A Scroll Through Medieval Essex

by Neil McCarthy and Eloise McEvoy, p23
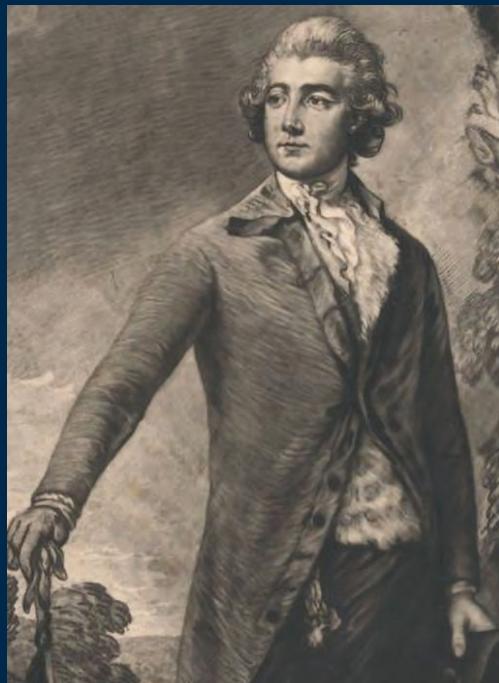
Sir Henry Bate Dudley at Bradwell-on-Sea: Part I
Elaine Thornton, p39

Also in this issue:
- Henry Ham: The Lost Vicar of Great Waltham
- Middle Bronze Age to Romano British Settlement at Tooley's Farm, Little Dunmow
- Book Reviews

Welcome to the Autumn 2025 issue of the *Essex Journal*

I am pleased to present within these pages an array of articles spanning a satisfyingly wide chronological range: from the Middle Bronze Age to the 18th century, with a few surprises along the way.

We begin with a matter of 'controversy and litigation', both of which characterise the figure of Henry Ham, vicar of St Mary and St Lawrence, Great Waltham in 1643/4 'in the time of the unhappy wars', whose tenure seems to overlap with that of his contemporary, Thomas Cox. Ham's name turns up often in Chancery lawsuits, and he evidently had a gift for annoying his colleagues, neighbours and superiors. He was able to exploit the diminution in the role and authority of bishops under the Presbyterian system of church governance which was introduced at this time.

I am also proud to include a detailed archaeological excavation report concerning the trial trenching at Tooley's Farm, Little Dunmow, supplied by Cura Terrae. Settlement remains (e.g. animal material and ceramics) from the Middle Bronze Age are vanishingly rare in this part of the world, but such period of activity for the finds and features has been confirmed by radiocarbon dating. Some Iron Age and Roman period features were also discovered on the site, which should indicate continuous activity there for more than a thousand years.

Moving on to more recent times, medieval mortuary rolls were drawn up to honour and commemorate deceased worthy members of religious establishments, and to serve as a record of their virtue and moral rectitude. As Neil McCarthy and Eloise McEvoy reveal in their article, a nationally important text of this type is Lucy's Mortuary Roll, held to be the oldest intact English illuminated such document. It refers to Lucy, Mother Superior of the Benedictine priory at Castle Hedingham, and records connections between 12th- and 13th-century religious establishments. Some important locations are included in the citations and in the subsequent history of the document. We are fortunate to have many excellent detailed images to elucidate the points of interest covered in the accompanying text.

The topic of 'slavery' is highly emotive, whether it relates to the ancient world – where it was largely endemic in all societies – or to more recent times. Tony Fox takes us on a tour through later Saxon Essex in search of evidence for the institution in our own corner of Britain. The subject is not straightforward, since there were several degrees of 'freedom' and several ways in which a person who had been born free might end up with unfree status. Even a legal term such as *esne* – sometimes glossed *servus* and thus probably an unfree person – seems more often to denote a hireling rather than indentured labour, much like today's worker on a zero-hours contract with few legal claims on the employer. A second article of Tony's, to appear in a subsequent issue, will look in detail at the situation in 1086, as evidenced by the *Domesdæg* survey.

A larger-than-life character from the 18th century is Sir Henry Bate Dudley – sometime clergyman, newspaper editor, dramatist and duellist, but always a controversial figure in Georgian society. Bate Dudley was connected with – indeed, dominated – the village of Bradwell-on-Sea, where he combined the roles of parson, squire and magistrate. A vigorous dispute with the ecclesiastical authorities eventually forced him to leave, but not without a scandal involving the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Prime Minister and the Prince of Wales. The comings and goings of modern public figures seem perfectly tame by comparison.

Our customary book reviews continue – this time we have a walker's guide to the Radwinter to Beeleigh Abbey medieval freight route, Bishop's Stortford's castle, and a look at the rise of Victorian Southend-on-Sea.

Stephen Pollington, Honorary Editor

Notes to contributors
Contributions are welcome and should be sent in a Word format to the Honorary Editor at the email listed above. General correspondence can either be emailed or posted to: Amore, Mill Road, Boxted, Essex CO4 5RW. The Editor is more than happy to discuss any proposed articles as he does not guarantee that unsolicited material will be published. Contributors are requested to limit their articles to 2,500/4,000 words, other than by prior agreement with the Editor. Style notes are available.

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Cover illustration right: The opening section of the Mortuary Roll of Lucy of Hedingham

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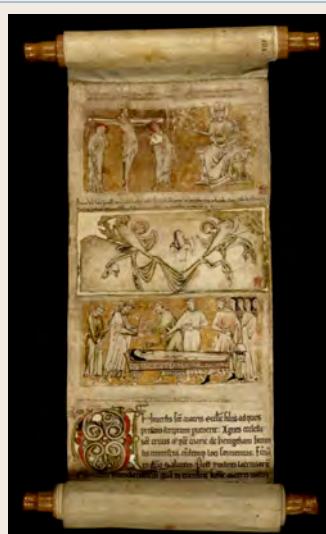
HENRY HAM: THE LOST VICAR OF GREAT WALTHAM

David Williams

Not long after I became a Churchwarden of St Mary and St Lawrence, Great Waltham in 2020, our church historian, Peter Wells, drew my attention to a pair of entries in our parish register,[1] reproduced below, in which two vicars, Henry Ham and Thomas Cox, both disclaimed responsibility for omissions on the grounds that the register had not been in their possession at all times. Thomas Cox was vicar from 1653 to 1670,[2] but Henry Ham did not feature in Newcourt's list of incumbents,[3] which jumps from Samuel Noel, instituted in 1630, to Thomas Cox in 1653. Who was this missing vicar?

As this article shows, there are some significant gaps in what we know about Henry Ham, but what I have pieced together suggests that even by the standard of the contentious times in which he lived, he was fond of controversy and litigation, and his time at Great Waltham ended with a tempestuous quarrel with his own father-in-law.

Origins

Our missing vicar is most likely to have been the man listed in the Oxford Alumni register[4] as the son of a clergyman, born in Gloucestershire, who entered Broadgates Hall (later Pembroke College) in June 1618 at the age of 17, and took his degree in February 1620. He was therefore born about 1601, and it is likely that he was one of several sons of John Ham, then Rector of Harnhill, some three miles from Cirencester; his father may have previously been Vicar of Ashton Keynes, just over the border in northern Wiltshire, where a John Ham was instituted in 1591 and moved to Harnhill in 1595. The Ashton Keynes registers include baptisms of John and James Ham, sons of the vicar, in 1592 and 1593, and 'our' Henry mentions brothers of both names in his will, of which more later.[5] The Harnhill registers survive only from 1613, so Henry's own baptismal record has probably been lost. Henry's brother John was eventually to succeed their father as rector of Harnhill on John senior's death in 1641, and held the living until his own death some time after March 1666.[6]

Ordination and Early Career

Henry was ordained at Gloucester on 16 June 1622[7] by Bishop Miles Smith, one of the translators of the King James Bible and a man of firm Calvinist views,[8] which as his career was to show, Henry shared. His career immediately after ordination is unclear, but on 9 May
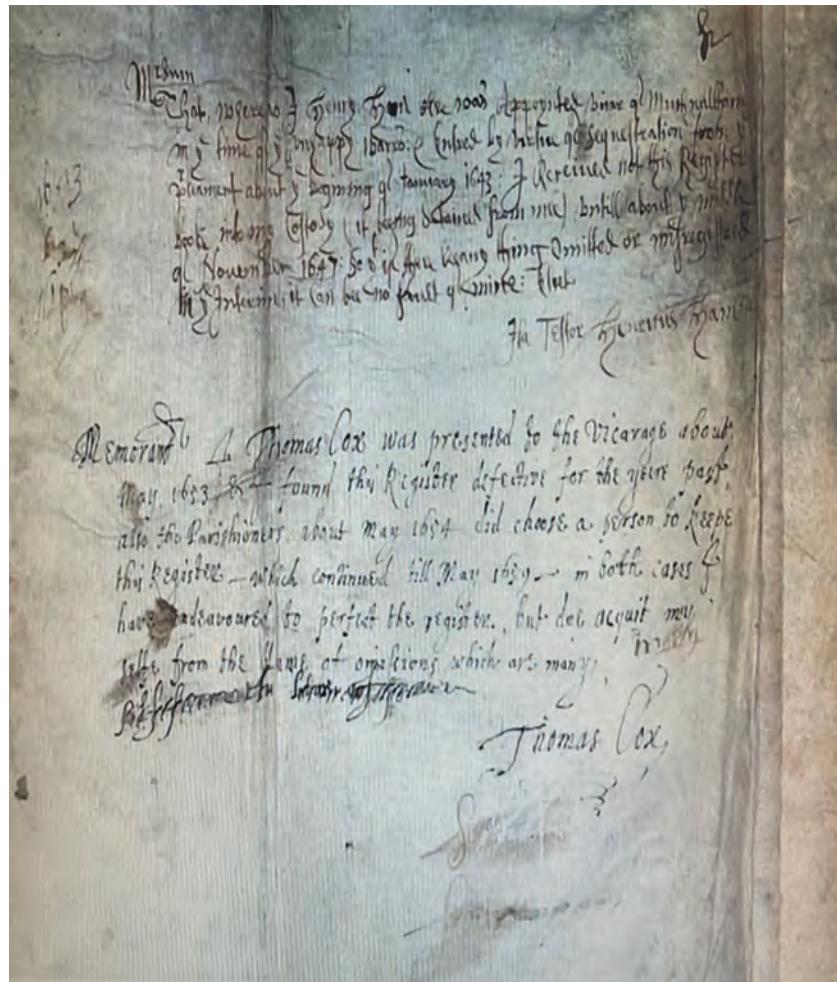
The entries in the parish register of Great Waltham which prompted the investigation behind this article. Henry Ham becomes Vicar in January 1643/4 'in the time of the unhappy wars', and Thomas Cox takes over in May 1653 (By kind permission of the Churchwardens and PCC)

1628 he married Sara Barras or Barrowes at Bibury in the Cotswolds, some six miles from Cirencester.[9] We also know of this marriage thanks to one of a number of lawsuits that punctuated Henry's life.[10] This case began in the Chancery Court in 1648 and is the main piece of evidence linking his life in Gloucestershire with his later time in Essex; the papers describe the plaintiff as: 'Henry Ham Clarke heretofore of Chipping Sodbury in the county of Gloucester and nowe of Much Waltham in the county of Essex'. The defendants in the case, which was still unresolved at least in 1655, were the trustees of a settlement by Sara's father Humphrey Smith, another clergyman, formerly of Castle Eaton, Wiltshire. Sara had been married before, to a Thomas Barrowes, 'an unthrifty man' who had since died. By 1648 Sara had also evidently died and Henry sued the trustees for moneys due as her executor. In 1629 their son John was baptised at Bibury.

> ' *Henry ... 'leaning upon his elbow in a contemptuous and braving manner', refused to remove his hat and declined to recognise the Court.* '

A Suspended Curate and a Drunken Vicar

By the time of his marriage, Henry was probably Curate of Bibury; he certainly was by 1630, when he came into conflict with his vicar, Robert Knollys, another frequent litigant of the period. Knollys had become Vicar of Bibury in 1629 and asserted that his parish was an ecclesiastical 'Peculiar', not subject to the jurisdiction of the bishop or archdeacon[11]. Henry disagreed, and was promptly suspended by Knollys. Henry objected that only the bishop could take such a step. The dispute went to the Court of Arches, the main forum for church litigation, where Knollys claimed that while he was sitting in his 'Court' in Bibury Church, Henry 'sat down with his hat on' and, 'leaning upon his elbow in a contemptuous and braving manner', refused to remove his hat and declined to recognise the Court. Later Henry alleged that he had been paid only 22 shillings for nine months service as curate when his official salary was 13s.4d. a week.[12] The dispute seems to have rumbled through the courts until at least 1633, and because the relevant records were lost in the Great Fire of London, it is unclear if Henry ever got satisfaction; in an undated letter[13] to a local landowner, Sir Thomas Sackville, written while the lawsuit was ongoing, Henry complained:

> *that hee [Knollys] hath unduly gained out of the High Commission Court an attachment against mee where w[i]t[h] I was by 4 bayleiffes in as disgracefull manner as might be arrested in my owne house and had not som of my neighbowers conceived a singuller good oppinion of mee, I must [?]irremeadiously have gone to prison …. Something must bee done against these fellows or els they will grow insolent, and utterly undoe mee as the last Munday …. Knowls threatened to doe, and how t[ha]t he should recover … £100 against mee, unless I would submitt to him in the matter of the peculier, where and at w[hic]h tyme, as the [?]sheriffs men towld mee, he was so sowndly [?]flushed w[i]t[h] sacke[14] [tha]t galloping whome[15] he fell off his horse and sorely hurt his eye brow, and had it not bin for Roberts[16] he had broke his neck, w[hic]h he may doe in the end, when his tyme is com …*

Henry was not alone in falling out with Knollys. A complaint from the Bibury parishioners to Parliament claimed that Knollys neglected his duties, failed to preach regularly and, when he did, preached 'in a very mean and slender manner … by reason he is so much addicted to frequent Inns and Alehouses and Suits in Law'.[17]

Later in 1630, however, Henry escaped from Knollys' jurisdiction, physically if not legally. In that year his name appears in the parish register of Hardwicke, four miles south-west of Gloucester, where he signed the year's entries in a hand similar to the one on the Great Waltham register reproduced in this article (and quite different from the hand which made the 1629 entries).[18] These continue into 1633 when on 1 May he recorded the baptism of his and Sara's daughter Elizabeth. The entries apparently in this hand seem to stop after April 1635, and for the next few years his exact whereabouts and employment are unclear.[19]

From Gloucestershire to Essex, and a Disappearing Bag

The next point at which we can pick up Henry's trail takes us deep into the troubles that were now engulfing the country. Again we owe our information to a Chancery lawsuit, this time against Samuel Stoakes and his wife Isabella.[20] Henry's plea was entered in the 'Hilary [Law] Term of 1647' – meaning between 11 January and the Wednesday before Easter, but possibly in 1648 modern style – and claims that 'about five years before' – thus in 1642 or possibly 1643 – Henry,

> *being possessed of a cloake bagg[21] of leather wherein he had putt three and twenty pounds or thereabouts in money parte silver, parte gould, a silver bowl and some plate lynnen and goods of a good vallue which he had sealed upp in his cloake bagg with divers seales for the better preservacion and safety thereof, and meaning to leave his habitacion att Chipping Sodbury in the county of Gloucester in regard of the troubles then in the country, went to the defendants [the Stoakeses] being his neer neighbours and acquainted them of his purpose … and desired them to lay [the bag] upp in some safe place … which they were very willing and able to doe … [and] promised to see itt safely laid upp … but the defendants being minded to defeate the complaynant [Henry] of the cloake bagg and of the money plate lynnen and other goods therein they opened the bagg and took thereout the money plate lynnen and other goods therein and disposed of the same to theire own use refuseing to deliver the same to the complaynant or to discover where it was … and pretended that the complaynant never left such bagg with them … and sometimes confessed the receipt thereof but said it was taken from them by souldiers in the tyme of the warre …*

By the summer of 1642 the Civil War was already inevitable. The western and south-western counties were more strongly inclined towards the King, who had now abandoned London to set up his Court in Oxford,

whereas Parliament's stronghold was in London and the eastern side of the country. Throughout 1642 and 1643 Gloucestershire was the scene of intense fighting; Cirencester was captured by the Royalists in December 1642 and by August 1643 Bristol had fallen to them too; the summer saw Gloucester captured first by the Royalists and then relieved by the Parliamentary forces.[22] Perhaps Henry, as a Calvinist naturally inclined to the Parliamentary side, saw this as an opportune time to head towards the eastern counties, where fighting was relatively light and his theological views more widely shared, even if his arrangements over the bag of valuables suggest he hoped to return if the war swung the other way.

In any event, 'about the beginning of January' 1644,[23] as his note our register confirms, he became Vicar of Great Waltham 'in the time of the late unhappy warrs', having 'entered by virtue of a sequestration from the Parliament'. This was a time of many such appointments, as Parliament suspended the powers of bishops and determined to root out parochial clergy of whom they disapproved. The endowments of such parishes were seized and used to support the more 'godly' men installed by Parliament's decree, apart from one-fifth of the income still paid to the removed man or his dependants. Sometimes the man removed was accused of immoral behaviour, drinking, swearing or womanising,[24] but often his politics were deemed too Royalist or his theological views too 'Papist' and close to those of the deposed Archbishop of Canterbury, William Laud, who had been imprisoned since 1641 and would be beheaded in 1645.

Records of the first wave of sequestrations are incomplete, and it has been impossible to find a specific record of such action at Great Waltham in the Parliamentary records.[25] Harold Smith, who researched the comings and goings of Essex clergy in this period exhaustively in the 1930s, seems to have been unaware of Henry's register entry, and says merely that 'there may have been a sequestration' whereby he took the parish.[26] In fact I believe we can be more definitive by considering other evidence.

Pluralists and Puritans

Here we need to go back a few years. The Vicar of Great Waltham since 1630 had been Samuel Noel, a Fellow of Trinity College, Oxford, the patrons of the living. He was a Bachelor of Divinity, described in 1632 by Robert Aylett, Laud's lawyer, who reported on the state of the clergy when Laud was Bishop of London, as a 'learned and grave man from Oxford'.[27] Although Laud evidently found nothing to disapprove of in Noel's character or ministry, there may have been an appetite in the parish for other views. In 1625, John Sorrell, one of the main landowners of the parish and the tenant of the patron, Trinity College, left £5 in his will to one 'Mr Ward our preacher' to preach at his funeral and 'to instruct and teach the people touching theire mortallitie'.[28] Aylett's 1632 report speaks of 'a young and hot fellow, one Fuller,[29] Lecturer, who, I fear, will pull down faster than the vicar can build up in conformity'. There were numerous instances around the area in the 1620s and '30s of parishioners clubbing together to employ clergy of Puritan views to give lectures outside the normal

The church of St Mary and St Lawrence, Great Waltham (Photo: the author)

round of services, giving a more 'godly' exposition of the faith than the incumbent provided.[30]

Any dissatisfaction with Noel's ministry may have increased when, in 1636, he was also instituted to the parish of Little Canfield, some ten miles to the west of Great Waltham.[31] This made him a 'pluralist', with more than one parish, something of which Puritans generally disapproved. By 1637 it appears he was living there; when the Bishop of London's visitation summoned the clergy of the Chelmsford Deanery to appear at St Mary's, Chelmsford on 6 September, against Noel's name appears the entry 'To appear at Dunmow', and Great Waltham was represented by his curate, John Redderich. On 12 September the clergy of the Dunmow Deanery who appeared at Great Dunmow church included 'Mr Samuel Noel, Rector' of Little Canfield.[32]

When Parliament took control of church affairs in the early 1640s, pluralism was an obvious target. In the summer of 1642 a 'Bill against Pluralities' was passed. Over the winter of 1642/3 it was one of the many issues put to the King during negotiations at Uxbridge, only for Charles to prevaricate and force Parliament to pass an Ordinance which required pluralists to vacate all but one of their livings by 1 April 1643.[33] This legislation will have caught Samuel Noel, and he clearly decided to retain Little Canfield – and thus be deprived of Great Waltham, which became liable to sequestration.

Meanwhile at Oxford, the Fellows of Trinity had got wind of his departure and on 1 May 1644 they requested the Bishop of London (now William Juxon) to institute one of their own number, William Hobbs DD,[34] as his successor. However, the uncertainty of the times is reflected in the way they started by using the form of words employed at the last presentation back in 1630, declaring that the benefice was no longer held by Noel, but then deleted his name and any mention of why he was no longer vicar.[35] Exactly what happened next is uncertain, but according to his own account by January 1644 Henry Ham had been installed by Parliament. We do not know if the Fellows of Trinity actually sent their request to the Bishop, or how he responded if they did, but there is no record in the Bishop's or Archdeacon's registers of Hobbs being instituted or inducted.[36] Did he ride from Oxford to Great Waltham only to find that Henry Ham had been in place since the previous January?

An important document of 1650, the Parochial Inquisition ordered by Parliament in 1649, to which we shall return shortly, in its entry for Great Waltham describes Henry as 'unanimously Chosen by the Parishioners and Confirmed by Order of Parliament',[37] but I have found no contemporary document to confirm this. How had Henry reached Essex and why was he chosen? We have seen that he left Gloucestershire around 1642/3, and it is known that numerous Parliamentarian clergy driven out of Royalist areas converged on London after the outbreak of war. This prompted a Lords' resolution of December 1642, to the effect that such clergy should be given benefices vacated by Royalist clergy. Henry may have been one of this influx and his Calvinist views will have made him an acceptable candidate for the Committee for Plundered Ministers, which was now responsible for approving clerical appointments; by October 1643 the Committee had started to confiscate episcopal and cathedral funds to help pay for its appointments.[38] It is also possible that Henry was already in Great Waltham as Samuel Noel's curate; this could explain why the parishioners supported his appointment.

Henry as Vicar – an able godly painfull Preaching Minister?

The life of the local church was now undergoing significant changes, as Parliament moved towards a Presbyterian system, with bishops stripped of their powers. In 1643 Parliament had appointed the Westminster Assembly of Divines, which produced a new Confession of Faith and a new Directory for Worship to replace the Book of Common Prayer. From February 1644, all men over 18 were obliged to subscribe to the Solemn League and Covenant, attesting their loyalty to the reformed religion and promising their best efforts to remove 'popery, prelacy, superstition, heresy, schism profaneness and whatsoever shall be found contrary to sound doctrine'.[39] During 1645/6, counties were asked to organise their parishes into presbyteries, with each parish choosing elders to run their affairs in conjunction with the incumbent, or, as he was now to be known, the Minister. The return for Essex, drawn up apparently in March 1646, shows each area divided into 'Classes', and in the Chelmsford 'Classis', the Minister of Great Waltham is listed as 'Mr Ham', and the elders as Sir Richard Everard (the 'squire' of Langleys), John Sorrell, John Goodere and Elias Pledger;[40] all or some of them may well have been churchwardens under the old regime.

The extent to which the Classis system was merely a paper reorganisation rather than a change of substance has been debated by historians,[41] but we do know that Henry was one of 129 Essex clergy who signed the so called 'Essex Testimony' in May 1648, endorsing all the church reforms introduced since the start of the Civil War, including the Directory for Worship and the Confession of Faith, and declaring that they 'utterly detest and abhor … all the Damnable Errors Heresies and Blasphemies of these present evil times'. Harold Smith[42] describes this as a 'manifesto of orthodox Presbyterianism'. It seems clear that Henry was a full-on Presbyterian, and when Parliament required a survey of the whole pastoral organisation of the Church, the so-called Parochial Inquisition mentioned earlier, it is unsurprising that the Essex Commissioners, reporting in September 1650, wrote as follows about Great Waltham:

> *There is within the said parish one Viccarage presentative, and Mr Henry Ham is Incumbent unanimously Chosen by the Parishioners and Confirmed by Order of Parliament, and since the death of the former Incumbent Continued by Trinity College in Oxford, with whom the presentacion unto the said Viccarage hath formerly belonged … the yearely value of the said Viccarage is sixtye pounds … the parish church of Much Waltham is well provided of an able godly painfull Preaching Minister (viz) Mr Henry Ham*[43]

The 'former incumbent' can only be Samuel Noel, who had died around the start of April 1649,[44] only just over a year before the Inquisition was taken. Sequestration did not remove the rights of patrons, unless they were on Parliament's blacklist, such as the King, bishops or known Royalist sympathisers ('malignants' or 'delinquents' as they were sometimes described); in this case, as Trinity College was not in those categories, it only had effect until Noel's death. Trinity could have appointed a new man to Great Waltham, but evidently chose not to;[45] how far this reflects on Henry's abilities or the regard in which he was held in the parish it is impossible to say. The phrase 'able godly painfull [we would say 'painstaking'] Preaching Minister' occurs multiple times in this Inquisition, and probably means no more than 'one of us'.

The vicar's income of £60 was not large by contemporary standards for a man with at least two children, and depended on whether he could collect all the small tithes.[46] In 1641 the Vicar of Earl's Colne, Ralph Josselin, only just married and with no children, stipulated £80 as 'a competency such as I could live on',[47] but his diary makes it clear that he rarely received the full amount; like him, Henry probably had to rely on his private income.

Conflicts and the Courts

We know from Henry's lawsuit against her father's trustees that his wife Sara had died by 1648; there is no trace of her burial in the Great Waltham register, but we know from his own note that it was missing when he arrived. On 25 September 1651, as the restored register records, he was married again, to Mary, daughter of William Bright. By now the political landscape had been transformed; on 30 January 1649 Charles I had been executed, and England became a republic ruled by a Council of State. A few days before Henry's remarriage, the young Charles II had been defeated at the battle of Worcester and fled to France. Thus ended over ten years of intermittent warfare in which perhaps 85,000 soldiers and 40,000 civilians had died in England alone.[48] The war had come home to Essex in 1648 with the eleven-week-long siege of Colchester, ending with the execution of the Royalist leaders.

Henry was still engaged in the two lawsuits already noted. His claim against the Stoakeses about his 'cloak bag' and contents was settled in his favour in 1647, but by February 1653 he had still not received payment and the Chancery master ordered the defendants to pay him £25 for the value of the property as well as

£12.10s. in damages and interest.[49] His action against the trustees of Sara's settlement also saw a decision in his favour to the tune of £141.8s., but not until 1654, and it spawned another legal marathon against Robert Clements of Cirencester and his wife Elizabeth.[50] Robert was the administrator of the estate of one of the deceased trustees and therefore Henry pursued him for the money. In 1654 he sent his son John to extract the money from Clements at his house. Clements admitted that he had received the court order in Henry's favour but said that matter 'had been in suit this twenty years and that he doubted the money would be paid in seven years if he could help it'. By November 1655 nothing had still been paid, despite the use of bailiffs, and Henry obtained a finding of contempt of court against the Clementses, but this lawsuit may well have outlived him.[51]

Meanwhile he was litigating nearer home. In December 1649, Henry lent £200[52] to John Love, gentleman of Great Waltham, for three years at 7% interest, secured on land in Great Waltham parish and his personal bond of £500. After paying one year's interest, Love died in April 1651,[53] and 'his trusty and wellbeloved friend' Henry was named as one of the overseers of his will.[54] Henry had drafted the will himself, and had been entrusted by Love with its safe keeping and delivery to Love's widow, Anne. According to Anne's Bill of Complaint in the Chancery Court,[55] in June 1651 she went to Henry's house and asked for a copy of the will and the mortgage deed so that she might repay the principal and interest. She claimed that he 'utterly refused' to provide this or to tell Anne the due dates for interest and repayment. Around this time Anne remarried, to Thomas Pond of Great Waltham, and in September, as we have seen, Henry married Mary Bright; Anne claimed that eventually Henry's son John and his new wife Mary accepted some interest payments, but Henry still refused to hand over the will, without which Anne was unable to sell a property at Stebbing in order to repay the principal £200. Henry was therefore trying to foreclose on the loan and seize the mortgaged properties as well as suing for the £500 bond. On top of this he wanted forty shillings for drafting the will – apparently on top of a similar amount left to him as a legacy.

> **'** *Henry's rebuttal went for the man as well as the ball …***'**

Henry's rebuttal went for the man as well as the ball; he started by claiming that Thomas Pond had no right to sue him, because he (Henry)

> *knoweth not whether that the s[ai]d complainants are lawfully married together, or not, for that he could never certainly heare, either the time when, place where or person by whom the s[ai]d complainants were married …*[56]

Then he brought politics in, alleging that Pond

> *is a delinquenqt as this def[endan]t veryly believeth, for that he bore armes against the Parliament at Colchester [referring to the siege of 1648] and never compounded for the same …*

He went on to ask that Thomas and Anne should be made 'to take the Ingagement'. This was another swipe at their credibility, as Parliament had since 1650 required office bearers to 'engage' that they would be 'true and faithful to the Commonwealth of England as it is now established, without a King or House of Lords'.[57] He claimed that Anne was lying about her finances and that other assets of her late husband would be more than enough to repay his debt without selling the Stebbing property; and that far from being deprived of the will, she had picked up a copy which his son John had left lying on a table at his house and used that to get probate.[58] He admitted that he had drafted John Love's will, doing successive drafts for which he went 'foure five or six times from his owne dwelling to the dwelling howse of John Love being neare a mile distant … being promised payment … for his paines in the writing thereof'; he said that if Anne thought forty shillings was too much, he 'would refer himself to any scrivener [law clerk] and take what he should judge' the work was worth; he added that he was doing Anne a favour, because £5 was nearer the mark. Love's will was not particularly complex and less than two pages long; he signed his name and so was apparently literate. It was not uncommon for the clergy to draft wills, but perhaps less common to charge fees for the service.[59]

As is common with such lawsuits we do not know the final outcome, but Henry seems to have had a strange view of activities compatible with his clerical status; his next lawsuit may have strained the relationship to or even beyond breaking point.

An Abducted Father-in-law and a Ransacked Vicarage?

The final episode of Henry's career in the courts originated when he courted Mary Bright. Her father, William, was, according to his Chancery claim against Henry,[60] dated 24 November 1652, a glover, worth about £700 in tangible assets as well as some land. Mary was his only child and lived with him, and about a year earlier

> *… one Henry Ham clarke Viccar of the said parrish … often resorted to [Bright's] howse and pretended to be a suitor to her in the way of marriage, which [Bright] disliking did many times forbied the said Henry Ham from comeing to her. But such was the boldness of the said Henry that [Bright] could not keepe him from resorting to her, and in truth he soe insinuated himselfe into [Mary's] good likeing and affecion that att length he prevayled with her to consent to marry with him and about a yeare last past was marryed unto him but altogeather against [Bright's] goodwill and likeing.*

The wedding (in September 1651)

> *… and other former dealings of the said Henry Ham with [Bright] did soe affect [him] with melancholy and sadness of spirritt that [he] was thereby bereaved of his senses for a time …*

Taking advantage, Bright claimed, of this, Henry, Mary and Henry's son John (who was now about 23) hatched a scheme. They

> *… shortly after the said marriage entered into [Bright's] howse and possessed themselves of all [his] goods and chattells money plate lynnen bedding [and] howsehold stuffe …*

They were also alleged to have seized Bright's documents evidencing his land holdings and debts totalling £400 due to him, and about £140 in cash, and took them back to the Vicarage. Worse followed, according to Bright:

> *who being thus bereft of his daughter and of his said money plate goods howsehold stuff to the very bedd he lay on, was inforced through necessity to go the howse of the said Henry Ham in Much Waltham aforesaid where [the Hams] kept [him] under hunger and cold locked upp in a chamber for the space of three weekes or thereabouts not suffering any of his freinds to resort unto him.*

Bright went on to claim that Henry had started to collect some of his debts and kept the cash for himself, claiming that Bright had assigned the debts over to him and that he had promised to transfer all his other assets to Henry as part of a marriage settlement for his daughter. No such assignment or transfer had been made, Bright went on, or if it had been

> *… the same was obteyned from [him] by threates menacyes and the barbarous usage of the said Henry to [him] and in the night time when [he] was restrayned of his liberty in the howse of the said Henry Ham and was never read to [him] or understood by him.*

The chronology at this point becomes significant, because Henry's time as vicar was nearly up. We know from Thomas Cox's register note that he claimed to have become vicar 'about May 1653'. In fact, at the first bishop's visitation of the diocese after the Restoration, in September 1664, Cox produced a document showing that he had been instituted earlier, on 31 March.[61]

The Chancery Court appointed commissioners to obtain the Hams' answers to Bright's claims in December 1652. Part of these were taken down on 9 January 1653, but a large part not until 23 April, by which time, if Cox was correct, Henry was no longer vicar. Perhaps the terms of the answers cast light on the reasons for his departure.

The Hams replied[62] that Bright's claims were completely untrue. Far from hating Henry, Mary Ham said that her father

> *… came voluntarily into the howse of the defendant Henry & from there went to church with [Mary] & the company & was there present at the said marriage and gave [Mary] unto the other defendant Henry praying God to blesse them both together.*

This was natural enough because 'in consideration of the fatherly love & affecion hee bore to her … & of the constant dutifulnesse she had ever shewed unto him', her father had agreed to settle on her new husband his entire property, land, leases, houses, goods, chattles and debts due to him. He had also agreed to make over his own house within four days of the marriage, and

> *… that from thenceforth he would dwell & live with her this defendant & demeane himself towards her & all hers honestly harmelessly peaceably & Christianly … [and] she would receive him … & would take a childlike care to provide for him howse harbor meate drink cloathing washing lodging & all other necessaries convenient for the life of man & that notwithstanding her marriage she … would bee helpful & duetifull to [him]soe long as they lived together.*

Furthermore, she claimed that her father had executed a deed dated 9 October 1651 enshrining all these terms. While William lived with the Hams, they claimed

> *… he was accomodated with all things befitting him. And [they] deny that [he] was kepte with hunger and could or kepte up in a roome as is pretended for any one day at all. And his freinds might have com to him if they had so pleased …*

But the Hams could not produce any further papers on the matter, because (as Henry's answer states)

> *… [Bright] with John Sorrell & others came into the howse of the [Hams] & by fraud & force or both took againe into his possession & custody the said goods & personall estate which hee gave unto the defendant Henry in free marriage with his daughter & hath sold carried away locked up & taken away the said estate consisting in the goods monys & writings mencioned in the Bill.*

This alleged raid took place 'about Michaelmas last past', which would mean late September 1652, about a year after the wedding. The involvement of John Sorrell – described, as we shall see, as an 'enemy' in Henry's will – may be a reference to the tenant of Trinity College[63] who was one of the elders appointed in the 1640s. If so,
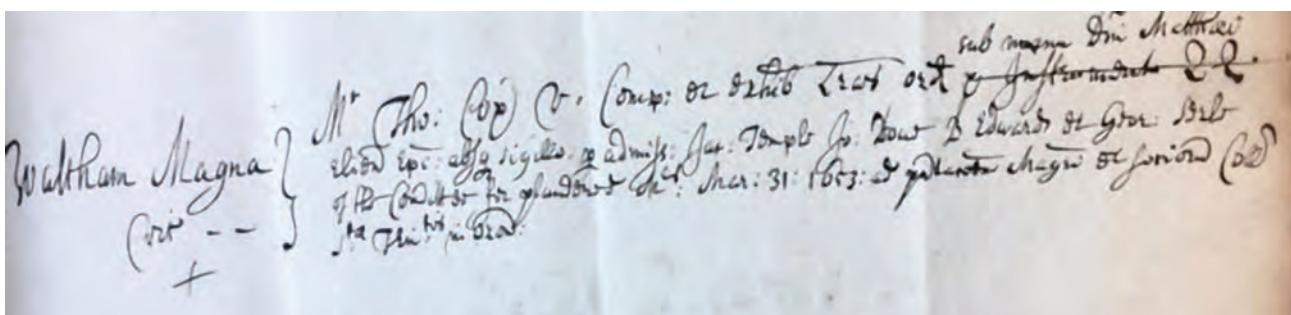
Thomas Cox presents his credentials at the Bishop of London's 1664 visitation, saying he had been presented as Vicar of Great Waltham by Trinity College, Oxford on 31 March 1653 – after Henry Ham's dramatic quarrel with his father-in-law (By kind permission of the Diocese of London)

by late 1652 Henry not only had a ransacked vicarage but also had antagonised one of the most important laymen in the parish, probably second in wealth only to the Everards of Langleys, and was still embroiled in litigation with Bright and his various creditors and possibly still with Thomas and Anne Pond. As Thomas Cox reported in his note, the register had 'been defective for a year past' when he arrived. Relations between the vicar and his flock may have become strained to the point where by the spring of 1653 Henry had given way to Cox.

No documentary evidence has come to light about Henry's resignation. Cox in 1664 produced a document under seal of the former Committee for Plundered Ministers (the body in charge of approving parochial appointments in the mid-1650s) evidencing his appointment on 31 March 1653 and his presentation by Trinity College;[64] these steps must have taken some weeks, suggesting Henry had departed early in 1653 if not before.

Henry at Bardfield Saling – the Last Years

For the last scene of Henry's life we must turn to his will, made on 28 April 1656,[65] in which he describes himself as a 'Minister and Preacher of the Word of God now dwelling at Bardfield Saling', some ten miles north of Great Waltham. He leaves a legacy of ten shillings a year for three years to be shared between 'the poorest people of Little Saling [Bardfield Saling's alternative name] which usually frequented the church when there was preaching'. The church had been mistakenly identified as a chantry by Henry VIII and ownership of the chapel of ease and churchyard were not gifted to the inhabitants until about 1571, together with the priest's house, garden, orchard and croft, certain specified tithes and £3 per annum. The inhabitants were responsible for

the repair of the chapel and chapel yard, and were to have nomination of the chaplain. This probably explains why Newcourt, working from the diocesan records, does not list any incumbents there.[66] It may well have been rather a comedown from Great Waltham, with its income of £60 a year.

Probably around the time they left Great Waltham, Henry and Mary had a daughter, also called Mary, and towards the end of 1655 another, Sara.[67] In his will Henry appointed both these little girls his executrices, which does not suggest he was knew his time was short, although he made their half-sister Elizabeth, now about 23, their trustee until they came of age. Nevertheless, Henry died soon afterwards,[68] aged about 55. The Bardfield Saling registers[69] do not record his daughters' baptisms or his own burial, but they have very few entries at this period; perhaps the parishioners had appointed a lay registrar, under Cromwell's short-lived civil registration legislation passed in 1653,[70] whose register has been lost. (Thomas Cox's note in the Great Waltham register says this happened there.)

His time at Bardfield Saling probably still featured litigation; his case against Thomas and Anne Pond may have remained unsettled, and his claim against his first wife's trustees was still in court late in 1655. His action against William Bright had by 1654 spawned a sub-suit in which he claimed that Bright had released his various debtors from their loans, in an attempt to leave Henry with worthless paper instead of valuable bonds.[71] And his will strongly implies that his main dispute with William Bright was far from finished.

Henry's will is an unusually bitter document, its phraseology in places suggesting his own words rather than a lawyer's stock expressions. He begins with a stridently Puritan declaration of faith,

Henry may have preached from this pulpit at Bardfield Saling, estimated date c.1625 (By kind permission of the Churchwardens and PCC)

St Peter and St Paul's Church, Bardfield Saling, where Henry was probably vicar from about 1653 to 1656, and where he may be buried (Photo: the author)

… renouncing all confidence in Popish pardons indulgences and superstitious performances, as also in any righteousnesse of workes, ordinances or any self qualifications, yet repenting I have done no more good works …

He gives instructions for his funeral:

… my buriall I would have performed without any superstitious ringing, singing or unchristian or undecent ceremonies whatsoever.

He then launches into a sustained rant against Bright and his ally John Sorrell:

And whereas William Bright was desirous that I should marrie with his only child and daughter Mary Bright and promised me in franke marriage with her all his lands … bills, goods, debts, chattells and household stuffe whatsoever and that he would deliver all the same unto me and come and dwell with me during all his life, and having caused me to be married to his said daughter, hath sithens[72] the said marriage, through the persuasion of John Sorrell a false, fierce, proud, cruell, causelesse enemie of mine, that seeketh the utter undoing of me, my wife and children, falsified his promise, revoked his letter of attorney made to me, forbidding his debtors to pay me his debts and bonds he assigned over to me, as part of my marriage portion, which I expected because 'twas promised, and for the recoverie of which to my great coste, I sued, and he hath released them and my suite, and hath also commenced a suit in Chancerie against me my wife and sonne John Ham whereby he sueth for seven hundred pounds, (although his personall estate was never worth the

one halfe thereof), and hath also in a riotous manner by force of armes taken from me all such household stuffe and goods as he assigned over and delivered to me, so that now I am dampnified by his and his daughters meanes above five hundred pounds ….

He leaves his widow one-third of his property in Bardfield Saling for her widowhood, and thereafter to John, and also all the land and chattels that her father promised Henry (according to him) in the marriage settlement,

… some part whereof were once in my possession in the Vicarage of Much Waltham and were violently taken away from me by him … by reason whereof I cannot doe for my wife as I intended and resolved to doe for her, neither doe I conceive thence any reason or equitie I should so doe, being dealt so falsely withall, so basely treated and intolerably dampnified, robbed and cozened in my estate by her and her father and his kindred and complices (my deadly enemies, whome I pray God to forgive.

He charges Elizabeth with the responsibility

… to arrest, implead, convict and imprison all or any of my debtors that delay or refuse to pay any debts due unto me, and the same debts so recovered to pay unto my sonne John Ham.

Finally he entrusts John with the care of his young half-sisters and asks

… that he doe neither them nor their mother the least wrong whatsoever, but to doe them all the right and good office of love and dutie and courtesie ….

Epilogue

It is difficult to estimate how well off Henry was in the end. He spent the first part of his clerical career as a poorly paid curate, and the last part in another poorly paid post at Bardfield Saling. Although Great Waltham was a more valuable living, it was not much for a very large parish; within a few years his successor Thomas Cox obtained augmentations from the relevant parliamentary committees of £20 in 1658 and another £5 the following year.[73] Henry had accumulated property in Great Waltham and Bardfield Saling, and still had assets in Gloucestershire, as mentioned in his will; he could afford to make substantial private loans to the likes of John Love. It has been impossible to discover whether he ever 'won' all his legal battles, but he will have enriched several lawyers.

His children seem to have inherited some of his tendencies. Elizabeth married Edward Dowers of Cirencester soon after her father's death,[74] but she too was soon in the courts, claiming that Robert and Joan Smith of Cadbury, having been entrusted with the safe keeping of Henry's tangible assets in Gloucestershire, were refusing to pass them over to her. Her brother John, despite the injunctions in his father's will, by the time his half-sisters were grown up became involved in an action and cross-claim in which they accused him of failing to pay over an annuity and legacies left by their father, and he claimed that as he had borne the whole cost of their upbringing and education he was entitled to repay himself out of the estate.[75] He seems to have remained at Bardfield Saling for the rest of his life,

dying there on 7 November 1680[76] and leaving legacies to his 'kinsmen' Edward and John Dowers, both under 21, and probably Elizabeth's sons. Mary and Sara were both by then married, and John's will[77] left legacies to both of them, so perhaps at least one dispute had by then reached a peaceful conclusion.

Back at Great Waltham, Thomas Cox had glided from Cromwell's republic to the restored monarchy of Charles II, signing the Declaration of Conformity in 1662[78] and retaining his post (as apparently did Henry's brother, John senior, at Harnhill); one doubts if Henry would have done the same. By 1664, one of the Great Waltham churchwardens was a William Bright;[79] we do not know if this was Henry's father-in-law, but it is an intriguing possibility.

In Great Waltham church is a list of vicars, inscribed on a board set up in the 1960s. It was copied from Newcourt, so Henry Ham's name is missing. This article has attempted to restore him to his rightful place, obtained in turbulent times by a man who seemed well suited to them.

Part of the list of vicars in Great Waltham church, jumping straight from Samuel Noel to Thomas Cox (By kind permission of the Churchwardens and PCC)

Endnotes

Sources are abbreviated as follows:

BL   British Library
ERO   Essex Record Office
GA   Gloucestershire Archives
LMA London Metropolitan Archives
LPL   Lambeth Palace Library
NA   National Archives
TCA   Archives of Trinity College, Oxford

[1]   ERO D/P 121/1/0.

[2]   See Michael Leach's article about Cox and his more famous son and namesake in the *Essex Journal* , vol 55, no 2 (Autumn 2020), pp 101–108.

[3]   Richard Newcourt, *Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense* (London, 1708), vol 2, p. 633.

[4]   *Alumni Oxonienses: The Members of the University of Oxford, 1500–1714*. Oxford, Parker and Co., 1888–1892.

[5]   See *Clergy of the Church of England Database* (theclergydatabase.org.uk) for these links. The registers of Ashton Keynes and Harnhill are reproduced on Ancestry.com.

[6]   John Ham senior's will is at GA GDR/R8/1640/88 and his son's at GA GDR/R8/1666/47.

[7]   GA GDR 142A and the Clergy Database.

[8]   See his entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (online edn 2004), and also Helen Moore and Julian Reed (eds), *Manifold Greatness: The Making of the King James Bible* , Oxford, Bodleian Library, 2011, especially ch. 4, which features his portrait.

[9]   Again these registers are reproduced on Ancestry.com.

[10] *Ham v Hearne and others,* NA C78/1009.

[11] See A.L. Browne, *The Peculiar Jurisdiction of Bibury*, in *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society* (1936), vol. 58, pp. 171–194.

[12] GA D678/1/Z2/10 (antiquarian's notes and transcripts of original papers relating to Bibury, the originals apparently being lost), p. 83 onwards.

[13] GA D678/1/Z3/1 p. 72.

[14] Sherry or fortified wine.

[15] 'home'.

[16] ?Knollys's servant.

[17] R. Austin, *Robert Knollys, Vicar of Bibury,* in *Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society* (1937), vol. 59, p. 322. The complaint is undated but Knollys remained vicar until his death in 1641.

[18] These registers also appear on Ancestry.com. The Clergy Database seems to have confused Henry with a John Ham in its list of incumbents of Hardwicke. There is nothing to suggest that Henry's brother John ever held the living, however.

[19] Although from his legal cases he clearly spent some time living at Chipping Sodbury, I have found no mentions of him in the parish registers there and he was not the incumbent.

[20] *Ham v Stoakes,* NA C78/801.

[21] An old word for a travelling bag or suitcase.

[22] See Trevor Royle, *Civil War* (London, Abacus, 2005), chs 5 and 7.

[23] I assume throughout that 'old style' dating is being used in the sources, with the year beginning on 27 March.

[24] For examples in Essex see Jim Sharpe, *Scandalous and Malignant Priests in Essex,* in C. Jones, M. Newitt and S. Roberts (eds), *Politics and People in Revolutionary England* (Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1986).

[25] The recorded sequestrations are summarised in William A. Shaw, *A History of the English Church during the Civil Wars and under the Commonwealth, 1640–1660* (London, Longmans Green & Co, 1900), vol. 2, app. C. Frustratingly, the records of the Committee for Plundered Ministers (BL Add Ms 15669) start in January 1645, a year too late for our purposes.

[26] Harold Smith, *The Ecclesiastical History of Essex Under the Long Parliament and Commonwealth*, Colchester, Benham and Company Ltd (date of publication not stated but thought to be about 1935), Ch VI-for Great Waltham see p. 123. In Smith's unpublished typescript *Sequence of Essex Clergy* (ERO LIB/283.025), which may have been notes for his published work, he says that there *was* a sequestration. He seems to have seen Henry's will, however.

[27] Quoted in Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 41. See also Noel's entry in *Alumni Oxonienses*, available on Ancestry.com.

[28] Sorrell's will is at NA PROB11/149/676. Nobody called Ward held the living. For Sorrell's connection with Trinity, see Clare Hopkins, *Trinity – 450 Years of an Oxford College Community* (Oxford, OUP, 2005), pp. 76 and 81. He was wealthy enough to lend the College £50 in 1605 and £300 in 1618 when the roof of its Hall collapsed.

[29] T.W. Davids, *Annals of Essex Nonconformity* (London, Jackson Walford & Hodder, 1863), p. 505, identified him with John Fuller, later Vicar of St Martins, Ironmonger Lane in the City of London, whence he was ejected after refusing to conform in 1662.

[30] Smith, *op. cit.*, ch. IV(b).

[31] His institution on 4 August 1636 took place as part of the Archbishop's visitation of the province of Canterbury, although Laud, who had been promoted from London in 1633, did not officiate in person – see LPL, Reg Laud 1 folio 169. This also probably explains Noell's omission from the list of Little Canfield incumbents by Newcourt (*op. cit.,* vol. 2, p. 124) who seems to have worked largely from the London diocesan records, since he had been the diocesan registrar.

[32] LMA DL/A/A/007/MS09531/015, folios 10 and 35.

[33] Shaw, *op. cit.,* vol. 1, p. 110 *ff.* and vol. 2, p. 187 *ff.*

[34] See Hopkins, *op. cit.*, p. 131. He was a Fellow from 1617 to 1645 and later became a Canon of Salisbury.

35 TCA reference College Government I/1, Register A.

36 For the Bishop's register see note 32 above. The Archdeacon's register is at ERO D/AE M4.

37 See reference below, note 43.

38 Shaw, *op. cit.,* vol. 2, p. 198 and 205 *ff*.

39 Smith, *op. cit.,* p. 97.

40 Shaw, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, app. 3b, p. 377. Sorrell is likely to be the son of the man whose will is mentioned earlier, and 'Goodere' may be a mistake for the more common local name of Goodeve.

41 Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 200 suggests that the system never 'got into proper work' in Essex.

42 Smith, *op. cit.,* p. 102.

43 LPL COMM XIIa.8, p. 206 *ff*. In this copy Henry's surname is spelled HAINE, in contrast to the copy in the British Library (BL Lansdowne MS 459/1) and in all other sources, where it is HAM or HAMM.

44 Noel's will (NA PROB 11/214/282) is dated 30 March 1649 and his burial is recorded in the Little Canfield register (ERO D/P 227/1/1) on 11 April.

45 TCA have no trace of the College's approval of Henry's appointment or his continuation on Noel's death, or anything about the appointment of Thomas Cox in 1653, but they have considerable gaps in this period (Hopkins, *op. cit.,* p. 110). For the legal position see Smith, *op. cit.*, pp. 160–161.

46 The large tithes (of corn and grain) belonged to the patron.

47 *The Diary of the Rev Ralph Josselin* (1908 edn, Royal Historical Society), p. 10.

48 Royle, *op. cit.*, p. 604.

49 NA C38/118. Whether they ever paid up is unknown.

50 *Ham v Clements,* NA C22/981/14.

51 NA C38/126 folio 21.

52 Perhaps £30,000 at present day prices? (See www.measuringworth.com, although these comparisons are complicated.)

53 He was buried at Great Waltham on 9 April according to the register.

54 NA PROB 11/217/52.

55 *Pond v Ham,* NA C6/114/87.

56 This may be scurrilous, since the Court Roll of the Manor of South House (ERO D/DHh M177) reports that John Love having died his widow had married Thomas Pond, though the entry is dated 6 October 1659.

57 For text see 'January 1650: An Act For Subscribing the Engagement', British History Online (british-history.ac.uk).

58 The probate date was 3 June 1651, only a few weeks after Love's death, which tends to confirm Henry's answer.

59 See K. Wrightson and D. Levine, *Poverty and Piety in an English Village: Terling, 1525–1700* (Oxford, OUP, 1995), p. 158.

60 *Bright v Ham,* NA C2/ChasI/B158/114.

61 See note 64 below.

62 Separate replies were given by all three, but Mary's answer is quoted here since Henry's is badly damaged. One suspects that Henry answered for all three.

63 For his holdings on the Manor of Great Waltham Rectory see ERO D/DO M36.

64 LMA DL/B/A/002/MS09537/016, folio 12. The actual document he presented was not preserved. It would appear that this was what Newcourt meant when he described Cox's admission as *per commissarios*, with a side reference to the 1664 Visitation (Newcourt, *op. cit.,* vol. 2, p. 633).

65 NA PROB 11/264/341.

66 Salmon's *History of Essex* (1740), p. 187, and Philip Morant, *History and Antiquities of Essex* (1768), vol. 2, p. 123. I am grateful to Michael Leach for these references.

67 In his later action against his half-sisters John Ham says that when his father died Mary (junior) was three years old and Sara about six months.

68 In John's action he says his father died 'soon' after making his will (which was proved in May 1657). In Elizabeth's separate action against Robert and Joan Smith she uses the word 'shortly'.

69 ERO D/P 297/1/1.

70 Smith, *op. cit.*, p. 339 *ff*.

71 *Ham v Horsenayle and others,* NA C7/554/3.

72 'since'.

73 LPL Comm III/Via.9, folio 512, and Comm III/via.10, folio 232. Morant*, op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 89, commented that by 1721 'so large and burdensome a cure [as Great Waltham] was only a poor vicarage' and that Trinity College had agreed to increase its value by another £50. Nevertheless, Cox, and presumably Henry Ham before him, was rated for Hearth Tax in 1664 for four hearths, suggesting his vicarage was one of the larger houses in the parish; only the Squire, Sir Richard Everard, with 29, had more than seven (ERO T/A 169/3).

74 The actual marriage has not been traced but their banns were published at St Mary de Crypt, Gloucester in November/December 1656 (register on Ancestry.com). By the start of the legal action against the Smiths (*Dowers v Smith* NA C5/603/49) in November 1657 she was referred to by her married name.

75 *Ham v Drane,* NA C8/228/33.

76 Bardfield Saling register, quoted above. Unusually this gives the exact date, adding 'that day being Sabath Day [he] was buried the Wednesday following'. It is unclear if he ever married; his will leaves a legacy to his 'mother-in-law', but this may have meant his stepmother.

77 ERO D/ABW/70/94.

78 Smith, *op. cit.,* p. 352. His neighbour, John Harrison of Little Waltham, refused to sign and was ejected (*ibid.,* p. 377).

79 Mentioned in the 1664 Visitation records, LMA DL/B/A/002/Ms 09537/017, folio 12.

MIDDLE BRONZE AGE TO ROMANO BRITISH SETTLEMENT AT TOOLEY'S FARM, LITTLE DUNMOW

Holly Drinkwater, Sarah Percival and Dr Clare Rainsford

Introduction

Archaeological trial trenching by Cura Terrae at Tooley's Farm, Little Dunmow (Fig. 1) has identified settlement remains dating from a poorly understood period of Essex's prehistoric past. Middle Bronze Age finds and features, that have been confirmed by radiocarbon dating, represent important new regional evidence. Excavations also investigated Roman period features, which may have formed a continuation of activity from the known small town at Great Dunmow.

The trial trenching was undertaken on behalf of Padero Solar Renewables Ltd in advance of development of the site into a solar farm. The work was informed by a geophysical survey (Bartlett Clark Consultancy 2015) and a previous phase of trial trench evaluation carried out by Archaeology South East (2016), which identified evidence of late prehistoric and early Roman field systems associated with a finds and environmental assemblage suggesting domestic waste disposal from a nearby settlement.

Twenty 30m by 1.8m trenches were excavated during the current work (numbered 3–22); sixteen trenches were in a previously unevaluated area in the north-east area of the site, and four trenches were located around Trench 4 of the previous evaluation, where the majority of the previously recorded archaeological features had been identified.

Features associated with Middle Bronze Age activity were exposed in Trenches 3 and 22, situated in the north-west corner of the development area. Roman period features were present in Trenches 18–21, centred around Archaeology South East's Trench 4 (2016, fig. 4) at the western edge of the development area.

Evaluation Results

The Middle Bronze Age Features

Trench 3 contained two ditches (304 and 308), a large pit (310) and a possible burnt tree-throw (316). The ditches displayed comparable dimensions of 0.9m wide and up to 0.5m deep, with shallow V-shaped profiles. They were broadly parallel spaced *c*.20m apart, with a north-east to south-west alignment. The similarities between these two features suggested they were part of a contemporary enclosure or field system, dated tentatively here to the Middle Bronze Age by their spatial association to pit 310. A pit or possible ditch terminal (2204) was exposed *c*.5m to the south of

Plate 1

feature 304 in Trench 22 which, although undated, may also have formed part of this field system.

A large, circular pit (310) had been cut along the inner edge of this possible enclosure (Plate 1). It had a diameter of 1.7m and was up to 0.7m deep with moderately sloping edges and a flat base. Pit 310 had been filled initially by a deposit of grey silty clay (311) that indicated it had been open and exposed to the elements for a period.

The primary fill was not sterile of cultural material and contained a flint core and sherd of pottery, and charcoal flecking. The three succeeding fills (312, 318 and 319) suggested activity around the pit, which resulted in periods of dumping of burnt refuse into the feature, which included an assemblage of thirteen flint flakes and debitage, burnt antler and twenty-one sherds of pottery (recovered from fill 318). The burnt material was sealed by a grey silty clay that was comparable to the primary fill of the pit, perhaps suggesting the feature had silted naturally as a partially infilled shallow earthwork.
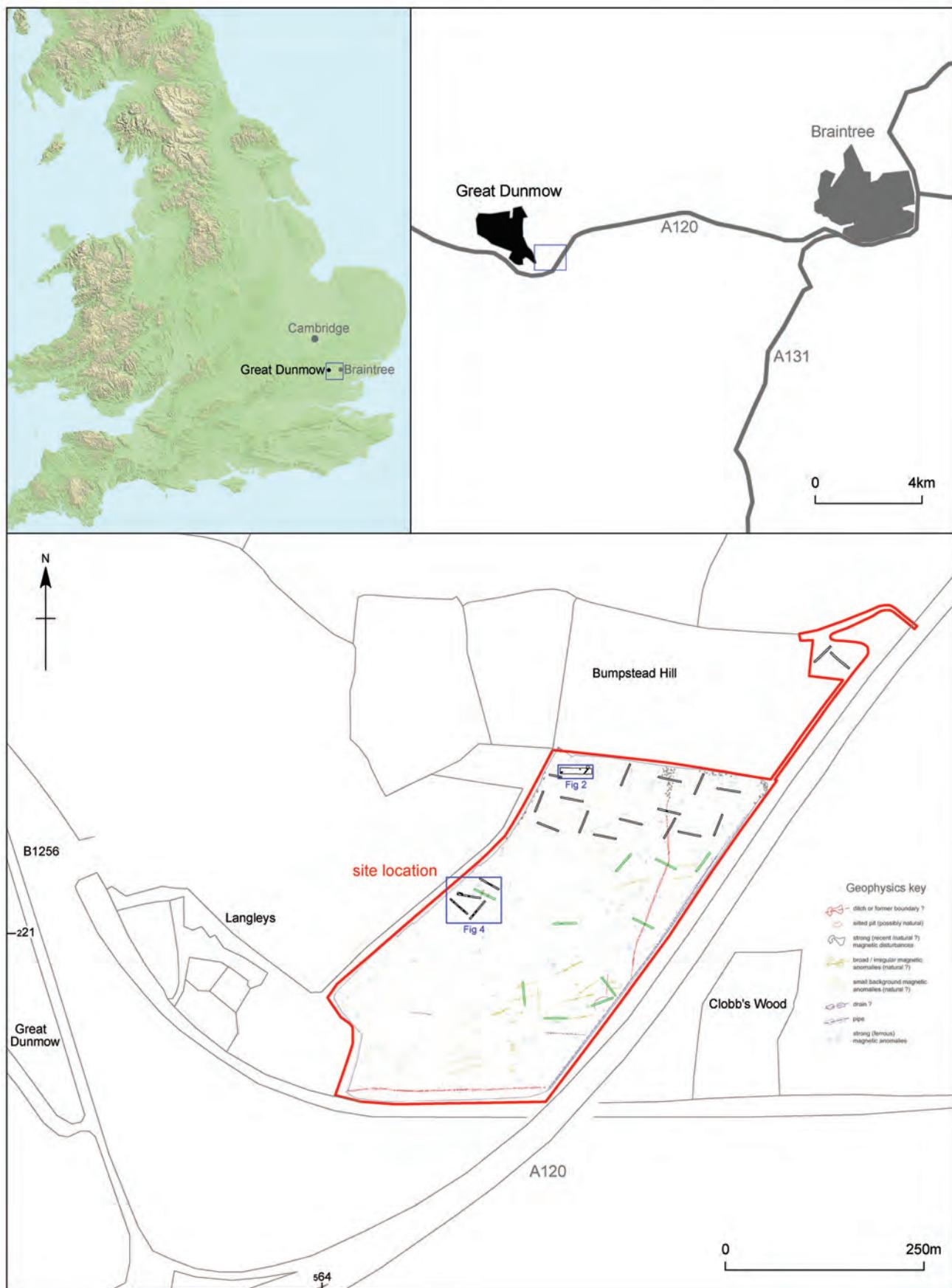
Figure 1: Site location and trial trench positions overlain on geophysical survey
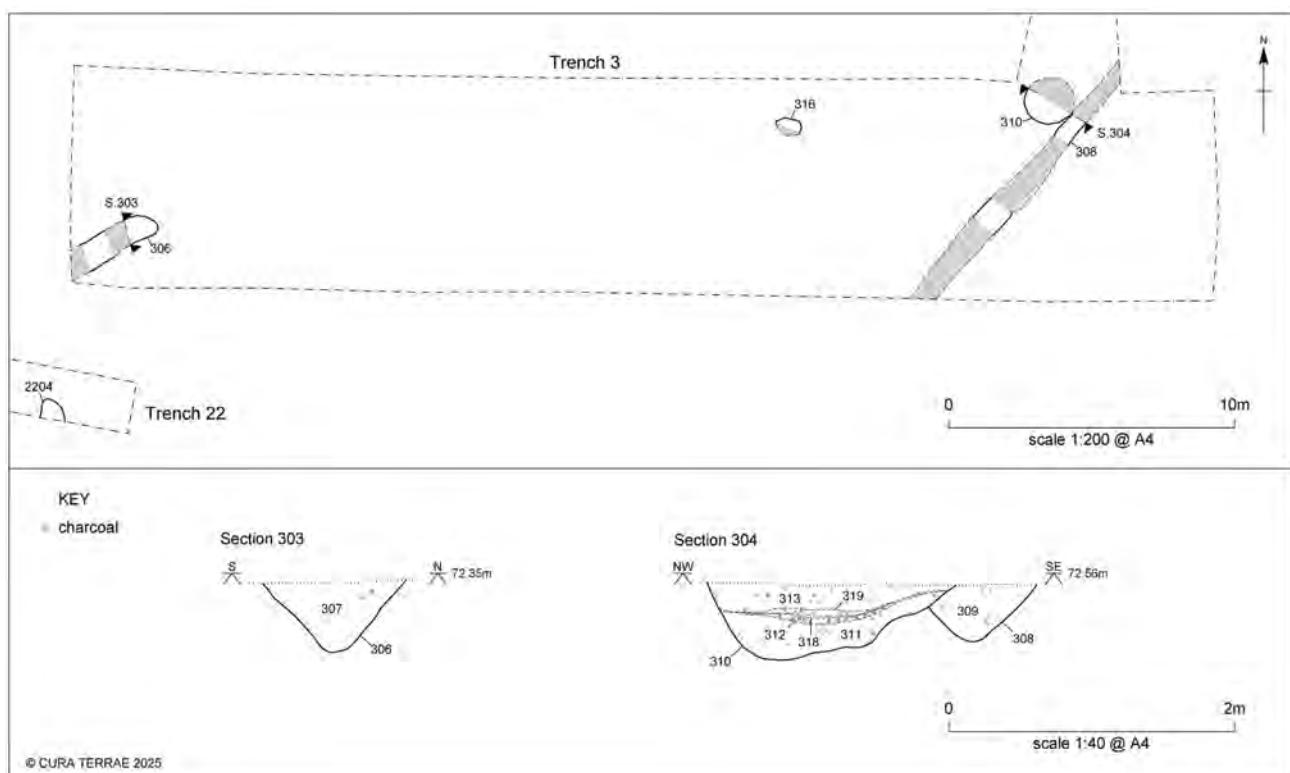
Figure 2: Trenches 3 and 22, plans and sections

Fabric group	Fabric code	Fabric description	Quantity	Weight (g)
Flint	FlCC	Common coarse flint (>1–3mm) in fine clay matrix	7	181
Flint	FlCMC	Common medium to coarse flint (>0.25–3mm) in flint in fine clay matrix	8	92
Flint	FlCVC	Common very coarse flint (>3mm) in flint in fine clay matrix	1	14
Flint	FlMM	Moderate medium flint (>0.25–1mm) in fine clay matrix	3	18
Sand	QFlRF	Rare fine flint (<0.25mm) in sandy clay matrix	1	5
Sand and flint	QFlCFGrRF	Common fine rounded quartz sand (0.25mm) common fine flint (0.25mm) and rare fine grog in fine clay matrix	1	8
Total			21	318

Table 1: Middle Bronze Age pottery from pit 310, by fabric

The pottery assemblage recovered from the pit (310) primarily consisted of undecorated body sherds with flint-tempered fabrics (Table 1) in the Deverel-Rimbury tradition and is comparable with Middle Bronze Age assemblages recorded in the region at Stansted, North Shoebury and Mucking (Leivers 2008, 17.7; Brown 1995a, 77; Brown 2016, 105–107). Five sherds had vitrified food residues on their inner surfaces, while a number of the sherds displayed external sooting, indicating the vessels had been used for cooking. Two sherds were decorated (Fig. 3). One rim sherd from fill 312 originated from a small, tub-shaped jar in a coarse fabric with common, medium to large flint inclusions (fabric FLCMC) and had slashes around the flat rim top and a row of tool impressed circular indentions running around the vessel below the rim (Fig. 3.1). The vessel form, rim shape and rim-top decoration compare well with examples from Stansted and Mucking, Essex and Grimes Graves, Norfolk (Leivers 2008, fig. 17.3, 13–17;

Brown 2016, fig. 2.39, 5; Longworth *et al*. 1988, fig. 40, 477–481). The row of perforations below the rim, which do not fully perforate the vessel wall, are similar to examples found at Grimes Graves (Longworth *et al*. 1988, fig. 34, 281). The diameter around the rim is 170mm, falling within the medium-sized vessel group identified at Grimes Graves, which typically feature rows of perforations below the rim (Ellison 1988, 46).

The second decorated sherd was from fill 313 and was of a sandy fabric with fine flint and possible fine grog inclusions (QFlCFGrRF). The sherd displayed incised decoration, probably forming panels or triangles infilled with parallel diagonal lines (Fig. 3.2). This sherd is from the body of a vessel, most likely a globular urn comparable to examples from Ardleigh, which are found in similar thin-walled, fine sandy fabrics, some with flint inclusions (Brown 1999, fig. 58, 34). The sherd from Tooley's Farm lacks the well-smoothed or
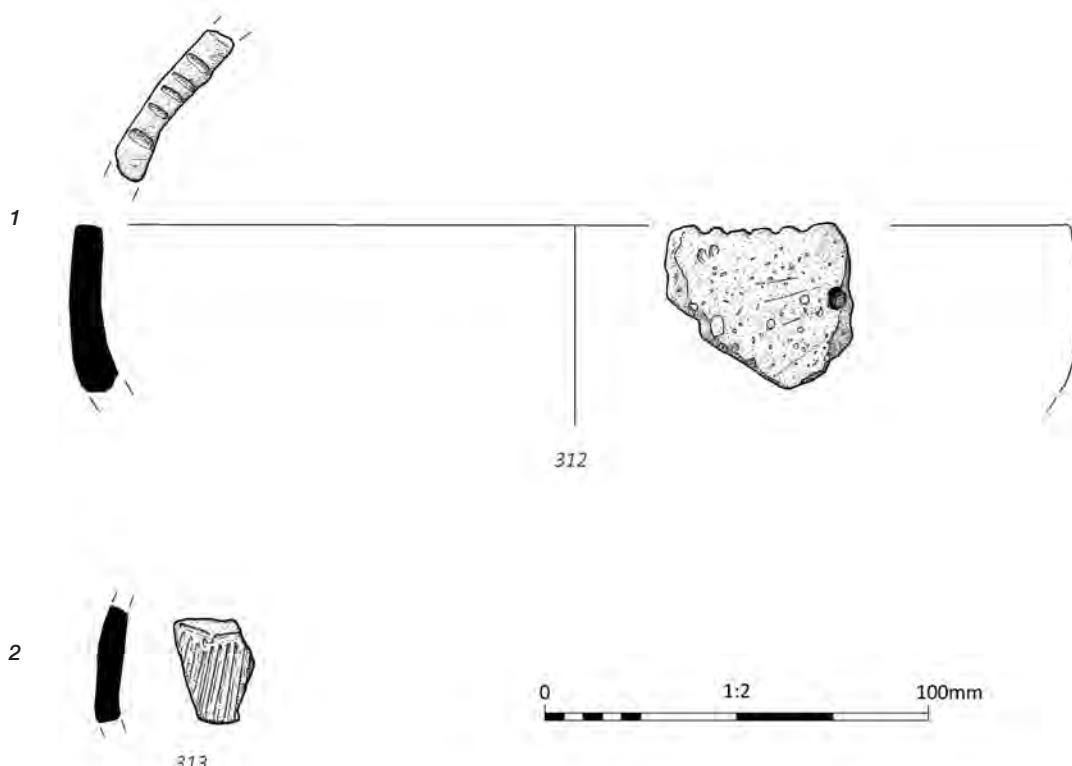
Figure 3: The decorated pottery from pit 310

burnished surfaces typical of globular urns found at Ardleigh (Brown 1999, 79), though this may be due to the poor soil conditions.

The majority of the animal bone assemblage from pit 310 was recovered from fill 318, with small quantities from fills 311, 312 and 313. The assemblage was primarily made up of red deer antler, with parts of a large mammal skull also being present that was too fragmentary to be identified to species but may have also been deer (Table 2). The material had been heavily burnt and was predominantly greyish white in colouration, which indicated burning at a high temperature (600–700 degrees celsius; Lyman 2001) or for a prolonged duration. Interestingly, teal-green surface discolouration, consistent with copper-staining, was noted on more than sixteen bone fragments in context 318 and on a single fragment in context 312, which implied that bone from both contexts had been in proximity to a degraded bronze or copper-alloy artefact either during or following the burning process. No such item was recovered from the excavations and there is the potential that the assemblage recorded in context 318 represents part of a larger deposit of burnt material which had been split and distributed more widely than within pit 310.

The identifiable pieces of antler consisted of fragments of beam, with characteristic rugose outer surface, thick cortical bone, and dense cancellous bone. Approximately 15g of bone could be identified as fragments of antler burr, irregular in shape and fragmented to c.10–15mm square. Three tine tips were also identified, all from context 318. The size of the fragments of burr would indicate that they derive from a relatively large set of antlers; but there was no evidence preserved to indicate whether any of the antler was shed or still attached to the skull at the time of burning. Three fragments of antler beam from context 318 showed evidence of potential surface modifications, one fragment displaying two distinct cut marks.

Context	Sample	Species	Element	Burnt / unburnt	Weight (g)	Weight from sample (g)	Total (g)
311	302	pig	molar, unburnt	Unburnt		2.5	2.5
312	303	deer	antler	Burnt	4.8	3.5	8.3
313	306	deer	antler	Burnt	23.6	8.1	31.7
313	306	large mammal	cranial	Burnt		1.8	1.8
318	304	deer	antler	Burnt	658.7	264.9	923.6
318	304	large mammal	cranial	Burnt		25.5	25.5
Total							993.4

Table 2: Identifiable animal bone recovered from fills within pit 310.

Multiple samples of the burnt antler were submitted for AMS radiocarbon dating; however, each failed due to insufficient collagen content. Following the failure of these samples, a sample of charcoal from fill 318 was submitted, which returned a calibrated date of 1256–1125 cal BC (68.2%) or 1282–1053 cal BC (95.4%) (Beta-748597; 2970±30BP) and is commensurate with a Middle to Late Bronze Age date for the deposition of material in pit 310.

A second, smaller pit (316) to the west of pit 310 also contained burnt material, although vitrification of the edges of the pit suggested this was a burnt tree-throw rather than an intentionally excavated feature. No finds other than an assemblage of charcoal were recovered from the fill, which may have been residual and derived from the Bronze Age activity demonstrated in the area by the contents of pit 310.

A sparse distribution of Middle Bronze Age sites within the Essex region means that our understanding of the period is currently limited (Timby *et al.* 2007). Although small in number, the features within Trench 3 represent an important group that fits into a wider network of Bronze Age activity highlighted during large-scale infrastructure works at Stansted (Havis and Brooks 2004), and on the A120 between Stansted and Braintree (Timby *et al.* 2007). The Middle Bronze Age sites identified along the A120 displayed a similar character to that identified at Tooley's Farm, one of land division demarcated by square enclosures and of settlement evidenced by the deposition of domestic waste in dispersed pits and ditch fills.

A conspicuously large circular pit, of comparable size to pit 310, was recorded *c.*1km to the north-east at Grange Lane (Site 49, *ibid.*). This pit contained a distinct and potentially formal deposition event of burnt material including Middle Bronze Age pottery and worked flint prior to infilling. Further comparable finds assemblages were recovered from pits at Green Lane Sites 7 and 39, which included Middle Bronze Age pottery, worked flint,
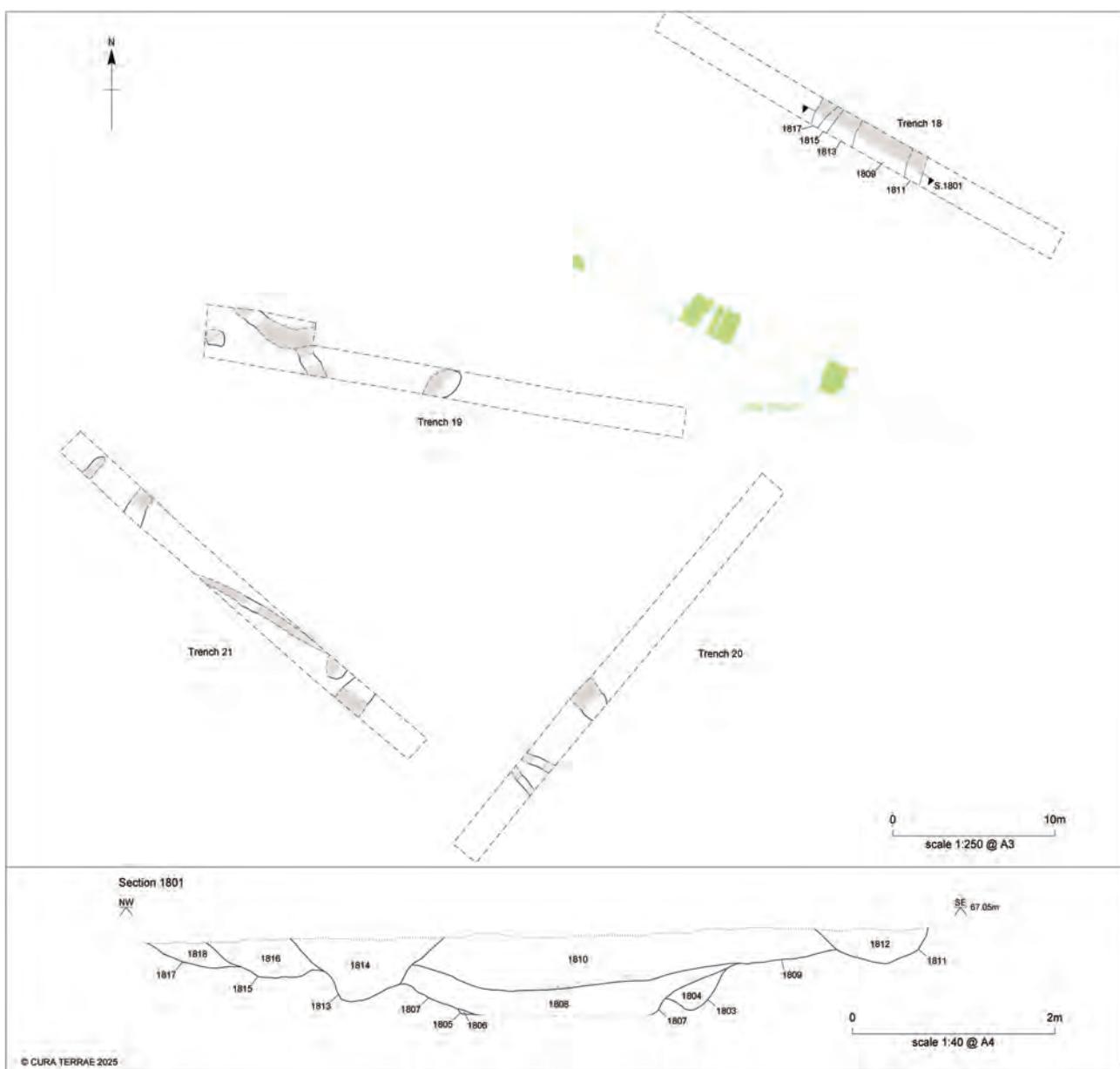

Figure 4: Trenches 18–21 plans and section

animal bone and charcoal (*ibid.*); however, their infilling was more characteristic of the accumulation of domestic waste.

The large assemblage of burnt antler in the fills of pit 310 is perhaps significant, with very few known regional comparators. It is plausible that the assemblage represented production waste, although the extent of the burning and fragmentation meant that only three pieces could be identified that displayed possible tool marks. Worked antler fragments have been recorded from a Middle Bronze Age pit during excavations at Stansted Airport, at the Car Park 1 site (Havis and Brooks 2004, 13) and in the wider region from a possible formal deposit in an enclosure ditch at Boreham Interchange, near Chelmsford (Ditch 831; Lavender 1999, 10). Both contexts were also associated with assemblages of Middle Bronze Age pottery (specifically Deverel-Rimbury forms), flint and charcoal. Three antler tines were recorded within the Tooley's Farm assemblage, the removal of which is seen in the production of contemporary antler tools, such as adzes and axes. However, the near identical material assemblages recorded from features at both Stansted and the Boreham Interchange may suggest a more enigmatic and structured reason for these deposition events than just disposal of refuse and production waste.

The Late Iron Age and Romano British Features

Archaeology South East's Trench 4 had recorded a multi-phase ditched boundary (2016), which proved to continue to the north into Trench 18 (Fig. 4). The feature was not present to the south, indicating that it terminated between the trenches. Stratigraphically, the earliest phase of the boundary consisted of a single, large north-east to south-west orientated ditch (1807), which had been recut (by 1809) before being succeeded by two smaller, parallel ditches. The northernmost ditch had been recut on at least one occasion (1817, 1815 and 1813). The archaeological remains recorded in Trenches 19–21 were also primarily linear ditches and/or gullies which were either orientated on a corresponding north-east to south-west alignment or perpendicular, running north-west to south-east.

Although the evaluation only provided a limited view of these features, it is plausible to suggest that they represent elements of square enclosures or rectilinear field systems synonymous with a Late Iron Age/Romano-British tradition of 'ladder' settlements. The pottery assemblage recovered from features in Trenches 18–21 comprised both hand-built wares in the native Late Iron Age tradition and typically Roman types, more closely datable to the 2nd to 3rd centuries AD (Ecus 2024). A significant proportion of the Roman assemblage (92% by sherd count) comprised Black Burnished 2, which may have been produced locally at a known production centre in Mucking (e.g. MUC BB2, Tomber and Dore 1989, 135; *ibid.*).

None of the areas excavated archaeologically in the A120 corridor directly adjacent to Tooley's Farm contained any archaeological features of this period (Sites 17 and 17a; Timby *et al.* 2007). During this work, archaeological activity was found to become more pronounced to the north-east, towards Little Dunmow, with evidence of nucleated settlement and enclosure systems dating from the Middle to Late Iron Age, with a number of features containing Roman material alongside native hand-built pottery (*ibid.*, 45). To the west, Roman settlement at Great Dunmow was established around the junction of Stane Street and the Roman Chelmsford Road and settlement has been attested from *c*.AD60 into the 4th century (Wickenden *et al.* 1988). It is likely that the enclosure system identified at Tooley's Farm belonged to the agricultural hinterland of Great Dunmow. The north-east to south-west and south-east to north-west orientation of the linear features recorded in Trenches 18–21 may suggest they were aligned with the Roman Chelmsford Road, located less than 500m to the west.

Conclusion

The results of the Cura Terrae evaluation, although limited in scale, fit into a wider framework of contemporary occupation recorded in the local landscape of the site and have provided a valuable dataset, particularly in terms of informing the nature of Middle Bronze Age activity in the Essex region. The extensive use of flint-temper and lack of profuse decoration in the Deverel-Rimbury assemblage from pit 310 suggested a date towards the later Middle Bronze Age for the material, which has been supported by the associated radiocarbon date (1282–1053 cal BC; 95.4%). The assemblage displayed some evidence of cooking residues and adds to a small but growing corpus of non-funerary pottery from the region. This evidence of domestic activity was accompanied in the same feature by an enigmatic and substantial deposit of heavily burnt antler. Regional comparisons may suggest this deposition of material had been structured to a degree and perhaps representative of less practical and more ritualistic activities.

The evidence for Roman activity was more readily interpretable and most likely related to field systems representing the agricultural hinterland of Great Dunmow during the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD, situated in the angle of two major Roman roads, Stane Street and the Chelmsford Road.

About the author

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IN BRIEF

Medieval Seal Matrix

PAS reference: ESS-1D7FB6.

A chessman-type seal matrix was found near Harlow, dating to the 14th century. It has the classic faceted profile and pierced trefoil handle. The face is engraved with a design showing St Margaret of Antioch rising from the stomach of a dragon. In her left hand, she holds a cross-staff with its end resting in the open mouth of the dragon, whose body forms a curve at the bottom of the image. A dove is placed above her head. An inscription surrounds the scene, retrograde around the die face; it is likely garbled: '*SAVNTA NTAMEA', probably for 'Saint Margaret' based on the iconography; a beaded border separates the legend from the scene.

Post-Roman Coin

PAS reference: ESS-DC0964.

A very early post-Roman coin was unearthed at Gestingthorpe in May this year. A mere 11.6mm in diameter and weighing just 1.01g, the silver coin (probably a sceatta, Primary series BZ, type 29a) belongs to the late 7th or very early 8th century – provisionally 700–710 AD. The obverse shows a facing bearded bust and a partial or blundered legend 'D+:+:+', while the reverse has a small equal-arm cross surmounted by a bird, probably a dove, with a ring of pellets forming the border. Christianity did not have a firm hold in Essex until the end of the 7th century, but this coin indicates that Christian iconography was already adopted for official purposes.

Gold Quarter Stater

PAS reference: ESS-71C4C9.

A gold quarter stater of the 'North Thames Region/ Trinovantes' type, was found at Fyfield earlier this year. This class of coin is usually attributed to the Iron Age ruler Dubnovellaunos and to the period c.5 BC–AD 10. It is the so-called 'Dubnovellaunos Trefoil' type with a wreath on the obverse, addorsed crescents in the centre and a pellet-in-ring to each side. The reverse depicts a horse advancing left with a branch below and a trefoil above. The original workmanship for this coin is exceptional, as is its preservation, showing little wear.

Iron Age Toggle

PAS reference: ESS4904E7.

Also of later Iron Age date is this bronze toggle found near Finchingfield in 2020. Despite their unprepossessing appearance, these tiny (27mm long) objects were used to secure a waist belt. Until the arrival of the Roman military in the middle of the 1st century AD, toggles of this kind were the height of fashion for securing a belt without recourse to tying a knot, with the flared ends slipped through a slit in the belt to hold it firmly in place.

A SCROLL THROUGH MEDIEVAL ESSEX

Neil McCarthy and Eloise McEvoy
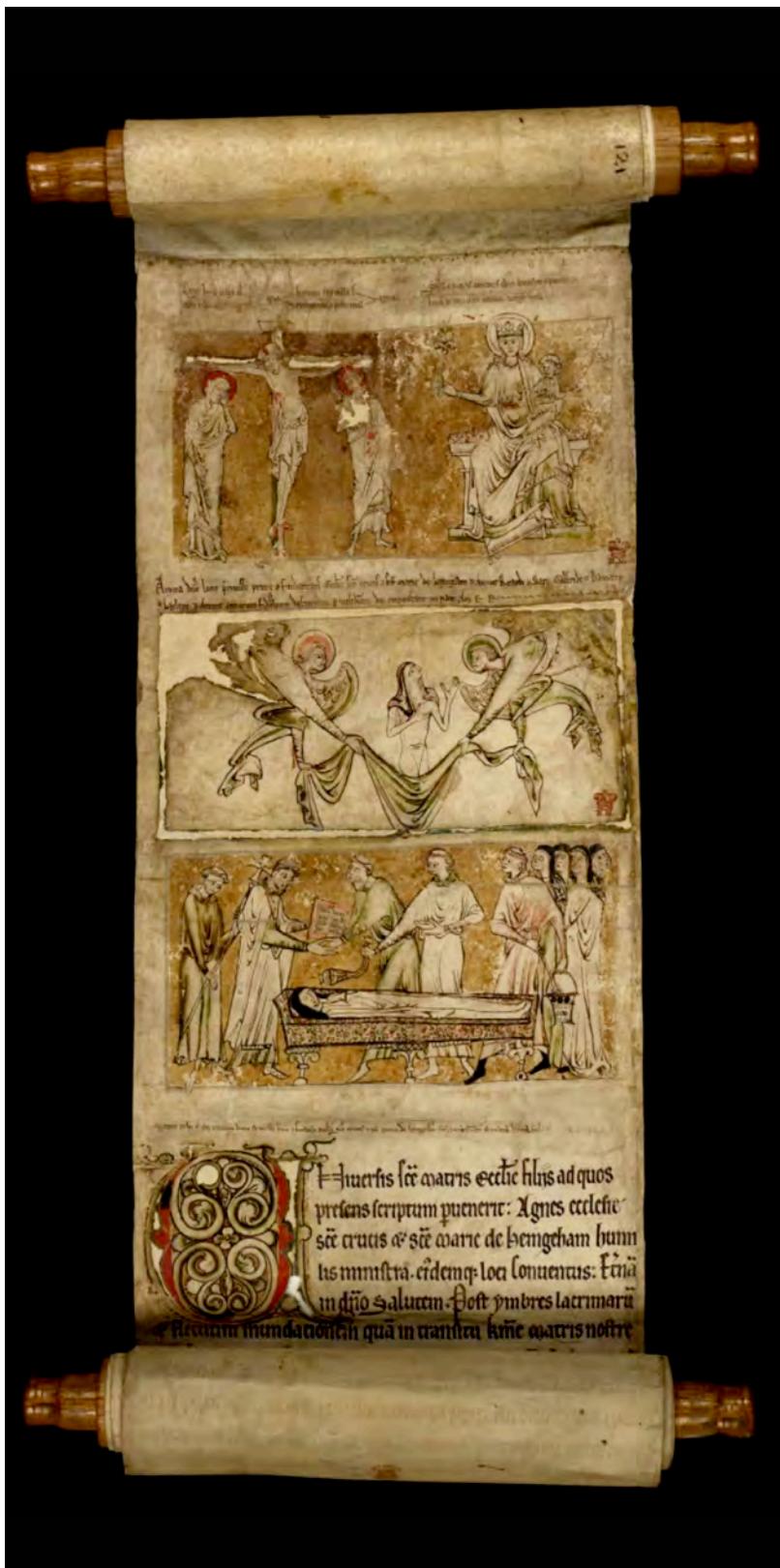
The opening section of the 'Lucy Roll'

Surviving intact after almost 800 years, a scroll prepared for an Essex order of nuns provides a trove of information on the county's monastic past while now also serving as a primary source for research into the role of women in medieval scriptoria.

This article reviews the circumstances leading to the scroll's production, contradictions contained in its written history, and its pathway to preservation until eventual purchase and safe keeping for the nation. However, the primary purpose is to examine and record connections between Essex's twelfth- and thirteenth-century religious houses, of which fifteen were directly involved in the compilation of the Mortuary Roll of Lucy of Castle Hedingham.

> *After a storm of tears and floods of lamentation, into the passage of grace, our mother, the venerable Lucy, the first prioress and founder of our house was called to the Lord.*

With these words[1] mourning the death of the Mother Superior of the Benedictine priory at Castle Hedingham, her successor, Agnes, began an appeal in Latin to the heads of other religious houses asking for their 'highest prayers and sacrificial offerings'.

In answer, 122 monasteries and convents across southern England contributed responses, consisting of individually composed paeans acknowledging Lucy's virtues while also soliciting prayers for their own intentions. These replies,

known collectively as *titutl,* together with Agnes's illustrated original exhortation, were assembled using ten separate membranes of parchment into a single linear document, to become Lucy's Mortuary Roll. Unfurled, it measures 19ft 2in (5.8m) in length by 8in (20cm) wide. Acquired for the British Museum in 1903,[2] it is stored at the British Library, which claims it as the oldest intact English illuminated mortuary roll.[3]

Mediaeval Mortuary Rolls

Mortuary rolls in the Middle Ages were created to honour and commemorate deceased leaders of religious establishments, such as an abbot or bishop, to serve as a record of their righteousness. Circulated among monasteries, convents, and other religious institutions, each of these in turn would add prayers, poems, or inscriptions expressing reverence and seeking divine intervention for the departed soul.[4] Rolls also confirmed the deceased's status and each answering institution's prestige in being called to add their commiserations. Sometimes adorned with elaborate calligraphy and decorations, the completed roll would remain at the originating religious house, available for display and incorporated into services held on relevant anniversaries and saints' feast days.[5] Lucy's venerated reputation led to prayers being said for her at Westminster Abbey on news of her death reaching London.[6]

The 'Lucy Roll' and the few other extant English examples available for study are of immense importance to palaeographers for what they help reveal of developments in medieval manuscript styles.[7] For the non-specialist, it is the images that catch the eye. The first of these has the Crucifixion to the left and the Virgin and infant Jesus to the right. Beneath this are shown two angels using a funeral shroud to lift Lucy's naked soul heavenwards. It is the third image that requires a fuller description as it records the elements of a funeral service afforded a person of authority, in this case a holy noblewoman: Lucy with her body in a bier is in the foreground, behind (from the right) are a cleric holding a processional cross and a priest receiving

Calvary scene and Mary and Christ enthroned

Angels bring Lucy to her tomb

Interment with ceremonial cleansing and prayer

a book from a second cleric. On the book's open pages is the inscription *Absolvimus te, soror Lucia, uxor beati Petri, apostolorum principis* (We absolve you, Sister Lucy, wife of the blessed Peter, the prince of apostles). It continues with a thurifer swinging a censer and a fourth cleric holding a holy water vessel and aspergillum. At the right edge are four mourning nuns attending the service in their Benedictine habits.

Hedingham Priory and the de Vere Family

The priory at Hedingham, dedicated to St Mary, St James and The Holy Cross, was endowed in the second half of the twelfth century by the prominent Norman-origin de Vere family, occupiers of the town's substantial castle.[8] Lucy's installation as Prioress occurred in the early 1190s. The year of her death is uncertain, estimated between 1224 and 1230. Similarly unclear is her relationship to the de Veres. Some authorities have claimed her as wife to Aubrey de Vere, Earl of Oxford.[9] However, while her high-ranking position suggests she may have been a relative to a de Vere, the texts of the Roll itself testifying to her commitment to virginity, along with convincing biographical evidence,[10] discounts the possibility of marriage. Despite this, many publications and online sites continue to copy and repeat the assertion that she was an earl's widow. The de Vere family tree has no record of a married Lucy,[11] although that name was likely adopted in place of a baptismal name when she made her profession of vows to become a nun. St Lucia (Lucy) was a revered fourth-century Christian martyr.[12]

Hedingham's nuns benefited from substantial grants made by generations of the de Vere family: a water mill on the Colne and adjacent land and premises; income-producing fields and woods elsewhere; construction of the new priory, chapel and outbuildings; and, via Richard de Belmeis, Bishop of London, the 'everlasting alms' of the nearby parish church. That church, St Nicholas's, was rebuilt to a Norman design by the de Vere family in 1180, following on from the erection in 1140 of the castle's stone keep. Unlike the nunnery, closed at the Dissolution to eventually leave no archaeological trace, today both castle keep[13] and church remain viable and highly visible legacies of the de Vere dynasty.

As followers of the Rule of St Benedict – motto *ora et labora* (prayer and work) – the sisters under Lucy's leadership would have observed a daily routine of labour and study interspersed with eight scheduled services of communal devotion, known as the Liturgy of the Hours. Copying and illuminating manuscripts along with embroidery of vestments were among crafts undertaken by Benedictine nuns throughout Europe, in addition to the upkeep of their premises and manual labour outdoors.[14] All this came to an end in July 1536, at the Dissolution, when the priory and all its possessions were granted in tail to John de Vere, fifteenth Earl of Oxford.[15]

Ordnance Survey mapping has identified fifty-seven locations that supported monastic life within Essex's traditional boundaries until the sixteenth-century closures.[16] These range from the two-man woodland Benedictine hermitage outpost of 'Bedeman's Berg' at Highwood near Writtle to Waltham Abbey, a site of national pilgrimage with twenty-four Augustinian canons and other clergy within its cloister.

Beneath the three illustrations that preface Lucy's Roll is the lament composed by her successor, addressed to 'all children of the sacred mother church'. This text, crafted in a style known as 'large book hand' and its illuminated decorative capital 'U' would have been the product of the Hedingham scriptorium. It leads on to *tituli* in varying scripts written at the 122 places visited by the breviator (a literate lay messenger) tasked with transporting the parchment across southern England.

Agnes's lauding of Lucy's piety included comparing her virginity to that of her nominative patron. 'Deservedly

The location and extent of the nunnery
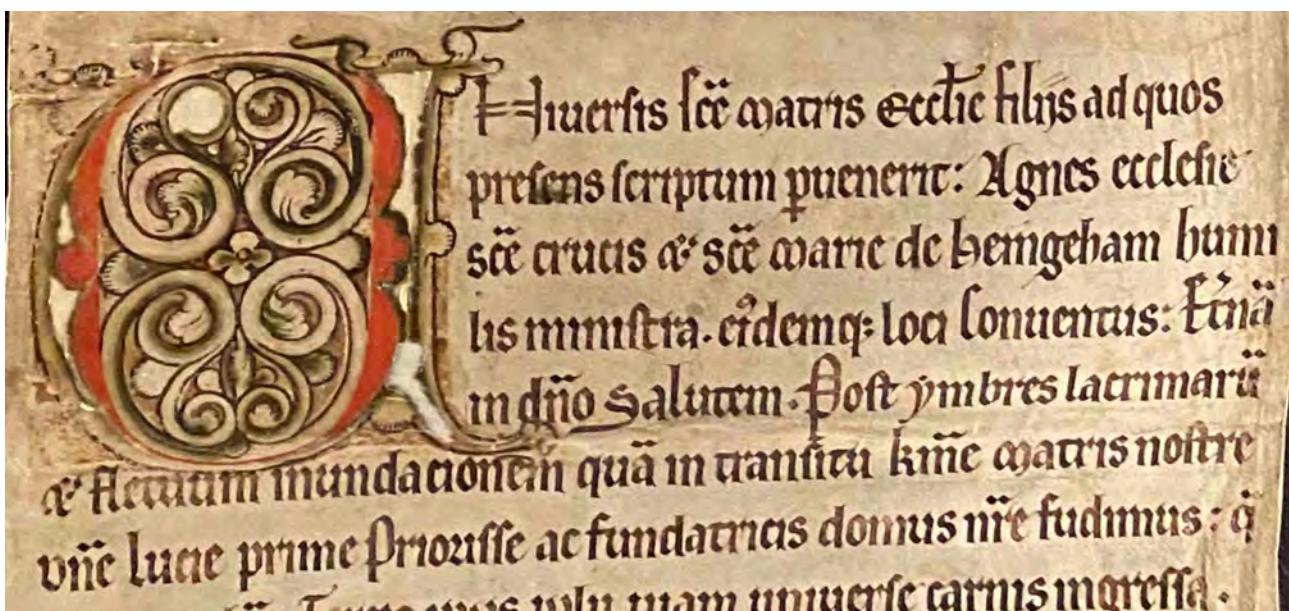
Iluminated capital from the manuscript

is she called Lucy as she is the light of knowledge … rightly is she called Lucy, because the blessed virgin assigned her strength in imitation of her exemplar [the martyr] Lucy'.[17]

It has been suggested that Hedingham's nuns sent first news of Lucy's death to St Osyth Priory because it shared close connections to the de Veres,[18] yet its inscription does not appear first in the scroll. Three distinctly differing Essex establishments feature prominently on the first length of membrane as it is unwound from the wooden spindle handle at its head. The first in line after Agnes's introduction is St Botolph's, Colchester. Modern-day palaeographic research has paid particular interest to analysing its *titulus* and also that of St Laurence Priory, Blackmore, and the county's foremost convent, Barking Abbey.[19]

St Botolph's Priory

St Botolph's became a priory between 1093 and 1100, when the congregation of priests based at the church elected to form the first British order of St Augustine. This gave Colchester four monastic houses, the others being: St John's Abbey (Benedictine, founded *c*.1095), which also has an entry in the Roll; the Benedictine nunnery of St Mary's Abbey; and the Hospital of St Mary Magdalene, a close neighbour to St Botolph's. A few years after Lucy's death, Colchester's fifth monastery, Holy Cross, was founded in 1235 by the Crutched Friars order.

St Botolph's prominence may have been a collaboration with the nuns at Hedingham in the scroll's production. The elaborate initial capital 'T' has been identified as crafted in the same decorative style hand as Hedingham's initial 'U', while the body of the two texts are in a different hand, St Botolph's using a book-hand and documentary hybrid. It also includes a poetic eulogy emphasising Lucy's sanctity and piety. In the Latin original, stress is given to her name deriving from *lux*, meaning 'light'. It reads in translation:

> *This Virgin, humble in life, is placed above the stars.*
> *And so, Lucy is given eternal light.*
> *This venerable nun has passed to the Heavens.*
> *There are few who can compare to her virtue.*
> *Let the eternal light shine on Lucy with its light,*
> *by the intercession of Mary's prayer,*
> *because she flowered just like a spring rose.*

As the country's first Augustinian foundation, the prior of St Botolph's had authority over other houses of the order in England for a brief period. The pre-existing Saxon church on the site just outside the Roman city wall was replaced with a Norman-Romanesque design using flint and recycled Roman bricks. Construction took decades, but by the time of Lucy's death, Prior Hasculph would have had a scriptorium at his disposal. With twelve canons (ordained priests), St Botolph's was somewhat overshadowed by its close neighbour St John's Abbey. Not only were the abbey's church and

From a wood engraving circa 1845
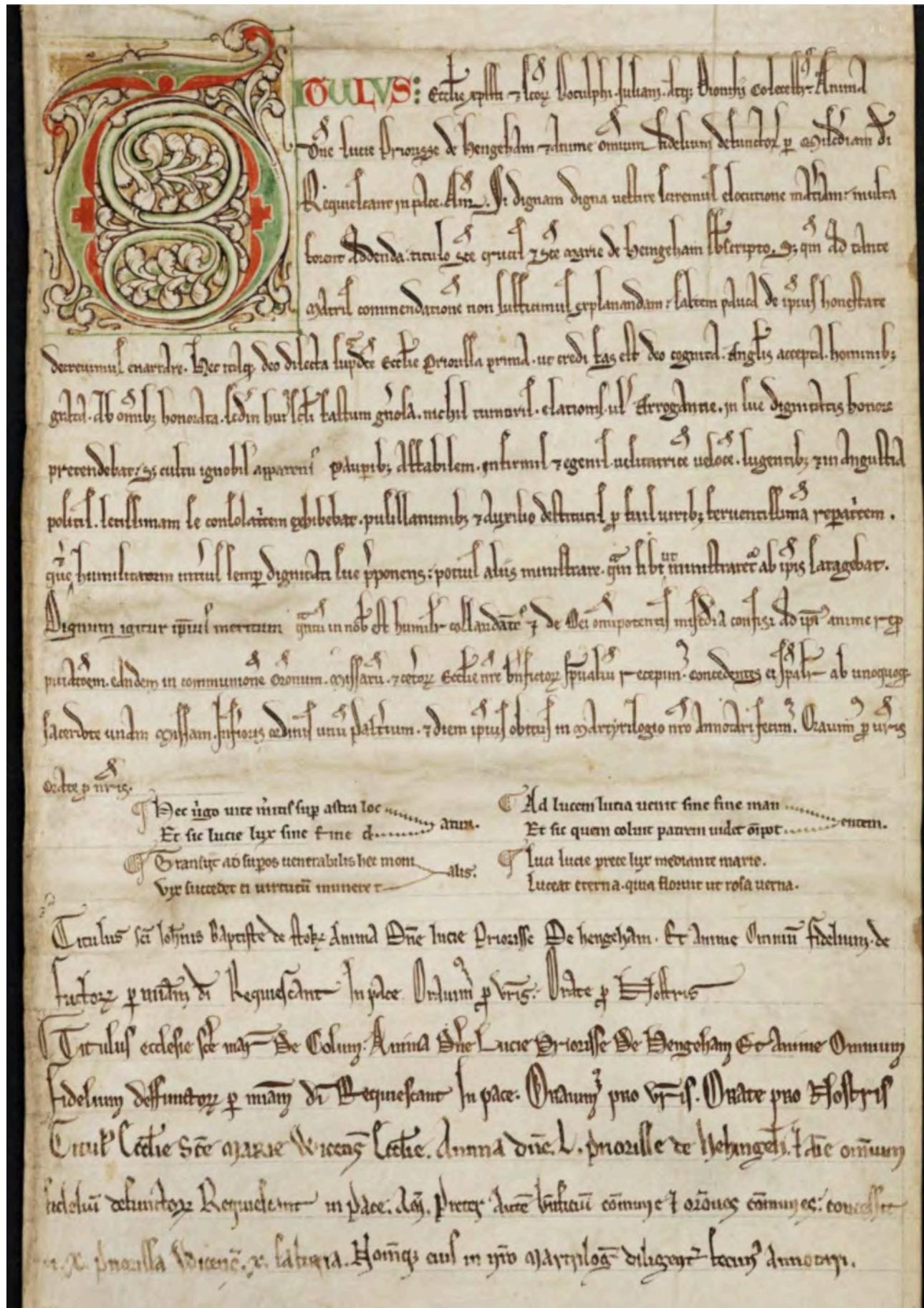
St Botolph's document, with illuminated capital 'T'

St Botolph's Priory ruins today

ecclesiastical buildings larger, it also housed twenty monks of the Benedictine order and 'a great number of Officers and Servants, and multitudes of Travellers and Poor who daily resorted thither'.[20] Disputes, on occasion involving acts of violence, sporadically broke out between the two establishments in latter years. The abbey's *titulus* sits below that of the priory.

St Botolph's was forced to close in 1536, with its assets granted to Henry VIII's Chancellor Thomas Audley. Most of its buildings were torn down, with a remaining section of the church used for parish services – until the 1648 Civil War siege, during which cannon-fire destroyed the roof. The church now in use on the site was built in 1837 adjacent to the remains of the old walls. The priory grounds and impressive ruins are open to the public.

A few entries further on to St Botolph's *titulus* is a contribution that stands out through the use of exaggerated flourished ascenders and is of particular interest to modern-day palaeographic students. It has been described as a 'wonderfully confident' individual script.[21] Its content follows the composition formula used most often in mortuary rolls: title, praise of the deceased, commiserations over the death, and ending in the valediction 'we pray for you, pray for us'.

Blackmore Priory and Jericho House

Bishop Richard, instrumental in granting Lucy's convent an income from the parish church at Hedingham, was also responsible for authorising the establishment of the priory at Blackmore in the same year. A period of substantial increase in the number of religious houses throughout the land, also included a location too insignificant to be recorded in the Domesday Book: the woodland manor of *Phingheria* (Fingrith) with six villagers, eight smallholders, twenty-four cattle and 1,000 pigs was the Domesday entry covering the area.

The Augustine community established at Blackmore between 1150 and 1170 was endowed by another Norman family, the de Samfords, who possessed the manor of Fingrith among their land holdings. Alice de Samford, granddaughter of the founder, was later to marry the fifth Earl of Oxford by which union the advowson of Blackmore transferred to the de Veres, creating another link to Hedingham. Representations of

Plan showing the relationship of the building as it stands today (solid black) to its medieval predecessors (broken lines)
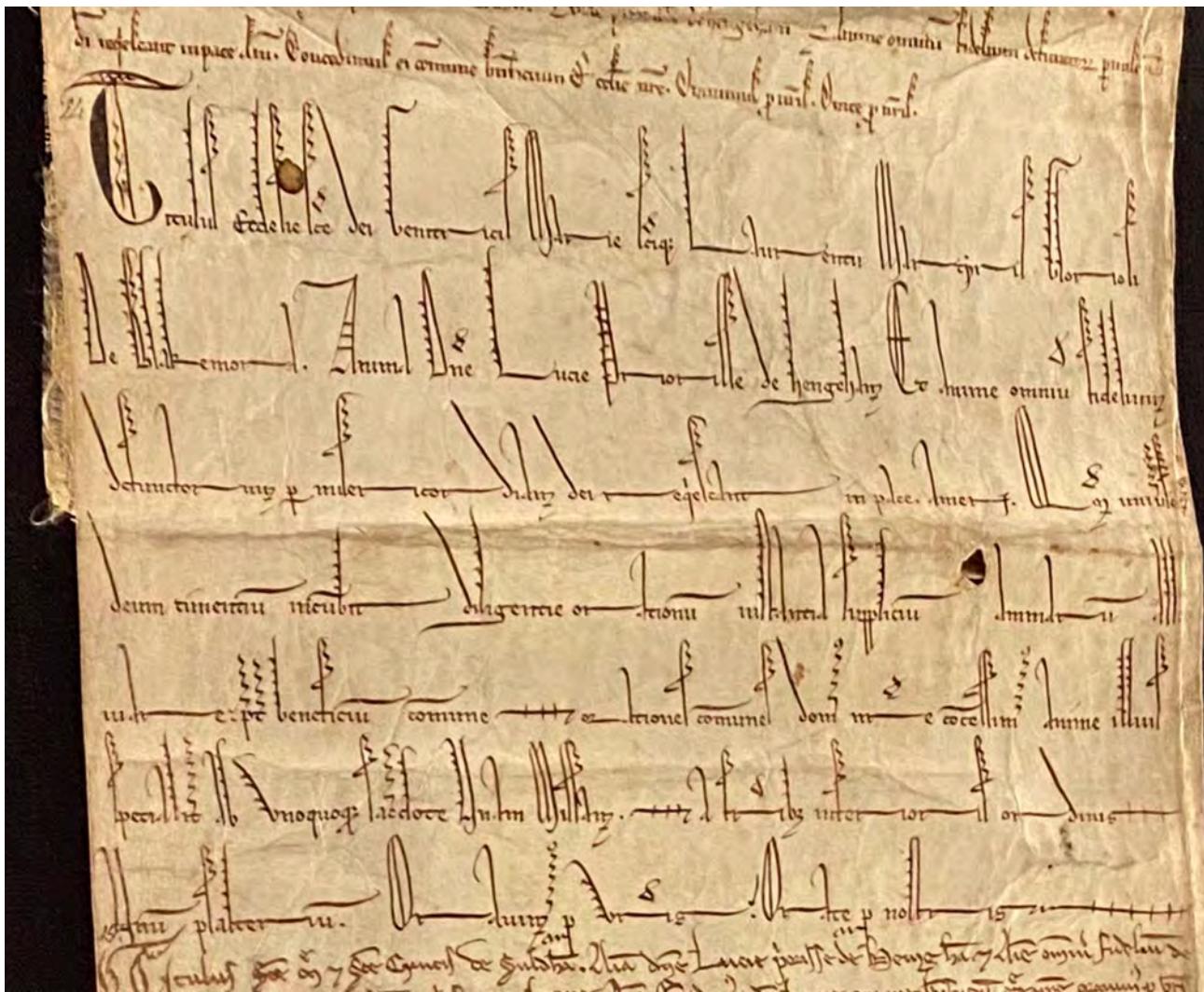
The Blackmore document, with very extravagant use of ascenders in the script

Blackmore St Laurence today

Blackmore St Laurence, the font and knave today

heraldic shields of the de Vere and de Samford families are still visible on the nave ceiling forming part of the church that survived dissolution.[22]

With the building of the priory, dedicated to the third-century Roman martyr St Laurence, the embryo village of Blackmore began to grow in the forest clearing to its south. The monks improved the drainage of the low-lying settlement, creating a moat and diverting water courses feeding the river Wid. In time, an oak-framed bell tower was added – still standing, and described in Pevsner's guide as probably the most impressive all-timber tower in England – and separate guest accommodation, Jericho House, for the Prior to host distinguished visitors. Here was born Henry FitzRoy, King Henry's illegitimate son, when his mistress, Elizabeth Blount, was sent to Blackmore for her confinement. FitzRoy was acknowledged by Henry, who awarded him the titles of Earl of Nottingham and Duke of Richmond and Somerset and the Lord Lieutenancy of Ireland. When raised to the peerage at the age of six, FitzRoy was attended at the ceremony by John de Vere, fourteenth Earl of Oxford. Married at the age of fourteen to the thirteen-year-old daughter of the Duke of Norfolk, FitzRoy died of tuberculosis three years later. The expression 'Gone to Jericho' is attributed to the vague excuse given at court when King Henry was absent without an apparent justified explanation.[23]

The priory and Jericho House were among the first religious houses to be disbanded during a 1524 'rationalisation' of smaller monasteries that preceded the widespread closures underway from 1536 onwards. Cardinal Wolsey held the property for two years before being stripped of office. The priory reverted to Henry,

the king who had sired a boy born within its grounds. In 1531 Henry granted the property to Waltham Abbey but it was a short tenure. Church and manor were sold to John Smyth, auditor to Henry. Smyth had the buildings torn down, apart from what now serves as the parish church and the tower. Stonework from the priory was used to build Smyth Hall, the family seat half a mile distant. The Smyth Hall site has now reverted to farmland.[24]

Barking Abbey

The next *titulus* announces its heritage in the first line: The Abbey of St Mary and St Ethelburga, Barking. Not only was Ethelburga the founding abbess at Barking (*c*.666 AD), but she was later canonised. Barking's storied past is well documented, beginning with the hagiography written by the Venerable Bede (*c*.731)[25] and subsequently detailed at length elsewhere.[26] Mabel de Boseham, elected by her fellow nuns in 1215 (d.1247) was Abbess during the period Lucy's Roll was being assembled. Barking was an important nunnery for almost the entirety of its near 900 years, only interrupted by Viking raids in the 870s leading to an abandonment lasting into the following century. It was a royal abbey by virtue of the appointment of wives, daughters and sisters of several British monarchs to positions of authority at the convent. It was also the Thameside base for William I in the year of his conquest while awaiting completion of the Tower of London.

Documents produced at Barking have been key to studies by palaeographers and other researchers assessing the

'St Ethelburga' by Gabriel Ehinger, after Jesaias Fisches line engraving, early 18th century (© National Portrait Gallery) NPG D23687
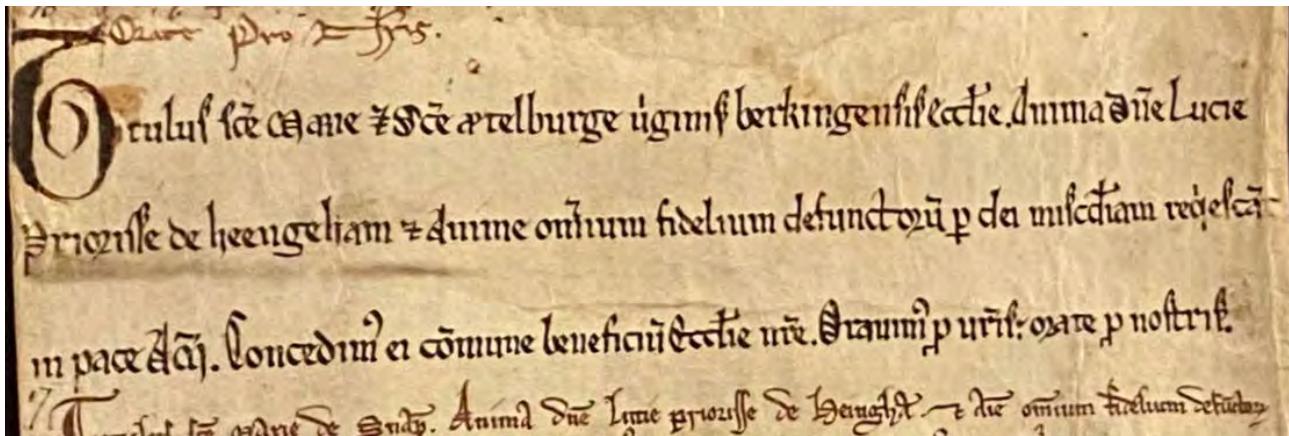
Opening of the reply from Barking

role of women in learning, literacy, authorship and scriptoria. The 2024 exhibition at the British Library entitled *Medieval Women: In Their Own Words* featured the abbey's inscription for the Lucy Roll.

> It is asked of all who hear this work that they do not revile it because a woman translated it. That is no reason to despise it, nor to disregard the good in it.

These words from the prologue to a *Life of St. Catherine of Alexandria* were written *c*.1170 by an anonymous nun at Barking who translated the Latin manuscript into Anglo-Norman French. The work pre-dates another translation which expanded on the original text and is recognised as being by the first named female English author: Clemence of Barking. Signing herself

The main gate of Barking abbey today

as *Clemence, sui nun de Barking,* she also authored the *Life of St. Edward the Confessor* written in the 1180s.[27]

The abbey was surrendered to William Petre, the royal commissioner, in November 1539, and its considerable wealth and lands in Essex appropriated to the Crown; the last Abbess and thirty nuns receiving pensions in return for acquiescing to the closure. The abbey's Barking buildings became the property of Edward Lord Clinton, and eventually were erased completely from the site. A different fate befell the Abbess's Ingatestone manor and other Essex estates acquired by Sir William. Ingatestone Hall, previously occupied by the Abbess's steward, became the ancestral home of the Petres. Sir William's successors were raised to the Barony of Writtle with the present Lord Petre, eighteenth direct descendant, being Patron of the Society publishing this *Essex Journal*.[28]

After Barking's entry is that of St Bartholomew's Priory, Smithfield, before the route of the scroll's passage zig-zags across southern England. No reasons have been recorded as to why some of the Essex's other major monasteries, such as Waltham Abbey, were apparently bypassed. Alphabetically, the Essex religious houses included in the Roll, and not previously mentioned above, were: Coggeshall, Earls Colne, Hatfield Broad Oak, Horksley, Latton, Leighs, Little Dunmow, Maldon, Prittlewell, Stratford Langthorne, Tilty, and Wix. Ten parchment membranes were stitched together lengthwise to complete the scroll.

Later History of the Document

Custody of the Roll until the present day can be broadly traced. As a treasured item, Hedingham's nuns would have held it in safekeeping until the convent's closure in 1536, after which possession passed to the de Veres at the nearby castle. The antiquarian John Weever (1576–1632) writes of examining the Roll while reading through manuscripts in the De Vere library. Weever's accounts of the funerary arrangements for Lucy were later published in book form, although his findings are disputed. The next owner was a Fellow of the Royal Society and director of the Bank of England, Gustavus Brander (1720–87). On his death, the Roll was auctioned at Leigh and Sotheby's. Archivist and book collector Thomas Astle (1735–1803) secured the lot with a bid of ten shillings and six pence.[29] Astle's handwritten notes on a section of the Roll's covering

Estimated route of Lucy's Mortuary Roll, marking the 122 religious houses contributing to the scroll before it returned to Castle Hedingham.

Map courtesy of the British Library

The likely route taken in compiling the Mortuary Roll

Essex priories and convents contributing to the Mortuary Roll of Lucy of Hedingham.

The blue symbols are imposed on a detail from the Monastic Britain Map (OS South Sheet, 1953) of Pre-Reformation religious houses.

Locations of the institutions contributing to the Roll (Supplied by the authors)

membrane remain. The final private owner was Lewis Majendie MP. The Hedingham Castle estate had passed to him through his 1870 marriage to Lady Margaret Lindsay, a de Vere descendant. The Roll was acquired by the British Museum in 1903 through a bequest of Francis Egerton, Earl of Bridgewater, before transfer to the care of the British Library.[30]

Professor Elaine Treharne, giving the University of London's 2025 John Coffin Memorial Lecture in Palaeography, *Mortuary Rolls as Evidence of Scribal Practice*, used extracts from the Hedingham, Colchester, Barking and Blackmore *titului* to illustrate script variety and development in the Middle Ages. In addition to her senior positions at Stanford University (USA), Prof. Treharne is Director of Stanford Text Technology and, with academic colleagues, directs its *Medieval Networks of Memory* project.[31] A fully digitised version of the entire Lucy Roll is used in conjunction with a similar process retrieving *titulus* from the Prioress Amphelisa of Lillechurch Roll, preserved at St John's College, Cambridge. The project's database holds evidence from 500 religious scriptoria. Analysis of scripts and ongoing research will explore evidence of women in scriptoria, particularly in nunneries, challenging historical assumptions that only men were scribes at the time. The map showing the passage of Lucy's Roll through southern England has been provided courtesy of the Stanford project.

References, abbreviations and notes

[1] Authors' translation.

[2] British Library (BL): Egerton MS/2849/1; Egerton MS 2849/2.

[3] BL: *Ancient, Medieval, and Early Modern Manuscript*s, 25 January 2025.

[4] *Medieval Mortuary Rolls: Prayers for the Dead and Travel in Medieval England,* Lynda Rollason, *Northern History*, volume 48, issue 2, 2011.

[5] *Speculations on the Visibility and Display of a Mortuary Roll*, Stacy Boldrick, Courtauld Institute, 2019.

[6] *History and Antiquities of the County of Essex,* Philip Morant, volume 2, 1768, hereafter *Morant*, p. 297.

[7] Medieval Networks of Memory – Stanford (USA) University Text Technologies Project.

[8] Victoria History of Essex (VCH), volume ll, 1907, pp. 122–3.

[9] *Morant*, Hinckford Hundred, p. 296; VCH p. 122 (commonly repeated elsewhere with and without attribution).

[10] *The Benedictine Nuns of Castle Hedingham*, Jane Greatorex, Manors, Mills & Manuscripts Series, 2008. Hereafter *Greatorex*.

[11] *The De Veres of Castle Hedingham*, Verily Anderson, pub. Terence Dalton of Lavenham, 1993.

[12] *The Life and Prayers of Saint Lucy of Syracuse*, Wyatt North, Createspace, 2014.

[13] *Greatorex*, pp. 18–40; VCH, pp. 122–3; *Morant*, pp. 292–7.

[14] *The Benedictines in the Middle Ages,* James G. Clark, Boydell & Brewer, 2011.

[15] *Morant* (p. 297) writes that at the time of his compilation of the history of Essex (1763–1768) the nunnery had been converted to a farmhouse, its other buildings either no longer standing or in ruins. The Nunnery Farmhouse now occupying part of the old convent grounds is listed by Historic England (ID 1122942) as sixteenth century.

[16] *Map of Monastic Britain* (south sheet), Ordnance Survey, 1954

[17] Authors' translation.

[18] *Greatorex,* p. 8.

[19] *St Botolph's Priory*, Crossan C., Crummy, N. and Harris, A., *The Colchester Archaeologist*, vol. 5, 1992, pp. 6–10; *St Botolph's Priory, Colchester, Essex,* Peers, C., English Heritage, London, 1977; VCH, pp. 148–9.

[20] *The History and Antiquities of Colchester*, Philip Morant, 1748, p. 141.

[21] Prof. Elaine Treharne, Medieval Networks of Memory – Stanford (USA) University Text Technologies Project, giving the John Coffin Memorial Lecture in Palaeography, University College London, 2025.

[22] *Morant*, Chelmsford Hundred, p. 56; VCH, pp. 146–8; *A Guide to the Priory Church of St. Laurence, Blackmore*, Andrew Smith, 2005; *Guide to the Priory Church of St. Laurence Blackmore*, Constance Simmons, 1966.

[23] *Blackmore Area Local History*, Andrew Smith, 2019.

[24] *Guide to the Priory Church of St. Laurence Blackmore*, Simmons.

[25] *A History of the English Church and People*, Bede, translatd by Leo Sherley-Price, Penguin, 1955.

[26] VCH, pp. 115–7.

[27] *Barking Abbey and Medieval Literary Culture: Authorship and Authority in a Female Community*, edited by Jennifer N. Brown, Donna Alfano Bussell, York Medieval Press, 2013.

[28] *Tudor Secretary*, F.G. Emmerson, Longmans, 1961, pp. 22–7; *The Catholic Church in Ingatestone*, Stewart Foster, Mayhew-McCrimmon, 1982, pp. 17–22.

[29] *Ancient Funerall Monuments*, John Weever, London, 1631, p. 378; *Origin and Progress of Writing*, Thomas Astle, London, 1784, p. 211; Medieval Manuscripts Provenance (Peter Kidd, mssprovenance.blogspot.com), 2019; Manuscripts of Lewis Majendie, MP, of Hedingham Castle.

[30] BL Egerton MS/2849/1, MS 2849/2.

[31] https://medievalnetworks.github.io/mnm/.

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SLAVERY IN ANGLO-SAXON ESSEX

Tony Fox

The contemporary, written evidence for Anglo-Saxon slavery is ample. Among legal texts, the earliest surviving English law code (of Aethelbert of Kent, *c*.597–616), as well as Ine's laws in Wessex (*c*.710), provide for different punishments to be meted out to slaves and freemen, especially in the British/Welsh/Celtic part of the population.[1] Elsewhere, *c*.730–735, the Venerable Bede mentions an Anglo-Saxon thegn named Imma, who, after capture in battle and proving to be something of an escape artist, is 'sold to a Frisian' in London.[2] The Treaty of Alfred and Guthrum (*c*.878) not only defines one (if not two) boundaries of Essex, but also requires both the English and the Danes to document their slaves; the parties further agreed not to harbour slaves that did not belong to them. The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (ASC) reports the enslaving of English captives by Viking invaders in 917 and 940. Later on, the ASC for 1036 reports that Earl Godwine enslaved some of Edward Aethling's companions and sold them.[3] Slavery was endemic in England long before the Norman Conquest.

Overall, a working definition of slavery might be a person who: (i) works under the control of an owner (directly or indirectly), (ii) is not a member of the dominant landholding class, and (iii) lacks the legal rights of others in the same community, including to freedom of movement (there were laws describing severe punishments for runaway slaves).

The semantics, however, do not help. The word 'slave' dates only from the 13th century, when slavery in England had already disappeared; the word was an import from the Old French *esclave*, and ultimately seems to have the same origin as the word Slav, with the connotation of meaning a person from outside Christendom.[4]

The principal Anglo-Saxon term was *þeow* (pronounced 'theew') or *þrael* ('thral'). Other terms were *gebur* (modernly, 'boor'), *esne,* and serf. These terms have several declensions and derivatives.[5] These terms may indicate legal nuances applying to the state of enslavement, and there is considerable academic debate about these shades of meaning. Some types of slave were essentially chattels and were bought and sold in markets. Others were tied to land to which they occupied in varying degrees of servility. Conveyances of such land included the occupying slaves, who were seen as appurtenances that went with it.

Beyond the working definition, it is a reasonable presumption that if one person can be freed by another (the act of manumission),[6] then the former was unfree beforehand. Well-to-do Anglo-Saxons were wont to include manumissions in their wills, and thought this might promote a more favourable final judgment of their soul.

One example is the will (*c*.1052–66) of Ketel, who owned land at Stisted, and where he had installed a reeve (*i.e.*, a local steward).[7] In typical fashion, Ketel bequeaths his land with a religious aspiration: 'for the sake of my father's soul and for Saefled's'. But then, importantly, he continues: 'and it is my will that all my men shall be free, and that my reeve, Mann, shall occupy the free land which I have given over to his possession, forever freely during his life'. It is interesting that a (presumably) trusted servant such as a reeve might yet also have been unfree. It is also interesting that Ketel was going further with his manumissions than had his mother. She had devised Stisted to Ketel in her will (*c*.1046), but had stipulated that only half the men on her estate were to be freed, and, even then, only after both Ketel and his brother (named Ælfketel) had died.[8]

East Saxon Wills

There are other, earlier examples of slave manumission by East Saxons.[9] Best known is the will of Theodred, Bishop of London (*c*.942–951); his many bequests include lands at Dunmow, Dengie, and St Osyth's (then called *Cic*). Everything on the estate at St Osyth's was given to St Paul's 'except the men who are there; they are all to be freed for my soul's sake [*buten þe men þe þer aren fre men alle for mine soule*.]'.[10] Another example is the will of a lady called Leofgifu, made *c*.1035–44.[9] Among Leofgifu's bequests are lands at Gestingthorpe, one of the Belchamps, Bentley, Boreham, (probably Earls) Colne, Lawford, and one of the Warleys. These came with a blanket statement: 'and I desire that all my men shall be free, in the household, and on the estate, for my sake and for those who begot me.' Again, Thurstan 'son of Wine' made his will *c*.1042–43 with an impressive list of witnesses (executors of wills had not yet been invented) including much of the Royal Court, two bishops, two priests, one sheriff, and four Essex thegns ('*ealle þa þegenas on Eastsexan*') named Osulf Fila, Ufic, Aelfwine 'son of Wulfred', and Aelfric 'son of Wihtgar'.
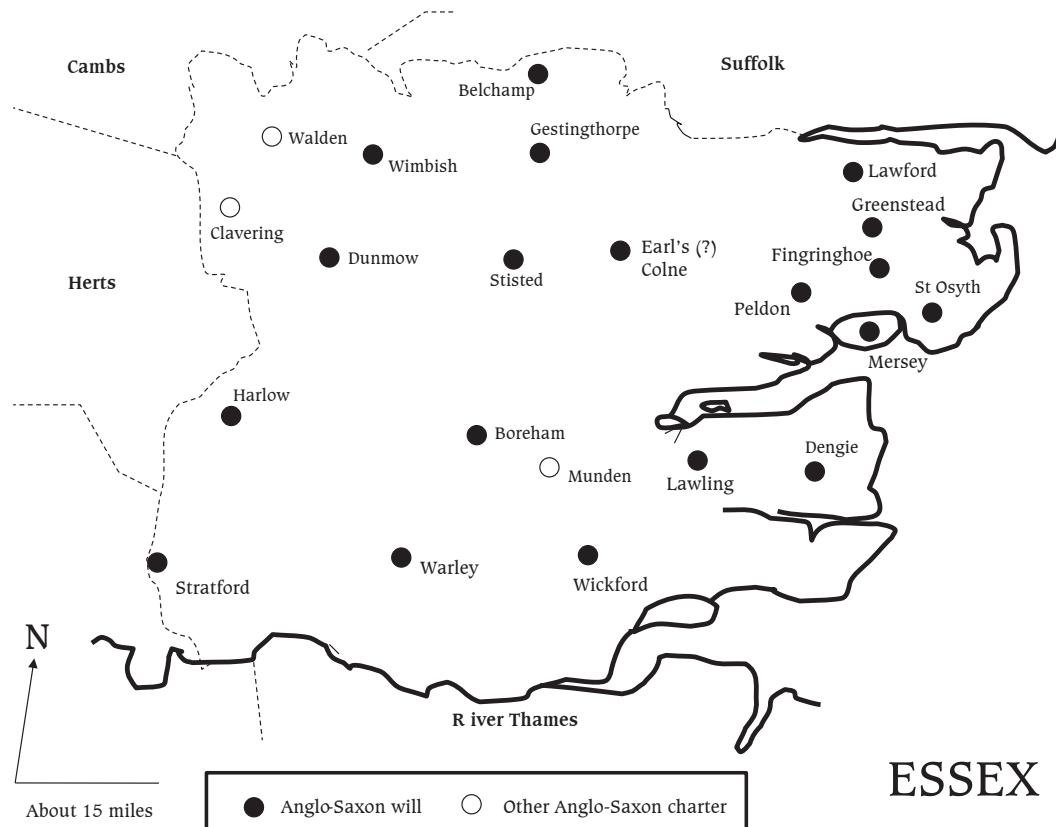
Figure 1: Places named in Anglo-Saxon documents in connexion with slaves in Essex. The distribution seems to be reasonably even across the county, in spite of the doubtless sparse survival of documents

One of Thurstan's legacies was a life interest in his estate at Wimbish, which he left to a woman called Leofwaru (who was not his wife), 'and all their men are to be freed after the death of both of them'. This same Thurstan, in a separate document, bequeaths lands at Harlow and various other places, and, again, 'all the men are to be free'.[9] Similarly, Ælfflæd (who became the wealthy widow of Ealdorman Brihtnoth) issued a blanket manumission of 'half of my men in every village [*elcum tune*] be freed for my soul' in about 962–91;[11] it is unclear how Ælfflæd's beneficiaries were to be selected. However, later on (*c*.1001), Ælfflæd changed her mind about her estate at Lawling which was then bequeathed 'with its produce and its men, just as it stands' to Æthelmær (probably the Ealdorman of the Western Shires).[12,13] These bequests have been included in Figure 1.

Family Ties

Chattels have owners. Demonstrating lawful possession of property is important because it counters accusations of theft and enables legitimate trade. Modernly, before the Land Registry, proof of title to land was fulfilled by various documents, preferably in an unbroken historical chain going as far back as possible. Anglo-Saxons had the same need regarding their slaves.

Slaves were valuable property (in some legal tables of compensation, a slave was worth two-thirds of a horse).[14] Thus, identifying slaves was desirable to confirm status and ownership. This identification was done by naming the slave's relatives and place of residence. Sometimes, Anglo-Saxon documents have sufficient detail to allow a partial reconstruction of a slave's family tree. By accident of survival, Figure 2 shows an example concerning boors in north-west Essex, and demonstrates their relationship with others in eastern Hertfordshire.[15]

We know the names of a few other pre-Conquest Essex slaves. One was certain Cynric at Clavering, and another was Hehstan at Walden. The latter also had kin in or near Hatfield, Hertfordshire, and may be related to those named in Figure 2.[15]

Domesdæg

One purpose of Domesday was to record the population in 1086, and to compare it with the situation prior to the Conquest (*i.e.*, the spring/summer of 1086 versus, notionally, January 1066). The Norman conquerors were probably bewildered by the nuances, complexities and legalities of English slavery, and one objective of Domesday seems to have been to rationalise the peasant class system. One aspect of that rationalisation is that Essex Domesday (in Little Domesday Book, 'LDB') uses the undifferentiated term *servi* (singular: *servus*) for all of those on the bottom rung of society in the later 11th century. With a much larger sample than that provided by the accidental survivals of charters, the Survey confirms how ubiquitous slavery was in Essex at the end of the Anglo-Saxon era, just before the Conquest (Table 1).
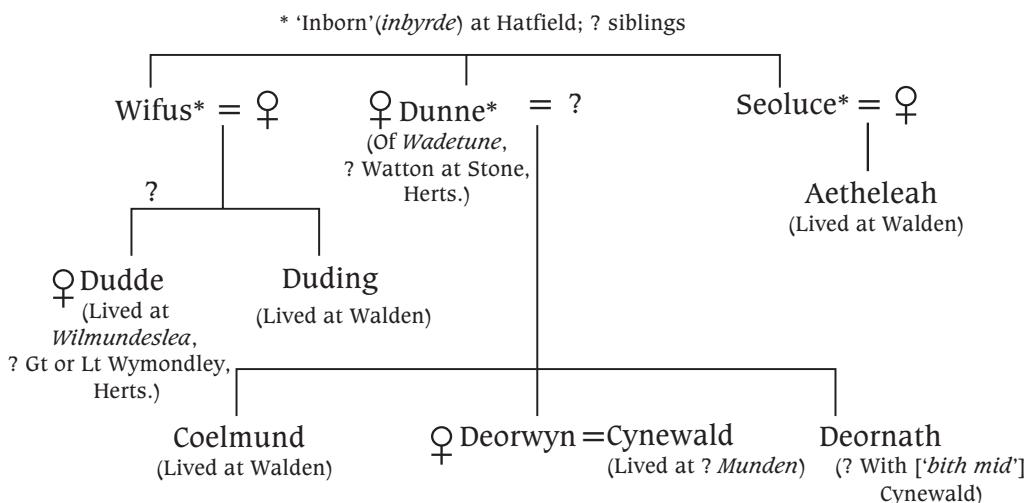
Figure 2: A fragmentary pedigree of 11th century, pre-Conquest boors, after (reconstructed) Thorpe (1865)[15]

(Half-)Hundred	Estates	Servi	Total recorded population	Servi (% of recorded population)	Average servi / estate
Barstaple	86	143	595	24.0	1.66
Becontree	26	64	541	11.8	2.46
Chafford	47	81	421	19.2	1.72
Chelmsford	80	206	995	20.7	2.58
Clavering	19	50	180	27.8	2.63
Dunmow	58	176	706	24.9	3.03
Freshwell	26	78	348	22.4	3.00
Harlow	34	110	353	31.2	3.24
Hinckford	135	320	1388	23.1	2.37
Lexden	57	154	780	19.7	2.70
Maldon	3	0	2	0.00	0.00
Ongar	50	146	578	25.3	2.92
Rochford	51	80	504	15.9	1.57
Tendring	75	188	1171	16.1	2.51
Thunreslau	3	12	57	21.1	4.00
Thurstable	27	93	335	27.8	3.44
Uttlesford	61	178	926	19.2	2.92
Waltham	9	23	185	12.4	2.56
Wibertsherne*	68	171	625	27.4	2.52
Winstree	27	82	246	33.3	3.04
Witham	39	115	507	22.7	2.95

Table 1: The ubiquity of slavery in Essex on the eve of the Norman Conquest (notionally, January 1066)[16]

Regardless of the semantics, many peasants in Anglo-Saxon Essex were slaves. One may wonder whether legal nuances in slave status made much difference to the everyday existence of the unfree Essex peasant.[17] Even after manumission, the beneficiary might still hold only slightly better status than before, and remain bound to his master by reason of a land tenancy with onerous conditions.[18] Given their lowly status, it is perhaps surprising that some of their names and genealogy have survived. But the reason is because they were often chattels or land appurtenances, and, as a matter of legal title to ownership, they were more likely to be documented than some of their better-off neighbours. Overall, unquestionably, slavery was common and widespread in Anglo-Saxon Essex.

Endnotes

1 Alexander (1995).

2 Bede (*c*.731), §IV.22, IV.26.

3 See: Pelteret (1981) and Dutchak (2003).

4 Oxford English Dictionary, revised 2022. www.oed.com/dictionary/slave, accessed 21 Sep 2023.

5 Pelteret (1995), pp. 305–317; Miller (2014), pp. 136–175, table 19, p. 141.

6 Pelteret (1995), p. 169.

7 Pelteret (1995), p. 124.

8 Whitelock (1930), p. 85.

9 Whitelock (1930), pp. 76–77, 79, 81–85, 88–91.

10 Hart (1971), no. 11; Hart (1992), p. 212; Kelly (2004), pp. 90-91, 225–228; Whitelock (1930), pp. 2–5.

11 Hart (1971), no. 18, Whitelock (1930), p. 37.

12 Hart (1971), no. 34, Whitelock (1930), p. 41.

13 Hart (1971) no. 39.

14 Molyneaux (2012).

15 Thorpe (1865), pp. 649–651. This is probably the same charter printed by: Kemble no. 1354; and see Hart (1971), no. 33.

16 Essex Domesday, *passim*. For details about the database, see forthcoming article.

17 Butler (2019).

18 Pelteret (1995), pp. 1–37.

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About the author

Tony Fox was born an Essex man, in pre-1965 Cranham. He has a longstanding interest in the history not only of that parish, but also Chafford Hundred as a whole; he has more recently also started studying north-west Essex as an interesting comparison. He used lockdown, in part, to make a database of Essex Domesday. Currently, he lives in Hammersmith.

Society Publications Archive

The Essex Society for Archaeology and History provides free online access to past issues of the *Essex Journal*, and also to its back catalogue of *Transactions*, newsletters and occasional papers which date back to the Society's foundation in 1852.

https://www.esah1852.org.uk/publications
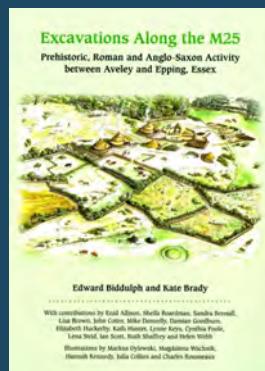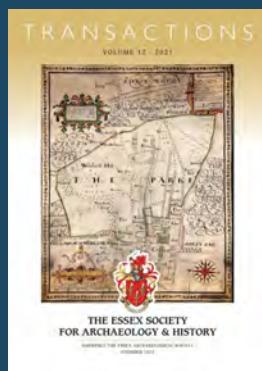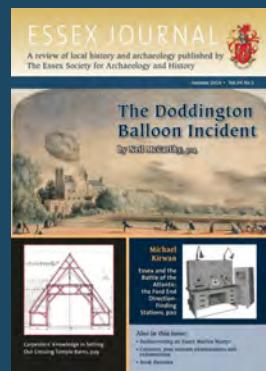
SIR HENRY BATE DUDLEY AT BRADWELL-ON-SEA: PART I

Elaine Thornton

Sir Henry Bate Dudley, clergyman, newspaper editor, dramatist and duellist, was a controversial figure in Georgian society. A gifted journalist and inveterate self-publicist, known as the 'Fighting Parson' for his combative character, Bate Dudley was the most prominent newspaperman of his time. A modern history of journalism, the *Encyclopaedia of the British Press*, describes him as 'undoubtedly, the star of his day'.[1] He was also a popular playwright, producing light comedies which were performed on the stages of Covent Garden and Drury Lane.

Parson, Squire and Magistrate

Alongside his careers in the newspaper and theatre worlds, Bate Dudley held clerical livings in various parts of the country. In particular, he had a long and often turbulent association with the Essex village of Bradwell-on-Sea, where for many years he combined the roles of parson, squire and magistrate, until a long-running dispute with the church authorities over the legality of his position in the parish forced him to leave, causing a scandal that drew in the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Prime Minister and the Prince of Wales.

Gainsborough's study of Sir Henry Bate Dudley

Bate Dudley's connection with Essex dated back to his youth. The future Sir Henry was born plain Henry Bate on 25 August 1745, the first son of the Reverend Henry Bate, curate of the parish of St Peter and St Clare in the Warwickshire village of Fenny Compton. Young Henry later added 'Dudley' to his name at the request of a distant relative, a Mrs Wilbraham Dudley of Devon, who had no male descendants.[2]

When Henry was two years old the family moved to Worcester, where the Reverend Bate spent fifteen years as rector of St Nicholas, a city-centre church. In 1762, the family moved again to settle in Essex, where Henry senior was the rector of Holy Trinity church in the village of North Fambridge. The Bates lived in the nearby town of Chelmsford.

After leaving school, young Henry went to Oxford University, matriculating at Magdalen Hall.[3] He left the university without taking a degree, but this did not prevent him from following his father into the Anglican church. He was ordained deacon in 1765 and held curacies at both Paglesham and Prittlewell.[4] He lived in Prittlewell, where he also acted as schoolmaster: in September 1765, the local newspapers announced that the Free School in Prittlewell, run by Henry Bate of Magdalen Hall, Oxford, was now accepting pupils.[5]

Bate was not destined to remain a rural cleric and schoolteacher for long. The quiet life did not suit his temperament – he was later described by a fellow journalist as having 'an intrepidity of spirit' and 'a quick and inventive mind'.[6] He was clearly restless: in October 1767, the newspapers announced that 'Last week the Rev Mr Henry Bates [*sic*] Junior was appointed Chaplain to a Regiment of Foot and ordered to be in readiness to embark for America'.[7] Bate's army career was very brief, however, probably due to his father becoming seriously ill around that time, and he almost certainly never travelled to America.

Ordination and Journalism

He was ordained priest in 1768. The next year, his father resigned the living of North Fambridge to him. Bate senior died eighteen months later, in September 1770, at the age of forty-five. Young Henry did not remain in Essex for long after his father's death. He had literary

Prittlewell in 1818 (Courtesy of ERO)

ambitions and achieved some early success: he was the anonymous author behind a *History of Essex* published in the early 1770s,[8] and had several poems published in magazines and journals.[9]

Bate soon realised that his talents and character were well suited to the rough and tumble of the flourishing Georgian newspaper industry. He moved to London, leaving the North Fambridge living in the care of a curate, and in 1772 became the editor, and later part owner, of a major new London paper, the *Morning Post*.[10]

Under Bate's skilful management, the *Post* rapidly became one of London's best-selling dailies. He understood what would appeal to his readers, and he caught the spirit of the late Georgian world, in particular the fascination with celebrity, sex and scandal that makes the eighteenth century seem so much closer to our own time than the Victorian era. Bate frequently ran stories on his own exploits, in particular his fights and duels, in a way that is strikingly modern, and suggestive of our twenty-first-century world of media celebrities.

Bate remained with the *Post* until 1780, when he quarrelled with his fellow proprietors. In the same year he founded his own newspaper, the *Morning Herald*, which quickly outsold the *Post*. The *Post*'s circulation dropped from around 3,000 in 1780, when Bate was at the helm, to around 1,650 in late 1783.[11]
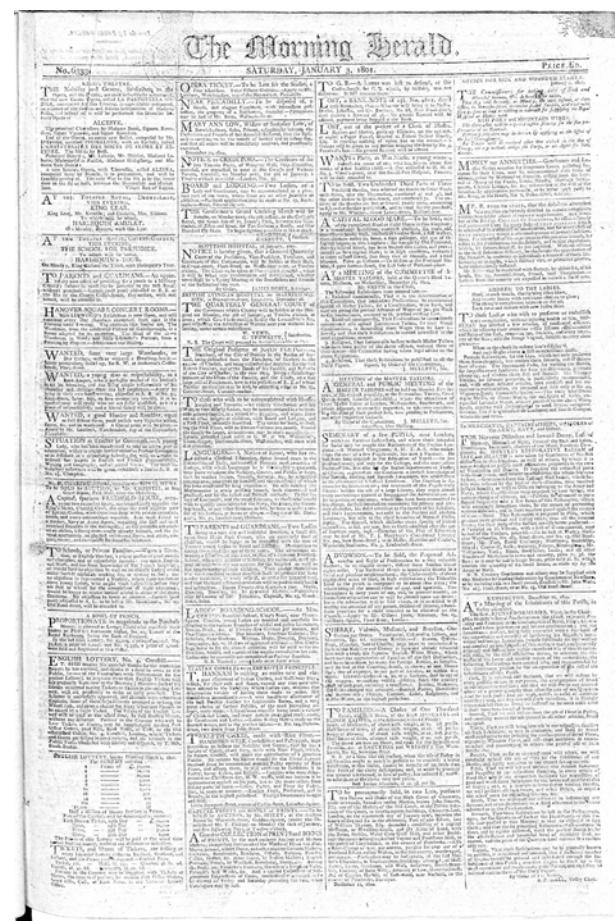
The Morning Herald *Newspaper*

'The worst of all the scandalous libellers'

Bate Dudley moved in artistic circles; his close friends included the actor-manager David Garrick, and the artist Thomas Gainsborough, who painted magnificent large-scale portraits of both Bate Dudley and his wife, Mary.[12] He was not admired by all of his contemporaries, however: Doctor Johnson disliked him, and the writer and wit Horace Walpole described him as 'the worst of all the scandalous libellers'.[13]

At the time of Walpole's comment, in 1780, Bate had been convicted of libelling the third Duke of Richmond by accusing him of treason in the *Morning Post*. It was this episode that sparked Bate's quarrel with his co-owners at the *Post* and precipitated his departure from the paper.

The Duke was a radical Whig MP who opposed the government's policy in the American War of Independence, which had started in 1775. Bate's *Morning Post* backed Lord North's government and attacked North's political enemies – for a fee. Bate was paid £200 a year for his support, and North had also promised to assist him in furthering his clerical career at a later date. This was standard practice: *The Times*, founded in 1785, was a recipient of government money in its early years.[14]

Bate had gone too far in libelling the Duke, however, and was sentenced to a year in the King's Bench prison. He accepted his imprisonment philosophically, as a hazard of the job, as indeed it was – many of his contemporaries spent spells in prison, usually for the offence of seditious libel, which was frequently used to criminalise criticism of the king or the government in the newspapers.

Bate Dudley used his time in the King's Bench to plan his future moves. He was a complex character: along with his love of high society, the theatre and the cut-throat newspaper world, he had a passion for agriculture. In the mid-1770s, while editor of the *Post*, he had rented a farm at Kingsbury Grove near Hendon. David Garrick, who used to visit him there, nicknamed him 'Farmer'.[15]

It seems likely that Bate's occupation of the farm was related to his friendship with Garrick, who was lord of the manor of Hendon. Garrick was also patron of the living, owning the advowson, which gave him the right to nominate the vicar when that office fell vacant. In 1772, he had given the post of vicar of Hendon to the Reverend James Townley, who was also a dramatist, and the author of a popular farce, *High Life Below Stairs*.

Bate became Townley's curate. When the position fell vacant in June 1774, Garrick recommended his 'warm friend' Bate to Townley, adding that Bate 'lives on a good farm in your neighbourhood'.[16] It has been thought that Bate began writing for the stage as a result of Townley's influence, but this cannot be the case, as Bate's first play, *Henry and Emma*, had been premiered at Covent Garden in April 1774, two months before Garrick introduced him to Townley.

It is not clear how long Bate Dudley lived at Hendon, but his interest in agriculture developed into an ambition to farm his own land. As a clergyman, the easiest way for him to achieve this was to obtain a church

King's Bench prison – a microcosm of London

Bradwell Lodge (Courtesy of ERO)

appointment to a living with a large amount of its own agricultural land, or glebe. During his imprisonment in 1780, he was looking out for a suitable parish, and by the beginning of 1781 he believed that he had found the right place, in the village of Bradwell-on-Sea.

Bradwell-on-Sea

Bate Dudley knew the area well, as Bradwell was situated on the edge of the Dengie peninsula, about fourteen miles from North Fambridge. He still held his father's old living at Fambridge, but the glebe at Bradwell, which consisted of around 300 acres, offered him the opportunity he was looking for.

The rector of Bradwell, George Pawson, was an absentee, which was a common situation in the eighteenth-century Anglican church, where clergymen could hold multiple livings in different parts of the country, taking the income they generated yet seldom visiting them. Pawson took no interest in the parish. Bate Dudley later said that, when he first saw Bradwell, the glebe was in such a ruinous state from sea flooding and 'various causes of extreme neglect' that the previous farming tenant had left, unable to make enough profit to pay the rent, and that no further tenant could be found willing to take it on.

The church, St Thomas, was in a similarly poor condition and had fallen into disuse. The chancel was damaged, and the churchyard unfenced, with the village pigs running around the graveyard, disturbing the tombstones. Bate Dudley realised that the place had potential but thought that 'no effectual reform was practicable without great exertion, and that by a Gentleman who would reside on the spot and become the adventurous occupier of this deluged and impoverished Farm'.[17] He had no doubt who that adventurous gentleman should be.

Bradwell was ideal for Bate Dudley in a number of ways. He had no intention of retiring permanently from London life, and Bradwell had the advantage of being close enough to the capital to allow him to travel back and forth, and to continue his dual career as journalist and dramatist.

Another attraction was the fact that Pawson held the advowson of Bradwell, as he was patron of the living as well as the rector. Advowsons could be bought and sold, and Bate Dudley's attention had been drawn to Bradwell by an advertisement that Pawson had inserted – rather indiscreetly – in the *Morning Post* offering the advowson for sale.

Bate Dudley intended both to purchase the advowson and to replace Pawson as rector. He had discovered that Pawson was deeply in debt and needed to raise a large amount of money quickly to avoid being consigned to a debtor's prison. Bate Dudley had the money: he had called in Lord North's promise of furthering his career, in the form of a lump sum payment of £3,250.[18]

The two men drew up a contract in February 1781 to the effect that Pawson would resign as rector of Bradwell, present Bate Dudley to the living as his successor and then sell him the advowson. The plan came to nothing, however, when the Bishop of London, Robert Lowth, refused to accept Pawson's resignation. Although church law allowed the sale of advowsons, the trading of spiritual posts, such as that of rector, was a breach of canon law known as simony. Lowth had rejected Bate and Pawson's agreement on the grounds that Bate would effectively be buying the spiritual office along with the patronage of the living.

Bate Dudley and Pawson came up with a compromise solution to keep the deal within the letter of church law:

Road improvements were one of Bate Dudley's interests

in the terms of a second contract drawn up in April, Pawson would sell the patronage of Bradwell to Bate, while retaining the post of rector himself, and employing Bate as his curate. Pawson would then lease the glebe and the tithes to Bate for a period of ninety-nine years at a peppercorn rent.[19] The sale of the advowson went ahead under these amended terms.

It was not uncommon for incumbents to lease out their glebe land and tithes. As Pawson had no intention of residing in the parish, the arrangement would allow Bate, as curate, to farm the land himself, and profit from the living. In the longer term, as patron, Bate would be able to nominate himself to succeed Pawson as rector on Pawson's death. Bate said later that he had known that Pawson was in a poor state of health and was unlikely to outlive him.[20]

As soon as he was released from prison, in the summer of 1782, Bate Dudley lost no time in taking up the curacy of Bradwell, where his name appears in the parish marriage register for the first time on 22 December that year.[21]

Two years later, the patronage of the living, which had been valued at £8,000, passed to Bate, who paid £3,400 to Pawson, holding back £4,600 against the repayment of a mortgage that Pawson had raised on the advowson.[22] The money Bate had received from Lord North just about covered the payment to Pawson; he would have to repay the mortgage from his own resources.

Once settled in the parish, Bate set about establishing himself as parson, squire and magistrate. He repaired the fabric of the church and re-instituted regular services. He used his powers as a magistrate to improve the roads in the district by fining parishes for not carrying out the necessary work to keep their roads in good condition. On 14 January 1783, less than a month after his name first appears in the Bradwell parish registers, the Quarter Sessions at Chelmsford recorded that the parish of Latchingdon had been fined £70 for failing to repair a highway, on the indictment of the Reverend Henry Bate.[23]

In 1807, the agricultural writer and later Secretary of the Board of Agriculture, Arthur Young, while travelling in Essex, recorded that 'In Dengey hundred [the roads] are incomparable: every lane seemed to rival the finest turnpikes ... The roads of this hundred ought not to be mentioned without assigning the merit where due: it was the unwearied exertions of the Rev. H. B. Dudley that effected the marvellous change experienced'.[24]

Bate also made efforts to eradicate smuggling and poaching, which were both endemic along his part of the coastline. Smuggling was a particular problem in the Dengie peninsula, an isolated area with safe anchorage and good landing places. In 1784, the *London Chronicle* published a letter from a reader in Maldon, who told the paper's readers that, 'Smuggling with us has reached the most daring height imaginable: our coast all along the Blackwater round Bradwell Point, and up the Burnham River, is now under the absolute dominion of the smugglers'.[25] Bate Dudley was later thanked by Lord Kenyon, barrister and Lord Chief Justice from 1788, for his services in repressing smuggling and poaching in the area.[26]

Land Reclamation, Crop management and Hunting

Bate Dudley's real interest was in his farm, however, and he quickly became a leader in agricultural circles, experimenting with the latest methods in stock breeding and crop management. Arthur Young described Bate Dudley as 'the most distinguished cultivator in Essex ... His exertions in building, draining, embanking, road-making, manuring, &c. &c. were in a superior style, and became an example that will not soon be forgotten.'[27]

Bate Dudley was awarded both the silver and gold medals of the Society of Arts for his work in developing embankments to reclaim land from the sea. He managed to do this successfully both on his glebe land and on an 800-acre tract of farmland in neighbouring Tillingham that he rented from the Dean and Chapter of St Paul's.

At Tillingham, he reclaimed around 300 acres from the sea. He had been paying £800 a year to St Paul's for the lease of the land and having increased the

amount of usable land to 1,100 acres, he sub-let it for the remainder of his lease at £1,750 a year.[28] He estimated that more than 800 sheep and between sixty to eighty horses were 'almost constantly' grazing on the reclaimed land.[29]

Bate Dudley also rebuilt the imposing Bradwell rectory. The original building was Tudor and had been given to Anne of Cleves by Henry VIII as part of their divorce settlement. Bate Dudley retained the Tudor building, adding an impressive new wing, designed by the architect John Johnson in the Neoclassical style. No expense was spared on the exterior or the interior of the new building.

In his persona of local sporting squire, Bate Dudley enjoyed putting on entertainments for the public. Shortly after his arrival in Bradwell, he instituted a triennial sailing race for fishing boats, donating a silver cup for the winning crew. The first competition was held on 26 June 1783. The course was seventeen leagues (about fifty miles) in length and ran along the coastline of Bradwell and out around the island of Mersea.

The weather was sunny, and the race attracted large numbers of spectators, for whom booths had been provided. The miller John Crosier attended the event and noted in his diary that ten large cutters had entered the competition, and that 'Hawkins of Burnham' won the prize, adding, 'The Company in hoys, pleasure boats, with music, etc., made a very pretty appearance.'[30]

Bate Dudley was a keen huntsman, and he kept a large pack of hounds at Bradwell. In January 1787, the *Derby Mercury* listed the principal packs of foxhounds in England, and the numbers of foxes killed by each pack in the preceding season.[31] Seventeen packs were listed, headed by that of Earl Fitzwilliam in Northamptonshire, which had killed thirty-four foxes. Henry Bate Dudley's pack in Essex was listed, with seventeen kills.

Many stories circulated about Bate Dudley's sporting exploits: the best-known concerned the demise of a fox who had scrambled up the ivy-covered buttress of a church tower to escape the hounds but was followed up by Bate Dudley and his most determined dogs. The fox was killed on the leads of the chancel, and a hunting song was written about the incident.

Bate Dudley was also a successful breeder of greyhounds. His best dog, The Miller, won over seventy races. The dog was painted by Henry Chalon, a follower of George Stubbs. The Miller's daughter, Miss, was also a champion. In 1801, the *London Courier and Evening Gazette* rated Bate Dudley among 'the greatest greyhound breeders that we at present know of'.[32] He hosted annual coursing events on the Bradwell marshes, which ended with a dinner at the King's Head inn.

By the end of the 1780s, Bate Dudley had the gratification of knowing that he was numbered among the ranks of the Essex gentry: in 1787, the engraver William Angus published a book of illustrations of 'The Seats of the Nobility and Gentry in Great Britain and Wales'. Plate 35 was entitled: 'Bradwell Lodge in Essex. The Seat of the Rev. Henry Bate Dudley.'

Bate Dudley had achieved his ambition. However, as future events were to show, the purchase of the Bradwell advowson was to become a cause of contention and controversy, creating unexpected difficulties for Bate Dudley that would alter the course of his life. Part II will appear in the next issue of *Essex Journal*, continuing the career of this remarkable gentleman.

Endnotes

1   Dennis Griffiths (ed.), *The Encyclopedia of the British Press 1422–1992*, Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1992, p. 210.

2   *London Gazette*, 20–24 January 1784.

3   Joseph Foster, *Alumni Oxonienses 1715–1886*, Oxford: Parker, 1892, vol. 1, p. 73. Bate is described as 'son of Henry, of Fenny Compton, county Warwick, cleric'. Magdalen Hall merged with Hart Hall to become Hertford College in the 19th century. Prior to this amalgamation, in 1820, Magdalen Hall's archives were destroyed by a fire.

4   The Church of England Clergy Database (www.theclergydatabase.org.uk) has 'Henry Bale' instead of 'Henry Bate' in both the ordination record and the appointment to Paglesham. Henry Bate was signing marriage registers as curate at both Paglesham and Prittlewell throughout 1766 and 1767. See Essex Record Office (ERO) D/P 183/1/38 and D/P 254/1/2.

5   *Ipswich Journal*, 7 September 1765.

6   John Taylor, *Records of My Life*, London: Edward Bull, 1832, vol. 1, p. 102.

7   *Public Advertiser*, 13 October 1767. Also see Bate Dudley, *The Vauxhall Affray; or, The Macaronies Defeated*, London: J. Williams, 1773, p. 19, where Bate confirms that he had spent some time in the army.

8   See Michael Leach, 'The Gentleman's History of Essex; the enigma of its authorship resolved', *The Essex Journal*, vol. 48 no. 1, Spring 2013, pp. 9–15.

9   *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1766, 1768; *Scots Magazine*, 1767, 1768; and *Court Miscellany*, 1768. These give Bate's address as Prittlewell.

10 A date of 1775 is also given for Bate's editorship of the *Post*. However, the newspaper historian Lucyle Werkmeister (*The London Daily Press 1772–1792*, University of Nebraska Press, 1963) maintains that Bate was editor from 1772. The *Post*'s papers have not survived, but the contemporary evidence supports the earlier date. For example, the extraordinary coverage given to Bate's quarrel with a group of army officers in Vauxhall in the summer of 1773 suggests that he had considerable influence over the content of the *Post*. A poem published at that time in connection with the quarrel, called *The Macaroniad*, describes Bate as the man 'who dauntless wields the Morning Post' [Bate Dudley, *The Vauxhall Affray*, p. 59]. Bate's friend Henry Angelo also states in his *Reminiscences* [London, 1828, vol. 1, p. 154] that Bate was the editor of the *Post* at the time of the Vauxhall affray.

11 Lucyle Werkmeister, *The London Daily Press 1772–1792*, pp. 57–8.

12 The portraits are on display in the Tate Britain gallery in London.

[13] Horace Walpole, *Last Journals*, Bodley Head, 1910, vol. 2, p. 367.

[14] Lucyle Werkmeister, *A Newspaper History of England 1792-1793*, University of Nebraska Press, 1967, p. 24.

[15] Philbrick Library of Dramatic Art and Theatre History Special Collections, Honnold Mudd Library, Autograph Letters, Box 6, Folder 35.

[16] David M. Little and George M. Kahrl (eds), *The Letters of David Garrick*, London: Oxford University Press, 1963, vol. 3, p. 940.

[17] Henry Bate Dudley, Letters &c., which have lately passed between the Bishop of London, and the Rev. H.B. Dudley, London: T. Longman, 1798, pp. 13–14.

[18] Fortescue, Sir John, Correspondence of King George the Third from 1760 to December 1783, London, 1927–28, vol. 5, pp. 471, 484, 491.

[19] ERO D/DQ 16/8; Taunton, William Pyle, Reports of Cases Argued and Determined in the Court of Common Pleas and Other Courts from Trinity Term 53 Geo. III 1813 to Michaelmas Term 55 Geo. III 1814, London, 1815, pp. 728–29.

[20] Bate Dudley, Letters &c., p. 13.

[21] ERO D/P 51/1/7.

[22] ERO D/DQ 16/8. The advowson was conveyed to Bate Dudley's lawyer, Albany Wallis, who held it in trust for him. It was conveyed to Bate Dudley in 1792, with a note confirming that he, not Wallis, had been the original purchaser.

[23] Henry Laver, 'The Roads of Dengie Hundred', *Transactions of the Essex Archaeological Society*, 2nd Series, vol. 5 (1895), p. 38.

[24] Arthur Young, General View of the Agriculture of the County of Essex, vol. 2, London, 1807, p. 384.

[25] *London Chronicle*, 19–21 February 1784.

[26] Herbert Brown, *A History of Bradwell-on-Sea, Essex*, Chelmsford: JM Clarke, 1929, p. 80.

[27] Arthur Young, *General View*, vol. 1, London, 1807, pp. 18–19.

[28] Arthur Young, *General View*, vol. 2, pp. 129–30.

[29] The Repertory of Arts and Manufactures, London, 1802, vol XVI, p. 47.

[30] A.F.J. Brown (ed.), E*ssex People 1750-1900 from their diaries, memoirs and letters*, Chelmsford: Essex Record Office Publications, 1972, p. 25.

[31] *Derby Mercury*, 4 January 1787.

[32] *London Courier and Evening Gazette*, 26 August 1801.

Book Reviews

Helen Walker

Radwinter to Beeleigh Abbey:

A long-distance walk following a medieval route-way through the heart of Essex

Helen Walker Publishing, 2025. Card covers, 50pp, colour images and maps. ISBN 978-1-7398808-1-1 £6. Available direct from the author at walker1956@btinternet.com

This small, perfect-bound book sets out the course of a known medieval transport route which allowed the movement of freight from Radwinter in the north-west of Essex down to the River Blackwater and the port of Maldon. The author demonstrates that although the route is no longer available to watercraft along its full length, it can be followed even today as a series of footpaths and minor roads that take in a great many interesting and significant features – small towns, villages, churchyards, farmyards and others. End-to-end, the route is about 40 miles (64km) and can be tackled in two or three days by a walker who is properly prepared – and the book offers a great deal of guidance as to hazards and waymarkers, opportune resting points, holloways, footbridges over waterways and so on. The directions are friendly and comprehensive: 'At footpath sign on [left] turn [left] across large field towards trees, if no path is visible, head slightly diagonally [right] and keep to the high ground, do not go down slope, if cream-coloured house behind pine tree is visible, head for that …'.

Sketch maps – rather in the style of 18th-century itinerary road maps – offer a summary of the landscape features and named settlements that will be passed by or through on the way. The directions include left and right turns, designations of numbered roads (*e.g.,* A120), and what to look out for in terms of natural and historic features. A short bibliography notes a number of texts cited in the route descriptions, and there are useful website addresses for the Countryside Code, bus planners, national rail services and the like.

At little more than the price of a cup of coffee, the book is excellent value, and if it stimulates a few of us to get out of our cars and walk even part of the route it will have served its purpose. It also cries out for expansion into other routes and byways.

Steve Pollington

Michael F James and Ruth Halliwell

The Bishop's Castle: Waytemore and Bishop's Stortford
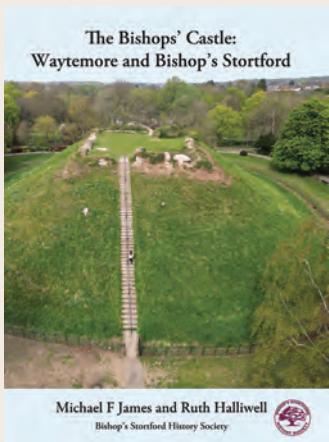
Bishop's Stortford History Society, 2025, 208 pp, card covers, colour and monochrome images, maps, text figs.
ISBN 978-1-7385289-2-9. £22.50 direct from the Bishop's Stortford History Society.

The 'castle' of the book's title is a large motte or castle-mound which stands close to the heart of the modern town of Bishop's Stortford – and here, in that name, we have our first clue to the importance of the site. The Waytemore mound was constructed in the first flurry of post-Conquest occupation of key sites (perhaps around 1070) since Stortford was an important location close to the junction of the still much-used Stane Street and Ermine Street trunk-roads. Yet the developer of the site was not a Norman baron, but rather William, Bishop of London (1051–75), because the historical diocese of London extended across (modern) Essex, Middlesex and Hertfordshire – core of the East Saxon kingdom; a local connection to Edeva Pulchra (Edith the Fair), the spouse of Harold Godwineson, indicates that the area remained important into the 11th century. Probably the bishop's first choice would have been to build in London itself, but King William's plans for the city prevented this. The 'castle' built at Stortford was of timber with flint and mortar elements, not a huge stone-built structure – that came later. It formed a key point in the struggle between the king (John) and the barons.

The book is detailed enough for the specialist to learn much of the 'castle' and its likely construction, yet it is an entertaining read in itself. Antique maps and literary references are placed side-by-side with the latest in Lidar imaging to unwrap the history of the site. The authors present some engaging new evidence for Stortford as an important pre-Conquest centre – a fact not recognised until very recently (2024 and not published at the time of the book's printing). The whole river valley area has been something of a Cinderella in terms of systematic investigation, perhaps because the spread of nearby Stansted Airport has inhibited any but small-scale and rescue excavations. A strong Iron Age and Roman presence has been detected – not surprising with the major route to *Camulodunum* running through the Stort Valley. Lidar imaging has been used to re-evaluate the valley as a whole and to situate the mound in the wider landscape. A fresh examination of Domesday evidence indicates the potential workforce for the enterprise, and subsequent chapters focus on the construction of the bailey and the mound itself (including the results of coring undertaken in 1907) and the superstructure – the keep in its various stages of development including its later use as a prison. Three appendices cover an outline chronology of the site; the life and career of John Laybank Glasscock, the wealthy local historian and patron of public works who purchased the site for the town; the excavation notes from Glasscock's 1899–1900 dig.

The castle is not an impressive monument these days, but the authors have taken great pains to outline its historical importance. As a project run by a local history group, it is truly impressive.

Steve Pollington

Ken Crowe

Southend, Victorian Town and Resort

Victoria History of Essex. London, 2025, 131 pp, card covers, colour and monochrome images, maps, text figs.
ISBN 978-1-915249-87-6. £15
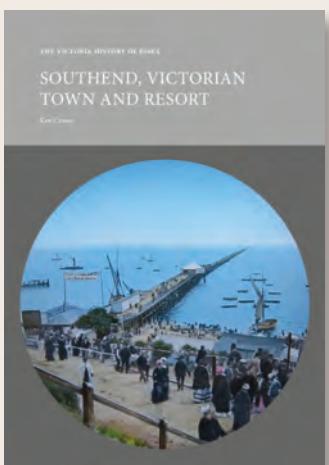
Ken Crowe was the curator in Southend Museum for many years and gained an unmatched in-depth knowledge of the town's history from his service there. The subject of this book is mainly the Victorian era – roughly from 1866, when the town became a County Borough through to the outbreak of the First World War; earlier, the pier was erected in 1830 and before this in 1791 a 'New Town' was begun on the cliffs to the west. The Southend Local Board oversaw the development of public amenities, from sewers to bathing facilities, cemeteries to provision of roads, and in time it took over the pier itself. Southend soon outgrew the settlement of Prittlewell, based on the medieval priory, where its origins lay.

The story of the town's rapid expansion is set out clearly in these pages. It was fuelled by the many tourists and day-trippers whose visits were made possible by two railway services: the Great Eastern and the London, Tilbury and Southend. Happy day-trippers became prospective homeowners and the seaside location within easy reach of London proved popular.

The book is logically built around certain themed chapters – the historic parishes, the building of Cliff Town, the pier and its resort, local agriculture, retail businesses, catering for visitors, education and so on. The once-vital local brickmaking industry exploiting the London Clay

BOOK REVIEWS

of the area is also covered in depth. Important names in Southend's story, such as James Scott (builder) and Thomas Dowsett (the first mayor of the borough and a prominent retailer) are covered in some detail.

The book is attractively presented with many photographs and maps.

My only criticism of the book is that it is too short – the information Crowe includes demonstrates that there must be a huge amount more to say, that could have been used to flesh out some of the details; and the stories included in its pages could often have been expanded. I expect most readers already knew something about boatbuilding in this area, but the presence of two different bicycle factories and a watchmaker was a surprise. What became of the proposed Rochford Hundred Railway or the Southend and Maldon Railway?

That said, the author has done a magnificent job of bringing the history of Southend – really 'Southend-on-Sea' with all its connotations of day trippers, seafood and the pleasure pier – into a very readable and lively account which nevertheless is always factual and reliable. Perhaps a more discursive account awaits us still in Crowe's files and dossiers?

Heather Godfrey

Lucy's Mortuary Roll on display at the British Library, looking down the length of the scroll from the header scenes

Uniuersis sce matris ecclie filiis ad quos presens scriptum puenerit: Agnes ecclesie sce crucis & sce marie de heingeham humilis ministra. eidemq; loci conuentus: Etnā in dño salutem. Post ymbres lacrimarū & fletuum inundationem quā in transitu kme matris nostre vñe lucie prime Priorisse ac fundatricis domus ñre fudimus; q uocante dño Tercio idus julii. uiam uniuerse carnis ingressa terre debitū humani generis psoluit: manū mistm' ad calamū uniuersitati uře scripto denunciantes calamitatem qm patimur subtracta eni tam felici matre: in hac ualle miserie simul & celum dereliquit a nos. Nec mirū. cum eadem tot uirtutū polleret morib;. tantis griarū rutilaret honorib;. tot meritoz fragraret odorib;: ut merito illi congrua hoc nomen lucia. qd est lucis scientia. Recte ideo lucia dicta: quia nomen beate uirginis lucie sortita. Illa p uirtub; semp imitabat exempla. iïta meritis & precib; fluente sanguinis in matre deleuit. ista in se oïus motus concupiscentie carnalis restringens: fluxū malis incontinentie & contaminationis p ariditate sce conuersationis & sobrie tute radicitus extirpauit. illa sponso suo carnalem copulam nutu diuino subtraxit. ista ut noctui inuicto matrimonii septes constricta. consortii inutilis ignara incontaminata semp & illesa pmansit. & ita de laqueo uenantiū tempraliter est erepta. Ac hoc fecit diuina prudentia: ut nullū preter eu admitteret amatorem. ista erna d secreta fuit in silentio. utilis in uerbo. uerecundia gratis. pudore uenerabilis. singulis compassione pma. pre cunctis contemplatione suspensa. sicq; studuit b'ie agentib; & p humilitate socia: ut p zelū iustitie delinquentiū corrigeret errata. Unde in tribulatione carnis ex ea didicim' habere prudentiā. in aduersitate fortitudinē. in tribulatione patientiā. in desperatione solatiū in periculo refugiū. in estu refrigium. in asperitate lenitatē. Et fuit nobis ipi exemplo lectio frequentior. oratio pinguior. & feruentior affecti. Qd multa: tanta effloruit in hac benignissima uirgine & pia matre uirtus abstinentie. tanta ieiunioz & uigiliarū necnon & uestimentoz asperitate disciplinaq; assiduitate corpus suū excruciauit: ut fere simul cū job sciïssimo. pelli sue consūptis carnib; os suū adhereret. Et hec talis tantaq; sublata est: & hec omnia simul. Migrauit aūt ad illum qui sibi fructuū decimas psolui uoluit. qui etiā decalogium constituit mandatoz. Miseremini g ñri miseremini ñri saltem uos amici ñri. & nobis miseris compatiamini fluentes lacrimas poratioñ suffragia desiccantes. quia piū est & saluberrimū p defunctis exorare ut a peccatis soluant. Subuenite g benigni monachi. subuenite uenerabiles canonici. & uos sce uirgines: in conspectu altissimi preces & hostias offerentes: ut ipse pie misereat qui abstergit omnem lacrimam ab oculis scōz. quatinus que ei macule de terrenis contagiis adhese runt: remissionis eius remedio deleantur. A e — ꝑ — + ꝑ.