bedwin has decided to retire as Chairman of the Publications Committee after a period of some twenty years. The Society has been most fortunate in being able to benefit from his expertise and support over such a lengthy period of time. Indeed, Owen's contribution has been considerable having also served as President (1986-7) and with distinction as our Editor from 1987-2000. Owen also came to the aid of the Society at a difficult period to edit and oversee three recent volumes of the *Transactions* through the press (35, 36 and 37 (2004-6)). I wish him well in his deserved retirement.

Most of the services that we (those with an interest in archaeology, local history and genealogy) greatly value are non-statutory and are increasingly coming under threat. The latest instance within our historic county is the Redbridge Local Studies Library and Archive which faced the prospect of draconian budget cuts. It is most pleasing to report that a vigorous campaign has resulted in the Council deciding to postpone its plans at a meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March. Obviously, the threat is far from removed especially with a new government facing unprecedented levels of debt. Public sector net debt was £741.6 billion (equivalent to 52.6 per cent of GDP) at the end of February an increase of £144.7 billion in one year! In stating the

obvious, it is apparent that local authorities will come under increasing budgetary pressure for the foreseeable future. The postponement achieved in Redbridge represents a triumph and demonstrates the importance of making elected representatives realise that these types of services are used and are greatly valued by the community. This Society, as a long-established county organisation, continues to lobby vigorously in such cases. Letter writing and pushing at closed doors can and often does produce results. We must continue to remain vigilant.

The Society has also supported the campaign to purchase the Sergeants' Mess at Colchester with a contribution of £2,000 towards the successful public appeal to raise £170,000. Colchester Borough Council have pledged a further sum of £30,000 to secure the building and part of the site of Britain's only Roman chariot horse racing track.

It seems inconceivable that my second year as President is swiftly drawing to a close. The Annual General Meeting this year will be held in the magnificent surroundings of the Grade I Listed Council Chamber at Braintree Town Hall on **Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> June**. The appropriate A.G.M. papers are enclosed with this mailing. Council is proposing the election of Andrew Phillips as an additional Vice-President. Andrew is another who has contributed significantly to the Society. He served as President from 1984-6 and as Librarian from 1986 to 2007 during which period he negotiated the library's move from Hollytrees to Essex University. I hope you agree that a Vice-Presidency is entirely appropriate to acknowledge his outstanding contribution.

H. Martin Stuchfield

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## HAROLD CURWEN – A CORRECTION

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We are grateful to Richard Morris for pointing out an error in the note in last Newsletter. Curwen was born in Upton House, but this was in Upton Lane, West Ham (not Loughton). He lived in Loughton at a later period (from 1910 to 1940), first at 4 Spring Grove, then at 'Mansard' in Alderton Hill. There is more information about Harold Curwen in the Newsletters of the Loughton and District Historical Society (numbers 151, 174 & 175). These articles can be accessed on LDHS's website.

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## WORLD WAR II OCCASIONAL PAPER – VOLUNTEER NEEDED

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We are looking for someone who might be interested in researching, writing and editing an occasional paper of 40 to 50 pages on sources for local historians on World War II topics. This idea has been encouraged by a member who rescued a unique Essex Police document of some 500 pages listing all known incidents (details of bombings, crashed aircraft etc) in the historic county of Essex (excluding Loughton, Waltham Abbey, Southend and Colchester which came under different police authorities). It has been suggested that this entire document could be digitised and included with the occasional paper as a CD. The paper itself should include a description and evaluation of other sources of World War II archives which are now available for Essex, and which would fill the gaps in the information provided by the police document already mentioned. This would involve some research in the Essex Records Office and elsewhere. One of the ERO staff is

very willing to provide help and guidance, and the Society's Publications Committee will provide whatever other support is required.

Anyone interested should contact Michael Leach, Hon Secretary, at [leach1939@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:leach1939@yahoo.co.uk), or through the contact details inside the back cover of this Newsletter.

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## **WALLASEA ISLAND**

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Previous editions of this Newsletter have noted the RSPB's ambitious plans for Wallasea Island, intended to show how low-lying coastal areas might be managed in the face of rising sea levels – both for the benefit of people and wildlife. The RSPB has now acquired about a third of the island and has the other 1800 acres in its sights. Clay to be extracted from the projected new east-west railway line under London (Crossrail) will be used for an unprecedented landscape restoration. More information can be obtained from their website on [www.rspb.org.uk/wallasea](http://www.rspb.org.uk/wallasea)

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## **A SCHOOL FOR YOUNG LADIES AT DEDHAM**

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A member of the Leyland Historical Society is seeking information about Miss Agnes Gardner (1735-1813) who ran a school for 'young ladies' in Dedham in partnership with Mrs Mary Prior (to whom she left £100 in her will dated November 1813). The surviving diary of her sister, Dolly Clayton, who periodically visited from her Lancashire home, makes several references to the Constable family of Flatford Mill. Her son by her first marriage, Robert Barrie (b1774), was a school friend of John Constable and his mother's diary has a few, brief references to the painter. Any information about this family, the

school and the identity of Mrs Mary Prior, would be most welcome. Please contact Joan Langford on [joanlangford@talktalk.net](mailto:joanlangford@talktalk.net)

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## **THE COMPLETE GRAZIER**

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This slim octavo volume, published in 1767 at 3 shillings, was written by an unidentified 'Country Gentleman' as a practical guide for the efficient running of a small estate and was 'originally designed for private Use'. More than half of the book covers the buying, the rearing and the diseases (with suggested remedies) of cows, sheep and pigs; the remaining pages being devoted to the management of poultry, game birds, rabbits, bees and fishponds. It is not to be confused with a better known publication with the same name (but a different author) which ran through many editions in the early C19.

The particular interest of this work is the number of references to Essex. No other county is mentioned nearly as frequently, raising the possibility that the author was an Essex man. All the detailed examples of good practice on various types of farm come from North Essex. The first of these lists the profits that would be expected from a 100 acre dairy farm, together with the costs of the necessary equipment – from which it is clear that butter and cheese making were at the centre of this enterprise. A second Essex example shows the profits and expenses accruing from 50 acres of meadow ground, and a third sets out the economics of 100 acres of coppiced woodland (cut on a ten year rotation) – this was considerably less profitable than either of the others. He notes that, though the clergy were entitled to a tenth of the wood harvested, this could be offset against the woodward's costs in looking after that portion during its growing and felling (known as 'stub

money'). This doubtless led to some contentious disputes. Ten acres were expected to produce 80 'ranges' of wood (worth £80), though I have been unable to find a precise definition of this unit. However the profit from 100 acres of woodland was about one seventh of the same area of meadow, and one tenth of that of an equivalent dairy farm. Needless to say, the author extolled the advantages of dairy farming.

Cheese making – exclusively from cow's milk -- occupies three chapters of the book. If Henry VIII's poet laureate, John Skelton, is to be believed, Essex cheese did not have a good reputation in the C16:

*A cantle of Essex cheese,  
Was well a foot thicke,  
Full of maggots quicke;  
It was huge and great,  
And mighty strong meat,  
For the Deuill to eat,  
It was tart and punicate.*

Cheese making seems to have been a particular interest of the author of *The Complete Grazier*. He refers to the 'Essex method' of making rennet, though this does not seem much different from the techniques used elsewhere, apart from the amount of salt used. His instructions for making cheese are very exact, doubtless important for this delicate art. Two centuries earlier, Tusser had noted:

*Ill hussife unskiful, to make her own  
cheese  
through trusting of others, hath this for  
her fees:*

*Her milkpan and cream pot so slabber'd  
and sost:*

*That butter is wanting and cheese is half  
lost.*

It is difficult to know if the cheese recipes in *The Complete Grazier* derived from the Essex experience of the author. The first recipe is for Stilton. It is clear that this cheese was made generally, and

was not the blue cheese that we know today, as the author frowned on 'moldiness, cracks and rottenness within'. The other cheeses described were a cream cheese, and one called an Angelot, as well as a Cheshire, and another mature cheese coloured with marigold petals and flavoured with mace, cloves, pepper or herbs. Modern cheese aficionados will be familiar with the excellent cheeses which the Dutch usually keep for their own consumption – well matured, and containing cumin seed or cloves. Did Dutch immigrants introduce these flavoured cheeses to the English palate, or was it a widespread (but now forgotten) practice amongst earlier English cheese makers? Writing a century later, Mrs Beeton makes no reference to cheeses of this type (apart from one flavoured with sage and marigold) so perhaps they had fallen out of favour with the English palate. According to Miller Christy, the manufacture of cow's milk cheese was widespread in Essex until the early C19, after which it rapidly dwindled in favour of fattening beef for the London market. At the end of the C18, the Griggs brothers had noted the importance of Epping in the production of butter, and this aspect of Essex dairy farming seems to have survived longer than cheesemaking as, in 1861, Mrs Beeton specifically referred to the excellence of Epping butter in her *Book of Household Management*.

Other Essex references are scattered throughout the book. He is critical of the practice of regularly bleeding Essex calves to produce a white meat. Hay made from lucerne (mixed with straw) was much used for fattening Essex sheep. He refers to 'a lady of my acquaintance in Essex' who, in the winter months, moved her dairy to a warmer underground cellar to facilitate the separation of the cream from the milk

during butter making. A large breed of hog, particularly suitable for making bacon, was fattened in Hertfordshire and 'the north part of Essex'. His other chapters contain no specific references to Essex practices, but it is difficult to pass over his chapter on bustards, 'common on the plains of Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Salisbury-plain, and upon downs, and in the champaign country'. Being much easier to keep and rear than turkeys, these birds were recommended by the writer. Today's Christmas dinner might have been rather different if his advice had been more widely followed!

It would be good to discover the identity of the writer, though the chances of doing so must now be very slender indeed.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Anon, 1767 *The Complete Grazier, or Gentleman and Farmer's Directory*, J. Almon, London

Beeton, I., 1861 *The Book of Household Management*, London

Christy, Miller, 1907 'Cheese-Making' in *Victoria County History of Essex*, ii, London

Griggs, brothers, 1794 *General View of the Agriculture of Essex*, London

Hartley, D., (ed) 1931 *Thomas Tusser, his good points of husbandry*

Steer, F.W., 1950 *Farm & Cottage Inventories of Mid-Essex 1635-1749*, Essex County Council

the street elevation. It was acquired by a building preservation trust which has regrettably (and without planning permission) removed the sash windows and replaced them with 'Tudor' windows, though there was no surviving evidence to show what the originals would have been like. Also the external lime render was removed (with planning permission, because it was in a poor state and had been patched with cement render). The plaster has been replaced, but within the frame, contrary to planning consent. The timber is not in good condition and was never previously exposed to the weather. Maldon District Council has understandably served an enforcement order, stipulating the replacement of the sash windows (though, if these have been destroyed, this will represent another false restoration) and the re-rendering of the exterior in lime plaster to cover the timber frame. It is most regrettable that a very commendable attempt to rescue an old building should have gone so badly wrong, and is a salutary reminder that anyone working on a listed building should work very closely indeed with the appropriate conservation officer.

The same issue of the SPAB magazine reports the much happier, though very protracted, rescue of Harlowbury chapel in Harlow over the last 25 years.

Michael Leach

Source: *Cornerstone*, volume30, no: 4, 2009

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## A MOST REGRETTABLE DISAGREEMENT

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144 High Street, Maldon, is a Grade II listed timber framed building of C16 date with various later modifications, including the insertion of C18 sash windows on

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## ESSEX ELSEWHERE

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The Friends of Friendless Churches reports that work on conservation of the C13 wall paintings at Wickham Bishops church has continued, with impressive results, as well as the recovery of the inscription "1613 IS" dating from a

previous re-touching. Benjamin Finn, who uses the church as a stained glass studio, has made a drawing showing his proposal for a replacement east window, aided by a donation from Maldon Council. His website at [www.stpetersstainedglass.co.uk](http://www.stpetersstainedglass.co.uk) carries further information. The wall painting conservator is Perry Lithgow, under the supervision of Julian Limentani of Marshall Sisson.

Work by the same conservator has continued on the remarkable C18 wall paintings at the east end of St Mary's Mundon. The origins of this ambitious Baroque trompe l'oeil decoration, in which a heavily tasselled curtain is partially pulled aside above the east window, remain unknown. Further work is still to be done in this church (mainly repair to its windows) but FoFC is quietly confident that funding for this will be found.

Michael Leach

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## **RICHARD BULL OF ONGAR, A VERITABLE VIRTUOSO OF GRANGERISING**

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The Bull family originated in the Isle of Wight but, in the mid C17, John Bull (d.1715) came to London to seek his fortune. His son, also John Bull (d.1742), became a wealthy Turkey merchant in London – a trader in Turkish produce, and a member of the Levant Company. He was knighted in 1717 and, in the same year, married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Turner, a wealthy London advocate who lived in Chipping Ongar. Sir John Bull was living in Ongar, possibly at the White House, by 1722 when his infant son was buried in the churchyard. It seems likely that his business required a residence in the City

as well, because his son, Richard (the main focus of this note), was baptised on 15 November 1721 at the church of St Peter-le-Poor in London. Though most of his children were baptised elsewhere (presumably in London), at least seven were buried in the Chipping Ongar churchyard. The White House was Richard Bull's home from childhood and became his family home on his marriage in 1747 to Mary Alexander (née Ash), a neighbouring widow and heiress. They remained in Ongar until about 1783 when they moved to the Isle of Wight, though they continued to own the White House which was let to tenants for another 14 years.

A considerable amount is known about Richard Bull (1721-1805) who was described by a near contemporary as 'a veritable virtuoso of Grangerising'. This term was derived from the Rev. James Granger (1723-1776) who, in 1769, published a book entitled *A Biographical History of England from Egbert the Great to the Revolution.....adapted to a Methodical Catalogue of Engraved British Heads*. This was an extensive catalogue of engraved portraits, or 'heads', (of which Granger himself was an enthusiastic collector), each entry enlivened by a short biographical sketch. Various categories of biography were included, ranging from royalty to notoriety. The work, to which a third volume was added in 1774, fuelled a frenzy for the collection of engraved portraits. Though Granger himself kept his extensive print collection as loose sheets, his followers had them bound into printed books, even breaking up other books in order to obtain the required engraving. The process of adding additional material (particularly illustrations) to a printed book became known as 'grangerisation', even though it had never been practised by Granger himself. However some of the second

(1775) and third (1779) editions of his work were issued interleaved with blank pages and distributed to the most eminent collectors, with the aim of eliciting information about portraits that might be in their possession.

Richard Bull started collecting engravings in 1768 and added to his collection steadily over the next four decades. He and another collector (Joseph Gulston) were blamed by Horace Walpole for inflating the market price of engravings (from a few shillings apiece to several guineas). Bull himself blamed Gulston. Though it is not known how many engravings Richard Bull collected, his library eventually contained some 250 grangerised books containing about 20,000 inserted illustrations. One of his larger projects was the Holy Bible which, with the additional material, was expanded from 7 to 25 folio volumes.

His three daughters at Ongar shared his enthusiasm and provided practical assistance with the mounting of new acquisitions which were provided with elegant ruled and hand-coloured borders. One daughter, Elizabeth (d.1809), became a collector in her own right, specialising in religious works. Disbound books were collated with the necessary illustrations and despatched to a London bookbinder. If the engraving was larger than the printed page of the book in which it was to be inserted, pages printed on one side only were specially obtained from the printer and suitably mounted by the Bull family. If no suitable engraving was available, one would be commissioned from a contemporary artist or engraver. Amongst numerous other works, Richard Bull grangerised Granger's own *Biographical History*, and this work (expanded by the added portraits to some 36 folio volumes!) was sold to Lord Mountstuart in 1774 for the princely sum of £1000. It is now in the Huntington

Library in the USA.

Richard Bull became a great authority on engraved portraits and was widely consulted by fellow collectors. He was, however, quite up to teasing a fellow collector to whom he sent an engraving of the Biblical Adam. Concerning its provenance he noted "Mrs Adam gave it to young Abel, from whom Mr Cain took it by force .... it was subsequently hung up in Noah's cabin in the Ark .... and a pigeon brought it to England."

He travelled abroad in search of prints, as well as employing friends in the quest and exchanging material with fellow collectors. Bull travelled a great deal, regarding it as 'a Panacea for all manners of disorders, except that terrible disease, call'd the Pocket Consumption, which sooner or later is bound to seize all persons who take long journies'. Though he was MP for Newport in Cornwall from 1756 to 1780, it is not surprising to find that he rarely attended the House of Commons and there is no record that he ever made a speech there. However he did draw a Secret Service pension of £600 pa for most of that period – doubtless a useful subsidy for his hobby.

Though much of his collecting and grangerising was done during his time in Ongar, he moved permanently to North Court, Shorwell, Isle of Wight in 1783 where both his humour and his lavish entertainment were recorded in letters and diaries. At his death, his library contained about 3000 volumes, including most of the printed works on engraving, and a volume containing some 10,000 title pages from books published before 1749. Perhaps some of these came from books that had been destroyed by the frenzied collection of engravings. Such was the destruction of books that, by the end of the C18, it was unusual to find a volume of Dugdale's *Monasticon* that retained its original illustrations. By this

date the market for engravings was so brisk that even grangerised volumes were being broken up and sold piecemeal to collectors.

Michael Leach

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## LOOKING FOR A GOOD HOME

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Transactions of Essex Archaeological Society, new series, volume xiii, parts 3 and 4 (both published in 1914). These lack the articles on Essex tokens (A to C, and C to H respectively), but are offered free to a good home. Please contact Michael Leach 01277 363106 or [leach1939@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:leach1939@yahoo.co.uk)

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## ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

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This was the title of a seminar organised by English Heritage which took place on 4 February. It took the form of six presentations by representatives of groups which had experience of work in this field. The following notes seek to draw attention to those elements which might be of use to some of our members.

There was an introduction based on a

survey of visitors by English Heritage which demonstrated that there was a sharp rise in exposure to the historic environment during early years which went on into early teenage years and then subsided in the late teens and early twenties. The rise was largely a result of parental influence, with factors such as visits with schools and voluntary groups playing a smaller role. Competition for time in later teenage years tended to reduce involvement which then picked up again as people found settled jobs in their twenties when engagement picked up and continued throughout adult life as people visited historic locations in the company of their, families, partners and friends. The point was made that there was a general interest in history and sympathy with conservation of the historic environment even if this was not manifested in active membership of specific interest groups. The data from the survey is not published but it was hoped to put some of it on the English Heritage website.

The 'Young Roots' programme of the Heritage Lottery Fund offers finance for projects involving young people, and while not requiring matched funding, can make grants in the range £3000-£25000. These must be youth-led projects involving people in the 13-25 age group and aimed at groups which are socially disadvantaged, examples being ethnic groups and young offenders. They should incorporate 'creative delivery', that is a media element. This scheme is under-subscribed. If anyone feels they can make use of it they should go to [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk). Another website which should be considered is [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk) which is used by the Churches Conservation Trust, and which uses young offenders for such work as the clearance of churchyards. Youth projects for tasks which involved manual

labour, in particular the removal of vegetation, were also used extensively by the National Trust. The National Trust was particularly keen on the use of social networking and saw an internet-based information strategy as the most appropriate way of gaining the attention and engagement of young people.

Most of the projects which were discussed stressed the social role of engagement with the historic environment rather than any educational or instructional function. The exception being the Natural History Museum 'Learning Volunteers Programme'. This sought to involve young people as part of family units which provide stewarding and general guidance to the public. This seemed to involve some degree of motivation from the volunteers. They are recruited in family groups in order to obviate potential child protection and insurance difficulties. Although no qualifications are asked for a sound level of knowledge is required and training is given. It was felt that using young volunteers enabled them to communicate with young visitors, and the volunteers have to have good communication skills. The volunteers saw the value of the work in providing a positive good material for their CVs. Individual volunteers are recruited from the age of 18. Generally however the speakers were aiming at very specific groups: inner city youth, and socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

John Hayward

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## BOOK REVIEW

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Working towards Foulness: the life and work of an Essex family of farmworkers over three centuries, by George and Brenda Jago, published in 2009 by the Foreshore Press, St Lawrence at £15. ISBN 978-0-9538593-4-4, pp.iii + 199,

numerous illustrations, no index.

This impressive book traces the history of eight generations of the Webb family (through the direct line of one of the authors) and relates their migration from Sandon to Foulness. Inevitably the details of the earlier generations are scanty, but the authors have tackled this problem by very thorough use of what records have survived. They have also provided much general information about contemporary Essex rural life from a range of other sources which are well referenced in the endnotes. The book provides a clear insight into how the life of an agricultural labourer evolved over three centuries and the relentless physical labour that was needed to keep the country fed. The sections on Foulness are particularly interesting, a reminder of the remoteness of this island until the construction of the Havengore Bridge by the War Office in 1922. Until then, links to the mainland were by sea-going barges, or by rowing boat ferries across the Blackwater to Bradwell (or from Wallasea Island to Creeksea), or by running the gauntlet of the offshore Broomway path at low tide for moving livestock to and from the island. One Webb ancestor, having lost his forearm in a chaff cutter, had to wait many hours for the tide to go out before he could be transported via the Broomway to a surgeon on the mainland. An excellent feature of this book is its information about forgotten agricultural practices, such as the method of setting out a field to be ploughed by horse. Apart from agriculture, breeding horses and wherrying were the main employments on the island. The ferry to Creeksea was used for carrying horses which must have been an alarming experience for man and beast! The book is copiously illustrated, though the quality of some of these is rather poor (which the authors acknowledge). The very full list of

references shows the considerable amount of work which went into the authors' research, and it should be an inspiration to other family historians. The authors are to be warmly commended, not least for their generosity in donating the profits from sales to the Foulness Heritage Centre.

Michael Leach

## COX'S HISTORY OF ESSEX

A rather poorly printed slim quarto volume of 103 pages carried this title on its spine, and proved to be the Essex section of *Magna Britannia* which was issued in monthly parts between 1711 and 1717, as a supplement to the five volume *Atlas Geographus*. The work was published anonymously, 'Collected and Composed by an impartial Hand'. However the author is generally assumed to have been the Rev. Thomas Cox (1655/6-1734), incumbent of Broomfield, Stock and Chignall Smealy. This particular copy of the book had been bound in 1907 (according to the book plate) and lacked a title page, an introduction and an index. The only clue to its authorship was what had been stamped by the Edwardian bookbinder onto its spine.

According to the ODNB, Cox was born on the western fringes of Essex, educated at Bishops Stortford Grammar School and at Queens' College, Cambridge. He became rector of Chignall Smealy in 1680, Broomfield in 1685 and Stock in 1703. He resigned Chignall Smealy in 1704 but held the other two livings till the end of his life. He had a particular interest in medieval and ecclesiastical history, and translated works from French, Italian and Greek authors on early church history. He contributed biographies of various medieval English kings to *A Complete*

*History of England* (1706), much of which was written by White Kennet, the Whig bishop of Peterborough. The author of the 2004 ODNB article notes the usual attribution of the authorship of *Magna Britannia* to Thomas Cox, but suggests that this is an error resulting from the publication of a later six volume edition (1720-31) by a bookseller who was also called Thomas Cox.

However there is evidence in the book itself that the Rev Thomas Cox, of Broomfield and Stock, did write much of *Magna Britannia*, including the entire Essex section. Under the entry for his own parish of Stock, he unusually recorded in full a monumental inscription which he also noted in one of his letters to William Holman in 1716. Under Broomfield, he referred to a document, a copy of which was "in the Vicar's Hand". This suggests personal knowledge of these two parishes. Stronger evidence, perhaps, comes from Philip Morant, who succeeded him in the Broomfield living and noted Cox's authorship of various works, including *Magna Britannia*, in his own *History of Essex*. It seems unlikely that Morant would have been mistaken in this. Irrefutable evidence comes from a series of letters dating from 1716 (now in Essex Record Office) from Cox to William Holman, in which there are frequent references to Cox's ongoing work on *Magna Britannia* for Essex. Holman had loaned Cox some of his manuscripts and provided other information on Hinckford Hundred. Cox was also working on Durham and Cumberland in 1716. There are letters to Holman from other Essex antiquarians (Samuel Dale, Nicholas Jekyll and Anthony Holbrook) some of which are not flattering about Cox's work on the Essex section of *Magna Britannia*. There is an undated letter from Cox to Holman, apologising for not sending him the Essex section before publication, and for

failing to acknowledge his assistance in its compilation. Cox excused this on grounds of haste, as well as not wishing to prejudice Holman's plan to publish his own county history. His reasoning was that, if the public knew that Holman had contributed material to *Magna Britannia*, they would be unwilling to lay out money to buy Holman's publication in order to read at greater length what had already been set down by Cox. He was clearly feeling under attack at this point, noting "...I am blamed on all sides, by some for being too long, & others too short ... I was under a covert once & slept secure but now I am made a marke for everyone to shoot their arrows at."

In fact Cox did energetically publicise Holman's project in his account of Essex. At the end of his section on Hinckford Hundred, he wrote 'we may expect a much fuller Account of it shortly from the industrious and learned Gentleman, Mr William Holman of Halsted, who has bent his Studies this way for some Years, and has had such Encouragement and Assistance in carrying on the Work, that nothing in Antiquity relating to it, either curious or useful, can be supposed to escape his Search and Judgement. He is solicited to carry his History through the whole County; but that being uncertain, whether his Life or Leisure will permit him to go through so great a Work, tho' he has Materials sufficient, this Hundred will be the first, and that soon published, to give the Publick a Proof of his Ability for so great a Performance.' Holman's *History of Hinckford Hundred* never reached the press, though it is interesting to note that Gough, in his *Anecdotes of British Topography* of 1768, stated that it had been published.

Cox's letters give an insight into how he set about writing his county histories. His first undated letter in Holman's collection is a proforma, which must have been

sent out to many individuals. Without preamble, he wrote "I desire a short Account of anything of Antiquity or otherwise remarkable in the Market towns of Essex. As also, if conveniently, any Men of Note for Offices or Learning. Any Charitable Benefactions, as Almshouses &c. Any Particular Customs or Usages. Any Rarities in Nature as Mines, Minerals, Fossils, Chalybeate Waters & c. Any Monastries, Churchlands & Special Endowm<sup>t</sup> of Churches, Chappels & c. Any remarkable Monum<sup>t</sup> in Churches."

The subsequent letters (not all of which are dated) span from May 1716 to December 1716. It is clear that Holman provided Cox with much material, including the loan of his own MSS, and printed copies of Leland's *Itinerary* and Willis's *Notitia Parliamentaria*. Cox was working under huge pressure. In May he wrote "As to Essex, it has been laid aside because I was forced to compose Cumberland and Durham wh<sup>c</sup> another Gentleman had undertaken but through illness was forced to throw y<sup>m</sup> up." In December, when Essex was about to go to press, he was working on "Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Hartfordshire, Herefordshire &c." As if this wasn't enough, he was busy with a new edition of Puffendorf's *De Jure Naturae et Gentium* with annotations by Barbeyrac. He was under constant pressure from his booksellers who "confine themselves to so many Sheets for a Shilling, and they will not afford a page more.....We are always in haste & I can't get anything ready before they want it." He complained to Holman that "you put a pretty hard taske upon me to account for all the defects, as you esteem them, in y<sup>e</sup> Atlas of Essex."

One begins to feel sorry for Cox. In one letter he noted that, although he had a good horse, he did not much enjoy travelling and was much happier on a

comfortable chair in his study with his favourite books. These, apart from the ones already referred to, included Newcourt's *Repertorium*, Dugdale's *Baronage* and *Monasticon*, works by Norden and Speed, Gibson's edition of Camden's *Britannia*, Kennet's *Case of Impropriations*, Stokesley's *Registry*, Woods' *Athenae Oxoniensis*, Herne's *Life* and works by John Ray. Some of these titles appear as references in the text, others are referred to in his correspondence with Holman.

As far as the Essex volume is concerned, it is not surprising that the end result is patchy and derivative. There is a description, sometimes a mere mention, of about a third of the Essex parishes. This may include a brief account of the owners of the manor and advowson, notes on eminent residents and dissident clergy, a brief topographical description and a few anecdotal oddities. Occasionally the text comes to life with what must have been a direct personal observation. Under Stansted Mountfitchet, for example, he noted "of the Vicars of this Parish, Mr John Reynolds, the present one, deserves a particular Commendation for his Care and Expencc in building a neat Vicarage-House, with convenient Outhouses and Gardens, which his Predecessors had neglected so long..." At the end of the book is a list of the county's baronets (with the dates of their creation), and its gentlemen, notes on its natural history, a short description of its monastic foundations, some of its Marian martyrs, a list of its eminent divines and writers, a brief account of its charity schools, a table showing the value of the county's parishes (with their incumbents and patrons) and a mileage chart showing the distances from London to the county's market towns.

In spite of his shortcomings, Cox (or his importunate booksellers) must be given

credit for getting a history of Essex into print, something which many historians (including Holman himself) failed to achieve.

Michael Leach

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## CHELMSFORD MUSEUM REDEVELOPMENT

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A major building project which started in July 2008 has provided Chelmsford Museum with a two storey extension which has doubled the size of the Grade II, Victorian, Oaklands House. Chelmsford Borough Council provided the capital budget of £5m for the work. The enlarged museum opened to the public at the end of January 2010 and was officially opened by HRH the Duke of Gloucester on 25 February 2010.

The new building is unashamedly in the modern idiom, built partly using cream coloured bricks to fit in with the Victorian gault bricks, partly with a large glazed section and partly with zinc panels, which pick up the colour of the grey roof slate of the old house. The design has generally met with a favourable public reaction of 'pleasant surprise'.

The exterior is adorned with the Georgian Mildmay coat of arms in Portland stone, carved in about 1730 for Moulsham Hall for Benjamin Mildmay,

Early Fitzwalter. The Hall was demolished in 1809 and was where Moulsham Drive is now. Benjamin Mildmay's tomb is in Chelmsford Cathedral. The museum acquired the surviving stones from a garage in Brentwood in 1963, and don't know where the missing fragments are – the missing left hand supporter would have been another lion – there is just one paw surviving holding the shield. The full motto, ALLA TA HARA, means 'God My Help'. It has been in store for over 40 years, and this has been a wonderful opportunity to get it back on permanent display, relatively close to its original home.

The new building accommodates a new Essex Regiment Museum and small Essex Yeomanry display, and the Borough Council is grateful to the Trustees of the Essex Yeomanry and the Trustees of the Essex Regiment Museum for masterminding an Appeal which raised over £130,000. There is also a new interactive display, 'Bright Sparks', which tells the story of Chelmsford's industry, and particularly 'the big three', the world-beating Marconi, Hoffmann and Crompton. Indeed outside the new entrance is also erected an original Crompton lamp standard, made for the City of Plymouth, but re-erected at Marconi Radar on Writtle Road and stored more recently at Sandford Mill.

The Museum also now has a larger temporary exhibition room as well as an Education Room, which is capable of being hired out for evening functions. It can seat 65 people.

Chelmsford Borough Council has been keen to ensure the use of sustainable energy and resources. A Ground Source Heat Pump has been installed in the new building, which will extract heat from the ground in winter, and will dump heat in the ground to cool the building in

summer. The whole building has been super-insulated. Roofwater is now harvested for use in irrigating the park.

It has not been possible to refurbish all the displays in the existing Victorian House, but there is now a space to hang rotating exhibitions of the Borough's art collections, and there are new displays on the town's Georgian and Victorian history, and its popular culture, such as the music and sports club scenes, and the town's carnival. These opened in late July 2009 and include dressing up for children, oral reminiscences, and videos. A key exhibit is the Luftwaffe model of the Hoffmann and Marconi factories in New Street, recovered from a German airfield after the war.

Public admission remains free. Visiting hours are Mondays-Saturdays 10am-5pm and Sunday afternoons, 1pm-4pm. Phone 01245 605700, email

[museums@chelmsford.gov.uk](mailto:museums@chelmsford.gov.uk), [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/museums](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/museums) website

Nick Wickenden, Museums Manager

Architects: Thomas Ford & Partners  
Main contractors: TJ Evers of Tiptree  
Museum Design: Ronayne Design  
Capital cost: £5m

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## INTRODUCTORY COURSES IN ARCHAEOLOGY

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The Copped Hall Trust Archaeological Project is running three taster weekends to introduce beginners to the basics of archaeology and excavation. These will take place at Copped Hall, near Epping, on the weekends of July 17 & 18, July 24 & 25, and July 31 & August 1. The cost is £50. In August there are two 5 day field schools for those who already know the basics of excavation and recording, either at Copped Hall or elsewhere. The

dates are Monday 9 August to Friday 13 August, and Monday 16 August to Friday 20 August. The cost is £90. Professional archaeologists and experienced supervisors are involved with all courses. Further details can be obtained from Pauline Dalton, Roseleigh, Epping Road, Epping CM16 5HW. She can be contacted by phone on 10992 813725 or by e-mail on [pmd2@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:pmd2@ukonline.co.uk)

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## **THE DISCOVERING COGGESHALL PROJECT**

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The development of the medieval settlement of Coggeshall is not obvious from maps of the town. There is no clear indication of the existence of burgage plots, or exactly where or the extent of the market place in the town. The market charter of 1256, granted to the Cistercian Abbey, established a market place on the old Roman road. This probably had the effect of drawing the focus of settlement away from the area of the church to its present position at a crossroads, but this theory has not been confirmed by either archaeological or historic research. However, the historic town centre is notable for its numerous well preserved timber-framed buildings, dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Coggeshall Heritage Society (CHS) has, for a number of years, been interested in promoting further study of the town. To this aim a partnership with the Essex Historic Buildings Group (EHBG) and technical support from the Essex County Council Historic Buildings and Conservation Section (ECC, HB&C) led to a successful attempt to obtain sufficient funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to study a closely defined area in the centre of the town. This contained around 40 historic properties which would be subject to a preliminary examination to determine

layout and potential ages, the production of rough plans and assessment of their potential for dendrochronology. An important part of the project was to include the community and to this end talks have already been given to potential volunteers interested in assisting with measured surveys. The primary and secondary schools in Coggeshall have been involved in a competition to design a logo for the project and a photographic competition. The Honywood Community Science School, within their local history module, attended a Technical Study Day at Cressing Temple. They were shown how timber-framed buildings were constructed and were given hands on experience in such skills as wattle and daub panels and bricklaying. The course was organised by ECC, HB&C. The website for "Discovering Coggeshall" has been designed by the Honywood School and they will also be responsible for its updating and maintenance.

Whilst there is a considerable amount of time given freely by the volunteers from all the organisations involved in the project a major part of the grant will be directed at dendrochronology (tree-ring dating). This has extended the study of timber-framed buildings started by the late Cecil Hewett with his study of carpentry joints. In many of the Essex towns the results have been disappointing due to the use of fast grown trees with insufficient rings. When Ian Tyers, a leading dendrochronologist, did a rapid survey of Coggeshall he found, for reasons yet unclear, that many of the buildings showed good signs for successful dating.

Amongst the documentary material available for Coggeshall there is a rental survey dated 1574. This not only records ownership and rent but gives dimensions and area of the plots and adjoining owners making it possible to add into the

study of the buildings the very important social context. The documents are currently being transcribed by a local historian and another local volunteer is undertaking the task of mapping the properties onto a modern map base. Hopefully the outcome of all this research will be a popular publication on the developing social history of the town, its buildings and their development with a permanent exhibition at the Coggeshall Museum that will be capable of display at other venues. The schools will be responsible for producing DVD's and other material for the use of young people, teaching packs on historical, heritage and technical projects and short drama productions on life in Coggeshall over the centuries. A Town Trail and detailed information board are planned so that visitors will be able to appreciate more fully the architectural, historic and social importance of the town of Coggeshall.

Brenda Watkin

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## **WALTER CHARLES DAVEY**

### **1925 - 2010**

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Walter Charles Davey (Wally to his friends), who was well known as an historian, archaeologist and pottery expert in Harlow, died on 17th January, 2010, after a long battle against lymphatic leukaemia. Born in Bristol on 6th October, 1925, the youngest of seven children of William and Elizabeth Davey, he lost his father at seven years of age and moved around with his family, eventually settling in London. His father, a former regular soldier who was recalled to the colours in 1914, spent most of World War I as a prisoner of war, having been captured at Mons. Following demobilisation he became an active trade unionist and, despite his

early death, exerted a powerful influence on his son's political development.

After leaving school at fourteen years of age, he worked in engineering and then the building trade, eventually becoming a plumber. He became active in politics and joined the Young Communists' League, which led him to join an expedition to Spain to deliver food to comrades fighting in the Spanish Civil War.

When the Second World War broke out Wally tried unsuccessfully to join the RAF, but he was eventually drafted into the Army at his call-up. He volunteered to train as a pilot in the 6th Airborne Regiment and was subsequently posted to Palestine. Here, his left-wing outlook influenced his attitude to the formation of the state of Israel, and he condemned terrorism.

After demobilisation in 1948 he trained and qualified as a teacher. His first marriage had been a casualty of his war service, and he now met and married another teacher, Enid Hoddy. For some years they both taught in Inner London schools but, in the mid-1950s, they moved to Harlow and became involved in community activities including performances of the Moot House Players, CND and local politics.

As a teacher of pottery at Brays Grove Comprehensive School, Wally was fascinated to discover the remains of a 17<sup>th</sup> century pottery kiln on the school playing field. Recognising pottery fragments as Metropolitan ware, which had been widely circulated through Britain and its North American colonies, he realised when he discovered other local kilns that Harlow and Potter Street had been the centre of England's premier pottery industry before the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

He spent the rest of his life on further research, the results of which were encapsulated in an important book, *The*

*Harlow Pottery Industries*, produced in collaboration with Helen Walker and published in June 2009.

Wally also joined the West Essex Archaeological Group and helped excavate the Iron Age Camp at Wallbury, Great Hallingbury, and the Romano-Celtic Temple at Harlow, where he identified Bronze Age remains. He became an authority on local archaeology and spent many hours at Harlow Museum. His numerous other interests included jazz and he always regretted leaving a collection of records in Palestine.

His wife, Enid, predeceased him, but he is survived by two adopted daughters, Rachel and Miriam and four grandchildren in whom he delighted.

Stan Newens

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## JOYCE MAY JONES 1924 - 2010

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Joyce May Jones, an able Harlow local historian, died on 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2010. Born in Pendlebury, near Manchester, on 28<sup>th</sup> January, 1924, the only child of Harry Edmunds, a shipping representative, and his wife, Kate, she was educated at Pendleton High School for Girls and Manchester University, where she studied architecture. Her university course was interrupted by 2 ½ years service in the ATS during the Second World War – partly spent monitoring enemy wireless signals and partly as a teacher of arts and crafts to wounded and disabled soldiers.

After securing a First Class Degree (B.Arch) and winning the Haywood Silver Medal as the best final year student, Joyce gained an MA during the course of her first professional engagement in the Architects Department of Buckinghamshire County Council. From

there she moved to Cambridgeshire and, in 1953, she married another architect, Eric Jones, and came to Harlow. Here she worked for the Harlow Development Corporation and became greatly attached to the town.

She acted as the architect for the preservation of the historic Harlowbury Chapel, played a part in work on the Celtic Romano Temple and advised the Porch Committee at St. Mary's Church, Parndon.

She also wrote *Landlords and Tenants*, a history of Harlowbury; *How We Saved an Ancient Monument*, an account of the restoration of Harlowbury Chapel; *The Secret History of Harlow's Roman Temple Site*; *Passmores: the Story of a House*; *Seed Time and Harvest*, an edited edition of the weather diary of William Barnard of Harlowbury, 1807-23; *The House that Wasn't There*, a fascinating account of the timber-framed house in which she lived, which had been moved from Eastwick to Great Parndon in the 1850s. In addition, she assisted other local historians – in particular, Hazel Lake – in producing other historical works on Harlow.

Joyce and her husband, Eric, were also interested in a wide range of cultural activities. She painted watercolours and decorated the harpsichords and clavichords which Eric and their son built. She had an extensive knowledge of English literature and her whole family is very musical. She also involved herself in a school PTA, in Harlow Civic Society, the Friends of Harlow Museum and other activities.

Joyce is survived by her husband, Eric, their son, Lewis, their daughter, Sarah, and two granddaughters, who are all involved in cultural activities of their own.

Stan Newens

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**APPEAL FOR THE PUBLICATION AND RESEARCH FUND (PRF)**

This fund replaced the Publications Development Fund in 2004. It supports the publication of articles in each Volume of *Essex Archaeology and History* as well as Occasional Papers. Donations are placed into an INALIENABLE account, which cannot be spent. It is the Interest thereon which is distributed by awards granted by our COUNCIL. As at December 2009 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £47,715

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In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact me, or the Newsletter Editor.

Michael Leach

 THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

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