

ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

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Summer 2010

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 161

SUMMER 2010

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COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 12 NOVEMBER 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 'South End' of Prittlewell parish in the 1820's was a fashionable watering place for the wealthy. Its development as a popular resort began in the last quarter of the C19 after the second railway link with London had been built.

A colour version of this illustration dated 1820 is published in 'Essex and the Sea', ERO, 1959. This illustration is also available on the ERO online catalogue ref **I/Mb 321/1/11**.

There is an illustrated article 'Southend: 1760-1860' by William Pollitt in the Southend on Sea and District Antiquarian and Historical Society Transactions, Volume 3, Number 4, pp.212-249.

More can be found on the development of the Essex Seaside in a publication currently being prepared by Sue Tyler of the ECC Historic Environment team based on a series of individual 'resort' reports.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The presentation of the Grant of Arms at Ingatestone Hall on Thursday, 13th May was a huge success and will surely be remembered as a significant milestone in the history of our Society. Your support was truly magnificent with well in excess of one hundred members and their guests attending the occasion at Ingatestone Hall. Thomas Woodcock (Garter Principal King of Arms), attired in magnificent court dress (replete with sword and medals), duly presented the Letters Patent to our Patron, Lord Petre. As previously stated, a colour reproduction of the impressive Letters Patent will be reproduced in the forthcoming issue of the Transactions (volume 40 for 2009). We do, of course, owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Lord Petre and his son, the Hon. Dominic Petre, for permitting the presentation to be held at Ingatestone Hall. I would also like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the staff, principally Mrs. Gina Cordwell and Mrs. Carol Delafuente, who could not have been more helpful. They contributed significantly to a highly successful evening. The refreshments were greatly appreciated and consistently commended during the course of the evening. These were provided by Ann Newman, ably supported by her husband Ken. The Newman's were somewhat concerned about the task of catering for such a large gathering but exceeded the challenge in their inimitable way. These few words of appreciation inadequately reflect their outstanding contribution.

A further opportunity to inspect the Letters Patent was afforded at the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday, 19th June in the magnificent surroundings of the Grade I Listed

Council Chamber of Braintree Town Hall. Dr David Andrews provided a highly engaging talk following the formal business. David explained that the building was the gift of William Julien Courtauld who commissioned Vincent Harris as the architect with the brief that "I only want the best". Charlotte Andrews, who was responsible for the visit, subsequently guided the assembled company around several of the more interesting rooms to enable the municipal opulence to be appreciated at first hand.

The next important date in the Society's calendar is the Morant Lunch which this year will be held on Sunday, 10th October in the convivial surroundings of Reeves Restaurant in Felsted. Our guest speaker on this occasion will be John Drury, a local historian who was formerly clerk and chairman of the parish council. John published a valuable history of the village in 1999. It is still possible to book places by contacting Pat Ryan (60 Maldon Road, Danbury, Essex CM3 4QL). I greatly look forward to your company.

On Friday, 28th May it was my very sad duty to represent the Society at the funeral of Rev William J T Smith (1920-2010) which took place at Boreham. Mrs Eleanor Burgess, a member and parishioner, was also present. Mr Smith, who joined the Society in 1970, spent his entire ministry in the Diocese of Chelmsford where he was curate of Laindon-cum-Basildon (1956-61), rector of Stifford (1961-5) and vicar of Boreham (1965-90). All three churches contain monumental brasses. He was (with H.G. Worsley) the author of *Brasses: Thurrock & District* (1970). Smith also published *Else Byng and her Brass* in 1991 as part of his Boreham Histories Series. William Smith genuinely loved

Boreham church and village and wrote passionately on practically every historical aspect. I personally feel his loss acutely having known him since the age of eight when my aunt lived at Bulls Lodge and regularly worshipped at the church. William Smith was buried in the churchyard in a favoured location beneath the west window. Rest in Peace.

The Society also suffered another significant loss with the passing of Stephen Ripper of Sible Hedingham (1926-2010). Mr Ripper was the joint longest serving member (with our Vice-President, John Appleby) having joined the Society in 1947. Ripper was also a long time member of Sible Hedingham parish council - serving as Chairman from 1961-4. He was also a long standing member of Halstead and District Local History Society and enjoyed visiting museums. He took a keen interest in local and family history compiling a large archive and photographic collection relating to Rippers Limited, a company founded by his grandfather and which employed some seven hundred people at its peak. It is envisaged that his archive will be exhibited in the Village Hall at Sible Hedingham during the course of 2011. Stephen leaves a widow (Frances), two daughters (Anne and Catherine) and grandchildren. He was buried next to a third daughter (Susan) in the churchyard at Sible Hedingham on 9th August. Our member, Adrian Corder-Birch attended the funeral to whom I am most grateful for this brief biography. I am also delighted to report that his widow wishes to continue membership of the Society.

Finally, I referred to the unprecedented levels of public debt in the Spring newsletter which at the end of February stood at £741.6 billion (equivalent to

52.6 per cent of GDP). At the end of July the debt had risen to an eye-watering £816.2 billion (equivalent to 56.1 per cent of GDP). The political landscape has changed radically over the last six months. We now brace ourselves for the public spending review on 20th October. Many of the services that we cherish are non-statutory and, thus, are at considerable potential risk. I warned that we should remain vigilant. Now I am urging you to contact Michael Leach, our energetic Secretary, or myself in cases where services are threatened. Our Society has a proud record of making strong representation in the face of adversity. I sincerely hope that I am proved wrong but I fear that we will be called upon to try and defend what we value.

H. Martin Stuchfield

AN APOLOGY

We deeply regret that the financial statement included in the annual report (which was sent out with the last Newsletter) contained a number of errors (year-ending dates) and omissions (COIF income). We are extremely grateful to a number of assiduous members who tactfully pointed out these various errors. The only good news is that the overall healthy financial position of the Society is not altered by these errors. Corrected financial statements were circulated at the AGM, and have been forwarded to the Charity Commission for the Society's annual return. Any member who was not at the AGM, and who wishes to have a correct set of accounts, is asked to contact the Hon Secretary.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY

The Advisory Committee met on 3 occasions in the year with County Councillors, archaeologists, museum curators and representatives of Archaeology Societies in attendance.

A visit was made to Wat Tyler Country Park, Pitsea, where considerable recreational and educational facilities have been made available under the auspices of Thames Gateway scheme, local councils and RSPB. The Thames riverside landscape includes preserved red hills, farmstead sites, animal enclosures, medieval and post-medieval field boundaries, river embankments and dykes.

Towards the end of the year there were signs of a slow increase in excavations and evaluations as development picked up. A drainage 'chunker' duct [see note] had been lifted for examination from under the River Chelmer. At Boreham a 12th /13th century farmstead had been excavated. At Bradwell-on-Sea a Roman masonry wall relating to outside the shore fort had been discovered.

At Colchester, Museum Street, the medieval castle barbican had been excavated. The Colchester Urban Archaeological Database was now part-available at www.heritagegateway.org.uk

At Southend the Prittlewell Prince site geophysical survey was completed.

The extension to Chelmsford Museum in Oaklands Park opened early in 2010.

A Bronze Age ring ditch and a timber structure were found at Sandon.

The proposed Heritage Quest Centre at Saffron Walden was experiencing difficulties but progress was maintained. Proposals were in place for conservation work at the castle.

On Foulness the Visitor Centre was proving popular. Excavation at the

Workhouse site had been completed, revealing an encampment of the Rochford Hundred Volunteers.

Exhibition display panels to illustrate Essex's industrial heritage had been prepared for Braintree and Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Mill museums. The World War II Defences Survey for Maldon District had been completed.

Development Planning Advice to Thurrock District has returned to Essex County Council. The 2012 Olympic mountain bike venue near Hadleigh Castle was needing archaeological impact assessments.

The 17th century Stebbing barn reusing a medieval aisled structure and 17th century Garnons at Wormingford were recorded. A publication on Essex Seaside Resorts was being prepared.

James Kemble

Note: A 'chunker' duct, for those who don't already know, is a submerged culvert under a canal usually constructed of elm. These 'chunkers' were put in when the canal was originally constructed.

The Editor

BLACKMORE WAR MEMORIAL RECARVED

Blackmore's ninety year old War Memorial has recently been cleaned and re-engraved with the names of those who enlisted for King and Country during the First World War. In total there are 102 names recorded: 21 who died, plus a further 81 who served. The work was commissioned by the Parish Council, who is custodian of this edifice.

The War Memorial, which stands on The Green, was dedicated on 7th November 1920, four days before the second Anniversary of the Armistice when

people would have gathered and paused for two minutes to remember. The Essex County Chronicle reported: "The unveiling of the war memorial took place on Sunday afternoon, a very large number of people being present. The ceremony began with the singing of "O God Our Help In Ages Past" followed by the lesson read by the Vicar (the Revd. W L Petrie) and prayers by Pastor Francis. At the request of Mr Edmund Marriage, Lieut. Col. Gibbons D.S.O. then unveiled the memorial congratulating Blackmore for having sent 103 men out of a population of 600. He mentioned that one in every five had paid the supreme sacrifice – Mr J H Hull then asked Mr E Marriage as Chairman of the Parish Council, to accept custody of the memorial. The names of the fallen are inscribed on the front face, and on the other faces the names of the men from the village who served are inscribed" (1).

The work was undertaken because the names carved had weathered over time and become difficult to read. The Parish Council did not however have a workable transcription so a small group of local historians got together and worked on a project to investigate the lives of those commemorated, and to decipher the faded letters 'C' and 'G' in particular. Was the person remembered Charles or George?

The war casualties turned out to be relatively easy to identify, because many of the names are also included on a window in the village church. Also, the Commonwealth War Graves Commission has a lot of information on casualties, published on a website. As we looked at a number of sources we discovered the names of other men, not listed, who were said to be associated with Blackmore but died during the Great War, as it was known then. The Military Genealogy website gave a number of

names of individuals who were either born in Blackmore, Essex or were resident in Blackmore, not to mention Blackmoor and other misspellings of the parish name. After discounting Blackmore End, which is near Wethersfield in Essex, we had compiled a list of 45 men, not 21, who had fallen. The task was to verify whether these had a Blackmore connection. With the survivors listed, this was to be a family history research project on an epic scale with a list approaching 125 names.

We decided early in the project to advise the Parish Council that the War Memorial should be faithfully re-carved and that names should not be added: we would not tinker with history.

Researching the survivors presented a more difficult problem, but we still found a surprising number of useful sources of information. The 1911 census told us who was living in the village just before the outbreak of war. In 1918, for the first time all men could vote, so that told us who was living in the village at the end of the war. Then there are records of the medals that were awarded to all in the Army at the end of the conflict, which confirm which regiment people fought in. The early release of the 1911 census proved a godsend to our work. Personal possession of Blackmore's 1910 Electoral Register proved useful too as did the 1918 roll available online. Many absent voters listed revealed the identity of some of the survivors, and sadly positive identification of one of the victims, Albert Edward Barker, as landlord of The Bull public house who had been killed a year earlier. We made several visits to the excellent Essex Record Office, making lists of Blackmore male baptisms and marriages, looking at the Sunday School Admissions Register, and numerous other documents including the Ongar and District War Memorial Hospital Roll of Honour, which

we realised was the frequent source of errors in names of the fallen. The Vicar and churchwardens generously allowed us to make a transcript of the Burial Register dating after 1893, kept in the church safe and not housed in any archive anywhere. We 'enlisted' the help of the Essex branch of the Western Front Association and made regular contact with the curator at the recently reopened Essex Regiment Museum in Chelmsford. Above all we used the existing 'Blackmore Area Local History' website and partner blog to update the world on progress and encourage descendants to contact us – which they did in large numbers offering all kinds of useful information, and photographs of the people. We were able to share our work and help others fill in their family stories, which is always a pleasure to do. At the time of writing we have positively identified all but one name: S Ball.

War Memorials were, of course, erected because loved ones were either lost or buried in some foreign field. Very often the names inscribed are those who lived in the parish at the time. It came as no surprise to us to find names of those not remembered who were born in Blackmore but had moved away or were resident for only a short time in the village. These epitaphs are by no means then a definitive list of those who died in the Great War since there are errors of omission as well as commission. We find, for example, four names of the twenty-one commemorated also listed on the Doddinghurst War Memorial tablet inside All Saints' Church. The result of our work is now published online (www.blackmorehistory.co.uk) with work well in progress to reproduce a copy as a book running to around 150 pages for future reference by the Parish Council and researchers visiting the Essex Record Office. These will form a permanent record and the meagre

contribution of our generation to their remembrance.

"We will remember them".

Andrew Smith

Source

(1) ERO. T/P 181/2/11. A quotation taken from a newspaper cutting in the Cuttle collection, dated 12th November 1920, concerning the dedication of the War Memorial.

BOOK REVIEW

Reminiscences of an old Colonist, William Frost (with additional information by John Appleby, 2009 (originally published 1897), no ISBN, pp45, cover illustration, no index, available from John Appleby, Little Pitchbury, Brick Kiln Lane, Great Horkesley CO6 4EU for £3 including p&p..

One of 11 children, the author grew up in poverty in Great Bromley, Essex. In 1846, at the age of 22, he accepted a job as overseer on a sugar estate in Trinidad, necessitating a 5 day journey to reach Glasgow and then 60 days by sailing ship to Port of Spain. During the voyage, all the ship's lifeboats were swept away in a storm. Though Britain had abolished slavery in 1837, the trade was still being operated by other countries, and some of his workforce had been liberated from slave ships intercepted by the Royal Navy. There were also Indian and Chinese labourers, harsh weather, unpleasant parasites, too much cheap rum and readily available razor-sharp machetes to compound his problems as overseer. Matters were aggravated by the British free trade policy of 1848 which led to a sharp drop in the price of sugar, resulting in lower wages for the labour force. The plantation labourers disappeared into the

forests, and there was widespread arson of buildings and cane plantations. There is a lively account of his adventures and disasters, as well as the methods of growing and processing sugar cane. In 1860 he returned to England for the first time, the passage by steamship being reduced to a mere 19 days to Southampton. He returned five years later to purchase steam ploughs, and then four years after that for a prolonged convalescence. By this time he was managing several estates, including one of 10,000 acres, mainly growing sugar cane but also cocoa, limes and coconuts. In 1880 he retired but made several return trips to visit – and finally to sell at a considerable loss – his own estate in Trinidad. The price of sugar had collapsed and plantations in the West Indies had become uneconomic. Settling in Great Bromley, he involved himself in local government and was the first chairman of the parish council. He died in 1899. This is a lively and interesting personal account of a very different time, enhanced by the short appendices added by John Appleby.

ESSEX SEEN FROM ELSEWHERE

The Winter/Spring newsletter of the Ancient Monuments Society contains three matters of Essex interest.

a) The 'Jumbo' water tower, a notable Colchester landmark designed by the borough engineer (Charles Clegg) and built in 1882/3, has been redundant for several years. It is listed Grade II* and a public enquiry approved conversion for residential use which would have involved only relatively minor changes in the structure. It would have made a challenging dwelling with a superb view! However this scheme has fallen through,

and the owners now wish to convert the tower to office use. This will involve infilling the space between the legs of the tower, resulting in substantial changes to its external appearance. This proposal remains under discussion.

b) Brook House, 34 Maldon Road, Tiptree has suffered from serious subsidence (probably aggravated by a substantial tree much too close to the building), as well as attacks by vandals. Application for complete demolition has been made, but the AMS thinks that the tree should be removed to establish whether this would arrest the subsidence problems.

c) The National Lottery Fund has made a 'first round pass' award of £1.8M to Colchester Castle for repairs, and new displays of exhibits. The British Museum regards Colchester's Roman collection as one of the most important in Britain and Europe.

VISIT TO BLACKMORE

Members visited Blackmore church and village on 27 March 2010. The present village, which does not appear in Domesday, owes its existence to the Austin Canons priory, founded for five canons towards the end of the C12 by one of the Sanford family. The site was on low-lying land to the south of the manor of Fingrith which occupied the better, higher land. According to Reaney, Fingrith was the former parish name ('priore ecclesie sancti Laurencii de Blakemora in parochia de Fyngreth' in the Registrum of 1310). The same authority derives the Blackmore place-name from two components meaning 'black swamp'. The River Wid runs nearby, feeding a large moated enclosure surrounding the site of the church and priory. The Augustinians

were a working order, with a tradition for improving difficult land. In 1232 they were granted the right to hold a fair on the vigil, the day and the morrow of St Laurence (9 to 11 August), and this was the origin of the present village green on which an annual cattle fair was held up to the end of the C19.

The priory was not wealthy and was one of the first to be dissolved in 1525 when it was granted to Cardinal Wolsey to support the foundation of his college in Oxford, and his school in Ipswich. A partial inventory has survived, listing the images and (unusually) the lengths of the two aisles – Our Lady's aisle being 40 feet, St Peter's aisle being 52 feet. There was a nave altar, as well as the aisle and high altars. After Wolsey's fall the priory was granted, in 1532, to Waltham Abbey, in whose hands it remained until the final surrender of the latter (the last in England) in 1540. It is not known if the canons returned to Blackmore priory between 1532 and 1540, but after the final dissolution it was granted to John Smith. The house on the priory site (known at various times as Jericho) was sold in about 1714 by the descendants of John Smith to Jacob Ackworth who repaired and altered this building, giving it its present-day appearance. However its four projecting square corner turrets are suggestive of a building of mid C16 construction, albeit now covered in an early Georgian skin.

Two groups were taken on a guided walk round the village and returned to the church for a closer examination of the fabric. What remains of the priory is the nave and north and south aisles of the priory church of C12 date. There was probably an aisleless chancel for the monks, the evidence for this being two blocked and truncated fragments of C12 round-headed window openings (cut into by the later infilled east wall) which are below clerestory level. The east wall,

built after the demolition of the chancel, contains much re-used material, as well as the columns (still in situ) of the C14 chancel arch. There does not appear to have been a crossing tower. The arcade of the north aisle was rebuilt in the C14, and again in 1898 by Chancellor & Son who re-set the same stones. Much of the north wall was also rebuilt by Chancellor, incorporating fragments of chevron ornament and other worked stone. RCHM suggested that the south aisle may have collapsed in the C16 when the aisle arcade was rebuilt with plastered brick arches and octagonal piers (also originally plastered). Significant further movement to one arch has occurred since then, presumably due to treacherous foundations on the marshy ground. The south wall was rebuilt at the same time, probably after the suppression as there are no remaining scars of a cloister roof on the outside face. However extensive repairs were required in 1686 when this wall was ordered to be 'stopt up with bricks and stone, and alsoe at ye East end, and to be plaister'd over', so any scars might have been eradicated at this time. At the east end of the south aisle is a blocked doorway (surmounted by an unidentifiable carved beast) that may have led into the cloisters.

The easternmost arcade arches are very low, suggesting that the east end of the two aisles was originally of two storeys; RCHM thought that a pulpitum may have extended across the nave at this point. The south east bay now contains the organ and the fine 1592 tomb with recumbent alabaster effigies of Thomas Smith and his wife, much repaired and reconstructed. Fragments of the effigies of their children, and two decorated pilaster strips, found in the belfry have been incorporated into the modern base. When the RCHM published their report in 1921, the belfry was a veritable

chapel house of fragments of medieval worked stone, with more fragments noted in the churchyard.

The particular glory of this church is the massive timber belfry, the largest in Essex. Recent dendrodating revealed felling dates from the winters of 1397/8/1398/9 and 1399/40. All the medieval Essex timber belfries that can be reliably dated fall within a few decades of 1400. At Blackmore the construction of the belfry blocked the original west entrance to the priory church, and dendrodating confirms that no entrance had been provided through the west wall of the belfry at ground level, as these timbers are contemporary with the rest of the structure. There are five bells (the same number as at the 1686 visitation), now mounted on a mid C18 bellframe. Drawings in the Chancellor collection include a very accurate drawing of the belfry, and indicate that the spire above the bell chamber was reconstructed in 1900. In recent years, woodpeckers have caused considerable damage to the cedar shingles on the spire. The holes are not made in search of food, but as a demonstration of the prowess of the male birds!

Though the nave roof appears to have been rebuilt (presumably during Chancellor's restoration) the evidence from the re-used heraldic shields on the inside indicate that it had been reconstructed at the same time as belfry. This flurry of re-building around the turn of the C14 suggests that this was a prosperous time for the priory.

Though the Society visited this church in 1903, 1915, 1930, and 1948, only very scanty reports appear in the *Transactions*. We are most grateful to our guides, Andrew Smith and Bruno Giordan, for a very interesting visit, and to Ann Newman and her team for the usual excellent tea that followed.

Michael Leach

[Additional information from VCH ii, 146; EAT x, 17, xxii, 324 & indexes; EAH v, 209; RCHM ii, 15; Reaney's *Place-Names of Essex*, 236]

THE HEREFORD MAPPA MUNDI

Many members will have heard of this map of the known world which was made for the monks of Hereford on a single sheet of vellum in about 1290. Like all maps of the period it placed Jerusalem in the centre, and England, Scotland and Ireland are tightly squeezed into the bottom edge, right on the limits of the known world. The map was discovered under a floor in one of the cathedral precinct buildings in the C18, still in its original medieval frame with a triangular head decorated with leaf shaped finials. This frame has subsequently been lost and not replaced. For reasons so far unexplained, one of the more surprising items in the Society's library is the photograph taken in 1868 by a Hereford photographer, Thomas Ladmore, showing the original frame. Though the photograph is faded and rather crudely trimmed, it is the only surviving close-up image of the map's decorative frame. It also shows the iron brackets which were used to fix the frame to the wall when it was displayed in the cathedral after its discovery. Perhaps woodworm or damp subsequently damaged the frame, or maybe a later generation felt that it detracted from the map itself, and had it removed. About a decade ago, the remains of the frame were found amongst rubbish in the stables of the bishop's palace but my informant from the Woolhope Club (our sister society in

Herefordshire) had no information about its present whereabouts.

The photograph is not listed in the Society's 1923 library catalogue and any information about how it was acquired would be very welcome. Council felt that this unique record, which is of no direct relevance to Essex, should be reunited with the Mappa Mundi at Hereford, and it has recently been donated to the cathedral. Though the cathedral library has other Ladmore photographs of the Mappa, it did not own this one, which shows the map in close-up, still attached by nails to its backboard. A letter of appreciation of our gift has been received from the cathedral librarian and a copy of the photograph has been kept for the Society's library.

A magnificent facsimile of the Hereford Mappa Mundi, with the original colouring restored, has been made for the current map exhibition at the British Library.

Michael Leach

WILLIAM BYRD'S LIBRARY

William Byrd, the Elizabethan composer, lived at Stondon Massey for the last thirty years of his life, dying in 1623. He was a Catholic but avoided the severest penalties because of his association with the Chapel Royal and the sovereigns: Queen Elizabeth I (who loved his music) and James I. Recently evidence has come to light which provides an insight into this composer's life as well as his music.

Two leading Byrd scholars, Kerry McCarthy and John Harley, have announced in the *Musical Times* (Winter 2009) the discovery of ten books containing Byrd's signature which had hitherto eluded nearly all other scholars. These books are in libraries spread across the United Kingdom and the United States of America but the authors

have inspected each one and confirmed the identifications of the signatures to be genuine.

It is thought that Byrd may have collected books because of his association with the publishing trade. Alongside Thomas Tallis, Queen Elizabeth granted him exclusive right to publish music.

The discovery of these books is important because, like any personal library, they reflect the tastes of the owner. Nine books are about religion, but more accurately the politics surrounding the Catholic and Protestant situation of the time, taking the Protestant side of the argument. One, 'The unmasking of the politike athiest', published in 1602, is a violent attack on the Roman Catholic religion by J. Hull. He condemns musical and liturgical practices of English Catholics, describing the 'Ave maris stella' (Hail Virgin Mary) as blasphemous and denounced the use of organs and other instruments of the church. 'Superstitious' holidays such as Candlemas, All Saints and Corpus Christi did not escape Hull's tirade. What is curious is that Byrd should own such a book which was against everything he held dear. We know that Byrd composed many settings for such festive occasions. The authors suggest that Byrd was wily in his choice of books on public display and attempted to deceive those who browsed his bookshelves or those who were instructed, as in May 1585, 'too send for byrd of the chappell and that his howse be diligentely searchyd'.

The tenth book is one typical of the age. It is a sixteenth century travel guide covering everything from what to see, eat, wear and observe as customs "so that the traveller after his rangings and peregrinations shall retire himself a man of skill". Byrd though was an armchair traveller believed to have never left

these shores, unlike his brother John who was a London merchant and ship owner who frequently exported wheat to Spain and traded as far a field as West Africa and Brazil.

These fresh insights reveal that history is not a dead subject. Our modern age with its worldwide web is adding to the stories of our forbears. It's a great time to be a local historian!

Andrew Smith

A VISIT TO LEYTON IN 1709

From *The Diary of Ralph Thoresby* 1677-1724, published in London in 1830:

"20 January 1709.....rode to Mile End, Stratford, and Bow, to Low Leyton, rightly so called from its situation, the meadows being covered with water, like an arm of the sea, but we found the road good, and were kindly received by the worthy Mr Strype, a pious divine, and indefatigably industrious historian, as appears by the many volumes of his handwriting, and some of them prodigiously large folios, which I was really surprised with the sight of, and with his noble collection of original letters of King Henry the Eighth, and several of his Queens, Edward the Sixth, Queen Jane, Queen Mary, and Queen Elizabeth, with Cardinal Wolsey, Pole, and others of the most eminent clergy, both before and after the Reformation, with the most eminent statesmen, divines, and historians; which, I perceived, had been the collections of the famous Lord Treasurer, Burleigh, to whom most of the later letters were directed, and particularly those of the Lord Chancellor, Earl of Essex, Sir Philip Sidney, Sir Walter Mildmay, and Secretary Wilson that he presented me

with. Returned very well and in good time."

[Biographical note: Ralph Thoresby (1658-1725) was a well travelled historian and topographer of Leeds, in contact with many of his contemporary antiquaries and historians. John Strype (1643-1737), was minister of Low Leyton for 68 years where he rebuilt part of the church and provided himself with a new rectory, stables and outhouses, and 'new-planted and trenched the Gardens and Orchards'. He was a distinguished ecclesiastical historian and biographer, and a prodigious collector of pre- and post- Reformation MSS. It was through the good offices of a parishioner, Sir William Hicke, that Strype obtained access to Lord Burleigh's papers, some of which he had managed to acquire for his collection. The old DNB entry noted that many of the Burleigh MSS were obtained 'by questionable means', but the 2004 ODNB entry exonerates him to a large degree. The MSS had been loaned to Strype, by Hicke and by a publisher, in order that Strype could edit them for a printed edition. Before this had been completed, Hicke had become insane, and the publisher, having already decided that the project would be too costly, had died leaving his debts to Strype unpaid. Though he might reasonably have been entitled to keep the MSS in lieu of payment for his work, Strype, in his will, identified the material that was to be returned to the publisher's heirs. It is not clear if these intentions were honoured, as Strype suffered from a stroke in 1720 and the acquisitive Humfrey Wanley (acting on behalf of his master, Robert Harley, first Earl of Oxford) instructed a London bookseller to keep a sharp eye on Strype's health and the prospects for acquiring his collection. Although Strype, contrary to expectation, outlived both Wanley and

Robert Harley by more than a decade, much of Strype's collection passed into the second earl of Oxford's library and is now amongst the Harleian MSS in the British Library.]

Michael Leach

Sources:

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A CONTEMPORARY ACCOUNT OF C16 & C17 BUILDING PRACTICES

Robert Ryece of Preston near Lavenham compiled his *Breviary of Suffolk* during the first two decades of the C17. Though it relates to Suffolk, his home was near enough to the Essex border to think that his account may have some relevance to Essex. Sandwiched between accounts on 'Sea Fowle' and 'Entercourse' (by which he meant highways and bridges) are sections on 'Castles', 'Mansions or dwelling houses' and 'Tenements'. The section on castles is largely historical and political, but the other two focus much more on the practical construction of these buildings. He noted that the oldest houses 'for their more security and quiet against all worldly accidents....were environed with a deep ditch or moat and to that end....they were enforced to low valleys, that they might the more easily draw water from the next river...' This is no surprise; thirty years ago, Aberg noted that Essex and Suffolk had the largest number of moated sites of any other English county by a large margin, though the modern

view is that the function of most of these moats was not defensive.

He described the old houses having thick walls, small windows and 'their chimneys large, or instead of them to have round harthes in the midst of their great hals or roomes, with round holes or lovers aloft in the roof, which carried away the smoake never offending.' In contrast the newer buildings were placed where 'they may bee furthest seen, have best prospect, sweetest air, and greatest pleasure, their walls thin, their lights large, all for outward show....' The large windows would have been encouraged by the general availability of glass by the C17. Also the insertion of new internal floors in hall houses created new rooms which needed to be lit. Surprisingly Ryece noted that the new buildings were often three or four storeys in height, though this may have included cellars, as well as dormers which, by the C17, were being inserted to make the roof space habitable. Suffolk houses changed in style earlier than those in Essex, and tended to be longer and narrower, with steeper roof pitches (the last feature probably reflecting the dominant use of thatch in that county). Also houses in Suffolk were plastered externally at an earlier date than in Essex, and this could go with thinner walls – it certainly did so by the C18.

Ryece made a curious observation about more recent roofs, noting that they were 'square, and so slender that they are enforced often to repaire, and in all buildings this one thing is observed, spare of stuffe scarcity of timber (which is too general) and that workman that can doe his worke with most beauty, least charge, (albeit not so strong) hee is most required.' By the time that Ryece was writing, the crown post roof had been abandoned in favour of the side purlin. This type used less timber, and was a little less stable, particularly as

hips and gablets, which brace and strengthen roof structures, had fallen out of fashion. The other factor is that pantiles from the Low Countries had begun to replace thatch by the early C17, resulting in heavier loads on the roof.

Though Ryece lamented the 'carelesse wast of this age of our wonted plenty of timber, and other building stuffe', there is no real evidence of a shortage of timber, though it was used in different ways and was probably of lower quality through a decline in woodland management, resulting in the use of smaller sections with much sap wood content. It is apparent from passages elsewhere in his account that he had a theological axe to grind about waste, profligacy and extravagant display, so this may have coloured his views on the availability of timber and other building materials.

Suffolk building practices did differ somewhat from those in Essex, but Ryece was most familiar with the area of his county nearest to Essex, so it is likely that his observations will have some relevance to our county.

Michael Leach

(with grateful thanks to Elphin Watkin for the technical background)

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ESSEX NUMISMATIC SOCIETY

Members of ESAH are welcome to attend meetings of the Essex Numismatic Society which meets on the

fourth Friday of each month at 7.30pm for 8.00pm at the Chelmsford Museum in Moulsham Street. The programme so far is:

2010

24 September: 'Emergency issue banknotes' by John Cowlin

22 October: 'Suffolk tokens' by Nigel Clark

26 November: 'Coins of the Knights of Malta' by Tony Holmes

2011

28 January: Short talk and exchange & mart

25 February: 'Medieval half groats' by David Greenhalgh

25 March: 'The Viking coinage of York' by Megan Gooch

22 April: AGM and annual exhibition

TWO FORGOTTEN ESSEX ANTIQUARIES: JOHN & THOMAS LUFKIN

Gibson's 1722 edition of Camden's *Britannia* contains a list, arranged by counties, of 'Books and Treatises relating to the Antiquities of England'. Apart from two, all the Essex authors are familiar names whose biographies are already well known. The exceptions are Thomas and John Lufkin.

Nothing is known about John Lufkin who, in 1700, wrote a letter to the *Philosophical Transactions* (xxii, 924-6) about some large bones found in a gravel pit near Colchester. According to Samuel Dale he gave an account in the same article of bones found in a cliff at Harwich, which he had identified as those of an elephant.

According to Foster, Thomas Lufkin was born in Colchester on 22 February 1678/9 His father was John Lufkin, an apothecary in the town. He matriculated at Christ Church College, Oxford in December 1700, aged 20, and

proceeded to BA in 1704, and MA in 1707. His date of ordination is not stated, but he was appointed rector of Frating in 1709 and rector of Layer de la Haye and Berechurch in 1711. Though Morant agrees with this date for the Frating living, other sources give somewhat earlier dates for his preferences, but he appears to have held all three until his death in 1745. The visitations of 1727 and 1738 noted that he was partly resident in Frating, and partly in Colchester.

His scientific and antiquarian interests were developed early in adult life. In 1699 his letter to Dr Wallis was published in the *Philosophical Transactions*, describing an inscription on a carved wooden window cill in a house in Colchester. This appeared to bear the date 1090 in Arabic numerals and led to a great deal of discussion over the following decades about when such numerals were introduced into Europe, and whether the date had been misread, or was a forgery. This controversy was aired over a century later in Thomas Cromwell's *History of Colchester*. In the same letter, Lufkin described his proposal for the 'Application of a Pneumatic Engine to Cupping-Glasses'. A separate letter on the same subject, to Sir Hans Sloane, was published in the same journal.

The next reference to Lufkin is found in a letter of December 1712 from Nicholas Jekyll to William Holman. The writer advises a further visit to 'Mr Lufkin of Colchester' in connection with material that Lufkin had contributed to the new edition of Camden's *Britannia*. Jekyll doubted whether Lufkin would ever get round to publishing anything on his own account, but thought that his notes (possibly on his collection of coins) might be suitable as an appendix to the book that Holman was working on. Jekyll also thought that Lufkin might be able to point

Holman to some useful manuscript sources.

In 1722 Lufkin organised a careful survey of the Lexden earthworks. This project is mentioned both by Philip Morant and by Thomas Cromwell. A professional surveyor, Payler Smith, was used to take the measurements, and perhaps Lufkin acted as his assistant (and presumably paid his fees). Payler Smith's plan, if it was ever drawn out, does not seem to have survived. Morant recorded the bearings and the measurements taken by the surveyor, and also made a rough sketch plan in his own annotated copy of *The History of Colchester*.

As both men lived in or near to Colchester, it is not surprise to find that, towards the end of Lufkin's life, he collaborated with Morant in editing an edition of Matthew Carter's *True Relation of that honourable tho' unfortunate expedition of Kent, Essex and Colchester in 1648*. This was printed by J. Pilborough in Colchester, probably in 1745, and there is an imperfect copy in the British Library. No library in Essex appears to possess this book.

Though Thomas Lufkin is dwarfed by his other contemporary antiquaries, nevertheless he seems to have been well regarded by them, and was regarded as a useful potential source of information. John Lufkin was presumably a relative (possibly his father) but nothing further has been discovered about him.

Michael Leach

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Philosophical Transactions, xxi (1699), 287-8, 408-10

VISIT TO EAST DONYLAND HALL

Members visited this house on 17 April under a perfect spring sky, completely free of aeroplanes due to the volcanic eruption in Iceland.

The owner warmly welcomed us, and explained that the manor had come into the hands of Queen Maud who had granted it to St John's Abbey, Colchester. By the time of the Dissolution, the abbey owned most of the parish which then passed through various hands until its purchase, in 1730, by David Gansel. He was an amateur architect who had already been active in altering his house and grounds at Leyton. He made extensive improvements to his new acquisition at East Donyland, and laid out the surrounding park. He encased the early C17 U-shaped timber framed house in a brick skin, filling in the courtyard on the south side to form a rectangular building. The bewildering changes of levels internally at first floor level may reflect a series of piecemeal alterations carried out while the family continued to live in the rest of the house – not an uncommon situation. On the main east elevation Gansel raised the parapet to hide the dormers, and inserted false windows in the brickwork to give the

appearance of an extra storey. The sash windows on this elevation are unusually narrow (two panes wide, rather than the usual three) effectively making the façade look higher than it really is. The appearance of height was enhanced by the rusticated brick pilasters. A broad moat survives on three sides of the house; a small spur at the southeast end suggests that it originally existed across the east side as well, but it was probably filled in by Gansel.

The next development – at an unknown date – was the bizarre addition of a huge double height ballroom on the north side, which is shown in a painting by John Vine dated 1838. By the end of the century this had disappeared and had been replaced by a modest single storey lean-to which is shown in the RCHM photograph.

In 1945/6, most of the high parapet with its false windows was removed and a new single storey extension added to the north, with a matching screen wall on the south side. Stone urns were placed at strategic points on the reduced parapet where, however, the faint scars of the lower part of the false windows are still visible. There have been various internal alterations since, including the removal of a chimney breast and the servant's staircase to enlarge the room in the south east corner. Alterations upstairs revealed a very low doorway opening into what had been the open courtyard of the earlier house – almost certainly the garderobe door.

East of the house, on the opposite side of the large oval turning circle, are three low pedimented ranges of outbuildings, end-on to the house, dating from David Gansel's time. The elevations facing the house are built in extremely fine brickwork with a very smooth white lime mortar, and each has an elegant doorcase with broken pediment, belying the utilitarian function of the buildings

behind (brew house, dairy and stables/ chaise house respectively). What is puzzling is that the side walls of two of these buildings are about 5° off the right angle to the front wall and are of much inferior brickwork. No explanation could be found for this curious arrangement. Further east are two walled gardens (the northernmost of which has a large blocked gateway, perhaps originally the main axial access to Gansel's improved house) and some later brick farm buildings with dentilated eaves. Southeast of the walled gardens, now partly hidden in woodland, are three ponds in line, two of which are at a higher level. They are retained by substantial embankments and are said to be medieval fishponds dug by the monks of St John's. However the abbey owned, from the early Middle Ages, two fish ponds at Bourne Mill, much closer to their main premises in Colchester, and the East Donyland ponds, with their broad banks and fine views across to Wivenhoe, are more likely to have been part of Gansel's ambitious landscaping scheme.

We are deeply indebted to the owners for their very warm welcome, and for allowing us free access to their delightful house and grounds – and, of course, to Ann Newman and her helpers for an excellent tea.

Michael Leach

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, ESSEX BRANCH

Meetings will be held in The Link, Trinity Methodist Church, Chelmsford.

Followed by tea/coffee and biscuits

Free parking at the Church or in the Essex County Council car-park opposite

Visitors and prospective members warmly welcome - a £2 donation is requested.

www.essexinfo.net/essex-branch-of-historical-association/

PROGRAMME 2010 - 2011

SATURDAY, 2ND OCTOBER 2010; *The Italian Renaissance and links with France and England* [illustrated], AGM followed by Glenn Richardson, Reader in Early Modern History & Academic Director, School of Theology, Philosophy and History, St Mary's University College, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham, a college of the University of Surrey:

SATURDAY, 30TH OCTOBER 2010; *Using Original Historical Documents with Schoolchildren and "Children" of all Ages!* [illustrated], Ian Mason, Programme Secretary, Cumbria branch of the Historical Association: **ian's lecture will be a personal memorial by the branch to the late Nancy Edwards, who played such a key role in the life of the branch for so many years.**

SATURDAY, 4TH DECEMBER 2010; *Members' Meeting*, This is a chance for any member to present a short talk on any subject they may be researching or simply have an interest in. Alternatively, we choose a theme and members select which aspect they would like to talk about. Whether the talks are on serious subjects or (usually) not, this is always great fun afternoon. We are still discussing the format for this meeting.

SATURDAY, 8TH JANUARY 2011; *Mountbatten: Hero of our time*, Dr Adrian Smith, Senior Lecturer in the School of Humanities, University of Southampton

SATURDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY 2011; *Women and Work in the Middle Ages*.

[illustrated]; Anne Curry, Head of the School of Humanities and Professor of Medieval History, Southampton University, and President of the Historical Association.

SATURDAY, 5TH MARCH 2011; *The Strategy of the American Civil War*, Professor Brian Holden Reid, King's College, London.

SATURDAY, 9TH APRIL 2011; *Colchester's Roman Circus: Past and Future*, Philip Crummy, Director of the Colchester Archaeological Trust.

SATURDAY, 7TH MAY 2011; *Witchcraft - How 'bad' were the East Anglian Witch-Hunts of 1645-47? Mid-Seventeenth Century English Witch Persecution in Comparative Context*, Alison Rowlands, Senior Lecturer in European History, University of Essex:

LANDSCAPE CREATION AT MUCKING

This exciting project is spearheaded by the Essex Wildlife Trust with backing from various other commercial organisations, the relevant local authorities, the Port of London Authority and the Thames Gateway Corporation. Mucking marshes have been exploited in the past for sand and gravel extraction, and more recently as a landfill site for six of London's boroughs. The waste has arrived at Mucking Flats by barge for off-loading by crane and this will cease once the final top soil restoration is completed. A new visitor centre will be built overlooking Mucking Flats and Stanford le Hope marshes, and a wide range of different habitats will be created on the (ultimately) 1300 acre site – a variety of grassland (some grazed), salt marsh, reed beds, scrapes, mud flats, woodland and scrub. The area includes Stanford

Warren to the north which already has the largest reed bed in Essex, as well as a small area of ancient woodland (with a rookery) on the west side of the site. A new footbridge over Mucking Creek will improve access. Obviously all this is dependant on successful fundraising and will take several years to come to fruition, but the potential success of this form of landscape re-creation has already been well demonstrated by the RSPB at their new reserve on the former military firing ranges at Rainham Marshes – well worth a visit for those who are not already familiar with it.

Michael Leach

Source: *Essex Wildlife*. Spring 2010, 10-13

ESSEX HERITAGE AT RISK!

The Buildings at Risk Register compiled by Essex County Council has changed to Heritage at Risk and will be available from September 2010. The new register will show a much greater picture of the risks to heritage in Essex by including scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens and conservation areas as well as buildings.

Do you know of a designated heritage asset that should be included on the register? Or would you like more information on the 2010 Heritage at Risk Register? If so, please contact Laura Belton at ECC Historic Environment telephone 01245 437613 or e-mail laura.belton@essex.gov.uk

MEMBERSHIP - Subscriptions due on January 1st each year

Single Member - £20

Family Membership - £22

Student - £9

Associate Member - £9

Institutions - £25

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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 2009 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £47,715

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

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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Essex Archaeology and History News



Winter 2010

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 162

WINTER 2010

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COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 11 MARCH 2011

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

Cover illustration:

The ancient woodland of Monk Wood, Epping Forest, From Epping Forest (2nd Ed), by Edward North Buxton, published by Edward Stanford, 1885.

130 years of Essex Field Club publications, dating back to 1880 and including the publication above, have been made available through www.essexfieldclub.org.uk. Over 22630 pages from 2409 individual books, articles and papers have been digitised. The publications cover a wide array of subjects relating to the flora, fauna, geology and lithic archaeology of the County of Essex. The publications are a unique collection documenting not only the heritage of the Essex Field Club, but also the natural history heritage and social history of Essex and the collection has not been publicly accessible since the closure of the Passmore Edwards Museum in Newham.

I know that I have already found it an invaluable resource in checking some of the references on the Unlocking Essex's Past / HBSMR database.
Sally Gale

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The production of volume 40 (2009) of the *Transactions* continues apace with despatch projected to take place early in the New Year. Whilst this is marginally delayed from my previous forecast it is also anticipated that it will be possible to combine the mailing with a further Index Volume covering volumes 21 to 30 (1990-9). Our Indexer, Peter Gunn, has completed the necessary work with the checking and finishing touches remaining outstanding. It is envisaged that it will also be possible to continue the indexing process for volumes 31 to 40 (2000-9) in order to ensure completion of the entire Third Series.

As always, I wish to pay a fulsome tribute to Chris Starr, ably assisted by Helen Walker, who work tirelessly to ensure that our flagship publication appears in a timely fashion. Numerous members assist in the production of the *Transactions*. In the case of the forthcoming volume I wish to single out Owen Bedwin, Nigel Brown and especially Maria Medlycott. All three are members of the Historic Environment Branch of the Essex County Council with whom we enjoy an excellent relationship. I am further delighted to announce that Maria has been appointed Secretary of the Publications Committee where it has proved possible to take advantage of her skills and efficiency on a more formal basis. Neil Wiffen was appointed Chairman at the last meeting of the Publications Committee held on 27th September and has the formidable task of succeeding Dr Owen Bedwin who performed this role for a twenty year period (see Spring 2010 Newsletter). Neil, of course, requires scant introduction for he is widely known through his role as Public Service Team Manager at the Essex Record Office. He

has further enhanced his reputation as the innovative Editor of the *Essex Journal*. I wish them well for the future and am greatly encouraged that we have succeeded in reducing the age profile. This bodes extremely well for the future of our Society.

It is with enormous regret that I announce the retirement of Ann Turner as Membership Secretary. Ann has performed this valuable role in an exemplary manner since June 2001. Her retirement is, of course, well deserved having given a decade of service to the Society. We are extremely grateful to Ann for her magnificent contribution safe in the knowledge that we knew at all times who was a fully paid-up member! Clearly, we need to fill the vacuum. You will find a letter asking for a replacement enclosed with this Newsletter. The position requires a person with the ability to pay attention to detail, keep accurate records and enjoy interfacing with the membership. If this challenge appeals then you would certainly be working as part of a friendly and lively team. Michael Leach or I would warmly welcome contact from interested members.

I have frequently made mention during the last year of the rising levels of public debt and the consequent risk to non-statutory services resulting from inevitable fiscal tightening. Since my last statement the Essex County Council ("E.C.C.") have announced a programme to achieve savings of £300 million by the end of March 2013. The full impact of these developments is yet to be disclosed. However, early indications suggest that the essential grant provided by the E.C.C. to the Victoria County History of Essex will either be severely reduced or cut completely. This is, of course, wholly unwelcome and gives rise to serious consequences – not least,

concerns regarding the continuing employment of two very fine historians, Chris Thornton and Herbert Eiden, who have served this county well over a considerable period of time. I fear that this is just the beginning of a very difficult period where we shall be called upon to rigorously defend our cultural heritage.

However, I wish to conclude on a more positive note. It was with enormous pleasure that I was able to accept an invitation to attend the recent launch at Sible Hedingham of Adrian Corder-Birch's latest book entitled *Our Ancestors were Brickmakers and Potters*. This provided a wonderful opportunity to support Adrian who has contributed so significantly to Essex history. The occasion also provided an opportunity to meet members of the Minter family who have been manufacturing home-made bricks since the 1930s. Indeed, the Bulmer Brick and Tile Company achieved notoriety by providing many of the one million bricks used in the recent restoration of St Pancras Station. It is gratifying to realise that such fine traditions continue to enhance the reputation of our beloved county.

H. Martin Stuchfield

BISHOP'S PALACE AT RETTENDON?

On the road between Rettendon and Downham Green, just south of what is now called Warren Lane, there was a house with modest grounds named as 'Palace' on early maps (such as Chapman and Andre of 1777, and the first edition 1" OS sheet of 1799). The name does not appear on modern maps but the present lane follows an identical route to that shown by Chapman and

Andre, and the site can be identified with some certainty. It is now occupied by Poplar's Lodge and Poplar's Farm, just to the west of the Running Well equestrian centre.

Morant noted that the lordship of Rettendon was part of the pre-Conquest endowment of the abbey at Ely. In 1108 it became part of the possessions of the bishop of Ely, and in 1213 the bishop was granted leave to add 20 acres of land to his park at Rettendon (or leave to enclose his wood?). In 1223 the king granted ten does and two stags 'out of the king's forest in the parts about Colchester' to Geoffrey, bishop of Ely. It has been suggested that this was to stock the bishop's park at Rettendon. Nearly two years later, it was noted that the does had proved so difficult to take in the forest of Essex that an order was given for them to be supplied from Rockingham forest. In the *History of Essex by a Gentleman*, the author noted 'The manor house lies at a small distance north west of the church, round which was formerly a park paled in and well stocked with deer. The bishop of Ely kept it in exceeding good order in the reign of Henry the Third'.

No authority for this statement is provided. By 1500 the bishopric of Ely held some 50 manors scattered throughout East Anglia, but Rettendon was on the extreme southwest periphery of its landholdings and was its only Essex property. By this date, the mansions where the bishops resided regularly were within the Isle of Ely (Wisbech, Downham, Somersham, Fen Ditton and Ely itself). In addition there was Hatfield Palace (a useful stopping place en route to London), and Ely Place in Holborn in the capital itself. By the beginning of the C16, many of the distant manors (including Rettendon) were let out on leases, though the advowsons, and the right to levy men for

the king's service, were still retained by the bishop.

It is not clear when Rettendon was alienated to the crown. Unlike some other sees, Ely managed to retain much of its extensive property until well after the reformation. This was the result of a prolonged struggle between bishop Cox of Ely and Elizabeth I, which only ended with Cox's death in 1581. The see was then kept vacant for an unprecedented 19 years (during which time its revenues were conveniently appropriated by the crown). When the next bishop was appointed in 1599, 34 of the remaining manors were transferred to the crown on the undertaking (by Robert Cecil) that their revenues would be used for the public good. Even if the bishopric had managed to retain Rettendon up to this point, the manor had probably been disparted and tenanted for at least a century. It is not shown as a park on Norden's 1594 map. The first lay owner of Rettendon was recorded in 1601, so perhaps the manor was one of those that were surrendered in 1599.

The name 'Palace' remains an enigma. It is 2kms to the west of the site of the manor house of Rettendon Place which adjoined the parish church. The manor house itself would have been the obvious residence for the owner or tenant of the manor. Adjoining it there is a gabled brick building of C16 date, now called the 'Bishop of Ely's Stables'. Though originally a barn, it was clearly a high status one, being built in brick. Perhaps both names are fanciful, as it seems unlikely that the bishop would have personally lived in, or even visited, such an out-of-the-way place. However the names are an important reminder of the medieval ownership of this manor by the bishop of Ely.

Reaney was unable to throw any light on the derivation of the Rettendon place-name, other than noting the 'dun'

element meaning hill. Earlier writers hazarded a Saxon derivation referring to the poor state of the roads in the area. These were still notoriously bad when Thomas Wright compiled his *History of Essex* in 1831 – perhaps another reason for thinking that the bishop might have been an infrequent visitor.

Michael Leach

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ESSEX SEEN FROM ELSEWHERE

On 12 January 2010, the roof of the parish church of St Mary at Sheering was damaged by fire, apparently caused by an electrical fault. It is to be hoped that the fire damage was not too bad, as Cecil Hewett described the nave roof as a rare and interesting one of C14 date.

The Historic Churches Trust has recently become the owner of the Petre mortuary chapel at Thorndon Park, a spectacular design of 1857 by Charles Wardell. English Heritage will provide a 70% grant towards the cost of repair.

Essex, it seems, can claim to have been the first county to publish an authoritative account of its church chests (in 1913). Our sister society, the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History, has recently published the third such county

inventory. Taking advantage of dendrochronology, Suffolk can now claim to have the oldest known church chest, that at Poslingford, dated to the final quarter of the C13. It is made of wood of Baltic origin, apparently from the same batch that was used for the construction of the presbytery roof at St Alban's abbey. There is an elevational drawing of this chest, with reconstruction of the medieval iron work from surviving fragments and the iron stains on the wood. The report written by David Sherlock is available from the Suffolk Institute at £12-50.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Ancient Monuments Society Newsletter, Summer 2010

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This took place in the magnificent setting of the Council Chamber of Braintree Town Hall. After the conclusion of the formal business, David Andrews gave a short account of the building.

This is one of the grandest municipal buildings in Essex, rivalling County Hall in Chelmsford. It is listed Grade II* (very unusual for a building of this period) and it owes everything to the drive and wealth of W J Courtauld (WJC), the architect he commissioned (E. Vincent Harris) and the superb workmanship of the contractors. The Courtaulds had been in Braintree and Bocking since the early C19 and their contribution to public buildings and public life in Braintree was considerable. WJC himself dedicated his

life to local government and to public service. Vincent Harris (1876-1971) is now a largely forgotten architect but was the designer of numerous town halls – Nottingham, Leeds, Bristol and Sheffield are examples. He also did some work on County Hall in Chelmsford, funded by WJC. He did not embrace the Modern Movement in architecture. By the time he was awarded the RIBA gold medal in 1951 his style of architecture would have seemed out-dated, and he rather sharply noted in his acceptance speech “You don't like what I do, and I don't like what you do”. One of his later buildings in London was to be the target of a protest group, called the ‘Anti-Uglies’, which was opposed to conservative traditional architecture.

For Braintree town hall, WJC insisted that he “only wanted the best” and, not surprisingly, the building went well over budget, costing some £55,000. It is in an Italian/French renaissance style, faced with hand-made bricks and Portland stone with a steeply hipped roof and a baroque bell turret. It was opened in 1928 by Colonel Ruggles Brise who anticipated that Braintree had a bright future and would, in time, become a city.

The other influential manufacturers in Braintree were the Crittal family (of metal window fame) who had unequivocally embraced the Modern Movement at Silver End. W F Crittal (WFC) was highly critical of the new town hall, stating that it was “the wrong building in the wrong place in the wrong style”. It was built on the corner of the cattle market, “in the middle of the local piggery, without a setting”. The ‘piggery’ was a reference to the adjoining cattle market, now long past, and the Fairfield Road surroundings have improved considerably since 1928, with a neo-Georgian post office of 1933, the Embassy Cinema of 1935 and the unusual domed library of 1996, designed

by the county architect. Opposite the town hall is Corner House, bearing WJC's initials and the date of 1929, possibly also designed by Vincent Harris.

WFC also considered that it "was far beyond future needs or present merits" – a sentiment with which pruned-down modern local government might well sympathise! WFC thought that metal windows would have been better than the elegant sash windows in oak, though this could have been the manufacturer's sour grapes. However the building was not without some concessions to new technology – the roof is in reinforced concrete, the sash windows are hung on bicycle chain rather than sash cord, and metal windows were used in a few places (albeit supplied by one of Crittal's competitors).

Internally there are a series of panelled rooms. The council chamber is in oak with holly inlay, and the ceiling depicts (somewhat fancifully) scenes from Braintree's history, painted by Maurice Greiffenhagen. The adjoining chairman's room is panelled in richly figured walnut, with lavish plasterwork and a ceiling painted with an elegant map of Essex by Henry Rushbury. Other rooms are panelled in different exotic woods, such as pear wood and Australian bean wood. Much of the furniture appears to be original, traditional and substantially well made.

Members enjoyed the chance to see a number of these fine rooms, and to enjoy another of the Newman's fine teas.

Michael Leach

ARTHUR WILSON (1595-1652)

This historian and playwright served as the Earl of Warwick's steward at Leez

Priory, Essex, from 1632 until his death. His journal, in spite of the puritan title of *Observations of God's Providence in the tract of my life*, is a vivid and lively account of his times, and deserves to be better known. He was inspired to write this account of his life after hearing a sermon at Leez on 21 July 1644. This argued that 'every Christian ought to keep a record of his owne actions & wayes, being full of dangers & hazards; that God might have the glorie...soe everie man, though of the meanest qualitie, may see the hand of the Divine Goodnes working for him in the many occurrences of his life.'

His story is an eventful one. He left Oxford on a snowy February day in 1632 on his journey to Essex to enter the earl's service. On leading his horse down Shotover Hill, he encountered a 'Grecian...in an old, long, black garment, a great broad beard and a hat whose brim was of an easterne diameter.' He spoke 'in a strange gibberish language', and attempts to communicate with him in English, Latin, French and Italian all failed. Wilson deduced that he was a fraud, and berated him in English as a 'counterfeit, striving by canting to deceive ignorant people', and threatened to take him to the justice of the peace. The 'Grecian', clearly understanding Wilson's drift, pulled him from his horse and attempted to seize his sword. After a skirmish, Wilson broke loose and ran off down the hill to retrieve his horse, pursued by his assailant. Initially Wilson was able to keep him at sword's length, but he slipped on the snow and again found the sturdy 'Grecian', 'onely arm'd with drink', on top of him. He then recorded 'in this extremitie was God's mercie seene' as he was able to struggle free from his assailant who was badly out of breath from the pursuit. At this point three shepherds, who had witnessed Wilson being pulled off his

horse, arrived and restrained the 'Grecian' whom they denounced as a drunken rogue who 'had bene drinking all night at an alehouse upon the side of the hill.' Wilson, free at last, had to walk to the next town to retrieve his horse which had run off in fright.

Wilson described a number of other encounters with beggars, of whom he had a poor opinion. Some 'fastened bladders to their secret parts, to swell them into a rupture; others whose inverted tongues have proclaim'd them dumbe; some, whose crouches could hardlie support them, most miraculously have run away.' He was about to offer charity to a beggar in Whitehall, haggard and yellow with jaundice, but 'looking somewhat intently upon his face, I found it rubb'd with brimstone, or some other tincture to color his knaverie. My tongue then being more nimble than my hand, I tax'd him with it. Hee would not dure the triall; but left his double dealing; grew an upright man; & maugre his disease, ran away from mee.'

In 1635, he fell into a quarrel with Mr King, one of the Earl of Warwick's gentlemen, who was armed with a sword. Wilson, being unarmed, felt he had to strike the first blow and 'clos'd with him & threw him downe.' In the altercation that followed King's 'leg snapt in two peeces, to my regret... I helpt to carry him to his chamber. Where, I must confesse, for two monethes hee indured a great deale of hardship. In which time I visited him often, being very sorry that there was an occasion given & taken, which redounded so much to his prejudice'. On King's recovery, Wilson received a writ and consulted his advocate. The advice given was that provocation was no defence and, as he had struck the first blow and broken the victim's leg, no jury would take his side. They agreed what would now be called an out-of-court settlement, with Wilson

paying King the substantial sum of £35.

In 1637 he accompanied the Earl of Warwick to the Low Countries and was present at the second siege of Breda. Although for him this action was uneventful, their return journey in August was not. In a 'poore, ill-built, & worse waigh'd, unseasoned mussel-boate' they ran into a ferocious three day storm with adverse winds which prevented their return to harbour. 'The dayes, we saw our danger; yett the nights were more fearfull. Such cries! Now shee sinkes! Lord have mercie upon us! Such terrible noises our feares made, that the wind & seas were calm to 'em. For my part a rough sea & I can never agree; 'tis a sickness to me almost to death, when others are in no danger. I could doe nothing but lye still, & prepare myself for a dissolution; my soule was at worke for life; when my bodie waited to be lodged in the chambers of death'. Eventually they made The Hague, but had been presumed lost by the ship that had accompanied them. As the winds continued contrary, Wilson travelled overland to Flanders but his journey was complicated by a three week detention in Bruges, in spite of the necessary papers for a free passage from the king's resident at The Hague.

He encountered a different hazard of travelling in 1642 when he was sent in the earl's carriage to rescue the countess Rivers, an adherent to the Catholic faith, who was reported to be in danger at Long Melford. There were difficulties in passing though each Essex town and village 'where their black bills & course examinations put us to divers demurs', and safe passage was only allowed at each place when either Wilson or the earl's coach was recognised. At Sudbury he was less lucky. Though 'not a man appeared till we were within the chain,' the streets rapidly filled with armed men, and the

coach, mistaken for that of countess Rivers, was surrounded by an angry mob. Wilson himself was taken to be Lord Rivers. 'They swarm'd about mee, & were soe kind as to lay hold on mee. But I calmly intreated those many hundreds which incircled mee, to hear mee speake; which before they had not patience to doe, the confusion & noise was so great.' When he was able to make himself heard above the uproar, he indicated that he had letters of authority from the Earl of Warwick which he would show to the local magistrate. The mayor, however, said that he did not know the earl's hand, and that anyone could have written the letter. The mob grew more restless, having 'an ytching desire after the coach-horses', the town having had many of its animals requisitioned by the parliamentary army. Finally he was identified by the town clerk who had met him once at Leez and 'the great cloude vanished.' Continuing his journey to Long Melford was out of the question, as that town was in 'so great a confusion.... that no man appeared like a gentleman, but was made a prey to that ravenous crewe.' However Wilson learnt that the countess had already escaped from Long Melford, first to Bury and then to London, so he was able to return to Leez, deeply impressed by the 'great act of Divine Goodness, that a man I never knewe, should owne mee in such a time of extremitee. And that, though I were incircled, provok'd, seiz'd on, and readie to be made a sacrifice to the rage of a giddie multitude, their madnes was not soe high as to doe me mischief; nor my fears so great as to betray my innocence.'

The best known passages relate to Wilson's attempts to defend Leez from the depredations of the cavalier forces en route to Colchester. This was preceded by a meeting with the

Royalists at Chelmsford where he unsuccessfully attempted to persuade them to abandon their struggle – 'there was too much noise, too many commanders, & too few obeyers, to listen to any good advice... in the confusion I slunke away; lest I should bee taken in their trapp; & went home to Leez to secure my lord's house.'

The Royalist forces at Chelmsford, under Lord Goring and Sir Charles Lucas, had news of an approaching parliamentary party, and prepared to move. They were short of weapons and Goring sent a note to Wilson informing him that 'he would dine at Leeze & borrow my lord's armes'. There was no chance of defending the house against the Royalists, so Wilson set about concealing over half the weapons in the armoury at Leez in other parts of the house. No sooner was this done than Goring arrived with Lucas and 30 or 40 officers. They were admitted as 'their demeanour was very faire & civill.' This was more than could be said of the main body of the army who had 'neither order nor discipline among them. The soldiers left their ranks & some fell to killing of deere, some to taking of horses, & others clambered over the walls & came into the house.' They were driven out at sword point by the officers but, even so, twenty hogsheads of beer, one of sack and 100 deer were consumed by 'our ill guests.... all the scum of the countrie, & many hundreds of apprentice boys... who knew not whom to call commander, nor how to bee obedient.' Meanwhile Goring inspected the armoury and was surprised to find it more than half empty. Wilson explained that lord Manchester had taken arms from it for his regiment, and this explanation (only partly true) was accepted. However Sir Charles Lucas returned later, having apparently learnt from an informant that more arms were concealed in the house, and ordered a

search. This was thwarted by Wilson's delaying tactics, at some considerable personal risk. On a pre-arranged signal, the housekeeper slipped off with the keys and concealed himself, and could not be found subsequently to open the locked rooms. Meanwhile 100 men were allowed into the outer courtyard to load the weapons into carts, but the officers nearly lost control again when the rabble threatened to plunder the house. Before the situation got completely out of control, and Wilson's ruse was discovered, word was received that the parliamentary forces were nearby and the Royalists departed in haste with some horses, two brass cannon, and less than half the contents of the armoury, as well as some barrels of powder, match and bullets. According to Lord Goring's quartermaster-general, two or three hundred muskets, a similar number of pikes, some pistols and carbines, and 60 'great saddles' were taken. Many of the saddles, however, had to be left behind for want of transport.

It is interesting to compare Wilson's account with that of the future countess, Mary Warwick, who was resident at Leez at this time. If she felt threatened by the mob, she made no reference to it, and merely noted that 'I was upon that account used so well that, bating some arms they took, there was not anything touched, and they stayed only a dinnering time....' She attributed this considerate treatment to her friendship with Lord Goring. Perhaps she did not know about her steward's deception, or - if she did - she may not have approved of it.

Though Wilson was undoubtedly a combative individual, his attitude to the persecution of witches is interesting. He attended the witch trials in Chelmsford on 29 July 1645, presided over by the Earl of Warwick, at which 18 women

were tried and condemned to death. He was far from convinced that they were witches, and wrote that he 'could see nothing in the evidence which did persuade me to think them other than poore, mellencholie, envious, mischievous, ill disposed, ill dieted, atrabilus** constitutions; whose fancies working by grosse fumes & vapours, might make the imagination readie to take any impression; whereby their anger & envie might vent it selfe into such expressions, as the hearers of their confessions (who gave evidence) might find cause to believe, they were such people as they blazon'd themselves to bee.' The Biblical injunction 'thou shalt not to suffer a witch to live' troubled his conscience considerably, and he wrote about it at some length. But he was unable to dissuade himself from his original view that 'there is nothing upon the stage of the world, acted by publique justice, comes so crosse to my temper, as putting so many witches to death.' Wilson comes across as a vigorous and pugnacious individual, but also a thoughtful and humane one. His writing has an immediacy which gives it life and veracity. One is left with a strong impression that he would be a resourceful friend in difficult situations, but not someone with whom to pick a fight, or to attempt to dissemble.

Michael Leach

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**atrabilus = atrabilious, i.e. black bile or melancholy

WALLER'S POOR OPINION OF ESSEX

Lady Anne Rich, a grand-daughter of Bess of Hardwick, died in 1638. An ode, written for the occasion by the poet Edmund Waller was described by Charlotte Fell Smith as 'rather insincere', consisting of a mixture of hyperbolic praise of the deceased and contemporary prejudice about the unhealthiness of the county in which Lady Anne had taken up residence. Smith, writing in 1901, wryly noted that Waller's wish for the swift depopulation of Essex had not been fulfilled. The relevant passage of Waller's poem reads:

May those already curs'd Essexian
plains
Where hasty death and pining sickness
reigns,
Prove all a desert! And none there may
stay
But savage beasts or men as wild as
they!
There the fair light which all our island
grac'd,
Like Hero's taper in the window plac'd,
Such fate from the malignant air did find
As that exposed to the boisterous wind.

Source

Fell Smith, C, 1901 *Mary Rich, Countess of Warwick 1625-78: her family and friends*, Longmans

RESTORATION OF ANCIENT WOODLAND

This is not an oxymoron, but a remarkable success story reported by the Woodland Trust and based on a ten year study. In the post-war years, much ancient woodland was felled and planted

with non-native conifers, resulting in monolithic stands of alien trees in the landscape and the loss of a rich habitat. Nature, however, has proved resilient and indigenous species managed to persist, particularly on the woodland fringes and in areas where the conifers failed to establish themselves. As Oliver Rackham observed, some deciduous trees, like small leaved lime, are extremely resistant to attempts to exterminate them. In addition, seeds from native species - both trees and flowering plants - can remain dormant in the soil for many decades. In 2001 the Woodland Trust adopted a policy of gradual clearance of the alien species from former ancient woodland, and has observed 100 different stands over the last ten years. This has shown the advantage of the gradual clearance of conifers which maintains shade and prevents overgrowth by invasive species such as bramble and bracken. It also benefits native woodland species, with regeneration of shade-loving plants such as bluebell, yellow archangel and stitchwort. Shade also favours those insects and lichens that live on dead wood, by preventing excessive drying out. On the poor soils of the acidic wet uplands (such as Wales), regeneration was considerably slower, and it was possible to remove the conifers more quickly. Though the native survivors were often thin and straggly from being crowded out by conifers, their crowns filled out as the non-deciduous trees were removed, and regeneration of native trees followed. Replanting is quite unnecessary; a good local example is Chalkney Wood, near Earl's Colne where Oliver Rackham noted the recovery of the lime wood resulting from what he inelegantly, but memorably, called 'un-replanting'. These results should give heart to anyone owning a monolithic piece of

post-war conifer plantation which is now almost valueless as a timber crop, as well as being a very poor habitat for wild life. More information can be found on the Woodland Trust website at woodlandtrust.org.uk/research.

Michael Leach

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THE JOHN BENSUSAN BUTT BIOGRAPHICAL DICTIONARY OF EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY COLCHESTER - AND AN UNRELIABLE SOURCE

As people with an informed interest in the history and archaeology of Essex, ESAH members will have a shrewd critical eye for the accuracy of the historical sources they use in their research. Over the years I have been working on John Bensusan Butt's collection of historical material on eighteenth-century Colchester, I have dealt with all kinds of primary sources from parish registers, borough records, rates, newspapers, maps, images and deeds to private correspondence and indeed to the visual evidence in the architecture and street plan of modern Colchester. Now that the project is completed and the three volumes of *Colchester People: the John Bensusan Butt Biographical Dictionary of Eighteenth-Century Colchester* are published (details below) there is one historical source that stands out as both

intriguing and very often decidedly unreliable.

The collection of anecdotes, apparently written by Henry Daniel Bland, Colchester Alderman between 1836 and 1841, seems to be drawn principally from his teenage recollections of late-eighteenth century Colchester, though there are also references to newspaper obituaries of the 1830s and 40s and a handed-down story about the mayor of 1723. Bland seems to have grown up in Colchester, left for London as a young adult, but returned later. He was created a Colchester free burgess in 1799. From 1835 he lived in St Mary's Terrace. He died in 1851, aged 79 and is buried at St Nicholas, Colchester along with William Bland who had been with the East India Company (d. 1818 aged 75) and Mary (d. 1825, aged 80) (see *Colchester People*, Vol. 1, pp. 71-2).

It seems likely that Bland left Colchester under something of a cloud. An advertisement in the *Ipswich Journal* of 4 October 1794, contained a public notice by Philip Havens, then owner of Donyland Hall, as follows:-

POACHERS & UNQUALIFIED PERSONS

Whereas Bland junr of Colchester and Vince junr of Langham Essex, both unqualified persons have lately made improper use of the names of proprietors and stewards of manors; and have lately killed game ... near Donyland Hall ... and Bland junr did ... shoot a hare in the plantation adjoining the Church.

A reward of FIVE GUINEAS is hereby offered to anyone who will give information....

Whether this event was sufficient to account for Bland's animus against Colchester's late-eighteenth-century social and political establishment, his intention in the anecdotes seems to be to paint the 1790s Borough Corporation and middle classes as drunken, venal,

ill-educated and self-serving - a disparaging view from the perspective of reformed nineteenth-century Borough government. Bland refers with some approval to the scandalous 1818 doggerel, *The Guild*, a product of Corporation political in-fighting, which landed its printer, Isaac Marsden, in gaol for libel.

Many of Bland's anecdotes are of scant literary or historical merit. The writing style lacks distinction; many of the stories are dull and sometimes scatological. Some of them are obviously 'urban myths'. For example, the common tale of the drunken man who stays at an inn where the only free bed is in a room shared by an unknown lady. Creeping into her bed with lustful intent the hero is terrified to find that his bedfellow is a laid-out corpse. Bland attaches this story to Philip Sansom, cardmaker and Alderman. Nevertheless, the collection also includes allusive material about named individuals which checks out against other sources, for example the story of the illegitimate child fathered by William Sparling, later a very respectable attorney, or the disappearance from the local record of hitherto well-regarded apothecary, Stephen Hooker, which Bland attributes to his having 'taking ways' and being discovered in the theft of a watch. There are hints of tensions over nuances of social and class status in Napoleonic-era Colchester. Prosperous tailor Francis Snell bought a tenanted house on East Hill occupied, amongst others, by Major Wilshire Wilson of the Royal Regiment of Dragoons and sometime Town Adjutant of Portsmouth. The Major was irritated to find that his new landlord was a tradesman, and when Snell called on him to announce the purchase said 'Damn me, Sir, you are a purse-proud fellow.' To which Snell responded 'Damn me, Major, none can say that of you.'

Bland also provides insights into the texture of life in an eighteenth-century provincial town. For example, in the days before motor traffic noise, he recalls the cries of cockle-seller Blind Kibble who tramped regularly up from Wivenhoe calling, 'Salt and good Pinpatches ho!' and could be heard in the centre of the town coming down Clinghoe Hill. Likewise the recollection of Joseph Mitchell, the pieman, who stood in the market place surrounded by a crowd of boys tossing coins to win pies and puddings, also the subject of a drawing by E. P. Strutt. There are also pictures of servants (Abigail Arthy, marked by the smallpox with only one eye) and the poor (Old Nabb the 'idiot woman, dumb with tongue too large for her mouth' who sat outside St Leonard's workshop). St Giles was the place to go to see the ever-laughing Petticoat Jack 'who wore a petticoat instead of breeches, with a cocked hat and a round wig'. Sam Smith had spent some time in Bethlem Hospital, but ran away to Colchester where he got by through running errands. He was known for religious quotation and 'made verses and sang them upon every public occurrence, preceding every procession and exhibition.' Bland's recollection nuances the historian's perspective of the accounts of civic processions in the newspapers, knowing that on every formal occasion Sam Smith was at the head of the procession, singing his celebratory songs. If Bland's hostility to the 1780s and 90s Colchester Corporation are easy to spot, his fascination with the eccentric, the mad or the deformed gives a grotesque twist to the picture of Colchester's poor that seeps out of this text. Alongside the ignorant, drunken Aldermen, they become a part of a deformed and disorderly past. Nevertheless, taking a different perspective, such people would

have been socially visible in a town of the size of Colchester, particularly to adolescent and teenage boys roaming the streets, as Bland was at that date. Perhaps especially before the Victorian workhouses, such individuals were necessarily part of the 'street-scape'. However from a historian's point of view such word portraits of the poor are otherwise hard to find in the sources for Colchester's eighteenth-century history. As an author Bland was self-serving and always ready to sacrifice accurate recollection to make a good tale. Nevertheless, taken as a whole, and read contextually and carefully, there is historical value in these stories. In recent years there have been exchanges of ideas between social history and literary and cultural studies. Thinking about culture (less in the sense of 'high' culture, but of how ideas, material artefacts and social practice come together to shape historical events) and about how to read even unreliable texts like Bland's Anecdotes 'against the grain,' have enriched much recent historical writing.

Bland's original manuscript has long disappeared and John Bensusan Butt himself knew of the anecdotes through a manuscript copy he attributes to Charles Benham. John borrowed the Benham manuscript in 1964 from the headmaster of Endsleigh School, and this too seems to have been lost. There is suggestive evidence that there were other anecdotes not included in John's transcription of the Benham notebook. For example, historian G. O. Rickwood cites a story about an Ensign Sturt who offered to marry one of Borough Recorder Francis Smythies' daughters at a reduced dowry, which seems to be of a piece with Bland's other tales. Consequently, John's typescript is, to my knowledge, the only surviving version of the anecdotes. It is now fairly deeply

buried in his uncatalogued research materials deposited in ERO (C905, Box 2). It is a blurred carbon copy on ragged flimsy paper - the kind of item that archivists are reluctant to issue or copy. Not least for this reason, I included a full transcription of Bland's Anecdotes as an appendix in Volume 3 of *Colchester People*, where interested readers can be intrigued, informed and irritated by the Anecdotes as much as I have been.

Bland's stories provide only one of many elements in the over 1,000 biographies of eighteenth-century Colcestrians included in *Colchester People*. These volumes provide information for people researching specific individuals, families, trades and locations in the town. Together, the many entries also build up a picture of social, political and religious connections between families, individuals and neighbourhoods. *Colchester People* is just out on www.lulu.com (available on Amazon.com in the new year) where you can also find a collection of John Bensusan Butt's more extended essays in historical biography, together entitled *Essex in the Age of Enlightenment*.

As an introductory offer, readers of this newsletter can also purchase, for the much reduced price of £10, a CD with electronic copies both of all three volumes of *Colchester People* and *Essex in the Age of Enlightenment*. This CD is not on general distribution but is available only at this link:-

<http://www.lulu.com/content/compact-disc/colchester-people/9764116>

You will need Adobe Acrobat on your computer to be able to read these files. This software is available as a free download.

Shani D'Cruze

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COLLECTING AUTOGRAPH LETTERS

Anyone familiar with Elizabeth Ogborne's first (and only) volume of her *History of Essex* of 1814 will recall a feature not found in other Essex topographical works – engraved portraits of local worthies accompanied by facsimiles of their signatures. Thomas Cromwell went a stage further in his *History of Colchester* of 1826, in which signed copies of three documents relating to the siege of the town in 1648 were reproduced with great accuracy – presumably by the laborious process of making copper engravings from the originals.

The activities of Richard Bull of Chipping Ongar and his contemporaries, who were prodigious collectors of engraved portraits, were described in the Spring 2010 Newsletter. What is less well known is that autographed letters were also collected, and that this had developed into a formidable obsession by the early years of the C19. Such letters were often mounted and bound up by their enthusiastic collectors as

additional material in printed books, in a similar way to the portraits that were added by the grangerisers. Only a single document from each writer was required, so the process was quite distinct from the manuscript collections formed by antiquarians. Frequently the letter was trimmed to fit the page, or even reduced to the signature itself, so that its usefulness to an antiquarian as a document was destroyed.

Munby describes the history of the collection of the holograph, already established in the C17. An early exemplar was the Suffolk antiquary, Sir Simonds D'Ewes, who (in 1638) wrote a letter to Elizabeth of Bohemia, soliciting a letter in her husband's handwriting and, in exchange, sent her a letter from the duke of Brunswick. Other C17 antiquarians made similar collections, partly as a means of establishing the authenticity of other documents. Samuel Pepys prepared a volume for his own use entitled 'Repertorium Chiro-Typicum containing My Collection of Signes-Manuall' in which one of his secretaries made accurate facsimiles of signatures of individuals who were of importance in his naval correspondence. If it was possible for his secretary to make perfect copies, one wonders how useful this book was for the detection of forged signatures!

During the C18 it was largely antiquarians who collected autograph letters, though there was a growing interest in including them in general collections of curiosities. Horace Walpole, for example, acquired letters for his vast collection, more from a fascination with the writer than from the importance of their content. This practice evolved further after the publication of James Granger's *Biographical History of England* in 1769. The enthusiasts who added engraved portraits to printed volumes began to add autograph letters

in decorative mounts, often pruned to fit the page. By the early decades of the C19 the collection of these letters rivalled the mania for engraved portraits, and led to the fragmentation of many MSS collections. However, by that date, letters were appreciated for their contents as well as their signatures, and it became much less common to crop them up to fit. Neither of the two most assiduous collectors (William Upcott and Dawson Turner) have Essex connections but their obsession was phenomenal. Upcott, for example, compiled nearly three hundred bound volumes of letters from individuals, as well as an unknown number of printed books, extra-illustrated with handwritten material. Though he sold a great deal of this material in his lifetime, it has been estimated that there were still about 32,000 letters in his possession at his death in 1845.

Anyone trying to trace an early collection of manuscripts must live in the fear that the grangerisers got there first, cutting up and scattering large amounts of material. There seems to be no evidence that Richard Bull of Chipping Ongar, 'that veritable virtuoso of grangerising', collected autograph letters as well as engraved portraits, but doubtless there were other Essex collectors.

Michael Leach

Source

Munby, A N L, 1962 *The Cult of the Autograph Letter*, Athlone Press

BOOK REVIEW

Robert Nightingale: the life and times of an Essex artist, by Hugh Scantlebury, 2007. 68pp, numerous colour illustrations. Available from the author (hmscant@parvilles.com or telephone

01279 731228). £10 plus £1.50 UK postage & packing.

The opening sentence of this self-published book is somewhat disarming: 'It is, surprisingly, quite difficult to find out much about the life of Robert Nightingale, the artist, of Maldon, in Essex, who died in 1895'. For a start, the year of his birth is uncertain: commonly given as 1815, it might have been 1817, but is more likely to have been 1816, the year in which he was baptised, at Eitham, in Kent. He was orphaned at the age of eight, raised by aunts, and apprenticed to J. Stannard, painter and decorator, of Maldon. Thus he qualifies as an Essex artist. He has left us some watercolours and prints of Maldon and neighbourhood, and in 1844 he did some work for the Plume Library, cleaning their portrait of Archbishop Laud, and painting the beautifully illuminated Rules that are still displayed there. The Library has his bill and receipt for £8. But we don't know what Nightingale looked like, as no photograph or other likeness of him has been identified, and no sketchbooks, notebooks, or other memorabilia appear to have survived.

The reason why this obscurity is surprising is that Nightingale enjoyed quite a reputation in his lifetime as a painter that extended well beyond Essex. He specialised in portraits of prize cattle for Essex farmers, of hunters and hounds for the local gentry (notably Charles du Cane of Braxted Park and W.P. Honeywood of Marks Hall), and of racehorses for the country's leading owners, including at least two Derby winners, Hermit and Cremorne, who won in 1867 and 1872 respectively. Some of his work tends towards the sentimental (e.g. 'Children with pets'), but in this he was no worse than many of his

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contemporaries, and a painting like 'Decoy Ponds at Grange Farm' (possibly Grange Farm, Steeple) is a realistic portrayal of trapping wild duck that tells us much about this aspect of nineteenth-century rural life.

From rather sparse material Hugh Scantlebury has compiled an interesting and well-illustrated account of Nightingale's life and work, and by keeping an eye on auction house catalogues over the years he has managed to assemble quite a collection of photographs of Nightingale's paintings, most of which have remained in private hands. Mr Scantlebury has done Nightingale a great service, that is not undeserved, and this little book will be of interest to a wide range of people.

James Bettley

HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION, ESSEX BRANCH

Meetings will be held in The Link, Trinity Methodist Church, Chelmsford.

Followed by tea/coffee and biscuits

Free parking at the Church or in the Essex County Council car-park opposite Visitors and prospective members warmly welcome - a £2 donation is requested.

www.essexinfo.net/essex-branch-of-historical-association/

PROGRAMME 2011

SATURDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY 2011; *Women and Work in the Middle Ages.* [illustrated]; Anne Curry, Head of the School of Humanities and Professor of Medieval History, Southampton University, and President of the Historical Association.

SATURDAY, 5TH MARCH 2011; *The Strategy of the American Civil War,* Professor Brian Holden Reid, King's College, London.

SATURDAY, 9TH APRIL 2011; *Colchester's Roman Circus: Past and Future,* Philip Crummy, Director of the Colchester Archaeological Trust.

SATURDAY, 7TH MAY 2011; *Witchcraft - How 'bad' were the East Anglian Witch-Hunts of 1645-47? Mid-Seventeenth Century English Witch Persecution in Comparative Context,* Alison Rowlands, Senior Lecturer in European History, University of Essex:

BOOKBINDING

It is not easy to find a professional bookbinder who is a real enthusiast for the repair of damaged and battered leather or cloth bound books. While the Society cannot recommend any particular binder, a number of members have been very pleased with work done by George Smith of Brentwood. He is not on the phone, but works at Bookend, whose premises are in a yard hidden behind 40 Kings Road, Brentwood CM14 4DW. Clients are welcome to discuss the repair of their valued books on weekdays between 10am and 4pm (closed Thursday afternoon).

WILLIAM BYRD FESTIVAL

St Peter & St Paul Church, Stondon Massey. 7 -15 May 2011

Having retiled the nave roof this year, more work needs to be done to St Peter & St Paul Church and its surroundings. In order to raise funds to retile the porch and create a new Garden of Remembrance in the churchyard (which

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will cost over £5000) members of the local congregation are organising a 'William Byrd Festival' next May to commemorate the village's famous Elizabethan composer. The Festival will be held over **two** weekends at the church.

Leading the list of artists will be Richard Turbet, an expert in the life and work of William Byrd, and the Stondon Singers, a local Choir who since their formation in 1968 have specialised in the music of the renaissance composer and his contemporaries. Richard has chosen as his theme 'William Byrd: His Essex Years'. The event will be given twice on Saturday 7 May: a matinee at 4.00pm and evening performance at 7.30pm.

Then on Saturday 14 May at 7.30pm, the Writtle Singers conducted by Christine Gwynn will give a concert of mainly Byrd's music. Having heard the Writtle Singers perform an evening of words and music remembering the events of the Gunpowder Plot this will be an occasion not to miss.

Tickets for both events go on sale in early January priced £12.50 (children £6), from the William Byrd Festival, c/o Church Office, The Vicarage, Church Street, Blackmore, Ingatestone, Essex. CM4 0RN. (Cheques payable to "St Peter & St Paul PCC". Please enclose SAE).

On the two Sundays, church services will also be on a Byrd theme. On 8 May at 9.00am Stondon Church will have a Book of Common Prayer Morning Service featuring recorded music by Byrd, with singing supported by the church music group, Jubilate. Then on 15 May, again at 9.00am (repeated at 11.00am at the Priory Church of St Laurence Blackmore), there will be a

Service of the Top 10 Favourite Hymns, as voted by the people of our two parishes and beyond. Why? Because Byrd said that "Since singing is such a good thing, I wish every man would learne to sing" – that includes women as well!

For more information on the Festival visit www.williambyrdfestival.blogspot.com.

Andrew Smith

VOLUNTEERS WANTED TO HELP WITH A SURVEY OF ESSEX WINDMILLS

Over the next few months the County Council is undertaking a thematic Industrial Survey of Windmills. We are actively seeking volunteer help with this project which aims to specifically identify standing windmills and windmill remains in the County for planning purposes. If you are interested in helping please contact me for further details on david.morgans@essex.gov.uk or on the address or phone numbers given below.

David Morgans
Mills Support Officer
Historic Environment Branch
Essex County Council
County Hall (E3)
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mobile: 07766 364846
e-mail: david.morgans@essex.gov.uk
<http://www.essex.gov.uk/Activities/Heritage/Pages/Mills-in-Essex.aspx>



MEMBERSHIP - Subscriptions due on January 1st each year

Single Member - £20

Family Membership - £22

Student - £9

Associate Member - £9

Institutions - £25

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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 2009 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £47,715

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

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 162

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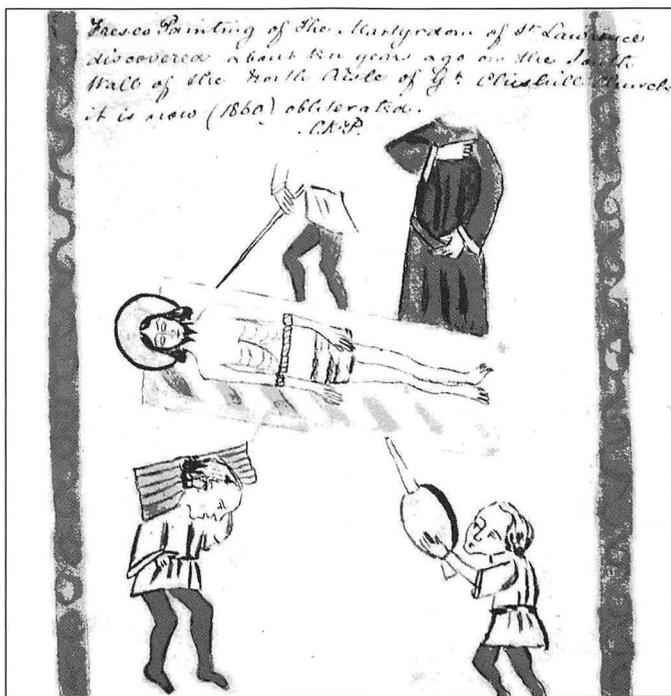
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Essex Archaeology and History News



Spring 2011

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 163

SPRING 2011

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COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 8 JULY 2011

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

Cover illustration:

Illustration from a Victorian gentleman's scrapbook.

The scrapbook includes a drawing of a wall painting in the church at Great Chishall, a village described in Kelly's Directory of Essex (1890) as being "on the Cambridgeshire border". (It was transferred out of Essex in 1895.)

The gentlemen (CKP) described it as a 'Fresco painting of the Martyrdom of St Laurence discovered about ten years ago on the South Wall of the North Aisle of Gt. Chishall Church. It is now (1860) obliterated".

See page 9 for full article

From The President

It is with incredulity that I contribute this last communication as President of your Society and, as a consequence, I am left pondering where the last three years have disappeared to? It has been an enormous honour and privilege to serve in this capacity especially with our foundations stretching back to 1852. It is people who predominantly make a worthy organisation and in this respect it has been a pleasure working with so many thoroughly pleasant and distinguished individuals. Of course, it would be quite invidious to single out specific personalities and, in any event, space certainly does not permit! However, I am exercising my prerogative to pay a tribute to the immediate past-President and our principal officers. Firstly, my predecessor, Stan Newens, who despite an onerous workload, continues to support the Society in every way possible which has certainly enabled me to take advantage of his experience and wise council. I am delighted that Stan's commitment and enthusiasm has been rewarded with his appointment as a Holding Trustee ensuring that the Society will continue to benefit on a permanent basis. Michael Leach has been a tower of strength being totally dependable in every respect. Bill Abbot who, in his quiet and scrupulous manner, deals so admirably with the financial affairs of the Society. Finally, Chris Starr, who has worked resolutely (supported by Helen Walker and others) to produce a learned and balanced *Transactions* whilst entirely eradicating the arrears in producing this publication. It is with enormous pleasure that I am able to report that Chris Starr's erudition and scholarship was recently recognised with his election as a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

The Annual General Meeting to be held at the University of Essex on Saturday, 18th June will signify the end of my time in office. It is at this point that Mark Davies will succeed me as the 38th President of the Society. This is a most welcomed development for Mark is steeped in Essex archaeology and history. He brings with him a wealth of experience which will be enormously beneficial to the development and smooth running of the Society. Mark will also be able to share the distinction of being of one of only five 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, the late William Raymond Powell and myself. Mark's professional career commenced as an Archaeological Assistant at the Grosvenor Museum at Chester during which time he contributed a short section on Roman Chester to the Pevsner Cheshire volume. In 1970 he emigrated to Essex upon his appointment as Assistant Curator of the Colchester Museum where he served as deputy to David Clarke (see obituary in the recently published 2009 *Transactions*, volume 40, pp.vii-ix). He eventually took early retirement in 1998 having served the last fifteen months as Acting Head of Museum and Visitor Services. Mark has held numerous posts throughout his career including holding office as the Secretary (1980-6) and Chairman (1991-4) of the Society of Museum Archaeologists. He was Company Secretary and is currently Chairman of the Colchester Archaeological Trust and has served as Chairman on three occasions (1975-8, 1991-4 and 2001-4) of the Colchester Archaeological Group. Mark has recently been very active in the negotiations to safeguard the future of Tymperleys (the clock museum at

Colchester which was formerly the home of William Gilbert, scientist and physician to Elizabeth I).

Ann Newman and Pat Ryan, our Programme Secretary and Excursions Secretary, have indicated that they wish to stand down from their respective posts. Both have worked tirelessly for the Society over a considerable period of time and thoroughly deserve to enjoy their retirement! Ann, together with her husband Ken, has been meticulous in organising the Society's varied and interesting programme. I personally have benefited greatly from their organisational skills – not least the most enjoyable Morant Lunches which I have attended during my period in office and, of course, the highly successful presentation of the Letters Patent at Ingatestone Hall last May. These occasions would not have been possible without their significant contribution. The wonderful teas which have become such a feature of Society events owe their origin to Ann. Pat Ryan has been equally punctilious in taking responsibility for bookings which is a highly necessary task to ensure the smooth running of events. They will be greatly missed. You will find with this mailing a letter from Michael Leach appealing for volunteers. Do please consider putting yourself forward.

I am delighted to announce that the preparation of the Index Volume covering volumes 21 to 30 (1990-9) has reached an advanced stage of production. It is envisaged that it will be possible to despatch this publication shortly. Our Indexer, Peter Gunn, is now proceeding to complete the indexing of volumes 31 to 40 (2000-9) in order to ensure completion of the entire Third Series.

I wish this fine Society all the very best for the future and pledge to continue my

support in any way possible. Thank you for electing me as your President.

H. Martin Stuchfield

Essex Place-Names Project

For several years Volunteers have been recording Place- and Field-names from old documents and maps, many in the Essex Record Office, onto a county-wide database, and making this freely available to researchers on the internet. Essex is one of the first counties to coordinate such a Project and one of the first to put it onto an electronic version on the web. To date over half of the parishes in Essex have significant entries, but all parishes are represented at least to some degree.

The searchable database www.essex.ac.uk/history/esah/essexplace_names is of use to local historians, genealogists, linguists and archaeologists. For those seeking information about family history, landowners and tenants are recorded against the places and fields they occupied. Kilns, mills, maltings and inns no longer extant are preserved in the names of fields and roads. How farmers used their land and the productivity of individual fields is recorded in field-names. Past practices such as the textile, brick-making and pottery industries can be traced by residual names. Previous sites of mill-mounds, sometimes reusing prehistoric barrows, can be identified even though the terrain has been flattened by subsequent ploughing.

More Recorders are needed to record their parishes. Further information is available from the Project Publicity Officer paul.mardon@btinternet.com.

James Kemble

Victoria County History of Essex: the current position

It is now well known that Essex County Council has ended its 60 year long financial support for the Victoria County History of Essex. The loss of the grant (the major element of support for the salaries of the editor and assistant editor) has necessitated a complete reorganisation of the finances and management of the VCH Essex. With effect from the New Year, the following new structure has emerged through discussions between the Victoria County History of Essex Appeal Fund and London University's Institute of Historical Research (the body responsible, nationally, for the Victoria County Histories).

The principal change involves the Appeal Committee taking over the role as manager of the VCH Essex; the function fulfilled before the move to Essex University by the old County Committee. The editor and assistant editor, hitherto on the staff of the IHR, will now become freelance contractors, working to the Appeal Committee on VCH research. They will still be called editor and assistant editor and their formal linkage to the IHR is likely to be retained by their designation as Associate Fellows. Under the new arrangements, the Appeal Committee will commission VCH research from its contractors; the IHR acting to verify the quality of the research.

The key problems for the VCH Essex and for the effective continuance of the research programme are, firstly, the willingness of the editors to continue to work within the new and more tightly-constrained financial framework and, secondly, the necessity for the Appeal Fund to continue to raise sufficient money through its donors and research

grants to sustain an acceptable pace of progress in the hard times for charities which lie ahead.

The good news is that Volume XI (the Clacton volume) is almost complete and that earlier work on Volume XII means that almost 60% of that volume, too, is in rough draft. The process of continuous publication on the internet also ensures that, even if the rate of completion of future volumes slows, the contents are available from soon after the completion of drafts. For the Diamond Jubilee of the VCH Essex, therefore, to be held on Chelmsford on the 8th of October, this year, there will still be much to be cheerful about.

Future funding, of course, is the key issue for our survival. Existing funds will allow work to continue for around two years at, perhaps, 30% of earlier years and a major fund-raising effort to be launched at the Jubilee in October is hoped to continue to maintain that rate for a further two years. After that, perhaps the national economic sun will begin to shine again!

A further major development in the work of the VCH, nationally and locally, has been the introduction of volunteers into the research process. Pioneered in Essex through the Clacton project, writing is also under way in Newport and Southend. Although a formidable challenge where pre-modern history is concerned, such a development has the benefit that it forges closer links between the community and the VCH. In Essex as elsewhere, for economic reasons alone, it may become an essential element of the research programme.

The Appeal Fund is determined to continue to guide the VCH Essex through the difficult years ahead but it will also need all those concerned for and interested in the history of our County to recognise that we are now alone in our work. Perhaps, knowing the

fickleness of public funding, that may not be the worst outcome!

Geoffrey Hare
Chairman, Victoria County History of
Essex Appeal Fund

Colchester Botanic Garden

The post medieval concept of a botanic garden developed from the medieval monastic gardens which grew plants for culinary and medicinal use. The need for medicinal herbs did not disappear with the dissolution, and the Barber Surgeon's Hall in the city of London probably had a physic garden in the mid C16 (and perhaps earlier), and certainly had one by 1597. The earliest post-medieval foundation was in Oxford which received a gift of £5000 from Sir Henry Danvers (1573-1644) to establish a physic garden for the university, 'for the glorification of God and the advancement of learning'. These good intentions became mired in practical difficulties as, after the acquisition of the site and the completion of its surrounding walls in 1633, there was no money left to pay for its running costs. The first curator, Jacob Bobart senior (1599-1680), was appointed in 1642 but was not paid by the university for seven years. He was obliged to make ends meet by selling produce from the garden. He was succeeded by his son, Jacob Bobart junior (1641-1719) who subsequently became professor of botany, but after his death the garden fell into decline. It was rescued by a legacy in 1728 which endowed the chair of botany, on the condition that the university contributed to the upkeep of the botanic garden.

All the early botanic gardens were associated either with universities (for example Edinburgh in 1670, Cambridge in 1762), or with professional

organisations (the Chelsea physic garden established by the Society of Apothecaries in 1673). In the eighteenth century the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew evolved as a royal pleasure ground, but by the middle of the century had acquired a notable collection of rare or unusual plants. By 1837 it was in serious decline and, after public pressure, was acquired by the state in 1841. The difficulties experienced at Oxford and Kew were not unusual – Chelsea nearly failed in the early eighteenth century and, at Cambridge, the university's botanic garden had to be re-established on a new site in 1831 by professor Henslow.

In addition to these prestigious gardens – all now well known due to their survival to the present day – there were an unknown number of private physic gardens established by provincial physicians. These were transient and remain largely unrecorded. One such was noted in Ipswich in 1722 by Daniel Defoe. It belonged to Dr William Beeston (c1672-1733) who was 'exquisitely skilled in botanic knowledge, so has he not only been very diligent, but successful too, in making a collection of rare and exotic plants, such as are scarce to be equalled in England.' Rev. William Beeston Coyte (1740-1810) who was presumably related to Dr Beeston, also practised as a physician in Ipswich. He may have inherited Beeston's garden, and in 1796 he published a 'systematic enumeration' of the plants in his own botanic garden.

The early nineteenth century saw the growth of provincial scientific and philosophical societies, a number of which established botanic gardens to further their intellectual aims, and to provide outdoor relaxation for their members. Examples include Liverpool in 1803, Hull in 1811, Bury St Edmunds in 1821, and Sheffield in 1836. They were

funded in a number of different ways – through donations from wealthy supporters, from paid-up subscribers and even from the issue of shares. Most of them ran into difficulties of one sort or another during the nineteenth century. In industrial areas, potential supporters were lost when they moved away from the inner city to the more salubrious suburbs. Free access to the newly laid out municipal parks reduced the need for privately funded open spaces. Another direct threat was the rise in value of building land which made the sites of struggling botanic garden very attractive to developers. Many botanic gardens faced difficulties in generating enough income to cover the running costs, even in large cities. Survival in small provincial towns was more problematical.

Colchester's botanic garden was typical of early nineteenth century creations and was established in 1823 by the Colchester and Essex Botanical and Horticultural Society. It had no association with a university or professional organisation and, like most of its contemporaries, was run by a locally elected committee, many of whom were active in other aspects of the town's commercial and intellectual life. Its vice-patrons and vice-presidents were drawn from the landed gentry of Essex, the Bishop of London and a number of local parliamentary representatives (including George Canning, MP for Harwich). It is curious that none of the honorary officers or the elected committee appear to have been noted for outstanding botanical or horticultural expertise, and nothing is known about the background of the first curator, Mr Affleck, who must have had an important role in the establishment of the garden. However the committee clearly realised that there would be difficulties in setting up a botanic garden without endowments in a provincial town, and

from the outset the venture was to be subsidised - and ultimately (it was hoped) fully financed - by combining it with a nursery garden to bring in additional income. One wonders what Edward Auston (1796-1877), whose nursery garden was a stone's throw away on the other side of the town wall, must have felt about the close proximity of this rival.

An 8½ acre site was leased for 21 years on part of the Greyfriars site within the old town walls which conveniently formed the northern and eastern boundaries. Morant's map of Colchester in his 1748 history of the town shows that this area had already been laid out as square plots planted with trees. By 1818 there was a more formal arrangement of large rectangular beds with a central circular plot. When the botanic garden was laid out, this layout was completely changed with curved intersecting paths, and the addition of greenhouses, an office for the curator and various outbuildings. Two existing ponds (alleged to be former monastic fishponds, though they are not shown on the 1748 or 1818 maps) were joined together to provide a large pond for aquatics, and most of the plants were to be arranged in Linnaean classification, with a few illustrative of 'Jussieu's continental system'. Trees and shrubs were to be planted 'to produce the most agreeable and ornamental effect'. It is interesting that the physic garden tradition still lingered on, as there was to be provision for cultivating medicinal plants. Early accounts of the garden emphasized the pleasing aspect of the site, and delightful distant views which it afforded. There were two groups of members. A maximum of 200 proprietors paid a guinea a year plus a further guinea to purchase one 'share', or pro rata up to a maximum of ten shares. These shares could be sold or passed

on, but only with the approval of the committee who met monthly. There were to be no new proprietors after July 1825, by which time it was probably hoped that the garden would be financially self-sufficient from its plant sales. Ordinary subscribers also paid a guinea a year which entitled them, their families (and their non-resident visitors) to free admission. Other non-residents could be admitted for 2s 6d a day, but this would be refunded if they purchased more than 10s worth of plants.

The committee's minutes have not been found, so little is known about the problems that faced the Colchester botanic garden. In 1844 there was a major threat to its existence by the Colchester Port and Junction Railway which proposed to run a line in a brick-arched cutting immediately north of, and parallel to, the High Street. This would have cut the garden into two pieces and would have destroyed everything that had been achieved. That this railway was never built must be an immense relief to those who love the town and its archaeology, and doubtless the committee were relieved that this threat did not materialise. At this time Edward Warmington was listed as 'occupier'. Possibly he was the resident curator and he may have been related to the family of F W Warmington & Co who were Colchester tanners and leather merchants in the 1850s.

It is generally believed that the finances of the botanic garden were in poor shape by this time. A newspaper advertisement of May 1849 announced the ascent of Green's "New Victoria" balloon from the botanic gardens; this may have been to raise funds. *The Essex County Standard* of 19 September 1851 reported the closure of the gardens. Within six weeks, the minutes of the Sanitary Committee noted the proposed allotment of the site of the botanic gardens for building, and

new estate roads (now Roman Road and Castle Road) were laid out soon afterwards and a variety of houses were built over the next few decades. In about 1854 the Colchester Monthly Meeting of the Society of Friends agreed to buy plots 1, 2 and 3 (adjoining what was then named Garden Terrace at the northern end of the site) for use as a burial ground, together with another plot with a 40 foot frontage immediately to the south, fronting onto Roman Road. The necessary permission was obtained from the Secretary of State and the first burial took place in 1857. In 1864 it was suggested that part of the Roman Road plot could be used for building, but it was let as a garden instead and was not built on until it was finally sold in 1956. In 1879 a strip of land between the northern boundary of the burial ground and the town wall had become an eyesore, and the Friends purchased this and planted it with trees. This piece was not used for burials.

Today the area is a mature Victorian housing development with the Quaker cemetery in the north east corner, and nothing remains to suggest that the area had been a botanic garden. Many other provincial botanic gardens also had a short life. A combination of high running costs, and the pressure to use the land more profitably to house the growing population of Victorian towns, sealed their fate. Even those which survived into the twentieth century, such as Sheffield, came perilously close to closure after prolonged periods of inadequate investment and public spending cuts.

Michael Leach

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Saffron Walden Museum Society

This society meets on Monday evenings at 8pm in St Mary's Parish Rooms, Museum Street, Saffron Walden and non members may attend on payment of £3 per meeting. The remaining meetings this year are:

13 June: 'Two Hundred Years of Wedgwood' by Dr Julia Poole, former Keeper of Applied Art, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

12 September: 'The Home Front: Essex 1914-18' by William Tyler.

10 October: 'Missionary Collecting & British Society: What was George Benet doing in Saffron Walden?' by Chris Wingfield, Hon Associate, Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.

14 November: 'Lost on the Somme' by Julian Whybra.

New Insights into Tree Ring Dating

Tree ring dating (or dendrochronology) has been with us for a number of years. The science has helped historians understand and sometimes reinterpret

the history of an individual building, and its context within a community. This was the case at Blackmore a few years ago when Dr Martin Bridge was commissioned by the Parochial Church Council (with 100% grant support) to attempt to date the bell tower of the Priory Church of St Laurence.

The result, a construction date of 1400 or, at most, two years' afterwards, was much earlier than anyone had previously thought and caused the understanding of the building's history to change. Historians learned that the bell tower was almost contemporary with the construction of the roof over the nave and chancel (1381 – 97: being the date range of the 16 painted shields on the ceiling) and the likely piercing of a north door for parishioners' use when the great west door was stopped up.

Almost seven years after the dating work was completed, Dr Martin Bridge gave a talk to the High Country History Group (1) on his specialist topic. With every new and successful commission a greater understanding of timber use can be gleaned. Recent research has indicated the possibility that the timbers to build the 'Mary Rose' could have been sourced from many locations, from across southern England to the Welsh Marches. This makes stronger the discussion set forward in Dr Bridge's 2004 report (2) on Blackmore's bell tower that it's oak may have not necessarily been sourced locally.

"The very poor timber matching between the individual samples is remarkable, and again underlines the idea that timber may have been gathered from several woodlands, although the matching characteristics of the site chronology suggest the sources would have been relatively local. It is also of note that many of the sites with which the tree-ring series match best have monastic / ecclesiastical connections, matching is

less good with close secular sites (for example Little Braxted, Dunmow, Good Easter and Fyfield, all within a 25km range).”

Martin Bridge also talked about the work done on St Andrew’s Church at Greensted. The results confirmed the date of construction to be much later than had been thought, destroying the age-old legend that it had been used as a resting place for St Edmund’s body in 1013. That said it remains one of the most ancient buildings in the county.

As the body of evidence grows on this subject, further insights may still be realised.

Andrew Smith

1. The High Country History Group meets during the winter months at Toot Hill, Stanford Rivers. For more information contact me.

2. M. C. Bridge (2004). Oxford Dendrochronology Laboratory Report 2004/4. The Tree-Ring Dating of the Bell Tower, Priory Church of St Laurence, Blackmore, Essex. Unpublished but available from Andrew Smith if interested.
E-mail: apsblackmore@btinternet.com

A Day’s Elephant Hunting in Essex

The first catalogue of the Society’s library was published in 1895 but, by 1923, this was very out of date and a new catalogue was printed. This was only issued to those members who had directly subscribed to its publication and it was issued as a hardback volume, attractively bound in blue cloth with the Society’s seal stamped in gold on the front board. Printed catalogues, of course, were impossible to update without regular supplements, and were superceded by card indexes, and now by electronic listing. It is unlikely that

anyone needs to be convinced of the immense advantages of the on-line catalogue which can be easily updated, as well searched from any computer in a variety of ways.

The 1923 catalogue is a relic from a different era but nevertheless gives an interesting insight into what the Society had collected over the first 70 years of its life. It is arranged alphabetically, and included authors’ names, journal titles and some (but not all) of the book titles. The printed pages are bound alternately with blank ones to enable members to pencil in additional entries. Some 40 printed pages of the catalogue deal with ‘Manuscripts and MS Collections’, a large section of which (25 pages) is devoted to the Morant manuscripts. William Wire’s collection covers another 10 pages. Scattered throughout the ‘Manuscript’ section are a few printed books, pamphlets, maps and engravings. It has been the Society’s policy for a great many years to deposit (on recoverable loan) all its manuscript material at the Essex Record Office and most of this material will no longer be found in the Society’s library.

On glancing through the slim volume, my eye was caught by a number of improbable titles, such as *A Day’s Elephant Hunting in Essex* by Henry Walker (undated) and *A Scramble over the Lake Mountains, New Zealand* by Samuel H. Moreton (1885). Some titles tantalise, such as *The Pen-man’s Paradis* of 1695, ‘with engraved plates showing examples of handwriting and flourishes’. There were also fragmentary runs of some rather obscure journals such as *The Illustrated Science Monthly* of 1884, a few reports of the Russian Archaeological Commission (printed in Russian, and dating from 1890 to 1893) and a single volume of the *Quarterly Journal of the Microscopical Society* of 1854. Perhaps these titles were donated

by members, rather than acquired by deliberate purchase, and they may have had a significance which is not now apparent. It is not possible to check as none of these titles are now to be found in the Society's collection at the University of Essex. However, as *A Day's Elephant Hunting in Essex* was originally published in the *Transactions of the Essex Field Club* in 1881, the pursuit was clearly for fossil bones rather than their modern living descendants!

Much of the material listed consists of journals, or reprints of articles which had originally been published in journals. There are relatively few books on Essex archaeology, though – with a few surprising exceptions – most of the standard topographical works are present, including the county histories by Norden, Salmon, Morant, Osborne, Wright and Suckling (but not Tindal's or *The Gentleman's History*, or Collier's *People's History*). There are a number of local histories, such as Dale's *History of Harwich*, Palin's two volumes on the Stifford neighbourhood and Reeves' account of Stondon Massey, but not Cromwell's *History of Colchester*. The most surprising absence is Newcourt's *Repertorium*. The rather random collection of journals and book titles in the catalogue, some of little apparent relevance to Essex history and archaeology, suggests that much of the material had been donated, rather than collected in an ordered and planned manner, and this may account for the absence of the *Repertorium* (unless it was not at that time valued as a reference book). It would be interesting to know more about the history of the formation of the Society's library, and whether there was a policy for acquisitions, or a budget for doing so.

Michael Leach

Source

Redstone, V B, 1923 *Catalogue of Books, Pamphlets, Periodicals, Manuscripts & Scrap Collections in the Library of the Essex Archaeological Society*, Benham & Co.

Wall Paintings

As a member of the Library Committee of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History I have taken on a task, with others, of sorting the contents of an office at, what could be described as, the headquarters of the organisation.

The ESAH has an interesting history of its own. In years gone by its members were elected. These ladies and gentlemen were amateurs and professionals with a particular interest in archaeology and the county's history. Little has changed regarding the membership but now anyone can join.

The passing of time means that over the many years the Society has not only published thousands of pages of historic interest through its own 'Transactions' but accumulated many publications left by former members, probably upon their demise. The office contains a treasure trove of material which has quietly languished there, some in need of viewing by a wider audience through transfer to archives such the Essex Record Office, some which needs to be retained, and another larger proportion which needs to be sold or disposed. All have gathered dust!

One 'discovery' was a scrapbook compiled by an unidentified Victorian member of the Society. It contains some reports of Society Meetings (today called 'Excursions'), text on some church refurbishments and rebuilds, and, principally, cuttings from books (Suckling, Buckler etc) and the compiler's own sketches of Essex churches.

Essex churches were of particular interest to this gentleman. The scrapbook includes a drawing of a wall painting in the church at Great Chishall, (see front cover.

Randomly opening Volume XVII of the Society's "Transactions" ("New Series"), I found another illustration of the same image in the frontispiece with an article by the Rev. G. Montagu Benton on 'Wall Paintings in Essex. I. Wall-paintings formerly in the churches of Felsted and Great Chishall'.

Benton mentions in his paper that at Ingatestone a painting representing the seven deadly sins was discovered during the course of restoration in 1866. "In this instance each sin was placed between the spokes of a large wheel, 7 feet 2 inches in diameter, in the centre of which was hell. After much perplexity the vicar and the churchwardens of the time decided to cover up this picture". As a youngster growing up in the parish during the 1970s I remember the Rector of the time – Canon Edward Hudson – telling the story to us as schoolchildren. An hour-glass holder of a later age – of equal interest – covers its site on the north wall by the pulpit.

Last October (2010) members of the local branch of the NADFAS held a couple of meetings at St Edmund and St Mary Church to explain some of the things they had discovered during the course of recording the interior of Ingatestone Church. The present Rector – Revd. Patrick Sheering – displayed a framed drawing of the 'Seven Deadly Sins' which had been given to him only in the last two to three years. It is an original made at the time of the 1866 restoration, and is accompanied by the narrative which appeared in the Essex Archaeological Society's 'Transactions' Volume IV ("Old Series"). I was pleased to go to the Essex Record Office and find on its bookshelves a copy of the

same, and the copy of the current Rector's acquisition beautiful represented.

The Great Chishall painting was destroyed, according to Benton, but the Ingatestone painting is preserved. If hidden from view. At least the Rector and the Society has copies and I hope that one day it may be made available to all to see on the Internet.

Andrew Smith

Book Reviews

John de Vere, Thirteenth Earl of Oxyford, 1442-1513 by Jane Greatorex, Manors, Mills & Manuscripts Series, 2010, ix & 136pp, numerous illustrations, ISBN 9 7809518543 9 6, available from www.essex-history.com at £16.99.

John de Vere, thirteenth Earl of Oxford, was the most powerful nobleman in early Tudor Essex, and Jane Greatorex has written a detailed account of his life, based on a wide range of sources, and making considerable use of quotations from them in the text. During the Wars of the Roses, the de Veres supported the Lancastrians. John's father and elder brother were executed for treason by Edward IV in 1462, and, although the de Vere lands were restored to the thirteenth earl two years later, he continued to plot on behalf of the Lancastrians. After Edward IV's victory at the battle of Barnet in 1471, John was captured at St Michael's Mount in 1474, attainted, forfeited his estates and was imprisoned at Hammes castle. He escaped ten years later, in time to join Henry VII and fight at the battle of Bosworth. From that point, he played a leading political role at court, and enjoyed a wealthy lifestyle, as is illustrated by his household accounts. His interests were not limited to politics.

He restored his residence at Castle Hedingham, and contributed to the rebuilding of Lavenham church where the de Vere arms can still be seen above the porch. He may have been responsible for building the Lady Chapel at Colne priory, in 1513, and the description of his elaborate funeral and his will are included in the book. A bibliography is provided for further reading, although arrangement in alphabetical order of author/editor would have been helpful; Translations of the Royal Historical Society should read *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*.

Jennifer Ward

Bromley Boozers by John S Appleby, self published 2010, 30pp, 16 illustrations, no ISBN, available from John Appleby, Little Pitchbury, Brick Kiln Lane, Great Horkesley, CO6 4EU

This slim booklet gives a one page summary of the historic legislation regulating beer houses, taverns and inns, and then gives brief illustrated summary descriptions of the public houses of Great and Little Bromley, many of which are now lost. Information has been obtained from ale house recognisances, census returns, church rates, overseers records and other sources which are not always identified. There are brief notes on the origin of some of the names, though the significance of the "Sorrowing Child" and the "Donkey and Buskins" remain obscure. The census returns show a significant turnover of publicans from decade to decade, as well as the other occupations of some of the licencees – grocer, carpenter, tailor and blacksmith. The final pages contain notes on brewers who lived in, or owned property in Great Bromley, and a paragraph on the pub game of quoits, played with heavy metal rings thrown at a target on

the ground. This pamphlet will be a useful pointer for anyone undertaking research into their local hostelrys, some of which had a transitory existence and left little archive evidence.

Michael Leach

Our Ancestors were Brickmakers and Potters by Adrian Corder-Birch, 2010, 170pp, 150 photographs, ISBN 978-0-9567219-0-7, £14.95

Our Ancestors were Brickmakers and Potters is a very detailed and meticulously researched history of the Corder and other related families who were engaged in the clay working industries of brick, tile, drain pipe and pottery making in the mid-north Essex parishes of Bulmer, Castle and Sible Hedingham, Gestingthorpe, Gosfield and Great Yeldham, industries which flourished in the area from the second half of the eighteenth century until the beginning of the Second World War. Some buildings survive which incorporate the products made by these families and their workers, but, today, little remains of the work places where the bricks, tiles, chimney-pots, drain-pipes etc. were made. The hundred and fifty photographs, maps and drawings included in this book provide an invaluable record of the brickworks and the men who worked in them.

The introduction by Peter Minter, Master Brickmaker of The Bulmer Brick and Tile Co., Ltd., one of the two remaining brickworks in the county, describes how bricks were made by hand in Essex in the past and are still being made in the traditional way at his works in Bulmer.

A useful glossary explains many of the technical terms that were used in the clayworking industries in Essex. This book is fully referenced and has a comprehensive index.

Pat Ryan

The Lost Tudor Hunting-Lodge at Wormingford: The story of the archaeological dig, Howard Brooks, Andrew White, Francis Nicholls, published in 2010 by the Colchester Archaeological Group with support from Essex and Suffolk Water and the Dedham Vale and Stour Valley Project, ISBN 978-0-9503905-2-9, 24 pages, numerous illustrations. Available in local bookshops £5 or from jmallin704@aol.com price £6 including postage

This lavishly illustrated booklet tells the story of the discovery of the Tudor hunting-lodge at Lodge Hills, Wormingford by ferreters digging out a trapped ferret and its excavation. In 1561 Queen Elizabeth I visited the Waldegrave family at Smallbridge Hall on the opposite bank of the River Stour in Suffolk and is thought to have been entertained by a hunt at Lodge Hills. Although the name of Lodge Hills is shown on numerous tithe maps, it referred to a wide area of high land on the Essex side of the river overlooking the Stour Valley, and the actual location of the Lodge itself had been lost to history.

The ferreters in the course of their digging hit a brick foundation, which they reported to the land-owner, who in turn invited the Colchester Archaeological Group to investigate. Initial investigations confirmed the presence of brickwork dating to the 16th century, raising the question as to whether the lost lodge had been rediscovered.

The Colchester Archaeological Group excavations on the site since late 2007 have revealed a number of structures which forms part of the complex of buildings which formed the Lodge. This includes the hunting-lodge tower, a well dating from the 16th century which contained the bottom half of a contemporary pumping mechanism, a

brick box associated with a sluice (probably the garderobe), the western edge of a brick building which may have been the main Lodge building, and a brick foundation which may have supported a 'standing' (viewing/shooting platform) or a curtain wall.

The booklet contains a summary of the historical research and the excavations so far undertaken. These have largely concentrated on tracing the walls and drainage system. A summary of the more interesting finds is also included. Further work is needed on placing the Lodge within its contemporary landscape. The Heritage Lottery Funded Managing a Masterpiece project will be supporting this work in 2010/11.

Maria Medlycott

The Living Landscape. Animals in Parks and Gardens of Essex. Essex Gardens Trust Research Group. Editor Twigs Way. Essex Gardens Trust. 2010. ISBN 978 0 9565198-0-1. 90 pages. £10.00

Nine members of the Essex Gardens Trust have come together to produce an anthology of ten essays on wide ranging subjects related to gardens and landscape. Topics range from dovecotes to stables, bee boles to aviaries, cattle to fishponds. Readers of the Society's own 'Transactions' will recognise a familiar layout and style presented in A4 format. Each contribution demonstrates solid research, and the whole has been skilfully and harmoniously brought together by the editor Twigs Way. Most of the essays are generously illustrated, some with colour plates, although others are void of pictures.

In 'Braxted Deer Park: From Larder to Landscape', Fiona Wells explores through letters and leases the management of deer at Great Braxted, making references to the mending of park pale.

Bronze Age Hoard on Dengie Peninsular

Michael Leach's second contribution on 'Rabbits in the Landscape' discusses the importance of rabbit husbandry in mediaeval England and the keeping of warrens, remarking that unlike today the rabbit was not a pest. His first essay, entitled 'Many a Luce in Stewe: Medieval Fishponds in Essex' will appeal to both the archaeologist as well as the garden historian.

Sally-Ann Turner's survey of the county's dovecotes in 'A Duffus in the Grounds: A Consideration of Some Essex Dovecotes' is nicely illustrated, provides an interesting view of a former larder.

Twigs Way's own paper, 'Seen but not Herd: Deer Parks in the Calendar of Patent Rolls (1232 – 1432), and Charter Rolls (1227 – 1516)' covers the social history, role and importance of parks, park management, its legalities and upkeep, including the location of previously unknown sites.

The publication is dedicated to the late Nancy Edwards (1929 - 2009), who made a major contribution to the research and understanding of the county's heritage, and was involved in the project until her untimely death.

Andrew & Elaine Smith

Training Excavations

The West Essex Archaeological Group is running both weekend and five day training excavations this summer at the Tudor mansion site of Copped Hall, near Epping. The weekend dates are 16-17 July, 23-24 July, 30-31 July; and the five day course dates are 8-12 August and 15-19 August. The cost is £50 for a weekend and £90 for a week. Further details can be obtained from Pauline Dalton, Roseleigh, Epping Road, Epping CM16 5HW, phone 01992 813725 or e-mail pmd2@ukonline.co.uk .

During the summer of 2010 a metal detectorist found a number of bronze objects in a field on the Dengie Peninsular. With admirable responsibility these were passed on to the Essex Finds Liaison Officer who identified them as parts of Bronze Age axes. Further investigation of the area revealed more fragments, including a spear head, a gouge and some pieces of pottery. A large pot was also found, about 0.4m below ground level, and the metal detector signals showed that there was a significant mass of metal in or below the vessel. Again, with commendable responsibility, this was left in situ, carefully covered over and discretely marked. Strict confidentiality was maintained while the next part of the investigation was planned. In October the site was excavated by a professional team, and the pot (which was surprisingly heavy) was carefully uncovered and lifted with a surrounding block of soil for laboratory examination. Wider investigation of the field showed no evidence of an adjoining settlement, suggesting that this was a hoard rather than a collection of scrap metal from a workshop. Closer examination of the pot revealed that one side had been sheared off (probably by plough damage) and X-rays showed bronze objects protruding from the top, with a dense mass of metal packed inside. It was planned to investigate this under laboratory conditions during the autumn. For obvious reasons, the exact position of the discovery has been kept secret. Further analysis of the scattered bronze objects that had been recovered showed a range of items, including axe heads, ingots, spear heads, scrap metal and a gouge. It appeared that some of the axe

heads had been deliberately broken before burial, adding to the impression that this was a ritual deposit, rather than a collection of scrap, concealed for later retrieval. Culturally these objects appear to date from about 1000 BC, but metallurgical analysis may provide a more precise date and provenance in due course.

This may be the first Bronze Age hoard to be found on the Dengie Peninsular. One of the characteristics of such hoards is that they contain a wide range of different objects, but the reason for such deposits remains obscure. They may have served a sacrificial purpose, or have been a way of maintaining the value of other bronze objects that were still in circulation, or a means of symbolising the end of a relationship between individuals or groups. Whatever the reasons, the regular discovery of such hoards in recent decades shows that there was a substantial amount of bronze in circulation.

Michael Leach

Source

www.finds.org.uk/blogs/essex/2010/10/25/bronze-age-hoard

The Road from Billericay to Tilbury

'Of all the cursed roads that ever disgraced this kingdom in the very ages of barbarism, none ever equalled that from Billericay to the King's Head at Tilbury. It is for ten miles so narrow that a mouse cannot pass by any carriage. I saw a fellow creep under his wagon to assist me to lift, if possible, my chaise over a hedge. The ruts are of an incredible depth, and a pavement of diamonds might as well be sought for as a quarter. The trees everywhere

overgrow the road, so that it is totally impervious to the sun, except at a few places. And to add to the infamous circumstances that continually occur to plague a traveller, I must not forget the eternally meeting with chalk wagons, themselves frequently stuck fast till a collection of them are in the same situation, and twenty or thirty horses may be tacked to each other to draw them out one by one. After this description will you, can you, believe me that I tell you that a turnpike was much solicited for by some gentlemen to lead from Chelmsford to the fort at Tilbury Fort, but opposed by the ruins of this country, whose horses are torn to pieces with bringing chalk through these vile roads; and yet in this tract are found farmers who cultivate above a thousand pounds a year, but are perfectly contented with their roads.'

Thus wrote Arthur Young in 1768 in his *Six Week Tour through the Southern Counties of England and Wales..* This road, altered and diverted beyond recognition, is in part now the B1007, which has been considerably modified to the west of Basildon. Its route south of Horndon-on-the-Hill is difficult to trace as the B1007 has been diverted to the east, and the dual carriageway of the A13 has obliterated some of the twists and turns of the old road running to the south. However a two mile un-metalled section further south running down to Mill House seems to be the route of Young's 'infamous road', and would be worth exploration.

Michael Leach

Sources

Arthur Young's account quoted in Palin, W, 1871 *Stifford and its Neighbourhood*
Chapman and Andre map of Essex, 1777

The Castle Hedingham Wheel Window

According to a contributor to the Kent Archaeological Society newsletter, there are only three surviving C12 wheel windows set in chancel gables in England – two in Kent (Barfreston and Patrixbourne) and one in Essex at Castle Hedingham. The writer observes that the window at Castle Hedingham church was inserted at a later date, having originally been placed in the castle, though she does not indicate her source for this statement and neither the Essex RCHM or James Bettley confirm this. The article is principally concerned with the wheel windows at Barfreston and Patrixbourne which are almost identical, raising the question of whether they were originally two of a pair. There is some evidence in the fabric that both may have been re-cycled from elsewhere, possibly in the C15 or later, but unfortunately both churches were heavily restored in the C19, and the evidence in each is equivocal. The Castle Hedingham window, though of similar date and in eight sections, is said to have foliated capitals on the spokes rather than the grotesques found in the Kent examples. However close comparison with the twins in Kent would be interesting, as well as well as confirmation (or otherwise) that the Castle Hedingham window was originally sited elsewhere. Rickman confirmed the rarity of surviving wheel windows; he mentioned the Barfreston example, and illustrated a six-spoked one at Peterborough Cathedral dated to c.1220, and a ten-spoked one at Christ Church Cathedral, Oxford. There also appears to be a ten-spoked example at Beverley Minster. None of these have the grotesque heads of the two Kent wheel windows.

Further information about the suggested later insertion of the wheel window at Castle Hedingham church would be greatly appreciated. If it is true that it was a relocated, the most likely source would be the nearby castle chapel which lay immediately south of the surviving keep. It is not known exactly when the chapel was demolished but may have been taken down when the new mansion was built in the early C18. The building could have been derelict and used as a source of building materials for some time before this, though equally the account of the removal of the wheel window and its installation in the parish church could be a local tradition not supported by any firm historical or structural evidence.

Michael Leach

Source

Kent Archaeological Society Newsletter,
no: 87, Winter 2010/11

Rickman, T, 1881 *Gothic Architecture*,
Parker & Co.

RCHM Essex, i, 1916, 57-8

The Programme and Excursions Secretaries

The Society's programme is one of the benefits of membership. It comprises a variety of talks, meetings and visits, the latter mostly to places not normally open to the public. The substance of the programme is identified by the Programme Committee, and then the Programme Secretary works out the detail and ties it all together. Since 2003, that job has been done by Ann Newman, assisted by her husband Ken in what has been a team enterprise. Building on the work of the previous secretary, John Walker, Ann has made a great success of the programme, which has maintained a high standard of

interesting fixtures, exceedingly well organised, with events mostly booked out. Now, however, after eight years, Ann has decided, quite reasonably, that she would like a break. So has Pat Ryan, who as Excursions Secretary, is the other half of the organisation, handling inquiries, and taking bookings and money. Pat has served for an even longer period of time, and has done a sterling job, providing support in this way as the main point of contact with the membership.

As chair of the Programme Committee for longer than I should have been, I am very sorry about this, as Ann, Ken and Pat have been a delight to work with, and they have brought an energy and resourcefulness to the task which has meant that it has all run very smoothly and been great fun. I, and the membership, are very grateful to them, and indeed to all those who serve on the Programme Committee.

As well as expressing our thanks, we are of course appealing for volunteers to take on the jobs of Programme and Excursion Secretaries from September 2011. It involves two committee meetings a year (meetings which it should be emphasised are usually very enjoyable); sorting out the arrangements for the visits and meetings usually between February and September; and at the end of the year getting the programme card printed in time to go out at the beginning of the following year.

Would anyone interested in these roles, or wanting to know more about them, please contact me, or Ann or Pat for more detail on what is involved.

David Andrews
d.d.andrews@talk21.com

Saturday 18th June – AGM at Essex University, at 2.00 pm. in the Lakeside Theatre. Afterwards there will be an opportunity to visit the Albert Sloman Library which houses the Society's library. Members of the library staff will be at hand to answer questions. Our thanks to Nigel Cochrane for his help in organising this event and the generous hospitality of the University.

Saturday 24th July – visit to Foulness, meet at 2pm at Landwick Guard Lodge, Great Wakering, where we will be met by members of the Foulness Society and then drive the 5 miles to the Foulness Heritage Centre. The tour of Foulness will be by tractor & trailer. Cost £14 to include tea. Maximum 30. Bookings with payment and car registration number MUST reach Pat Ryan by Friday 8th July at the latest. Only people (and cars) registered well in advance of the visit date will be allowed on to the island.

Saturday 20th August – visit to Saffron Walden, where we shall have a conducted tour of 25-27 Church Street (part of the old Sun Inn) led by Douglas Kent of SPAB, and also have the opportunity to visit the town Museum. Cost £6 to include tea in St Mary's Parish Rooms, Church Path, Saffron Walden. We shall be in two groups, assembly point details will be provided with the location map and instructions. Maximum 30.

Saturday 24th September – all day visit to Harwich led by members of Harwich Society Guide Panel. Cost £6 to include tea, please make your own arrangements for lunch. Meet at 11.00 am at the Electric Palace.

Sunday 16th October – the Morant Lunch at The Warren Golf Club, Woodham Walter. 12.30 for 1.00 pm. Cost £25. After dinner speaker Pat Ryan. Bookings with payment to Pat Ryan by 16th September please.

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 2010 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £48,884

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Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail bill.abbott@btinternet.com

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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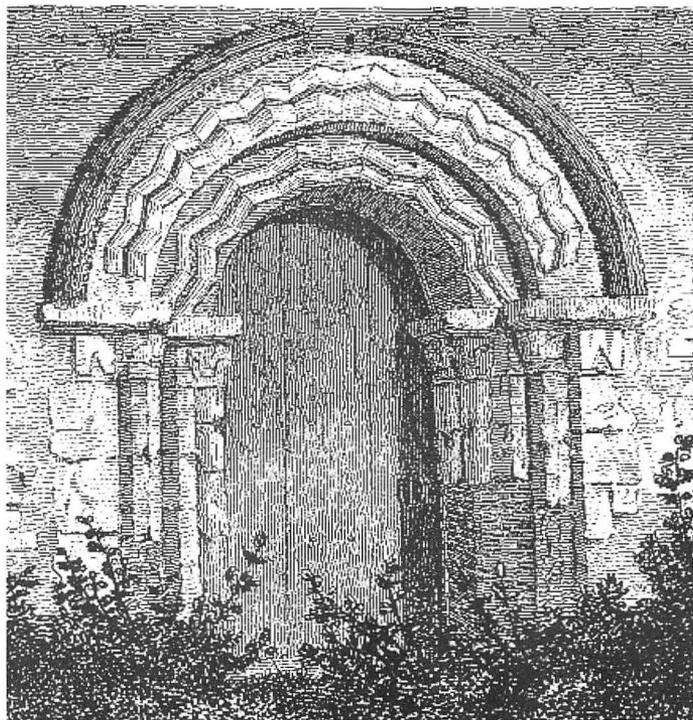
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Essex Archaeology and History News



Summer 2011

THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 164

SUMMER 2011

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COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 21 OCTOBER 2011

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

Please note the new Membership Secretary's address inside the back cover.

Cover illustrations:

Front Cover:

An extract from the 'Door way Rainham Ch. Essex' engraved by J. Greig from a drawing by T. Higham published in the 'Antiquarian and Topographical Cabinet Containing a Series of Elegant Views of the Most Interesting Objects of Curiosity in Great Britain' Vol X, 1811. This volume and others can be viewed online - search in google books. See page 8 of this newsletter for a report on the group visit to Rainham in April.

Back Cover:

The illustration is taken from Ernest Godman's book, 'Medieval Architecture in Essex', published in 1905. Stondon Massey Church - belfry and spire from the South East by A E Nutter.

From The President

The Society's visit to the Albert Sloman Library at the University of Essex, following our Annual General Meeting in the Lakeside Theatre on Saturday, 18th June, 2011, was not only extremely informative for those who attended, but it also served to remind us all of the significant benefits which members can enjoy from access to the Society's own library collection in its current location at Wivenhoe Park. There is no time like the present for all of us to ask ourselves how much we know about this major asset and whether we could make more use of it.

Sincere thanks go to our member Nigel Cochrane, the University's Deputy Librarian, and to his colleague Emma Wisher for guiding us in two groups around the Albert Sloman Library, which as befitted that time of the academic year was enjoying almost whisperless calm after the end of the busy summer term. This air of serenity enabled us to appreciate much more fully how very fortunate members of the Society are to be able to enjoy not just our own archaeological and historical holdings but all the rest that this great university library has to offer as well.

Next year will see the 160th anniversary of the Society's inauguration and over the past years a collection of some 15,000 volumes has been carefully amassed for members to use. Several hundred periodicals and newsletters continue to be maintained, many by exchange with other like-minded societies, and there is also our collection of 600 rare books on long-term deposit.

For most of its existence the Society's library was closely associated with Colchester's Museum Service - at first in the Castle Museum, where from 1860 the collections of both Society and Town (now Borough) Council have been

displayed. These were permanently amalgamated into one collection with a single accession book in 1926, by formal agreement, when the name 'Colchester and Essex Museum' was adopted in recognition of the two bodies. Our representatives continued to serve on the Borough Council's museum committee until the effects of municipal restructuring took precedence some 20 years ago.

It had been a primary objective of the Society from its inception to establish its own museum at Colchester, but almost inevitably there were fundraising problems although the desired goal was in due course achieved in large part as a result of the remarkable generosity of the Society's Honorary Treasurer, Charles Gray Round, who owned the Castle. For its part the other major participant, Colchester Town Council, helped guarantee the scheme's success by undertaking to make a financial contribution towards the salary of a Museum Curator as well as to general running costs.

Such were the early beginnings of a now substantial Museum Service in whose foundation and management distinguished members of our Society played such an important part. Through the years changing circumstances have led to the introduction of different ways of running it. Just 4 years ago a particularly innovative approach was adopted with the establishment of the dual-funded Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service.

The Castle Museum itself and its outstanding archaeological collections are currently the subject of an application for Heritage Lottery Funding towards a major re-development project costing some £4.3 M. If all goes to plan, in early 2013 the Castle's interior walls will be fully revealed for the first time since 1935 before structural works begin

and the new displays are created. The latter are being designed to integrate more broadly with the town's historic context and to provide a link to the interpretation of other notable attractions such as the Town Walls, the Roman Circus (with which the Colchester Archaeological Trust is closely involved), St. Botolph's Priory and St. John's Abbey.

Last year the 150th anniversary of the Castle Museum's opening to the public was celebrated exactly to the day – on 27th September 2010 – with a special Open Evening held for the Friends of Colchester Museum, of which I am currently Chairman. Happy to relate, my predecessor as President, Martin Stuchfield, whose various major achievements in that office have been rightly acclaimed, was able to attend by personal invitation to represent the Society's special connection.

Returning to the Society's Library, I am sure that many members, like myself, used to find it very convenient to be able to make short or long visits according to need when it was based at Hollytrees. It had been moved there when the museum was opened in 1929. As it so happens, this was originally intended just as a temporary home until a more permanent solution could be found, but the arrangement lasted for some 70 years. During that time various changes occurred, like moving to rooms on the top floor formerly occupied by H.W. Poulter until his death in 1963.

However, what with the museum's need for further accommodation added to the Society's concerns about its library, a major re-appraisal in due course became inevitable. A new era then dawned in 2000 when the Society's holdings were placed on permanent deposit at the Albert Sloman Library. The fruits of this decision are now available for all to see as they clearly seem to be proving

beneficial to all concerned.

It was very pleasing to learn that our library is being put to good use by members of the University staff and bona-fide researchers. However, more could be made of it by our own members, some of whom may not be fully aware of what there is on offer, while others perhaps feel that they still only need to make short visits which would now take longer than before.

My own personal view is that the circumstances relating to our library have now changed so much more for the better that anyone who does not make use of it, at least to some extent, is really missing a great deal. The ESAH Collection, which incidentally forms the largest deposit at the Albert Sloman Library, is now professionally administered and cared for as a valued element of a major University Library. Apart from some pamphlets and leaflets, the whole collection has recently been digitally catalogued in a form that can easily be accessed either through the Society's own website or directly on the University Library's website. Members are thus not only able to apprise themselves of all the books and services that are available to them, but they can also save time by planning a visit to the Library in the comfort of their own homes.

Another major advantage is that a reader's ticket also permits access to books in the main University Library, which has a particularly strong history section, and full borrowing rights to this apply. Although the Society's books are for the moment currently divided between two locations on different floors, those who feel unable to descend to the ground-floor room can ask for books to be brought up to the Special Collections Consultation Area.

On a final note, despite current government spending cuts affecting

Universities, it is very encouraging to know that the proposed capital scheme for building an extension to the Albert Sloman Library at a cost of about £14 M is proceeding. It is programmed for completion in Autumn 2013 and will result in the Society's Library collection being re-united for consultation in new accommodation on the first floor. All in all, I feel that we are extremely fortunate as a society with the library facilities available to us and I hope that members will agree by making the most use of them that they can.

G. Mark R. Davies

The Buildings of England – Essex

James Bettley's revision of the Pevsner Architectural Guide to Essex, published by Yale University Press in 2007, was reprinted with corrections in 2010, and any copies now purchased should be the corrected reprint (this is noted on the verso of the title page; the ISBN number remains the same, 978 0 300 11614 4). However, the demands of modern publishing are such that, for the most part, only 'character-for-character' corrections can be made (e.g. of dates), although it has been possible to slip in the occasional 'dem.' in the case of buildings that have been demolished.

James has however been keeping a list of *Addenda & Corrigenda*, which contains more material than it was possible to include in the corrected reprint. This includes not just corrections, but also new information that has come to light since 2007. He is happy to e-mail this as a Word attachment to anyone requesting it by e-mail to jamesbettley@btinternet.com

Advisory Committee for Archaeology

The Advisory Committee met on 3 occasions in the year with County Councillors, archaeologists, museum curators and representatives of Archaeology Societies in attendance. A visit was made to Coalhouse Fort, East Tilbury, where the ongoing restoration work by volunteers of the 19th and 20th century defences of this stretch of the River Thames including cannon, anti-aircraft guns, mine-laying equipment and watch-towers were inspected.

Research bringing together past excavations of Great Chesterford and of the Air-photography Project detecting archaeological sites in Essex have been published in East Anglian Archaeology (volumes 137 and 136 respectively). A travelling exhibition of Essex's Industrial Heritage was circulating round the county. Manuden schoolchildren have taken part in a 1-metre test-pit survey organised by Cambridge University.

With Essex County Council due to become a commissioning-only organisation in 2011/12 there was uncertainty about future arrangements for staffing and what services would be commissioned. It was likely that the Archaeological Field Unit would become part of a larger organisation. Funding for archaeological projects from the government's Gravel Extraction Levy has now ceased.

Field-study and archaeological excavation courses were now being offered at Copped Hall, Epping, where Tudor and later remains were being examined. The new Heritage Centre at Saffron Walden which has reached an advanced stage of planning had again been put on hold due to delays and loss of funding. A hoard of socket axes found at Littlebury Iron Age fort has been

deposited in Saffron Walden museum. Colchester Museum had bid for a grant to update its displays.

A Visitors' Centre/Education Room was being built at Prittlewell Priory (Southend) and a new archaeological store was now open. At The Garrison site Colchester, a new Iron Age dyke, 3rd century coin hoard and a warrior burial have been found. The east end of St John's Abbey church has been identified by ground-penetrating radar at Colchester. A Roman settlement has been found at Havengore (Foulness).

Work to the extension of Southend Airport has revealed Bronze Age ditches and post-holes. At Bowers Marsh (Pitsea) heaths and dwellings of 1st-4th century have been excavated near to salt-production sites. The Lexden Union Workhouse built in 1836 was recorded prior to residential conversion. World War II defences were being collated at Harwich and along the Stour estuary. A camp which housed children of the Kinder transport in 1939 and subsequently German POW's has been identified.

James Kemble.

2011 Morant lecture

This was held on 19 March and Helen Walker, of Essex County Council's Field Archaeology Unit, spoke on the Harlow pottery industry. She was the co-author of a monograph published by the Medieval Pottery Research Group, in collaboration with English Heritage, Harlow Museum and the Field Archaeology Unit. Her fellow author, a former pottery teacher in Harlow, had spent many years studying this local industry, and had brought his knowledge and experience as a craftsman to this archaeological study.

The industry, centred on Potter Street, was revealed in the building of Harlow New Town in the 1950s and 1960s. Much of the surrounding area is boulder clay, unsuitable for making pottery, but London clay is exposed in the Harlow Common area. Sand, used by medieval potters to improve the workability of clay, is found just to the north, and there was a supply of water as well as fuel from the adjoining coppiced woodland. Bracken, which provides a hot, clean, flame was also used. Other factors which favoured the development of a local pottery industry were favourable manorial rents, and sales outlets through local fairs (Bush Fair being the nearest). The Harlow medieval wares had only local distribution, as transport further afield would have been difficult. Though the River Stort is nearby, this was not navigable in the medieval period due to the numerous mills along its course. No medieval kilns have been found in Harlow, but chemical analysis of medieval sherds shows an identical composition to the post medieval material known to be associated with the Harlow kilns, so there is no doubt that there was local industry, albeit on quite a small scale.

There is plenty of archival evidence for the presence of several families of potters in the area from the early C17 onwards, and the indications are that they had strong protestant or puritan beliefs. Unfortunately, though several post medieval kilns have been excavated, only one has been properly recorded. This was typical of contemporary pottery kilns, consisting of a sunk oval fire pit with stoke holes at each end, channels to drain out water which would have accumulated between firings, and a raised clay pedestal on which the pots were stacked for firing. A variety of pots were made. There was red urban ware for cooking vessels for

kitchen use, and mugs and jugs of various sizes in black glazed ware, providing a cheap imitation of pewter. The black glaze was achieved by adding copper and firing under low oxygen conditions. A local speciality, not found elsewhere, was a mug with two closely spaced handles. The purpose of this arrangement is not known; in practice they are hard for a man to hold and, when full, need to be stabilised by the other hand clasping the opposite side of the mug. They might have been more suitable for the smaller hands of women, whose fingers would have been able to slip through the handles.

The most striking product of the Harlow potteries was 'metropolitan slipware', so called because large amounts of it have been uncovered in London. This was lead glazed to produce a golden-brown background for the slip decoration. Flat dishes were very popular, presumably for display on shelves and dressers rather than for practical use, and the earliest known specimen has the date '1630' incorporated into its decoration. It is only possible to achieve simple designs with slip trailing, and most dishes were divided into four patterned quadrants with a central motif and a decorative edge. Some had inscriptions in slip, with loyal sentiments such as 'Honour the King', or pious ones such as 'Fast and pray and pity the poor, amend thy life and sin no more'. Other decorations included the fleur-de-lis (possibly of heraldic or religious significance), and the endless knot which may have been a fertility symbol or a defence against witchcraft. Decorations may have been taken from copy books, and it was pointed out in the subsequent discussion that the lattice-and-dot decoration (often found on slip ware, and believed to be a fly deterrent) is also common on decorated daub on the exterior of local buildings. Another

interesting find on Harlow pottery is small batch tags, about an inch across, bearing an initial (presumably that of the potter) and a number (presumably indicating the batch) – an early form of quality control. Unfortunately it has not been possible to link any of these tags with known potters.

The origins of the Harlow slipware are obscure, but there are similarities with Dutch slipware, and a Dutch surname occurs amongst the late C16 Harlow potters. It may therefore have been introduced by immigrant workers, but could equally have developed independently, perhaps from the slip decoration of medieval floor tiles.

The industry expanded considerably in the first half of the C17, probably as a result of increasing affluence as well as an improved road from Harlow to London. Its slow decline after the Restoration was probably due to a combination of factors. Tin glaze and stoneware (for which the Harlow clay is not suitable) became increasingly fashionable, and the manufacture of earthenware moved north to places like Stoke where coal provided a superior fuel for firing kilns. The slipware industry lingered on in Harlow till the end of the C18, but only had local distribution by then, and was of a much inferior quality. It is surprising that identical slipware has been found on the western seaboard of the USA and also in Jamaica. It is not yet known if this was imported from Harlow, or represents the work of emigrant potters who took the local technique with them. This question can only be resolved by a chemical analysis of the fabric of the New World pots, though there are no immediate plans to do this.

Michael Leach

Successful Stondon Byrd Festival Gains International Reputation

Early music lovers from far and wide flocked to hear the music of William Byrd at Stondon Massey Church over two weekends in May. William Byrd lived in the village until his death in 1623.

A 'William Byrd Festival' was organised by the congregation of St Peter & St Paul Church in order to raise money to build a new Garden of Remembrance in the churchyard where Byrd is thought to have been buried in an unmarked grave. The Festival not only realised £2200 but also raised the profile of the man who ought to be as well-known as his contemporary, William Shakespeare. To use a pun, the Festival killed two birds with one stone.

William Byrd was a recusant Catholic, refusing to attend the Church of England at a time when staying away from Services was illegal. He, with other 'papists', was frequently named before the Archdeaconry Court and fined huge sums of money. Byrd wrote music for the Catholic faith, which was banned, but was spared punishment because he had friends in high places. He was a Gentleman of the Chapel Royal, the monarch's personal choir, and his music was liked by Queen Elizabeth I and her successor King James I. The Petre family of Ingatestone Hall were his Patrons, and it was to John Petre that Byrd dedicated his second book of Latin Catholic church music in 1607. He was both loyal and yet a traitor.

Leading the cast on the first Saturday of the Festival was Richard Turbet, from the University of Aberdeen, an expert on the life and work of Byrd. He led a lecture / recital entitled "William Byrd: His Essex Years" which explored the composer's musical output while living in

Stondon Massey. He was supported by the Stondon Singers under their conductor Christopher Tinker.

The event was held twice. The present Lord Petre attended the matinee performance.

A traditional Morning Prayer service was held the following morning with music by Byrd played on the organ by John Hatt and an anthem sung by the church music group, Jubilate.

The second weekend's events were led by a Saturday concert by the Writtle Singers, under Christine Gwynn, making their debut performance at St Peter & St Paul Church. Their programme – 'William Byrd: Loyal Heart or Traitor?' - explored Byrd's life as a recusant Catholic and the protest songs he secretly composed.

The Festival concluded on the Sunday with a service of Favourite Hymns, reflecting Byrd's wish that 'every man should learne to sing'.

The event has put William Byrd on the map as far as the church is concerned. During the second week one of the congregation visited the church in order to set up the space for a choir rehearsal to find affixed to the door a bunch of flowers with a request to place them on the grave of the 'English composer'. The flowers were sent by well-wishers from 'Tom Garrison and the Trinity Choir' which following a little Internet research turned out to be the Episcopal Cathedral in Kansas City. It was decided to arrange the flowers on the Memorial Tablet to the great composer inside the church. The Festival website (www.williambyrdfestival.blogspot.com), which remains open, shows that William Byrd is very popular in America with over a third of the hits coming from that country.

Members of the congregation received some lovely comments and have been encouraged to make more of William

Byrd's name in Essex. As Revd Edward Reeve, Rector of Stondon Massey wrote a century ago: "We can claim Byrd for our own".

Two books are available at the church priced £2 each. 'William Byrd: Some Notes', and a biography of Reeve himself.

Andrew Smith

Victorian Scrapbook Author Identified

In the last edition of ESAH News I wrote about the pleasurable task of sorting through a number of books which have languished in the office at Hollytrees for some years and the discovery of a scrapbook "compiled by an unidentified Victorian member of the Society" using the initials CKP.

Michael Leach and James Bettley have advised me that CKP is C.K. Probert of Newport (1820-1887). Probert was an early member of the Society, an antiquary and collector. The Society's printed library catalogue of 1923 lists MS items described as the Probert Collection ('Chas K Probert, Newport, Essex Nov 24 1883 written on the inner cover'). These were rough notes about 48 churches (the few listed in the catalogue were all in NW Essex, but Gt Chrishall is not mentioned). The catalogue indicates that they formed the basis of 12 MS volumes which were bequeathed to the British Museum in 1889. His papers may be consulted at the British Library and College of Arms (<http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/nra/searches/subjectView.asp?ID=P23530>).

James Bettley has looked at the scrapbook in more detail. It dates from the second half of the 1850s through to 1885, and begins by concentrating on

parishes in the north west of the county. Of particular interest are the sketches of churches made before the Victorian restorers appeared on the scene. For example, Bobbingworth shows the timber bell tower prior to restoration in 1841, and St Mary's, High Ongar with a belfry and tall and slender spire before much rebuilding in 1858.

James Bettley adds: "Apart from the Suckling/Buckler cuttings, I thought it the single most useful source on 19th century church restoration in Essex that I have come across – the sketches and photos of churches before they were restored provide very valuable evidence. I was surprised to find, when I compared some of the photos of Radwinter that the very photos in the scrapbook were used to illustrate *A Deuce of an Uproar*, where they are credited to Probert – so someone knew of this resource and used it in the 1980s".

Andrew Smith

With acknowledgement to Michael Leach & James Bettley

Bibliography:

Pevsner / Bettley: *The Buildings of England. Essex* (Yale, 2007)

Church Fonts drawn by William Harvey Pridham, 1886-c.1908

I am preparing a book for the Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society on the church fonts in the county of Somerset drawn and recorded by Harvey, or William Harvey Pridham. He was born at Ramsden Crays in 1863 the son of the Revd George Pridham. In his notes he recorded that he also worked on recording fonts in Berkshire, Bristol, Dorset, Essex, Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Middlesex, Monmouthshire,

Oxfordshire, Surrey, Sussex and Wiltshire. The collections for Wiltshire and Berkshire have been located but does anyone know of the whereabouts of the drawings and description of fonts relating to the other counties prepared by Pridham? He may not have recorded every font in every county, but any information is very welcome on his work, especially details of his death.

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[Editorial note: Pridham's only known drawing of an Essex font is amongst his drawings of Wiltshire and Berkshire fonts held by the University of Colorado at Boulder, and shows the one at East Tilbury church. This is a plain late medieval font, so it is unlikely that it was recorded because it was an unusual example. Was Pridham attempting to make a comprehensive record?]

Essex seen from elsewhere

The Friends of Friendless Churches have been friends indeed to Mundon church where (as previously reported) the chancel has undergone a heroic rescue from severe subsidence. The final round of repairs will attend to the nave and the work was started in February, at an estimated cost of £54,000. The chancel wall painting is illustrated on the front cover of the AMS Newsletter.

By the time this newsletter is published, English Heritage's nation-wide searchable database of listed buildings, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields and protected wreck sites, should be available on www.english-heritage.org.uk. One new addition to the listed buildings will be Leahurst in Braintree High Street,

built as a district nurses' home in 1939 by Vincent Harris, yet another example of W J Courtauld's beneficence to the town. This building has statuary and lettering by Eric Gill, and was intended to "improve the appearance to Braintree from London".

Michael Leach

Source:
Ancient Monuments Society Newsletter
Winter 2011

ESAH Transactions, Third Series, Vols 1 to 30

A complete run of these has been returned to us by our indexer. They are mostly in good condition (one of the early volumes is partly disbound but complete) and, though every page has multiple markings in pencil and red biro, the text is perfectly readable. These are offered at an unrepeatable bargain price of £75. Delivery may be possible in Essex, otherwise there would be an additional cost.

Anyone interested should contact Michael Leach, 01277 363106 or leach1939@yahoo.co.uk

Visit to Rainham Church and Hall

Members ventured into metropolitan Essex on 16 April 2011 to visit Rainham. Though hemmed in by the uncertain delights of the A13, industrial estates, a vast Tesco superstore and HS1 on its way to St Pancras, it retains the strong feel of a small country town. We met in the remarkably complete late C12 church and were given a very informative introduction to the town, established on the east bank of the

Ingrebourne river which was fordable at this point. Just to the south, the Thames itself may also have been fordable in earlier times, and there was an important ferry crossing here from the early Middle Ages until its abandonment in the late C19. Thus the town was on the crossing of important east/west and north/south routes, on land slightly raised above the marshes to the south which provided rich grazing for sheep. Salmon, commenting on the town's supposed vulnerability to Danish raids, darkly noted 'the Graziers will say 'tis a Place of Rapine now, where their Sheep are killed to steal their Tallow.' By this date the Ingrebourne had been dredged and made navigable up to Rainham, and a profitable trade in shipping goods had been established.

The church itself is late Norman, with the use of waterleaf capitals and mid-shaft bands on the nave pier columns, and was probably built about 1170. The advowson was donated to Lesnes Abbey which was founded by Richard de Lucy in 1178. Though various local historians have suggested that de Lucy built Rainham church, there seems to be no supporting evidence for this. Nevertheless the church as built was certainly a building of significant status, with both north and south aisles and a substantial tower. Even Morant, who rarely commented on church architecture, described that the dogtooth decoration on the Norman chancel arch as 'indented or curiously wreathed'. Apart from some later medieval windows, and the insertion of two blind arches (possibly for an altar) in the NE corner of the nave, few changes were made until the C18 when the original windows at the east end were filled in, and the nave roof was extended to cover the two aisles. This necessitated filling in the nave clerestory windows. A substantial pulpit and a west gallery were added.

By the end of the C19 the church was in poor condition, partly due to the re-roofing in the previous century which had pushed the wall of the south aisle outwards. Funds were scarce but the Rev. Ernest Geldart, who was working on nearby Wennington church, was persuaded to oversee the restoration which he undertook with great sensitivity. Copies of his finely drawn plans, sections and elevations were circulated. Between 1897 and 1910 much of the south aisle wall was rebuilt, and both aisles were re-roofed to enable the clerestory windows to be unblocked and glazed. Other work by Geldart included the careful and sensitive reconstruction of the original windows at the east end, the provision of an elaborate rood screen and reredos (neither of which survive today) and the removal and replacement of the C18 pews and pulpit.

A very interesting discovery was made in 2008 when the priest's door in the south wall of the chancel was examined. Previously unnoticed beneath an external skin of planks, and an internal lining of possibly C16 date, was a very early door of c.1200, which still had some of its original ironwork in situ. Iron staining on the bottom of the door shows only a part of the upper section of the lower hinge, indicating that the door has been shortened in the past, possibly when the internal skin and present hinges were attached. The survival of such an early door is most unusual, and there are plans to mount it internally in the south aisle to ensure its preservation, and to allow the chancel door opening to be used as a fire exit. Although many accounts of the church (including the RCHM) refer to the use of septaria, no examples of this stone could be found in the external walls. These are built of a mixture of ragstone, ironstone and flint, with small amounts of chalk (possibly local), Reigate stone and

ferricrete. The inside walls are heavily coated with lime wash, making it impossible to identify the stone, though the medieval graffito of a ship inside the rood stairwell was probably cut into chalk.

Members then walked to the nearby Rainham Hall which has been in the care of the National Trust since 1949. This house was built in 1729 by John Harle, sea captain and merchant from Co. Durham, who had married a wealthy widow and settled in Rainham to promote his business interests. He was an active entrepreneur, dredging the Ingrebourne river to enable his ships to dock at a new wharf nearby, and it has been suggested that the house, as well as providing office and storage space, acted as a show case for the building materials that he was importing, such as the black and white marble flooring, the oak panelling and the blue Delft tiles in the fireplaces.

The house would have been somewhat old fashioned by 1729. It is of three storeys, raised on a basement, built in two colours of brick, with stone quoins and keystones. There are panels below the windows filled with rubbed brick, a fine carved timber porch, and the original front railings and gate surmounted by a panel containing the initials of John Harle and his wife. The house is almost a cube, with a shallow hipped roof behind a parapet, and two chimneys. The stone urns at the corners of the parapets were taken down in the early C20 and survive as garden ornaments.

Inside it is surprisingly small, with four rooms on each floor separated by a central corridor containing the staircase which has three barley sugar banisters (in oak) to each pine tread with a mahogany handrail (an early use of this wood). The basement was probably used for storage when the house was built, but housed the relocated kitchen in

the C20. The ground floor had a handsome entrance hall, drawing room, dining room and the original kitchen (with a large fireplace for an open fire or a range). The next floor had three bedrooms, the fourth room probably served as an office with a small connecting ante-room over the front door – this may have served as a waiting room, or was possibly used by a clerk. This was converted to a bathroom in the C20. The floors above are not open and are occupied by the National Trust's tenants who kindly showed us round.

What is remarkable about this house is that it has changed so little since John Harle built it. Analysis of the paint in the entrance hall shows that it has been decorated only five times in 280 years. Most or all of the original panelling has survived, and the sash windows have the thick glazing bars of the early years of this type of fenestration. It is very sparsely furnished and a little shabby, but this gives the house a special atmosphere and perhaps (judging by contemporary inventories) could reflect the rather small number of material possessions of an early C18 merchant.

At the back is a small attractive garden maintained by volunteers, currently being restored by the NT to provide a long terrace. In the past this would have given views over the salt marshes to the Thames; these are now replaced by an industrial estate and the overhead gantries of the railway. But even this view was attractive on a bright spring afternoon!

Michael Leach

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 Watkin, B, 2008 typescript report on south chancel door, Rainham parish church

Essex Archaeological Society Transactions Volume 1 (1858)

Book collectors will be aware of the rarity of this volume. The Society's membership at that time was only about 150, and all the undistributed stock of its publications was destroyed in the Colchester castle fire of 1874. In recent years, many branches of the county library have removed the early numbers of our *Transactions* from open shelves and have relegated them to back room storage. Frequently (in my experience) staff either deny their existence, or produce the wrong volume one. On my last request at Chelmsford local studies library, after a vigorous denial that they held the relevant volume, I had to insist in accompanying the assistance to the rolling cabinets in order to show him where to look.

The opportunity to acquire a modern print-on-demand reprint using optical character recognition seemed too good to pass by. However the reprint is not without many accompanying frustrations. One can quickly adjust to the frequent and bizarre OCR misreadings (such as 'BEMARKS ON THE ROUND CHTJRCHES OF ENGLAND') which are easy enough to decipher, though the jumbled Latin inscriptions are considerably more challenging to anyone with only a poor understanding of that language. More annoying is the failure to provide any of the plans or images which are printed in the original volume, and the extremely poor layout which runs

articles into each other without even a paragraph break, together with disconcerting lacunae on some pages (though apparently without loss of text), and the unexpected insertion of references in mid sentence. The most irksome aspect is that, with the elimination of illustrations and page breaks, the original pagination has been completely lost so that the page numbers in the index (a very bizarre jumble in its own right) are useless. It is frustrating that a little more planning could have greatly improved this publication, though the introduction explains, in its justification, that it was necessary to keep production costs to a minimum. The main advantage of this publication is that it usually gives a good idea of what is to be found in the first volume of our *Transactions*, but the disadvantage is that I will still need to brave the rolling cabinets in the Chelmsford local studies library in order to make sense of some of the OCR confusions.

Michael Leach

Source:

Transactions of Essex Archaeological Society, i, 1858 (reproduced in 2010 by General Books, Memphis, Tennessee)

Major Brinson and the Mobile Archaeological Unit

Recently an enquiry was received from a researcher at the university of Naples about the war time archaeological activities of Lieutenant (later Major) Brinson who took a very active role in Essex archaeology after the war, and was President of this Society on two occasions. Dr Aurino was seeking information about Brinson and his excavations at the cemetery of Gaudo,

near Paestum.

The main source of information about Brinson comes from his anonymous obituary in our *Transactions*. Before the war, he worked as a land agent for Essex County Council. As a member of the Territorials he was called up on the first day of the Second World War and sent to France as an NCO. He was reported as missing at Dunkirk but in fact was one of the last to escape from the French shore. He was posted to Aldershot, commissioned in 1941 in the Royal Engineers and sent to North Africa. He subsequently took part in the invasion of Italy and (according to the obituary) it was there that he persuaded his superior officers to form a British Mobile Archaeological Unit to undertake rescue digs when there was no military action. The Neolithic cemetery of Gaudio was their most important work, discovered by chance during the construction of a military airfield late in 1943. It is not known if this excavation was ever published, but Brinson was a conscientious archaeologist and the artefacts, as well as his field notes, are preserved in the National Archaeological Museum at Naples.

A chance finding in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, the journal of our sister society in Kent, shows that in one respect the obituary in our *Transactions* was incorrect. A contribution by Brinson describes the discovery of a group of Belgic burial urns in August 1942, unearthed by some soldiers digging a drainage sump on Hothfield Common, near Ashford in Kent. This was very much rescue archaeology as the men had backfilled the hole, leaving the site 'in a neat and soldier like condition'. Brinson had to dig it out again, and sieve the spoil, and then widen the excavation to recover other artefacts. Two things are clear from this account. Firstly his description confirms that he was already

an experienced archaeologist. Secondly his site plan, and his drawing of an urn, are clearly marked 'B.P. MOBILE ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT' so the group must have been in existence well before the invasion of Italy.

A search for further information about the Mobile Archaeological Unit has been unsuccessful, and it is hoped that Dr Aurino's visit to the R.E. museum later in the year may reveal more. If any member has any information about Major Brinson and the Mobile Archaeological Unit, I will be happy to pass it on to Dr Aurino.

Dr Aurino is also keen to find a good photograph of Major Brinson, suitable for publication, and would be delighted to hear from anyone who can provide one.

Michael Leach

Sources

anon. (Fulcher, E), 1973 obituary of J G S Brinson in *EAH*, 3rd series, v, 3-5

Brinson, J G S, 1944 'Two Burial Groups of Belgic Age, Hothfield Common, Ashford' in *Arch. Cant.*, lvi, 41-47

Parsonage Farm, School Lane, Broomfield

The early history is vague but from the suppression of the monasteries in the sixteenth century the tithes and the Parsonage, held by the Priory of the Holy Trinity, London, were granted by Henry VIII to William Harris. They then passed to Richard Lord Riche who made them part of the endowment of his Free-school and Almshouse at Felsted. An article in a 1983 Broomfield Parish Magazine, not referenced, states that The Parsonage was described as Broomfield's grandest house. It stands behind the pond, its height enhanced by its tall ornamental chimney stacks. Over

the door can be seen the carved arms of the Devereux family. (Morant also comments on the Devereux coat of arms but places it over one of the chimneys.) The mansion now belongs to the Lord Rich, who has leased it to Robert Eton for fifty years at the annual rent of 2 quarters and 2 bushels of red or grey wheat and 3 quarters and 5 bushels of barley malt. The rent goes to help the poor of Felsted. Morant also mentions the corn rents paid to the Almshouse, "From Broomfield-parsonage, 18 bushels of wheat, and 4 of malt". This contribution is carefully described in the leases as "2 quarters & 2 bushells of good sweet and merchantable White or Redd wheat and 3 quarters & 5 bushells of good sweet and merchantable barley wheat". An added stipulation was that it had to be delivered to the Almshouse in Felsted at set times during the year.

No further reference to Robert Eton and his 50 year lease was found but a series of leases from 1720 through to 1862 survive in the Essex Record Office and provide a fascinating insight to the contribution that the rent from this property and lands of 94 acres made to the Riche Charities. Morant, in 1768, refers to the various money rents payable to the Churchwardens of Felsted for the use and support of the Riche Foundation. "From Broomfield parsonage £50 6s 11d more from thence by grant of the late Earl of Nottingham, £18 in all £68 6s 11d". This was the monetary gain to the Foundation when in 1753 the Hon. Edward Finch Esq. of Sackville Street, St. James, City of Westminster entered into a 21 year lease. Prior to that date, September 1720, the lease to John Stewart of Broomfield Esq. was £18 6s 11d. He also had to undertake to maintain all the property and the chancel of Broomfield Church together with a payment of 15s. 4p. to the Vicar of Broomfield. In

September 1732 Richard Prior Esq. of Hayes in Middlesex takes over a 21 lease from the local John Hill of Broomfield Esq. who only had the lease for six years. Changes occur to the conditions of the lease during the 19th century so when Thomas Wall Crook took on the lease in October 1845 the rent had escalated to £180 per annum with an additional clause to ensure that he carried out good husbandry. By the next record, 1862, William Henry the elder and Henry the younger Marriage obtained a 14 years lease at £530 per annum with £20 per acre to be paid for land taken into plough and £10 per acre for any lapse in good husbandry. The Marriage family finally negotiated to purchase the freehold of the property in the 1920's.

At the time of the Tithe Award for Broomfield Parish in 1846 the estate was still in the hands of the Felsted Charities and being leased to a Thomas Wall Crooks. He also owned land and a cottage in the parish that he was leasing out. But, he was also leasing a further 70 acres or so in the parish making him a major farmer in the area. The lands were well spread with areas near the river to the east and woodland to the south west all with fields linked to road access. Amongst these was further land in the north east of the parish that also included buildings assumed to be farm buildings.

Morant describes The Parsonage as being improved by John Hill Esq. of Broomfield (1726-1732) and Richard Price Esq. of Hayes, Middlesex (1732-1753) so as to be fit for a Gentleman's seat and names the present lessee as the Hon. Edward Finch Esq.: brother to the Earl of Winchelsea and Nottingham, patron of Felsted School. [It is the Hon. Edward Finch who sponsors the estate map of 1756 that clearly shows the Charities lands.] The house was

replaced in the late 19th century and it is clear that the lessees, whether they lived at and farmed the land or sublet, were affluent. Their commitments included a complete repair clause on the buildings of the holding, repairs to the chancel of Broomfield Church and an annual payment to the Vicar of Broomfield of 15s. 4d.

The estate map produced for the Honourable Edward Finch by Thomas Dawson in 1758 was copied and certified in 1848. It shows the house with multi-gables and stacks together with the buildings of the farmyard to the west. East of the house is the pleasure garden and orchard with the little kitchen garden to the northeast and east of Parsonage Green. The great kitchen garden lies to the south of the farmyard with what is interpreted as a 'canal' feature to the east. These were popular landscape features as seen locally to the front of Boreham House and the rear of Springfield Lyons and Springfield Rectory.

Illustrated on the map is a barn, aligned north-south, closing the western side of the farmyard. The two gabled roofs of the porches can be readily identified but unfortunately the main roof of the barn collapsed in 2006 but the outer timber-frame still survives. This seven bay structure is single aisled to the west and built using primary braced construction and is typical of late 17th or early 18th century date. However, it does have an unusual bay arrangement in that instead of the normal even width bays these vary from the 11' central bays, 12' for the midstreys and two northern bays to the south bay that has an undivided length of 18' 6". In a county where consistent bay size is expected why such a disparity? One answer could be that the differential bay size related to specific storage requirements, perhaps those laid done in the lease for the wheat and

barley that was required for the Felsted Charity. I would be pleased to receive information of other barns with varied bay size and any ideas why the variation from 11' 0" to 18' 6".

Brenda Watkin

References:

Leases in the ERO, D/Q 11/54/1, D/Q 11/54/2, D/Q 11/54/4, D/Q 11/54/6, D/Q 11/54/7, D/Q 11/54/8, D/Q 11/54/9 D/Q 11/54/10, D/DO T64, D/DO T827

Window Glass

We take window glass for granted, if we notice it at all. Recent work has provided useful details about early glass, survival of which is relatively unusual on account of its opaque quality. There were several distinct periods of glass making. Late medieval glass was, like all glass, made principally from sand but with the addition of plant material (possibly bracken) to lower the melting point. This glass was a strong green colour due to impurities, and was not very transparent. It is also not very stable, so its survival is unusual.

The first improvement was made in 1567 by French glassmakers who found that wood ash as an additive produced a more durable and cheaper glass (HLLA or high lime/low alkali glass). This had replaced the medieval product by about 1600 but was still a strong blue/green colour and not easy to see through.

The next development was the replacement of wood or vegetable ash by kelp ash made from seaweed. This produced a glass that was easy to see through and it probably replaced HLLA glass within a decade of 1700.

Soda glass was introduced about 1835, using sodium carbonate as the second ingredient. This had a very low level of impurities, and small bubbles could be

removed in manufacture by the addition of arsenic (or saltpetre after the 1870s). Again, this superior product displaced kelp glass within a decade of its introduction. Whatever the manufacturing process, glass was blown by hand into long cylinders which were then cut longitudinally and opened out to form a flat sheet. This process was mechanized in the later C19 and early C20 to produce completely flat and highly transparent glass. The hand blown glass in older windows has a pleasing and slightly curved profile, and it is unfortunate that many are now being replaced with flat modern glass or UPVC units.

Michael Leach

Source

Archaeology March/April 2011

Further information can be obtained from 'The value of historic window glass' by David Dungworth, *The Historic Environment: Policy & Practice 2* (2011) on whose research much of this information is based.

Dated Buildings

With the increased use of the exacting science of dendrochronology we can now point to an increasing number of firmly dated buildings. However there are still limitations varying from insufficient number of tree-rings to the other extreme of numerous rings but the core will not match with the master curve and, for the moment remains undated. In Coggeshall the earlier buildings, 14th and 15th century, have been producing precise dates when bark is present whilst later builds have either been in elm which cannot be dated or a match cannot always be found.

Dating by architectural detail and documents still plays a large part in

current research so finding any building with an inscribed date is a bonus. Even then there is the problem, as the date can mark a renovation, marriage or extension. Obviously there is no doubt about the inscription on the famous Boote House in Felsted where the message that George Boote made this house 1596 is carved into the crosswing jetty and further interest provided by the buxom 'nag of Felsted' carved on the dragon post. Dates on stacks and porches have to be questioned as these are features that can be additions to an earlier structure.

The Courtauld family obviously enjoyed not only dating houses, built by them for their employees, but also in giving them names. Walking around Halstead you will soon find houses from the 1920s called *Pride and Prejudice*, *Sense and Sensibility*, *Emma*, *Northanger Abbey* and many more from Jane Austen's novels. Other industrialists in the 19th century were also keen to date and name the houses built for the work force but with less fanciful names such as *Hibernia* and *Belle Vue Cottages*, 1872 and 1876, built by Hunt in Earls Colne whilst the many workers houses of the country estates sported dates and coats of arms.

All of this information helps to build up a picture not only of the development of houses but also of social history from the very proud George Boote to the improvers of the 19th and 20th century. One very poignant picture comes from an inscribed stud in a 16th century house in Well Lane, Galleywood that was modified in the 17th century from a simple 1½ storey building to a full two storey house with brick stack. The initials, IPM, IPS and ?SP with the dates 1692 and 1708 are inscribed into the brick jamb of the added fireplace. At first floor level, where a door way has been created by cutting through the tie beam,

carved into the left hand door jamb is this inscription: "AT THE CHARGE OF JACOB PANNETT THE ELDEST SUSANNA HIS WIFE SUSANNA HIS DAUGHTER WHO WROUGHT EXCEEDING HARD FOR ITT (sic) PRAY DO NOT SPEND IT" At floor level is carved "THIS HOUSE WAS BUILT IN 1692".

1692 is also recorded on the fireplace so to what does the date 1708 refer? Further research into Great Baddow Parish Register revealed that Susanna Panett (daughter) was baptised 13th May 1682 but was unfortunately buried 18 April 1696 and followed four days later by her mother. However Jacob Panett widower of the parish and Susanna Cooke singlewoman of the parish married by license 30th December 1708. So having entreated his first wife 'pray do not spend it' he was fortunate to find another Susanna rather than re-carve the inscription. I cannot help but wonder why so much energy was put into the lengthy carving and was his first wife really such a spendthrift, but, regardless of the questions it has given a unique insight into how the building was adapted in 1692 and what happened to the occupants.

Brenda Watkin

References:

Great Baddow Parish Register ERO D/P 65/1/1

Anglo-Saxon Hospital at Winchester?

For several years the site of St Mary's hospital in Winchester has been under archaeological excavation. The site is a complex one. Documentary evidence indicates that it was developed as a leper hospital in the mid C12, and then mostly demolished in the C16 and

replaced by almshouses (though the medieval chapel survived). It was subsequently used by troops in the Civil War, and then as a prison for Dutch soldiers in the 1660s and 70s. The buildings became derelict and were demolished towards the end of the C18, but the site was re-occupied as a military base in World War I. Since the removal of the military structures (including a forces cinema!) the site has been unused, and is now providing a complex archaeological challenge from which it is hoped to learn more about the status and function of an early leper hospital.

It is usually assumed that medieval hospitals were all post-Conquest foundations but the dig has revealed skeletons which show evidence of leprosy, and have been radio carbon dated to AD960-1030. A number of other artefacts, pits and post holes indicate a range of buildings of similar date, and a large sunken structure was found buried under the site of the medieval infirmary. Further evaluation will be needed before definite conclusions can be drawn, but it is likely that the accepted view that hospitals were a post-Conquest phenomenon may have to be revised. It is possible that this site is unique, as Winchester was the country's capital for much of the Anglo-Saxon period, but it would be interesting to know if St Mary Magdalen's hospital in Colchester might be older than its documented foundation date in the reign of Henry I.

Michael Leach

Sources

The Guardian, 20 October 2011

www.winchester.ac.uk/academicdepartment/s/archaeology

Morant, P, 1748 *History and Antiquities of Colchester*, London

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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 2010 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £48,884

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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.

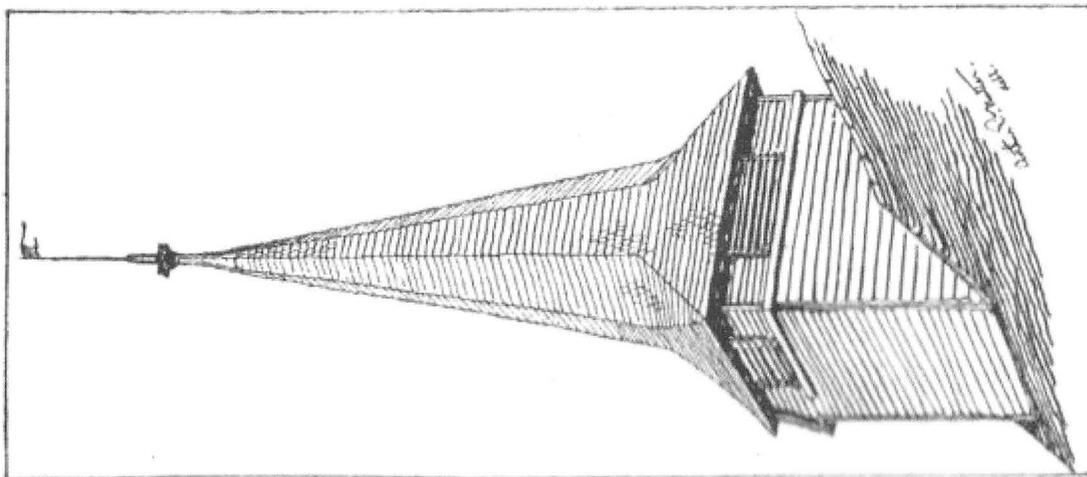
Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other 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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NEWSLETTER

Winter 2011



The Essex Society for Archaeology & History

FORMERLY THE ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1852

From the President

Various changes and improvements are being introduced to the Society's corporate identity, as members will know, following the grant of arms in 2009. None of these would have been possible without the foresight, commitment and enthusiasm of my predecessor, Martin Stuchfield, from whose energetic input we are very fortunate to have benefited.

We now have a very attractive and informative new membership leaflet which deserves every success in helping to enlist new members for our Society. I have been distributing copies discretely here and there myself on a number of appropriate occasions and I would be grateful if other members would endeavour to do the same whenever possible.

For what is offered, the annual cost of individual membership of our Society can only be described as very reasonable indeed even in these financially restricted times. In fact, I would say that the present economic crisis that we are undergoing nationally, in European terms and globally presents us with a particularly poignant challenge to continue supporting the objectives that we consider particularly dear to our hearts in spite of all the difficulties. Put another way, those who study and learn from the past need to take a long-term view of the future and not become too bogged down by temporary current ills if at all possible.

As local authority funding for heritage-related activities with which

we are concerned becomes more restricted it is important that we make every effort to maintain standards. Through consistent membership of our society and by encouraging others to join it we can make a meaningful contribution, both individually and corporately, to our County's heritage, which we particularly value as a significant part of the national heritage.

I feel that it is important to emphasise that, not only do we gain advantage and enjoyment from our membership personally to varying degrees according to our interests, but in so doing we are also contributing significantly to general public benefit from our common heritage.

Our highly informative Essex Archaeology and History News is also undergoing an improved new format. So too are our prestigious Transactions, Essex Archaeology and History, for which an attractive new design has been devised to mark the beginning of a new series. This has been proving a very complicated process, as may be imagined, and as work on it has proceeded a number of unexpected technical difficulties have inevitably arisen which have needed to be addressed.

At the last Council Meeting in September two decisions were made relating to the format, one of which was to ask the Publications Committee to assess longer term issues relating to the new design. As things turned out, however, it became necessary to address these issues more immediately both to ensure a consistently high standard from the beginning and to avoid the Society incurring greater expenditure than



necessary.

All this has meant a great amount of extra work on the part of our Editor, Chris Starr, our contributing authors and the members of the Publications Committee, to all of whom I would like to express my grateful thanks. As a result, their recommendations were considered by a special meeting in early November of the Finance and Membership Services Committee and, it was unanimously agreed by all concerned to make certain appropriate adjustments to what had already been agreed in order to solve the immediate problems without significantly altering the spirit of the new design. As it was felt essential that these changes should be applied to the new series 'ab initio,' Volume One will now appear shortly after Easter 2012 with some additional cost to be borne solely by the Society.

A detailed report will be submitted for Council's approval in late January. However, both I and all those who have contributed so willingly and effectively to this process are confident that the new series will prove to be a great success.

G. Mark R. Davies

The Society's library at the University of Essex

Most members will know that the Society's library, formerly in Hollytrees, has been moved to the Albert Sloman Library. Work will shortly commence on cataloguing titles into computer format. Access to

the collection will, of course, be unaffected throughout this long-term project. The following notes have been prepared to help members of the Society when consulting the collection, as well as the holdings in the Albert Sloman Library in general.

All members of the Society are required to register beforehand as readers of the Albert Sloman Library. Members should write for a library card to Nigel Cochrane, Deputy Librarian, Albert Sloman Library, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ

The Society's collection is located in a part of the Library which cannot be accessed by university students. Members should, on arrival at the Library, show their library card to a member of staff at the circulation desk on the entrance floor, and access to the collection will then be arranged. The Society's collection is available from Monday to Friday between 9.00am and 5.00pm and, during university term only, on Saturdays between the same times. Autumn term runs from early October to mid December, Spring term from mid January to the end of March, Summer term from the end of April to mid June.

Many items in the collection are available for reference only, including all journals, and those books designated as non-loanable by the Society's Hon Librarian. Where loan is permitted, members may borrow up to five items at a time for a maximum of ten weeks. Such items should be taken to the circulation desk with your library card for recording, and the date of return will be stamped

inside each book. The Library's regulations for loans will apply. Please note that fines of 50p per day are charged for overdue books.

On leaving the Library, please show all books to the Library attendant at the exit control point. Contents of bags and cases will also be checked.

Self-service photocopying machines are available on the Library's entrance floor. Photocopying cards may be purchased at the circulation desk, the cost being about 7p per A4 page. Please return all volumes to the shelves after copying.

If, during your use of the collection, you leave the adjacent reading area for more than a few minutes, please inform the circulation desk. When you have finished consulting items for the day, please let the circulation desk know so that the area can be locked.

If any further assistance is required please ask a member of staff at the circulation desk, or write to me. We will be glad to help.

Nigel Cochrane, Deputy Librarian,
Albert Sloman Library

VCH Essex Diamond Jubilee

On Saturday, the 8th of October, 2011, VCH Essex celebrated its anniversary with a well-attended seminar (and a cake!) at the Essex Record Office.

Amongst many of its friends and supporters, it not only commemorated its refounding in 1951 but also

marked three other important events. Firstly, the publication of Volume XI; secondly, the move to control of VCH Essex by the VCH Essex Appeal Fund following the loss of Essex County Council funding and, in consequence, the launch that day of an appeal for funding to carry forward the work on Volume XII and beyond.

In regard to Volume XI, it had been expected to be delivered on the day (and Boydell & Brewer were there to take orders) but unexpected problems forestalled that pleasure. The volume is now expected to be available at the end of the year; so still a Jubilee event, just.

The loss of County Council funding, leaving only our free accommodation at the Record Office, led directly to the Appeal Fund re-assuming control of VCH Essex as it had done for most of its history. The launch of our fund-raising campaign to carry us forward has already been a first notable success for the Appeal Fund. Even before the launch, once it was known that we were without County Council funding, around half the required £50,000 had already been donated by friends anxious to help preserve this irreplaceable historical project. Further donations were received on the day and the Appeal Fund is now confident that the future of the VCH Essex will be secured for the next three to four years.

In terms of its objectives, with the exception of the delayed publication of Volume XI, the Diamond Jubilee celebratory day was a great success, aided notably by a series of fascinating papers.

The morning was given over to themes (and out-takes!) from Volume



XI by Chris Thornton, Herbert Eiden and James Bettley. The afternoon commenced with the circumstances of and the need for the appeal by Sir Alex Jarratt, Vice-Chairman of the Appeal Fund and Chairman of the appeal itself. Three further fascinating papers concluded the day: by Professor James Raven on the Harsnett Collection (now at Essex University), by Jane Pearson and Marie Rayner on the Colchester Lock Hospital and by Brenda Watkin on the Discovering Coggeshall Project.

The VCH Essex Appeal Fund is grateful to Essex County Council for free use of the Record Office, to the Essex history groups who exhibited and, in particular, to the staff of the Record Office and members of the Friends of Historic Essex who underpinned what, these days, we call the logistics of the event.

Geoffrey Hare

Chairman, VCH Essex Appeal Fund

We still have many thousands of pounds to raise so, to contribute to the Appeal, the address is as follows:

Martin Stuchfield,
Hon. Treasurer VCH Essex Appeal
Fund,
Lowe Hill House,
Stratford St. Mary,
Suffolk CO7 6JX
Tel: 01206 337239

The oxlip and ancient woodland

This unusual plant is specific to the area where Essex, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire meet, as it only

grows on damp chalky bolder clay in ancient coppiced woodland. A survey in 1974 found this plant on 80 different sites in north-west Essex, but 30 years later it had disappeared from 28 of these woods. A recent survey by the Essex Wildlife Trust showed that the decline (both in the number of plants found, and the number of different sites on which they grow) has continued. Oxlip competes with another plant of ancient woodland, dog's mercury, which appears to have been more resistant to the threats which have decimated the oxlip population. These were identified by Oliver Rackham 35 years ago and are a) the abandonment of coppicing (oxlips usually flourish markedly in the years immediately following this practice) and b) the inexorable rise in the number of fallow deer which graze on the woodland understorey and enjoy eating them. The appetite of fallow deer is also threatening woodland regeneration from their consumption of tree and shrub seedlings. In the past, the coppice stools in newly felled woodland were usually protected from grazing deer by dead-hedging (making a physical barrier with the unwanted brash); this obviously benefitted the oxlip too. The loss of this understorey also impinges on other wildlife (such as nightingales and dormice) which depend on this cover for their survival. Attractive though fallow deer may be their exclusion from ancient woodland seems to be vital for the survival of a variety of plants, animals and birds. In the few woods where coppicing and deer fencing

have been recently re-introduced, a marked increase in the oxlip population has been noted.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Rackham, O, 2003 Ancient Woodland, Castlepoint Press

Sergeant, L, 2011 „Survey of Oxlip Woods’ in Essex Wildlife, no.85, 26-27

Seeking interviews with Essex local historians:

I am a doctoral student in Religious and Medieval Studies at Northwestern University (Chicago, USA). My current project analyzes monastic-parochial disputes in late medieval English parish churches and the ways in which local historians and dedicated parishioners memorialize them. Because these conflicts centred upon the physical space of the parish church, I pay particular attention to how the medieval building was and still is inextricably tied to its parishioners. Local historians have especially recognized this bond between the medieval parish church building and its parishioners and often cast these medieval disputes over the church building as exemplars of pious action in their parish guidebooks and histories. I recently spent a month at the Essex Record Office examining a dispute that occurred at Hatfield Broad Oak in 1378. However, a key component of this research is still missing, which is contact with local historians and parishioners who are familiar with this parish church. I

would be delighted to hear from members of the congregation, individuals or friends’ groups who are actively involved in maintaining and raising funds for the church, and professional or self-trained historians who are well-versed in the parish history and/or its present circumstances. Moreover, I welcome suggestions for other cases of medieval monastic-parochial disputes in Essex or elsewhere. You can contact me by post at: Kristi Woodward Bain, 2845 North Wolcott Avenue, Unit A, Chicago, IL, 60657; or by email at: kristikeuhn2013@u.northwestern.edu or klkeuhn@yahoo.com.

Willingale Bells

The bells of St Christopher’s, Willingale [traditionally Willingale Doe] rang out for the last time on 25 June 2011 ahead of a project to restore the tower and augment the number of bells from four to six. The existing four bells – which date from 1610 to 1797 – with a “2nd bell” cast in the early twentieth century from Prittlewell, left the village for Whitechapel Bell Foundry for retuning in early July. A fifth bell used for chiming only, which came from neighbouring Shellow Bowells, will be returned. A new bell will be cast to complete a ring of six. In the meantime work to construct a new bell frame will proceed. This will be placed lower in the tower to place less strain on the structure and create a better sound out of the louvre windows. The Victorian bell frame will remain in situ unused. Ringing



will in future be performed from a new mezzanine floor placed in front of the west window and in full view of the congregation. The project is supported by a National Lottery Grant and funds raised locally and is expected to be completed in time for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Andrew Smith

144 High Street, Maldon

It is sad to report that this building, which has been under restoration by a building preservation trust, has become something of a cause célèbre for all the wrong reasons (see EAH News, Spring 2010). Initially the C18 windows were removed without planning consent, and replaced by 'Tudor' imitations based on no surviving evidence. Also the timber frame had been exposed to the weather; this had never been the intention of the original builders. The first public enquiry backed Maldon District Council's insistence that these alterations should not be allowed. A second public enquiry was held in January 2011 to resolve the issue of a sole plate, and a single stud on the east elevation which had been removed and replaced. This had been done without listed building consent, necessary as it had involved demolition, and replacement of timber with changes in detailing. The concern was that the change in the profile of the sole plate would trap, rather than shed, water. In the long term this could result in rot of the new

timber and the surviving original studs. Also the sole plate had been bedded on a hard mortar fillet and a slate damp proof course which (being non-breathable) could further aggravate the problems caused by damp penetration.

The public enquiry decided to allow the appeal, but only on condition that the trust provided further details of how it proposed to remedy the poor detailing of the new work in order to reduce the risk of rot in the future. Possible remedial action could include re-profiling the sole plate, and replacing the hard mortar with a lime-based one. The previous public enquiry had stipulated that the newly exposed timber frame should be protected by lime plaster rendering, and this would provide additional protection for the new sole plate.

Michael Leach

Source: Cornerstone (magazine of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings), xxxii, no.1 (2011)

Harwich

The Harwich Society were our hosts on an all-day excursion to the compact historical town on 24 September. Members assembled outside the Electric Palace cinema, now one of the oldest surviving purpose-built picture houses. It was founded by Charles Thurston and opened in 1911 following the passing of the Cinematograph Act of 1909 which forbade the showing of films in tents, requiring a projection room to

the separated from the auditorium on account of dangerous inflammable nitrates which existed with reel film. The projectionist climbs a ladder to his room from the east side of the building. It was named 'electric' to sound innovative, new and clean like the new source of power which was then sweeping Edwardian England. The fact that the Electric Palace did not have mains electricity until 1927 did not matter. Cinema was only in its second decade when the venue was built, and it was another form of media, television, which caused its sudden closure in 1956. For the next thirty years the building was locked and became a place for fishermen to store boats. The local Council proposed its demolition in favour of a lorry park but this was met by so much opposition that a group of volunteers was formed to save and restore both the exterior and interior to its former Edwardian glory using the original blueprints. Today attendees sit in a 199 seated auditorium for weekend showings of both modern and vintage films as well as Jazz concerts. At one time 452 people were crammed on benches. The digital age is now upon us and the venue has had to change with the times by investing £70,000 in new technology. The old will be kept and used in tandem with the new. My late Uncle, a film, cinema and theatre organ enthusiast, used to wax lyrical about the Electric Palace after it reopened in 1981. It was lovely to visit one of his old haunts. Charles Owen, Hollywood actor and local resident is today a great supporter of the Electric Palace Cinema. The lovely, compact Edwardian-style

venue has rightly been accorded Grade II* listed status, is much loved by the town and appears to have a great future in store.

Nearby, St Nicholas Church was rebuilt in 1822 using the latest mass produced materials of the industrial revolution. With its soaring slender pillars, large windows and three-sided gallery it is a large and bright worship area. A church had been sited here since 1177. One of Harwich's most famous residents, Christopher Martin, who sailed The Mayflower in 1620, married here twice.

Christopher Martin is remembered at his former home on one of the many informative plaques sited by the active Harwich Society. Local enthusiasts are attempting to rebuild adjacent to the railway station a replica of The Mayflower which they hope to float in the harbour. Their more immediate quest is to source around 200 suitable oak trees. Our guide asked that we put the word around adding that every community needs "bonkers people" with a vision to see projects such as this through to their conclusion.

Next to the church is the former Three Cups inn, which only in the last generation became a private house. It is reputed that Lord Nelson and Lady Hamilton stayed there, but evidence is flimsy to say the least. Mr Bull was the landlord in 1820s, and I was able to contribute a story (reproduced below) which adds to the social history or folklore of the place. Sharing research is one of the pleasures of an amateur local historian. Our volunteer guide, a musician and local Morris dancer, hopes one day to weave the story of



Harwich into folk-song, and the passage gave him a ready-made chorus.

The story of the Three Cups is taken from a commonplace book, written by Edward Henry Lisle Reeve of Stondon Massey in 1881. It reads:

“Mr Smythies of Colchester is to be remembered among other reasons for his celebrated toast at the hostellerie of ‘The Three Cups’ at Harwich. The ‘Three Cups’ was kept by a Mr Bull who was a universal favourite. Mr Smythies being called upon for a toast when dining there one evening gave, to the delight of the party assembled, this following sentiment.

“Here’s to health of Mr Bull
And may his Cups be always full”.

“We have said Mr Bull was popular. And no wonder. He was a man whom it was impossible to put out of temper. At any rate he was capable of enduring considerable provocation without a murmur.

“On one occasion twelve officers [of the West Suffolk Militia] were to dine together at the “Three Cups”. While waiting for dinner to be served they began to form a wager among themselves as to the possibility or impossibility of ruffling the temper of Mr Bull, and for the sake of the bet, they divided their number equally, six taking one side, and six the other. Dinner was served in due course, and Mr Bull, according to his custom, brought on the first dish – a beautiful salmon – himself. This, the officers found great fault with, saying that it was bad, and odoriferous. And, all through dinner, they took occasion to

complain of everything brought to the table. The very bill at the end they grumbled at, and called the items in question: the wine – the best Mr Bull could produce – they voted positively disagreeable. Mr Bull came forward himself to apologize. He was not the least ruffled, but said that he was truly sorry not to have given satisfaction, as he had taken a great deal of trouble about the dinner, and could only say that he begged they would think no more about the bill, but let it pass. Upon this they all burst into a hoarse laugh; explained to Mr Bull that they had had a wager at his expense, voted him a capital good fellow, paid the bill, and ordered just such another dinner for the ensuing week.”

Returning to the tour, the re-sited Treadwheel Crane was originally built in 1667 for the Harwich Navy Dockyard and remained in use until 1928. It is the only surviving example having a double treadwheel. It was operated by human exertion but unfortunately the mundane of how men worked it is lost in the mists of time. Perhaps small gangs hauled vessels out of the harbour keeping time by using a sea-shanty or similar work song.

Samuel Pepys, the famous diarist, was Member of Parliament for the rotten borough of Harwich in the 1660s and also Secretary of State to the Navy. His influence brought a dockyard from the Thames to Old Harwich, which “stands between two strands”. A bell on the street towards the Ha’Penny Pier records that Thomas Darby of Ipswich cast it in 1666.

We passed the High Lighthouse

(built 1822), which in the 1960s was the home of a local resident known as 'Lighthouse Lil'. Alignment with the Low Lighthouse out at sea allowed safe passage into the harbour for sailors. The Low Lighthouse was painted by Constable: his canvas is now in the Tate Gallery in London. The High Lighthouse now marks the end of an 81-mile walk from Epping Station called the Essex Way, and I can personally recommend it having completed the whole route over five days back in 1996.

Fresh water was always a problem in Harwich. Older houses had brick-built wells in their gardens which stored rainwater. These are known as rainbacks. Members trooped through a house of a kindly resident to view an example in his small back garden. Thomas Cobbold had plenty of trade on tap when he set up his Brewery in 1727 but brackish water and expensive transportation of a fresh supply proved so impractical that he moved his operation to Ipswich, where the firm stayed until very recent years.

The Harwich Redoubt was built during the Napoleonic Wars between 1808 and 1811. It formed part of a strategic defence stretching from Southwold in Suffolk to Eastbourne on the south coast. From its prominent position the town could be defended through 360 degrees by 24lb guns firing up to a range of a mile, as far as Felixstowe across the river. Several Martello towers along the coastline and Stour and Orwell River estuaries were pointed out by the guide. The fort itself is 180 feet in diameter and has a dry moat 20 feet wide. It fell into disuse after the

Second World War. The Harwich Society, recognising its importance began work in 1969 to remove debris thus beginning an ambitious project of restoration using mainly voluntary labour. In doing so members discovered an original gun thrown down in the moat, which was excavated and hauled to its original position. Rooms inside the amphitheatre-like structure, called casements, tell the story of the Redoubt and the town.

Our day finished with an excellent tea served by the churchwardens of St Nicholas Church in the Church Hall, the former Infants School. All around the old town is evidence of a community which cares about its rich history and heritage. The Harwich Society is an energetic and enthusiastic body of volunteers of 40 plus years standing which brings the social history of the town alive. They hope that we will visit again either as a Society or as individuals. For me a revisit with Pevsner's Perambulation (updated by James Bettley) would be a good basis for future investigation, perhaps during next year's Harwich Music Festival.

Andrew Smith

Window Glass: an addendum

Michael Leach wrote a short article in EASH Newsletter, summer 2011, on window glass in which he discussed its manufacture. One statement "Whatever the manufacturing process glass was blown by hand into long cylinders



which were then cut longitudinally and opened out to form a flat sheet.” needs further explanation.

There are in fact two main methods of manufacture and these are known as ‘crown’ and ‘muff’. The ‘crown’ method, which is said to be first produced at Rouen, Normandy in 1330 and probably made its way to England via immigrant workmen in the 14th century. The process starts in the same way as ‘muff’ glass by producing a bubble (paraison) from the molten glass attached to the blowing-iron. (In fact any article be it window glass or vessel is started in the same way.) It was then transferred to a solid iron rod called a pontil and cut from the blowing-iron. Reheating then took place before it was spun vigorously so that the centrifugal force opened up the bubble into a flattish circular dish.

The dish was then cut into smaller panels (quarries) of diamond or square shape that would be made up into a leaded light panel. The disadvantages were that only a limited number of regular quarries could be cut from the large circular disc and the thickened centre would be waste (cullet) either being melted down in the next manufacture or used to glaze subservient windows. Because of the rough protruding surface where the pontil had been fixed this section became known as ‘bull’s eye’ glass. Unlike its use today in prominent positions it would have been relegated to the rear of the house or humble dwellings.

Neve’s the City and Country Purchaser first published in 1703 states that the best quality crown-

glass sold in London for about 9d per foot ready cut into squares. When set into lead as a panel it cost about 18d per foot. Today Vauxhall glass, the nearest equivalent to crown glass, cut to size costs £385 per square metre with cylinder or muff a mere £243 per square metre. So a modest pane of glass broken by a football would mean the loss of over £20 pocket money.

Do take time to look at windows containing old glass and you will soon be able to tell the difference between the two types. Crown glass has the curving lines from spinning whilst ‘muff’ or cylinder glass has the straight lines formed from flattening the glass.

Brenda Watkin

Source:

English Medieval Industries edited by John Blair and Nigel Ramsay, Hambleton.

The London Crown Glass Company.

An Essex stray

East Anglian Notes & Queries published the inventories of Suffolk church goods which had been compiled by churchwardens in September 1552 during the reign of Edward VI. One of these relates to the church of ‘ffordham Magna’ but there is no Suffolk parish of this name. Ekwall lists three Fordhams (none of them with the prefix Great) which are to be found in the counties of Cambridgeshire, Essex and Norfolk. However Reaney noted a reference to Fordham Magna (one of the Fordham

manors) in Essex in 1254, and the inventory names the incumbent as Symond Baghoot. This must be the same individual as the Sam. Baghett recorded by Newcourt, and these two pieces of evidence make it almost certain that the inventory does refer to the Essex parish. It provides much more information than the slightly earlier and abbreviated entries from the State Papers Domestic of Edward VI, which covers only 115 Essex parishes and were published by E P Dickin in our Transactions in 1914.

The Fordham Magna inventory follows the usual pattern, listing goods remaining in the church, giving the names of those holding cash belonging to the dissolved guild of the Holy Trinity, and itemising the list of goods which had been sold three or four years earlier to pay for church repairs. These included items which were liturgically redundant after the Reformation, such as candlesticks from the rood loft, handbells and vestments, and totalled the significant sum of 41s 4d. The inventory then details the costs of the repairs to the fabric, which included 2½ seams of lime for 'whiting the church', as well as mending and glazing windows, and repairing the lead roof. A century later, much of the latter must have been undone by the exigencies of the Civil War because, according to Morant, the lead from the church roof 'was converted into instruments of destruction'. The total cost of repairs in 1548/9 amounted to 59s 10d, of which the repairs to the lead accounted for 26s.

These inventories have had a patchy survival and must have been split up in the past. H W King

published those from 127 Essex parishes and chapels in our Transactions (1st series) in the 1870s and 1880s, but apparently knew of others which were inaccessible at that time. Some were in the library at Stowe and subsequently found their way into the British Museum as Stowe MSS 827, and it was these that were subsequently published by W C Waller in the Transactions between 1909 and 1911. It is not clear how the Fordham inventory found its way into the Suffolk bundle, or whether other Essex parishes were similarly appropriated.

Michael Leach

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East Anglian Notes & Queries, new series, i, 234-5 (1885-6)
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Ekwall, E, 1981 Concise Oxford Dictionary of English Place-names
King, H W, 'Inventories of Church Goods' in EAT, (os) iv, v, (ns) i, ii, iii
Reaney, P H, 1935 The Place-names of Essex, CUP
Waller, W C, 1909-11 'Inventories of Church Goods, 6 Edward VI' in EAT (ns) xi, 90, 202, 312, 367

The Road from Billericay to Tilbury

About a mile (1,782 metres) of the above highway, referred to in the Spring 2011 Newsletter, may be said to be in a state of preservation sufficient to give some impression of its character in Arthur Young's time. This section projects southward from the (much widened) Buckingham Hill



Road in Mucking parish and passes into West Tilbury's territory at the edge of the 30 metre gravel terrace, abutting the Mucking archaeological site. It is therefore not without connection to note that Reaney alludes to this line of road a little northward (at Horndon on the Hill parish), as 'Harestrete' in 1350 (Essex Placenames p.118), the usual interpretation of which is 'Army Street', implying an ancient strategic way.

The latter thought has its touch of irony, since it was in planning a series of three military routes out of the Tilbury fort and ferrypoint in 1778 that Col. Hugh Debieg unwittingly 'saved' this exact stretch of the old 'Dover Road' (as Ogilby shows it in 1679) for posterity. Debieg's 'trident' of improved highway running inland from the river crossing was to create wide lines of communication suitable for two converging columns of marching infantry, with waggons, to pass each other. These military lines were to go via Stifford, Horndon on the Hill, and Vange (Basildon). But to upgrade the centre (Horndon) passage using the old (Young's) Tilbury road, would necessitate too much earth shifting through the steep sided and narrow way northward to West Tilbury smockmill. Debieg therefore abandoned it, and a detour via Muckingford was selected instead. This, a few years later (1793) became an adopted route for the Hadleigh Turnpike Trust and so a preferred new line of highway superseded our ancient lane. It declined thereafter into use only for local agricultural traffic, as its width measurements still

indicate. My notes, taken in the early 1980s, give a series of readings along the mile of between 8' 6" and 8 feet width of metalled (gritted asphalt) surface – just spacious enough for a loaded cart or harvest waggon to negotiate. There were still no 'quarters' (of which Arthur Young complained), that is, no lay-by points for the convenience of vehicles confronting each other.

Thurrock Museum's concern for the condition of the way during the 1980s (considerable domestic dumping, burnt-out cars, etc.) led to the Planning Dept. effecting a Protected Lane status in the autumn of 1992, with metal gates installed at the Mill House farm entrance and near Buckingham Hill Road, Mucking. Agricultural motor use only was thereafter permitted, other access being for horseriders, pedal cycles and walkers. A rapid in creep of side herbage has been the result in places and the tarred surfaces are now somewhat obscured.

The complexities of such an old line of highway are of course manifold. It is plainly part of that Iron Age – Roman rectilinear system discussed by Rodwell and Drury, both of whom worked extensively at adjacent gravel crop-mark sites. A small part of the lane near Mill House (Elizabeth's Armada Camp location) was fortunately mapped by the elder John Walker during 1584, indicating wide verges to the lane in Tudor times. These fragmentarily survive, but in other places, they have been snatched for agriculture, with 'new' single species (English Elm) hedgelines crowding the road edge.

Walker's use of the name 'Howe Forde' over a brook some half mile to northward, is affirmed on Ogilby's strip map (How Ford) almost a century later (1675), while Chapman and André refer here to „Howford Bridge'. A causeway carries the journeyer several metres higher than the surrounding fields over a (now piped) stream at this point. The culvert's brickwork under this long embankment is regrettably not visible and so a substantial parish engineering project remains as yet undated.

Vestiges of a formerly more plentiful ancient woodland adhere to the highway, both in Mucking parish (Musket Hill Wood) and West Tilbury (Rainbow Shaw) and various lengths of the lane's hedgerows offer a pleasant mix of woodland species, together with an undergrowth of bluebell, indicating that they are remainders of wood edges. It is surely fair to assume that the 4 hides of woodland, recorded upon the post-conquest manor of Swein extended in this direction, right to Mucking top. Crab Apple, Hazel, Spindle, Honeysuckle, Oak (robur) Ash and Field Maple add to the more usual runs of Field Hawthorn, Blackthorn and English Elm that fringe the way, along which there are still some patches of the sort Young groaned about, where „trees everywhere overgrow the road ... totally impervious to the sun.' In the south-Essex of today, such laneside burgeonings come as a little bit of paradise.

During 2007 the Thurrock Biodiversity Action Group (T-BAG), aided by botanist Mary Smith of Upminster, surveyed the hedges at

both sides of the road (66 lengths of 27 metres on east and on west). Some 43 lesser herb species were recorded, together with the above mentioned range of shrubs and trees. Our botanist remarked afterwards: „For an ancient hedge, I was slightly disappointed at the few taxa (63) that were found ... It seemed that Alexanders (*Smyrnium olusatrum*) had crowded many smaller plants out'. Other factors may, however, contribute. Years of mineral extraction and waste processing along the Mucking sector of this highway have damaged and polluted its vegetation. Elsewhere, agricultural regimes have seen former years of stubble burning (now thankfully ceased) causing severe scorching while more recently one observes the larger hedgeline's trees, shallowly rooted into gravels, in trauma, due partly to climate change but also through seasonal ploughing which rips deep into ancient fieldbanks.

Tired, abused and a bit scruffy, the lane has managed to survive into our present century through a series of lucky chances – an anachronistic green corridor where one can still hear the cuckoo, spot a glow worm, or discover badgers' pawprints in the silty loams which wash down, turning the Hoford bottom causeway into a raised quagmire. Just as Arthur Young met obstacles with his horse chaise hereabouts in 1767, so a few years ago I was hailed across the winter farmland by an exhausted and mired constable, asking for help. A police driver was stuck fast on the narrow causeway middle, deep in mud. I wouldn't leave my fieldwalking, but told him to go back



and let his vehicle sink further till it found the grit and tarmac surface. They were merely flustered and very soon got clear. Neither had supposed, driving along over fallen leaves that a good 20th century metalled surface lay beneath them. A sure sign then that the lane is on the way back to full archaeological status, being overtaken by nature and swallowed up, as is the proper way of country things.

Randal Bingley

Sources

Royal Engineers letter books RE.GRA/10/1. Royal Engineers Library Brompton, Gillingham.

15th May 1778 – 27th May, 1808.

Bingley R. Behold the Painful Plough: Country Life in West Tilbury, Essex, 1700-1850.

Bingley R. Military Road Communications Around East Tilbury. Thurrock Local Hist. Soc. Vol. 30, 1989.

Rodwell W. and Drury P. Settlement in the Later Iron Age and Roman Period. CBA Research Report No. 34, 1980.

Book Review

Patrick Taylor - The Toll-houses of Essex, Polystar Press, 277 Cavendish Street, Ipswich, IP3 8BQ [80 pages, ISBN 978 1 907154 04 1] 2010 £7.95

The maintenance of roads was, for centuries, a serious problem throughout the country, and this escalated as England emerged from the Middle Ages and trade and travel increased. In 1555, in the reign of

Mary Tudor, an Act of Parliament was passed which required each parish in the country to appoint two surveyors whose duty it was to organise parishioners to carry out repairs. Further Acts were passed requiring inhabitants to work on the roads for six days a year. Failure to keep roads in an acceptable condition meant parishes could be indicted, brought before Justices of the Peace at County Quarter Sessions and heavily fined.

Reliance on parish labour was, however, an inefficient system, and in the 17th century the first turnpike trusts were set up to maintain and repair roads with funds raised by imposing tolls on road users. To implement this, tollgates were erected at intervals and those who passed through them were required to pay a toll. Tollgate keepers needed to be in attendance 24 hours a day to open the gates and collect money from road users and, to facilitate this, they lived in tollhouses by the side of each set of tollgates. Up to 1750, 133 turnpike trusts were set up, which led to a proliferation of tollhouses. The boom continued until the 1840s, by which time over 20,000 miles of road were controlled by over 1,000 turnpike trusts.

The coming of the railways and other problems, however, led to falling receipts from tolls, and trusts were wound up and their assets sold off – although many of the tollhouses remain as dwellings, unconnected with the collection of tolls.

Patrick Taylor has undertaken the task of researching and recording tollhouses – at first in Cornwall,

Norfolk and Suffolk and, most recently, in Essex. His book is a gazetteer of tollhouses and their former sites, illustrated by as many pictures as he has been able to collect. His study is prefaced by an account of the rise and fall of the turnpike system and a general description of tollhouses and their construction.

Although a number of books have been written on turnpike trusts, this is the first comprehensive account of Essex tollhouses and it is a fascinating study, of interest right across the county. It provides information on imposters as well as genuine tollhouses and will, hopefully, promote further research into relatively unexplored historical territory.

Stan Newens

What is a Barn?

On the recent visit to Foulness a discussion took place in regard to the correct terminology for the various buildings that make up a historic farmyard. We had stopped at an abandoned farmstead where the farmhouse had been demolished and were being given an explanation of the various remaining buildings. There was a brick stable range and a low timber-framed and weather boarded building that was described as a barn. The building was very small in size for a barn but more importantly it lacked that essential feature of opposing doors. After further questioning it was discovered that the building was set on 'staddle' stones, hidden by the vegetation, to

raise it above ground level making it clear that the building we were looking at was a granary. The frame of the raised floor can be set on mushroom like staddle stones, brick piers or cast iron staddles but they all perform the function of preventing the ingress of vermin.

It is very noticeable that almost any building within the farmyard is often referred to as a barn and yet it is a building that has a very specific use. In the Essex context it is a store for un-threshed corn and other feed stock. It is usually the largest building in the farmyard and has minimal openings except for the opposing doors. These can be of similar or varying size and if the barn has a porch it is here that you find the large set of doors. Why opposing doors, because between them was situated the threshing floor where through the winter months the crop was flailed and winnowed. The resultant grain is then stored in a granary either in bins or sacks.

We were told that in modern farming the term barn is automatically used for large grain stores but on another site a house was carefully described, without any reference to modern terminology, as containing a buttery and pantry at the service end. So just a plea for the continued use of the correct historic names and if that building in the farmyard does not have opposing doors it is not a barn. If you cannot find its original use you can always refer to it as a farm building.

Brenda Watkin



Advance Conference **Notice "The Hearth Tax** **in Essex"**

Hearth Tax returns are invaluable for family, house and local history research on the 17th century. This conference coincides with the publication of an edition of the Essex Heath Tax returns by the British Records Society, supported by the Essex Society for Archaeology and History. Speakers include national experts on the Hearth Tax, Essex history and Essex surnames, including Professor Henry French and Professor

David Hey

Essex Record Office, Saturday 14th July, 10am – 3.45pm.

Tickets: £20, includes buffet lunch and refreshments.

This conference is organized by the Friends of Historic Essex and British Academy Hearth Tax Project (Roehampton University).

For further details contact Dr Chris Thornton, 75 Victoria Road, Maldon, Essex, CM9 5HE; 01621 856827: c.c.thornton@btinternet.com.

Historical Association **Essex Branch** **Programme 2011 - 2012**

Talks on Saturdays, 2.30pm, The Link, Trinity Methodist Church, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, CM1 2XB.

Free parking at the Church or in the County Council car-park opposite.

Visitors and prospective members warmly welcomed - a £2 donation requested.

4 Feb 2012; Mountbatten: Hero of our Time
by Dr Adrian Smith, senior lecturer, University of Southampton, author of, among other publications, the first volume in a major study of Lord Mountbatten, Mountbatten: Apprentice Warlord (2010)

3 Mar 2012; Paycocke's House, Coggeshall
by Dr Chris Thornton, former editor of the Victoria County History of Essex, who has researched Essex history and medieval agrarian history extensively. Paycocke's house is a Grade I property owned by the National Trust.

31 Mar 2012; The Strategy of the American Civil War
by Prof Brian Holden Reid, King's College, University of London, one of the world's foremost authorities on the American Civil War and military history generally on which he has published widely

5 May 2012; The Normans in Essex
by Dr Jennifer Ward, former senior lecturer Goldsmiths College, University of London, an authority on the medieval period and Essex history, whose publications include books on medieval women and on Brentwood

For further information contact Shirley Durgan 01245 261124
www.history.org.uk

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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 2010 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £48,884

Donations payable to: The Essex Society for Archaeology and History

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Donations of acceptable books

Please address enquiries to: Bill Abbott, 13 Sovereign Crescent, Lexden Road, Colchester C03 3UZ.

Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail bill.abbott@btinternet.com

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

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2012

Friday evening 16th March - the Morant Lecture, talk on *New Towns in Essex*, by Gareth Gunning, at 7.30pm in The Link, Trinity Methodist Church, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, followed by tea. Cost £5.00.

Saturday afternoon 14 April - visit to Valence House and Museum, guided architectural history tour led by the Curator at 2pm, Number limited to 32, split into 2 groups. Cost £5.00. Café on site.

Friday 20 April – visit to Terling Place. Details to be confirmed, but if interested, contact the Programme Secretary.

Saturday afternoon 19th May – Stow Maries Aerodrome - Talk and tour starting at 1pm of the aerodrome and museum led by the Curator, including tea in the restaurant. Min. number 25. Cost £6.00.

Saturday afternoon 9th June - AGM 2pm in the St Leonards Hall, St Mary's Church, Broomfield, followed by a talk by Ken Searles Local Historian. Tea provided at a cost of £5.00.

Wednesday evening 4th July - visit to The Gibberd Garden. To include a talk on the history of the garden, visit to the Gibberd Rooms, and gardens. Meet at 5.30pm. Cost £6.00. Tea rooms will be open.

Sunday afternoon 12th August - visit to Guildhall, Pykenham's Tower, and Hadleigh church in Suffolk, led by John Walker. Max. number of people 30, split into 2 groups. Meet at 2 pm. Cost £10.00, to include refreshments.

Saturday afternoon 15th September - visit to Wivenhoe for a walk and talk and a visit to the **Nottage Museum**. Max 30. Meet at 2pm. Cost £5.00, including refreshments.

Sunday midday 14th October - the Morant lunch at The Old Moot House, Castle Hedingham. 12.30 for 1pm. Cost £25.00. Bookings with payment to be made by 14th September.

Further details of all events are available from the Excursions Secretary, Mr Graham Gould, 16 Osborne Road, Leyton, E10 5QW (0208 556 1423). **If you are interested in any of these events must please contact Graham Gould to check availability**

Please note the visits on the Society's programme are open to members and associate members only.

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2012



The Essex Society for Archaeology & History

FORMERLY THE ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1852

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necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

The illustration on the front cover is a photograph of Beeleigh Abbey, Maldon, Essex
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From the President

As reported at the Society's last meeting of Council in January, the publication date for Volume 1 of the fourth series of *Essex Archaeology and History* was set at 13th April 2012. In its new format this first volume has over 400 pages and contains a fairly even balance of significant archaeological and historical articles, which ought to provide something of interest for all our members and regular readers. It is also hoped that everyone will find it well worth having had to wait for and that the quality of content enhanced by its redesigned appearance will meet with general approval.

I know that many members, including myself, look forward to receiving the Transactions, which are rightly considered one of the major advantages of society membership. It is very much our aim that volumes should appear regularly each year as far as possible. The immediate future for our publication looks encouragingly bright with a good flow of suitably interesting articles coming in. The second volume should be completed by the end of this calendar year.

None of us needs reminding of the current economic situation, but we do need to keep abreast of its likely implications, particularly where the quality of public services relevant to our valued common heritage is concerned. During my time living and working in the county (since 1970), Essex has enjoyed a well-earned reputation built up carefully over the years for its record office, its

archaeological services and its museums, to name but three specific aspects. But now, despite continually growing public interest in heritage matters as reflected in the popular media, we find ourselves in an age where there is no longer a County Archivist or a County Archaeologist, while the people who run our museums are no longer called Curators or Museum Directors.

Is this a bad thing? Should we accept without question that change is inevitable? It seems to me that where services are subject to a restructure (for whatever reason), there should still be the need to ensure that core values are maintained with relevance to modern needs and that appropriate services are provided for the benefit of those for whom they are intended and who underwrite the cost in the public interest. They should not appear to be re-arranged without convincing explanation for seemingly administrative convenience, which has the inevitable effect of putting potential users off and leads to stagnation.

With Essex County Council's move towards becoming a commissioning authority, the Society was able to contribute to the debate about future archaeological and heritage services by means of a submission to the Scrutiny Committee in late 2010. The resultant new structure has now been put in place during the last couple of months so that in future, as members of the Advisory Committee for Archaeology in Essex (ACAE) were recently told, those archaeologists previously forming the Historic Environment branch will, with certain exceptions,



be absorbed into a new Department of Place Services, which also brings together specialists from the Built Environment and Natural Environment branches and certain Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) aspects of Planning.

The new structure ties in with the government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published on 27th March 2012 which contains a subtle change of emphasis to 'sustainable development' in plan-making and decision-taking, where the conservation of designated heritage assets (previously favoured by express presumption in PPS 5) is now to be undertaken 'in a manner appropriate to their significance' as one of 12 core principles.

English Heritage have stated their belief that the previous level of protection given to the heritage has been maintained in the NPPF. At the County level, coming down to the districts with most of whom service level agreements are negotiated, it is also apparent that certain advantages may be gained from a co-ordinated environmental approach. However, what level of emphasis heritage issues will actually achieve in the new management process remains to be seen.

In general terms, despite several of the senior officer's no longer being present (Nigel Brown, Paul Gilman and David Andrews, whom we wish well for the future), most members of the former Heritage Environment section are apparently included in the new structure, although none in senior management posts. As expected, a significant exception is the Field

Archaeological Unit whose future in a devolved form has still to be announced.

Given the current changes of policy, structure and funding, these are particularly challenging times for all concerned – politicians, officers and members of the public. Hopefully the high standards of archaeological and heritage service for which Essex has in the past had such a good reputation will continue with equally commensurate success.

The Advisory Committee (ACAE), which has played a valuable part since the mid-1970s in co-ordinating the interests and representing the views of the different types of archaeological bodies in Essex, is currently undergoing a review of its role. Until recently it has always been chaired by a senior County Councillor, including the extended tenure of the current chairman, Chris Manning-Press, who stands down in June after long service. Given the right support and suitably updated terms of reference there is no reason why this committee should not successfully continue to play an important role supporting Essex heritage in the public interest

G. Mark R. Davies

A New Role

Following the reorganisation of specialist environmental services at County Hall, Paul Gilman has taken on a new role with the County Council as a European Projects Manager. Paul had been involved with the development and

management of the Essex Historic Environment Record (formerly the Sites and Monuments Record) since 1984 and since 2000 he had also taken a leading role in developing and managing European-funded projects. These included two stages of Planarch which reviewed practices in archaeological heritage management in north-west Europe and also two projects under the European Route of Industrial Heritage umbrella. These ended up with the creation of a network linking the most important industrial heritage sites across Europe and also included a regional route in the East of England known as the 'Industrious East'. Paul was also involved in the Crossing the Lines project about historic fortifications which helped restore and provide improved interpretation at Jaywick Martello Tower and Tilbury Fort. In his new role, Paul is managing two new projects, Walls and Gardens and World War Two Heritage, both with partners from northern France, Belgium and the Netherlands. Walls and Gardens has 22 partners who are working together to share good practice about the sustainable management and presentation of historic fortifications, including natural environments and landscape settings. World War Heritage brings together ten partners to tell the human story of the war and how it affected the project area, bringing together oral history and information about the physical vestiges of the war such as pillboxes and airfields. Updates on progress with both projects will appear in future issues of this newsletter. Paul will also be looking for opportunities

to develop new projects for heritage and other subjects.

Paul Gilman

Advisory Committee for Archaeology

The Advisory Committee met on three occasions in the year with County Councillors, archaeologists, museum curators and representatives of archaeological societies (including ESAH) in attendance. A visit was made to Coalhouse Fort, East Tilbury, where the ongoing restoration work by volunteers of the 19th and 20th century defences of this stretch of the River Thames (including cannon, anti-aircraft guns, mine-laying and watchtowers) were inspected.

Research bringing together past excavations of Great Chesterford, and the Air-photography Project detecting archaeological sites in Essex, have been published in *East Anglian Archaeology*. A travelling exhibition of Essex's industrial heritage was circulating round the county. Manuden schoolchildren have taken part in the 1 metre test-pit survey organised by Cambridge University.

With Essex County Council due to become a commissioning-only organisation in 2011/2012 there was uncertainty about future arrangements for staffing, and what services would be commissioned. It was likely that the Archaeological Field Unit would become part of a larger organisation. Funding for archaeological projects from the government's Gravel Extraction Levy has now ceased.



Field study and archaeological excavation courses were now being offered at Copped Hall, Epping, where Tudor and later remains were being examined. The new heritage centre at Saffron Walden, which had reached an advanced stage of planning, has gain been put on hold due to delays and loss of funding. A hoard of socket axes found at Littlebury Iron Age fort has been deposited in Saffron Walden museum. Colchester museum had bid for a grant to update its displays.

A Visitors' Centre/Education Room was being built at Prittlewell priory, Southend, and a new archaeological store was now open. At the Garrison site, Colchester, a new Iron Age dike, a 3rd century coin hoard and a warrior burial have been found. The east end of St John's abbey church has been identified by ground-penetrating radar at Colchester. A Roman settlement has been found at Havengore, Foulness.

Work to the extension of Southend airport has revealed Bronze Age ditches and post-holes. At Bowers Marsh, Pitsea, hearths and dwellings of the 1st to 4th centuries have been excavated near to salt-production sites. The Lexden Union workhouse built in 1836 was recorded prior to residential conversion. World War II defences were being collated at Harwich and along the Stour estuary. A camp which housed children of the Kinder transport in 1939, and subsequently German POWs, has been identified.

James Kemble

Essex clergyman escapes Vietnam massacre

In a footnote to his entry for the vicar of Wanstead from 1707 to 1724, Morant noted this event in the more measured tones of his day: 'Mr James Pound was Chaplain to the English Factory at Pulo-Condore in the East Indies; and very narrowly escaped with his life, when that Factory was cut to pieces in the year 1705; at which time he irretrievably lost many curious Papers and Observations of his own.'

Pulo-Condore was the name of one of a group of islands (now called Côn-Sô'n) in the Mekong delta off the southern coast of what was then Cochinchina (now Vietnam). The 'factory' was a fortified trading post established by the East India Company in 1702. It was built by Maccassar soldiers and slaves to establish a route for English exports to China, as well as to profit from Chinese produce 'without being exposed to the vexatious oppressions of the officers in the ports of that Empire'. It was also seen as a possible route for opening up trade with Japan which was still, at that date, almost entirely closed to trade with the west. The post was protected by a mercenary garrison hired from Borneo, and a small warship which intended to provide additional protection and to exact reprisals on Chinese ports when necessary. It may have been this garrison that mutinied after the Company reneged on an agreement about their wages. The

Company's warehouses were burnt down and only eleven Europeans escaped alive, of whom Pound was one. The East India Company's President, who was present at the time of the mutiny, was one of many Europeans killed. The island was to achieve very unpleasant notoriety in the C20 when it was home to an infamous prison, run initially by the French colonial rulers of Vietnam, and subsequently used by the occupying US army.

Pound was born in 1669 in Wiltshire, graduated at Oxford, and obtained a medical diploma there in 1697. He only practised briefly before being ordained, and then entered service with the East India Company as chaplain. His first post was Madras, then Chushan Dao, an island south of Shanghai, before going to Pulo-Condore to establish the trading post there. He returned to England in June 1706, fifteen months after the massacre, and was presented to the rectory of Wanstead the following year, though the patronage of Sir Richard Child whose family had strong connections with the East India Company. He retained this living for the rest of his life, from 1720 in plurality with Burstow in Surrey, though Wanstead remained his home till his death in 1724. The royal patron of Burstow clearly had a penchant for non-resident astronomers, as the living had been held previously by John Flamsteed, the Astronomer Royal until his death in 1719.

Though Pound left an account of the massacre at Pulo-Condore, it was never published; he is better known as an astronomer who worked closely

with Flamsteed, providing observations about the southern stars made during his overseas postings. A three foot quadrant, made by one of the foremost scientific instrument makers of the day, was shipped out to him in 1700 but it took four years to reach him, by which time it was badly corroded. He continued his observations at Wanstead after his return to England, and provided data for a report on the total solar eclipse of 1715, as well as various planetary observations. In 1717 the Royal Society lent him a lens with focal length of 123 feet which was mounted on top of a maypole in Wanstead Park to make an 'aerial' telescope (i.e. an instrument without a tube to hold the lenses in place or to screen out extraneous light). With this extremely clumsy device he was able to provide data which enabled Halley to correct his calculations on the moons of Saturn. He also made measurements of the discs of Saturn and Jupiter for Sir Isaac Newton, as well as a variety of other planetary observations.

He made a further, if indirect, contribution to astronomy by acting as mentor to his nephew James Bradley, a future Astronomer Royal and Savilian professor of astronomy at Oxford. Pound nursed him through an attack of smallpox, and paid for his education. They made observations together at Wanstead on the opposition of Mars in 1719, and the transit of Mercury in 1723. One account suggests that Bradley continued to live in Pound's house in Wanstead after the latter's death, with Bradley only visiting Oxford to deliver his lectures. It was also reported that a 12½ foot zenith sector



(later moved to Greenwich) was mounted at the Wanstead house in 1727. Pound's manuscripts passed to Bradley (and ultimately to the Bodleian library) and his natural history collection was deposited at the Ashmolean museum, Oxford.

Michael Leach

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Rev. Charles Merivale of Lawford 1808-1893

On the south wall of the chancel of Lawford church, near Manningtree, is a marble tablet, the first part of which reads:

In memory of

The very Rev. Charles Merivale
D.D. D.C.L. L.L.D

Historian of Rome

Scholar and Fellow of St John's
College, Cambridge

Rector of this Parish from 1848 to
1870

and afterwards

Dean of the Cathedral Church of
Ely

This forgotten 'historian of Rome' was not a native of Essex, though he did most of his important work in the parish of Lawford. Born in London on 8 March 1808 he was the second son of John Herman Merivale, lawyer and literary scholar, and Louisa Heath, daughter of the headmaster of Harrow school from 1785 to 1805. The young Merivale was sent to Harrow in 1818 where he combined scholarship with sporting prowess, playing in the first cricket match against Eton in 1824. In the same year, on the promise of an Indian writership, he transferred to Haileybury School where he took prizes in classics and oriental languages. However the prospect of a career in the Indian civil service began to seem less attractive and his father agreed instead to send him to Cambridge. It is said that a casual reading of Edward Gibbon's *Memoirs* was a determining influence in his choice of career as a historian.

At St John's College, Cambridge he was awarded the Browne medal for Latin verse in 1829 and graduated BA the following year, proceeding to MA and BD in 1833 and 1840 respectively. He was elected to that most select of university societies, the Cambridge *Conversazione Society*, better known as the 'Apostles'. Contemporary fellow members included Alfred Tennyson, Arthur Hallam, Monkton Milne and James

Spedding. He also rowed for the university against Oxford in 1829.

In 1833 Merivale was elected to a college fellowship and this prompted him to commit himself to historical research. He was ordained priest in 1834. Disappointed by his failure to obtain the chair of classics at King's College, London, he immersed himself in German, travelled to Bavaria and Austria and continued his Roman studies. The sermons he delivered as select preacher to the university in 1838 served him well and led to his appointment in the following year as select preacher at Whitehall. By nature a valetudinarian, he became absorbed in the study of Roman history, seemingly content with one brief visit to Rome in the autumn of 1845.

In order to find the time to research and write, Merivale accepted the college living of Lawford in 1848 and relinquished his fellowship. His *History of the Romans under the Empire* appeared in seven volumes between 1850 and 1864. A new edition in eight volumes was issued in 1865. He intended it to form a prelude to Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* and it was accepted as such by his contemporaries. German, French and Italian translations followed. The popularity of the early volumes convinced him to publish a one volume epitome, *The Fall of the Roman Republic*, which reached a fifth edition within ten years of its

first appearance. *The Conversion of the Roman Empire* was published in 1865, and *The Conversion of the Northern Nations* followed in the same year; both had been delivered as Boyle lectures, given annually in London since 1692 to 'prove the truth of the Christian religion against the infidel'. He was Hulsean lecturer at Cambridge University in 1862, select preacher in Whitehall in 1864, and chaplain to the House of Commons from 1863 to 1869. He declined the regius chair of modern history at Cambridge but was promoted to the deanery of Ely in 1869, resigning from the Lawford living the following year. He had been involved with the restoration of the chancel in 1853 and the nave in 1864, and present appearance of the interior of Lawford church owes much to the historian of Rome.

Other historical works followed in quick succession. His *General History of Rome from the Foundation of the City to the fall of Augustulus* appeared in 1875. In this he attempted to synthesize a vast subject in a way easily absorbed by the general reader. An abridged edition was published two years later. This was followed by *The Roman Triumvirates* (1876), *St Paul at Rome* (1877), *The Conversion of the Continental Teutons* (1878), and *Four Lectures on some Epochs of Early Church History* (1879). He also produced sermons and discourses, much Latin verse and a pamphlet proposing modest reform to the system of



election to college fellowships. In 1888 he published a memoir of his elder brother, Herman Merivale, who had a distinguished career in the Colonial and India offices.

Apart from his writing, Merivale made almost no impression beyond the cathedral precincts. He did organise an elaborate commemoration in 1873 of the foundation of Ely minster, of which he published an account. The stone pinnacles surmounting the lantern were rebuilt in his time. He also enlarged the school. He was awarded an honorary DCL from Oxford in 1866, and in 1884 an LLD from Edinburgh. His old college, St John's, made him an honorary fellow in 1874. He died on 27 December 1893 and was buried in Ely cemetery. Monuments were erected in Lawford church and in Ely cathedral. His daughter edited his correspondence and published this privately, with a fragment of his autobiography, in 1899.

Highly regarded in his own time, Merivale has not entered the historians' pantheon. Perhaps the very fact that he intended his magnum opus to form a prelude to *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* counted against him. It was an audacious enterprise at a time when Gibbon was out of favour in England. If the latter's theme was the long march of civilization from the Roman Empire to the 'one great republic' of his own day, Merivale's was necessarily less ambitious. He relied too heavily on

literary sources. His neglect of epigraphy certainly reduced the value of his work, and for some made it seem old fashioned. In the unforgiving world of scholarship Merivale has been superseded. However, he still has much to say of interest on the structure of the empire and the process of Christian conversion.

Mark Lockett

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Vancouver's report on Essex agriculture

Several writers in the second half of the C18 promoted the unpopular view that the government should take the initiative in promoting agricultural improvements. Both Arthur Young (1741-1820) and William Marshall (1745-1818) claimed to have originated the idea

of establishing a Board of Agriculture. According to the latter's Review and Abstract, Marshall had lived for a time somewhere in NE Essex, though this is not mentioned by his ODNB biographer. He was certainly an active polemicist for agricultural improvements, proposing a scheme to the Society of Arts in 1780 for testing theoretical ideas by their practical evaluation of their effectiveness in the field in a number of different districts. He recommended that an observer should reside on a suitable farm for 12 months in order to make the necessary assessment. He appears to have put this idea into practice himself and this may be the explanation of his contact with Essex, though no further information has been found. In 1787 he advocated a plan to compile 'a full and faithful register of the present practice of husbandry in well cultivated districts.' Three years later he suggested the establishment of agricultural colleges in different districts, to act as 'seminaries of rural knowledge.'

However it was another agricultural reformer, MP and landowner, Sir John Sinclair (1754-1835), who successfully persuaded the government that a public body would have more influence than a private one in reforming farming. This led to the establishment of the Board of Agriculture in 1793. From the outset the Board was bedevilled by inadequate funding; Sinclair had

asked for 10,000 guineas per annum but Parliament only granted £3000, and its weekly meetings had to be held in Sinclair's house to save money. The Board had 31 'ordinary members', selected from both Houses of Parliament, and 19 'official members' who included officers of state, bishops and the president of the Royal Society. To Marshall's chagrin, Arthur Young was chosen as the paid secretary, with Sinclair as the annually elected unpaid president. The latter's priority was to commission county by county reports but his timetable was injudiciously rushed and over-ambitious. The reports were intended to cover the nature of the soil, land tenure, land use, grasses, stock, grains, prices, roads, fallowing, manures, effects of enclosure and tithes, wages, labour, drainage and so on, and were to be finished in five or six weeks in mid-winter. When complete they were printed with unusually wide margins, and circulated for comment to influential and interested parties within each county. It was intended that annotated copies should be returned to the Board of Agriculture within three months of publication.

The report for Essex, compiled by 'Messrs Griggs', was published in January 1794 and, at 26 pages, had the dubious distinction of being the shortest of all the county volumes. It was described in detail in the Spring 2008 issue of EAH News, and it certainly fell



hopelessly short of what Sinclair had intended. It is surprising that Sinclair had agreed to such a rushed schedule, as he himself had compiled the highly detailed Statistical Account of Scotland. This took him and his team of assistants nine years to complete, during which time he had direct experience of the endless difficulties in extracting timely and accurate information from suspicious local informants.

The shortcomings of the Griggs's report on Essex must have been immediately apparent, as a second report was commissioned almost immediately from Charles Vancouver (1756-?1815) who had already completed the county report for Cambridgeshire. In spite of obstruction from farmers who feared that the survey would be used by the government to raise taxes, Vancouver had produced a detailed account of nearly every parish in that large county. The Essex volume (published in February 1795) was less complete, though the parish tables show that he had intended to collect a similar level of detail. Each section (based broadly on his perception of soil types) has a table listing each parish against columns for the rent charges for arable, pasture, meadow, marsh, hopland, woods, forests, and commons (with the acreages of some of these), and the annual crop yields per acre for wheat, rye, barley, oats, peas and beans. More contentiously there were columns

for the tithe composition per acre and poor rates, with the increase in both noted over previous decades. Tithe was an extremely sensitive issue at this time, believed by reformers to be acting as a break on agricultural improvement, but viewed by the House of Lords as a sacrosanct form of taxation. Unfortunately for Essex historians, many of the columns in his tables are blank. However there is still a formidable amount of detail, both in the tables and in the accompanying text, about local agricultural practice and problems, as well as wages and food prices, crops and yields. It is impossible to list these in a short article and, as the volume is not indexed, it is necessary to read the whole to get an idea of what is included. It ranges from the prevalence of 'calf slip' (i.e. spontaneous abortion) in Billericay, to what must be an early (and pre-Mendelian) account of selective cultivation of wheat for specific characteristics in the garden of an unnamed gentleman in Great Bardfield. There are also details of methods which had been used to improve local yields, and illustrations of the increase in land values and yields which resulted from the enclosure of wastes, and the clearance of woods and forests.

The second part contains general observations on animal husbandry, and improvements in stock, often with more local detail such as the Finchingfield experimental cross between Norfolk and Southdown

sheep. This is followed by sections of advice on drainage, manuring and numerous other routes to improved yields, and a list of the names of the gentlemen who had provided the writer with useful information and support. Finally there are the details of the 33 questions that were sent out by the Board to landowners, clergy and farmers, and a selection of the responses received, including those from that well-known agricultural improver, Rev. Bate Dudley (1754-1824) of Bradwell-on-Sea, and the political economist, Rev John Howlett (1731-1804) of Great Dunmow.

Vancouver was a remarkable individual. Born of Dutch parents, he was apprenticed to a Norfolk farmer. By the age of 20, he was recommended by Arthur Young as bailiff to an Irish estate with responsibility for draining areas of bog. A decade later he crossed the Atlantic to run an estate of 53,000 acres but returned to England in 1793 (probably at the instigation of Arthur Young) to compile the Cambridgeshire report mentioned above. Between 1798 and 1805 he travelled extensively in the United States, but was also actively involved in fen drainage in the Netherlands. By 1806 he was back in England, working on further county reports (Devon and Hampshire) for the Board of Agriculture. He also wrote other reports, advocating (for example) the drainage of the Dartmoor peat

bogs and the fens of eastern England, and the colonization of the New Forest in Hampshire. Lovers of the New Forest must be grateful that the last plan was never fulfilled!

William Marshall continued to nurse his grievances about not being appointed as secretary to the board, and in 1808 commenced the massive and self-imposed task of summarising all the various county reports in a single publication. This provided him with the opportunity of sniping at the perceived inadequacies of some of the county reports. His multi-volume *Review & Abstract* was finally completed just before his death in 1818, and refers to two further reports on Essex agriculture. One, never published, was written by 'Mr Howlett'. This was Rev John Howlett of Great Dunmow who had been commissioned by the Board of Agriculture and was working on his Essex report at the time of his death in 1804. The other was Arthur Young's report (published in 1807) which, according to Marshall, incorporated much of the Howlett and Vancouver reports, a little of Griggs and some of his own.

Sinclair was replaced as president of the board in 1798. The new president had different priorities (such as the promotion of agricultural societies), though county reports still continued to be commissioned and the last was not published until 1814. Unfortunately the sceptics, who had predicted that



a government body would achieve little, were proved correct; the board's activities aroused considerable public suspicion about government interference, as well the wrath of the House of Lords over proposals to reform the tithe system, and the board was finally abolished in 1822.

Michael Leach

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Book Reviews

Andrew Marr's book '**The Diamond Queen**' (Macmillan, 2011), a more detailed account than the recent television series, is subtitled 'Elizabeth II and her people'. It charts the history of the monarchy from George V to the present, and

includes, inevitably, a parallel political history of the nation; Churchill, an Essex MP being the Queen's first of twelve Prime Ministers. During the First World War the Saxe-Coburg-Gotha family restyled themselves as the Windsors, a rather English, if invented, name. The book refers to: "The Bishop of Chelmsford [Rt Rev John Edwin Watts-Ditchfield], an influential figure, had told [Lord] Stamfordham [the King's private secretary] that 'the stability of the throne would be strengthened if the Prince of Wales married an English lady ... she must be intelligent and above all full of sympathy'." The constant evolving of monarchy is a thread which Andrew Marr follows, drawing comparison with the Duke of York's marriage to Elizabeth Bowes Lyon and Prince William to Catherine Middleton.

Andrew Smith

Lawford: a timber circle overlooked by Patrick Taylor Polystar Press 2010, 19 pages 6 figs.

This is the third of a series of booklets which consider a number of prehistoric sites with timber post settings in eastern England. The present pamphlet deals with the late Neolithic ring-ditch at Lawford and suggests that the curving arc of postholes recorded inside the ring-ditch had originally been part of a complete circle. The author examines the excavated evidence and offers interpretations of the geometry of the site, its topographical setting and astronomical alignments in the light

of the work of Alexander Thom. The pamphlet demonstrates the long-term value of clear publication of archaeological excavations, which allows the evidence to be examined anew and different interpretations to be developed and presented.

The Heddingham Medieval Pottery Industry by Helen Walker Essex County Council and Braintree District Council 2010, 8 pages 8 plates

This short, colourful and attractive booklet presents a summary of the medieval pottery industry which flourished in and around the Colne valley between Sible Heddingham, Gosfield and Halstead. It provides an overview for the interested general reader of Helen Walker's more detailed study which is shortly to be published as a monograph in the East Anglian Archaeology series. This work will stand alongside Helen's numerous contributions to the study of medieval pottery in Essex, most of which have appeared as integral parts of excavation reports published in Essex Archaeology and History.

Nigel Brown

Stansted Airport Through Time by Charles Woodley Published by Amberley Publishing, 128 pages

The book largely comprises of photographs of the different aircraft that have used Stansted airport since its construction. It also provides a summary history of the development of the airport at Stansted from its inception as an American airfield in 1942, its subsequent development as a civil airport through to its modern day

incarnation as London's third international Airport. There are short text sections on its World War II Service, the first civil operations, its role as a centre for troop flights and as potential Cold War base, and its subsequent development. However, the book concentrates on the types of aircraft used, and the number of crashes or near misses that have taken place in the last 70 years. A notable conclusion from reading the text is that aviation at Stansted is dominated by the failure of airlines, air freight companies and engineering companies.

The book would have benefited from a contents and illustration list.

Richard Havis

Disused local authority buildings at risk

Many members will know that Colchester BC has permanently closed Tymperley's clock museum. A small number of the clocks will be displayed at Hollytrees, but the majority of the collection will be put in store. The building itself is of late C15 date with later additions, is listed Grade II*. It is now unoccupied and is at risk from all the problems that afflict such buildings – vandalism, rising damp, roof leaks, blocked gutters and rainwater pipes. Unnoticed and unremedied, these can lead to serious decay which is very expensive to remedy, and increases the difficulties of finding a suitable new use for the building. The Society is seeking assurance from the BC that regular inspections and maintenance



will be carried out until a suitable alternative use can be found. The building cannot be sold outright without Treasury consent, but the latest information is that the BC is trying to find a lessee on a 125 year leasehold.

Brentwood BC is the owner of the Old House, also listed Grade II*, now an abandoned community centre and unoccupied. The external manifestations of neglect are windows showing signs of wet rot, and down pipes heavily encroached by Virginia creeper. The building has had the dubious distinction of featuring in *Cornerstone*, the magazine of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, as an example of the neglect of important buildings being forced on local authorities by spending cuts. The lack of regular maintenance will be, in the long run, a serious false economy and will make it much more difficult to find another use for this building.

Michael Leach

144 & 144A High Street, Maldon

The saga of this building, described in previous issues of this Newsletter, continues. The Rochford and South East Building Preservation Trust have already been through (and lost) two planning appeals after removal of sash windows and exposure of the timber frame without planning consent. The sash windows have been put back, and the whole building is now clothed in an

attractive and appropriate covering of lime plaster. Nevertheless the BPT is now embarking on a third appeal against the DC's refusal to allow the exposure (again!) of the timber frame of the crosswing, the reconstruction of the long filled-in jetty on the ground floor of the front elevation, and the insertion of a 'Tudor-style' window. The SPAB will be supporting Maldon DC in the enquiry. Both organisations deserve credit for their persistence in protecting this building from over-enthusiastic and ill-considered 'restoration'.

Michael Leach

Source: *Cornerstone*, volume 32, no 3.

Epping Forest, a nursery for the most profligate of men

Charles Vancouver, in his *General View of the Agriculture of Essex* (1795), viewed forests with a thoroughly jaundiced eye. Generally he saw them as unproductive areas which could be rendered far more profitable if made over to agriculture. Epping and Hainault Forests, in his view, presented a further problem, as he noted:

'These forests, so near the metropolis, are well known to be the nursery and resort of the most idle and profligate of men: here the undergraduates in iniquity commence their career with deer stealing, and here the more finished and hardened robber secrets himself from justice,

or retires for a time with his plunder from his haunts in London.....'

He also regarded deer in a very unfavourable light:

'...the farmers universally declare, that the privilege of commonage is by no means equal to the one tenth part of the losses they constantly sustain from deer in breaking down their fences, and destroying their crops, either ripe or green. Against these depredators it is further alleged, that there are no fences, however laboriously contrived, expensive, and formidable against other animals, that will in any wise avail: add to this, that the evil is continually increasing from the annual increase in the stock of deer.'

Michael Leach

Essex seen from elsewhere

Anyone who has attempted to use the Land Tax Returns in ERO will probably have been frustrated by the limited amount of information (usually only the name and the amount paid) that can be extracted from them. However they will be heartened by an extremely useful article by Prof. Hoyle of Reading University in *The Local Historian*. This provides an overview of how the tax was assessed from its introduction in the late C17, but - more specifically - how land tax redemption, introduced in 1798 to raise funds for the war with Napoleon, can provide much more information about landholding at the end of the C18. Land tax redemption

provided tax payers with an opportunity to avoid future tax by the payment of a lump sum, and this necessitated the collection of detailed information on the taxable land and property concerned. The detail varied, but usually included acreage, a brief description of the property and its name, and sometimes other information such as farm names before amalgamation. This was recorded by the Land Tax Redemption Office and their archive is now in The National Archive at Kew. Essex is covered in three volumes (ref: IR 23, vols 27-9). Land tax redemption was popular with the larger owners (whether for reasons of patriotism or self-interest, or a mixture of the two, is not clear) and within 6 years 56% of land tax had been redeemed in the Lexden Hundred in Essex. Generally those who paid the smallest amount of tax were the least likely to opt for redemption. As well as providing a useful overview of land tax, Prof. Hoyle demonstrates what can be deduced from the Tax Redemption Office records at Kew, using Lexden Hundred and the parish of Earls Colne as examples.

The Ancient Monuments Society has been consulted over two church alterations in Essex. The first, St John the Baptist at Great Clacton, had been a cause célèbre 20 years ago when there was a proposal to demolish part of the church. The recent proposal, to insert two dormer windows, was considerably less contentious. The proposals at Holy Cross church at Felsted were more challenging, involving a substantial north/south extension across the churchyard.



Approval for this was obtained, though English Heritage, as well as AMS, had considerable reservations. The extension is described as a self effacing design, and is partly screened by an avenue of trees, so it will be interesting to see how the unmistakably modern building fits in with the medieval church and the surrounding village.

A detailed report of excavations on the site of a post-medieval flour mill on the bank of the River Roding at Barking has been published in *Industrial Archaeology Review*. This complex site, later occupied by J A Symes' match factory, was developed from the C17, initially as a water mill but latterly steam powered. Evidence emerged of the various phases of this development, and of the complex alterations to the line of the river bank.

Crittall's housing at Clockhouse Way, Braintree (from 1919), the new village at Silver End (1926-32) and the Bata factory and settlement at east Tilbury (from 1933) are described by Adam Garwood in a recent issue of *Industrial Archaeology News*.

Michael Leach

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Ancient Monuments Society Newsletter, Autumn 2011

Guided Tour of the Holy Trinity Church in Halstead on Saturday 28th July 2012

Between 1843 and 1844 Sir George Gilbert Scott was commissioned to build a new church in the Essex town of Halstead. His creation is truly one of the hidden gems of the Essex countryside. Take this opportunity to learn about the building, its history and the people remembered within. For further information and to book please contact the Friends of Holy Trinity, Halstead at friendsofholyltrinityhalstead@gmail.com

EH Heritage Gateway

I would like to urge all members to look at this website <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/> and make comments back to English Heritage. They are currently considering removing the County, District, Parish search option now that they have a better map search facility. ECC have recently had their point data added to this map. A survey can be found at the following <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/HeritageGateway2012>

The Editor

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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 2010 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £50,018

Donations payable to: The Essex Society for Archaeology and History

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Please address enquiries to: Bill Abbott, 13 Sovereign Crescent, Lexden Road, Colchester C03 3UZ.

Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail bill.abbott@btinternet.com

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

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Saturday afternoon 19th May – Stow Maries Aerodrome - Talk and tour starting at 1pm of the aerodrome and museum led by the Curator, including tea in the restaurant. Min. number 25. Cost £6.00.

Stow Maries Aerodrome is a First World War aerodrome and it belonged to “B” flight squadron Royal Flying Corps. Some buildings have been restored others in the process.

Saturday afternoon 9th June - AGM 2pm in the St Leonards Hall, St Mary’s Church, Broomfield, followed by a talk by Ken Searles Local Historian. Tea provided at a cost of £5.00.

Wednesday evening 4th July - visit to **The Gibberd Garden**. To include a talk on the history of the garden, visit to the Gibberd Rooms, and gardens.

Meet at 5.30pm. Cost £6.00. Tea rooms will be open.

The Gibberd Garden is the garden of Sir Frederick Gibberd The Master Planner of Harlow. The visit also includes the Gibberd Rooms in the house.

Sunday afternoon 12th August - visit to **Guildhall, Pykenham’s Tower, and Hadleigh church in Suffolk**, led by John Walker. Max. number of people 30, split into 2 groups. Meet at 2 pm. Cost £10.00, to include refreshments.

Pykehams Tower is the gatehouse of the Archdeacons house built about 1495 and 43 foot high, the Church is large with a tower and two south porches.

Saturday afternoon 15th September - visit to **Wivenhoe** for a walk and talk and a visit to the **Nottage Museum**. Max 30. Meet at 2pm. Cost £5.00, including refreshments.

Wivenhoe is a village situated on the River Colne with a history steeped in fishing and smuggling. It’s a favourite place for artists. The Nottage is a museum, but also a place to learn boat building and maritime skills.

Sunday midday 14th October - the **Morant lunch** at The Old Moot House, Castle Hedingham. 12.30 for 1pm. Cost £25.00. Bookings with payment to be made by 14th September.

Further details of all events are available from the Excursions Secretary, Mr Graham Gould, 16 Osborne Road, Leyton, E10 5QW (0208 556 1423). **If you are interested in any of these events must please contact Graham Gould to check availability**

Please note the visits on the Society's programme are open to members and associate members only.

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2012



The Essex Society for Archaeology & History

FORMERLY THE ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1852

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COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 22 OCTOBER 2012

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

The illustration on the front cover is a photograph by Andy Barham of Beeleigh Abbey, Maldon, Essex

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From the President

With the approving roar of sporting success still ringing in our ears from the Olympic Park at Stratford and the various other venues of London 2012, there now inevitably follows a public debate about what the appropriate 'Legacy' of these Olympic Games should be. The outstanding successes of Team GB have quite properly bolstered calls for a significant increase in resources to enable young people to become more generally involved in sports and to help increase British athletes' achievements.

With the highly successful running of the London Games having benefited from the dedication, energy and commitment of many thousands of people, it is interesting to note how welcoming, friendly and inclusive the prevailing atmosphere was throughout the 16 days of the Games. This seems to have come from a remarkable upsurge of public enthusiasm, shown not least by the numerous volunteers, and it clearly affected competitors, spectators, onlookers and tourists alike.

From a non-sporting point of view, however, surely the most interesting aspect of these Olympic Games has been the confident expression of what can best be referred to as pride in our national British Heritage. Of course, some will say that the well-known buildings and views of London merely provided an easily recognisable backdrop for the different events being watched by millions of TV viewers all around the world. However, not only were there

many familiar historic sights to be seen, but in the opening and closing ceremonies a whole kaleidoscope of scenes was shown depicting major British achievements and events. Although light-hearted and self-parodying - much of the detail was probably quite mystifying to foreign audiences - all this served to highlight aspects of British culture, including some of the most significant contributions made here in recent world history.

There could hardly have been a more sustained and welcoming advertisement for tourists from abroad to come and visit Britain's historic and cultural heritage. As if we did not already know it, recent official research has actually confirmed that Britain's heritage is what foreign visitors want to see when they come here. London's places of interest are well known, but in Essex, if all this promotion proves effective, can we realistically expect a significant influx of tourists?

As part of the county's Cultural Olympiad, special exhibitions and events have been held at different places in a four-year programme combining cultural activities and education with sport. Drawn mostly from the creative arts they have been well attended, although to what extent by tourists especially from abroad is not clear. The intention has been for Essex to promote itself as a thriving cultural destination for visitors before, during and long after the Games.

One or two of these Cultural Olympiad events have had some association with Essex heritage, for example where exhibitions were held in museums. The 'Sporting Heroes'



touring exhibition, currently on display until the end of September at Braintree Museum, tells the story of some of the region's most notable sporting personalities and clubs. At Colchester the Castle Museum's 'Treasures of China' displays 70 very special objects from Nanjing Museum, the second largest museum in China, ranging through 8,000 years of Chinese history. Besides being curated by 10 children from the Gilberd School, this exhibition like its predecessor in 2008 is expected to attract many visitors, who will then perhaps be able to see other attractions that historic Colchester has to offer.

However, the project in Essex that connects most closely with its local heritage, having been 'inspired by London 2012' and taking a 'legacy' from the Games, is without doubt 'The Team Hadleigh project.' Local residents and schoolchildren have taken part in a series of heritage activities to research Hadleigh Castle and Country Park, which provided the setting for the Olympic Mountain Bike events.

Heritage trails, a guided audio tour and an App have been provided, the latter telling the story of the town, Castle, Country Park and history of mountain biking and BMX sports. The Olympic Mountain Bike course will also be adapted for public use so that all kinds of interest will be catered for in close association (see www.team_hadleigh.org).

It is perhaps a little disappointing that more has not been done in connection with the London Olympic Games to promote other aspects of

this county's rich heritage. In terms of boosting tourism it would have been quite easy to have included heritage projects which related certain periods of our history to wider international contexts, the most obvious ones being the Roman and Norman periods.

A subject that enjoys widespread interest through tourism is Industrial Archaeology. The European Route of Industrial Heritage, an information network, has a useful website, www.erih.net, which is well worth looking at. There are more than 850 sites in 32 European countries and of its 16 regional routes 5 are in Britain. The Historic Environment Branch of Essex County Council has been responsible for creating and managing 'The Industrious East', the East of England Regional Route, for which Paul Gilman is Project Manager. Essex forms a major part of its coverage and there are useful leaflets that can be downloaded free of charge. The network was developed with EU support and has members throughout Europe.

On 11th August 2012 I had the pleasure of representing the Society at the annual dinner of the Association for Industrial Archaeology, whose conference this year was held in Essex at Writtle College. Afterwards, thanks were expressed by the President, Prof. Marilyn Palmer, for our contribution towards the production costs of their new 'Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of Essex' compiled by Tony Crosby.

This 68-page illustrated booklet includes a gazetteer of important buildings and sites selected to represent the development of the

various industries in Essex and which are well worth visiting. Although there is no specialist group in Essex dealing with local Industrial Archaeology, I know that many of our own members are very interested in the subject. Details of how to obtain copies of this useful booklet will be given in due course.

Returning to the theme of legacy, this is an opportune moment to re-appraise how best to use our heritage assets. It is easy for historic buildings and sites to be treated as backdrops to other events or for museums to become mere activity centres. To use the sporting analogy, we need at least to ensure that the next generation of heritage 'athletes' has the latest science and technology, helped by professional and volunteer back-up, as well as popular support, to provide the best results for local communities and tourists alike.

G. Mark R. Davies

Apologies to Andy Barham

Many apologies are due from the Society to Andy Barham whose photograph of Beeleigh Abbey appears on the front of this newsletter. This was not duly acknowledged, either in the first two editions in the new format, or on the Society's membership application form. Apart from being an excellent photograph, Andy spent a considerable amount of time digitally removing extraneous objects from the foreground. We are very sorry about

our failure to give him due credit, but are pleased to do so now.

Cumin

Any aficionado of Indian cooking (or a special Dutch cheese) will be familiar with this delicious spice, made by grinding up (or using whole) the small seeds of the plant. Unlike coriander, which was long cultivated in England (particularly in Essex, according to Mrs Beeton), cumin's natural habitat is the hot dry areas of the eastern Mediterranean and the Near East. It is unusual to find it growing wild in our colder and wetter climate, and Stanley Jermyn in his *Flora of Essex* noted only two reports – one from Dagenham in 1936 and another from the Barking rubbish tip in 1971. This contrasts with wild coriander, both once cultivated in Essex, and both of which Jermyn noted as relatively common in the wild. In the early C18 Rev. Adam Buddle, rector of North Fambridge, noted that coriander was plentiful in the fields of Essex.

Allowing for the difficulties in growing cumin, it is surprising to find a number of Essex references in the medieval period to payments for rent and tithes made in the seed, both with and without additional amounts in cash. ERO D/DP T1/1700, for example, stipulated twice yearly payments (undated but medieval) of a quarter pound of cumin and 6d. for land held of Bicknacre priory. In 1691 a manor in Rawreth was receiving payments in a mixture of cash and cumin seed (ERO D/DXn/4). Even as late as 1766, the manor of Fingrith



Hall in Blackmore was receiving some dues from tenants in cumin seed (ERO D/DHt M7). Payments in cumin (and a variety of other products) were not unusual outside Essex. Where did the necessary cumin seed come from, and what was it used for?

It is possible that cumin might have flourished in the drier parts of England in the warmer periods of the Middle Ages. Gerard in his *Herbal* of 1633 noted that he succeeded in obtaining seed from the plant ten weeks after mid May sowing, and Gervase Markham two years later provided information about the best conditions for its cultivation. So it must have been possible to grow it in the seventeenth century, but perhaps only in a warm and dry summer. In 1659 the agricultural writer Adolphus Speed recommended cumin as one of a number of alternative crops that could be grown. A recent experiment in a domestic greenhouse showed that there are no problems with getting the seed to germinate, though it failed to flourish in the cool summer of 2012 even under glass. No evidence has been found for the commercial cultivation of cumin in Essex in the early modern period, though other unusual crops, such as weld, caraway and coriander, were being grown in the county until the nineteenth century.

There is ample evidence for its use in the past, both in cooking and in medical treatments. The idea that medieval dishes were dull and bland is dispelled by early cookery books. These show that a wide range of spices was used – at least in the

kitchens of the wealthy – and that cumin was used for flavouring many different dishes, including chicken, whelks, poached eggs, gingerbread and blancmange. The popularity of cumin as a flavouring seems to have dwindled from the seventeenth century and it is not mentioned at all by Mrs Beeton in 1861, in spite of her use of a range of other curry spices. Its medicinal virtues (principally digestive ones) were still being extolled in the nineteenth century and one writer noted that its seeds were formerly smoked in order to procure a pale delicate visage. ‘Young ladies’ he remarked coyly ‘who prefer such a countenance to the rosy hue of health, may take the hint, and consult Dioscorides, Pliny and Horace.’

If, as the evidence suggests, it was difficult to cultivate, why was cumin used in payment in preference to cash? Various other forms of payment are found in rentals, particularly peppercorns which definitely could not be grown in this country. This tradition lingers legally to the present day in the form of a ‘peppercorn rent’. Some medieval rent payments seem to fall into a similar nominal category – a garland of roses, and three gillyflowers for example (ERO D/DXn/4). Non monetary forms of payment were familiar to the translators of the Authorised Version of the Bible – they rendered Matthew xxiii, 23 as ‘for ye pay tithes of mint and anise and cumin...’. The modern mind is accustomed to attaching a cash value to everything, but it is probable that many alternative systems of payment existed in the medieval period for small

transactions, of which we obtain only fleeting glimpses. Cumin as a form of currency may be one of them.

Michael Leach

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The Broomway

WARNING:

PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY
ACROSS MAPLIN SANDS CAN
BE DANGEROUS: SEEK LOCAL
GUIDANCE

This is the message to be found just to the south of Foulness Island on the 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey map,

along the line of what must be the most unusual footpath in the county. Only the hardiest of walkers go beyond the start of this unmarked path with its ominous warning notices about unpleasant ways of meeting a premature death, including drowning and the hazards of unexploded military hardware. It leaves the mainland at Wakering Stairs (a 'Hammer House of Horrors' name, if ever there was one), heads out to sea for several hundred yards along a causeway, then turns north east to run parallel with the almost invisible coastline over a vast featureless expanse of shimmering sands. After five miles it turns inland and makes landfall at Fisherman's Head near the eastern tip of Foulness Island, though a number of short paths ('headways') branch off to reach the coast at various points before its final destination. It was once clearly marked by a line of poles or 'brooms' every 30 yards or so, but the only markers visible now have been placed there by the army and relate to the use of the area as an artillery range. These cannot be relied upon for indicating the route of the Broomway. For those who mis-time their journey, the tide comes in over the sands faster than a horse can gallop, and in the mist or in the dark all sense of direction is quickly lost, as the unfortunate Chinese cockle pickers in Morecombe Bay discovered in 2004. The Maplin Sands have had their fair share of victims too, some of whom are buried in Foulness churchyard. Not all would have been travellers on the Broomway as the sands were home to numerous fish traps, or kiddles, which would have required regular visits to



retrieve the catch, sometimes under challenging conditions. Mist can descend without warning even on a fine day, and the misleading direction of the incoming tide has deceived people into walking out to sea to their death. The rector of Foulness, who was very familiar with the route, wrote a vivid account of his complete disorientation when returning on foot from a ruridecanal meeting in darkness and rain in October 1899.

The earliest documentary reference (as the *Bromwey*) is found in an account compiled by the bailiff of the manor of Wakering in 1419, a document that was cited in a case concerning the ownership of the foreshore, heard by the Court of Appeal in 1891. It has been claimed (on no clear evidence) to be of much more ancient origin, possibly of Roman date built to facilitate the carriage of salt from the 'red hill' sites on the island. Its route is clearly shown on Norden's map of Essex of 1594 and it is mentioned in passing by most of the subsequent Essex topographers. Morant's description of Foulness, for example, noted 'eight hours in twelve there is passage for a horse to Wakering.' Until the building of the Havengore bridge in the 1920s it was the only way of getting to Foulness, other than by boat. Unlike the Morecombe Bay tidal path whose route varies from season to season, the route of the Broomway does not appear to have changed significantly, supposedly due to a ridge of chalk just beneath the sand. However this explanation is probably not correct as the chalk underlying Essex does not run on the same NE-SW orientation

as the path. ECC's Essex Aerial Mapping Project in 1995 showed that the Broomway was less conspicuous than in earlier photos, probably due to shifting sand.

In 1907 the Essex Field Club outing travelled from Fisherman's Head to Wakering Stairs in a four wheeled vehicle pulled by a horse. A contemporary photograph shows the Broomway looking as well defined as an arterial road, vanishing into the distance over the sands. The route fell into disuse after the construction of the Havengore bridge but played a vital part in the aftermath of the 1953 floods when the road to the bridge was completely blocked by debris. On 6 February a fleet of 24 cattle lorries carried large numbers of stranded livestock along the Broomway to safety on the mainland. Though the route is no longer marked by brooms, or clearly defined by regular usage, it is still possible to walk its full length, though it must never be tackled without an experienced guide, or in uncertain weather or tide, or on weekdays when the army is firing shells over the Maplin sands. The times and dates of organized walks can be found on the web.

Michael Leach

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Information from Ken Newman

The Mersea Barrow **1912-2012**

For nearly two thousand years, the Mersea Barrow, an earthen tumulus over twenty feet high, has silently guarded the northern shores of Mersea Island. Even today, many visitors (and some residents) driving past on the East Mersea Road are unaware of the existence of this significant ancient monument. Long a focus of blood-curdling legends and unanswered questions, it was not until a century ago that the barrow was first opened and its contents brought out into the light of day. The excavator was Samuel Hazzledine Warren, a noted geologist and paleontologist, engaged by the short-lived Morant Club to investigate one of the more conspicuous burial mounds still surviving in Essex.

On 16th April, 1912, Warren arrived from his home in Loughton to begin the excavation. The Morant Club had granted funding of £52 to pay four workmen, on loan from Colchester Corporation, to dig a trench six feet wide from the eastern

side into the centre of the barrow, and a shaft twelve feet square from the summit of the mound down to the original ground level. For several weeks Warren stayed at a nearby temperance boarding house, spending every day working on the excavation, keeping meticulous records and sending frequent progress reports to the curator of Colchester Museum, Arthur G Wright.

Returning to Mersea on 21st May after a break caused by a family crisis, Warren eagerly resumed his search, which had now reached ground level beneath the presumed centre of the mound. Nothing could be seen at this point apart from red staining and fragments of Roman tile in the western wall of the shaft, so the tunnel was continued for a further five feet in that direction. The following day brought the long-awaited sounds of the workmen's tools striking something solid. Immediately, Warren gave the order to cease work while he hastened to the West Mersea Post Office to send urgent telegrams to Arthur Wright and to Dr Henry Laver, President of the Morant Club: 'Found small built structure wait opening tomorrow.'

On Wednesday 22nd May 1912, in front of a crowd of dignitaries and local people, Warren solemnly broke into the structure, which was built entirely of Roman roof tiles, sealed by a mysterious 'red layer' and with no apparent opening. In the words of his excavation report, published the following year: 'It was a great day for the inhabitants of Mersea Island, to see the secrets of their barrow, which had for so many generations exercised



their wonder and speculation, at last revealed.'

And what were those long-buried secrets? As the first tiles were removed from one side of the structure, Warren inserted a candle through the gap to glimpse what looked like a square lead box, covered by a makeshift lid of two wooden boards, contained within a cavity inside the tomb. As one side of the enclosing wall was removed, Warren lifted off the boards to reveal, inside the lead casket, a sea-green globular glass bowl, in which could be seen a large number of partially burnt bones. This was final resting place of a significant individual who had lived on Mersea Island in the first century AD, and whose cremated bones had lain under the great barrow, unknown and undisturbed, for nearly two thousand years.

This year marks the centenary of the excavation of the Mersea Barrow, celebrated by the publication of a new 78-page booklet, 'Secrets of the Mound: Mersea Barrow 1912-2012', and the return to Mersea of the contents of the Barrow for the first time since they were taken to Colchester Museum within days of their discovery. Now forming the centrepiece of Mersea Island Museum's summer exhibition, the Roman casket and glass cremation urn can be seen until September 30th, on temporary loan from Colchester Museum. Meanwhile fund-raising is in progress to have the bones analysed by professional osteo-archaeologists, so that it may be possible to establish the age group and/or sex of the person in whose

honour this great tumulus was raised. And if the remains were to provide any clues as to the cultural or genetic background of this presumably 'Roman' individual, that would indeed be an added bonus.

Mersea Island Museum is open each Wednesday to Sunday (plus Bank Holiday Mondays) from 2 - 5 pm, until 30th September. For further information, to purchase the booklet or to arrange a visit inside the Mersea Barrow, see the museum's website at <http://www.merseamuseum.org.uk>, or telephone 01206 385191 during opening hours.

Sue Howlett

A searcher for hid treasures

On 27 June 1891 the *Essex Standard* reported 'The Essex Archaeological Society, until quite recently, paid a man to search for hid treasures in the way of Roman antiquities in Colchester, but the Society has, I suppose from "that eternal lack of pence which often vexes public men" been obliged to desist from that excellent work.'

Though the accounts presented at the August 1891 AGM showed a respectable surplus (just over £13 on a total income of £77-7-6d.) a Council meeting 3 months earlier had resolved that 'in view of the state of the funds of the Society, in future no carriage or luncheon tickets be supplied, except to Members and their friends on payment for the same, and that the Secretary be requested not to

order any advertisements of Meetings in the local newspapers.' The searcher for 'hid treasures' is not mentioned in any of the printed reports of Council meetings, but he was probably the Mr Jarmin whose salary of £15 is recorded in the accounts for the financial year 1890/1. His name does not appear in next set of accounts which showed a small deficit of 8s.

Who was Mr Jarmin? If he was the 'searcher for hid treasures', how did he carry out his quest and did he make any useful discoveries while he was employed by the Society?

Michael Leach

A quest for early volumes of the Society's Transactions

At a general meeting of the Essex Archaeological Society on 30 July 1874 Captain F C Brooke of Woodbridge, Suffolk, was elected a member of the Society. His grangerised copy of volume 1 of the new series contains a series of letters concerning his search for the five volumes of the first series. The compilation also included notices of the Society's excursions, the annual subscription requests from the Society's collector, Josiah Parish, and the relevant receipts that were issued after payment. Even the envelopes, in which some of these were sent, were pasted in, and his neatly written errata notes were bound into the main body of the text. Brooke was a prodigious collector of other archaeological journals, including those of our sister

societies in Kent, Surrey, Sussex and London & Middlesex; he was also a book collector, being client of J. Read, the Ipswich bookseller, who offered him Ogborne's *History of Essex* ('very rare') at 25s. and Dawson Turner's *Sepulchral Reminiscences of a Market Town* for 10s.

The collection of letters shows that Brooke had been trying to acquire a set of the first series of the Transactions in 1872, but his efforts were stepped up after the disastrous fire in the early hours of 10 December 1873 which destroyed the Society's entire stock at the High Street printing works of Benham & Harrison. One letter noted 'but for the military, and the wind being in the right quarter, the whole High Street would have been consumed'. All the woodcut blocks, plates and 'the Society's MSS' were destroyed, together with all remaining copies of Wright's *History of Essex*. J H Marsden's account of the collection of Greek and Roman sculpture at Felix Hall, published by the Society in 1863, was also consumed. The fire put an end to the Society's plan to reprint volume i, part 1, presumably because the lost blocks and plates would have been prohibitively expensive to replace.

In the following April Josiah Parish agreed to sell Brooke his own copy of volume v part 4 for 6s. (published price 4s.) and soon after sold him a copy of volume 1 part 1 (soiled and lacking a cover) for the princely sum of 30s. Having collected all the parts of the first series, as well as two volumes of the second series, he had them elegantly bound in green leather, interleaved with neat hand-



written errata notes and the ephemera already described.

Michael Leach

Source: Capt F C Brooke's grangerised copies of *EAT*, ns, i & ii

Stow Maries Aerodrome

Twenty-four ex farm buildings and a flying field achieved Grade II* listing status in May 2012, just days before the Society's visit to the site (on 19 May). Stow Maries Aerodrome is the only intact First World War built site in the country. Its present owners took on the farm in 2007 and with a band of some fifty volunteers are in the process of restoring the buildings: the ninth is in progress. The Turner family occupied the land between 1914 and 2007, except during the gap when used for military activity. During the First World War the aerodrome was used by 37 (Home Defence) Squadron, which also operated from Goldhanger and Rochford (now London Southend airport). Their courage and bravery is remembered in the presence of a new War Memorial on the site commemorating those who died in the cause of defending their country using very basic aeroplanes and navigational aids. The remote site is a haven for wildlife and the owners are keen to develop conservation projects alongside the restoration of the buildings. The new owners gave Society members a magnificent tour and thanked the Society for a

donation made last year towards the memorial.

Andrew Smith

Colchester Museum catalogue

When I was gathering information about Charlotte Fell Smith for the introduction to the second index, I came across a reference suggesting that she had compiled a catalogue of the contents of the Colchester Museum. Though an extremely able person, it seemed unlikely that she would have had the necessary archaeological expertise for this task, and she was far too responsible a historian to tackle something for which she was ill equipped. Enquiries at the museum failed to provide any evidence that she had made such a catalogue.

In 1897 she wrote an article in *Essex Review* about Colchester Museum; this was to be the first of a series of articles on local museums, and in it she indicated that she had spent some time looking at the artefacts. It was perhaps this comment which led to the misunderstanding about her compilation of a catalogue. But in this article she noted "the writer of these lines cannot pretend to any scientific knowledge whatever of antiquities. She only proposes to give a passing sketch of some of the most interesting features of this collection, as during a short period spent in daily contact with its relics of the past, the customs, manners, actions of our

predecessors were vividly set before her.”

With characteristic integrity, she knew and acknowledged her limitations. However she did allow herself to be critical of the impractical system used in the existing manuscript catalogue, prepared many years earlier. She wryly noted “Mr Price, the expert employed, however, fell so completely under the spell of Rome in his work, that he numbered everything in Roman numerals, which, when he reached the high figure of 1,488, amounted to no less than thirteen letters, thus, MCCCLXXXVIII. This appalling array has succeeded in almost obscuring the article so enumerated, especially if it be small.”

Michael Leach

Source: Fell Smith, C, 1897 ‘Local Museums 1 – Colchester’ in *Essex Review*, vi, 81-86

Rebuilding at Skreens, Roxwell in 1699

This house had been demolished by the time that the relevant volume of the Essex RCHM was published in 1921, but an extract from Sir John Bramston’s autobiography provides a little insight into the repairs and improvements which took place in 1699.

‘My sonn doubting a rome which we called the Low Parlor was in dainger of falling, and would indainger the dyning rome, which also seemed to have slipped from the maine posts, by reason some cracks

were in the ceiling, he resolved to take down all that end from the stairs, and rebuild a handsome parlor where the old was, of brick; and because that would not shew well, being brick alone, he took downe the wall of all the rest of the house next to the garden, and made it of brick also. But the new building being built higher-roof’d then the old, (as indeed it ought to be), some eye-sores there are; but who considers the difficultie of joyning the new and old worke will pardon some blunders. He agreed with his workers at a summ certain, and undertook to find brick and timber whatsoever wanted more than the old, which beinge very large and stronge there wanted little new; and the 28th of March 1699, the workmen began to untile over the dininge rome. My sonn made all the bricks, and burnt them with fagotts, tho’ not in a killn, and fetcht all his lime from Stifford. The carpenters and joyners, and the bricklayers, were all Londoners; the carpenters and joyners dieted at the house; the bricklayers, and their laborers, lodged, but did not diet, at the house.’

There are two other brief references to the rebuilding. On 12 May, Sir John, in his 88th year, had to move to another room when the workmen began to pull down the windows and walls of his ‘lodging’. And on 24 August he complained ‘that our house was full of noyce, durt, and dust, and we were cooped up and scanted for rome.’ Six months later, he was dead.

The fact that the earlier house was entirely of timber construction had been of some legal significance. It was suggested in 1663 that Sir John



was a covert Papist and that he had sworn allegiance to the Pope and taken the sacrament at Skreens in May of that year, an event which Ferdinando Massedo, a Portugese gentleman of dubious probity, claimed to have witnessed. Massedo's statement described Skreens as built of brick and stone, an understandable mistake for a foreigner, perhaps, but one which cast doubt on his testimony. Sir John was asked what his house was built of. 'I told him timber; that, besides the underpinning, chimnies, and walls about the garden, there was not any brick about my house, and not any stone but my kitchins and hall floors.' There was additional (and more substantial) exoneration; Sir John was able to show that, on the two dates when Massedo claimed to have been at Skreens, he himself was out of the county.

There are several interesting points about the rebuilding. Brick was the newly fashionable material for gentry houses, and Sir John's son was keen to show it off on the garden front of the house, going to considerable inconvenience to achieve this while still living in the house. It is highly improbable that he made the bricks himself; these would have been made by an itinerant team of brickmakers and fired in a clamp. Sir John's account shows that some materials from the dismantled part of the house were saved for re-use, and that there was a certain amount of unsatisfactory fudging when it came to marrying the new roof to the old! The builders came from London, perhaps because local workmen

lacked the necessary skills. All were lodged in the house, but only the carpenters and joiners had their meals provided. Did they have a higher status than the bricklayers and labourers who, presumably, had to fend for themselves?

Michael Leach

Source: Braybrooke, Lord P, (ed) 1845 *The Autobiography of Sir John Bramston, K.B.*, Camden Society, o.s., xxxii

Snails Hall Farm, Billericay

Local historians interested in the events of the First World War will instantly recognise that Snails Hall Farm, South Green, Billericay was the location where, on the night of 23/24 September 1916, a fire-damaged enemy Zeppelin (L32) fell killing all the crew on board.

Very recently I was given for online publication an eye-witness account of John Maryon (1897-1975) whose father then occupied the farm. In September 1916 John, who had been in training for military service, was discharged from hospital having had rheumatic fever. His bed was needed for the injured from the Battle of the Somme.

"I was given 5 days' draft leave, which I spent at home. During the weekend a Zeppelin was brought down and the debris fell into one of our fields. There were the [entire] crew of 26 men (all dead and mostly burned). They were put in our

adjacent barn, with a lane running hard by. It was here I saw a disgraceful scene. Thousands of people had come down by all means of transport, and they were standing 5 deep in the lane outside the barn, wherein lay the German dead. The front rank had torn the boards off the barn to get a better view and a brisk trade started with the R.A.M.C. and the sightseers for parts of the airmen's furlined clothing. This was being cut off by the orderlies laying out the dead, in exchange for money. My father had about 4 acres of potatoes, which were overrun and looted, and 9 acres of barley trodden flat, and for the remaining year of my father's lease, he was mending fences to keep his cattle in. Long after the war, he received a derisory sum in compensation from the government.

"And the next week I went to France on my nineteenth birthday, hardly recovered from my crippling illness ...". He spent a year away, fighting at Passchendaele.

"I returned from this to my home in Billericay, to find my father was out of his farm, it having been sold over his head, with vacant possession. In fact he had notice to terminate his year lease soon after the farm had become a shambles from German aircraft and attendant crowds the year previously."

The events of the war, and the experience of his father, shaped John Maryon's life. His account 'The Political Conversion of John Maryon' can be read in full online.

Andrew Smith

A proposal to hide Charles I in Essex

In August 1647 Charles I was confined at Hampton Court while unsuccessful attempts were being made to bring about a reconciliation between him and Parliament. Anthony Wood's account shows that his supporters, alarmed by the tone of the Putney debates in October 1647, were anxious to expedite his escape from London, and one of those involved in these plans was Lady Jane Whorwood. In Wood's words:

'...shee went to William Lillie the Astronomer living in the Strand within the Libertie of Westminster to receive his judgement about it, that is to say in what quarter of the nation he might be most safe and not be discovered till himself pleased. When she came to his dore, Lilly told her he could not let her come in, for he had buried a Maid-servant of the plague very lately – *I fear not plague but the pox*, saith shee. So he let her in and went up staires. After Lillie had erected his Figure, he told her that about 20 miles from London and in Essex, he was certain that the King might continue undiscovered. Shee liked his judgement very well, and being herself of a sharp judgement, remembered a place in Essex, about that distance, where there was an excellent House and all conveniences for his reception &c.'

Though Lady Jane went to Hampton Court the next morning, she was unable to persuade the King to accept this advice (though other accounts suggest that the king had already left); he chose instead to



escape to Hampshire and to put himself in the hands of the Governor of the Isle of Wight, who put him into protective custody in Carisbrooke Castle. Lady Jane continued to seek means of securing the king's liberty

William Lilley was a well-known astrologer with a large clientele, and the 'erecting of his Figure' was part of his conjuration to predict a satisfactory outcome to the king's flight. According to Wood, he received £20 in gold for this and other advice. While confined at Carisbrook the king, again through the agency of Lady Jane, sought Lilley's opinion about whether to sign the propositions sent to him by Parliament. Though Lilley's conjurations were in favour, once more the king ignored the opinion that he had requested.

It would be interesting to know which Essex house Lady Jane had in mind as a refuge, and whether, had the king had taken this advice, he would have been safe as Lilley had predicted in this strongly Parliamentary county. None of Lady Jane's immediate relations appear to have resided in Essex.

Michael Leach

Source: Kiessling N K (ed), 2009 *The Life of Anthony Wood in his own Words*, Bodleian Library

Acute oak decline (AOD)

As if the natural world does not have enough natural threats to its survival, a new disease has appeared

to threaten the native oak, both the sessile and the pedunculate types. Its cause and mode of transmission are at present unknown. It is particularly visible on affected trees in the spring with vertical splits appearing in the bark of the trunk. These splits weep a dark sticky fluid, and the tree's canopy begins to thin and die. Complete death of the tree may take five years or more. The disease often appears to be associated with the wood boring beetle, *Agrilus biguttatus*, but it is thought that this is an opportunist invader rather than the carrier of the disease. There is no known treatment and it is not clear how virulent the disease will prove to be. More information can be found on the Forestry Commission website at www.forestry.gov.uk/website/forestresearch.nsf/ByUnique/INFD-7UL9NQ. Anyone noting a tree with signs of the disease is encouraged to record its position with a six or eight figure grid reference, to take a photograph, and to report its location to emailrecords@essexwt.org.uk. Affected trees have already been found around Colchester, Danbury and in other parts of Essex.

Michael Leach

Changing ideas about the evolution of Homo sapiens

Recent scientific developments, including the understanding of the DNA sequences that determine the characteristics of individuals and their inheritance, have revolutionised

thinking about the origins of early humans. There is a better understanding of the limitations of radio-carbon (C^{14}) dating which becomes very much less reliable at the earliest point of its chronology, as well as significantly vulnerable to errors due to contamination. The fragment of a human jaw found at Kent's Cavern, Torquay, illustrates this. In 1988, C^{14} measurements dated this to 30,900 (plus or minus 900) years before the present but this measurement has proved to be flawed. When originally conserved in the 1920s, a collagen based glue had been used to stabilise the teeth in the maxilla, introducing significant amounts of modern C^{14} . Technology now exists which can remove later contamination but it was not possible to use this technique on this fragment. However considerable numbers of animal bones had been found in the adjoining strata and the new technique applied to these made it possible to establish a date spectrum across the level in which the human fragment was found, dating it to between 41,000 and 44,000 years before the present, a period when Neanderthal man was still present in Europe. Although insufficient quantities of DNA could be extracted, computerised tomography of the teeth was able to show that, of the 20 dental traits analysed, 13 were similar to those of modern humans. No teeth from a Neanderthal would show as many 'modern' characteristics, so there is little doubt that the Kent's Cavern fragment came from Homo sapiens. There is increasing evidence from other sites in Europe that Neanderthal man and Homo sapiens

co-existed, probably for several thousand years after the latter's migration northwards from Africa. Indeed DNA and other evidence suggest that there was some interbreeding between the two, as well as exchanges of cultural ideas.

So the old idea that Neanderthal was an evolutionary dead end, nasty, brutish and primitive, and rapidly replaced by modern man, is almost certainly incorrect. How Neanderthal became extinct is an unanswered question, but one pessimistic suggestion is that it was an early example of Homo sapiens' enthusiasm for ethnic cleansing.

Michael Leach

Source: Stringer, C & Douka, K 2011 'Dating Europe's oldest modern humans' in *Archaeology* no: 122

Possible pillow mounds on Danbury Common

Recent clearance by the National Trust to enhance the heathland habitat has exposed what may be two pillow mounds, roughly 4m by 2m by ½ m high. The area is difficult to interpret as it is peppered with pits from small-scale gravel extraction in the past, and the mounds appear to be outside what may be part of an old boundary bank marked by a line of coppiced hornbeams. The picture is further confused by the NT's use of a bulldozer to push brash and topsoil to the edge of the existing woodland. Such an area of gravelly heathland of poor fertility would certainly be a prime site for rabbit cultivation, and a



possible descendant of the former denizens was noted hopping off into the undergrowth when I visited. The site is about 280m due north of the junction of Bicknacre and Gay Bowers roads and I am very grateful to Adrian Gascoyne for drawing it to my attention.

Michael Leach

Book Reviews

Stour Valley Railway Part 2 Through Time: Clare to Shelford & Audley End. Andy T Willis. (Amberley Publishing, 2011). ISBN 978-1-4456-0473-2. 96 pages, Illustrated. £14.99

Before the Beeching axe was wielded in the 1960s the Stour Valley railway, completed in 1865, ran from Marks Tey to Shelford and Audley End via Bartlow. This book, the second in the series, covers many locations outside the historic county of Essex. It provides a collection of comparative photographs in 'then and now' variety, for example showing the survival of station buildings at Saffron Walden. Ashdon Halt was no more than a platform with old railway carriage providing shelter. The decayed remains remain. The branch platform building of the branch line at Audley End is now a coffee shop, near the grand mainline station which is unaltered over the passage of time. It is a record of surviving standard design Great Eastern Railway country stations, overgrown areas (Bartlow), a Tesco building (Haverhill North) and dual carriageway (Pampisford). Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

The supporting text includes a narrative of the rolling stock employed. A one page introduction provides historical context.

Harwich Lifeboats. An **illustrated history.** Nicholas Leach. (Amberley Publishing, 2011). ISBN 978-1-84868-876-6. 192 pages, 150 illustrations. £16.99

Nicholas Leach is author of *Ships Monthly* and an authority on the history of the Royal National Lifeboat Institution. This book contains an immense amount of detail about Harwich's many lifeboats: the craft employed and people deployed. The Appendices provide a list of the help given to those in peril along the coastline and river estuaries. One for the enthusiast.

Andrew Smith

2012 Plume Lecture

The Trustees of Thomas Plume's Library are pleased to announce that the 2012 Plume Lecture *The Libraries of the National Trust* will be given by Mark Purcell, Libraries Curator, the National Trust.

It will take place on Saturday **10th November 2012** at 7.30 pm in the United Reformed Church, Market Hill, Maldon, CM9 8PZ.

There is no entry charge and advance booking is not necessary.

MEMBERSHIP - Subscriptions due on January 1st each year

Single Member - £20

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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

2011 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £50,018

Donations payable to: The Essex Society for Archaeology and History

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Donations of acceptable books

Please address enquiries to: Bill Abbott, 13 Sovereign Crescent, Lexden Road, Colchester C03 3UZ.

Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail bill.abbott@btinternet.com

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. John Hayward

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS

Saturday afternoon 15th September - visit to **Wivenhoe** for a walk and talk and a visit to the **Nottage Museum**. Max 30. Meet at 2pm. Cost £5.00, including refreshments.

Wivenhoe is a village situated on the River Colne with a history steeped in fishing and smuggling. It's a favourite place for artists. The Nottage is a museum, but also a place to learn boat building and maritime skills.

Sunday midday 14th October - the **Morant lunch** at The Old Moot House, Castle Hedingham. 12.30 for 1pm. Cost £25.00. Bookings with payment to be made by 14th September.

Further details of all events are available from the Excursions Secretary, Mr Graham Gould, 16 Osborne Road, Leyton, E10 5QW (0208 556 1423). **If you are interested in any of these events must please contact Graham Gould to check availability**

Please note the visits on the Society's programme are open to members and associate members only.

NON SOCIETY EVENTS OPEN TO EVERYONE

Essex Record Office Discovery Day

8 September 2012, 10am-4pm

Find out what the Essex Record Office does at this special 'ERO Discovery Day'. Meet the archivists, public service team and conservators, see behind-the-scenes and learn about how the ERO can help you with family, house or local history research. There will be tours of the Record Office, taking in the Searchroom, repositories, and some of our 'treasures' documents, and tours of the Conservation Studio, each lasting approximately 45 minutes. There will also be a keynote speech from Dr Nick Barratt, specialist archive researcher and television presenter, who will be speaking about the continuing importance of archives in the digital age. There will also be an ERO Helpdesk, where people can bring their enquiries to our expert staff, an ERO Education Desk for people to find out about the work of the Heritage Education Unit, and a local history marketplace with stalls from our local Community Archives.

General Tours 10.30, 11.30, 12.30, 14.00 & 15.00; Conservation Tours 11.30, 12.30, 14.00 & 15.00; Talk 13.30-14.15

All events are free. Places on the tours and at the talk will be on a first-come-first-served basis, and can be pre-booked by ringing 01245 244620.

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2012



The Essex Society for Archaeology & History

FORMERLY THE ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1852

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contributors and not necessarily those of the Society or its officers.

The illustration on the front cover is a photograph by Andy Barham
of Beeleigh Abbey, Maldon, Essex

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From the President

On Sunday 14th October 2012 a select gathering of members of the Society met in the hospitable 15th century, Grade II listed premises of the Old Moot House at Castle Hedingham to enjoy one another's company and the annual Morant Lunch. Such an important occasion, named in honour of our county's premier historian, requires your president to bring with him the great man's portrait, which is entrusted to him on entering office together with the recent grant of arms (2010) and the presidential badge, made at the centenary in 1952 by F. Newland Smith to the design of Kenneth Mabbitt FSA (President 1967-70).

As it happened, there was no after-dinner speaker on this occasion, so I found myself briefly explaining the background to our portrait of the Reverend Philip Morant MA, FSA. Only a few weeks previously, while researching a completely different subject at the Museum Resource Centre next to Colchester Castle, I had come across probably the only known photograph of the man who was responsible for our portrait, which is itself a photograph.

The original portrait in

oil, despite appearing at first glance to be contemporary with its subject, is actually only 110 years old. Like many others, it was specially painted for Colchester's Town Hall, which was officially opened by the Earl of Rosebery in May 1902. It still hangs there in the Grand Jury Room, next to the Mayor's Parlour, on the first floor, the gift of Mr and Mrs P. R. Green.

What may not be generally realised is that this portrait was not even copied from an original painting long since lost or destroyed. It was in fact concocted on the basis of a pencil sketch preserved in the Hills-Astle collection with certain additional details supplied by Sir William Gurney Benham Kt, JP, FSA, FRHistS.

Other portraits by the same local artist, Charles Head (1850-1926), are of Benjamin Revett Cant, eminent Colchester rosarian, the Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould (1834-1924), famous hymn-writer and author, who was Rector of East Mersea (1871-1881), Charles Henry Hawkins JP, Mayor of Colchester four times (1848, 1865, 1870 and 1871) and William Mason (d.1802), Mayor of Colchester (1796-1797). All the paintings, busts and historic artefacts adorning this Grade I listed civic building have been



catalogued as part of the Borough's Museum collection.

As to who was responsible for the photograph used in our framed portrait of Philip Morant, this was Ernest Noah Mason at whose early death on 30th April 1914, aged only 46, it was acknowledged that "the Society has lost one of its most energetic and indefatigable workers._ For 10 years or so previously he had been devoting his time, efforts and resources to acquiring "anything and everything relating to the past history of Colchester._ He amassed an enormous collection of photographs of people, buildings and events for the purpose of illustrating his 'Colchester Historical Record._

This ambitious project was inaugurated by the Mayor, Cllr E Alex Blaxill, on 5th March 1910 at the Town Hall with a reception attended by more than 300 people who were treated to a full programme of events including inspection of the building, a special exhibition in the Council Chamber and other rooms, afternoon tea, an organ recital, lectures "illustrated by lantern_ and plenty of time for "Comments by Mr L Worthington Evans MP and other gentlemen._

Just 3 days earlier a letter of enquiry was sent by the outgoing MP, Sir Weetman Pearson, to Lord Knollys, Private Secretary to King Edward VII, asking if the work might be styled the Colchester Royal Historical Record. This was laid before His Majesty and by royal command forwarded to the Home Secretary, whose advice was needed for the privilege to be granted. However, it was not forthcoming although the reply from the Home Office asked "that you will be so good as to bring to the notice of all concerned in the undertaking the fact that the King has desired Mr Churchill to express His Majesty's appreciation of, and interest in, the work._ A further letter then came from Buckingham Palace advising that "The King will have much pleasure in accepting a copy for the Royal Library at Windsor.

Enthusiastic support was received both from individuals and in the Press. In 1912, with over 120 subscribers already committed, a prospectus and order form were published stating a proposed limit of 350 sets of 4 volumes at £5:5s per set. However, by 1914 Ernest Mason "had long been suffering from a mysterious illness._ In spite

of this he managed to superintend the Morant Club's excavations at the Balkerne Gate "with all his accustomed energy and thoroughness almost up to the time of his death. (Captain R E M Wheeler completed the work in 1917.)

Although the Historical Record was sadly never completed, a large number of notes, completed sections, printed request forms and replies and other relevant documents, mainly compiled through the diligent researches of Mrs Bertha Mason, were passed in due course to Colchester Central Library, where they are today housed with later material among the general files of the Local Studies Library. Some of this is archival, like the printed postcard signed by Captain H E (Ted) Laver in agreement with a proposed increase from 200 to 350 sets and confirming his support. His address was given simply as Shanghai and the card, dated 12th March 1912, arrived safely in Colchester having been posted with a Hong Kong 4 cents stamp and marked "Via Siberia. Perhaps now that 100 years have passed it is time for a reappraisal of where some of this material should be kept.

Ernest Mason's extensive photographic archive survives as a highly

significant legacy accessible to all in the Colchester Museum Resource Centre. Of his 3 sons Bernard Mason is best known for his philanthropic work and generous support of local organisations. When he and his wife Evelyn left Colchester in 1979 to live in Devon, Tymperleys was handed over to Colchester Borough Council while his large collection of Colchester clocks was received into the Colchester Museum collection. Also left was a cleverly constructed wooden cabinet containing ring-bound files in which the carefully catalogued prints of his father's photographs were stored. It was here that I came across a photograph of Ernest Mason that I had not seen for many years and whose full significance I had not realised until recently. Taken in 1900, it shows Ernest Mason standing beside Philip Morant's grave in the old churchyard at Aldham, although the burial when made had actually been placed in the chancel of the original church (now demolished).

The Morant gravestone was transferred in 1966 to the chancel of the present church where it and a memorial tablet were unveiled and dedicated by the Rt. Revd. Roderic N Coote, Bishop of Colchester,



in the presence of the Lord Lieutenant of Essex, Col. Sir John Ruggles-Brise, and the President (Sir William Addison), Officers and Members of the Society and others, on Tuesday, 15th March.

Like many of later generations Ernest Mason had been paying his respects to the man who was the inspiration for his own historical endeavours, which had just begun. His prospectus refers to Morant's History of Colchester (1748). It so happens that 2013 is the 250th anniversary of Philip Morant beginning to publish in instalments his volumes on The History and Antiquities of the County of Essex (1763 to 1768).

The next Morant Lunch will be the tenth since taking over from the more formal Morant Dinner. It will be held at Mulberry House, High Ongar, on Sunday, 6th September 2013, which is Philip Morant's birthday. I hope that members of the Society will put this date firmly their diaries and that as many as possible will be able enjoy celebrating his continuing influence on the Archaeology and History of Essex in this congenial way.

G. Mark R. Davies

An Appeal from the Secretary

A recent request from a school revealed a shortcoming. We were asked to provide someone to speak on a local history theme and to lead an assembly for a primary school. If any member has experience in this area and would be prepared to represent the Society it would be very much appreciated if they would contact the Secretary. The fact that we have not been asked for this service before suggests that we are unlikely to have to make frequent use of any volunteers but it would reflect well on us if we can provide this sort of assistance.

More generally, the Council would like to raise the profile of the Society but if we are to do this we will need to call upon the membership for assistance. It would be particularly useful if anyone who might be able to spare a few hours to help staff events such as the recent Essex Record Office open day were to make themselves known. It is not envisaged that this would involve excessive or onerous demands and it can be an interesting way of spending an afternoon. I f

we could do more at public events It would be of great value in promoting the work of the Society, increasing its influence and membership. Anyone who wishes to respond should let me know. It would be very much appreciated.

John Hayward
johnzhayward@yahoo.co.uk

AV: William Byrd, **Stondon Massey and the** **Authorised Version of** **the Bible**

An essay written for the 'William Byrd Festival' held in May 2011 at St Peter & St Paul Church, Stondon Massey.

When Kerry McCarthy gave a lecture recently to guests at Sidney Sussex College in Cambridge she said that William Byrd (c1540 - 1623) set none of his music to the text of the King James Version of the Bible. The lecture was given in celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Bible's publication.

Kerry McCarthy is an influential authority on Stondon Massey's great composer, an Associate Professor of Duke University in the United States, and prime mover and shaker of the Byrd Festival in Portland, Oregon.

Thinking somewhat laterally, it seems to almost state the obvious that William Byrd would disregard the 'new' Anglican Bible of 1611. Byrd was an ardent recusant Catholic living

in semi-retirement at Stondon Place in the quiet village of Stondon Massey in Essex. Four hundred years ago he had just published an entire edition of two cycles of Gradualia: illegal settings of Masses for the complete liturgical year to be sung in secret by 'papist sympathisers' at such places as Ingatestone Hall, the home of the Petre family, Byrd's patrons. The year 1611 also marked the final publication of the composer's work. Here was a man of at least three score and ten years who probably could not be bothered with the new-fangled version of the Bible.

The origin of the King James Version of the Bible is admirably covered in Derek Wilson's new book, 'The People's Bible' (2010). He tells the story of how churchman of various persuasions, mainstream Anglicans and Puritans, in 1604 flattered King James I into the creation of a unifying work bearing his name. Over six years six teams of scholars in Westminster, Cambridge and Oxford toiled over existing English language translations to create, as a Committee, a definitive work for its time.

Derek Wilson devotes the first seventy pages of his two hundred page book to those Bibles which had already translated and printed in English during the sixteenth century. Among those was the illegally imported translation by Tyndale, which cost him his life in 1536. Ironically only three years later King Henry VIII decreed that another translation, the Great Bible, be made available in all churches up and down the land. The Geneva Bible was published abroad in 1560; the Bishops



Bible of 1568 followed which omitted controversial margin notes of the Geneva Bible; and the Rheims Bible published in the Low Countries in 1582. The Douai-Rheims Bible was the fruit of an English College, founded by William Allen, an exiled Jesuit biblical scholar, completed by Gregory Martin.

Byrd's religious sympathies must have been towards the Rheims Bible, a 'Catholic translation' probably used covertly during the services at Ingestone Hall. We need only think too of Byrd's reaction to the martyrdom of Edmund Campion in Byrd's motet, 'Why Do I Use My Paper Ink and Pen', and known friendship with Father Henry Garnett who was later arrested and hung in connection with the Gunpowder Plot of 1605 because he had heard, in a confessional, the plans of the conspirators. Garnett was a marked man. Throughout his trial was referred to as "Mr Garnett" because the authorities did not recognise his Jesuit priesthood.

1605 and 1607 were the years of publication of Byrd's two books of Gradualia. This illustrates the dangerous path Byrd trod.

Byrd's frequent naming before the Essex Archdeaconry Court by the parson and churchwardens of Stondon Massey for non-attendance at St Peter & St Paul Church, coupled with heavy fines, is further illustration of his refusal to embrace the established church. What is interesting is his wife, who died c1606, was consistently named Ellen and not Juliana. Byrd biographer John Harley (1997) suggests this was the same

person. We can deduce that whilst Byrd was not known in his immediate local community he moved nonetheless in influential circles and avoided the penalties associated with blatant Catholicism, that of imprisonment, confiscation of property and death. Nowhere could the Catholic mass be legally celebrated.

There is, perhaps, another reason why Byrd did not use the Authorised Version of the Bible. Derek Wilson points out that although the research was completed in 1610, the work itself was hurriedly proof-read; compiled for publication and printed the following year. The finished work was littered with errors and despite stringent efforts to ensure that the King James Version was the only Bible produced in England, copies of the Geneva Bible continued to be imported until the 1640s. In the early days the Authorised Version was hardly a roaring success, but its monopoly, and corrections, ensured its longevity.

The King James Bible was intended to be read out aloud during Divine Worship. Even today its seventeenth century text seems to work through being heard. The success of the King James Version was due to an accident of history. It became the vogue in seventeenth century worship for the pulpit to take more importance than the altar. Lengthy sermons were not uncommon. At Stondon Massey we find part of a triple-decker pulpit. Reverend Reeve, a former Rector, wrote: "The pulpit in Stondon Church with the reading desk attached was

erected during [Nathaniel] Ward's incumbency, and bears the date 1630. In all probability it was introduced into the Church in response to an order from Bishop Laud, but I think we may trace Ward's handiwork also, and his personal superintendence. On the panels of the desk we find the words "Christ is All in All" the text of the famous discourse of his brother Samuel, "preacher of Ipswich", which was published in 1627, while in the pulpit is carved "2 Tim. iv. 1-2", the reference being to the words of St Paul, 'Preach the word in season and out of season', which no doubt was a favourite Apostolic injunction with the Puritan divine."

It is to the Wards that we must look for the Stondon connection and the Authorised Version. Samuel Ward, the Ipswich preacher, became Master of Sidney Sussex College in 1610. But he was also a member of the Cambridge II team of translators responsible, with others, for the Apocrypha. His brother, Nathaniel, became incumbent at Stondon Massey in 1628, and was one of the foremost Puritan preachers in Essex.

Nathaniel Ward's nemesis was William Laud, the Bishop of London who on appointment in 1628 immediately forbade the printing of the Geneva Bible. Laud is described by Wilson as "the scourge of the Puritans" and Reeve as "determined to strengthen the traditional and Catholic position of the Church of England."

Reeve takes up the story: "The Rector of Stondon was "presented" ... "for not wearing a surplice in Church for the two last years past, and that prayers were not constantly read in

Church on Wednesdaies, Fridaies and Holydaies".

"A few years later, however, the end came. The Bishop's books in the Registry of St Paul's record that on 27th Sept. 1632 Nathaniel Ward was suspended; on 30th Oct. of the same year he was excommunicated for non-obedience to the Canons, and on 16th Dec. he was deprived.

"On his expulsion from his living, Ward determined to visit the New England about which he had heard so much, and in the following year (1634) he set sail."

The book which these New England settlers took with them was the Authorised Version of the Bible. Over time wherever Britain colonised and created its Empire, wherever the atlas was coloured red, the Bible was present in the culture of each new society.

The influence of this Bible spread because of its association with the monarchy, with stability and of order in society. Melvyn Bragg, for example, lists the King James Bible in his set of essays, '12 Books That Changed The World' (2006). Shakespeare's 'The First Folio', Darwin's 'Origin of Species', Adam Smith's 'Wealth of Nations' and 'The Rule Book for Association Football' are also listed in his hall of fame. Perhaps it is an overstatement to suggest that the AV played a part in the democratic influence of England on other nations, but it is no understatement that the book had no cultural affect worldwide. It is interesting to reflect that while Britain considers AV – alternative voting – in a referendum, elsewhere in the world



there is unrest and uprising against leaders in Middle Eastern countries.

The King James Version became, certainly for over 300 years, a core work in the English language and the teaching of the English language both at home and abroad. It became part of England's literary heritage. This was both its success and long term failure. Melvyn Bragg suggests that there are some Christians who believe that only a return to regular use of the King James Version will return the nation to "the true path". Derek Wilson says that the study of the Christian faith adapts with each age and while the works of Shakespeare, a contemporary of the Bible, could not possibly be rewritten, likewise this was mistakenly felt with the King James Version.

Wilson also cites why the KJV's popularity fell into decline, pointing to the First World War, the break-up of the hierarchical society and increasing secularisation of the nation. Changes in education too meant that learning text by rote is considered out dated and that widespread use of the Bible in teaching in schools is now politically incorrect.

In the Church of England this year, strenuous efforts are being made to encourage greater personal Bible reading. Clergy say that the Bible provides moral compass for peoples' lives and the King James Version is more than a piece of towering seventeenth century literature.

Andrew Smith

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<http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/exhibitions/KJV/index.html>

Threshing for thatching straw

Wheat straw for thatching requires long undamaged stems. Modern wheat has been selected for its short straw to make it less vulnerable to wind damage, and perhaps to increase grain yield and to reduce waste as well, as straw is no longer a particularly useful harvest. Long straw wheats are still grown for thatching and mechanical harvesting minimises the damage to the straw itself. But how was damage to the long stems avoided in the past when wheat was threshed with flails on the threshing floor? One answer comes from a few loose pages of an

unidentified magazine of c1803 which describes in detail a West Country practice.

‘Many of the houses are covered with thatch, to procure which, with as little injury to the straw as possible, the wheat and rye in this district (west Devon), and, indeed, in most other parts of the West of England, are thrashed in the following singular manner. The first stage was to apply the flail lightly, or to beat it by hand across a cask, until most of the grain was extracted. Then double handfuls of straw were taken and suspended in a noose pulled tight just under the ears. The sheaflet was next combed with a long toothed rake to remove short or broken straws, and weeds. The cleaned sheaflets were made up into sheaves, and again flailed gently, or beaten by hand over the cask, to free any remaining grain. Finally the sheaves were made up into bundles of 36 pounds each, and their butts punched repeatedly on the floor until the base of the sheaf was as smooth and level as it had been cut by a knife.’

Straw prepared in this way was regarded as superior to reed for thatching, though the commentator noted that the cost in labour would probably equal the value of the end product. Was this method of preparing thatching straw ever used in Essex?

Michael Leach

Source: the unidentified & undated reference is: Rural Economy, &c., vol.i, p.181

Essex birds in 1909

Rev. John Charles Cox, in his Essex guide of 1909, included some remarks on the county's birds. He noted the marked diminution in wildfowl and the abandonment of most of the 35 decoy pounds. Only two were still being worked regularly, at the Grange and Marsh Farm, both in Tillingham. There were four heronries in the county, the largest containing about 200 nests at Birch Hall, the others being at Wanstead Park, St Osyth's Priory and Boreham House. Some of his other remarks, particularly those relating to the magpie, are surprising:

‘The raven, alas! is now only a rare autumn or winter visitor. Early in the last century it was fairly common throughout the county but it has gradually dwindled. Up to 1890 it continued to breed regularly in very small quantities among the highlands and lowlands on the coast. The magpie is almost extinct, though the jay remains fairly common. The only gull which breeds in the county, and that in small and diminishing numbers, is the black headed gull, known locally as the peewit gull. The starling in Essex, as elsewhere, is rapidly increasing; its bold piratical ways are hurtful to several species, particularly to the rapidly diminishing woodpecker which it frequently ejects from its breeding holes.’

It is interesting that marked fluctuations in bird numbers are nothing new though whether these were due to human activities or other factors is not clear. The near extinction of magpies, which had a



bad reputation for taking young birds, may have been caused by their persistent persecution by gamekeepers. There is certainly no shortage of them now, perhaps a direct result of the much reduced population of gamekeepers!

Michael Leach

Source

Cox, J C, 1909 *Essex* (Little Guides) quoted in Fell Smith, C (ed), 1911 *An Anthology of Essex*, London

The shipwreck of Greensted's stained glass

This is a curious and incomplete story. In about 1870, Jonathan Lewis of Water End Farm, Bobbingworth emigrated to Nelson in New Zealand, taking with him two small stained glass panels. According to their previous owner, they had been removed from Greensted church at least a dozen years before the Rev. Phillip Ray's major restoration of 1848. Mr Lewis's original intention had been to present the glass to a church in New Zealand but, after an exchange of letters with the Rev G. F. Barlow of Chelmsford, it was agreed that the two panels should be returned to Greensted church. The package containing the glass began its repatriation from Nelson in October 1870 on the *Challenger*. The ship sailed on a long northerly diversion to Malden Island in the mid Pacific, presumably to collect a cargo of guano which was this remote and

desolate island's only significant asset. From there it would have sailed south and rounded Cape Horn, as the Panama Canal had not yet been constructed. Unfortunately the *Challenger* failed to arrive when expected in London and, in due course, a report received from the Scilly Isles indicated that she had sunk at latitude 48N, longitude 13W, on 14 May 1871, more than seven months after leaving New Zealand. All the crew successfully abandoned the ship before she sank but her entire cargo, including the package containing the stained glass, had been lost.

Before their dispatch from New Zealand, photographs of the two panels had been sent to the Rev. G. F. Barlow. Drawings were made from these by the Chelmsford architect Wykeham Chancellor and published in the *Essex Review* in 1894. A somewhat fanciful Anglo-Saxon date had been attached to them by the New Zealand correspondent but Chancellor's opinion was that the panels were from a sixteenth century German or Flemish workshop. One contained the letters 'TE' linked by an intertwining cord with tasselled ends, the other a Tau cross overlaid with a label containing a blackletter inscription which proved difficult to decipher. This was initially read as 'Ohne Jhu, esto nucht' (derived from St John xv, 5: 'for without Me you can do nothing'), but was later interpreted as "Bone Jhu Esto mihi Jhu" ('O good Jesus, be Thou a Saviour to me').

If the coordinates of the sinking were correct, the ship foundered far

out to sea in the Atlantic and these two small panels of stained glass must be permanently lost. Whether the oral tradition of their origin in Greensted church was correct remains an open question. None of the older antiquarian descriptions of the church mention stained glass but such small panels would probably not have attracted their attention.

Michael Leach

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Crinkle crinkle walls

The earliest use of the word crinkle crinkle is 1598, according to the OED, and it is defined as 'a winding in and out; a zigzag.' It was used in this sense by John Evelyn in his disparaging description of King Henry VIII's chapel at Westminster Abbey with 'its sharp Angles, Jetties, narrow Lights, lame Statues, Lace, and other Cut-work and Crinkle Crinkle.'

At some point the word was used to describe the serpentine garden walls. They may have originated in the Low Countries where they are known as 'slange muren' (snaking walls) and the idea may have been imported to England with other Dutch influences. Though particularly associated with Norfolk and Suffolk, crinkle crinkle walls are also found in Essex and in most other counties in England. It appears that concave garden walls were first suggested in England in the mid C17 though they

may not have become widespread until a century later. Their advantage over a straight wall was the ability to retain the sun's heat, and to give protection to growing fruit particularly to early flowerers such as the pear. Later authorities, however, believed that this benefit was nullified by the wind turbulence that such walls generated. In Essex they were always built of brick, though walls of stone and cob are found in other counties. Cob walls were said to be cheaper to construct and had the added advantage that their thatched tops provided additional protection for fruit trees from late frosts. Crinkle crinkle walls are still occasionally built for decorative purposes. There is (or was) a modern version at Capel Manor, Enfield, built with straw bales, and a brick example at Clatterford End, Fyfield.

The earliest known surviving crinkle crinkle wall is said to be at Wroxall Abbey in Warwickshire. This claims a connection with Sir Christopher Wren though Gertrude Jekyll claimed that it incorporated a datestone – no longer discernible - of 1789. It differs somewhat in design from other examples and consists of a line of semicircular walls (with all the concave sides facing in the same direction), each semicircle being joined to the next by a short length of straight wall. Though the walls are in 4½ inch brickwork, they have full height buttresses on the rear face and are built on a 9 inch brick plinth.

In most crinkle crinkle garden walls, the concave and convex faces alternate, and there are no connecting straight segments, no buttresses and no plinth. The curved form gives the



wall great strength for its single brick thickness (4½ inches) in stretcher bond, and builds up to 7 feet in height were possible. Nine inch walls could be carried up to 15 feet. It has also been suggested that a serpentine wall coped better with subsidence and seasonal movement on tricky subsoils like the Essex clay. Though longer in overall length than a straight run, it was claimed to achieve a one third saving on the number of bricks required. However, setting out and construction must have been more complicated, and therefore more costly, than a straight wall so the real saving may have been less than the reduced brick consumption suggests. In general, however, crinkle crangle walls are found in town houses, manor houses and rectories, rather than mansions, so economy may have been an influential factor in their construction. It is possible that the attractive visual appearance was as important as its uncertain benefits for fruit growing.

Another variant of the crinkle crangle wall was the zigzag wall, built with triangular rather than semicircular sections, an example of which is found on three sides of a walled garden at Brentwood. This is not as visually attractive as the serpentine wall but was probably less expensive to build.

A number of examples have been identified (but mostly not yet visited) in Essex. These are Belchamp St Paul (Mulberry House); Brentwood (Middleton Hall, zigzag wall); Bocking (Dorewards Hall); Bradfield (4 miles south of St Lawrence church); Coggeshall (Holfield

Grange, haha wall); Colne Engaine (5 miles NE of Over Hall); Dengie (Dengie Manor); Great Yeldham (on the Clare road); Halstead (on Wakes Colne road); Little Bardfield (Little Bardfield Hall); Purleigh (Purleigh Hall); Tendring (Bradfield Place, ruinous); and Upminster (Stubbers) & (Upminster Court – now demolished, map evidence only). Any further information on any of these sites, and any additional ones in the county, would be greatly appreciated. Please contact me at leach1939@yahoo.co.uk or on 01277 363106.

Michael Leach

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Creation of new Essex landscape

An interesting landscape creation project is under way on Mucking marshes and the first 120 acres has recently been opened to the public by the Essex Wildlife Trust. Much of the former marshland site, which

covers 845 acres, has been used for landfill with domestic waste and, on a recent visit, shiploads of chalk were being unloaded to seal the tip. At the east end of the site the sea wall has been breached to provide mud flats to compensate for the loss of similar habitat at the Thameshaven container port, now under construction. The initial 120 acres have been covered with imported top soil and already support an impressive variety of wild flowers. When complete, the site will provide a wide range of habitats, from rough grazing to woodland, from tidal creeks to salt marsh. A new visitor centre rises like a ribbed drum from the highest part of the site and provides a spectacular 360° view of the area. It will be interesting to see how this new landscape develops over the next few years. There have already been benefits for wildlife, including the arrival of a large number of sky larks, as well as waders on the new scrape. An additional bonus is the shipping on the Thames which provides a constantly changing spectacle including (on the day of my visit) several tall ships in full sail, returning home from the Olympic gathering at Greenwich.

Essex's other landscape creation project at Wallasea Island (under the auspices of the RSPB) is also taking shape, with the importation by sea of large amounts of spoil from the eastern section of the Crossrail excavations. This too will create a varied mosaic of habitats for wildlife, a landscape greatly preferable to the featureless agricultural desert created in the aftermath of the 1953 floods. Though much of the 1500 acre island

is still inaccessible, the public footpath along the northern sea wall remains open.

Michael Leach

Warreners' lodges

In medieval England rabbits were a high status delicacy, as well as a valuable source of fur, but they required careful cultivation, being a Mediterranean animal ill-adapted (at that time) to our wet and old climate. They were often provided with ready-made burrows, fed over the winter months and safely contained within a walled, banked, moated or fenced enclosure. The warrener was in charge of their cultivation and their culling, and usually lived in or very near the warren so that a close watch could be kept over his livestock. Few of these medieval lodges have survived but those that do are tall and robustly built in order to protect their valuable contents from malefactors. Thetford Forest and Mildenhall Heath are two surviving examples. The usual form is a two storey structure, often with a hearth or hearths, with the provision of upstairs living accommodation connected by a spiral stair to the ground floor, where fur and rabbit carcasses were processed and stored. Even that most fanciful triangular warren lodge, built by Sir Thomas Tresham at Rushton, Northants, followed this standard pattern.

There is one surviving example in Essex and that is the C17 brick-built one in Hatfield Forest. Though now much altered, it would seem to



conform to the usual pattern, with one room upstairs and one room down, connected by a staircase turret, and provided with a substantial chimney. Documentary evidence suggests a building date of about 1680, by which time its striking diaper patterned brickwork, as well as some of its structural carpentry, would have been distinctly old fashioned.

Another Essex warrener's lodge, belonging to Lord Petre at Thorndon Hall near Brentwood, can be visualized from an inventory of 1589 which was described in EAH News (summer 2009). It too followed the usual pattern, with a single upstairs room, with a lockable door, providing living accommodation, and two downstairs rooms. One of the latter was not lockable and contained only a table, a bin for fuel and the staircase. It seems reasonable to assume that this room was used for processing the freshly killed carcasses. The second downstairs room was secured with a lock; it contained the warrener's tools and his equipment for catching rabbits, and another bin for fuel. It was probably also used for drying and storing skins and carcasses. There is of course no clue in the inventory about its site, and there are no traces of the lodge or the warren enclosure have survived the later landscaping of the park. It would probably have been sited reasonably close to an ample supply of water, as gutting and preparing rabbits is a messy business! Nevertheless, it is interesting to find that both these Essex examples were very similar to surviving examples in other counties.

Rabbit aficionados will soon be

able to stay in a former warren lodge at Kimbolton, Cambridgeshire, now being restored by the Landmark Trust to provide holiday accommodation. This is a C16 timber framed building (with a C18 eye-catching brick facade) and it follows the standard plan of warren lodges which has been described in this note.

Michael Leach

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EAH News Summer 2009

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Book Reviews

Supermarine Spitfire. Dr Alfred Price. Ian Allen Publishing. 2010. ISBN 978 1 85780 324 2. 128 pages. £19.99

This nicely presented book in landscape form is all about the Spitfire, the iconic aircraft of the Second World War. It contains many illustrations both historic and current, but is not a coffee table book. Dr Alfred Price not only holds a PhD in History but also has extensive experience of flying so brings to the work both knowledge and feeling for the Spitfire. This is a technical book which accessibly takes the reader through all 24 variations of this machine – the use of the Rolls Royce Merlin and Griffon engines for example - and their pilots. It is

arranged chronologically beginning with its predecessors. The book has few Essex references: reference to RAF Hornchurch, Rochford and North Weald in connection with the Second World War, and the latter airfield listed as the location for two of the 23 surviving airworthy craft in the UK (47 worldwide). This is a book for those interested in military history.

By Steamer to the Essex Coast.
Andrew Gladwell. Amberley. 2012.
ISBN 978 1 4456 0376 6. 128 pages,
illustrated (with an additional 16
pages in colour). £14.99

Mention the 'Waverley' and the 'Royal Daffodil' to Essex folk of a certain age and they will wax lyrically about the golden age of the pleasure steamers which departed from Southend Pier for London or France. This book taps into this nostalgia with an illustrated history since the 1820s, highlighting the heyday of the 1920s and 1930s, through to the present day. "The evocative mix of sea air, polished brass, watching the Thames landmarks pass by, a walk along the pier and fish and chips and ice cream at Southend is still as popular as ever!" The book is illustrated with contemporary photographs, posters and postcards of London and Essex resorts. There are views aplenty of a raised Tower Bridge with steamers passing through ('Royal Sovereign' on pages 27 and 29; 'Queen of The Channel' (1963), page 31; 'Queen of The South' (1967), page 41) and of the same vessel ('Medway Queen', pages 84-87). The scenes of Southend, the mention of a Rossi Ice Cream, the

Pier through all its fires, the Peter Pan Playground will stir the timeless memories of all Essex people and visitors.

Andrew Smith

**Southend Through Time by
David C. Rayment** Amberley
publishing £14.99

Books exploring the history of a town or other locality through a selection of old photographs, are a well known publishing phenomenon, visually interesting and pleasurable to browse through. This addition to the genre surveys the recent history of Southend and includes many colour photographs of the modern town which are often evocative of the place, capturing something of its varied character.

As described in the Introduction, the book is structured as a journey through the town; starting at Prittlewell, moving south to the High Street, then east to Shoebury and back along the seafront to Leigh. That is a good way of ordering such a book, giving the reader an opportunity to grasp something of the geography of the Southend conurbation. The Introduction contains some things to make the reader wary, the second paragraph has a glaring chronological error, the Palaeolithic and Mesolithic are said to date from '...about 3000BC and 2000BC respectively.'. The purpose of the book is described as initially intended to be '...a comparison between what was and what now is.', this purpose being modified with photographs included so that it could serve as '...a mini guide to the area and to assist the



recall of visitors' happy memories...'. Unfortunately this dual purpose does not really succeed, there are insufficient before and after photographs to chart the development of the town, and not enough contemporary photographs for the book to act as a colour souvenir. Having begun with a chronological error the book ends with a geographical one, the last picture is of the Hope Hotel said to be in Leigh, in fact the Hope is not in Leigh but several miles to the east on Southend seafront. The Hope is a building of some interest in terms of the development of the town, and probably deserves rather more than the single line caption provided. The caption erroneously describes the Hope as a coaching inn, but as Pollitt (1957) points out coaches (six daily to and from London in 1821) started and terminated at the Royal Hotel, in the New or Upper Town, the Hope was part of the Old or Lower Town.

Nigel Brown

Pollitt, W. 1957 *The Rise of Southend*

Historical Association, **Essex Branch 2013**

Talks on Saturdays, 2.30pm, The Link, Trinity Methodist Church, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, CM1 2XB. Free parking at the Church or in the County Council car-park opposite.

Visitors and prospective members warmly welcomed - a £2 donation requested.

9 February Dr Rosemary Horrox, Fitzwilliam College, University of Cambridge: **'Contemporary Opinions of the Black Death'**

9 March Paula Kitching, freelance historian and educational consultant for the London Jewish Cultural Centre and the Royal British Legion: **'Nazism and the Race War'**

13 April Lorraine Evans, academic writer, researcher and broadcaster in many aspects of ancient history; academic advisor to the Sirius Project, a group of leading Egyptologists: **'Warrior Women of Northern Europe'**

11 May Professor Jackie Eales, president of the Historical Association, professor of Early Modern History, Canterbury Christ Church University: **'The Campden Wonder of 1662: the Murder and Miraculous Deliverance of William Harrison'**

For further information:
www.history.org.uk phone 07914
910612 or email
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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 2011 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £50,018

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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.

John Hayward

ESAH online profile

ESAH160 is a new blog celebrating the 160th anniversary of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History. While we discuss how to improve our website this interim blog will supplement what we currently have online by providing up-to-date information about us and about Essex history.

Take a look. Visit **www.esah160.blogspot.com**

Andrew Smith

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2013



The Essex Society for Archaeology & History

FORMERLY THE ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1852

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COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE
ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 19 JULY 2013

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

The illustration on the front cover is a photograph by Andy Barham
of Beeleigh Abbey, Maldon, Essex

From the President

Last summer, as members will remember, our Society was pleased to be able to help with the production of Tony Crosby's new 'Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of Essex.' This excellent booklet was specially commissioned to coincide with the annual conference of the Association for Industrial Archaeology being held at Writtle, an immediate consequence of which was the realisation that, unlike many counties, Essex has no recognised organisation for those who wish to follow their interest in this aspect of Archaeology.

Initial soundings were therefore made about the possible formation of a countywide specialist group for Industrial Archaeology. These indicated plenty of scope and potential interest for rectifying the omission. However, with so many archaeological and historical societies already active in the county it was generally thought preferable not to add to their number, but rather to find some other means of achieving the proposed objective.

Council has been fully supportive of this initiative put forward by Adrian Corder-Birch and others, and in March he was invited with Tony Crosby and David Morgans to attend our meeting to discuss the matter in more detail. The solution which we proposed and which has been agreed is effectively for a special sub-group of this Society to be formed with an additional committee to deal with matters relating to Industrial Archaeology. New members who join ESAH with a particular interest in the

subject will receive all the normal benefits of full or associate membership, while for existing members it is felt that there will also be a significant gain from the Society's interests and activities being developed in this way.

On Saturday 6th July 2013 a one-day conference is to be held at the Essex Record Office on the theme of 'Essex's Industrial Archaeology.' It is proposed to take advantage of the occasion to launch the new arrangements at this conference.

Volume 2 of *Essex Archaeology and History* (Series 4) was published in March 2013 and hopefully all members will have received their copies by the time this Newsletter appears. I should here mention that distribution of the Transactions has not been helped by the latest increase in the cost of postage. This has meant that even more serious consideration is having to be given as to how best we can keep delivery costs within reasonable bounds. Several members already make a valuable contribution by delivering copies to others where they can, for which we are very grateful. But more help is needed to develop the existing network. Any member who is willing to make deliveries in their own local area, or further afield, is kindly asked to contact the Secretary, John Hayward (johnzhayward@yahoo.co.uk).

This latest edition of the Transactions is the second volume in the new format and contains a well-balanced variety of 15 articles and other contributions. It is also the sixth and last volume to have been published under the editorship of Dr. Christopher Starr, who resigned from



that office at the end of December 2012, having held it since 2007. I would like to take this opportunity to record thanks on behalf of all our members for his achievement in maintaining such high standards for the Society's publication over the past six years. This period has not been without its difficulties and we are especially grateful that he has been able to implement the introduction of the new format for Series 4 so successfully.

As to the future, several experienced members have kindly agreed to collaborate to see Volume 3 through to publication this year. There are a number of contributions already in hand and further capacity is still available, for which I now make a 'Call for Papers.' We specifically need varied historical articles, while shorter notices for history, archaeology and buildings would also be welcomed. Authors with suitable contributions to offer are requested to contact me in the first place (gmarkrdavies@btinternet.com) so that I can advise them on how and where to send their articles.

In the meantime, as part of the search for a new Editor, a review of the whole editing process and production of the Society's various publications is currently being undertaken. Its purpose is to ensure that the duties of the next post-holder are made as straightforward as possible, as well as helping to clarify the necessary involvement of other officers and helpers in the process.

For over 150 years, the Society's publication address has been 'the Museum in the Castle' at Colchester,

which our founders were largely instrumental in establishing. On Saturday, 6th April 2013, members were able to enjoy a rare visit to view the historic building itself in all its unencumbered structural detail following removal of the museum's archaeological collections as part of the current £4.2M redevelopment programme. Philip Wise, Collections and Curatorial Manager, kindly led a tour of inspection giving detailed interpretation that included the latest specialist views from a one-day seminar held three weeks earlier. This event was arranged as part of a 'Norman Connections' project, jointly funded by the EU through the INTERREG IV-A programme, which has created a network of Norman heritage sites in Britain and northern France.

The general view, now more confidently expressed, is that Colchester Castle was originally planned as a massive three-storey building but, mainly for financial reasons, was completed in stages as a two-storey structure with the corner towers standing to a higher level. As it has very plain details, it may have been started even earlier than the traditional foundation date of 1076.

The new displays to be opened next year will make more of the Castle itself, as well as re-telling the history of Colchester through the archaeological collections, in which our Society has an essential interest. Connections with other local monuments and important archaeological features, like the town walls and circus, will also be emphasized.

Finally, on a more cautious note, as members will be aware Council is keeping a watching brief on reductions and changes to heritage services in the county. The new arrangements for Harlow Museum's collections, having caused some concern, are being regarded with caution until their longer term effects can be assessed, while at county level the Advisory Committee for Archaeology in Essex has yet to meet following the restructuring of staff into the new Place Services a year ago.

At Colchester a meeting on 5th February with the Portfolio-holder, Cllr. Tim Young, confirmed the Council's intention to close and sell the Museum Resource Centre adjacent to the Castle, but not before next year. However, he gave an assurance that there is no threat to the collections and that Colchester B.C. intends to continue providing a world-class Museum Service. The offices will be moved into the Council's corporate core at Rowan House in Sheepen Road, while the other museum functions carried out at the MRC since 1981 would be transferred elsewhere in due course. It was agreed that the report now being prepared about this will be submitted for preliminary comment both to the Friends of Colchester Museums (of which I am Chairman) and to the Society as owner of part of the collections. This is awaited with interest.

G. Mark R. Davies

Our Online presence

In the last Newsletter mention was made of a new interim blog for the Society:

www.esah160.blogspot.co.uk. It has been created to raise our profile, ahead of a major re-launch of our website, with clear links to the catalogue of books held at the Essex University (including those in the ESAH Library), the Essex Places Names Project, our online bookshop (at

www.blackmorehistory.co.uk/esah.html) and the new twitter account (<https://twitter.com/esah160>). There are also links to the Society's 2013 Programme of Events and membership application form.

Content on the blogspotis varied with the most popular posts being news of history related events coming up across the county. We have listed for the first time online the complete contents of the Society's transactions from the earliest volume (in 1858) to the present day, providing links to articles which have been published elsewhere on the Internet (for example by the Colchester Archaeological Trust) as well as reproducing some items ourselves, especially from early volumes no longer available for sale from the Society because of their rarity.

A blog allows us to produce items which cannot be produced elsewhere. For example, a short video of the six bells ringing out from St Christopher's Church, Willingale, following its augmentation (see Newsletter, Winter 2011) and, more information on the Probert scrapbook



collection of Essex churches (see Newsletter, Spring & Summer 2011), now deposited at the Essex Record Office. ERO A13366 is described as an "Album of cuttings, prints, photographs and drawings relating to Essex churches and especially to their restoration, compiled in the 1850s perhaps by T J Griffinhoofe, and formerly in the possession of Charles K Probert of Newport (bookplate). [Revd Thomas J Griffinhoofe was Vicar of Arkesden from 1859 until his death in 1869, having previously served there as curate under his father. When proving his father's will in 1859 he was described as being 'of Newport']". A recently discovered index of items has been transcribed and uploaded onto the blog.

Another deposit to the Essex Record Office is "A13490. – Catalogue Ref; D/Z 183 addl. 'An Act for Inclosing Lands in the Parishes of Farnham in the County of Essex, and of Bishop's Stortford in the County of Hertford', 1820; 'An Act for Vesting the Estate of Sir James Lumley, Bart. In Trustees, for raising Monies by Sale or Mortgage thereof, for the Payment of his Debts' [Great Bardfield], 1730; 'The Case of the Respondent, Thomas Smee. To be heard at the House of Lords on 6 November 1745' [Great Chishall]". These papers were discovered at the bottom of one of many boxes during book sorting in the cellar storeroom.

The blog and 'Online Bookshop' are able to give latest updates on the availability for sale of surplus books not required by the Society. The recent book sales at the Morant Lecture and Colchester are an

extension of this aspect of work.

The Twitter account, run by John Hayward, provides additional links both to the blog as well as news from other archaeological and heritage organisations.

The blog provides a new window to the world for our Society and we would encourage members to view it regularly, and to contribute by commenting online or sending any relevant material for uploading to me (apsblackmore@btinternet.com)

Andrew Smith

Scottish migrants 1603-1762

The Department of History at the University of Manchester is undertaking a project on the integration – or otherwise – of Scottish migrants into English society during this period, and would welcome information about any known migrants, how they were regarded as 'economic migrants' or closet Catholics, and how they adapted to life south of the border. There is, for example, evidence that they were treated with considerable hostility in Harwich. As a spin-off from this study, it is hoped to prepare a database of all known Scots who made this hazardous journey south. Local history and family history societies will have fragments of information which would be invaluable to this study, and are invited to contact Dr R Scott Spurlock, the Research Associate in the department, at

scott.spurlock@manchester.ac.uk.

General information about the project will be found on the project website at <http://www.angloscottishmigration.humanities.manchester.ac.uk>

The Plume Lecture **2012**

The annual lecture was given by Mark Purcell, Libraries Curator for the National Trust, on 10 November in Maldon. He explained that this post was created in 1999 in (somewhat tardy) recognition of the fact that the NT owns a vast number of books, including the largest collection of early printed books in Europe. Its libraries range from the largest at Blickling in Norfolk (around 12,500 titles) to the smallest at Arlington Court in Devon (a mere three, though one is a C13 Parisian Book of Hours with the face of Thomas Becket scratched out!). Modern cataloguing of all libraries owned by the NT is in progress, and so far about 230,000 books have been listed on the COPAC website. Serious researchers are allowed access, but in some cases many weeks' notice is needed as Health and Safety requirements prevent the use of traditional library ladders, and scaffold towers may have to be erected to retrieve books from the higher shelves.

He outlined the history of the National Trust's acquisitions. In the early days the main focus was on countryside and it did not acquire its first mansion until the 1920s. Even then it had no interest in the contents of the house; these usually remained in the ownership of the donor and

were often subsequently sold. These early country house acquisitions were generally tenanted by the NT and only occasionally opened to the public. There was no sense of the importance of book collections in understanding the history of the house and, when the contents of libraries were disposed of by their historic owners, the empty shelves were filled with books donated through an appeal to members.

In spite of this recent neglect, the original collectors of books greatly valued their libraries and they were an important resource for the neighbourhood at a time when public libraries did not exist. They were staffed and catalogued, and access was provided to gentleman who wished to use them. Loans were allowed, and in some houses (Erdigg, for example) servants were permitted to borrow. The subject matter varied widely from house to house but there were always books for everyday reading, practical works on subjects ranging from architecture to warfare, theological works and sermons, and, naturally, the classical authors.

It is easy to overlook the fact that many country house libraries underwent major changes during the family ownership. Libraries were sold to meet debts, and the shelves repopulated later with books from another house, or from an inheritance. Until the mid C18 country house libraries were usually places for private study, but after that they were developed as the public spaces familiar to any modern visitor to a NT property. To some owners the books may have been little more than wallpaper, but they were always



important for the education of the children destined to inherit the estate.

Many libraries were lost in the 1880s. This was a period of serious agricultural depression when landowners' rental income dropped significantly. Many estates – and their contents – had been entailed and could not be sold, but the economic depression led to a change in the law which enabled owners to dispose of such assets. The country's most extensive collection of archaeological and antiquarian books at Stourhead in Wiltshire, acquired by Sir Richard Colt Hoare, was sold at this time, though a modern visitor will find no gaps on the shelves which were subsequently filled with books of far less significance from another property owned by the family. Death duties also forced sales of libraries, though at Penrhyn Castle in north Wales the government agreed to take the library in lieu and donated it to the NT.

National Trust libraries are important for a number of reasons. They often contain ephemera such as pamphlets, and the chap books sold by pedlars, which may not survive elsewhere, as well as editions which were discarded by most owners as soon as they were out of date. At Sissinghurst in Kent there is a large collection of C20 novels – no rarity perhaps, but invaluable for two reasons. They contain Vita Sackville-West's frequent pencil notes, and they also retain their dust covers which were almost invariably discarded by the major copyright libraries whose duty it is to preserve copies of every book published.

It is good to know that the National Trust's collection is now the responsibility of such an enthusiastic bibliophile.

Michael Leach

Book Reviews

Maldon and Heybridge Through Time by Stephen P. Nunn Amberley Publishing 96 pages ISBN 978 1 84868 074 6 £14.99

This book is another in Amberley's series of colourful books which explore the history of towns and villages through the ever popular format of comparing old photographs and contemporary ones. The introduction provides a useful short summary of the topography and history of Maldon and its neighbours Heybridge and Beeleigh. The historic images are well matched by good quality modern photographs, some of which are the author's own. The images are often enhanced by smaller inset pictures which add to the visual interest and compliment the informative captions. The book is a fine example of its type, a vivid reminder of the quality of Maldon's built historic environment, and a tribute to the author's knowledge of, and affection for, the town.

Nigel Brown

A Guide to the Industrial Archaeology of Essex by Tony Crosby for the Association of Industrial Archaeology (AIA) 2012 68 pages, ISBN 978 0 9560251 1 1 £5.50 plus p&p

This A3 booklet provides a gazetteer of industrial sites in Essex which was published to compliment the AIA's annual conference held at Writtle College, Chelmsford, in August 2012. The introduction to the gazetteer emphasises the largely agricultural basis for many of the sites included and gives a brief summary of each category comprising mills; other agricultural industries; malting and brewing; engineering; textiles; extractive industries; transport; electronics; public utilities and industrial communities.

The author draws upon his considerable knowledge of the industrial sites of Essex to include a range of sites that are now rare, unusual and of regional and national significance. These sites are ordered in the gazetteer by the 12 Districts within the current administrative County of Essex and the 2 Unitary Authorities of Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea but that part of historic Essex now within Greater London is excluded. For each district all gazetteer entries are listed alphabetically by town or village and have a letter and number reference which relates to the relevant District map, colour photographs and the index. In addition to location information, including a NGR reference, there is a brief description of what there is to see at each site.

In recent years there has been a growing appreciation of the quality of industrial heritage sites which survive outside of Britain's traditional industrial heartlands. The wide range of sites detailed in this booklet demonstrates the extent to which this applies to Essex. It is a welcome

introduction to the industrial sites of the county and provides a useful starting point for anyone wishing to carry out further research. The Society is acknowledged for its generous donation towards the production costs of the gazetteer.

David Buckley

The 1953 Essex Flood Disaster – The People's Story, Patricia Rennoldson Smith, The History Press, 2012, ISBN: 978-0-7524-6541-8, pp.144, illustrated (black and white), not indexed, RRP. £12.99

As a timely commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the 1953 flood, Smith's book offers an extensive collection of memories from survivors and victims, providing a graphic account of the impact of the flood along the Essex coast. The chapter order follows the route of the storm surge, covering each town or village affected, starting with Harwich and finishing at Tilbury. Each area is examined adequately, with those worst affected, such as Harwich, Jaywick, and Canvey Island and Benfleet, receiving greater attention, and the details of the night are presented chronologically. The day or hours before the fateful night are sometimes mentioned, although most frequently Smith moves straight onto the moment the flood struck, and how people reacted to it, providing a good balance of stories of heroic efforts, tragedies, and light hearted moments, all of which bring home the impact of the event on people's lives. Whilst the accounts are mainly limited to the initial rescue and recovery, this helps emphasise the



scale of the disaster and enormous efforts carried out by the emergency services, such as police and fire brigades, voluntary organisations, such as the British Red Cross and Women's Voluntary Service, and the members of the public, often after being rescued themselves.

Smith uses many previously unpublished photographs and recorded memories to tell these stories effectively. These normally include extended captions or quotations from the survivors in the body of the text, which help provide a strong picture of the impact of the flood on the individual residents. When these accounts are collected, they truly present the people's story, and show that whilst the impacts and rescue and recovery efforts varied between areas, the flood will never be forgotten in the towns affected.

The use of photographs, cartoons and maps are also well placed, with captions which link them to specific incidents or memories mentioned in the text. These help visualise the extent and scale of the disaster. Also included, at the end, is a very powerful list of those who perished during the flood, listing their ages and the roads in which they died. This helps demonstrate that all ages were vulnerable, although the young and elderly were particularly at risk.

A well recorded bibliography is included for those who wish to pursue the subject further, and the captions for the photographs, cartoons and maps are accurately referenced.

To conclude, Smith's well-constructed book is intended for those with a general interest, but it is also a

brilliant stepping on point for those wishing to explore the 1953 flood further.

Southend Airport Through Time
by Peter C Brown Amberley
Publishing 96 pages ISBN978-1-445601012-2 £14.99

Southend Airport Through Time provides a summary history of the development of the airport from its inception as a training ground in 1914 and being taken over by the Royal Navy Air Service in 1915, through its use during the two World Wars and its subsequent development as a civil airport through to its modern day incarnation as an expanding international Airport. The book has been carefully divided into date sections based on major changes at the airport. Throughout the book there are extensive photographs of the aircraft that have used the airfield as a base. It provides a detailed history of the many companies that have used the airfield, and the development of the different elements of the airfield through time. The final section of the book comprises a list of crashes that have occurred at the airport.

The book would have benefitted from a contents and illustration list.

Richard Havis

Essex Review reviewed

It is often worth returning to an old friend with a fresh eye. *Essex Review* first appeared as a quarterly publication in 1892 under the editorship of Edward Fitch, mayor and historian of Maldon, and W H

Dalton F.G.S., geologist and bibliographer. Looking at the first volume reveals much useful information. 'Notes of the Quarter' covered a range of contemporary events, such as shipwrecks, customs revenues, meteorological phenomena (such as the disastrous hailstorm of June 1897), and details of the building of new churches and the restoration of old ones (unfortunately usually without the name of the architect responsible). It reported the failure of Messrs Mills, Bawtree, Dawnay, Curzon and Co's bank in Colchester which also had several branches in SE Essex. There was no such thing as government bail-out, but the mayor of Colchester did preside over a meeting of creditors. The business (without the debts) was to be taken over by two other banks, and it was hoped that 10s. in the pound would be paid shortly from the remaining assets of the failed bank, with the possibility of another 5s. in the pound later. Also published was useful information on local government and some quite detailed obituaries. Much of this information will be found in local papers, but the advantage of Essex Review is that it has a very detailed index volume covering the issues up to 1927, making it easier to access this sort of information.

Some articles, such as extracts from parish registers, might seem a little pedestrian, but it has to be remembered that this material were much less accessible to the public a century ago. Others accounts are unexpectedly useful, such as the verbatim judgement from the House of Lords on the right of the Crown to the foreshore at Maplin Sands. Over

six pages of 8 point print provide a detailed overview of the long history of ownership and usage of Maplin, for the purpose of determining whether the government was entitled to use it as an artillery range.

Another curious item was the description (accompanied by a drawing) of the 'brazen head' at Lindsell, a bronze leonine head grasping in its mouth a door knocker in the form of a large iron ring. The whole is reminiscent of the famous sanctuary knocker at Durham cathedral, though on a more modest scale. It seems unlikely that it still adorns the farmhouse front door to which it was attached in 1892, but where is it now? And where did it come from originally? It is far too grand to have started its life on a farmhouse front door.

From an epidemiological perspective it is interesting to read the account by Dr Thresh, medical officer of health for Essex, of the influenza epidemic of 1891. Though there was a relative increase in deaths from 'flu, there was nearly double the normal death rate from all other causes, suggesting that 'flu was a contributory factor in far more deaths than it was given credit for. He ended with an impassioned plea for better preventative measures, as well as a cure for the disease. There have been many false dawns since his time, including the unjustified (and very costly) hope that was pinned to the drug Tamiflu in 2011.

One particular Essex false dawn was the exploration for coal deposits in the county by the Eastern Counties Coal Boring Association. A trial bore at Weeley reached a depth of 1,178



feet but 'was barren of the desired hopes of transforming portions of Essex into a black and busy mining district.'

Michael Leach

'The Enemies of Books'

Those who deplore the cavalier treatment or destruction of books will be interested in a publication with this title which ran to three editions between 1880 and 1888. The bibliophile author, William Blades, identified the usual physical threats to books, such as fire, water, heat, dust and neglect, and then moved on to less obvious ones: ignorance, bigotry, bookbinders, collectors, bookworms and other vermin. The third edition of his book added two further categories of vermin – servants and children. The former were accused of rough handling (on the pretext of dusting), the latter (particularly boys) were a more direct threat with their pocket knives and their sticky fingers. He concluded 'the possession of any old book is a sacred trust, which a conscientious guardian would as soon think of ignoring as a parent would of neglecting his child. An old book, whatever its subject or internal merits, is truly a portion of the national history; we may imitate it and print it in facsimile, but we can never exactly reproduce it; and as an historical document it should carefully be preserved.' He coined the term 'biblioclast' to describe those who wantonly destroyed books.

Though undoubtedly a curmudgeon, one can only wish that

William Blades had been able to influence the founding fathers of the National Trust.

Michael Leach

CBA East Group

The Society is a member of the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) and is represented on the Regional CBA Group by David Buckley (dbuckleyarch@btinternet.com). He provides notification of the following activities in 2013.

Annual General Meeting of the CBA East Group will be held on Saturday 11th May 2013 at the Friends Meeting House, 2 Jesus Lane, Cambridge. Lunch will be followed at 2.30pm by a guided walking tour of "Cambridge's Historical Topography" led by Nick James.

Group tour of "Saffron Walden and Audley End: separate entities or inextricably linked?", date during June/July to be confirmed.

One day conference "Recent Anglo-Saxon research in the East of England" to be held on Saturday 14th September at Bury St Edmunds Cathedral Centre.

A Members Newsletter is in preparation and items for inclusion are sought from group members and organisations. For further details about this and all of the above events email cbaeast@archaeologyuk.org or write to Aileen Conner c/o OA East, 15 Trafalgar Way, Bar Hill, Cambridge, CB23 8SQ.

David Buckley

News from the ERO: 75 years and counting

2013 is an important year for the Essex Record Office, marking 75 years since the appointment of the first County Archivist, F.G. Emmison, in 1938. Our fundamental purpose remains unaltered – that is, to care for documents which tell the story of Essex’s past, and to ensure public access to those documents – but needless to say, our service has changed a great deal in many ways since 1938. Our activities in the opening months of our 75th year underline a few of the ways in which our service has altered over the decades.

Gaining access to the documents we care for is now much more egalitarian; in years gone by you might have had a hard time just gaining access to the Searchroom.

Today we work hard to make it as easy as possible for people to visit. To this end, in February we welcomed most of the University of Essex’s History undergraduates (some 80 students in total) to introduce them to the Record Office and to show them how we could be of use to them in their future studies. The visits were a great success, and we succeeded in changing many of the students’ minds that we are dusty, old and boring and they left thinking that actually we are much more modern and interesting and useful than they had previously thought. We hope to see some of them again in the future when they are researching their dissertations.

We have also been out on the road on a trip to Saffron Walden for

Saffron Walden on the Map on Saturday 16 March. In spring 2012, a tattered, dirty piece of parchment was found in farm outbuilding in Wendens Ambo, and upon unrolling it it was discovered to be a map of the historic town of Saffron Walden, dating to 1757. This makes it the earliest known map of the town. This is a very special find, showing in great detail the historic centre of Saffron Walden, much of which survives today. The map was in very poor condition after years in a barn, and was transferred to the ERO for conservation work. Now that it has been stabilised, we put it on display in the town for a special event, alongside some later maps for comparison, a display on the conservation work that has been done to it, and lots of project work by local Cubs and Scouts working for their Local Heritage badges. The day was a huge success with over 500 people coming to see the map.

Perhaps one of the most revolutionary changes in our service has been the development of our online presence. Seax, our online catalogue, was launched when we moved into our new building in 2000, and it has since been added to with Essex Ancestors. Essex Ancestors enables subscribers to view images of Essex parish registers and wills, and has subscribers from 25 different countries around the world. The service underwent a major update at the end of 2012, with images of the remaining parish registers in our care being added to it. The next phases of the project are now forging ahead, with Waltham Forest registers next to be added, followed by (eventually)



the rest of the wills in our collection. More information about the service can be found at www.essexancestors.co.uk

Another new online venture is the Essex Record Office blog (www.essexrecordofficeblog.co.uk), and our adventures into the social media lands of Twitter and Facebook, which enable us to make our collections available to people all over the world in new ways.

As part of our 75th anniversary celebrations we will be taking part in Heritage Open Days on Saturday 14th September, when we will be inviting people in to see behind-the-scenes to witness first hand how we care for the county's heritage; look out for more details over the summer.

There is plenty going on in the meantime, with all the usual workshops (and some new ones) taking place, both at the ERO in Chelmsford and in locations across the county. Our next major event is our conference on Essex's Industrial Archaeology on Saturday 6 July, 9.30am-4.00pm. Essex is not commonly thought of as a particularly industrial county, but industry is a fascinating aspect of the county's past. The one-day conference will look at the industries which sprang up here, and the impact they had on local people's lives. The conference will also serve as the launch event for the new industrial archaeology sub-group of ESAH, so all in all it promises to be a most interesting day. Tickets are £15 including a buffet lunch and refreshments, and can be booked by telephoning 01245 244614.

Details of all of our events can be

found at www.essex.gov.uk/EROevents, or you can contact us to request a printed copy of our events guide.

As ever, we are open to the public six days a week and we can always be contacted on 01245 244644 or ero.enquiry@essex.gov.uk. Find out how to visit us at www.essex.gov.uk/ERO.

Hannah Salisbury,
Audience Development Officer

New killer stalks Essex woods

Having lost our elms, and with oak trees under threat, it is disturbing to learn of a new threat to our ash trees – ash dieback. This was first noted in 1992 in Poland and spread rapidly to other European countries. About 90% of infected trees die and Denmark has been particularly badly affected. The causative fungus, *Chalara fraxinea*, which causes the characteristic leaf loss and crown dieback, was not identified till 2006. The disease was first reported in the UK in Buckinghamshire in February 2012 in a consignment of ash saplings which had been imported from a nursery in Holland, and has subsequently been identified at various other sites in England and Scotland which have been linked to the import of continental saplings. Though DEFRA had been warned of the problem in 2009 by the Horticultural Trades Association, no action to ban imports was taken in the mistaken belief that the fungus was already endemic in

this country, and that a ban would be contrary to EU regulations.

However by October 2012 the disease had been identified in woodlands in Norfolk, Suffolk, Essex and Kent which had no obvious link with imported trees. By November there were similar confirmed outbreaks along much of the eastern side of the country, making it almost certain that these infections had been caused by wind-borne spores from continental Europe. Though a ban was finally imposed on imports in late October, recent evidence suggests that this measure was already too late and would do nothing to prevent airborne spread from Europe. Also the ban only applied to imports from areas known to be infected – scant reassurance when tackling a rapidly developing pandemic.

It is a sad story of too little action taken too late to be effective, as well as yet another example of the opportunities for the spread of disease through uncontrolled international trade. It transpires that even ‘native’ ash saplings, though coming from British seed, were being germinated and grown in Holland, and then exported – probably already infected - to the UK. There is a possibility that British ash trees may be more resistant to *Chalara fraxinea* than their continental brethren, or that resistant strains may develop quickly. The ash, unlike the elm, propagates by sexual reproduction, allowing the possibility of the development of a resistant mutation.

Only time will show if these hopes are justified. In the meantime a great many ash trees may die and, as with Dutch elm disease, the felling and

burning of infected trees is very unlikely to be effective in preventing ash dieback. Unlike Dutch elm disease, it does not require an insect vector but is spread by spores, making it potentially much more virulent.

Anyone suspecting ash dieback should promptly notify the Forestry Commission Plant Health Service on health@forestry.gsi.gov.uk. Further information can be found on the Forestry Commission websites. However, with the autumn leaf fall already well advanced, new cases are unlikely to be identified before the spring.

Michael Leach

Sources:

www.forestry.gov.uk/chalara

(accessed 25/10/2012)

The Guardian, 25/10/2012,

2/11/2012, 6/11/2012 et seq:

The Guardian G 2, 31/10/2012

Essex seen from elsewhere

Several Essex matters appear in the Ancient Monuments Society Newsletter of autumn 2012.

a) The recent restoration of Mundon church (described in several earlier ESAH newsletters) was awarded a commendation in the recent English Heritage ‘Angel Awards’.

b) Essex has the doubtful distinction of possessing one of the country’s top ten threatened structures recently listed by the Victorian Society. This is the church of St Peter at Birch, now partially surrounded by



a corrugated iron fence Designed by S.S.Teulon in 1849/50, it has a large aisle and a tall tower crowned with a stone broach spire. Teulon's building completely replaced the original medieval church. Recent photographs of the interior show extensive rainwater penetration along the line of the valley gutter (the Achilles heel of any abandoned building), and on the exterior there are at least two large areas where the outer skin of brown flint has fallen away to reveal the inner brick core

It is now almost certain that the church will be demolished. The fine east stained glass window of 1908 by Mary Lowndes has been offered a home at the Stained Glass Repository at Glaziers Hall. The fate of the other stained glass is not known and it may not have survived for 22 years in an abandoned building. EAH volume 22 indicates that there is also some C20 woodwork by the firm of H & K Mabbitt of Colchester. It would be a great shame if this met the same fate as the Chelmsford cathedral altar rails mentioned in (e) below.

c) Better news for another Essex church redundant since 1996. All Saint's, North Benfleet, listed Grade II* and on the ECC Buildings at Risk register, is to be leased to the Orthodox Church for re-use as a place of worship. It was re-faced in Kentish rag in the C16. A brick tower (concealing the timber framed C15 belfry) was added in 1903, and the 1870 chancel (also in Kentish rag) is by G E Street.

d) Epping Forest museum has received a HLF grant off £1,192,000

e) Church archaeologists will

welcome a new book by Prof Warwick Rodwell. There is much of general interest (such as the reason for the outward bowing of south facing walls, and the temporary 'barrow doors' in church walls which were blocked on completion of the building). Various *causes célèbres* are mentioned, including the complete gutting of the interior of Chelmsford cathedral in 1983, and the almost unbelievable disposal of its C17 Flemish altar rails on a bonfire. The title is: *The Archaeology of Churches* and it is published by Amberley Publishing at £25.

Michael Leach

International Medieval Congress

The twentieth annual IMC will take place 1-4 July 2013 in Leeds on the University of Leeds main campus and will focus on the special thematic strand, 'Pleasure'. The IMC is the largest annual gathering of medievalists in Europe, focusing upon all aspects of the Middle Ages (c. 300-1500).

Registration is now open and our programme is now available online. For more information, please see <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/ims/imc/imc2013.html>. There is also an exciting range of ticketed events, excursions, and concerts that are open to the public. These items can be booked by clicking on the following link to the University of Leeds Online Store: <http://store.leeds.ac.uk/browse/product.asp?catid=77&modid=2&compid=1>

John Macky's account of Essex

Daniel Defoe's *Tour through Great Britain* is well known. Rather less familiar is a similar work by John Macky entitled *A Journey through England in Familiar Letters*, published in 1714 (with an enlarged edition in 1724). There is a copy (dated 1722) in the Society's library at Colchester University, and the Essex section (from the 1724 edition) was printed in full in the *Essex Review* in 1897.

Macky's origins in Scotland are obscure. He is said to have fled to France with James II and acted as a spy for the English government. Later he wrote a propagandist tract, *A View of the Court of St Germain's from 1690 to 1695*, which he claimed sold 30,000 copies. He returned to London in 1692 with information about a planned French invasion, and was initially disbelieved but subsequently taken seriously. He was then employed in counter espionage work, intercepting the continental mails to the ports on the coast between Harwich and Dover. He had a significant role in unmasking a plot to assassinate William III in 1696, as well as the plans of James Stuart to invade Scotland in 1708. Though rewarded with a Post Office franchise in 1706, he ran into financial difficulties and had to flee to Flanders in 1713 to escape from his creditors. On returning to London in 1714 he secured the Dublin packet boat monopoly but this failed to rescue him from his financial difficulties and he resorted to travel writing. His

popular *Journey through England* of 1714 was followed by similar titles for Scotland (1723) and the Austrian Netherlands (1725) but, judging by a spell in a debtor's prison in 1722, these publications did not entirely resolve his troubles. By 1723 he had returned to espionage work and was collecting material for his account of travels in the Netherlands, which probably provided convenient cover for his intelligence gathering. He died in Rotterdam in 1726.

His marriage to the daughter of a Suffolk baronet, as well as his involvement with the Harwich mail boat, doubtless made him familiar with both that port and the road from Ipswich to London. In *A Journey through England* he gave a lively and personal account of the journey through Essex on the modern A12 with short descriptions of Harwich, Colchester, New Hall, Chelmsford, Wanstead and Stratford. About a quarter of the account is devoted to a description of Wanstead 'Palace' (i.e. Wanstead House, begun in 1715). He must have been allowed access to the house and grounds; though the shell was complete, the internal decorations (which he described in considerable detail) were only partly finished. His description of the internal plan is of interest – the *piano nobile* contained 20 state rooms, with a long gallery at one end and a chapel at the other. The living accommodation on the ground floor was split into four apartments of five rooms each, one apartment each for Earl Tilney and his lady, the other two for visitors. The gardens, already completed, were described in detail.

His account ends with a description of Stratford, at that time a



high class commuter paradise; 'there are above two hundred little Country Houses for the Conveniency of the Citizens in the Summer; where their Wives and Children generally keep, and their Husbands come down on Saturdays and return on Mondays. I thought myself in Holland again, the Houses having all Rows of Trees before their Doors, with Benches to sit on, as there, and little Gardens behind.' It is very reminiscent of an early C20 garden suburb!

Michael Leach

Sources:

Alsop, J D, 2004 'Macky, John, writer and spy' in *ODNB Essex Review*, vi, 1896, 55-60

Historic Building Courses

Repair and Conservation of Flint Walling 26th – 28th June 2013, St Botolph's Church, Hadstock Tutor: Simon Williams, *Anglian Flint*

Students on this three-day course will repair and rebuild a churchyard wall using flints and lime mortar. There will also be a demonstration of flint knapping with the opportunity to have a go. The course will be of interest to bricklayers, general builders and home owners alike. No experience needed. **Fee £265**

For more details and other courses see <http://www.cressingtemple.co.uk/>

Ale and Hearty

An exhibition of the history of pubs and breweries in Chelmsford at Chelmsford Museum, Moulsham Street, Chelmsford 11 May to 15 September 2013. Organised by Chelmsford Museum, CAMRA and the Friends of Chelmsford Museum.

Four talks are being held at the museum on Saturdays during the run of the exhibition.

1 June The Art and Science of Brewing by Franco Davanzo. Franco runs the microbrewery Felstar near Felsted and started brewing in 2001. He is constantly experimenting to find the "perfect pint".

6 July 'Drown Your Dogs In It, Drop Some Frogs In It' Beer in the Great War by Siobhan McGinn. She is a writer of beer books and leads tours to Belgium which explore beer in the context of the First World War.

3 August 'Shakespeare's Local' by Pete Brown. Pete has recently been voted beer Writer of the Year for the second time. He will talk about the George Inn at Southwark, the inspiration for his book of the same name which was serialized on radio 4.

14 September Malt and Malting by Elphin Watkin. Elphin, an ex-engineer and member of the Essex Historic Buildings Group, has surveyed and analysed old buildings for twenty-five years. He campaigned for the restoration of Dunmow Maltings and is one of its Trustees.

See www.chelmsford.gov.uk/mueums

MEMBERSHIP - Subscriptions due on January 1st each year

Single Member - £20

Family Membership - £22

Student - £9

Associate Member - £9

Institutions - £25

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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 2012 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £50,496

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, 13 Sovereign Crescent, Lexden Road, Colchester C03 3UZ.

Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail bill.abbott@btinternet.com

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.

John Hayward

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2013

Saturday afternoon 15th June - AGM 2pm in the Holy Trinity Church, Littlebury, followed by a talk by the Friends. Cream Tea provided at a cost of £5.00.p p

Sunday 14th July - visit to **Valentine Mansion**. Tour of the house and grounds 12 noon. Max 20 people Cost £6.00. Tea House open. (If over subscribed, a further date will be arranged)

Sunday 18th August - visit to **Heddingham Castle**. Meet at 2 pm. Cost £10.00 Tea Rooms open.

Saturday 14th September - visit to **Little Dunmow Church** for a walk and talk . Meet at 2pm. Cost £8.00. To include refreshments.

Sunday 6th October (Phillip Morant's Birth Date) - the **Morant lunch** at Mulberry House High Ongar, 12.30 for 1pm. After lunch speaker is Anne Padfield. Cost £27.00. Bookings with payment to be made by 6th September.

Saturday 16th November 2013 – 2 pm Chelmsford & Essex Museum. Lecture and demonstration on Flint Knapping Cost £ 6.00 including refreshments. (There will be items for sale)

Monday 10th February 2014 6pm Back room tour of Essex Record Office Cost £6.00 Max 20 people (If over subscribed, a further date will be arranged)

Further details of all events are available from the Excursions Secretary, Mr Graham Gould, 16 Osborne Road, Leyton, E10 5QW (0208 556 1423). **If you are interested in any of these events must please contact Graham Gould to check availability and then fill in the slips provided and return them to the Excursions Secretary at least 10 days before the event so arrangements can be made for tea etc. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope for each event, for maps and other instructions. Cheques should be made payable to the Essex Society for Archaeology and History.**

The visits on the Society's programme are open to members and associate members only. The Society can accept no liability for loss or injury sustained by members attending any of its programmed events. Members are asked to take care when visiting old buildings or sites and to alert others to any obvious risks. Please respect the privacy of those who invite us into their homes.

NEWSLETTER

Summer 2013



The Essex Society for Archaeology & History

FORMERLY THE ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1852

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COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 31 OCTOBER 2013

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

The illustration on the front cover is a photograph by Andy Barham of Beeleigh Abbey, Maldon, Essex

ISSN 0305-8530

Congratulations

Congratulations to our Vice-President Andrew Phillips for being awarded the British Empire Medal for services to history and heritage in Colchester in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.

From the President

There are a number of important matters which I would like to bring to members' attention. As planned, the one-day conference held at the Essex Record Office on Saturday 6th July 2013 included the successful launch by our Patron, Lord Petre, of the new Essex Industrial Archaeology Group as a special sub-group of ESAH. This was preceded by introductory remarks by Tony Crosby and your President about the new group, its aims and objectives and its proposed integral relationship to the Society, Lord Petre performing the opening ceremony itself with thoughtful expressions of encouragement and support. He also took the opportunity of presenting a cheque from the Essex Heritage Trust to Neil Wiffen representing the Record Office, which added to the occasion.

All those attending the conference, at which the Society provided a bookstall run by our Secretary John Hayward, were given information packs containing application forms. As a result, the first people specifically joining ESAH to be part of EIAG have already applied for membership. There are now two further ways in which new members of the group will be encouraged to

join. Together with this Newsletter every member of ESAH is receiving a form which they are requested to use to indicate their interest in the Essex Industrial Archaeology Group. Please do make full use of it, if only to register a general interest, which will be very helpful to the organisers.

The same application form can be used by entirely new members joining because of a special interest in Industrial Archaeology, although they will also need to complete an ESAH application form as well. It would be very much appreciated if ESAH members could pass on all this information about the EIAG, and how to apply for membership, to those they think might be interested.

In addition, there will be an Inaugural Meeting of the EIAG at Chelmsford Museum, Oaklands Park, Moulsham Street, Chelmsford on Saturday 23rd November 2013 at 2.30 pm. All interested parties are welcome to attend and it is intended to include an illustrated talk on some significant aspect of the county's Industrial Heritage, most likely Railways. Full details of the programme may be obtained from Tony Crosby - tcrosby.iah@outlook.com.

During the summer, discussions were held to finalise a Management Plan for the EIAG. This has now been welcomed by the Finance and Membership Services Committee and is being put to Council for confirmation on 28th September. Having been carefully prepared in some detail, this plan forms the basis of how the Industrial Archaeology section will work in relationship with the other activities of the Society. It



is hoped that as many members as are able, both existing and new, will attend the inaugural meeting in order to set this exciting new initiative for the Society off to a good start.

From its creation as the Essex Archaeological Society in 1852, our Society has been concerned to ensure a comprehensive coverage of Essex both in terms of relevant subject matter and geographically as far as membership goes. The creation of the EIAG section continues this tradition in an inclusive, though slightly different, format and it is strongly believed by those involved to date that it will provide stimulating impetus both to the study of our county's Industrial Archaeology and Heritage and to ESAH itself for the future.

In its early days the EAS appointed Local Committees in the major towns of Essex and on occasion Corresponding Members, who while not necessarily subscribers became entitled to all the privileges of membership. Over the past century and a half, of course, circumstances have changed, not least with the creation of many active local societies throughout Essex. We maintain close contact with many of these, some of them being associate members, while in other cases we share common cause through the Essex Archaeological and Historical Congress, which has approximately 100 member organisations. The subject of general co-operation among all the various local societies and other related bodies is one where I feel sure we could all do more in fostering communication along

existing lines, particularly in the current time of financial restraint and change in public services.

Having mentioned Congress, I would like to bring to members' attention one of its major annual activities over more than 40 years – the Archaeological Symposium. This year it is to be held, in a slightly different format, at Prittlewell Priory on Saturday 26th October 2013. For anyone who has not been there recently, the day's events will provide a good opportunity to see this recently refurbished branch of the Southend Museum Service and the new Priory Visitor Centre.

On a personal note, I would like to thank our current Membership Secretary, Bruno Giordan, for all the work he has done for the Society over the past two and a half years. He has digitised all the membership data and introduced new procedures, including improved contact with our institutional members. However, he is now having to stand down for personal reasons and we wish him well for the future. The work of his successor will be much easier as a result of the recent changes. If a volunteer is prepared to step forward to fill the post for 2 or 3 years, this would be very much appreciated.

Lastly, at our AGM in June a suggestion was made by Peter Sharpe that the Society might encourage Gift Membership as a means of finding new members. After due consideration by the Officers and at Committee level, we would like to support this suggestion, which is entirely feasible under current arrangements. It now needs taking up

by the existing membership, who might like to do so for birthdays or at Christmas time.

G. Mark R. Davies

Email addresses

It would be helpful if we could gather members' email addresses. Initially this would help the Membership Secretary in dealing with any queries and ultimately, if we can build up a substantial number of email contacts, we would be able to keep members better informed of current developments in areas which might be of interest. It is not anticipated that this information would be passed to any other agency. If members would send this information to the Membership Secretary at esahmembership@gmail.com it would be very much appreciated, and please keep us informed of any changes.

John Hayward

Society visit to Colchester Castle: 6 April 2013

New insights to the history of Colchester Castle were given by Philip Wise, Curatorial and Collections Manager, when members of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History visited the building on 6 April 2013. The visit presented a "once-in-a-lifetime" opportunity to view the building empty of its

museum artefacts: the Castle is closed for redevelopment now until Easter 2014.

Colchester Castle was built in two phases: the first dates from the 1070s according to an entry in the Colchester Chronicle; the second phase was constructed after 1101, being the earliest reliable date when King Henry I granted the Castle to one Eudo Dapifer, the Constable of the Castle. At that time the forebuilding and at least a second storey was added.

Colchester Castle as seen today is unique for three reasons. Firstly, it is the largest Norman Keep ever to have been built in England, and perhaps Europe, on account of the fact that it rests on the footprint foundations of the Roman Temple of Claudius which survived only a few years after the Roman occupation until the town's destruction by Boudicca in 61AD. Secondly, it was built in distinct building phases, perhaps on account of a threatened Viking invasion. Thirdly, that the Castle was partly destroyed by John Wheely who received a contract to demolish the building in 1683. It has been a matter of conjecture how much building material Wheely removed.

The Castle was always said to be the sister building to the White Tower in London. However the medieval document attributed to Bishop Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester (1077-1108), is now considered to be a fake. (Gundulf was the architect of the keep at Rochester Castle and the White Tower of London.) This opens the possibility that Colchester Castle did not originally have four floors, which seems extraordinarily tall given its



elevated position compared to the Tower of London standing sentinel by the River Thames guarding the City.

The building did not have a basement area so, unusually, the ground floor was the storage area and the first floor the Great Hall. It was originally divided into three portions with two sturdy walls, one of which was destroyed by Wheely. The walls were required because the size could not be spanned with a whole roof in timber. Examining the position of the missing wall at ground level there is evidence that it was once arcaded, contained arches to let more light into what was a large and dingy space: the spring of the first arch survives.

There was a prison on the ground floor, used until 1835. Among those held there were Dutch sailors and protestant martyrs.

The interior shows a ground floor constructed of brick and septaria, found in north east Essex, whilst the first floor contains Roman tiles built in herring-bone fashion. The quantity of recycled Roman material is enormous, so much so that many historians, even as late as the Victorian era, thought the building itself to be Roman. The walls would have been plastered over and perhaps elaborately painted.

The external doorway is indisputably Norman having capitals on either side similar to Durham and Lincoln Cathedrals. Visitors would enter and ascend the staircase immediately on the left to the first floor, under what is now a later-built turret on the south-west corner. This is the largest surviving stone staircase from Norman England. At the top

was a waiting room with two garderobes for convenience. The later designed Charles Gray room, so named after the eighteenth century owner who lived at the adjacent Hollytrees house and had the Castle in his private gardens as a genuine 'folly', has a fireplace where there was an original Norman one. Then there is the Great Hall, a vast space, into which visitors would come before the King. The room has Y-shaped chimneys running from the hearths and at the north-west corner there is a grand entrance, where the King would ascend a separate set of stairs (once covered) through a 'presentation doorway' to meet his subjects. Henry I, Stephen, Henry II and King John all visited Colchester Castle.

One third of first floor formed private accommodation: a private audience chamber, a garderobe, and the Royal bedchamber. The bedchamber was the only access on this floor into a vaulted crypt or chapel, which seems inconvenient for all other than the King, and has been the subject of recent debate. Originally it was thought that a separate staircase entered the chapel but this has now been dismissed, so it is thought that this was a private chapel and that others used the chapel in the bailey, which was exposed in an archaeological dig in the 1930s, and whose remains can be seen to the south side of the building. If then the vaulted space referred to is a chapel not a crypt, then the roofed room above was not a chapel at all but merely a roof-space or further floor.

The opportunity for historians to visit the empty shell of the building, and to compare it to other examples, has led to a view that Colchester Castle originally had no more than two storeys. Double height Great Halls were rare and any walkway which surrounded the room would have been interrupted by the Y-shaped flues.

The importance of the Castle building to the history of Colchester is of such merit that when reopened much of the story of the building will also be told as part of the Museum's interpretation of the town's 2000 year history.

The Essex Society for Archaeology and History can claim a long association with the Museum at Colchester Castle. The Society was formed in 1852 with an aim to establish a Museum in the town. In 1860 that goal was achieved through its opening at the Castle, in what is now called the chapel, in joint ownership with Colchester Corporation. The Society met frequently at the Castle in its early years. The Society amalgamated ownership of its artefacts in 1926 and had representatives on the museum's management committee until 1986. Such was the growth of the museum in the inter-war years that a separate museum was created at Hollytrees. The Castle was entirely roofed over in the mid-1930s; itself a necessity, because the foundations were showing alarming cracks and urgent repairs were required. Today the Essex Society for Archaeology and History has the ownership of a Library, originally started by Charles Gray and added to since its formation.

The Library collection was transferred to Hollytrees when it opened as a Museum in 1929 but is now held separately at the Albert Sloman Library, University of Essex. The Society still has a Librarian's Office at Hollytrees which is in regular use.

For more information on the historians' Study Day at Colchester Castle on 12 March, follow this link: <http://www.cimuseums.org.uk/castle/news/friday-15-march-2013.html>

Andrew Smith

Wrecks, rescues & telegraphy

It is easy to forget, in an era of instant communication, the enormous difficulties that were experienced till relatively recently. The first issue of the *Essex Review* noted the dangers of the Essex coast for shipping and the difficulties of effecting rescues. On 27 October 1891 the barque *Oliver Cromwell*, with a cargo of deal from Finland, drifted onto the Whitaker Spit and all 11 crew were rescued by the Clacton lifeboat. Five weeks later the same lifeboat was at sea for 15 hours, trying to rescue the crew of the *A.Patterson* aground on NE Maplin with a cargo of coal. Ten days later both the Walton and Harwich lifeboats answered distress signals from the Sunk and the Cork lightships but were unable to find the ship or ships in trouble. Several were believed to have been lost that night. A few days later the *Enterkin*, with a crew of 31, went aground on the Galloper Sand. A distress signal



(presumably a rocket) was sent from the Galloper lightship to the one at Longsand which passed the signal on to the Sunk lightship, thence to the Cork lightship and finally to Harwich. The lifeboat then had to retrace this path, hailing each lightship crew in turn to ascertain where the previous distress signal had come from. The lifeboat eventually reached the Galloper Sand but failed to find the *Enterkin*, perhaps because it has already broken up. One crew member, clinging to the rigging, was plucked off by a passing ship, two others were found adrift on some wreckage by another. The remaining 28 perished.

The *Essex Review* reminded its readers of the contributions that Essex men had made to safety at sea; Henry Winstanley of Littlebury for the first Eddystone lighthouse, Lionel Lukin of Great Dunmow for the invention of the unsinkable lifeboat, and George Palmer of Nazeing for further improvements in lifeboat design. It called for a fourth to devise a method for lightships to communicate quickly and easily with each other, and prophetically speculated that 'Prof Preece's recent discoveries may lead to electrical communication being inductively flashed to and from our lightships without the intervention of a cable'.

By the end of the year a Royal Commission had sat and recommended that five lightships and a number of rock lighthouses should be linked by telegraph cable. By the autumn a cable had been laid from the Gunfleet Pile lighthouse to the Old Gapway at Frinton and landline connections were about to be made to

Clacton, Walton and Harwich.

The previous winter had already taken its toll. On 9 December 1892 the steamer *Dilsberg* was wrecked in broad daylight on the Kentish Knock, in full view of Kentish Knock, Longsand and Sunk lightships. Rescue did not arrive till the next day, by which time 6 men had drowned. The captain died during the transfer of the survivors to the Kentish Knock lightship. On the same night a schooner was lost with all hands.

The reference to Sir William Henry Preece (1834-1913) is interesting. His knowledge of telegraphy was acquired while working for the Electric Telegraph Company which he joined in 1856. Most of his career, however, was spent with the Post Office, directing the expansion of its telegraph cable network. He also developed an early system of wireless telegraphy using induced currents but this was only effective over very short distances. In 1896 he welcomed and actively supported Marconi's invention, allowing him access to the Post Office's experimental facilities. Preece was subsequently blamed for failing to ensure that the government would benefit financially from the developments in wireless telegraphy that were to revolutionise long distance communication.

Today's global positioning technology has revolutionised navigation and the few lightships that remain are unmanned weather observation stations. The rest have been replaced by automated buoys. Even lighthouses have an uncertain future and a number have already

been closed, while those that remain have been unmanned for many years.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Essex Review, 1892, i, 3 & 1893, ii, 197

Hunt, B J., 2004 'Sir William Preece, electrical engineer & administrator' in *ODNB*

Society visit to Pleshey **Castle: 18 May 2013**

Pleshey, says our guide Nick Wickenden, is a hidden gem. The Castle is undoubtedly of Norman origin. The shape of the village bears out the shape of its structure. Modern Pleshey lies entirely within the Town Enclosure, the North Bailey within the semi-circular boundary of Back Lane, and the South, or Upper, Bailey, thought to be a later addition, still a grassed area by the Keep in private ownership.

Pleshey's fortune rose and fell with that of the owners of the Castle. Its heyday was that of Thomas of Woodstock (Duke of Gloucester), seventh son of Henry III, but greatest fall when his nephew Richard II arrested him and ordered him to be pressed to death in France in 1397.

The village is immortalised by Shakespeare. The Castle later became a rabbit warren.

The Essex Archaeological Society can take some credit for the excavations carried out in the village during the twentieth century. Frederick Chancellor undertook an initial investigation of the Keep in

1907 which was followed up by the Morant Club in May 1922 (and reported in *TEAS* n.s. Vol. 16 p190-204). Work commenced by the Society on excavating part of the Upper Bailey in 1959. The First Interim Report, by Philip A Rahtz of Birmingham University, was published a year later by the Society. (Those who attended the visit were given a copy.) It shows a photograph (on page 12) of the Mortimer Wheeler approach to excavation in defined and measured blocks. No further interim reports were published of work which continued to 1963 and it was not until 1977 that the report was completed as a whole (British Archaeological Report 42, by Frances Williams). "It is a sign of the times that this report is not published by this Society", J E Sellars wrote in the Winter 1977 edition of this Newsletter.

More recently, in 1987, a portion of the northern bailey was excavated and reported (*Transactions*. Third Series. Vol. 19 p166-175). However, between 1972 and 1981 a major investigation of the section through the Bailey / Motte moat, beside the bridge, and through the ramparts was cut. The excavation was carried out by Steven Bassett (now retired), again of Birmingham University, and although interim reports were published and finds were deposited at the Chelmsford Museum the whole work has never been published in full. Nick Wickenden suggests that this would make an ideal student's project: Frances Williams obtained her M.A. for the BAR report.

With all good speed at Plashy visit me



Empty bookshelves and unfurnished
factos
Unpeopled offices, unwritten
reports!!

Andrew Smith

Native Essex oyster under serious threat

Marine conservation has lagged at least 30 years behind its terrestrial equivalent. Though the government had intended to introduce legislation to create Marine Conservation Zones (MCZ) in 2012, the programme has slipped. In an attempt to overcome the lack of data about the health of the coastal marine environment in this county, Essex Wildlife Trust (EWT) in partnership with the Blackwater Oystermen's Association, conducted a detailed survey using GPS mapping, side scan sonar, dive surveys and direct sampling to assess the condition of the native oyster beds in the Blackwater – one of the areas proposed as an MCZ. The native oyster, *Ostrea edulis*, has been in decline for a long time, having lost more than 95% of its habitat. It lives in the sub-tidal zone and its beds provide an important stable habitat for a range of other sea creatures which cannot thrive in the shifting silts of the Essex coastline. The imported rock oyster, *Crassostrea gigas*, unlike its native equivalent, lives in the intertidal zone and does not benefit sub-tidal marine life. Moreover it has an adverse effect on those birds that use the tidally exposed mud as a feeding ground. This means that

harvesting these alien oysters is essential to maintain a good habitat for curlews and redshank, and a voluntary agreement has been reached with the oystermen to pick up rock oysters while sparing the native ones. However it remains uncertain whether the native oyster, that totemic Essex species, will survive, even if it is given total protection.

It is important to get the legislation to create MCZs into law and more information about them can be found on

www.wildlifetrusts.org/MCZfriends.

Michael Leach

Source:

Essex Wildlife, Winter 2012, pp.8-9

Our Online presence

Our new interim blog www.esah160.blogspot.co.uk is now receiving just over 1000 hits a month. It has been created to raise our profile with clear links to the catalogue of books held at the Essex University (including those in the ESAH Library), the Essex Places Names Project, our online bookshop (at www.blackmorehistory.co.uk/esah.html) and the new twitter account (<https://twitter.com/esah160>). There are also links to the Society's 2013 Programme of Events and membership application form.

Content continues to be added almost daily. The Society is able to advertise events coming up across the County which may be of interest to members. We are happy to advertise

the programmes of local history societies too.

The blog and 'Online Bookshop' are able to give latest updates on the availability for sale of surplus books not required by the Society. "Sale #2" is well under way. Members will receive a book list with this edition of the Newsletter.

The Twitter account, run by John Hayward, provides additional links both to the blog as well as news from other archaeological and heritage organisations.

The blog provides a new window to the world for our Society and we would encourage members to view it regularly, and to contribute by commenting online or sending any relevant material for uploading to me (at [e mail
apsblackmore@btinternet.com](mailto:apsblackmore@btinternet.com)).

Andrew Smith

Pleshey Castle Report – possible funding from the Castle Studies Trust

Seven summer seasons of excavations took place between 1972 and 1981, directed by Steven Bassett for the University of Birmingham, by kind permission of (and with funding provided by) the site owner, Col J Tuffnell. Three interim reports were privately circulated in 1977, 1980 and 1981. Steven Bassett has now retired and confirmed that he is not intending to write up the excavations.

Bassett excavated a trench, 9m wide and approximately 35m long, parallel to, and east of, the brick

bridge. This examined the southerly lower side of the motte, the ditch itself and the lip of the ditch cut in the bailey, exposing earlier bridge foundations, and a recut of the main defensive ditch.

The finds and paper archives have been deposited in Chelmsford Museum (accession number 1994.331).

They comprise :

- 69 plans and sections (mostly on film graph paper)
- 2 Director's note books, assorted notes and slides
- 2 drawers of A5 context cards
- 83 standard museum boxes containing finds by context and year in paper bags, of which :
- 13 pottery
- 18 brick and tile, worked stone, incl chimney bricks and decorated floor tile
- 24 animal bone
- 13 shell
- 4 plaster
- 1 glass (c.100 bags)
- 1 daub
- 5 slag, charcoal, mortar, seeds, soil samples etc
- 4 unsorted last season

Small finds include 11 coins identified by the Essex Numismatic Society, 1 box of copper alloy (mostly sewing pins and lace tags, c 160 envelopes), 6 boxes of iron including one box of c 120 x-rayed items), 1 box of c.70 lead fragments and window comes, 1 small box of c.14 items of worked bone, plus smaller quantities of whetstones, quern & mortar fragments, spindle whorls etc. Some partial hand written lists of small finds exist.



Some rudimentary stratigraphic analysis exists, plus hand written lists of over 400 features, and 1,000 layers (approximately half of which are components of the features).

An opportunity has arisen to bid (deadline December) for up to £5,000 from the Castle Studies Trust for a project to undertake post excavation work on this unpublished dig. Further grants to complete the work and publish a report would need to be sought from other bodies, including our own Society, the Council for British Archaeology, the Essex Heritage Trust, and Pleshey Parish Council.

There will need to be three main phases of work, which could be allocated to different funding requests. Some of the jobs could be carried out by unpaid volunteers.

1. type up a spreadsheet from the context cards
spot date the pottery and entering data onto the context spreadsheet
type up lists of finds by box, context and material
identify finds specialists and costs
2. phase contexts, preparing stratigraphic matrices, working from field drawings to produce phase plans and sections
finds reports and pottery report done
prepare archival report
identify finds and site drawings needed
3. prepare publication text (with appropriate reference to Rahtz's

previous excavation of the Bailey Chapel, and historic sources)
oversee production of publication drawings
agree publication and costs

Bearing in mind the applications for funding will not be considered until after 15 December, initial interest in being considered for this work is sought from members or their acquaintances. Previous experience of post excavation work is preferable. Please contact me at nick.wickenden@chelmsford.gov.uk with an indication of which elements you are interested in, whether you are offering voluntary help, otherwise stating your terms.

Nick Wickenden

Essex seen from elsewhere

The Winter, Spring and Summer 2013 newsletters of the Ancient Monuments Society contains some items of interest in Essex.

a) St Peter's church, Birch. The Church Commissioners determine the fate of redundant CoE churches. Under the 1975 Skelmersdale agreement, the Commissioners agreed to ask the Secretary of State to convene a non-statutory public enquiry whenever demolition of a redundant church was proposed. After a run of nine refusals and only one success, no such enquiry has been held for about 20 years. But recently the Secretary of State declined to order an enquiry into the

proposal to demolish an early C19 church in Wakefield. Apparently emboldened by this success, the Church Commissioners have now published a formal scheme to demolish St Peter's in spite of opposition by AMS which believed that there are possibilities of viable alternative uses. Clearly the prompt demolition of a church, and the subsequent sale of its site for development, is a much more attractive proposition to the Church Commissioners than the often lengthy negotiations required to find an alternative use for buildings which are often in poor repair.

b) After objections by AMS, the Victorian Society and the Twentieth Century Society, demolition of the former Marconi building which fronts onto New Street, Chelmsford, has been refused; it is now being converted into offices.

c) 224 Romford Road, Newham has been listed. Designed and built in 1878 as his home by the architect John Thomas Newman, it is in an eclectic Queen Anne style 'with some inspiration from the then fashionable Japan' together with embellishments of moulded terracotta and closely stacked octagonal chimneys. Though this house is mentioned in *Buildings of England: London 5: East* (2005), it is not identified as the work of J T Newman, though that architect is named as the designer of various churches and schools in the area.

d) The flitch chair, until recently in the town museum, has returned to its traditional position in the chancel of St Mary's church, Great Dunmow.

e) Upminster windmill has received a HLF grant for £1,513,400

for work on the mill and reconstruction of the miller's house.

f) Conversion of St Mary's church, Blackmore End, Wethersfield to single dwelling. The Church Commissioners have published this proposal for St Mary's. Since its closure in 1988 it has been used as a diocesan furniture store. The church was built at the expense of the Courtauld family in 1866 and designed by Charles Buckridge. The fate of its massive stone pulpit and font has not been revealed.

Michael Leach

Monument by Eric Gill **rediscovered at** **Buckhurst Hill**

Thanks to the vigilance and curiosity of a member of the Loughton & District Historical Society, a monument to a child in St John's church, Buckhurst Hill is now known to have been cut by Eric Gill, one of the best-known and highly influential British sculptors and letter cutters of the first half of the twentieth century. Gill was a friend of the family whose child had died in 1925, and this doubtless explains how the monument came to be commissioned from him in 1929.

Though the church has been closed for refurbishment, the work is scheduled for completion in September 2013. More information about this discovery – particularly fitting in the year that the Loughton & District Historical Society is



celebrating its 50th anniversary – will be found on their website.

The Mersea Barrow **Bones: experts confirm** **‘unique find’**

During the summer of 2012, Mersea Island Museum celebrated the centenary of the excavation of the Mersea Barrow with a special exhibition. Pride of place went to the items found within the tile-built tomb, uncovered by Samuel Hazzledine Warren in 1912 beneath the great burial mound. The lead ossuary and green glass cremation urn, containing a considerable quantity of bone, were on temporary loan from Colchester Castle Museum, to be seen on the island for the first time in the century since their removal from the barrow. The display aroused considerable interest, and many islanders were able to visit the barrow and venture through the reinforced excavation trench to the central chamber. There was eager curiosity to know more about the individual who had been buried beneath such a conspicuous monument, and generous donations from local people and from the Association for Roman Archaeology allowed Mersea Museum to commission scientific analysis of the cremated bone.

Regular viewers of Time Team will have seen Jacqueline McKinley, Senior Osteoarchaeologist at Wessex Archaeology, working on digs or identifying human remains. When the possibility of having the Mersea remains analysed was first explored,

she was sent a photograph and replied encouragingly: ‘This is a very interesting & rare collection you have here ... it would indeed be worthwhile having the bone analysed’. By January 2013 the fund-raising target had been reached and the bone fragments were transported to the laboratories at Salisbury for the exciting work to begin.

During the four months which passed while the work was taking place, tantalizing hints arrived in a series of emails. The material for analysis weighed almost 1800 g, comprising ‘good big bits’: in fact the weight of bone buried beneath the Mersea Barrow was described in the final report as ‘amongst the highest from any cremation burial, of any period, in the British Isles’. Added to this exciting news was the possibility, evident from the first inspection of the remains, that the individual had suffered from a severe arthritic condition. However, before the analysis could be completed, an unexpected problem arose. The bones were found to be coated with a strange, sticky substance which could not easily be rinsed off. To make matters worse, when attempts were made to scrape it away, it emitted a choking smell and unpleasant dust which resulted in Jacqueline McKinley having to work in mask and gloves for the first time ever.

There was an urgent need to identify the ancient material, which appeared to be some kind of resin. A specialist team, led by Professor Carl Heron of Bradford University, was found to be researching just such organic matter in archaeological

contexts. Even more fortunately, a research student was currently working on a PhD thesis exploring the 'identification of resinous materials in Roman mortuary contexts in Britain and evaluation of their significance'. Samples of the Mersea material, including shapeless lumps which floated when immersed in water, were sent immediately to Bradford for molecular analysis.

In the first week of June 2013, Mersea Museum Trust received two reports on the cremated bone from the Mersea Barrow. While Jacqueline McKinley provided data regarding the sex, age and medical condition of the individual buried within the Mersea Barrow, the second, by Rhea Brettell of Bradford University, analysed the organic substance which had coated the bones. It is hoped that reports will be published in the next volume of this society's *Transactions*. To provide more immediate information, the results of both reports are briefly summarized below.

Who was buried beneath the Mersea Barrow?

As expected, no evidence was found to identify the ethnic or geographic background of the deceased, whom the cremated bones identified as a male aged between 35 and 45. Most of his remains appeared 'relatively large and robust, with some marked muscle attachments, particularly in the lower limb'. He was 'regularly engaged in strenuous walking/running', and signs of soft tissue injury suggest he may have suffered a tear in one of the major thigh muscles. Far more surprisingly, evidence from spinal lesions and new,

excessive bony growths indicated that he suffered from Diffuse Idiopathic Skeletal Hyperostosis [DISH], a form of degenerative arthritis which today is found mainly in men over fifty. Jacqueline McKinley reports that she knows of no other cases of DISH recorded in cremated remains. This important Roman, living in a luxurious villa on beautiful Mersea Island, was likely to have suffered from stiffness and spinal pain, although these would not have been fatal unless there were complications.

How was he buried?

The body of the dead Roman must have been placed on a funeral pyre, close to where the massive burial mound would soon be erected over his tomb. The site was probably not far from his home, since many Roman villas, including that at West Mersea, had high status tombs nearby. Unlike in a modern cremation, the bones suffered varying degrees of oxidation after the soft tissue had been burnt away. This resulted in some of the surviving bones appearing black (charred), grey, or light brown (largely unburnt), while the majority appeared white in colour and fully oxidized. After the fire had gone out and the remains were cool, the bone fragments were placed into the large glass funerary urn, probably imported for this purpose. They did not fill the urn and yet, surprisingly, some skeletal elements were missing which could not have been totally consumed by the fire. Smaller bones from the hands and feet may have been left behind among the pyre debris, but the urn also contained far fewer fragments from the arms and ribs than



from the legs. It is not clear what happened to the remains left out of the urn. The original excavator, Hazzledine Warren, searched unsuccessfully for the site of the funeral pyre, and it is indeed possible that other human remains left at the pyre site are still concealed beneath the unexcavated, western half of the Mersea Barrow. It is even possible, speculates Jacqueline McKinley, that some bones such as those of the hands may have been distributed as mementoes for the deceased's relatives or friends.

An even greater mystery than the missing bone was the identity and purpose of the viscous substance which had been sent to Bradford University for analysis. Supported by 32 pages of technical analysis, involving a wide range of scientific tests and comparisons, Rhea Brettell's report concludes that the amorphous material within the Roman cremation urn from the Mersea Barrow consisted of two different resins. There was resin from trees of the pine family, 'believed to have special significance in Roman mortuary beliefs'. But 'of even greater significance, the more abundant resin present in the Mersea Island samples is *Burseraceae* exudate which most closely resembles frankincense'. This refers to the family of 'incense trees' which includes the genus *Boswellia*, four species of which produce frankincense. After detailed discussion of these, Rhea Brettell suggests that 'the frankincense in the Mersea cremation urn may have originated in east Africa.'

Because they had survived so well

in the Mersea cremation urn, it was clear that the pine resin and frankincense had not been used to accelerate or quench the fire, or to anoint the body before cremation, as they would then have been consumed by the intense heat, or traces of ash would have adhered to any surviving resin. It is possible that some of the resin found with the bones may have provided a seal to close the open mouth of the glass urn, but the frankincense must surely have been added to the bones as a liquid or unguent prior to their burial. Unfortunately, there are no directly comparable examples to help in the interpretation of this discovery. Although there are many references in classical texts to the use of frankincense and other perfumes or unguents at various stages of the funeral rites, it is extremely rare for any archaeological evidence of this to survive.

Why are these findings so important?

The identification made in the laboratories of Bradford University is of major archaeological significance, not limited to Britain. As the report confirms, 'It provides the first chemical confirmation for the use of resins in a Roman cremation burial.' Before the analysis of the Mersea remains, frankincense had been identified at only four other archaeological sites: in Egypt, Nubia and Yemen. We do not know the elaborate route by which it must have been traded or brought by a traveller into Britain. Yet for some unexplained reason it became part of the funerary rites for one individual,

buried not at the major Roman city of Colchester but on the coastal outpost of Mersea Island. No written Roman reference to Mersea has been found, and its name at the time is unknown. Although three significant Roman tombs were found on the island, only one villa is known of for certain, and that lies unexcavated, beneath and around West Mersea church.

When Hazzledine Warren excavated the Mersea Barrow in 1912, he was puzzled by the identification of yellow ochre mixed with crushed red tile which he considered 'may have been connected with some custom which was observed at the ceremony of interment'. If so, that was just one feature of the elaborate ritual which accompanied the departure of Mersea's dead Roman from this world into the next. His cremated bones had already received a libation of extremely rare, valuable and probably sacred frankincense. Jacqueline McKinley observes that the unexpected and currently unique discovery of this substance 'has enriched our comprehension of the wealth and magnificence of this individual's funeral rites and his reflected social status and connections'.

The analysis of bones found a century ago beneath Mersea's ancient burial mound has provided important new evidence and contributed significantly to academic research into burial rites and practices across the ancient Roman world. This Mersea Roman, whose remains lay concealed for nearly two millennia, has been brought into the daylight, and secrets of his medical condition

and elaborate funeral have been revealed. Whatever his name and background, he obviously held a major social and probably administrative position in this corner of Roman Britain. His monument is marked to this day, and into the foreseeable future, by the conspicuous earthwork of the Mersea Barrow.

Sue Howlett
Mersea Island Museum Trust

Danbury's lost church accounts

Sir Norton Knatchbull (d.1684), of Mersham Hatch in Kent, was member of Parliament for New Romney and a distinguished biblical and Hebrew scholar. His library was sold by auction in London in 1698. At least 1600 books were included in the sale, as well as a significant collection of manuscripts of medieval and later date. Of the latter, item 155 of the folio manuscripts was of Essex interest: 'Church Book of Accounts for the Parish of Danbury, for the Year 1586, 87, 88, 89, 90 and 91.'

How did these accounts from Danbury find their way to the library of a Kent baronet? It is difficult to understand how they could be of any interest to a serious biblical scholar. Closer examination of the manuscripts auctioned shows that they were an eclectic collection which included (amongst other oddities) the records of a Gloucestershire archdeacon's court from 1576 to 1585, as well as an inquisition post mortem from Dorset from the time of Edward II and III. It would appear



that Knatchbull was either collecting manuscripts indiscriminately, or that these items came as part of a job lot containing something else that he required.

It has to be assumed that the Danbury churchwardens' accounts (if this is what they were) have been permanently lost, as they are not in the ERO catalogue. How many other parish records passed into the collections of gentlemen as a result of the C17 enthusiasm for the purchase of manuscripts? It has to be assumed that most were discarded by later generations who would have seen no use for them.

Michael Leach

Source:

J. Bullord's sale catalogue of the library of Sir Norton Knatchbull (1698) in facsimile edition by EEBO (2012)

Historical Association, **Essex Branch** **Programme 2013-2014**

Talks on Saturdays, 2.30pm, The Link, Trinity Methodist Church, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, CM1 2XB.

Free parking at the Church or in the County Council car-park opposite. Visitors and prospective members warmly welcomed - a £2 donation requested.

2013: 28 Sept. Short AGM followed by Mr Nick Wickenden, Museums Manager, Chelmsford City Council:

Hylands House - its history, owners and restoration

26 Oct. Dr Pam Cox, Senior Lecturer, Dept. of Sociology, University of Essex: The making of BBC2's 'Servants: The True History of Life Below Stairs'

7 Dec. Professor Clive Emsley, Emeritus Professor of History, The Open University: Heroes and Zeroes: Crime and the British Military from Agincourt to Afghanistan
Followed by light seasonal refreshments.

2014: 11 Jan. Dr John Ashdown-Hill, Leader of genealogical research and historical adviser on 'Looking for Richard' Project': How Richard III was found - the historical and the scientific evidence behind the search
1 February Dr Adam Smith, Senior Lecturer, Dept. of History, University College, London: Abraham Lincoln: man and myth

1 March Professor Anthony Tuck, Emeritus Professor of Medieval History, University of Bristol: The English Language in Late Medieval Britain

5 April Professor Robin Smith, formerly of the University of Northumbria and former chairman of the Locomotion Trust: 'Catch Me Who Can': Whatever happened to Richard Trevithick?

10 May Dr Gareth Dale, Senior Lecturer, Dept. of Politics & History, Brunel University: The East German Revolution of 1989

For further information: email essexhal@btinternet.com or phone 07914 910612 www.history.org.uk and

www.essexbranchha.blogspot.com

MEMBERSHIP - Subscriptions due on January 1st each year

Single Member - £20

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Associate Member - £9

Institutions - £25

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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

2012 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £50,496

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, 13 Sovereign Crescent, Lexden Road, Colchester C03 3UZ.

Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail bill.abbott@btinternet.com

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.

John Hayward

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2013-2014

Sunday 6th October (Phillip Morant's Birth Date) - the Morant lunch at Mulberry House High Ongar, 12.30 for 1pm. After lunch speaker is Anne Padfield. Cost £27.00. Bookings with payment to be made by 6th September.

Saturday 16th November 2013 2 pm Chelmsford & Essex Museum. Lecture and demonstration on Flint Knapping Cost £ 6.00 including refreshments. (There will be items for sale)

Monday 10th February 2014 6pm Back room tour of Essex Record Office Cost £6.00 Max 20 people (If over subscribed, a further date will be arranged)

Further details of all events are available from the Excursions Secretary, Mr Graham Gould, 16 Osborne Road, Leyton, E10 5QW (0208 556 1423). **If you are interested in any of these events must please contact Graham Gould to check availability and then fill in the slips provided and return them to the Excursions Secretary at least 10 days before the event so arrangements can be made for tea etc. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope for each event**, for maps and other instructions. Cheques should be made payable to the Essex Society for Archaeology and History.

Saturday 23rd November 2013 at 2.30-4.30 pm - Inaugural Meeting of the Essex Industrial Archaeology Group (A sub-group of The Essex Society for Archaeology and History) at Chelmsford Museum, Oaklands Park, Moulsham Street, Chelmsford, CM2 9AQ. There will be a short business meeting , which is open to all, followed by a number of short talks introducing the Industries of Essex. Please indicate that you would like to attend by contacting Tony Crosby - tcrosby.iah@outlook.com or 01279 656632

The visits on the Society's programme are open to members and associate members only. The Society can accept no liability for loss or injury sustained by members attending any of its programmed events. Members are asked to take care when visiting old buildings or sites and to alert others to any obvious risks. Please respect the privacy of those who invite us into their homes.

NEWSLETTER

Winter 2013



The Essex Society for Archaeology & History

FORMERLY THE ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1852

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From the President

Some ostensibly heartening news was reported at the recent annual Visit Essex conference held on 27th November 2013. The tourism figures for 2012, we are told, were all significantly up on previous years, boosted by the impact of visitors coming to the county for the Olympic Games. The increased number of visits (by 891,737) generated higher income by £65M on previous years, which is not to be sniffed at, although not entirely unexpected. But what does this all mean in real terms and what is the lasting 'legacy' likely to be for Essex?

Visit Britain, the national tourism agency, has for some time held that 'built heritage, cultural heritage and contemporary heritage are core to Britain's offer' to visitors from abroad. In a recent survey of 10,000 tourists from other countries, it has now revealed that the desire to experience Britain's heritage and countryside is stronger than ever. With figures significantly increased in 2013, there is every expectation that the upward trend will continue in 2014.

Essex is specifically quoted as the county receiving the fourth highest number of visits 'for miscellaneous purposes.' That is, a significant number of tourists come to this county, although they do not fall into any clearly defined category. Even if, at a mere 9%, this figure might only relate to those going to and from Stansted airport, it must at least present some realistic opportunities.

The Visit Essex conference

received a number of informative papers, one being on The Digital Future, which dealt with a major evolution occurring in the digital marketing of Essex Tourism. In it reference was made to the need to 'place the user at the heart of the strategy' and to 'understand what each audience type wants and needs' with one of the three major elements of focus being on 'promoting what's great about Essex.'

For those interested in and practically supporting such matters, it is perhaps all the more concerning that, while Visit Essex is confidently looking forward, as it were, to catching rather more than two birds in the bush, Essex County Council itself seems set on gradually letting slip the fine bird it already has in the hand. I refer, of course, to Crossing Temple Barns, where from April 2014 it is proposed to reduce the current level of 9 full and part-time staff to 3 part-timers and, apart from the grounds, to restrict access to school holidays and weekends between April and October. With the Visitor Centre also otherwise closed and other facilities little used, except for special events and bookings, the potential of significantly increasing local use and developing tourist interest will be severely undermined, while the buildings themselves could be put at greater risk.

The site, which comprises a scheduled ancient monument with 6 listed buildings, including the Knights Templar's 13th century Wheat Barn and Barley Barn, was bought by ECC in 1987, with a contribution from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, to safeguard its outstanding heritage



assets and make them available to the people of Essex and the wider community. It was in effect to stand as a beacon of excellence for the county's heritage by providing an enjoyable public amenity that also had an important educational role. Another major feature is the recreated Tudor walled garden which is unique in the region. Information about this and the laudable objectives originally set out in the Crossing Temple Charter may be found in the ESAH 160 blogspot for 18 December 2013.

It is regrettable that serious financial restraints, which are fully appreciated, have sadly led to these somewhat peremptory proposals by ECC to reduce the site's care and public accessibility to basic levels. On Thursday 28 November John Hayward and I met Tim Dixon, Head of Country Parks, at his invitation, to hear about the new proposals and to discuss our members' concerns. We referred particularly to the proposed reduction in staffing levels and public access, withdrawal of a permanent custodian, lack of prior consultation and dialogue with interest groups such as our Society, and the apparently reduced promotion of this heritage site, now treated and managed as a country park. Our meeting was cordial and we received more detailed explanations than the standard replies sent to others who have expressed concern to members of ECC, including the leader and portfolio-holder. We were assured of the involvement of interest groups and that a developed Conservation Management Plan would in due course be sent for comment. In the

meantime, however, it remains for us to see if ECC can possibly be persuaded to modify these plans in a more constructive way.

We have offered the Society's support and members should also be aware of the Friends of Crossing Temple Gardens who were formed in March 2013 in response to the problems being faced. Their objectives are to raise funds and provide practical support to promote the gardens for public enjoyment and educational, research and therapeutic purposes. Their subscription rates range modestly from £5 and members wishing to join are asked to contact Karen Perry, Membership Secretary, Friends of Crossing Temple Gardens, on karenthompsonperry@gmail.com for further details.

On the home front, members will be aware of the changes made in December to the use of the rooms that the Society occupies at Hollytrees Museum in Colchester. These have arisen from Colchester Borough Council's decision to move its Visitor Information Centre into the building as from January 2014 and the concomitant need for repairs and redecoration. A great deal of extra work fell to our Librarians, Jane Pearson and Andrew Smith, as well as to other helpers, in achieving the necessary removals within the time agreed. I would like to thank them both personally and on behalf of the Society for what has proved a great success under difficult circumstances, especially Andrew for planning and executing the logistics of the

operation. He has also gone to a lot of trouble to sell or usefully give away much surplus stock which would otherwise have been thrown away and we are very grateful for this.

G. Mark R. Davies

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

It is very sad to report that Bill Hewitt died on 19 December 2013. After active war service in the Royal Artillery and a career in banking, he devoted his retirement to supporting a number of charities. He joined the Society in 1984 and was recruited by Ray Powell in 1993 to set up and run the Publications Development Fund. Those who had proposed the Fund had only modest hopes for it (a previous similar scheme having failed) but Bill set up the new fund like a military campaign, and ran it – with outstanding enthusiasm and efficiency – for 14 years. The sums that he raised for the Society exceeded all expectations; the anticipated £5000 was nearly doubled in the first year and the Fund (renamed the Publication and Research Fund in 2003) now stands at just over £50,000. The interest generated provides invaluable financial support to the Society's publications, and for carefully selected research projects.

Quite apart from this remarkable success, he was a doughty supporter of the Society in many other ways. On two occasions when the Society

found itself without a treasurer, he stepped in as deputy. He took a keen interest in the library and insisted that there should be a realistic valuation of its assets. He was at the forefront of efforts to reduce the distribution costs of the *Transactions*, and personally delivered large numbers by hand – and encouraged others to do likewise. His contributions to Council – of which he was a most loyal supporter – were always supportive, practical and well thought out, and his humour and goodwill were outstanding. The Society owes him an enormous debt and this will be marked by a full obituary in a future edition of the *Transactions*.

Michael Leach

Essex Industrial Archaeology Group

Following the launch of the new Essex Industrial Archaeology Group (EIAG) at the Essex Record Office conference on 6th July 2013, the Group had its inaugural meeting on 23rd November 2013 at Chelmsford Museum. This was extremely well attended with standing room only at one stage, until we found some stools in a store room! The meeting began with the appointment of the EIAG Committee, which currently consists of Tony Crosby (Chairman), Adrian Corder-Birch (Vice-Chairman and Membership Promotion), Paul Gilman (Secretary), Paul Sainsbury (representing the ESAH Programme Committee), Dave Buckley, Pam Corder-Birch, Jane Giffould, and Elphin Watkin. Having got the



business out of the way, the inaugural meeting then heard from Paul Gilman about the European Route of Industrial Heritage in Essex, Adrian Corder-Birch about brickmaking in Essex and the various transport modes used to distribute the products, and Tony Crosby about the aims and activities of the EIAG.

The Committee held its first meeting on 9th January 2014 and the main item on the agenda was to plan events for the coming year. It was noted that the ESAH Programme for 2014 includes two visits to industrial sites in recognition of the formation of the EIAG. These visits are to Upminster Windmill on 26th April and to Davy Down on 16th August to see, amongst other things, the Victorian 14-arch railway viaduct and the 1920s water pumping station and filtration plant. Both these visits will be of great interest to EIAG members. As these two visits are already planned, it gives the Committee time to arrange other industrial events later in the year and it is hoped to include an anniversary lecture in November and one other talk and visit in the early autumn. The Committee has further meetings in the diary at which these further events and ones for 2015 will be discussed. If you have any ideas for talks and visits which would be of interest to the EIAG membership or if you would like to join the Committee please contact Tony Crosby on ter Cosby.iah@outlook.com. If you are not yet a member but would like to join the EIAG details of how to do so were included in the Summer 2013 newsletter – new members would be most welcome.

Advisory Committee In Archaeology

The Advisory Committee was reconstituted in September 2013 with museum curators, archaeologists, planning officers, society representatives etc in attendance. It was agreed that the role of the Committee as a forum for dissemination and sharing of information, face-to-face discussion and integrated future planning was essential. It gave County Counsellors, who are to determine County Council's Strategy, the opportunity to familiarise themselves first-hand with Essex Heritage and Archaeology. Adrian Gascoyne and Richard Havis agreed to draw up a paper on the committee's future function and operation.

Archaeological work in Essex has been carried out by a variety of organisations of which Oxford Archaeology and Heritage Network are the more common. The Essex Field Archaeology Unit is now part of SE Archaeology. The former Director is engaged in writing up past excavation work. Solutions were being sought for storage of archaeological finds material.

The Essex Portable Antiquities Finds Officer, Katy Marsden, based at Colchester Resource Centre which is scheduled for closure and relocation, reported that Finds Officers' work was now part of British Museum and was funded until 2015. There had been a successful Epping Forest Finds Day.

Essex County Council is to become a “Commissioning Body” and £215M savings are to be made by 2015. The Cabinet County Counsellor for Heritage Services is John **Jowers**. The Manager of ‘Place Services’ into which Heritage and Archaeology have been ceded is Mat **Searle**. There has been a significant increase in Planning Applications for Development in the past 9 months, particularly in Uttlesford and north Chelmsford.

James Kemble reported that the newly-formed Industrial Archaeology Group would be part of Essex Society for Archaeology & History. Transactions EAH will contain Proceedings of the Archaeology Conference 2008.

Ken Crowe, Museum Curator at Southend, reported that excavations north of the Prittlewell Prince site shows that the burial was on the edge of marsh, similar to the Broomfield elite Saxon burial close to River Chelmer. He is shortly due to retire. No replacement has yet been made. He will undertake a voluntary research role on Canvey and brickfields.

Howard Brooks reported that the new Colchester Archaeological Trust offices were now at Roman Circus House, Circular North Road, where there is an Interpretation Centre and café. Part of the Circus will be left exposed to permit viewing. Post-excavation reports were being prepared for Wormingford, Marks Hall and Colchester Garrison.

James Kemble.

Ale and Hearty

Members may be interested to know about a new 16 page leaflet titled A Walking Guide to the pubs of Central Chelmsford and Moulsham: Past and Present. This guide has been published to complement the exhibition Ale and Hearty: The Pubs and Breweries of Chelmsford shown at Chelmsford Museums over the summer for which a booklet of the same name was issued (see www.aleandhearty.co.uk). Copies are available free of charge from Chelmsford Museums, Chelmsford Public Library, the Essex Record Office and some public houses in Chelmsford. All were produced by the Friends of Chelmsford Museums and the Chelmsford & Mid Essex Branch of CAMRA with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund.

David Buckley

The Coggeshall wood carvers

A number of highly skilled wood carvers flourished in Coggeshall from the mid C19 well into the C20 and their work is to be found in many Essex parish churches. William Polley of Church Street was well established by 1871 when he made the choir stalls and pulpit for the parish church, as well as the angels supporting the altar rails. At a later date he carved the rood screen and the organ case though neither of these has survived subsequent re-ordering of the church...



In 1885 Polley took on a thirteen year old apprentice, Ernest Beckwith (1872-1952) who, seven years later, set up his own business in East Street in Coggeshall. Beckwith combined wood carving with the restoration of antique furniture, and in 1908 was commissioned to work on Paycocke's. Much of the carving on the street frontage of this building (now in the hands of the National Trust) is his work. W.F.Crittall visited Paycocke's during its restoration, and this led to a range of commissions for Beckwith from the Crittall family. One consequence of the First World War was the erection on numerous commemorative lych gates and Beckwith was responsible for a number of examples in Essex. His son and grandson followed him into the business, and the latter (by then working from Northumberland) was commissioned in 2007 to make a new organ case for Coggeshall parish church, 110 years after his grandfather had worked on the same project.

There was a third, entirely separate, wood carving business in Coggeshall run by Samuel Marshall (1855-1934) in Bridge Street, though he did work in collaboration with Beckwith on some of the projects in the parish church. In 1907 he took on the 14 year old Bryan Saunders (1893-1973) who, in 1919, established his own business in Market Hill. Saunders established a reputation for fine carving far beyond Essex and his business flourished, enabling him to take an assistant (another of Marshall's former apprentices) in 1929. He continued to

work till his death in 1973 and his daughter presented the contents of his workshop to the National Trust which has a display of some of the items – including tools and partially completed pieces - in the Grange Barn at Coggeshall.

I am grateful to James Bettley for drawing my attention to a recently published book, *Art and Authenticity*, which examines how the commercial value of works of art is dictated by a variety of factors including the reputation of the craftsmen who created them, their attribution to an identifiable school or movement, and the significance of their subsequent ownership. It contains a chapter on Beckwith which considers how we judge such an artist who belonged to no particular artistic movement but simply excelled in his craft.

Michael Leach

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George Buckler's Churches of Essex (1856)

George Buckler's father, John (1770-1851) was an architect and topographical illustrator. His buildings are little known today, though he had a measure of success in his time, and he was placed second in the competition for the new Houses of

Parliament at Westminster after the disastrous fire of 1834. However his real love was making perspective drawings of ancient ecclesiastical buildings, though he did admit towards the end of his life that this was less profitable than being an architect, a profession which he finally abandoned.

Two of his sons also became architects and topographical illustrators. His youngest, George (1811-1886), who probably practised with his elder brother, was responsible for the design of the new museum at Wisbech in 1846, said to have been one of the first provincial museums to have been provided with purpose-built accommodation (though Saffron Walden has an earlier claim, its museum being constructed in 1834 by an unknown architect). By the early 1850s George Buckler was working as an architect for the Board of Works and was still there in 1860 when he wrote a report for the Board on the provision of a new house of the Lieutenant Governor of the Isle of Man. He was a much less prolific illustrator than his father or his older brother, but he drew a number of Essex churches (other than the 22 included in his 1856 book), published plans and sketches of Colchester castle (1876), as well as a fine image of Stoke-on-Trent railway station (1848) and probably other images that have not been traced. The reasons for his interest in Essex are not clear, as he was born and lived all his life south of the Thames in Bermondsey and Kennington. He is not known to have had any commissions in Essex though his brother did minor work on a lodge at Audley End, and his

nephew (also an architect) designed the chapel at Lilystone Hall, Stock. However his antiquarian interests in Essex were established by his early twenties when he walked from South London to look at East Ham church and 'other objects of interest' and he attended two meetings of the Essex Archaeological Society shortly after its formation, at which he gave papers on the frescoes at East Ham church (which had been discovered since his initial visit), and on the round churches of England with particular reference to the one at Little Maplestead. Both were published in the first volume of the Society's Transactions in 1858, though his name does not appear amongst the list of members in that volume. He also provided plans and illustrations for the Rev. H Jenkins' controversial publication of 1869 which claimed that Colchester castle was of Roman construction, and followed this a few years later with his own account of the castle which repeated the same opinion.

His *Twenty Two of the Churches of Essex*, architecturally described and illustrated was published in 1856 and in his very brief preface he explained his reasons for writing it. He noted that few Essex churches had the eye-catching towers or spires, or the richness of ornamental detail, which normally interested ecclesiastical writers. Yet he felt that there were churches in the county that were remarkable in one way or another, and he set out to describe twenty two examples in some detail. Some, such as St Albright's, Stanway, and St Runwald's, Colchester, were very modest buildings, but



nevertheless he was able to provide interesting details about both.

Most of his descriptions are accompanied by a detailed plan, and an engraving of the exterior as well as one or more of some particular architectural feature. There are short entries covering local history gleaned from the county historians whom he briefly lists, though he noted that their interest in ecclesiastical architecture was perfunctory. He also observed that Thomas Wright, in the preface to his *History*, had claimed that 'in order to ensure the accuracy of our descriptions – a point in which Morant is particularly deficient – the county has been personally visited'. Buckler cited errors in Wright's account which show that he had certainly not visited the churches in question and merely copied verbatim from the C18 historian.

His own accounts, in contrast, are obviously the result of detailed examination, even (in some instances) including the surroundings of the church. At Shenfield he noted 'a portion of a Purbeck marble gravestone with indentations of brasses, used as a stepping stone to a neighbouring horse pond'. He had a sharp eye for small details, illustrating (for example) a medieval escutcheon plate from the keyhole of the nave door at Little Burstead. His interests were not merely antiquarian, as he showed a keen interest in the structure of the buildings, and a respect for the craftsmanship deployed by earlier generations. This enthusiasm enabled him, for example, to describe (and illustrate) the east window of Brentwood chapel whose elegant but

non-Gothic tracery had been skilfully constructed in plastered brickwork – anathema to any true ecclesiologist. He often added practical comments about damp areas in buildings and how these could be remedied. He noted that, at South Ockendon, a new stove had been installed in an attempt to cure mildew which, in reality, was caused by a leaking roof. Elsewhere he detailed the damage caused to church walls by the invasion of ivy (though he did also appreciate its picturesque qualities).

Unlike many contemporary accounts, his descriptions cover items such as bells, bell frames, hour glass stands, fragmentary remains of medieval glass, iron hinges, rood screens, moulded wall plates and, in particular, the details of the framing of roofs, towers and spires. This was clearly the work of someone who understood the principles of building a roof, and who enjoyed working out how it had been constructed, as well as deploring ill-advised improvements, such as the removal of the tie beams in the north aisle of South Weald church. He also appreciated the workmanship of the brick towers at Fryerning and at Ingatestone, the latter ('a remarkable specimen of bold detail and fine proportion') being described at length together with an estimate of the number of bricks used in its construction. On old brickwork he often noted that there were 'five courses to a foot' and, where bricks had been used to lace flint walls, he attempted to distinguish Roman bricks from medieval ones.

Other than dampness, he rarely

reported that a church was in a seriously neglected condition. An exception was at North Ockendon where the windows of the north chapel were 'in a very dilapidated state, leaves of books and pieces of paper have been thrust into holes to exclude the wind'. It seems unlikely that, as an architect, he would have been able to overlook serious structural defects in the churches that he described, and one is left wondering how much of the frenzy of Victorian restoration and rebuilding was driven by ecclesiological demands rather than by structural necessity.

Several decades before the establishment of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, he expressed distinctly SPAB views on the treatment of old fabric. At Mucking he referred to the demolition of the nave but noted with approval that the patrons had 'preferred repairing the ancient structure (of the chancel) and retaining, in its integrity, the original design'. In general he was opposed to rebuilding when repair was practicable. He was not one to be alarmed by the often 'imaginary danger of cracking' and described the serious damage that could be caused by ill-considered buttressing, or unnecessary rebuilding. An illustration of the west end of Mountnessing church shows it bristling with eight buttresses. Elsewhere he commented 'now it is thought better to see (the church) clean and white rather than wearing an aspect of venerable age; the walls are therefore periodically cased with thick coats of whitewash, by which the remaining masonry is concealed

.....' At East Ham he praised the vicar for leaving the recently discovered wall paintings untouched, 'rather than spoil them by a too hasty and injudicious restoration' though there had been some 'obnoxious retouches by the village house painter' which were impossible to remove without destroying the original images.

Reading this book leaves one with a strong sense of regret that the author was not professionally involved in church restoration, as he would surely have approached such challenges with a much gentler hand than many of his contemporaries.

Michael Leach

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Obituary of Hazel Lake, Harlow Historian

Hazel Lake, a prolific historian of Harlow, died in Princess Alexandra Hospital, Harlow, on 29th May, aged 87 years. Born Hazel Evelyn Parkin in Oxfordshire, the daughter of a senior master at Sibford Quaker School, she was educated at Quaker schools and at the London School of Economics, where she took an economics degree.

She married Christopher Lake and they lived in Cyprus before moving to Harlow in 1956. Subsequently, she served as a teacher at Great Parndon School in Harlow, at Harlow College, and also taught in Sweden.

She was fascinated by the history of Harlow and dedicated herself to local research. In co-operation with others, she produced five books:

The Arkwrights of Harlow (with Joyce Jones) [1996]

Life and Death of Burnt Mill Village [1999]

Sugar Planters in Little Parndon [2002]

The Life of William Smith (with Jenny Handley) [2007]

The History of Mark Hall Manor [2010]

Hazel served as Vice-Chair of the Friends of Harlow Museum and

promoted the history of the town in this capacity. She was always ready to give advice and assist with other projects.

She also wrote two books on English language teaching and a number of historical articles.

She is survived by her husband, from whom she was divorced, by two daughters, Eleini and Katrina, and three grandchildren.

Stan Newens

World War II Heritage Project

Background

In 2012 the Society was invited to send a representative to a launch event for a new WW11 heritage project which is being supported for three years with European InterregIVA/2 Seas funding. The aim of the project is the creation of a lasting memory of the heritage of the Second World War by maintaining, preserving or reusing the heritage which remains for education and tourism. Suffolk and Essex County Councils along with the University of East Anglia and seven organisations from three other EU countries (the Netherlands, Belgium and France) have joined together as partners in the project. An important part of the project involves liaison with staff and volunteers from WW2 heritage sites, museums and related organisations in the regions of the partnership with the aim of familiarising them with the work of the project, introducing them to sites and initiatives in other

countries and creating a wider network of interested organisations. It was considered that our Society could play an important role in promoting the projects objectives through its publications, programme of visits and advocacy for the improved conservation and management of World War II sites. As the Society's representative I have now attended a number of project events.

Launch Event

The one day launch conference on 12th April 2012 was hosted by Suffolk CC at the Waterfront Building, University Campus Suffolk in Ipswich. It was attended by over 80 delegates from project partners, military heritage specialists, WWII museums, heritage sites and other bodies. The opening address by Dr John Schofield, from the University of York and former Head of Military Programmes at English Heritage, provided a review of developments over the past 15 years in military archaeology thereby setting the context for the project at a time of growing public interest in this aspect of European heritage. Speakers then developed the theme by reference to specific national and local projects with which they had been involved. These included:

Dr Mike Osborne: Defence of Britain Project (1995-2002), described the volunteer driven WWII UK structures and sites recording programme.

Paul Pattison: English Heritage, provided an overview of the historical development of Landguard Fort, Felixstowe, from the 16th to late 20th century (visited by delegates the next

day).

Dr Robert Liddiard: University of East Anglia, explained the Landscape of Exercise 'Kruschen', which took place on Dunwich Heath in 1943 and was significant as a D-Day landings training area.

StefTraas: Liberation Museum Zeeland, spoke about collaboration between voluntary and government organisations in that region.

FifiVissor: Zeeland oral history project, demonstrated how the project is recording memories and stories of those involved.

Mathieu De Meyer: Raversijde Atlantic Wall Museum, outlined the master plan for the development of this important Belgian site (near Ostend) as a gateway to other WWII sites in the region.

Paul Gilman/Fred Nash: Essex County Council, covered efforts made to research, record and promote sites in the county.

Cyrille Delatte: La Coupole (Nord-Pas-de Calais), explained how the WWII V2 rocket base has become a major remembrance and tourist destination.

The conference contributions gave the project a first class start and there was much to discuss at the evening reception, given by the Suffolk Portfolio Holder for Road, Transport and Planning, Cllr Guy McGregor. This was held amongst an interesting range of WWII project displays.

Normandy Visit

A study tour was made to Normandy by the partners and guests from invited museums and organisations on 15th-17 April 2013. The objective of the visit was to see how memorial sites in the region were



being developed to meet the growing requirements of tourist visitors while balancing this with the act of remembrance. Several of the well-known D-Day landing beaches and the Caen Memorial were visited.

Juno beach served for the landing of Canadian forces and the group toured surviving war time features and contemporary memorial structures with a young student Canadian guide. The Juno Beach centre, opened in 2003, presents all aspects of the Canadian civilian and military war effort, holds numerous events annually and serves as a Canadian place of memory in France.

Arromanche beach was the location for the Mulberry harbour which supported the landings. Here a circular cinema, Arromanche 360, shows on 9 screens the film "The Price of Freedom". Immersion in the heart of the action thanks to the 360 degree projection provides an extremely loud experience which, along with a very large visitor shop, provoked mixed reactions.

Pointe du Hoc Cliffs were the scene for one of the more difficult Allied landings on June 6th 1944. Here the complex of surviving bunkers surrounded by bomb craters creates particular issues for developing visitor facilities.

Of the five invasion beaches, Omaha beach is one of the two, assigned to US troops and where the largest number were killed. It is an important place of memorial and the American cemetery here includes 9,387 aligned tombstones, a chapel, a memorial and a visitor Centre. Visitor pressure at the site meant that

parts were closed for maintenance at the time of the visit.

The Caen Memorial is a large building where the goal is to make tourism and memory co-exist through a mixture of displays, educational activities, cultural entertainment and annual event programme which generates high media coverage.

While the opening event set out the range of current activity being undertaken by project partners, the Normandy visit demonstrated the level of attention being given in the D-Day landing area to WWII visitor locations. The growing numbers of visitors to this region and interest in WWII heritage as the events become more distant raises comparison with the approaches adopted for WWI sites in Flanders and northern France, where activity is intense as 2014 approaches.

Further Information

The project has produced a number of World War II heritage Newsletters which contain more details about activities by the group. Visit the website: www.worldwar2heritage.com

David Buckley

Book Review

William D'Oyley 1812-1890 – Loughton Surveyor and Superintendent of Epping Forest. Richard Morris, Loughton and District Historical Society, 2013, ISBN: 978-1-905269-19-8, pp. 56, illustrated (colour), £5-00

This is another excellent publication from the L&DHS, well

laid out, and clearly written and illustrated by Richard Morris. It describes the life of William D'Oyley, one of a family of local land surveyors, who became actively involved in the fight to save Epping Forest. D'Oyley's detailed knowledge of the Forest and its customs had already been invaluable for local residents seeking redress against the piecemeal enclosures, and were to provide the solid evidence needed to advance the Corporation of the City of London's legal fight for its permanent protection. His contributions included a series of detailed surveys of the entire Forest showing the areas which had been illegally enclosed and which, in the view of the Corporation, should revert to open forest. D'Oyley's collection of manuscript material, much of it accumulated by his father, also formed an important part of the Corporation's case. Acknowledgement of D'Oyley's important role in the fight for the preservation of the Forest led to his appointment as its first Superintendent in 1876.

This booklet examines D'Oyley's family background, his contribution to the practical aspects of the legal process, and his work as Superintendent. It also details the present whereabouts of the various maps and MSS that were important in the legal fight. One is left with the impression of a thorough and principled professional man whose support for the fight to save the Forest has - until now - never been sufficiently acknowledged. It is also an admonitory reminder of how much we owe to the perseverance and

determination of nineteenth century campaigners for the freedoms that we currently enjoy.

Michael Leach

Diaries of Mary Rich, countess of Warwick (1624-1678)

After her death at Leez Priory in Essex, Mary Rich's diaries (now British Library Add MSS 27351-5) must have passed to her private chaplain (Thomas Woodroffe), as they contain annotations in his hand. The diaries cover the years from 1666 to 1677 and have never been published in full, though Charlotte Fell Smith made excellent use of them, and quoted extracts in her fine biography of the countess. Fell Smith's view was that the diaries were of considerable historical value for their descriptions of local and national events, and that they also provided an unusual insight into the mind of a contemporary woman of deep religious conviction. She was less sanguine about their publication in full, and noted '... even the most patient and pious reader would weary of the tedious repetition of stereotyped phrases, of the daily record of prayers, sermons, penitence, intercession and self abasement ... written down week after week, year after year, in precisely the same words, and with identical phrases.'

Perhaps, after more than a century, this judgement should be re-examined. In 1908 the Camden Society published the diary of the



Essex clergyman, Ralph Josselin, in a heavily abridged version with the removal of most of what was regarded at the time as 'tedious repetition'. Yet the complete version of this diary, edited by Alan MacFarlane and published in 1976, provides a far better insight into the mind and beliefs of a contemporary puritan for whom the imminence of God perfused every aspect of daily life. Would not a complete edition of Mary Rich's diaries, appropriately edited and annotated, be of similar interest today?

A much shortened version of Mary Rich's diary, with most of the non-devotional material expunged, was printed in 1847 by the Religious Tract Society of London. In this case the editorial blue pencil had not been wielded by the RTS which had merely printed verbatim the 'exemplary' passages copied into a separate manuscript by Mary Rich's chaplain, Thomas Woodroffe, a century and a half earlier (BL MS 27358). It is not clear why he had made this copy. However by the end of her life, Mary Rich had acquired an almost saintly reputation and it is possible that Woodroffe had intended to publish a selection of her religious thoughts.

The nineteenth century saw not only the publication by the RTS of Woodroffe's extracts, but also Mary Rich's autobiography (BL Add MS 27357) which she had written over two days in February 1672. This was printed by the Percy Society in 1848. Two biographies (by Charlotte Fell Smith and Mary Palgrave) appeared in 1901 but little use has been made

of the diaries since then. Perhaps it is time that they were looked at again.

Michael Leach

Sources

anon, 1847 *Memoir of Lady Warwick, also her Diary*, Religious Tract Society

Fell Smith, C, 1901 *Mary Rich, Countess of Warwick*, Longman Green & Co

Mendelson, S H, 2004 'Rich, Mary, countess of Warwick' in *ODNB*

Colchester Castle

Addendum:

Documentary evidence

The opportunity for historians to visit the empty shell of the building, and to compare it to other examples, has led to the conclusion that Colchester Castle originally had no more than two storeys.

Historians have been misled by the notion that the Castle once had four floors. C. Henry Warren wrote of Wheely that, "this insensitive citizen did actually get as far as removing the two upper storeys (hence the dwarfed nature of the Castle today), when bankruptcy prevented him from completing his intentions" (Warren, 1950, 119).

J. H. Round dismissed Morant by stating "how utterly untenable is the theory that Colchester Castle was never higher than at present" (Round, 1882, 94) drawing comparisons with the Norman-built White Tower in London.

Morant's Colchester volume of

1748 should be read in a new light.

"It suffered from the ill-judged attempt of John Wheely ... many of the Roman bricks were taken away and sold, with most part of the free-stone at the coins and in the inward arches of the building. A fine well was destroyed, and the tops of the towers and walls forced down with screws, or blown up with gunpowder ... but after the great devastations, the remaining walls being so strongly cemented, that the profit did not answer the charge for further demolition, he was forced to desist" (Morant, 1748, 7).

This is further supported by an oral account.

The eighteenth century antiquarian and engraver, Chelmsford born Joseph Strutt (1749 – 1802) writes at length on Colchester Castle in his volume entitled 'Manners' in 1774 (rediscovered recently in the Librarian's Office at Hollytrees, and an omission from accession).

"I could not learn for certainty whether the top of the wall had been garretted or not, though an old man, who happened to be there when I was, informed me that he remembered something like embattlements at the top before it was so shamefully abused, great part of which were forced down with screws and gunpowder, and so falling down on the walls and vaults below, made lamentable havock and devastation, to the eternal shame of the despicable perpetrators, as it is to the great praise and honour of the present worthy owner, who takes great pains to repair and preserve this valuable antiquity" (Strutt, 1774, 27).

This eye-witness account appears to limit the demolition work to the embattlements and part of the Castle's roof only. The "worthy owner" at that time was, of course, Charles Gray.

Andrew Smith

Bibliography

Morant, Philip, M.A. The History and Antiquities of the most ancient Town and Borough of Colchester in the County of Essex. In three books collected chiefly from manuscripts. With an appendix of records and original papers. (Meggy & Chalk, Chelmsford, 1815)

Round, J. H. The History and Antiquities of Colchester Castle (Benham & Co, 1882)

Strutt, Joseph. Manners, Customs, Arms, Habit &c of the Inhabitants of England. Volume 1. (T. Jones, London, 1774)

Warren, C. Henry. Essex (Robert Hale Ltd., 1950)

CBA EAST

12th April pm Medieval graffiti in East Anglian churches. A talk and workshop with the award-winning Norfolk Medieval Graffiti Survey St Mary the Virgin Church, Parham, Suffolk

The AGM meeting will be at the **Roman Circus House, Colchester on Sat.10th May**, 10.30 for 11.00. Following the business meeting there will be an opportunity to see the new CAT work place and to learn about current/ ongoing projects in Colchester.



14th June 10-4 Explore the archaeology of Saffron Walden and Audley End. A museum visit and walking tour with English Heritage staff. Saffron Walden Museum, Castle and Audley End. Standard entry fees apply

See website for other events

<http://cbae.archaeologyuk.org/>

David Buckley

The Fighting Essex Soldier: Recruitment, War and Remembrance in the Fourteenth Century

Saturday 8 March 2014, 9.30am-4.15pm £15 including refreshments and buffet lunch A one-day conference at the Essex Record Office, Wharf Road, Chelmsford, CM2 6YT. Please book in advance on 01245 244614

www.essex.gov.uk/eroevents

Speakers include:

Dr Jenny Ward – Essex and the Hundred Years War: Taxation, Justice, and County Families

Dr David Simpkin – The Essex Gentry and the Wars of the English Crown. From Edward I to Richard II (c.1277-c.1400)

Dr Craig Lambert – Shipping the Troops and Fighting at Sea: The Participation of Essex Maritime Communities in England's Wars, 1320-1400

Mr Martin Stuchfield – Remembering the Soldier: Fourteenth Century Essex Brasses

16

Plus other expert speakers and lunchtime medieval music sung by members of Gaudeamus

In association with the Friends of Historic Essex

www.essexinfo.net/friendsofhistoricessex

Essex Local History Day

The Essex Local History Day will this year be held at the **University of Essex from 2 p.m. on Saturday June 7th 2014**. The speakers will be

1. Professor Tom Williamson: 'Understanding the historic landscape of Essex'.

2. Tricia Moxam and Dr Michael Leach: 'Fish, Fur and Honey: animal husbandry in historic Essex.'

Admission by ticket only from Local History Day, Department of History, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester, Essex.

Andrew Phillips

For the latest news and information about the Essex Society for Archaeology and History

go to our blog,

www.esah160.blogspot.co.uk

and follow us on

Twitter, <https://twitter.com/ESAH160>

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 2012 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £53,341

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, 13 Sovereign Crescent, Lexden Road, Colchester C03 3UZ.

Tel. 01206 369948 or e-mail bill.abbott@btinternet.com

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.

John Hayward

PROGRAMME OF MEETINGS 2013-2014

Friday 14th March 7.30pm Morant Lecture Mark Bailey –Serfdom in England, at the Chelmsford Museum. Followed by tea & biscuits. Cost £5.00

Saturday 26th April 12 noon Upminster Windmill Industrial site. Tour of the Windmill (1802) and site including the excavations of miller's house. Refreshments in the old Independent Chapel (1800). Cost £5.00

Wednesday 14th May 2pm Visit to Hill Hall and St Michael's church, Theydon Mount, led by Anne Padfield, with refreshments in St Michaels Church. Cost £10.00. (Free entry for English Heritage members)

Saturday 7th June 2pm AGM St Nicholas chapel at Coggeshall Abbey, followed by refreshments. There will be an opportunity to visit the ruins and the mill after the meeting. Refreshments £5.00

Saturday 5th July 10 am Full day Walking tour of Colchester Town with Mark Davies. Meet at Castle at 10am. Lunch 12.30 – 14.00 (provide own lunch). Cost £5.00. Max 15 people

Saturday 12th July 2pm Willingale. Visit to the churches, archaeological talk about the village, look at some of the village buildings and refreshments in the village hall. Cost £5.00

Saturday 16th August 12.00 for 12.30pm Davy Down and Stifford church. Visit to the 1920s pumping station and filtration plant (still pumping water today), the late 19C 14 arch viaduct(still in use by C2C), slide show and talk on the Mardyke river. Followed by a guided walk through North Stifford looking at the older buildings finishing at the church for refreshments. Cost £10.00 (Arrive earlier and bring a packed lunch if you wish).

Wednesday 17th September 1.30pm for 2pm Visit to High House, a Grade II listed manorial farmstead (1546) in Purfleet with rare Essex dovecote (now a scheduled ancient monument). Tour and talk. Also on site is the Royal Opera House scenery and set making workshops. Cafe on site. Cost £5.00

Sunday 12th October 12.30pm for 1pm Morant Lunch at the Red Lion Hotel in Colchester. Speaker Dr L J F Ashdown-Hill (leader of genealogical research and historical advisor to the 'Looking for Richard' project). The talk is on The Colchester Franciscan Priory (Greyfriars). Cost £25.00. Bookings by 14th September.

Saturday 8th November 2pm Lecture at Chelmsford Museum. Speaker Charles Bird on 'The Italian Job', Edward De Vere's Grand Tour, 1575. Followed by tea & biscuits. Members free, non members £1.00. Booking required.

Further details of all events and availability are available from the Excursions Secretary, Mr Graham Gould, 16 Osborne Road, Leyton, E10 5QW (0208 556 1423). All events to be booked via the Excursion Secretary at least 10 days prior to the event . Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope for each event, for maps and other instructions if you do not want these by email. Cheques should be made payable to the Essex Society for Archaeology and History. If there are any transport issues in attending these events, please contact the Programme Secretary.

The visits on the Society's programme are open to members and associate members only. The Society can accept no liability for loss or injury sustained by members attending any of its programmed events. Members are asked to take care when visiting old buildings or sites and to alert others to any obvious risks. Please respect the privacy of those who invite us into their homes.

NEWSLETTER

Autumn 2014



The Essex Society for Archaeology & History

FORMERLY THE ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY
FOUNDED 1852

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COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 31 DECEMBER 2014

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The illustration on the front cover is a photograph by Andy Barham of Beeleigh Abbey, Maldon, Essex.

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From the President

A regular item appearing on the agenda of the Society's Council meetings is broadly termed as a "watching brief on heritage services" in Essex. It enables members to report on or raise for discussion any current issue of concern, leading where appropriate to the sending of a letter, lobbying, or some other relevant action.

There have been a number of such concerns of late, mainly as the result of cutbacks in public expenditure at district or county level. We have continued to feel concern over the repercussions from major changes to the funding and provision of heritage-related services by Essex County Council and in the last issue I drew attention to the apparent contradiction between Visit Essex reporting an increase in the number of tourists and the major cutbacks at ECC's own 'flagship' heritage site at Crossing Temple.

On Wednesday 2nd April, Stan Newens and John Hayward, past President and current Secretary respectively, accompanied your President in a delegation to County Hall, where we were kindly received by Cllr. John Jowers, Cabinet Member for Communities and Planning, supported by several senior officers. These included David Adlington, Head of Enterprise Team, including tourism promotion, Visit Essex; Julie Nash, Operations Manager, Country Parks; Stephen Dixon, Archive Service Manager at the Essex Record Office; and Adrian Gascoyne, Senior Consultant, Historic

Environment Project Team. We raised several important issues and, after an enlightening exchange of views were thanked for raising the concerns and suggestions we had come to express.

Briefly, we were able to outline the high level of specialist and popular interest in the county's heritage as represented by our Society in particular for over 160 years as well as the large number of local groups, who form the majority in Essex Congress, and the general public. Our first concern being Crossing Temple, we welcomed the improved opening hours which are now less restricted than originally planned. However, we suggested that a more positive approach to generating income, as opposed to making savings alone, could be achieved by increased involvement of the local community, broadening the scope of the Friends' group and attracting tourists. The interpretation centre and tea room were excellent facilities which needed to be kept open. There was always the possibility of setting up a Trust.

In relation to the archaeological staff now assimilated into the multi-disciplinary teams of Place Services, concern was expressed as to how effective this was proving to be given the loss of specialist staff in this discipline as well as access to historic buildings advice, for which Essex had enjoyed a strong reputation. Adrian Gascoyne reported that service level agreements had been made with all but one or two of the other local authorities in the county, while some curatorial work was also being done for two others outside Essex. A new website had been created for Place Services.



In response to dismay expressed at ECC handing back Aythorpe Roding post mill (the largest remaining in Essex) leased since 1940, the need to make significant cost savings was explained as being 'inevitable'. It was hoped, however, that ECC would not turn its back completely on the county's historic mills after all that has been achieved. This mill no longer features on the Visit Essex website.

Towards the end of the meeting, the Advisory Committee for Archaeology in Essex was emphasised as having continued to play an important role as a co-ordinating body since the mid-1970s in spite of all the various changes during that period. Since ECC's current arrangements for archaeology came into effect two years ago, its future was unclear and Cllr. Jowers was exhorted to give it some encouragement. As a parting shot, the archaeological achievements of Essex County Council over the past 40 years were illustrated by the organisation of three major conferences held in 1978, 1993 and 2008. The first two had been successfully seen through to publication by ECC, whereas the Society had felt duty bound to deal with the last one. It would be grateful for some financial support if available in future. This seemed highly likely and the meeting ended on a cordial note.

A meeting of the said Advisory Committee was duly held on Wednesday, 23rd April, at which not only was Cllr. John Jowers himself present, but he also confirmed that a contribution to Essex Archaeology and History Volume 3 (Series 4)

would be forthcoming. Among other matters the Committee's future was considered and with final comments on the options to be submitted by the end of May, it seems likely that it will continue with the support of its constituent members, although not supported internally by ECC because of prevailing circumstances.

Our Society's Annual General Meeting was held this year at Coggeshall on Saturday, 7th June, 2014, which some 30 members attended and were able to take an ideal opportunity to visit the historic Abbey remains and mill on a sunny afternoon. This event marked the end of my triennium as President, an honour that I have enjoyed greatly thanks to the very active support of all the Society's Officers, Council and Committee members as well as many other members too numerous to mention. I would like, however, to thank three people in particular for all that they do for the society. John Hayward, since taking over as Secretary two years ago, has made a remarkable contribution for which I particularly am extremely grateful. Bill Abbott, as Treasurer, is always looking to make improvements and we would be lost without his expertise. Chris Thornton has enthusiastically kept the editorial pot boiling with the help of others and members have been and will be enjoying the results as the year progresses.

I am very pleased that Ann Turner has agreed to accept nomination as our next President. She is well known within the Society for her modest, cheerful and quiet efficiency as Membership Secretary for many

years. Born and raised in Chelmsford, where she also worked until joining Essex Police, she served at Brentwood, Clacton and Harwich before moving to Colchester and becoming the first Woman Detective there. As a trained Tourist Guide for the past 20 years, she is a strong supporter of Colchester and the county's heritage and has served with distinction as Chairman of the Colchester Guides Association. She brings her own special skills to her new role in which I am sure she will be very successful.

G. Mark R. Davies

An Apology

For thirteen years, Sally Gale has edited the Newsletter. In this time she has made it a significant benefit to members, providing information and items of historical interest with reliability and regularity. This year has been difficult for Sally and she has understandably not been able to continue with what is a demanding responsibility. We have missed one issue of the Newsletter and are a little late with this edition. A voluntary society such as ours is reliant on the goodwill, time and expertise of its members, so we are extremely grateful to Zoe Quinn taking over the Editorship at a difficult time. This is a bumper issue which we hope will go some way towards making good the deficiency in service to members in 2014. We'd like to thank Sally for all her good work and we send her our best wishes. Thank you for your

forbearance and please give your support to Zoe.

John Hayward

An Apology to Essex Heritage Trust

The recent print of the issued index volume for *Essex Archaeology & History*, which covers volumes 31-40, was generously assisted by a grant from Essex Heritage Trust. I very much regret that failure to spot an obvious mistake at the proof reading stage resulted in an incorrect attribution to Essex Environment Trust, and I apologise unreservedly for this error.

Essex Heritage Trust was established in 1989 and has an office based at Cressing Temple. Over the last 25 years it has raised an extremely impressive sum in excess of £1m to further its objectives. These are to encourage and assist the preservation of the county's rich and diverse heritage, and to make it accessible for the benefit and enjoyment of the people of Essex. It has made a wide range of grants towards the restoration of buildings and church contents, publications, works of art, and museum and art gallery acquisitions, as well as to the Essex Place-names Project.

A visit to the website at www.essexheritagetrust.co.uk will show just how diverse and varied its contribution to the county's heritage has been. It produces an attractively illustrated and informative news-letter showing where its grants have been



spent. Membership is £25 per annum and the Trust can be contacted at:
Crossing Temple,
Braintree, CM77 8PD or
mail@essexheritagetrust.co.uk or
01376 585794.

Michael Leach

Essex Industrial Archaeology Group

The EIAG Committee presently meets twice a month with the main aim of arranging talks and visits of industrial interest for ESAH members generally, but of specific interest to members of the Group.

In 2014, we visited two sites of industrial interest: Upminster Windmill in April and Davy Down in August to see, among other things, the Victorian 14-arch railway viaduct and the 1920s water pumping station and filtration plant. The Essex Congress' Archaeology Symposium for 2014 also took place on the 25th October at Waltham Abbey Royal Gunpowder Mills, an archaeological site of fascinating and varied industrial and transport interest spanning over 300 years.

Two extra events, with a focus on Essex's industrial past, were added to the ESAH 2014 programme:

The first in October, was a visit to the British Postal Museum & Archive store in Loughton where we were given a guided tour of the various delivery vehicles used over the centuries and the development of post and telephone boxes. It was extremely interesting and well worth a visit,

even if you have been there before, as the display changes frequently.

The second event was EIAG's first anniversary meeting and lecture in November, which was held at St Marks College, Audley End.

Professor Marilyn Palmer spoke to us about the use of technology in Country Houses with particular reference to Audley End House. She also accompanied some of us around the House itself as we discovered for ourselves the features she had mentioned in her talk.

Next year's ESAH programme includes visits of industrial interest to Beeleigh Mill, the Bata Reminiscence & Resource Centre, factory and company village at East Tilbury, and the Museum of Power near Maldon. There will also be a lecture on industrial archaeology at the anniversary meeting next November. More details of these events will be in the ESAH programme and also in the EIAG's own newsletters which include news on developments at various former industrial sites in the County.

EIAG has affiliated to the Association for Industrial Archaeology (AIA), affiliated societies of which meet annually on a regional basis. The Committee is continually looking at arranging events for 2015 onwards and any suggestions of subjects for talks and visits would be welcome, to tcrosby.iah@outlook.com.

Tony Crosby

World War II Heritage Project

In the last newsletter, information was given about the WWII Heritage Two Seas funded heritage project of which Essex County Council is a partner: www.worldwar2heritage.com

I have now attended two further project events as the Society's invited representative, both held in Essex. These demonstrated the range of activity being carried out by various organisations to protect and promote the surviving WWII remains in the county.

Trail Launch at Walton-on-the-Naze

ECC has supported the survey of WWII remains across Essex by Fred Nash for many years and to date over 2,700 sites have been recorded and the information made accessible online via the Essex Historic Environment Record:

<http://unlockingessex.essexcc.gov.uk>

An objective of this project is the creation of a number of WWII trails and the provision of interpretation at some of the more important of these sites.

Linking to the Walton Community Project, which promotes the historic sites of Walton-on-the-Naze, enabled the first of these trails to be launched on 2 May 2013 at the Naze Tower thereby furthering the aims of both organisations.

The area of the Naze has a particularly fascinating history which includes evidence of much activity during WWII. Coastal defences there

included a number of pillboxes, one of unusual design, and two of which are now located on the beach as a result of coastal erosion. The Tower is an eighteenth century sea mark which was used as a convenient location for a radar installation and is now a café and information point. Anti-aircraft artillery and rocket sites were both located here to defend the country against enemy bombers and V1 flying bombs. Particularly interesting, and little known outside the area, is the use of the Naze in 1944 for some of the earliest experiments in England with guided weapons. Five information boards located on the trail explain individual sites and their wider context. The boards are supported by a leaflet and a website:

www.walton-on-the-naze.com

Bats, Badgers, Birds and Pillboxes

A capacity building session on the theme "Natural Environment and WWII Heritage" was hosted by ECC at Hadleigh in south-east Essex on 5 November 2013.

Four short presentations provided the focus for discussion by the 30 delegates:

α.Neil Catchpole: Project Officer with the Dedham Vale AONB and Stour Valley Project described the conversion of ten WWII pillboxes beside the River Stour for use by bats as winter hibernation sites. Sealing up the pillboxes and leaving only a special access for the bats has helped to increase the numbers using them while providing improved protection for the structures.



α **Nick MacFarlane:** Shoebury Ranger for the Essex Wildlife Trust outlined the history of Gunners Park, Shoeburyness, and the important role that it played in the development of ordnance between 1805 and 1998. Current management problems include the presence of dangerous material, graffiti, and vandalism of the surviving historic structures. The Trust is trying to balance increased value of the site for wildlife and the protection of its cultural assets.

α **Robin Standing:** Reserves Archaeologist Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) provided an overview of the Society's management of over 200 nature reserves nationwide. These contain some 200 designated heritage assets and over 10,000 other heritage sites, including many of military origin. The RSPB first employed an archaeologist in 2009 with a job remit which includes understanding the historic resource and managing it accordingly.

α **Adrian Gascoyne:** ECC Archaeologist who ensured the protection of a Heavy Anti-Aircraft Gun Site at Hadleigh Castle which was located within the area chosen for the 2012 Olympic Mountain biking circuit. He explained how an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) involving various technical working groups had been carried out prior to the Olympics. This provided the basis for mitigation measures during the course of construction of the circuit. The Olympic legacy will include improved management and interpretation for both the historic

and natural environments within a multi-function green space. The presentation was followed by a tour of the anti-aircraft gun site.

Chelmer Valley Trail

On 6 November partners and guests had a site tour which, unfortunately, I was unable to attend. This was led by Fred Nash and visited WWII anti-invasion defences in the Chelmer Valley to the north of Chelmsford on the line of a proposed second trail.



Fred Nash explains the Hadleigh Anti-aircraft battery.

He explained the background to the construction of these structures which are all on the General Headquarters Line, which was constructed as a main line of defence across the whole country as a counter to the anticipated German invasion.



Project partners visit a pillbox near Hartford End.

The capacity building session demonstrated the considerable potential which exists for co-operation between natural environment and historic environment specialists to manage and better promote WWII sites. In particular, the Hadleigh visit highlighted the importance of prior assessment and integrated management plans for obtaining the best results.

Dave Buckley

Help Needed with Oral History Project in Halstead

The Halstead 21st Century Group has identified the 16 World War II air raid shelters in the town as a highly significant part of the town's, and the county's, heritage. The shelters, 15 of which are underground, were built by Courtaulds for their employees at the adjacent textile mill which was weaving silk for parachutes during the war. Not only are they campaigning for these shelters to be preserved, opened up to the public and interpreted, rather than have the land on which they are situated developed, but they are also about to embark on an oral history project to record the memories of former Courtauld employees from the town who used the shelters during the war. The Society would welcome more people to help with this project, especially people to undertake the oral history interviews. So if you or anyone you know has experience of oral history, or would be willing to undertake

training in oral history, and has a few hours to spare each month then do get in touch with the Group at

info@halstead21stcentury.org.uk

Source:

Essex Industrial Archaeology Group,
EIAG Newsletter, Oct. 2014

West Essex Archaeological Group

This group holds monthly meetings in Woodford from September to June each year, and organises a training dig in the summer (recently at Copt Hall, Epping).

Membership is open to anyone over the age of 12 and is £12 per annum for an adult. Contact

Mrs H McClory,
15 Buckingham Road,
London E18 2NH.

Historic Mill's Future Secured Thanks to a £1.4 Million Grant

One of London's handful of surviving windmills is to be saved, thanks to a grant of £1.4 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).

The Upminster Windmill was built in 1803 and remained in use as a family-owned business grinding corn until the 1930s. The Grade II* listed mill is only one of six surviving with sails in Greater London, and is one of the most complete examples of a smock mill remaining in the country. The name refers to the sloping sides of the structure that gives the building



the appearance of a countryman's smock.

The building is currently on English Heritage's At Risk register and the HLF grant will enable Havering Council, which owns the site, working with Upminster Windmill Preservation Trust to restore the mill and bring the milling machinery back to full working order.

Although situated in the midst of a built-up area, the five storey octagonal mill still sits in a one hectare open field setting. Archaeological research has identified 14 ancillary buildings that were associated with the mill during its more than 130 years of active life. As such, it gives a clear indication of the area's industrial heritage during the Georgian and Victorian eras.

The restoration project will also create an education and training centre in a separate building that will allow public access for the first time to a wide range of historical documents. The centre will be able to host school visits, public workshops and training sessions in traditional skills associated with milling. CCTV installed in the mill will permit visitors who cannot access the upper floors of the structure to view the restored machinery in action.

Volunteer researchers will record residents' memories of local history and the project will create two apprenticeships in tourism and visitor attraction skills.

Landscaping work will also be carried out around the mill.

At present the mill is only able to open at limited times for guided tours about 30 days a year. Once the work is complete, and the education and

training centre opens, visitor days are expected to increase fourfold.

Sue Bowers, Head of Heritage Lottery Fund London, said: "This is a rare surviving example of a building that was at the heart of the local community from the early 1800s, a site of local industry providing employment and helping to feed the village of which it was a part. This project will create a working example from this bygone era while creating present day job and volunteering opportunities."

Councillor Melvin Wallace, Cabinet Member for Culture and Community Engagement, said: "Upminster Windmill is one of the most significant heritage sites in the borough and this funding will go a long way, not only to restoring it to its former glory, but also in making it an invaluable educational hub. Thanks to the HLF, Upminster Windmill Preservation Trust, the Veolia North Thames Trust and the Architectural Heritage Fund, the mill will remain the jewel in the crown of Upminster for many years to come."

Dennis Coombs, chairman of Upminster Windmill Preservation Trust, said: "We're really grateful to the HLF for making this award. Volunteers have been opening the mill to the public for almost half a century now, during which the fabric of the mill has continued to decay. This will now be reversed and we will see the mill working again. I'm also extremely thankful to the team of volunteers, whose dedication and skills have made the restoration project possible."

Andrew Smith

Colchester Castle **Museum Reopened**

Colchester Castle Museum opened its doors to the public once again in May 2014, following a major refit. With emphasis on the “most important Romano British collection outside London”, it tells the story of the town from the Iron Age through to the establishment of a museum on the site.

Gone is the warren of false walls. On entering the museum visitors now see the internal structure of the castle open up before them. The castle itself is very much part of the story of the town.

The introductory area shows a map of the major sites which have contributed to the history, archaeology and understanding of the town. Then there is the first of numerous beautifully lit cases containing artefacts, well presented with adequate and clear supporting text. This acknowledges the formation of the museum, the substantial collection of George Joslin (a Victorian ironmonger), the merging of the Essex Archaeological Society’s collection in 1926, through to the work of professional archaeologists nowadays.

A case on the ground floor is used to show different aspects of the museum’s collection. To one side, on the first floor, is a cabinet showing an array of items taken out of storage, acknowledging the whole collection to be one of great significance and noting that it is impossible to display everything.

Returning to the viewing, in the corner of the ground floor is a seating area with large screen computer graphics showing aerial views of the castle through the ages – from its early days to the present where, after Wheeley had partly demolished the building for materials in the 1690s, the roofless structure remained until 1935 when it was covered to create more space for the museum.

At reception, we were advised to take the stairs or lift to the first floor. This is a large horseshoe shaped area telling the story of Colchester from its beginnings through to the end of the Roman period. It begins with a partly reconstructed circular Iron Age round house, the remainder being depicted by different shaded carpet to give the overall size and impression of the building. Well-known artefacts have been given a gentle makeover. The tombstone of Longinus Sdapeze alongside the memorial to Marcus Favonius Facilis adorn one side. The lighting picks out the inscriptions. Visitors are invited to touch smaller replicas coloured to show how these finds may have originally looked. Opposite are imitation Roman shields visitors can try on for size, with opportunities here and elsewhere to dress up.

The Lexden burial mound finds are another highlight of the gallery floor. These have a museum reference number containing 2001, which made me wonder whether these are newly displayed acquisitions. Mention should be made here that many items on display are new, new in the sense that they are recent discoveries, but the story of Colchester is not necessarily confined to items found



from within the borough and some are from elsewhere in Essex, discovered and acquired by the museum over its very long history.

The notable discovery of a Roman Circus over the past decade just outside Colchester's walled town provides the perfect opportunity in one corner of the gallery, for family members both young and old, to try their hand at the excitement of chariot racing. Those in pursuit of the more serious activity of looking at coin hoards and pots can smile and walk on by to view the iconic Colchester Sphinx, one of the museum's earliest acquisitions discovered in 1821 when the local hospital was built.

From the balcony onto the large but equally interesting stone wall, are projected huge graphics of the arrival of the Romans, the building of the Temple of Claudius on the very site of the Castle, and its subsequent destruction by Boudicca in 60AD. This sets the scene for the area which explains the burnt layer in the archaeology of the town when it was razed to the ground. We see the construction of the castle, its use as a prison, scenes of the siege, of Charles Gray acquiring the site as a pleasure garden before its creation as a museum.

We viewed the chapel, set out with chairs as a meeting space, before descending to the ground floor. Here, mediaeval history is depicted with references to St Botolph's Priory and St John's Priory, then of trade. Then there is an area devoted to the siege of Colchester of 1648 with a film shown in an adjacent room. It would be easy to miss the portion devoted to modern Colchester which has seating and

space to select interviews depicting town, family and military-service life.

Then it was back to the shop. Alas, there is no guide book as yet, though I believe audio tours will become available to enhance the experience of visitors. There is little in the shop specific to the castle museum other than boxes of fudge or chocolate. It is early days.

When exhibits are aligned to the history of the castle itself there have inevitably been sacrifices. The timber framed structure of a house pulled down in the 1940s has gone (a welcome omission), but there is also no mention of John Wilbye, the musician. There is little emphasis on the bay and say trade. Some have suggested that the museum has fewer artefacts on display than it had previously. I doubt that this is the case. What the visitor sees beyond the glass display cases, very cleverly, are the internal walls of the castle. This creates a spaciousness not hitherto seen. And, of course, the castle is part of the story of Colchester. It is an exhibit in itself.

Changing Times

Founded in 1860, the then Essex Archaeological Society was instrumental in the setting up of a museum at Colchester Castle. In the first half century of the museum's existence, the Society contributed substantial sums towards the curator's salary. Eric Rudsdale wrote in the 1940s that: "The institution grew from the time, when the Society supplied much of the stimulus and much of the money to keep it going...[but] gradually declined with changing times. It was

a sad break with a long tradition when the Society's annual meetings ceased to be held in the Castle, so closely associated with its beginnings".

Many members of the Society, Victorian gentlemen it has to be said, donated items for display. These items had a county focus, and the museum was once known as the Colchester and Essex Museum.

There are points where the Society's relationship with the museum declined. In 1974, membership of the committee which stretched back as far as 1859 became a co-option of the museum committee of the newly extended Colchester Borough Council. Then, in 1986, the Colchester Borough Council decided to end these co-options and the Essex Society for Archaeology and History's enthusiasm and influence was relegated, "a tear", as it was written at the time.

In 1926, an agreement was reached between the Colchester Town Council and the Society regarding the library and the artefacts. It united the collections of the corporation and the Society. It would be fascinating to trace their existence in storage. Our library found its home in the adjacent Hollytrees Museum in 1929 and remained there until 2000 when want of space determined a move to the University of Essex. Until 2013, the Society had its secretary and librarian's office at Hollytrees. We still have a storeroom for our stock of books and archives.

Our archives reveal appeals for items of interest to be given by members to the museum. Annual Museum Reports, particularly after

the appointment of M R (Rex) Hull in 1926 as the museum's curator, make many references to the Essex Archaeological Society. Here are some examples:

In the year ending 31 March 1927, the contents of a Harlow Rubbish Pit (5320.26-5328.26) "have already been fully described in Mr A G Wright in Essex Arch. Soc. Trans. Vol. XXIII p.222 but are described here again chiefly to publish the sectional drawings. The pit was found in opening a sand pit on the west side of the Roman road at Harlow, between the Railway Station [now Harlow Mill Station] and the bridge over the River Stort. One previously cleared on the opposite side of the road produced nothing, but the excavation was not supervised. The pit was cleared by Mr Miller Christy, Mr J L Glasscock, and Mr C F Hamilton".

In 1928, "In the Holly Trees meadow the Essex Archaeological Society have carried out excavations under the direction of Mr P G Laver, and have revealed the sally-port discovered by Duncan and described in the first volume of their Transactions (Old Series)".

Also, "A large area west of the Roman town now covered by Sheepen Farm and traversed (in part) by Water Lane, now called Sheepen Lane or Road [Colchester], has long been known to be full of remains of the early first century. ... An article on the remains recovered from the gravel pit will, it is hoped, appear shortly in the Trans. of the Essex Archaeological Society".



Finally for 1928, “A remarkable find of jewellery, 5580-5584.27, illustrated Pl XXI, was made by Mr E J Rudsdale, and reported by him in the *Trans. of the Essex Arch. Soc.* Vol. XIX., pt. 1, p.58. The articles appear to have been buried in a wooden box in an earlier rubbish pit on the area at Lexden which produces so much evidence of the Early Iron Age town [Colchester]”.

In the report for the year ended 31 March 1929: “By far the most outstanding find of the year, however, was the tombstone of the Roman cavalryman, Longinus, of the first Ala of Thracians. This magnificent piece of Romano-British sculpture has been repaired and set up in the Romano-British Room at the Castle Museum. A full report on it has been published in the *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society*, volume XIX, page 117.”

In the New Arcade, Colchester, “The most important find [in Smith’s Yard] was one of the minor streets of the Roman town, and the remains of houses on the S. side of it. According to Dr [Mortimer] Wheeler’s hypothetical plan (An *Insula of Roman Colchester*, *EAS Trans.* Vol. XVI), a street might be expected in this part, running parallel to the main street of the town”.

Finally, on excavations at Crouched Friars, also in Colchester: “It is not safe to put forward any theories about these bones, but they probably have nothing to do with the monastery. Skeletons are frequently found in this area: a large number were found

during sewerage excavations in 1913 (*EAS Trans.* XII. 257 and XIII 107)”.

Digitisation of publications will yield more references.

The 1960 report makes interesting reading. This was a joint publication by the Society and the corporation celebrating the museum’s centenary and reproduced the late Eric Rudsdale’s (1910-1951) history of the museum for the *Essex Review* in 1947.

Rudsdale joined the Colchester Castle Museum staff at the age of eighteen having spent many days as a teenager making sketches of the artefacts and assisting, where he could, with archaeological work such as the Lexden burial mound. (His archaeological diaries are in the *Essex Record Office*.) The illustrations were produced “from past numbers of the museum reports. They have been selected to show, so far as they permit, something of the sections in which the museum is particularly strong, and to give some idea of the archaeological material which has been saved by this museum, without which anyone attempting to study the archaeology of Essex would be in sad plight. The Roman period has been practically disregarded, it has been published recently exceptionally fully [*‘Roman Colchester’* by M R Hull (1958)]. The Bronze and Iron Ages have not been published recently, so we have concentrated on these.”

Andrew Smith

Pliny Rediscovered

It was as they downsized to relocate the storeroom books at Hollytrees, that members of the Society discovered under a large number of indexes to Transactions, Philemon Holland's seventeenth century translation of '*The Natural Historie of C Plinius Secundus*'.

Dave Andrews, who was present when the discovery was made, recognised it as the well-known translation Shakespeare is known to have referred to, though his would have been the 1601 edition and this one was published in 1634. On the other hand, the bookworm has had a feast of natural history. The page containing the words "Of worms that breed in wood" is the most devoured. The copy will be accessioned shortly to our library, after appropriate treatment.

The book was originally published by Pliny the elder c77-79AD and is one of the largest single works to have survived from the Roman Empire. The inside cover has an Essex Archaeological Society bookplate printed 'The Gift of Philip G Laver, F.S.A.' and it was probably acquired from his collection when he died in 1941.

Pliny demonstrates knowledge of the sun, moon and stars and their astronomical impact on the world: "twice in the yeare making the night equall with the day, to wit, in the Spring and Autumne ... to lengthen the day from the ... mid-winter, in the eighth degree of Capricorne: and againe to lengthen the night from the Sommer Sunsted, being in many

degrees of Cancer". A word with which we are familiar, acre, has exactly the same meaning: "was as much as might be eared up or ploughed in one day with a yoke of Oxen". In observing the changing seasons, and in particular the summer solstice which "falleth out alwaies (in Italy) to be just upon the 24 day of June ... the husbandman no sooner seeth ... to make hast to gather and inne the fruits of the yeare".

In the eighth book, Pliny declares: "Of land-beasts ... the Elephant is the greatest ... for they understand the language of the country wherein they are bred ... they remember what they have been taught ..."

Dogs are "the most faithfull and trustie companions of all others to a man... A sure and soveraigne remedy for them that are bitten with a mad dog ... the root of a wild rose Columella writeth, that when a whelp is just fortie daies old, if his tail be bitten off at the nethermost joint ... neither will the taile grow any more, nor the dog fall ever to be mad".

The second tome is a medical encyclopaedia. "For the biting of a mad dog take the ashes of a dog's head burnt, and apply it to the fore, it will save the Patient from that symptom of being afraid of water; which is incident to such as so be bitten". Rabies was clearly known to Pliny.

The nature of the cuckoo, classified as a hawk, is discussed: "These lay alwaies in other birds' neasts, and most of all in the Stock-doves, commonly one egge and no more. ... The Titling therefore that sitteth, being thus deceived, hatcheth the



egge & bringeth up the chick of another bird”.

We should not be surprised to see accounts of bees and honey, of grapes and wine, of olives and oil, and salt. “They will not go from their hive about their busines about 60 paces: & if it chance, that within the precinct of these limits they finde not flores sufficient: out goe their spies, whom they send forth to discover forage farther off”. “More plenty of hony is gathered in the full of the Moone”.

In the fourteenth book of the first tome much is written about grape vines, wine production and drinking. “In sum, that this may be truly said of wine, hat being taken soberly and in measure, nothing is more profitable to the strength of the body; but contrariwise, there is not a thing more dangerous and pernicious, than the immoderate drinking thereof.”

Andrew Smith

Morant Lecture 2014: **Serfdom in England**

This well-attended lecture based on his detailed studies of mediaeval manorial records, was given by Prof Mark Bailey on 14 March. There was never a legal definition of serfdom, though it bonded individuals to their lord or their lord's land, and imposed considerable restrictions on their time, their actions and their freedom of movement. Its precise form varied across Europe. In England it was never legally abolished but dwindled rapidly from the latter part of the fourteenth century; in Russia it was

not ended until the mid-nineteenth century.

In England, common law supported by the authority of courts (and ultimately by the king) developed between the 1160s and the 1220s. Villeins however were excluded from access to common law, and their only redress was through the manorial courts which were controlled by their (hardly impartial) lords.

Villeins were subject to numerous restrictions, and could be taxed at will by their lords, as well as required to provide free labour - both casual and on a weekly basis - on the lord's land. Though rent in cash or produce was demanded, the principle obligation was free labour. The rights of tenure, as well as the obligations of villeinage, were inherited through the male line – illegitimate children were born free, as their paternity could not be proved.

Unlike the lands of freeman, villein tenanted land was often not split (though it was permitted in south-east England). There were other marked regional variations; the lord's weekly demand for free labour was significantly higher in south and southeast England, while East Anglia had the lowest incidence of serfdom in the country.

The villein's obligations varied significantly even within a locality, being determined by custom rather than statute, and the traditional fines of heriot, merchet, tallage, chevage and bastardy were not necessarily levied.

The Black Death of 1348-9, which probably killed 50% of the population, marked the beginning of the collapse of serfdom, though it was not

the only event which had a major impact on society in the first part of the fourteenth century. The Black Death was preceded by a series of severe famines between 1315 and 1322, perhaps caused by reduction in sunlight due to a major volcanic event, as well as fatal cattle epidemics which may have killed up to 45% of livestock. The economic result of these events, combined with the Black Death, was a marked shortage of labour, triggering a rise in wages in spite of government attempts to enforce wage restraint by legislation.

Initially the lords tried to override local custom, and to enforce all the traditional demands, but the loss of much of their tied labour obliged them to rent out land that they were unable to cultivate to villeins who had profitted from wage inflation. The Peasants' Revolt of 1381 was driven by a much wider range of objectives than the abolition of serfdom, and was largely limited to those areas which had the lowest incidence of serfdom. The poll tax appears to have been the prime trigger, and the murder of government officials the immediate result.

The long-term economic consequences of these changes were considerable. The resented system of villeinage had been inefficient, and its collapse led to a marked increase in agricultural productivity. This, in turn, aided the growth of towns whose occupants had no land and were unable to produce their own food. The second consequence was the creation of a liberated workforce which could turn its energy to generating wealth from other forms of trade and production.

Serfdom was already in terminal decline before the Peasants' Revolt and had effectively died out by 1500. Villein tenure was replaced by copyhold tenure which inherited some of its features, such as the heriot and entry fines collected by the lord of the manor, but without - of course - the labour obligations. In due course, the liberated labour market and the increased efficiency of agricultural production provided the right conditions, not present anywhere else in Europe at that time, for the Industrial Revolution to take place.

Michael Leach

Morant Histories Restored to Library

The Revd. Philip Morant's *History of Colchester* (1748) and *History of Essex*, in two volumes (1768) are the first published histories of the County. The Essex Society for Archaeology and History acknowledges the work of this local historian every year with a Morant Lecture in the spring and Morant Lunch in the autumn. Several copies of the work have come into the possession of the Society over the years. One of the most interesting is a copy recently repaired by a bookbinder - thanks to Stan Newens - and accessioned to our library is one owned by a former member, Isaac Chalkley Gould. It is the original edition complete with plates which have not been interfered in any way with zealous librarian's stamps to prevent the theft of the same.



In the front cover are two handwritten notes which display the provenance of these two volumes.

“I desire that my friend Horace Wilmer, may select any books, china, or furniture, to the value of twenty pounds as a free gift in memory of one who appreciated his never-failing kindness.

The 2 vol original edition of Morants Hist. Essex (worth about 12 to 14 guineas) may form part of the above if Horace Wilmer has not the work already & cares to possess it.

I C Gould”

“My dear old friend died Oct 11 – 1907”

“Aug 1930

The 2 vols of Morant’s History of Essex were given to me by my old friend Horace Wilmer, FSA

H W Lewer

Priors, Loughton, Essex”

“[The volumes came into the possession of the Essex

Archaeological Society in 1944]

The gift of H W Lewer, Esqr, FSA. Hon Treasurer.

Dec 1944”

Prior to restoration, the books were in a sorry state with cover boards detached. Our deputy librarian took the volumes to an antiques valuation evening held in aid of Friends of St Laurence Church, Blackmore, where auctioneers Boningtons of Loughton gave them an estimated value of £800 to £1000 but advised against replacement of the original boards which would ‘kill the value’. The library committee and council took the view that books are to be read rather than valued monetarily so decided on a sensitive repair. The

books will be accessioned to our special collection and form some of the treasures of our Society.

Andrew Smith

Anecdotes of British Topography

This work, compiled by Richard Gough (1735-1809), was published in 1768. Gough was one of the foremost antiquaries of the eighteenth century. Though he did not go on the Grand Tour, he travelled extensively throughout the British Isles collecting material. He is perhaps best known for his new translation of Camden’s *Britannia* (1789) to which he added a considerable amount of additional material. He corresponded extensively with fellow antiquaries, was a member of the Royal Society, a regular anonymous contributor to the *Gentleman’s Magazine*, and a supporter and editor of several county histories. Though Gough had no particular connections with Essex, his main residence was nearby in Enfield, and he had certainly travelled in the county, taking a particular interest in Pleshey about which he published a historical account in 1803.

Anecdotes of British Topography was his first major publication in 1768 (with a second extended edition in 1780). His introduction gave an overview of the development of topographical histories which also included maps, prints of important buildings, meteorology and natural history. A useful index was included, though it was limited to personal names. His section on Camden’s *Britannia* provides considerable detail

about the numerous editions, and their various merits or defects. Similar details were provided for many of the other publications he described. He was openly critical of some of the topographical works that had been published, too frequently flawed by 'incorrect pedigrees, futile etymologies, verbose disquisitions, crowds of epitaphs, lists of landholders and such farrago, thrown together without method, unanimated by reflections, and delivered in the most uncouth and horrid style.' The outcome of his veiled criticism of Philip Morant's *History of Essex* has been fully explored by Ray Powell in *EAH*. Gough had adversely commented on Morant's omission of monumental inscriptions, and his implied failure to use, or to acknowledge, certain historical sources. In general, Gough noted that many county topographical histories had been partly or completely compiled but never completed, and he wryly observed that antiquarian studies seemed destined to result in the premature death of their authors! He regretted that Sir Simonds D'Ewes had wasted time attacking Camden's *Britannia*, time which (in his view) would have been much better spent in preparing his Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex collections for publication. Some of D'Ewes' East Anglian material can be found amongst the Harleian MSS in the British Museum, but Gough was not able to discover the whereabouts of his three volumes on Essex. In the twentieth century, Watson was able to identify only one undated D'Ewes item specific to the county - *liber manuscriptus de Valore Decanatum et aliorum in Comitatu Essex* - and

came to the conclusion that Gough had probably been confused by the similarity of Sir Simonds D'Ewes' first name with that of one of his contemporaries, the herald Richard Symonds, whose three volumes of Essex material are still to be found in the College of Arms library.

Gough's section on the early historiography of Essex, starting with Strangman and ending with Morant, formed the basis of every subsequent account. Gough's work is still impressive and perhaps underused. He gave full publication details of books (including dates of subsequent editions), and attempted to trace the whereabouts of lost manuscript histories, such as John Norden's *Essex Discribed* of 1594 (finally tracked down and published by the Camden Society in 1840). Where he was successful in tracing a manuscript, he usually provided the library catalogue references. One such MS in the Essex section was the printer's draft for the first part of Rev William Holman's unpublished *History of Essex*. Gough usually provided a critical assessment of works that he had seen - both published ones and those in manuscript. Of Salmon's incomplete *History of Essex*, for example, he noted that, 'though being thought by many too contracted and superficial', nevertheless 'such as it is, I wish he had lived to finish it.' He was clearly impressed by Salmon's work and it may have been Gough's comment that it was 'the best yet extant' that upset Philip Morant (most of whose *History of Essex* was already in print). In addition to histories in print and manuscript, he cited articles relevant



to the county published in the *Philosophical Transactions* of the Royal Society, as well as engravings, maps and pamphlets. His interests extended to natural history (a seven foot eel caught at Maldon) and meteorological phenomena, such as the sighting of the aurora borealis at Upminster. He even noted (with some scepticism) an account of a monstrous snake that had appeared on Lexden Heath (though in this case he does not provide the reference).

Gough's style in *Anecdotes* is clear and vigorous. His engagement with the broader aspects of topographical studies and his insistence on the importance of seeing a place first hand will appeal to the modern historian, as will his defence against Morant's criticism for his inclusion of 'fabulous' stories. 'Accounts of Witchcraft are inserted' he wrote '... because it is part of the curiosity of this age to hunt after such monuments of the credulity of the last.' There is a strong sense of curiosity running through the whole work, including an interest in bricks and the history of brickmaking. He was clearly familiar with the use of bricks in several Essex buildings, and was aware of the standard sizes of Roman bricks and the re-use of this material in later centuries. His comments on St Botolph's priory at Colchester were carefully observed, 'a close inspection will show it to be composed entirely of Roman bricks, cut or broken into small pieces, so that it would be difficult to find one of its original dimensions, whereas there are several remaining intire in the castle and in the walls of other churches in the same town.' Other Essex brick

buildings that he must have examined include Layer Marney tower, Ingatestone church, the bridge at Pleshey Castle, Rochford Hall and the ruins of the Roman town at Great Chesterford.

In contrast to the numerous engravings of classical ruins, he lamented the scant regard paid to Gothic architecture, and identified the need to understand its different styles and periods. 'Had the remains of ancient buildings been more attended to' he noted 'we should have had before now a system of Gothic architecture in its various æras: we should have had all its parts reduced to rules: their variations and their dates fixed together.' A footnote indicates that 'Mr Muntz' had commenced such a work in four volumes, but had abandoned it for lack of support. This was Johann Heinrich Müntz (1727-98), a painter and engraver of Swiss origin, who worked from 1758 to 1762 for Horace Walpole at Strawberry Hill, before being dismissed by him for having an amorous affair with one of his servants. Gough, too, clearly had second thoughts about Muntz's capabilities as, in a handwritten addition to his own copy of *Anecdotes*, he noted that Muntz 'was totally incapable of executing this work, nor knew what Gothic architecture was, but by living four years with Mr Walpole and drawing some antiquities for him.' This may be an over-severe judgement, as Muntz is known to have made some accurate architectural drawings of doorways at St Alban's Abbey and perhaps other studies that have been lost. However, his project received no

encouragement and Muntz, having lost Walpole's patronage, left England for good in 1763.

It was to be nearly another 60 years before the development of Gothic architecture was seriously studied by the architect, Thomas Rickman (1776-1841) in his *Attempt to discriminate the Styles of Architecture in England* published in 1817. The book contained extremely accurate drawings of Gothic detailing by Rickman, and it was he who devised the names of the various periods of Gothic architecture that are still in use today.

Michael Leach

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The Medicinal Spring at South Weald

The Essex section of Thomas Cox's *Magna Britannia*, dating from about 1716, notes 'Here are some Springs of a Medicinal Nature, as those of Upminster and Burntwood-Weal.' Though Morant does not mention the spring in his description of South Weald near Brentwood in his *History*, there is a passing reference to it under Upminster - 'In

North Upminster is a mineral Water impregnated with alkaline salts, of the same nature as that at Brentwood. It is good to correct acidities, and in vomitings, reachings, and too copious haemorrhoidal fluxes.'

Early twentieth century analysis confirmed the presence of salts of magnesium, calcium and sodium in both but, though those at South Weald were termed by some as chalybeate (i.e. rich in iron), this element was absent. Other Essex mineral waters are known to have been exploited commercially in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, but those at South Weald had achieved more than a local reputation a century or more earlier. In 1697, Sir John Bramston of Skreens, Roxwell, was taking a variety of remedies for oedema and bullous eruptions, including 'Lime Weald water and asses' milk. Two years later, falling ill in his 89th year with an itchy and scaly skin eruption, he took a combination of 'Gascon's powders and Weald water.' On both occasions he appears to have used South Weald water on his own initiative, though he had previously received advice from several different doctors and apothecaries who might have advocated this treatment, including the London physician, Sir Thomas Millington. On other occasions he had taken water sent over from a spring at Northall in Hertfordshire, which had been much favoured by Charles II, so there must already have been a system in place for marketing and transporting mineral waters.

South Weald's waters had come to the attention of Dr Benjamin Allen (1663-1738), a noted Braintree



physician and naturalist, and probably personal physician to the Earl of Manchester of Lee Priory to whom his book, *The Natural History of Chalybeate and Purging Waters*, is dedicated. He was a close friend and the family physician of both John Ray and Samuel Dale. His book provided details of the composition and the clinical uses of Essex waters. From a twenty-first century perspective it is difficult to understand his suppositions and conclusions, but he and his analyst, Edward Carter of Scarborough, were nothing if not thorough. A large number of now obscure reagents were used to test South Weald's water; these included syrup of violets, deliquium of salt of tartar, gall, tincture of logwood, syrup of clover, Hungarian vitriol, solution of sublimate, lignum nephriticum and sal saturni. The results of these tests were noted (for example 'a dusky Gold colour near that of Malaga sack with Lignum Nephriticum'). The crystalline structure of the salts precipitated after evaporation was examined, and the keeping properties of the water (not more than four days for South Weald's water) were established. Of more interest, perhaps, is that Dr Allen clearly had had extensive clinical experience of the properties of water from this particular source. He made careful notes on its adverse effects on some patients ('Leprous Cases' for example) and its benefits in others (particularly the 'Hypochondriacal Cases').

Modern medicine would approve of his insistence in taking the individual patient's constitution into account before recommending

treatment. He described the striking (but, to the modern mind, scarcely credible) side-effects from these waters when one of his female patients experienced 'Violent Flushings of the Body and Face, and an Obstruction of the Catamenia' (i.e. menstruation). Though it seems much more likely that this patient was suffering from menopausal flushes, rather than side effects from spring water, Dr Allen must be commended for being alert to possible adverse reactions from his treatments, particularly in an age when the treatment was sometimes worse than the illness.

One can conclude that South Weald's waters were known and used extensively, at least by this physician in the late seventeenth century. As it had poor keeping properties (not more than four days, according to the analysis), there must have been some means of providing a regular supply between its source and Braintree – unless his patients were lodged in Brentwood during their treatment. The other Essex waters described by Dr Allen came from Colchester, Felsted, Marks Hall, Upminster and Woodham Ferrers, and there is a passing reference to 'water in a Field adjoining to the Right Honourable the Earl of Manchester at Leez in Essex'. The last was not analysed, but perhaps included out of deference to his patron.

By the late eighteenth century, the South Weald spring was protected by a brick structure which was still intact though neglected when Miller Christy visited in 1907. He noted that the water was dirty and that the 'taste resembled the flattest ditch water' -

hardly an enthusiastic endorsement! It was marked as a 'well' on the first edition 6" OS map (close to the site of the icehouse), but its position near the top of a slope at GR TQ 566942 is now inside the deer enclosure of the country park, and is inaccessible for close scrutiny.

Michael Leach

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Lord Petre's Mortuary Chapel at Thorndon

This is now in the hands of the Historic Chapels Trust after years of decline, and destructive raids by vandals. A generous grant from English Heritage has funded some emergency repairs to make it safe; these include the removal of the spire which topped the belfry tower, and repairs to parts of the roof and the gable end coping stones. Much remains to be done, including re-tiling, restoration of part of the boarded roof internally, stabilisation

of the belfry and rebuilding the spire. The stone is a soft ragstone, which has weathered very badly in places. There is a lower decorative band running round the entire building, now largely destroyed by erosion, though some exquisitely delicate details remain on the north side. The upper decorative band, immediately under the eaves, has survived much better, and appears to contain sections of the Latin funeral mass.

This remarkable building was designed by William Wilkinson Wardell (1823-99) for the 12th Lord Petre in 1854. A friend of Pugin and Cardinal Newman (the latter persuaded him to convert to the Catholic faith), Wardell completed some 30 Catholic churches in London and southeast England before being obliged in 1858 to emigrate to Australia for the sake of his health. The Thorndon chapel is his only known work in Essex. Though the surviving building is surrounded by at least an acre of graveyard, the Petre family themselves were interred in a vault beneath the chapel, accessed by a coffin lift from the nave. The interior of the chapel has an angel hammer beam roof, each set of wings in a slightly different position giving a sense of movement like a time-lapse photograph. The boarded underside of the roof is gilded and painted from eaves to apex, with a further set of angels high up on the collar beams. Unfortunately, the elaborately carved altar and the Stations of the Cross have been badly vandalised and much of the stained glass smashed. The decorative tiled floor and the central coffin lift are intact, and the dismantled spire is stored in the



vestry pending the funds needed to rebuild it. Even in its damaged condition it is a very striking building, and it is excellent to know that it is in the hands of the Historic Chapels Trust.

By a historical anomaly the chapel is the final resting place of James, the first Earl of Derwentwater who was executed in 1716 for his part in supporting James Stuart's attempt to unthroned George I. After the earl was beheaded, the corpse was taken to the house of a London surgeon where it was embalmed before being conveyed to Dagenham Park near Romford. Three days later, its long journey to Dilston in Northumberland was associated with an apparently miraculous display of the aurora borealis. On arrival at the ancestral home, it was interred in the family chapel where it remained until the estate was sold in 1874, and six Derwentwater coffins were removed from the vault. In spite of strong local resistance to the removal of their 'sainted Lord', the Petre family obtained permission to bring the first earl's remains to Essex. Due to concerns about the possibility of violent opposition by the parishioners of Dilston, this had to be done clandestinely at night. When the lead coffin arrived at Thorndon Hall, it was placed in a timber shell covered in crimson velvet. On 16 February it was deposited with due ceremony in the vault of this mortuary chapel where it still rests.

Before his execution, the earl had left instructions that his heart was to be sent to a convent in Paris. Prior to the embalming of the body, the heart had been removed by a London

surgeon. Four months later he was surprised to note that, in spite of having made no attempts to preserve it, the organ was 'miraculously uncorrupted... more entire than with any art I could have used.' Encased in lead, it survived the French Revolution, hidden in the convent church wall, and was transferred to a new building when the old one was demolished in 1860. During the 1871 uprising, however, the convent was plundered and the casket containing the heart was removed. Its present whereabouts are unknown.

Michael Leach

Source:

Bowden C H (ed), 1897 *The Life and Death of James, Earl of Derwentwater 1689-1716*, Catholic Truth Society

Evinson, D, 2004 'William Wilkinson Wardell 1823-99' in *ODNB*
Information from the Historic Chapels Trust

Saved by a Timber Framed House

Soon after the Restoration in 1660, Sir John Bramston (1611-1700) of Skreens, Roxwell, a Royalist to the core, became involved in an acrimonious and long-running conflict with Henry Mildmay (1619-1692) of Graces, Little Baddow.

There were several reasons for this antipathy. Mildmay represented Maldon in parliament and doubtless expected to be able to protect his family's influence in the town. On the Restoration, his cousin (Sir Henry of Wanstead) was expelled from the post of high steward on the grounds that he

was a 'technical regicide' and Sir John was appointed in his place, holding this office until 1688.

Their mutual antipathy was reignited in the Quarter Sessions in Michaelmas 1671. A case brought by the county sought to determine whether the lord of the manor, Lord Fitzwalter (Mildmay's brother-in-law) was responsible for the repair of Chelmsford's bridge. Before the case opened, Sir John realised that, though the jury were gentlemen, 'they yet were younge, huntsmen and comrades of the Lord Fitzwalter'. He attempted to have the case transferred to the Assizes in order that it could be heard 'before equall and more indifferent judges.' While he was trying to arrange this, the jury was sworn in, the case proceeded and it was concluded that Fitzwalter was not responsible for the repairs. This resulted in an angry exchange between Sir John and Henry Mildmay who had been acting for his brother-in-law. Mildmay insulted the principal witness for the county, Dr Michaelson, rector of Chelmsford, by ignoring his proper title and referring to him as 'one Michelson.' Sir John, who had befriended and financially supported Michaelson after the sequestration of his living during the Civil War, was enraged and retaliated by calling Mildmay 'an apocriphall collonell'.

In his diary Sir John revealed more of the background to his antipathy. He noted that Mildmay had been 'bred under Holbech, scolemaster of Felstead, whoe scarce bred any man that was loyall to his prince. From his mother's wombe, and his master's tuition, he sucked in such principles

of disloyaltie and rebellion, and proved so good a proficient, that he became collonell of horse and Governor of Cambridge Castle; whither the Dr Michelson was brought a prisoner, and very hardly used by him; the remembrance whereof was revived in me by his slighting the poore man, and netled me soe I could not brooke his insultinge of the poore doctor in the face of the countrie.'

Later that day, when the justices were at dinner together, Lord Fitzwalter ('haveinge treated his jurie liberally' for deciding the case in his favour) sought out Sir John and took him to one side. The other justices acted protectively, sensing that Fitzwalter had come to deliver a challenge from his brother-in-law, but his lordship merely threatened Sir John by stating that 'the collonell would take his satisfaction another way.' In due course he did this by telling the Earl of Oxford (then lieutenant of the county) that certain Essex justices were not sound Protestants. On being pressed, as doubtless he wished to be, he named Sir John.

Not long after, further fuel was added to the disagreement. Sir John's brother, Moundeford Bramston, a justice in Romford, was investigating an alleged rape by a soldier from the Earl of Oxford's troop which was quartered in the town. The officers refused to surrender the trooper for questioning, claiming that he was subject to martial, and not to civil, law, and there was a dispute with the constable who was sent to arrest him. Sir John then went with his brother to Chelmsford to protest to the Earl of



Oxford and – judging by the diary account – there was a robust confrontation. The earl complained to the king, but the lord chancellor, the Earl of Clarendon, upheld the justices' right to jurisdiction over the soldier in the alleged rape.

The Earl of Oxford, primed with Mildmay's claim, informed the king that not only was Sir John not a true Protestant, but that he was a closet papist as well. Such an accusation - if proven - would not only have excluded him from all public offices, but also could have been potentially treasonable. Sir John acted resolutely and went to London to confront the Earl of Oxford at his town house. He was received by the earl and was reassured that he had nothing to worry about. Unconvinced, Sir John tried but failed to persuade the earl to arrange an audience for him with the king. He then conferred with friends at court, and was assisted by the Duke of York in delivering a written petition to the king, and in obtaining a hearing before the Privy Council to plead his innocence.

On 3 May 1672, Mildmay was ordered by the Privy Council to provide a reply. This took the form of a counter petition which contained an account of a visit to Sir John's house by a papal emissary and Francis, the 'pretended' Archbishop of Canterbury. He reported that oaths had been made, and payments received by Sir John and his brother, Moundeford, but did not name his informant. Five days later, he produced a signed and witnessed affidavit from Ferdinando de Macedo, a native of Portugal, who claimed that he had been present at this covert meeting on 22 May 1663.

It appears that the king himself questioned Macedo in French at a Privy Council meeting; perhaps the fact that his queen, Catherine of Braganza, was Portuguese was a reason for his particular interest. The Privy Council must have decided that Macedo was an unreliable witness as on May 17 a pardon was granted to him 'for all offences, particularly forgeries and perjuries ... on condition of his declaring all he knows about the said accusation, and the author and contriver of it ... and confesses himself suborned in the matter of Sir John Bramston.'

It is clear from the Bramston MSS that Sir John had been busy collecting information on Macedo's character. This revealed that Macedo had persuaded the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of Winchester to provide him with a generous allowance to enable him to go to Oxford University. His four months at Christchurch had ended in his expulsion by the dean, after complaints that he 'gamd & feasted & spent his money riotously ... that he pulled out a knife to stab one.' Significantly, Macedo retaliated by accusing the Bishop of Winchester of being a papist. He had attempted to smear others with the same allegation, and duped several into providing him with money and accommodation. He had also picked up a young lady on the road, taken her to London on his horse, treated her to two half pints of sack in a Southwark tavern and then 'did much opportune her to lay with him.'

Macedo's wife provided further telling evidence: 'After about a week or two days after Macedo was in

Councill, Mildmay bid Macedo's wife lett her house and take another, where shee would live very privately, and hee would have Macedo to weare a periwig that soo he might not be knownd and when hee goes out to carry his face downward and hee will give a summ of money to Macedo and hee promise they shall never want because her husband did his businesse bravely in Councill.'

Most of the relevant Bramston MSS are undated, making it difficult to sequence the exact order of events and, apart from Macedo's pardon, the *Calendar of State Papers Domestic* has nothing to add. It would appear that the case came before the Privy Council towards the end of May 1672 in the presence of the king, the attorney general, Sir Heneage Finch, Lord Keeper Bridgman and others. Macedo was questioned closely and part of his testimony was undermined by his claim that Sir John's Essex house was built of brick and stone. Sir John noted that 'the impudence of the man amassed me strangely, and all that knew me and my house. The Lord Keeper asked me what my house was built of. I told him tymber; that besides the underpinning, chimnies and walls about the garden, there was not any brick about my house, and not any stone but the kitchin and hall floors.' Sir John was also able to show that neither he nor his brothers could have been at Skreens on the day in May 1663 when they were alleged to have received the papal emissaries. Macedo then recalled that he had quoted the date 'Roman not English style' but Sir John was still able to show that both

he and his brothers were in London on the amended date.

Finally Macedo was forced to confess that his entire statement had been fabricated under Mildmay's coercion, and Sir John was fully exonerated in an official notice in the *London Gazette* in June 1672. 'His Majesty is pleased to declare his very good opinion of Sir John Bramston and his brothers and that he regarded the proceedings of Mr Mildmay as a malicious contrivance against them who appear altogether innocent of the charges brought against them.' Mildmay was stripped of his office of justice of the peace and, though Sir John considered legal redress against him, wiser counsel prevailed. Too much would have depended on the evidence of Macedo, a witness of highly dubious veracity.

It would be an exaggeration to claim that Sir John was saved by the fact that his Essex home was timber-framed as there was plenty of other evidence to discredit Macedo's statement. But it must be a little unusual for the fabric of one's house to be used as part of the evidence to undermine the testimony of a hostile witness.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Bramston MSS: ERO D/DEb 33/1-39
 Braybrooke, Lord P (ed), 1845 *The Autobiography of Sir John Bramston*, Camden Society
 Calendar of State Papers Domestic, Charles II, 17 May 1672
 Henning, B D (ed), 1983 *History of Parliament: House of Commons 1660-1690*, Boydell & Brewer
London Gazette 20-24 June 1672, no: 688 (copy amongst Bramston MSS)



Parthenon Marble Found in Essex

It is well known that Lord Elgin, as British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire in Athens, controversially acquired about half the surviving fragments of the Parthenon sculptures between 1801 and 1805. These were shipped back to Britain at intervals, one consignment going down in a shipwreck in shallow water off the island of Cerigo (now Kithira, just NW of Crete) in June 1802. Though all the crates containing these marbles were apparently recovered by sponge divers, they remained on the island until the autumn of 1804 when Lord Nelson (who must have had more pressing matters on his mind) ordered HMS Madras to collect them and transport them to Malta, for onwards conveyance to London. Elgin's collection was purchased by Parliament in 1816 and presented to the British Museum.

What is less well known is that other artefacts from the Parthenon were dispersed both before and after Lord Elgin's substantial acquisitions, and that sculptural fragments – presumably obtained by other collectors - can now be found in a number of museums across Europe.

The story of how a piece of the Parthenon frieze found its way into the garden of Colne Park, garden is obscure. The architect James Stuart (1713-88) had picked up a piece of inscribed stone in Athens, the text of which was published in *Archaeologia* in 1771. The slab was subsequently lost, but part of it was found in 1902

in an Essex rockery. The incomplete Greek text was copied and sent by an Essex clergyman to Dr Murray of the British Museum. Murray recognised it as the text which had been published in *Archaeologia* and further investigation of the rockery produced the rest of the slab, as well as a fragment of the Parthenon frieze which had not been recorded in Elgin's drawings. It consisted of the head of a horse ridden by an Athenian youth, and that of the attendant groom and it fitted perfectly into a damaged section of Elgin's marbles in the British Museum. It was illustrated in the RIBA Journal in 1902.

It seems reasonable to assume that Stuart, while in Athens, picked up other sculptural fragments including this piece from the Parthenon. Either sold in his lifetime, or dispersed after his death, the two pieces may have reached the Essex garden rockery via the collections of Thomas Astle (1735-1803), Philip Morant's son-in-law. Thomas Astle did not live in Essex and it may have been his son (who later owned Colne Park) who failed to appreciate the significance of the pieces and consigned them to his rockery.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Beard, M, 2002 *The Parthenon*, Profile Books, 87

Essex Review, xii, 1903, 115-6, 190

Journal of Royal Institute of British Architects 22 November 1902

Marsden J H, 1864 *A Brief Memoir of the Life and Writings of Lt Col*

William Martin Leake, London, 11-12

An Ongar Conventicle in the 1590s

The following case was brought to the Archdeaconry Court of Essex on 9 September 1616:

‘We, the churchwarden and side-men of Shelley, have presented Elizabeth Ramsie, the wife of John Ramsie, and Richard Palmer, sometime servant to the said John, to be suspected by common fame and report, to have committed adulterie; and nowe are enjoined by the 117 cannon to explaine the said presentment, doe now againe, having heard further of the offensive behaviour of the said Elizabeth in former tyme; as namely when she was first marryed, she using to goe to conventicles in the night at Chipinge Ongar, her husband beinge at that tyme fast asleepe, she was ordinarilye brought home by one yonge man or other, and had then been presented by the churchwarden, but that our minister diswaded him; this is to be proved yf neede be; since which tyme she hath sundrye tymes ridd abroad; sometyme with one man and sometyme with another, and have been knowen to lie in chamber with some that hath ridd forth with her, neither coulde she denye it, being urged in the matter: and especially with one Andrew Warnsley of Chipinge Ongar, who was one, when she was a mayde, that woulde have marryed her, and when she was newly marryed was her servant; at which tyme it was observed by many she was more kinde to hym then to her husband; as indeed she hath been to

all her men servants from tyme to tyme, which hath been offensive to many and mucche talke hath bene of it, and she hath bene reproved of it by our minister: upon which circumstances we doe by there presents confirm our former presentment, in these words following: That is – We doe present upon a common fame and report, Elizabeth Ramsie and Richard Palmer some tyme servant to John Ramsie, and now servant to Christopher Wilkin of Highe Ongar, to have committed adulterie.’ This rather breathless deposition raises a number of interesting points.

Firstly there are a few fragments of additional information from other sources about some of those named in this citation. Andrew Warnsley, a labourer of Shelley, appeared at the Quarter Sessions in 1622 for not scouring the 22 rods of his ditch which abutted the highway and was probably the same Andrew Warnsley who was married in Chipping Ongar church in September 1597. St Martin’s had also seen the marriage of John Ramsey and Elizabeth Burton four years earlier. In spite of the variations in spelling, these are almost certainly the individuals who were named in the Archdeaconry court deposition.

Secondly it was entirely normal at this time for moral offences to appear before church courts, and adultery was seen as a particularly serious as it threatened the sanctity of the family, as well as the principles of property inheritance. However court action was often seen as a last resort after local mediation had failed, and in this case it is clear that the rector of Shelley had intervened previously and



successfully blocked a move to bring the parties to court ('our minister dissuaded him', in other words he had dissuaded the churchwarden responsible for referring the case to court). However the rector's attempts to make the offenders alter their ways had clearly failed to produce the intended result and the village rumour mill was now in full spate ('muche talke hath bene of it'). The point had been reached where more had to be done.

Thirdly, and much more surprisingly, is the reference to nocturnal conventicles in Ongar at the end of the sixteenth century, soon after Elizabeth Ramsey's marriage. These were secret meetings of disaffected puritans gathered in a private house to discuss religious matters, to read the Bible and to pray, and were made illegal in 1593. Such activities were strongly disapproved of by both church and civil authorities and resulted in the periodic prosecution, and the imposition of fines or imprisonment of the participants. It is particularly interesting to find such a conventicle in Ongar at this time, as the rector, Rev. Hugh Ince, had strong puritan credentials, and was described as a 'sufficient and diligent preacher'.

As far as I am aware there are no other references to such puritan meetings in the town at that time. It is no coincidence that the self-righteous churchwarden of Shelley strengthened his case by linking Elizabeth's suspicious nocturnal activities ('her husband beinge at that tyme fast asleepe') with what would have been seen as the very suspicious behaviour of an unaccompanied married woman attending a conventicle after dark.

Nothing more is known of the outcome of this case, or of the individuals involved, but they give a glimpse of an age that is both very different and surprisingly similar to our own.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Crisp, F A (ed) 1886 *The Parish Registers of Ongar, Essex*, printed privately. Essex Quarter Session Rolls, Midsummer 1622 ERO: Q/SR 237/21,22

Hale, W (ed) 1847 *A Series of Precedents and Proceedings in Criminal Cases from the Act Books of the Courts of the Diocese of London*, Edinburgh

Ozonia Hotel, Canvey Island

One of the delights of John Betjeman's quirky 1973 documentary on Metroland was a glimpse into the house that Ernest George Trobridge (1884-1942) had built for his father-in-law, and later occupied himself. It was a mix of Arts and Crafts and 'cottage picturesque', an idiosyncratic and asymmetrical composition of thatch, exposed beams and 'Tudor' brick chimneys. He left a strong imprint on the domestic architecture of the NW London suburbs. He also established the Compressed Green Wood Construction Company to pioneer prefabricated buildings in elm, a project (only grudgingly backed by the Ministry of Health, and eventually forced into bankruptcy) intended to assist with the housing shortage following World War I. The timber was shaped when green, and

then reworked later to compensate for the natural tendency of elm to warp on seasoning. All his architectural work was domestic, and usually employed a rich mix of materials, asymmetrical forms and eclectic architectural styles. All were well built and idiosyncratic, and would now be deemed as 'highly desirable' in estate agents' brochures.

His only Essex work appears to be the 1936 Ozonia Hotel on Canvey Island, named presumably after the trivalent oxygen (ozone) which was believed to give sea air its beneficial qualities. Contemporary photographs show a rather bizarre three story building with cat-slide roofs in thatch, and a curved end which was clad in waney-edged weatherboarding. The development (of which he appears to have been proprietor) provided shops at ground level and, true to Trobridge's socialist principles, inexpensive self-contained holiday accommodation above. The internal decorations were unusual and were the creation of an out-of-work artist. There was a mural of penguins as a backdrop to the ice cream parlour and elsewhere a ghostly scene of terrified figures fleeing from some unknown horror – a curious choice for a holiday home! The building lingered on after the Second World War in local authority ownership, though by then its thatch had been replaced with a more utilitarian roof covering. It survived the 1953 floods but was demolished in the early 1960s.

Michael Leach

Source: *Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings Magazine*, Spring 2013

Scrap Metal Dealers Act 2013

This became law in February and offers hope for the first time that the spate of lead thefts from church roofs may abate from the epidemic proportions of recent years. In the early 2000s these averaged 20 a year, but by in the last three years of that decade totalled more than 14,000, costing churches about £32M in replacement costs. In December 2012 six men were imprisoned for lead thefts from 20 churches in the Midlands. Now scrap metal dealers must be nationally registered, and must demand identification from potential sellers of scrap. Cash transactions are not permitted. Doubtless some villains will find a way round this, but it should make the disposal of stolen lead significantly more difficult.

However we cannot remain complacent about the continuing threat to historic churches and their contents. It was reported in August that two panels had been hacked from a C15 rood screen in Holy Trinity church at Torbryan, Devon – and a third badly damaged in an unsuccessful attempt to remove it. This theft is particularly poignant as these saints had escaped the mutilation to which such images were almost invariably subjected in the C16 and C17. In case anyone should be offered a painted medieval panel, the missing saints are St Victor of Marseilles and St Margaret of Antioch.

Michael Leach



Source: *Ancient Monuments Society*
Newsletter Summer 2013

Parboiled Shrews

The Ig Nobel prizes are awarded every year by *The Annals of Improbable Research* to identify the best study, in a range of fields, designed 'to make people laugh, and then to make them think'. The 2013 award in medicine went to scientists who showed a much improved survival rate in post heart transplant mice who had exposure to the music of Mozart and Verdi during the recovery from the operation. Those who listened to the new age singer Enya did less well, though better than the group who had no music at all. In archaeology the award was won by a group of researchers who ate parboiled shrews, and then examined their faeces to determine which, if any, bones survived transit through the human gut. This was certainly a surprising (and possibly unenviable!) investigation, but one of obvious relevance to the interpretation of the small mammal bone fragments found on archaeological sites.

Michael Leach

Source: *British Medical Journal* 21
September 2013

Chalara Fraxinea – Ash Dieback

This disease - ultimately fatal to ash trees - is already widespread in Essex. Younger trees succumb within a few years, with saplings and newly

coppiced trees being most vulnerable, particularly if already infected with honey fungus or other parasitical infections. Older trees take longer to die and there have been reports from Somerset suggesting that some might be able to overcome the infection. Felling and burning affected trees is not effective as the pathogen is an asexual fungus which lives in the leaf litter and produces vast numbers of windborne spores. There is no known treatment and it is impossible to eradicate the disease once it is established in woodland. As the ash tree is widespread throughout Essex (and the third most common woodland species in the UK after oak and silver birch), the long term effect on our landscape is likely to be very significant.

Michael Leach

Source: *Essex Wildlife* Winter 2013

Book Reviews

Discovering Coggeshall, Timber framed buildings in the town centre.

By David Stenning with Richard Shackle. Published by John Lewis of Coggeshall 2013

ISBN 978-0-9539165-1-1 133pp
Fully illustrated in colour. £7

Discovering Coggeshall 2, The 1575 rental survey and the dated buildings.

By David Andrews. Published by John Lewis of Coggeshall 2013

ISBN 978-0-9539165-2-8 230pp
Fully illustrated in colour. £15

I was delighted to be asked to review the new books about Coggeshall since I was involved in

their conception in the late 1960s, being driven round Coggeshall in Cecil Hewett's green Armstrong Siddeley Sapphire with my late husband and many children.

At the time, Cecil Hewett was evolving his sequence of timber joints by which he could date buildings which has since been authenticated by dendrochronology and he would draw his exploded views of the timber frames at home the following evening unaided by CAD. I wish I had kept his scribbles on pub napkins which were works of art!

After his stroke and incapacity the work was taken up by the team involved in the present publications and supported by the staff at Essex County Council. The present volumes represent a never-to-be-repeated catalogue of Coggeshall buildings based partly on the analysis of the structures which Cecil pioneered, (Vol.1) and on the detailed descriptions from a rental survey of 1575.(Vol. 2)

Coggeshall has long been the subject of studies such as that of GR Beaumont in 1890 and the work of Eileen Power in the 1920's because there is such a rich source of material in the buildings, in particular, Paycocke's and the brasses and wills of the Paycocke family in the early sixteenth century. The present study amplifies these by examining each building one by one and providing a 'walk-round' itinerary with a spiral binding so that one can carry it round open at one page at a time.

Each page is a stupendous labour of scholarship, diligence and love by all the team but it would be invidious to omit mention of Dave Stenning's

contribution of realisations; of the scene and the goodbye of the last illustration of a man waving from the upstairs window.

No collection of Essex memorabilia will be complete without these beautifully produced volumes which represent the high point of local government involvement in recording and conservation of historic buildings and townscapes. Present cutbacks mean such studies might not be repeated for other towns for years to come but Coggeshall is lucky to have such a team of learned and artistic talents devoted to the production of these incomparable studies and it is unlikely that such a collection of expertise could ever be assembled again. They are a monumental work of first importance and the culmination of the lifetimes' experience by all the authors.

Helen Gibson

Colchester Memories

By Patrick Denny. (Amberley, 2014)
ISBN 978-1-4456-1854 96pp
Many illustrations, no index. £14.99

This is a sequel to Patrick Denny's *Colchester Voices* and is a selection from interviews collected by the Colchester Recalled Oral History Group since the 1980s. Forty five men and women recall memories of life in Colchester during the first half of the 1900s. The topics cover home and family life, schooldays, occupation and trade, wartime, horses and trams, people, leisure and events.

The stories are an engaging mixture of the personal and public, and are greatly enlivened by the many photographs carefully chosen to



support the story as told. For instance, Margaret Golby, born in 1901, tells a brave story of refusing to accept a piecework task at Hollingtons' clothing factory and walking out. She returned the next day and decided to start the work and was then told she would be paid "a few coppers more". The story is accompanied by a photograph clearly showing the cramped working conditions endured by the women who worked there.

Later, in the wartime chapter, Hollingtons appears again in a photograph as a ruined building looming over Stanwell Street after a bombing raid reduced it to a burnt-out shell.

Readers who know Colchester well will enjoy remembering the old days and the old street scenes.

Andrew Smith
Hon. Deputy Librarian

Essex Seen From Elsewhere

1. The Ancient Monuments Society reports that the Friends of Friendless Churches are providing a grant for a new piece of sculpture to be placed behind the altar of St George's church at Great Bromley, partly in recognition of the assiduous fundraising achieved in the parish for the repair to this large medieval building. The sculptor is Antonia Hockton who has work in the cathedrals at Lincoln and Poitiers.

2. The Heritage Lottery Fund has provided a grant for £100,000 towards plans to augment the income

of the recently restored fifteenth century Finchingfield Guildhall.

3. Boydell have recently published *Barking Abbey and Medieval Literary Culture* edited by Jennifer Brown and Donna Alfano Bussell. This abbey had one of the largest medieval libraries, particularly noted for its twelfth century hagiographies. More details will be found on www.boydellandbrewer.com.

4. Birch church, disused for 23 years, may be nearer finding a new use as a house. Proposals involve the demolition of the south aisle, but the retention of the rest of this very large building; this could be a price worth paying for the retention of the majority of this dramatic church which is still surrounded by a corrugated iron carapace, now breached in several places.

Michael Leach

Source: *Ancient Monuments Society Newsletter* Autumn 2013 & Winter/Spring 2014

For the latest news and information about the Essex Society for Archaeology and History go to our blog, www.esah160.blogspot.co.uk follow us on Twitter, @ESAH160

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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 2012 the projected value of the fund (including interest) stands at £53,341

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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.

John Hayward

ESSEX BRANCH HISTORICAL SOCIETY PROGRAMME

2015

Saturday 10th January Dr Carey Fleiner, Senior Lecturer in Classical and Medieval History, University of Winchester: A Boy and his Mum: the Story of Nero and Agrippina.

Saturday 7th February Professor Helen King, Professor of Classical Studies, Open University: Sex Change in the Renaissance.

Saturday 7th March Dr. David Rundle, Lecturer in History and Co-Director of Centre for Bibliographical History, University of Essex: What the Italian Renaissance owed to Britain.

Saturday 11th April Anne Byrne, Associate Tutor, History Dept. Birkbeck College, University of London: The Death of Louis XV.

Monday 11th May Dr. Paul Rusiecki, historian of 20th Century Essex:
A joint HA/Essex Record Office event held AT ESSEX RECORD OFFICE to launch his new book *Under Fire: Essex and the Second World War*, inc. book signing by author, tea and cake, and his talk on Dark Days and Dark Thoughts: Morale in Wartime Essex 1940-1

Talks on Saturdays, 2.30pm, Trinity Methodist Church, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford, CM1 2XB (except 11 May) Free parking at the Church or in the County Council car-park opposite. Visitors and prospective members warmly welcomed, £2 donation requested.

**For further information: email essexha1@btinternet.com or phone 07914 910612
www.history.org.uk and essexbranchha.blogspot.com**

Further details of all events and availability are available from the Excursions Secretary, Mr Graham Gould, 16 Osborne Road, Leyton, E10 5QW (0208 556 1423). All events to be booked via the Excursion Secretary at least 10 days prior to the event. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope for each event, for maps and other instructions if you do not want these by email. Cheques should be made payable to the Essex Society for Archaeology and History. If there are any transport issues in attending these events, please contact the Programme Secretary.

The visits on the Society's programme are open to members and associate members only. The Society can accept no liability for loss or injury sustained by members attending any of its programmed events. Members are asked to take care when visiting old buildings or sites and to alert others to any obvious risks. Please respect the privacy of those who invite us into their homes.