



THE ESSEX FAMILY HISTORIAN

The Essex Society for Family History Magazine



H.M. Queen Elizabeth II

21st April 1926 - 8th September 2022

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Essex Society for Family History

For full information about the Society, please visit our website - www.esfh.org.uk

All our meetings and workshops are a mixture of online only and online and in person events. Open to all members. You will be notified by email of all events and events are posted up on the Events section of our website.

We offer Research Services (see page 89). For one-to-one to help with your "brick walls" to be held at our Research Centre at the Essex Record Office and booked in advance please contact Gill Peregrine on gpesfh@gmail.com.

Membership Rates

Annual membership of the Society runs from 1st April until 31st March. For rates see table below or our website. For membership payment details please see our website or page 89:-

Membership Category	Fees Payable (Paper Magazine)	Fees Payable (Electronic Magazine)
Single Member living in UK	£16.00	£8.00
Institutional Member	£18.00	£8.00
Single Member living outside UK	£25.00	£8.00

Benefits of membership include:-

- The Society has a Research Centre located at the Essex Record Office with an extensive collection of material that is useful to family historians. One-to-one meetings are bookable to help with family history "brick walls".
- Access to the ESFH Members only area of the website where members can find valuable data including in excess of 2 million genealogical records which are increased regularly.
- Receipt of the HISTORIAN publication 3 times per year in March, August and December.
- Capability to view or download from our website the latest issue of the HISTORIAN and copies of publications issued by other family history societies.
- Access to an archive with a selection of back numbers of the HISTORIAN.
- Member Surname Interests - All members are able to update and advertise their own Surnames Interests online.
- Concessionary Subscription Rates for www.findmypast.co.uk
- Essex Gazetteer - members have access to a database which includes place names in "old Essex".
- Access, anytime, to recorded presentations.
- Access to Essex Poor Law Indexes.

The Essex Family Historian

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The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Committee and Officers of the Society.

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For Your Information

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CONTRIBUTORS PLEASE NOTE

Contributors are requested to limit their articles to 2000 words, other than by prior agreement with the Editor. Contributions should be sent in Microsoft Word format or plain text files (Microsoft Notepad) Graphics/photos preferably as separate JPEG files.

Alternatively written or typed articles with photographs can be sent directly to the Editor at the address above. Photographs will be returned.

Contributors should make every effort to trace and acknowledge ownership of all copyright material and secure permissions. The Editor needs to be aware of any problems with contributors acquiring copyright.

Contributors should include their ESFH membership number. The use of material is at the discretion of the Editorial team and may be used in any print and electronic media relevant to ESFH.

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The Geographical Area covered by ESFH

The area covered by ESFH is that of the old Essex county with the exception of 'London Boroughs' which are considered to be in the area of East of London FHS and Waltham Forest which is in the area of Waltham Forest FHS.

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Bolding of email addresses in this issue is to ensure that they are easy to read; they are not hyperlinked, whereas web addresses are bolded so that electronic readers may click on the link and be taken directly to that web address.

From the Editor

It seemed only fitting in this issue to acknowledge the passing of Queen Elizabeth II so there are several pages relating to royal memories from a few readers. If more readers have anecdotal recollections please send me the details as it would be nice to document them in the ESFH library. On page 42 there are images of an invitation to a Coronation Dinner held on 26th June 1953 at Orsett Hall in Essex. I wonder how many



COLLEEN DEVENISH

of you can read the signatures of the “great and the good” who signed the back of the menu card and who were they? To assist you to decipher the signatures there is a downloadable version of the image under the Events section of our website so that you can enlarge the writing. One of the signatures is that of a former Lord Lieutenant of Essex.

Emma Cox recently joined our Society and she has written her first article for our magazine regarding Huguenot research which is on page 9. Evidently about one in seven of us have Huguenot ancestors! Further new contributors to the pages are long time members Simon Mynott, on page 46, discussing his connection to Henry de Ferrers, and Roger Stirland, on page 70, with observations from a Fordham cleric. Church officials feature in several articles including one by Toni Neobard, who writes about ‘The Rogue Rector’ on page 35 and Fred Feather who tells us about The Springfield Rector’s Pyrenean Mountain Dog on page 58. On page 66 I have added a snippet about a few eccentric clergy who may well have been known to your ancestors.

I am grateful to member Alan Jackson for bringing to my attention the private publication of a book about the Worley family with their history of farming in South Essex. Alan indicated that in addition to a fascinating local history read he thought that it would make an ideal Christmas present for those with farming or Grays/Orsett connections. Another recently released private publication, on page 83, is a second book by Mel Thompson concerning the history of Little Baddow.

Thank you, on behalf of the membership, to all the people who have taken the time and effort to prepare material for this, the last magazine of 2022. For budding authors do let me have your material for future magazines.

As the end of the year approaches it is again time to thank and acknowledge the contribution of my ‘partner in crime’, Ian Fulcher, Production Manager, in the creation of the magazines.

A Happy Xmas and prosperous New Year to all members.

Happy Researching!

Notice Board

Please keep in touch with your Society by one or all of the following facilities:-

- Our website – where news is put up on the front page
- “Like” our Facebook page for regular announcements
- Send us an email using the ‘Contact us’ tab on our website
- Telephone or write to key members of the Executive Committee whose details are shown on the inside back cover

Any member is welcome to join our regular presentations via Zoom, the cloud based conferencing tool. Details of the forthcoming presentations are on page 7.

The new Patron of ESFH

It was announced at the AGM on 15th October 2022 that the Rt. Revd. Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani has accepted the role of Patron for our Society. We welcome her.

Born in Iran, Guli’s family left that country in the wake of the Iranian Revolution in 1980, when she was 13 years old, and to date she has been unable to return. She is married to Lee, also a priest and they have three children.

The Rt. Revd. Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani has served as Bishop of Chelmsford since April 2021. Chelmsford is the second largest diocese in the Church of England in terms of population and serves the communities of Essex and East London.

In January 2021, Bishop Guli was also appointed as the lead Bishop for Housing for the Church of England and she has served as a member of the Lords Spiritual in the House of Lords since November 2021. Bishop Guli is currently Vice-President of the Conference of European Churches, Vice Chair of the Board of the Church Army and a contributor to the BBC Radio programme Thought for the Day.

When asked about her family history she replied

“My family history on my mother’s side has been quite extensively traced over the years and there are some interesting people in there including Florence Nightingale and Elizabeth Fry as well as others! Somewhere I probably have a family tree that I could dig out! My father’s side, in Iran, I know much less about”.

Forthcoming Meetings

Our talks and workshops may be subject to change so **please always check our website under the ESFH Events tab for the latest information.**

Look out for regular emails sent by ESFH to your inbox advertising upcoming events.

Saturday 3rd Dec 10:30 GMT	Quiz presented by Elizabeth Cox	Online
Wednesday 14th Dec 19:30 GMT	All I want for Christmas (Family History) - Workshop/Chat with the Committee	Online
<u>2023</u>		
Saturday 7th January 10:30 GMT	The Hundred Parishes - covering 450 sq miles crossing parts of Essex, Herts & Cambs, encompassing around 100 administrative parishes presented by Ken McDonald	Online
Saturday 21st January 10:30 to 17:00 GMT	Family History Zoom Workshop /Open Day	Online
Thursday 26th January 19:30 GMT	Workshop - Using Word Processors - tables, headers/footers etc. Helpful for use with your family history research presented by John Young	Online
Saturday February 4th 10:30 GMT	Moot Hall Maldon Project 600 - At the centre of Maldon life for more than 600 years. Researching the lives and stories of those who walked through this building before us presented by Victoria George	Online
Saturday 4th February 14:30 GMT	Workshop - Using Spreadsheets - use of filters, etc. Helpful with your family history research presented by the Committee	Online
Saturday 4th February 19:30 GMT	200 Years of Local Countryside History presented by Ashley Cooper	To Be Confirmed
2nd March until 4th March	RootsTech 2023 Now open, sign up for this free event. See their website: https://www.familysearch.org/en/blog/rootstech-2023-registration	Online

DID YOU SEE THE IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT IN THE LAST ISSUE?

The Essex Poor Law Indexes are now available in the Members' Area of our website thanks to the hard work of transcribing by the former North West Essex Branch

ESSEX

Poor Law Indexes



**All entries with Essex Record Office references for your
further investigation**

1574 - 1895

31,371 Records

See if your ancestors are listed!

Huguenot Research

by Emma Cox (ESFH 33251)

Who were the Huguenots?

The Huguenots were Protestants who were persecuted in France and who left the country for safer places such as Holland and England. They were attracted by the possibility of religious freedom and by the prospects for employment. The first refugees arrived in the time of Edward VI and Elizabeth I (late 1500s and early 1600s). From 1670 to 1714 another 40,000 refugees arrived in England especially after the revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. Altogether around 50,000 people escaped from France.

It is estimated that as many as one in seven British people have Huguenot ancestry.

Where did they settle?

Mainly in England, starting in London but also in several other major towns across Southern England.

- * South East – Canterbury, Colchester, Dover, Faversham, Norwich, Rye, Sudbury and Thorney in Cambridgeshire
- * South – Southampton and Winchester
- * South West – Barnstaple, Bideford, Bristol and Plymouth

They went where they believed there would be employment (possibly with someone who had already emigrated or a business they had traded with whilst in France).

What industries did they work in?

Many different ones! They are well known as silk weavers in Spitalfields but there are lots of other industries including sword making, silversmiths, papermaking, furniture making, carving and gilding, banking, glass, guns and hats.

My own Fonblanque ancestors, my 5 x GGF Jean (aged 14) and his brother Antoine (aged 13) (anglicized to John and Anthony Fonblanque) were Huguenot refugees who arrived in England in 1740. They set up a bank in London and established a wine merchants in Water Lane near the Tower of London. John's son, also called John, became a barrister, King's Counsel and was known as 'The Father of the English Bar'. His shield is on the wall of the dining room in the Middle Temple and he is also on the plaques in the hallway.



1808 JOHANNES FONBLANQUE
SHIELD

How to get started researching your Huguenot ancestry

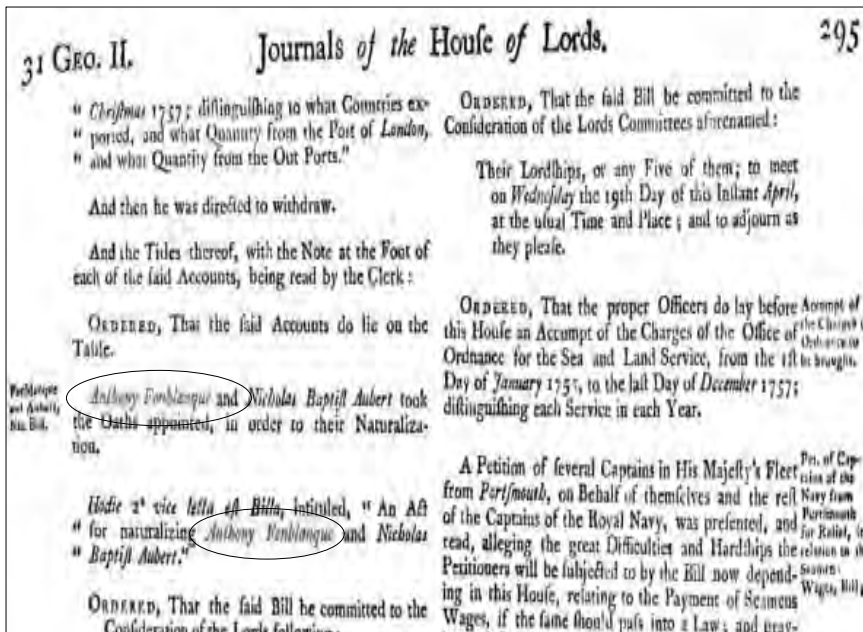
Start in the same way as any other family research, work through any existing family information you have access to. Note down family rumours (many have a grain of truth). Ask other relatives for information. Check family heirlooms and paperwork. Put together a basic family tree working backwards from yourself. Note items you are sure of and those you need to verify.

Tip: Make a note of all the different spellings of the Huguenot surnames you come across as it may help with future searches. This includes any mis-transcriptions.

Once you have the basic information in place start to look at the places your ancestors lived. Are there parish records available for births, marriages and deaths? Check with your local family history society. The London Metropolitan Archives https://search.lma.gov.uk/SCRIPTS/MWIMAIN.DLL?GET&FILE=%5bWWW_LMA%5dfamily-history.htm have parish records covering Spitalfields.

Contact the Huguenot Society (or check their website) to see if your family name is mentioned.

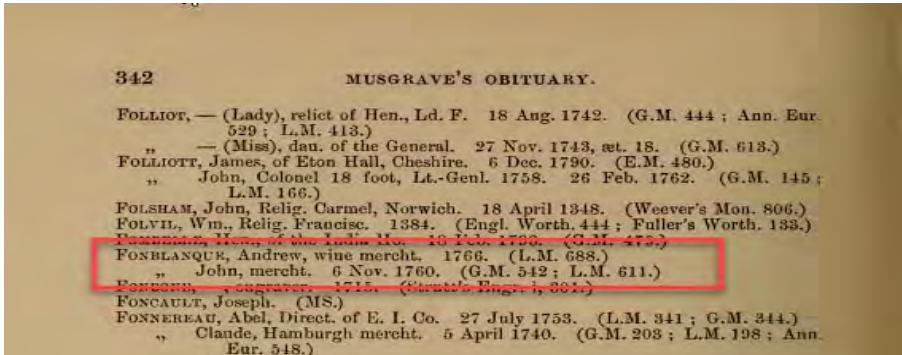
I found family records in St Dunstan-in-the-East, both original records and transcriptions. Also naturalization records for both Jean and Antoine, these were via Acts of Parliament. Plus someone had deposited some family records with the Huguenot Society so I visited the Huguenot Library at Kew (open by appointment) and took copies of them.



ANTHONY FONBLANQUE NATURALIZATION BILL APRIL 1758

Did they leave a will?

Records of wills and probates are available from The National Archives and some via Ancestry/FindMyPast. Anthony Fonblanque mentions lots of family bequests in his will helping me work out some family relationships. Both John and Anthony died relatively young and their widows went on to remarry and have lots more children.



MUSGRAVE'S OBITUARY FOR JOHN AND ANDREW AKA ANTHONY FONBLANQUE

Then look into the industry itself

* Was your ancestor a member of a Guild in London? Contact the Guild and ask them to check their archives.

* Did they establish a business? Look for records of the business itself. Ancestry has directories of London from 1736-1943. The earliest known directory of London merchants and bankers is from 1677 and available from the Internet Archive.

<https://archive.org/details/littlelondondire00lond/page/n5/mode/2up>

* Check newspaper archives. The British Newspaper Archive goes back to the 1700s
<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>

Tip: Use wildcards when searching. ? replaces a single character and * all the characters thereafter e.g. Fonblan?ue or Fonbl*.

Check criminal records

The Old Bailey <https://www.oldbaileyonline.org> has records going back to 1674. I found several trials relating to theft of property for my ancestors in 1794 and 1795. Someone stole 18 sacks of juniper berries in 1794 worth £20 (over £25,000 today) and there was a trial for grand larceny: <https://www.oldbaileyonline.org/browse.jsp?id=t17940430-94-person954&div=t17940430-94#highlight>.

What general resources are available?

There are a wide variety of different sources for Huguenot research, some of the following may be useful:

- * The Huguenot Society – records deposited by family members/descendants. Family trees. Wills. Publications. The Huguenot Library is based at the National Archives in Kew and is available to visit by appointment.
<https://www.huguenotsociety.org.uk>
- * East of London Family History Society **<https://www.eolfhs.org.uk>**
- * London Westminster and Middlesex Family History Society
<https://www.lwmfhs.org.uk>
- * WorldCat - Register of baptisms in the Dutch Church at Colchester from 1645 to 1728 (available via the British Library)
- * Google search for Huguenot + placename e.g. Huguenots Essex or Huguenots Colchester.
- * Kathleen Chater's talk for the National Archives in 2012 **<https://media.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.php/tracing-huguenot-ancestors>**
- * Family Search **[https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/England_Records_of_Huguenots,_Walloons,_Flemish_Religious_\(National_Institute\)](https://www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/England_Records_of_Huguenots,_Walloons,_Flemish_Religious_(National_Institute))**
- * Huguenots of Spitalfields - the charity is now closed but the website remains as a useful resource **<https://www.huguenotsofspitalfields.org>**
- * Records for St Michael's Church in Thorpe le Soken **<https://essexandsuffolksurnames.co.uk/parish-register-transcriptions/essex/thorpe-le-soken-st-michael>**
- * Huguenots of Britain on GENI **<https://www.geni.com/projects/Huguenots-of-Britain/12982>**
- * 17th and 18th century sources: **https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/familyhistory/next_steps/adv_07_17_and_18_01.shtml**
- * The British Library has a good list of sources.
- * If they were well-known then they may have entries in Wikipedia or The Peerage **<http://www.thepeerage.com>** or similar online encyclopaedias/websites.

French resources

Filae.com **<https://en.filae.com/v4/genealogie/HomePage.mvc/welcome>** is where I found the baptism record for Antoine de Fonblanque. This is a monthly/annual subscription website and it is available in both English and French.

There are also many French archives with lots of information. You do need to understand French to use these (or get someone to research for you).

Some examples of surnames which became anglicized which may surprise you!

- | | |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| * Sauvage | Savage and also Wild or Wilde |
| * Le Noir | Black |
| * L'Oiseau | Bird |
| * Le Jeune | Young |

* Lefèvre or Lefebre	Smith
* D'Orleans	Darling or Dorling
* Koch	Cox
* Jolifemme	Prettyman or Handsomebody

Notable Huguenot Descendants

There are many well-known Huguenot descendants today including Catherine Middleton, the Princess of Wales as is Prince William, Nigel Farage, Simon le Bon, Eddie Izzard. Other notable Huguenot descendants are John Spencer Churchill, Winston Churchill, John Calvin, Sir John Houblon, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Daphne du Maurier, Harriet Martineau, Franklin Roosevelt, Jean Jacques Rousseau, George Washington, Augustus De Morgan, Samuel Courtauld. All have portraits in the National Portrait Gallery which is closed until 2023 undergoing renovations.

I hope this helps you with getting started with researching your Huguenot ancestry and if you have any interesting stories to share I am always keen to hear them for my podcast Journeys into Genealogy.

Good luck with your journey!

Emma@emmacox.co.uk

Emma Cox Genealogy <https://emmacox.co.uk>

Journeys into Genealogy <https://journeysintogenealogy.co.uk>

Irish Connections with the London building industry?

The stories and history of the men who emigrated from Ireland and helped rebuild Britain after World War II are being gathered together for a new archive.

Called *The Men Who Built Britain* the archive will be hosted by the London Irish Centre, (<https://londonirishcentre.org>) with support from O'Donovan Waste, a London company set up by one of those many Irish expatriates.

The archives will include an array of documents and recordings of the many Irish emigrants who became known as the generation that built Britain. It will be digitised from records and interviews already gathered by Irish historian Ultan Cowely for a book he wrote more than 20 years ago, chronicling the tales of those who crossed the Irish Sea to work in UK construction.

For further background information see an article in the construction index.co.uk website at <https://bit.ly/3P5EhDi>

Communicating Connections:

The Essex Record Office project exploring the heritage of the Marconi Company in Chelmsford and Essex

by Laura Owen Project Coordinator

Following her lecture to ESFH and the information of this project on page 51 of the August 2022 edition Laura now gives us an update - Colleen, Editor



CONSTRUCTION OF MARCONI HOUSE ON THE NEW STREET SITE, CHELMSFORD. OCTOBER 1938.
COPYRIGHT ESSEX RECORD OFFICE. IMAGE REF: D-F 277-1-12334-1

For a number of years there have been calls from across the city to preserve the history of the Company, mainly from the Chelmsford Civic Society, who are extremely passionate about keeping the memory of Chelmsford's industrial past alive. In early 2020, Essex Record Office received funding for a major heritage project exploring the history of the Marconi Company and its legacy through oral history and collections digitisation work. The project was largely funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, alongside contributions from Essex 2020 and Friends of Historic Essex. The project came at a crucial time, at the centenary of Dame Nellie Melba's first live entertainment broadcast from the New Street site and to also coincide with the British Science Festival being held in the city.

In May 2020, I was brought on board to manage the project. Although I do not live in Chelmsford, I am a professional oral historian and have a keen interest in industrial heritage. I was immediately fascinated by the Marconi Company and soon found out that there is a huge appetite for the preservation of its history within the city. This became evident at the beginning of the project when we found out that many people recognised "The Birthplace of Radio" slogan that can be found on road signs when entering Chelmsford.

The project began with recruiting 10 brilliant volunteers who underwent oral history training and who would record the interviews. They ranged in age from 18 to 80, were from across the country (training and interviews were recorded remotely due to the COVID-19 pandemic), and had a variety of reasons for getting involved in the project. One was an ex-Marconi employee who wanted to learn more about other people's experiences, there were those who were passionate about oral history and heritage, and those who wanted to get involved in their local community during a series of lockdowns.

We also made links with the Marconi Veterans Association who put us in touch with some fantastic people who had served at Marconi for a number of years. But our project wasn't just about hearing the voices of those who had climbed the ladder up to management. I wanted to hear and share the stories of those who had worked in the offices as secretaries, those who started their careers there and had left, and those who had left before the 25-year mark needed to become part of the Veterans Association. So calls were put out on social media via Facebook groups, through word of mouth and through networks of women who met working in the science and technology industries.

Our volunteers uncovered some fascinating and otherwise unrecorded stories. There was Charlie, who met his wife whilst they were both working at Marconi's and his boss encouraged him to ask her on a date; and Maria, whose role allowed her to work from home – long before the pandemic – and Marconi's supported her by sending a runner on foot with work for her to complete.

"I don't know if [working from home] was the norm, but I don't think it was actually that unusual. I remember one of the chaps I worked with, as he was leaving one day he said "I just have to pop off to so and so now [to drop off some work]" and he said "She's only in the next road and she does printed circuit boards at home as well".

I never met any resentment anywhere. Because obviously, while the children were very small it was much better for me to work at home and I wasn't driving in those days, I learnt to drive when my son was five, and it was very convenient".

After recording 32 interviews with 33 ex-Marconi employees, we took an exhibition and a listening post, in the form of a historic Marconi wireless, into the High Chelmer shopping centre. Over the course of one weekend, we engaged with over 600 visitors who stopped to see the exhibition, listen to stories, look at photographs from the Marconi Photographic Unit, and chat to us about their own personal connections to the Company. These exhibition boards and Marconi wireless are currently available for hire from Essex Record Office.

One of the visitors to the exhibition told us:-

"I finished in the training centre in July 1954. And of course, I'd been in the hostel then for more or less a year. That was your induction and the Company did that because you were away from home, then after that they said "right, well, now you're on your own. You've got to find lodgings". The Company in those days had a massive amount of support for apprentices, because there were so many, there were about 700 apprentices at Marconi's in those days. And the whole Company at Chelmsford



COMMUNICATING CONNECTIONS EXHIBITION, HIGH CHELMER. SEPTEMBER 2021.
PHOTO CREDIT : LAURA OWEN

was probably over 10,000 people. So the welfare department found you digs; they'd say "here's some opportunities for you, go around and be interviewed by the landlady and see if you like it". So after that first year, I went off and found some digs".

Alongside the exhibition, the stories also formed part of a walking tour that can be accessed digitally via the 'GoJauntly' app, which can be downloaded from the App Store (iPhone) or Play Store (Android). There are 3 walks available: a long route, a short route, and a step-free/accessible route. The walk guides users around Chelmsford and tells the story of the Marconi Company as well as sharing clips from the oral history interviews.

Another ex-employee told us:-

"I had a good lot of people around me, the work was interesting, and because we were, at that stage, the world leaders in what I would know as stabilised platforms, which would hold a camera or laser, and the stabilised platform would take out the effects of vibration of the aircraft. Therefore the sightline of the camera or laser would be kept stationary, it wouldn't fluctuate because of what the aircraft was doing. We had various platforms, the first of which was called Heli Tele, which was a big white sphere which was hung on the side of a helicopter. Basically, it was a colour TV camera, and that was sold to the BBC."

If you would like to find out more about the project, the oral histories collected, and the photographs digitised, you can visit the project website at **www.marconi-stories.org**

You can also listen to the full oral histories online via Essex Archives Online at **https://www.essexarchivesonline.co.uk/result_details.aspx?DocID=1219383**

Essex Record Office always welcomes visitors into the Searchroom to look through the full collection of newly digitised images. Please arrange a visit by contacting **ero.enquiry@essex.gov.uk**

Agriculture in the Chelmsford Area

by Stephen Norris

Introduction by Colleen, Editor

In Part 4 of Stephen's continuing article on agriculture in the Chelmsford area he looks at the problems in local farming between the First and Second World Wars. The establishment of the Essex Farmers Union, the corn and seed merchants Cramphorn and the continuing story of the Marriage family.

Part Four

The first war brought about a big change in farming conditions. By this time Britain was largely dependent on imported food. The attacks by German U boats on international mercantile shipping seriously disrupted these imports. This led to wheat production in the county increasing, in part ordered by the War Agricultural Committee. The shortage of labour changed the position of the remaining farm labourers decisively. Wages on average more than doubled to 30 shillings a week. The war saw the first significant use of tractors in the area.

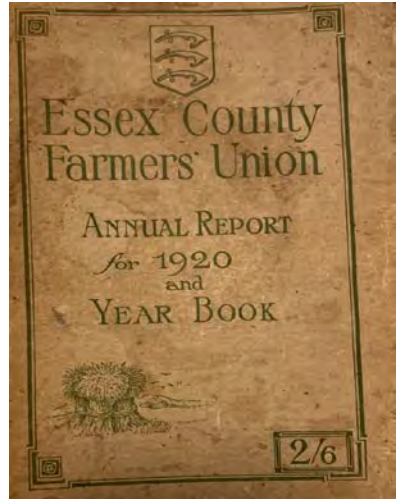
The end of the war brought about a short lived boom in food prices. Moves to control labourers' wages caused sporadic trouble and strikes in the county. The Workers Union handed out strike notices for ten thousand members in Essex, but the Chelmsford district organiser said he had not been consulted. In Essex the National Agricultural Labourers Union had eight thousand members. The new Government Wages Board was proposing to offer four shillings more than many current rates. Part of the problem was that wage rates varied between different types of agriculture in the region. The market gardeners in mid Essex, for example, were already paying higher than the average rate.

The boom proved short lived and in 1921 food prices fell sharply. Many, mostly small farms in the county, failed. The National Union of Agricultural Labourers came out on strike in the country in 1923, but the strike failed to materialise in Essex. Farmers were able to make individual deals with their groups of workers.



LOGO OF THE NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS UNION. SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA UK

The Essex Farmers Union (E.F.U.) had been formed immediately prior to the war in 1913 after a meeting at the Saracens Head Hotel. It was meant to advise individual members and promote their interests. It didn't get involved with commercial activities but there was disguised support for buying groups. The E.F.U. emerged from the war far stronger with a much-increased membership. This was partly because of the increased number of small and medium sized farmers buying their own farms and ceasing to be in the relatively weaker position of tenants. Its first county secretary was George Knowles, who farmed at Lordship Farm, later to be part of Writtle College. The Union's office was in Duke Street. Early meetings were in the boardroom of the Corn Exchange. The E.F.U. moved in 1936 to 1 Edward Avenue, now part of County Hall, and then to 'Agriculture House' at Briery Place New London Road. This building was eventually sold in the 1990's for just under a million pounds.



In 1922, despite the depressed nature of local farming, the Chelmsford branch of the E.F.U. voted against a motion for protection. They did not want to see the price of bread increase. Taxes and the tithe were still a bone of contention however. Pretzman, the Chelmsford M.P. said "*Landlords do not even have sufficient income to pay the taxes levied on them: farmers cannot get as much for their products as it costs*

them to produce it, and labour cannot get a living wage." By 1925 the local branch of the Farmer's Union said regarding protection and subsidies "*the country refuses to have one and pay for the other*". In 1927 the union was continuing to apply for state help because beef and milk couldn't be sold to cover their costs. Wheat production continued to decline in the county until 1934. By 1932 however, after the belated adoption of protection under the Ottawa Agreement, the Chronicle reported that the wheat quota was helping farmers. The amount of land under wheat was still decreasing but would have decreased more without the quotas. During the 1930s there was also a belated attempt to help dairy farmers both nationally and locally. In 1932 an Eastern Area Milk Organisation was formed which met at Chelmsford to fix milk prices. This was not however, completely effective. Six months later milk was being sold in Chelmsford at 2d a quart less than official prices. Despite



E.G. PRETZMAN
MP FOR CHELMSFORD 1908-1923

these government policies, times were extremely difficult for Essex farmers. The E.F.U. reported a big fall in subscriptions in the early 1930s. In the 1920s and 1930s however, a further migration of Scottish farmers into the area occurred, attracted by low land prices and the work of the Milk Marketing Board

Despite the depression, by the 1930s mechanisation was beginning to make serious inroads on the farm. Immediately after the first war farmers had needed a lot of convincing to change age old methods. The unreliability of tractors, even those of Henry Ford, meant that most farmers stood by the horse. The number of horses had even increased during the first war.

One of the biggest firms associated with Essex agriculture in the late 19th and through most of the 20th century was Cramphorn. Although they had a substantial farming operation until 1963, they were principally corn and seed merchants. They had two head offices, in Chelmsford and Brentwood. By the 1960s the firm had over 70 shops after their retail operations had expanded three times as fast as their farming. Cramphorn's ran a mill at Springfield and had granaries at Brentwood and Halstead as well as at Chelmsford.

Marriage's continued to expand during and after the first war. They bought Barnes Farm and Moulsham Mills from the Mildmay estate. The family had been long term tenants of both farms. In 1926 the General Strike cost the business £700 because of the extra price of coal. The Marriage farms grew an increasing amount of potatoes. Although sugar beet production started in earnest during the first war, due to the shortage of sugar, Marriage's didn't start producing it until 1926. They used steam cultivators extensively between the wars, but didn't own them. Marriage's farms were some of the last to use steam ploughs. They did own an early electric threshing machine and bought a Marshall tractor in 1934. The family kept two herds of pigs, one at Chignal and another at Good Easter. They were sent by the firm on the flour wagons to London.

"These pigs ran with the fattening bullocks and were supposed to live and thrive on the food the bullocks wasted!" Two flocks of sheep were kept for lamb at Easter. This meant lambing in mid winter and building straw yards every year. Another notebook of the family showed that man and horse were still the mainstays of work on the family's farms. In 1928 the family used a blacksmith, G. Mansfield and Son, of Dolphin Yard off Tindal Street in Chelmsford and also had their own blacksmith who did all the shoeing and repairs to farm implements. The family's farms kept many horses for farm work and transport. A wheelwright



was employed full time at their shop in Springfield, working on carts, wagons etc. All timber was home grown on the farms and transported by wagon to saw mills in Chelmsford. It was brought back the same day, stored and then sawed up as needed. All wheels were repaired at the blacksmith's shop at Broomfield Mill.

The introduction of roller milling had largely made stone grinding obsolete but a few people still preferred the quality of stone ground flour and the old stones still turned at Marriage's Moulsham Mill until well after the second war. Roller milling however brought spectacular improvements to the output of flour. Even by 1900 millstones were mainly being used for 'gristing' for animal feeds and a little wholemeal for brown bread.

The work of the Agricultural Institute had been considerably disrupted by the first war. The teaching programme was abandoned as some staff left to join the armed forces and others were seconded to the War Agricultural Committee which took control of the Institute. A great deal of work was carried out advising farmers how to increase production. After the war normal courses resumed but out of 80 students on a market garden course for example, there was only one female. By this time some students were entered for external University of London degrees. A review of the Institute heralded a move from advisory work to more education. The increased importance of poultry farming led the Institute to establish a poultry station in Beehive Lane, Galleywood.

The depression, of course, affected the Institute and by the 1930s it was having problems paying its staff. A report of 1934 emphasised the increasing lack of space at the Institute's old buildings and the difficulty of working from a site in the centre of town. In a little over 30 years Essex had gone from being a leader in agricultural education to being left behind. An out-of-town site was first proposed in 1935. Early possible sites included Hylands House, Boreham House and Margaretting Hall but eventually a 550 acre site was bought at Writtle including Lordship Farm. Four farms were bought in all from Mr George Knowles at a cost of £25,000. The first design was turned down because of the estimated £250,000 cost. Money rapidly ran out for the approved design because of the shortage of labour and materials caused by the outbreak of the second war. "The Institute began work (in 1940) without any ceremony but with two full hostels of students and a full complement of staff." In 1930 Henry Ford had established the Henry Ford Institute of Agriculture at Boreham to teach British farm workers the use of tractors and other innovations. It was later used for the training of Land Army girls before being cleared to make way for the American airfield.

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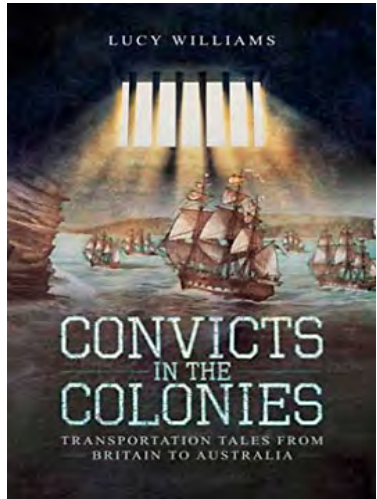
ADVERT FROM FARMER'S UNION 1920 YEAR BOOK

Convicts In The Colonies

Transportation Tales from Britain to Australia
by Lucy Williams

Book review by Helen Matten (ESFH 31242)

When we discover that convicts from Britain were transported to Australia from 1787, we usually associate 'Botany Bay' as being their destination. However, having read Lucy Williams' riveting book on the subject, I discovered that it's not true! Botany Bay was discovered to be lacking "*in adequate access to fresh water, had limited food supplies and was covered in boggy swampland*". Within days of the convicts being dropped off at the Bay, their guardians realised that they could not be left there to fend for themselves, convicts or not! They were therefore reloaded onto the ships, and the "First Fleet" journeyed north to Portland Bay, dropping anchor at Sydney Cove. The "First Fleet" were the 11 ships that had left Portsmouth eight months earlier. Ergo, Sydney became the first area



of Australia to be colonised by the British. Previous landings and attempts by the Dutch and French had failed in earlier decades. The book, although entitled '*...in the Colonies*' does not detail the transportations to America prior to Australia.

This book by Lucy Williams provides a fascinating insight into the plight and ultimate settling of the British colony of Australia from 1787 – 1868, just eighty years to found towns, farming settlements and a government.

The book does not purport to be an historical account of the transportation system per se, but what it does do is recount the stories of some of the 168,000 convicts who were taken from prisons and the stinking hulks of Britain on a three month journey to the other side of the world, to uncharted land inhabited by indigenous people who were, according to convict Margaret Catchpole in her letters home, to be "*very saveg for thay all wais Carrey with them spears and tommey horkes so when thay can meet wit a man thay will rob them and speer them...Thay are such poor naked Craturs. I for my part do not Like them*"[sic].

I found this book 'un-put-downable' and read it from cover to cover within a week. At 180 pages of narrative (excluding appendix, references and index) it is an easy read. However, it sheds a bright light on the treatment and existence of those transported. We must remember that it was not only the convicts who were marooned in this

inhospitable land with its hundreds of miles of impenetrable bush, a vast coastline hundreds of miles from anywhere else and nowhere to shelter on arrival, but also their guardians and gaolers. In later years there was the immigration of 'Free Settlers' who established businesses and townships. They employed the convicts – many of whom had been transported for trivial and petty crimes, so who were eminently employable for the most part. The coveted Ticket-of-Leave, given while still serving their sentences, meant that convicts could seek work freely provided that they abided by the rules. Transgressions meant return to prison, good behaviour meant a Freedom Ticket and the end of their penalisation. Many of those given their freedom went on to carve good lives for themselves, few electing to return to Britain and the 'old' life. Others were recidivists (Lucy's favourite word, peppered liberally throughout the book!) and spent their whole existence in and out of gaol.

Van Diemen's Land established a Military outpost after twenty years of Australian settlement, principally to keep out the Spanish and French who had been sniffing around and charting the Bass Strait; and went on to house around 75,000 British convicts from 1803 to 1840, although it became its own administrative colony in 1825. Escape was nigh impossible from there and became the principal transportation destination from about 1813.

An easily read, fascinating history, telling the tales of the 'recidivist' convicts in the 18th and 19th centuries. I have just ordered my own copy from Amazon (£10.95 paperback, £4.74 Kindle).

Published by Pen & Sword Books www.pen-and-sword.co.uk at a cost of £12.99. Tele: 01226 734222

☆ ☆ ☆

Convicts sent to Australia

by Colleen, Editor

For a list of some of the convicts sent to Australia see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_convicts_transported_to_Australia

Although not from Essex Margaret Catchpole, who lived in Suffolk, had a novel written about her escapades by the Rev. Richard Cobbold. Entitled *The History of Margaret Catchpole A Suffolk Girl*, it tells the tale of the efforts of Margaret to help her lover, the smuggler, Will Laud. She is famous for her epic ride from Ipswich to London in eight and a half hours on a horse stolen from her employers; followed by the shooting of her lover by her childhood friend Edward Barry and her two trials and subsequent transportation to New South Wales. There she married well and eventually became a respected citizen.



IMAGE OF MARGARET CATCHPOLE
PAINTED BY RICHARD COBBOLD
FROM MEMORY.
SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA

The Essex and Colchester Hospital Records

by Angela Hillier (ESFH 28397)

The Essex Archives Online catalogue of the Essex Record Office and I do not always see eye to eye with what comes up in my searches and in my last trawl through it I found several entries that on the surface had little to do with my “Colchester Methodists” query. Granted the name Colchester appeared in the title but a whole list of “The Medical & Surgical Journal of the Essex and Colchester Hospital” did not seem that appropriate. It covered 19 reference numbers and the period 1820-1907. It passed through my mind that 1820 was quite early for a Lancet type journal about unusual cases and operations and I scrolled on down through the list. Further down I found another shorter list entitled “Indexes to the Registers of the Essex and Colchester Hospital”. This piqued my interest and I wondered why there were so many indexes for something that I thought would not be that large so I scrolled back to the journals and went into the first entry to find out more about them.

I was totally incorrect in my assumption. What I had stumbled on appeared to be the register of all of the patients for the hospital with indexes to their names for some of the years covered. I was now intrigued to see exactly what was in these books and decided to order the earliest journal when I next went to the Record Office with the thought that I may find enough of interest in them to transcribe and publish them as a Eureka Partnership book.

The Eureka Partnership book thought went straight out of the window as I staggered back to my seat with a tome of the size of a St. Catherine’s House index – for those of you who do not know how big that is just let me say very large and very heavy. Inside was a whole list of “flesh to put on bones” and not only that it could well provide the answers to the tricky question of where people came from.



Essex and Colchester General Hospital

24/23

The entries in fairly decent handwriting were spread over two pages in neatly set out columns, the headings for which are as follows. "No.:" – I couldn't quite work out what this was as the same numbers reappeared fairly frequently and I decided that it may have something to do with the number of people staying in the hospital or the number of people seen each day. Column two was for "Name and Age", three was "Date of Admission" – which appears to mean the day people physically attended, four was "Residence and Settlement" – if there were two place names it appeared that the first one was for the place of residence and the second was the place of settlement, and some of those were not in Essex though others seemed to give the next parish. Then followed "By whom Recommended" and "Security" – there was no name in the second of these if the patient was an out-patient but there was nothing to say what the security was for and the name given was often not the same as the person who did the recommending. Then two columns under one title "Patient" "In" or "Out" followed by "Disease or Hurt" and "How Long Standing" – the latter column shows that people suffered with all manner of things for seemingly long periods of time. Then another single headed column split into two with the heading "Under whose care" "Physician" "Surgeon" – the people named seemed to be found in both columns so I am guessing that they did whatever was necessary at the time. The last two columns were headed "When Discharged & for what Reason" and "General No: of Patient". The reasons given for discharge vary from cured through some relief, at their own request, incurable to dead and a lot of other things in between. The Patient No: column seems to run numerically and sometimes has a second number in it which I took to be a second visit to the hospital but didn't check to see if it was for the same thing or something else. The first book had well over 2,000 entries even though it only covered the period 1820-1833.

Because the title was the Essex and Colchester Hospital I wondered if the patients came from all over Essex and looked through the volume to see if I could work that out. It seemed that some 60% came from Colchester itself and the majority of the rest from a wide area around Colchester roughly the north east part of Essex covering most of Tendring, Winstree, Lexden and some of Hinckford hundreds. There was also a fair sprinkling of people from Suffolk near the border with Essex, including Ipswich and the odd one or two from further west in Essex or another county completely.

The first page of entries read as follows – I have put the last column at the beginning and ignored the first column in the book

- 1 James KING 20, Sep 21, of Coptford, Stanway, recommended by J. H. HARRISON Esq, security Mr Wm MASKELL, In patient, hip case, 14 months, surgeon Mr NUNN, discharged Nov 19 with some benefit
- 2 Arthur NORMAN 46, Sep 21, St. Peters, recommended by Overseer (SWINBORNE), Outpatient, ulcerated leg, 5 years, surgeon Mr NUNN, discharged Mar 1 1821, cured
- 3 James MOOR 54, Sep 21, Holy Trinity, recommended by Overseer (Bowler WEB B) Outpatient, Paralysis, 2½ years, physician Dr MACKINTOSH, discharged Nov 16, incurable

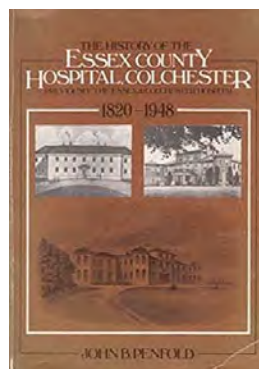
- 4 Ann GLENDENNING (not given), Sep 21, St. Leonards, recommended by Rev. R HOBLYN, security Rev. R. HOBLYN, In patient, paralysis of the lower extremities, 3 years, physician Dr MACKINTOSH, discharged Nov 30, with great benefit
- 5 Susan HOWARD 62, Sep 28, St. James's Colchester: Sudbury, recommended by Mr MACKINTOSH, Outpatient, Inflammation of the eye, 1 month, surgeon Mr BOUTFLOWER, discharged Dec 14, at her own request and with benefit
- 6 Joseph MANNING 12, Sep 28, St. Nicholas's Colchester, Nayland, recommended by Miss ROUND, Outpatient, abscess, 6 months, surgeon Mr BOUTFLOWER, discharged Dec 14 for the purpose of being made an In patient
- 7 Sarah THOROUGHGOOD 23, Sep 28, St. Mary's Colchester St. Peter's Colc, recommended by Dr MACKINTOSH, Outpatient, deafness & debility, 6 months, Surgeon Dr MACKINTOSH, discharged Nov 2, with benefit
- 8 John WHITE 54, Sep 28, St Botolph's Colchester: St Mich Bath, recommended by Mr WILMSHURST, Outpatient, stomach complaint, 1 year, physician Dr MACKINTOSH, discharged Nov 2, non attendance from confinement by illness
- 9 Francis WRIGHT 70, Sep 28. East Donyland, Ditchingham, recommended by Revd. V. M. TORRIANO, security Mr John SUTHERWOOD, Inpatient, sloughing ulcer, 3 months, Surgeon Mr BOUTFLOWER, discharged Dec 28 cured
- 10 Silvia SPOONER 36, Sep 28, Gt. Wigborough: Messing, recommended by Overseer Mr SADLER of Messing, security Overseer Mr Wm SADDLER, In patient, dropsy reqg operation, 9 months, physician Mr MACKINTOSH, discharged Nov 2 with benefit at her own request
- 11 Susanna HARVEY 27, Sep 28, All Saints Colchester, St. Giles's Colchester, recommended by H. N. JARRETT Esq, security Mr William MILLS, In patient, schirrus, 2 years, Surgeon Mr BOUTFLOWER, discharged Oct 9 incurable

The index books cover the same periods as the journals though they are not a complete set and only cover the years 1834-39, 1843-50, 1860-73, 1877-98. They are indexed by initial letter of the surname though not in alphabetical order under that initial letter. A Christian name, surname and the general patient no: are all that is given so they are not the most helpful things as all pages for each letter will need to be checked and every likely looking entry checked in the journal as well.

The Essex Record Office Reference Numbers for the journals are A/HN 1/2/1/1-19 and the Index Reference Numbers are A/HN 1/2/2/1-12.

Note from Colleen, Editor

For those readers interested in this hospital in 1984 The History of the Essex County and Colchester Hospital was written by John Penfold and it is still available as a second hand book plus you can log in and borrow the book on the Internet Archive <https://archive.org>



George Stacey Gibson (1818-1883)

by Mike Furlong (ESFH 7506)

The Gibson family had a long and illustrious presence in Saffron Walden. The most noted member of this Quaker family was George Stacey Gibson, (GSG) whose lifetime of public service and generous patronage earned him the nickname 'Mr Saffron Walden'.



George Stacey Gibson

GSG was in many ways the quintessential Victorian philanthropist. Very little happened in Saffron Walden without his knowledge. As the town's banker, Gibson had his finger in many pies. He was a Councillor and then Alderman for 24 years, and was twice elected Mayor. He was Treasurer of the local British Schools for 45 years and a Justice of the Peace. As vice-chairman of the Board of Guardians he administered the Poor Law and the workhouse and was Chairman of the Management Committee of the Saffron Walden Hospital built by the family in 1866. He was also a distinguished botanist and author of the *Flora of Essex*. He was a leading member of the Society of Friends both locally and nationally and he paid for the extension of Saffron Walden's meeting house in 1879.

It is as Saffron Walden's greatest benefactor that GSG is best remembered. Both during his lifetime and after his death, there was hardly any institution in Gibson's native town which did not benefit from his liberality. It was said of the Gibsons that their business instincts compelled them to make money and their faith compelled them to give it away. GSG, when he died in 1883, left a substantial estate of £342,456 worth at least £44 million in today's money. This was distributed to the hospital, the museum, the literary society, the Grammar School, the British Schools, the Friends School, and the training school for female teachers, the alms-houses as well as outside the town.

GSG came from a line of successful Saffron Walden businessmen, all of whom married wives from well-to-do families, so that he grew up within a cohesive family that owned a brewery, a chain of public houses, a bank and a number of sizeable residential properties in the town. One of his brothers sank a very deep well in 1835 to ensure Saffron Walden had a clean water supply. The provision of a reliable alternative to beer for drinking purposes enabled the Gibsons to leave the brewing and pub industry whose operations clashed with their temperance principles. The

Sun Inn in Church Street was one of their public houses and they converted it for domestic use, ensuring its preservation. The Grade 1 listed 14th century building was subsequently transferred by the family to the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and the National Trust.

GSG was born at the northern end of Saffron Walden High Street. George was a traditional family name, and Stacey was his mother's maiden name. When George married Elizabeth Tuke in 1845, they moved to Hill House, at the southern end of the High Street with extensive gardens covering more than 10 acres. Today a blue plaque identifies this house which has been converted to expensive town-centre apartments.



Elizabeth Tuke Gibson

From his childhood, GSG was interested in botany and at the age of 25 he produced a detailed listing of flora in the Saffron Walden area. He identified six plants in Essex that had not previously been recorded in the British Isles. In 1862 he published *Flora of Essex*. This identified over 1,000 species of flowering plants and ferns, including four that were found only in Essex. *Flora of Essex* sealed Gibson's reputation as a botanist and for the next century it was regarded as the definitive work on Essex botany.

Saffron Walden & North Essex Bank started as a family partnership in 1824 and GSG entered the firm in 1839 and in 1862, following the death of his father, he became senior partner. Sadly for him the increased business responsibilities curtailed his scientific interests but his gardens provided much pleasure.

George brought his brother-in-law, William Murray Tuke, into the banking partnership, and the bank was renamed Gibson, Tuke & Gibson, sometimes referred to as Gibsons & Co. It lost its separate identity when it became part of Barclays in 1896 and three direct descendants of William Murray Tuke served as chairmen of Barclays Bank up until 1981. When the Market Hill property proved insufficient for their needs, George oversaw the construction of new banking premises in Saffron Walden's Market Place, the 1874 building is now listed as 2*. Regrettably, as part of a programme of branch closures commencing in 2022, the bank finally shut its doors to customers in August.

As the town's leading banker, GSG was instrumental in bringing the railway to Saffron Walden in 1865, conscious of the economic benefits it could bring. He chaired the Saffron Walden Railway Company from the period of construction until it was sold to the Great Eastern Railway in 1877. The line, starting from Audley End, ran via Saffron Walden to Bartlow and operated until 1964.

He was personally involved in the reorganisation of Saffron Walden Museum whose collections comprise many items donated by him, including fossils and his herbarium, the extensive collection of preserved plant specimens that was the basis for his *Flora of Essex*.

GSG's generosity is particularly evident in the town's Market Place. He and his mother paid for the drinking fountain in 1863, whilst the extended and updated Town Hall, opened in 1879, was funded by Gibson, who also oversaw its construction.

He followed family tradition by supporting and expanding the alms-houses and founding a small orphanage and when the Gibson family built the British School in 1838, GSG became its Treasurer, a position he held until his death.

He was influential in the relocation of the Friends' School from Croydon to Saffron Walden in 1879, having donated some of the land on which it was built. Saffron Walden Training College opened in 1884 on land donated by Gibson and largely funded by him. The premises served as a teacher training college until 1977. Most of the buildings have been converted into living accommodation now.



He donated funds and many books to the Saffron Walden Literary and Scientific Institution which started in 1832 and then effectively became the Town Library. On his death, the library inherited a further 4,000 volumes, together with his mahogany bookcases which are still in use. Gibson Library is the name now adopted and it contains more than 25,000 volumes, being a major resource for the study of the Victorian and Edwardian periods. It also includes the Victorian Studies centre which covers several major topics, including: art, literature, social sciences, biographies, genealogy and family history, the history of printing, botanical illustration, archaeology, the history of exploration,

and topography. There are several hundred 19th century novels and the Centre also contains a wide range of material on the English Civil War.

GSG died in 1883 whilst attending a Quaker conference. His body was returned to Saffron Walden for a funeral that was attended by around 5,000 people. George's wife, Elizabeth, died in 1890. Their only child, Mary, continued to live at Hill House until her death in 1934 when the house was sold. Most of the grounds were then developed into a residential area which preserves the family name as Gibson Gardens, Gibson Way and Gibson Close.

This article is reproduced by kind permission of Margaret Collingwood, widow of Jeremy, and has been extracted from his excellent book "Mr Saffron Walden: The Life and Times of George Stacey Gibson" published in 2008 by Phillimore & Co Ltd.

Images 1 & 2 of GSG & his wife are by generous consent of Margaret Collingwood. Images 3 & 4 are by the author.



Beatrix Potter's cousin Kate and her connection to Essex

In the December 2021 edition of this magazine we detailed the book 'Beatrix Potter's Secret Code Breaker' by Andrew Wiltshire. Since then a fascinating connection with Essex has come to light regarding Beatrix's cousin Kate Potter. It appears that Kate spent part of her life living in a house called Springfield Lyons, which is two and a half miles away from the site of the current Essex Record Office. Rowena Godfrey, Libby Joy and Andrew take up the story. Colleen, Editor

Loud were the lamentations at 2 Bolton Gardens, Kensington, London on 7 September 1885 when Rupert Potter heard from his sister-in-law, Mary, that her beautiful daughter Kate was to marry '*one Captain Crookshank, who has been in the Army, is now a Stockbroker "by no means rich", not a word about his religion, friends, or age*' (The Journal of Beatrix Potter 1881-1897, Frederick Warne, revised edition 1989, page 156) and that they were going to live in a furnished house in the suburbs. Beatrix summed up what she felt was a sorry affair by writing, '*Love in a cottage is sentimental, but the parties must be very pleasing to each other to make it tolerable.*'

We knew very little about what happened to Kate from then onwards, but in the 1980s Judy Taylor (author and editor of many Potter-related publications) received a letter from Dawn Richardson (who has since died), saying that she was Kate Potter's granddaughter and confirming that her grandmother's full name was Mary Catherine ('the family always called her Katie'), and her husband's surname was Cruickshank, not Crookshank.

Fletcher Hayes Grant Cruickshank was born in India in 1846, where his father Major James John Farquharson Macdonald Cruickshank (1810-1856) was posted, and was one of six children. He was later a pupil at Wimbledon School – known formally as the Anglican Preparatory Military Academy for students planning future careers in the Army, Navy and the Indian Civil Service. It no longer exists. In 1863, Fletcher was one of forty-three 'leading players of the day' who determined the laws of the game of football (soccer), as adopted by the Football Association in December that year. By then he was a Captain in the Royal Horse Artillery, but he retired through ill health in 1881 and joined the stockbroking firm Cazenove.

Dawn's letter also mentioned that Beatrix went to stay with the Cruickshanks for about a week in the early 1900s, where she was taken out in the carriage 'to view the local countryside', and – according to family history – was remembered for an acid remark while watching a tennis match: something to the effect that the idea was to hit the ball over the net rather than anywhere else!

In the 1890s Kate and her husband had moved to Springfield Lyons, a large house now on the outskirts of Chelmsford in Essex, where they lived until Fletcher died in January 1912. Using the National Library of Scotland map website, we found that the house figured on an Ordnance Survey map published in 1881. It was set well away

from the Roman Road leading to the north-east, so a drive through pasture led up to what must have been the main entrance. To the north there were several quite large outbuildings and a formal garden, while a long pond or lake featured to the south-east followed by further acres of parkland set with specimen trees – providing a very pleasant view from the back of the house. Further maps revealed that the whole estate remained more or less intact until the late 1950s at least. It seems that stock-broking paid off and that Kate ended up living in the state to which she had become accustomed during her childhood and adolescence when her father Crompton Potter was making his wealth in the calico-printing industry and embellishing his large Manchester house with beautiful paintings and objets d'art.

Since Springfield Lyons is a Historic England Grade II listed building, Kate would have known it as rather a mish-mash of stuccoed timber-framed buildings and brick additions dating from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, but with some



EARLY POSTCARD PICTURE OF SPRINGFIELD LYONS HOUSE
FROM PRIVATE COLLECTION



SPRINGFIELD LYONS HOUSE IN 2022
PHOTO BY ANDREW WILTSHIRE

interesting redeeming features. Recently, a vast block of office accommodation has been added to the mix, with eighty-two parking spaces no less, and it was on sale early in 2021 with an asking price of £4¼ million. It is dwarfed by a massive B&Q store to the south, and virtually all the parkland has been swallowed up in ugly modern industrial development. The only feature which Kate might recognise today is the long pond.

She and Fletcher had four children, Fletcher, Violet, May (Dawn's mother) and Eric. We don't yet know what became of them, but according to a notice in the Times for 12 March 1941, Mary Catherine '*widow of Colonel Fletcher Cruickshank, of Springfield Lyons, near Chelmsford, died in London 'from enemy action' in January 1941.*'

It is of course ironic that Beatrix herself ended up with 'love in a cottage', but certainly the parties were very pleasing to each other!

Andrew Wiltshire visited the house and the local Essex Record Office in Chelmsford to find out more and to take some photographs – which reveal that the house is still just recognisable. He was much helped by the Archivist, Ruth Costello, to whom many thanks are given. She had unearthed the wedding certificate for the couple – they were married on 22 October 1885 – and two pocketbooks, '*like shorthand pads, but with leather covers and a brass clasp with a pouch for a pencil*'. These were the inventories and valuations for the transfer of the house, first from a Mr Gibson to Captain Cruickshank in October 1894, and then from the executors of 'Colonel' Cruickshank (who included his brother-in-law, Charles Wrigley, married to Kate's sister Blanche) to R Major on 28 February 1912. History does not relate how 'Captain' Cruickshank had become a Colonel – perhaps something to do with his post-retirement role with the Essex Yeomanry? The books '*were each completed in great detail in copperplate handwriting, by a valuer... noting everything that he saw*'.

The accommodation was spacious and comfortable with a large garden (including conservatory, vinery and so on) and the extensive outbuildings noted earlier. The



SPRINGFIELD LYONS - THE POND TODAY.
PHOTO BY ANDREW WILTSHIRE

valuation in 1894 was £121 11s 6d, plus 10s for stamp and inventory charge, and with 'Odds and Sods' (such as 'pigs' troughs, sawing horse, 50 yards of wire netting') excluded. In 1912 the valuation had risen to £399 1s, plus 15s for stamp and inventory.

The garden now boasted 'peach', 'stove' and 'carnation' houses in addition to other luxuries, and the valuation included 'heaps of manure in meadows and heaps of leaf mould in garden'!



The above article first appeared in the September 2022 issue of The Beatrix Potter Society's *Journal and Newsletter*. Rowena Godfrey, Libby Joy, and Andrew Wiltshire are all Members of the Beatrix Potter Society. Kate Potter's father, Edmund Crompton Potter, was a brother of Beatrix's father, Rupert, and she was one of six daughters.

The Society (www.beatrixpottersociety.org.uk) promotes the study and appreciation of the life and works of Beatrix Potter, and the *Journal and Newsletter*, which is produced three times a year, is one of the benefits of membership.

Copies of the book 'Beatrix Potter's Secret Code Breaker' by Andrew Wiltshire can be purchased from the Beatrix Potter Society's website shop.

Calling All With The Surname Reeves

by Jonathan Reeves based in the USA

The Reeves Project is a global group of genealogists working on all different Reeves families across the USA, England and beyond. It began in 2010 and is an extension of the much older Reeves YDNA Project at FamilyTreeDNA. Based on the YDNA results of Reeves men, we've been able to group many of the historical Reeves families in the USA into distinct family groups. We've had a few men with recent English ancestry take the test as well and hope to have more in the future to help group Reeve families in the UK as well. We collaborate on research through our WIKI website at <https://thereevesproject.org/>. This is a free collaborative platform allowing anyone with Reeves ancestry to join and contribute. We focus on careful documentation and include many transcriptions of wills, deeds, and other records on the site. I've recently been working through the Reeve wills from Essex and some of the relevant parish registers on select early Reeve families in Essex. We welcome anyone interested to join and research with us.

Jonathan E Reeves

Automation Engineer

Equifax

Email jer0007@tigermail.auburn.edu

The Tendring Union

by Alan Hillier (ESFH 30397)

After the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, the following 30 parishes were grouped together to form the Tendring Union. Before 1834 each parish may have had its own poorhouse or workhouse.

Alresford, Ardleigh, Beaumont with Moze, Bradfield, Frating, Great Bentley, Elmstead, Frinton, Great Bromley, Great Clacton, Great Holland, Great Oakley, Kirby, Lawford, Little Bentley, Little Bromley, Little Clacton, Little Holland, Little Oakley, Manningtee, Mistley, Ramsey, St Osyth, Tendring, Thorpe-le-Soken, Thorrington, Walton-on-the-Naze, Weeley, Wix and Wrabness.

Harwich and Dovercourt joined later and Brightlingsea was transferred to the Tendring Union from Lexden & Winstree Union.

In the census of 1841 the figures show males 103, females 99, this included 6 staff and 82 children under 14. The total number of inmates, 196, was high compared with other Essex workhouses at the time probably as a result of the economic climate in the large rural area of this part of Essex.

Nearly 50 years later the 1901 census shows a total of 201 people including 111 males and 90 females. The total included 14 staff and 34 children under the age of 14.

Extracts from the Tendring Workhouse Minutes of the Board of Guardians 1899

30th August 1899

Rudolph Bierwirth a German Lunatic

And that the German Ambassador be informed of the removal from Thorpe to the County Asylum at Brentwood on the 26th inst of Rudolph Bierwirth a German as a pauper Lunatic with the view of getting the Union relieved from the cost of his examination & removal & maintenance therein.

13th September 1899

A letter was read from the German Consulate with reference to this man stating that he had communicated its contents to Bierwirth relatives in Germany and upon receipt for their reply would again write upon the subject. And the Clerk stated that it appearing from papers received from Mr Gosden belonging to Bierwirth that the man had been an inmate of the Wilts County Asylum he had written to the Clerk thereof for information.

Note from Colleen, Editor

It seems likely that Rudolph was not long for this world as in 1901 there is a death recorded in the fourth quarter of 1901 in the Billericay Registration District of one Rudolf Bierwirth aged 27.

His name sake? In the Evening Despatch newspaper of **26th October 1954**, we learn "new commander Lt.-General Rudolph Bierwirth today assumed command of the British Commonwealth Forces in Korea and Japan".

16th August 1899

Re Mrs Shea and children with her

The Master reported as follows-

That Mary Shea, aged 49, and 13 children of The Ashburnham Grove Greenwich were brought to the house on Monday morning August 14 about 3 o'clock sent by Mr A S Hurrell Overseer Clacton on Sea. Mrs Shea only had 1 child, Dorothy aged 14 years belonging to her and 2 grandchildren aged 2 & 3 years. That Mary Rawley aged 13 years who acts as general help to Mrs Shea receives no wages was formerly paid for but the mother has absconded.

Rosie, Eddie, and Gladys 6,4,3 years 4s/- per week is paid for each by Mrs Loseby, Dulwich. Donald Howard aged 2 years 6s/- per week paid for this child. Lily Hill aged 13 months, Eddie Hill aged 9 years Sidney Hill aged 8 years, Daisy Mole 10 years, Albert March aged 3 months all paid 4s/- per week.

Money found upon Mrs Shea 11s/1½ d and return tickets by Steam Boat to London. Mrs Shea and 13 children left the house about on Monday. She paying the cost of the conveyance and I believe has returned to London by boat. The women pays £38 per year rent. Ordered that Mrs Shea pay 8/- cost of maintenance of herself, children and foster child.

— *Rita Harris* —
quality genealogical research

**Enthusiastic Research
for
Essex and London**

£18.00 per hour

Interesting sources beyond the internet

Baxter Essex Marriage Index 1754-1851
Baxter Essex Burial Index 1813-1865

01245 346490

contactrita71@gmail.com

71 Vicarage Road, Old Moulsham
Chelmsford, Essex
CM2 9BT



The Clerk was directed to ascertain from the Greenwich Union if Mrs Shea was duly licensed as a baby farmer. An account for 30s/- received from Z Fairclough and which was made out to the Overseers of Gt. Clacton for conveying Mrs Shea and the children named to the Workhouse was received but the Guardians declined to pay it.

30th August 1899

Re Mrs Shea. The master reported the receipt of 8/- from Mrs Shea cost of maintenance of herself and the children.

13th September 1899

Mary Shea. A letter was read from the Clerk of Greenwich Union dated 30th ulto stating that Mrs Shea was duly licensed under the Infant Life Protection Act 1897.

Source Essex Record Office G/T M34
1899-1900

The Rogue Rector

by Toni Neobard (ESFH 32898)

In May 1980 I was married at St Andrew's Church in Ashingdon, Essex. The church looked resplendent in the sunshine and the whole event went to plan with a good time being had by all. The ceremony was conducted by the Rev. Norman Cotgrove. A more upstanding and pleasant man you would be hard-pressed to find. My sister was married two years later but by then a new man had taken over the reins at St Andrew's. His name was the Rev. Simon Hankey. He was somewhat different from his predecessor, and



ST ANDREW'S ASHINGDON

certainly not in the normal mould of vicars. Although he wasn't invited to the wedding breakfast, he drew up a chair at the top table and proceeded to drink and eat with the best of them. The image of him in his cassock, having a good old knees-up with Nanny Womble, is forever etched on our memories.



EXTRACT FROM THE "RECTORS OF ASHINGDON" BOARDS IN THE PORCH AT ST ANDREW'S, ASHINGDON

I think you could say that the Rev. Hankey was a real character. And I'm sure that Ashingdon Church has had its fair share of characters at the helm over its 1,000 years of history. But I suspect that none more so than the Rev. Nehemiah Rodgers who was a rector there at the end of the 17th century.

According to the Church of England Clergy database (<https://theclergydatabase.org.uk>) Nehemiah was appointed as Rector of Ashingdon on 13th June 1687 and served there until his death on 1st September 1710. He also served as a curate for Great Stambridge and Canewdon.

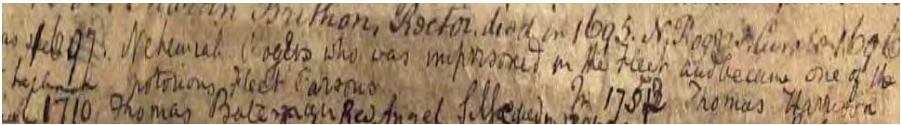
Nehemiah was born around 1654 to Zachary/Zachariah and Marie Rogers. He came from a long line of Essex clerics. His father was the vicar of Great Tey and the adjacent parish of Chappel. The family were related to an earlier Nehemiah Rogers who achieved fame as a puritan minister and produced several published works. Their most famous ancestor was the Protestant martyr John Rogers who was burnt at the stake in 1555 for his beliefs.

We know that 'our' Nehemiah's wife, Lydia was buried in 1695 at Ashingdon, as were some of his children. Then less than a year after Lydia's death he married again. His new spouse was called Elizabeth Ailiffe and he married her at nearby Canewdon. So, nothing too unusual there. However, a few years into his second marriage, around

1700, Nehemiah was imprisoned in Fleet Prison. At this time Fleet Prison was mainly used for debtors, although it did hold people for other offences. What we do know is that Nehemiah was allowed his liberty. There were various customs and practices known as the “Liberties of the Fleet”. One of these was that prisoners could pay the keeper so they could live outside of the prison.

There is a reference to a document in the National Archives which relates to a case in the Court of Chancery. The plaintiff is William Jones and Nehemiah is the defendant. It is dated 1701 and the subject is “money matters”. One of the other offences that would specifically earn you a spell in the Fleet was contempt of court by the Court of Chancery. So perhaps it wasn’t debt that imprisoned him but in that he did something to upset the judge in this court case.

He was also one of the notorious Fleet parsons conducting clandestine marriages in and around the prison. From various accounts it was recorded that he was conducting his business there between 1700-1703, but I have seen evidence that he was conducting marriages at least a year after this date.



EXTRACT FROM ST. ANDREW'S ASHINGDON PARISH REGISTER SHOWING THE ENTRY FOR NEHEMIAH RODGERS. THE IMAGE IS REPRODUCED COURTESY OF THE ESSEX RECORD OFFICE

A whistle-blower from the time wrote an anonymous letter to Sir Henry Newton, the then Chancellor of the Doctors' Commons (which was a society of lawyers practicing civil law in London and whose members practiced in the ecclesiastical courts). This letter outlined some of the nefarious practices that were going on and urged investigation into these. The informant went into some detail about several ministers and their actions. But Nehemiah got special mention. He said: *“There is also one Mr Nehemiah Rogers, he is a Prisoner but goes at large to his P[arish] Living in Essex, and all places else, he is a very wicked man as lives for drinking whoring and swearing”. The informant went on to say that Nehemiah had “struck and boxed ye bridegroom in ye Chapple and damned like any com'on souldier, he marries both within and without ye Chapple like his brother Colton.”*

“Brother” Colton was James Colton who had been deprived of his parish living in Little Stambridge in 1703 for ‘evil practices’. He was not a prisoner, and at the time of the anonymous letter was living in Leather Lane in London (next door to the Coach and Horses).

Nehemiah and James Colton almost certainly knew each other being involved in parishes so close to one another. I thought perhaps Nehemiah had suggested to Colton that there was money to be made and that he should come up to London and offer his services. However, it seems that Colton was carrying out marriages between 1681-1721, so he was already well established before Nehemiah was imprisoned

there. One wonders why Colton was censured by the authorities and lost his parish whilst Nehemiah retained his.

Clandestine Marriages

Another one of the “Liberties of the Fleet” was that the prison claimed to be outside the jurisdiction of the church, and therefore the normal rules did not apply for marriages. It attracted a trade of what became known as “Clandestine” and “Irregular” marriages. These ceremonies were attractive for a number of reasons. For example, they may be taking place away from the parish of residence for one or both parties, and/or did not involve the calling of banns or purchase of a licence. It was also a way in which minors could get spliced without the need for parental permission. Many disgraced clergy, (and as we have already seen from James Colton, they were not necessarily prisoners), were conducting marriage services. For the prison staff it was a lucrative trade for they charged various fees to allow the marriages to take place. Small fees were also paid to touts who helped pull in trade, promising the cheapest deal to help persuade the couple to tie the knot there and then.

But not all couples were trying to hide something. In many cases it was because they were offered a quicker and cheaper alternative to a standard marriage – the average cost of a Fleet wedding would be around 7 shillings and 6 pence. A couple marrying in secret could, of course, avoid any extra expense from a celebration of the nuptials if they wanted.

No doubt some that married had things to hide, such as marrying away from their friends and family so they wouldn't have to conceal an embarrassing pregnancy. We also know, from subsequent court cases, that they were favoured by bigamists who could marry with no questions asked. It was a bit like Las Vegas where walk-ins were encouraged, although there was no Fat Elvis option to conduct the ceremony. These ‘walk-ins’ often led to regret the day after, with many a sailor accepting a wager if he did the deed. We also know that some other very dodgy dealings went on, such as clergy or clerks falsifying entries or back-dating marriages for a fee. There were also reports of young women being abducted, stupefied with drink or opiates and then married.

“IT FREQUENTLY HAPPENS THAT A MAN WHO WENT TO BED VERY EASY AND VERY DRUNK, FINDS HIMSELF AT WAKING, MARRIED TO A CREATURE WHOM HE MOST HEARTILY DESPISES AND ABHORS”.

Even when there was a statute that cracked down on the trade i.e., imposed fines on any marriages taking place within the prison itself, it merely moved the ceremonies to the various marriage houses and taverns in the locality.

It has been estimated that by 1740 half of all marriages in London were Fleet ones. Both rich and poor took advantage of the Fleet services.

However, these marriages were brought to an abrupt halt in 1753 on the introduction of Lord Hardwicke's Marriage Act. From this point onwards all marriages were void unless they were preceded by banns or a licence had been obtained. They also had to be conducted in accordance with the rites of the Church of England (with

exemptions for Jews & Quakers). Any priest who disobeyed the law would be guilty of a felony which could attract a sentence of 14 years transportation.

However, this all happened after Nehemiah's death in 1710. He would have been around 55 years old when it happened. But one thing is for sure, he lived his life to the full!

Both Ancestry and Findmypast have a good collection of registers for Fleet and associated Marriage Houses. It's worth taking a look to see if any of your ancestors or wider family appears in them. You never know you might even find that Nehemiah married them!



A WEDDING IN THE FLEET (EARLY 18TH CENTURY) SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA

☆ ☆ ☆

Family History Federation Newsletter

by Meryl Rawlings Secretary

The Family History Federation produce a monthly electronic newsletter containing articles on family history, news from Family History Societies, details of forthcoming events and the latest genealogy news. To register go to: -

<https://www.familyhistoryfederation.com/> and then press *Subscribe to our Newsletter* button.

The Tollesbury Ancestry Group

by Helen Matten (ESFH 31242)

As a member of ESFH and a regular contributor to this magazine I also run The Tollesbury Ancestry Group, a small independent self-help group founded in 2014. The group was born due to the wish of our founder Joan Birchley to share her enthusiasm for family history with like-minded people and although no longer living in the village she maintains the role of President.

We are a small inclusive group with varying levels of family history experience; however, we all share not only an interest in family history but a divergent interest in the history of our village of Tollesbury.

We hold meetings at the Tollesbury Centre in the School Room on the first Wednesday of each month (apart from January and August) from 7pm-9pm. We often receive requests from people outside the area to help them with research of the Tollesbury area or help with tracing their Tollesbury ancestors. We welcome people joining us for one or several sessions. We run a variety of activities including research, workshops, quizzes, treasure hunts and have live guest speakers usually three times a year.

In November 2021 after lockdown had ended Neil Wiffen, who works at the Essex Record Office, came to present a talk to us about the Essex Home Guard. We were amused to see he had dressed in Home Guard uniform and gave us a fascinating insight into the real Local Defence Volunteers with whom his father had served during WW2.

The ESFH editor, Colleen accompanied by an American friend joined us in the summer for an interesting evening walk entitled 'Founding Fathers of Maeldune,' with the local historian Stephen Nunn. We undertook the tour around the town of Maldon, which started at All Saints Church, with some American connections. We continued on to other historic landmarks in the town, ending up back at our start point having visited St Mary's Church near Maldon Promenade close to where Stephen was born.

Several of our sessions have involved people speaking about their own Essex connections. At one particular meeting entitled 'Bring Your Ancestor to the Meeting', member Derek Shakespeare, whose great grandfather was Robert Stephen Appleton, a yachtsman born in Tollesbury in 1879, showed us a rare and amazing relic kept under a mattress by his mother. Derek had brought along a 'Common Book'. Common Books were notebooks kept usually by the lady of the house. In these she would record household accounts, records of births, deaths and marriages within the family. Wealthier households would also record the hiring and firing of servants, wages paid, and deductions made for



NEIL WIFFEN IN HOME
GUARD UNIFORM

uniform or breakages. These go back to the 16th century so coming across an intact Common Book is a great find. Robert's wages and details of his trips were among the entries in the book.

Another group member, Cherie Piché took up the tale of her interesting ancestor Captain Richard Nottingham (1728-1778) who took on another identity from a deceased John Nottingham to make himself difficult to trace. He subsequently rarely used his given name. He was 4th generation Virginian, USA, the family having originally sailed from Maldon to escape the English Civil War. Maldon seems to have been a haven for Royalists at the time with many ships taking royalists and pacifists to Virginia. In 1768 Captain Nottingham became a packet ship commander, carrying military despatches from Falmouth to New York for Admiral Howe, commander of the British forces in America. He made about 80 crossings of the Atlantic in the 'Sandwich' packet steamer, avoiding capture by 'enemies of the Crown'. He died in Falmouth at the age of 50, having concealed successfully his Virginian connection; in his marriage and his will he referred to himself as 'from Rotherhithe'.

If you have connections to Tollesbury or are interested in the history of the village and surrounding area, please feel free to come along and visit or join our friendly group by contacting me at helen.matten@gmail.com. I look forward to hearing from you.



Surname Nelson or Harris in your Essex ancestors in the 17th and 18th century?

ESFH has received a plea for help from an elderly member, Dr. Jack Nelson (ESFH 32954) living in assisted living in the USA and who can no longer do any research. Having lost his original family history notes he would like to find an Edward Nelson. Jack recalls at the Library of Virginia he found a document written by Edward's grandson, a highly educated scholar, who left a record that Edward was born "in Essex near London" in 1690.

His father was James Nelson. Edward was orphaned and went to sea as a boy. He settled in Virginia circa 1716 and was prosperous suggesting he had somehow made a small fortune while at sea. Edward styled himself as "Captain Surgeon" in Virginia. He had a sister, Elizabeth. He was closely related by marriage to the Harris family of Essex and Virginia as five of Edward's children married HARRISES.

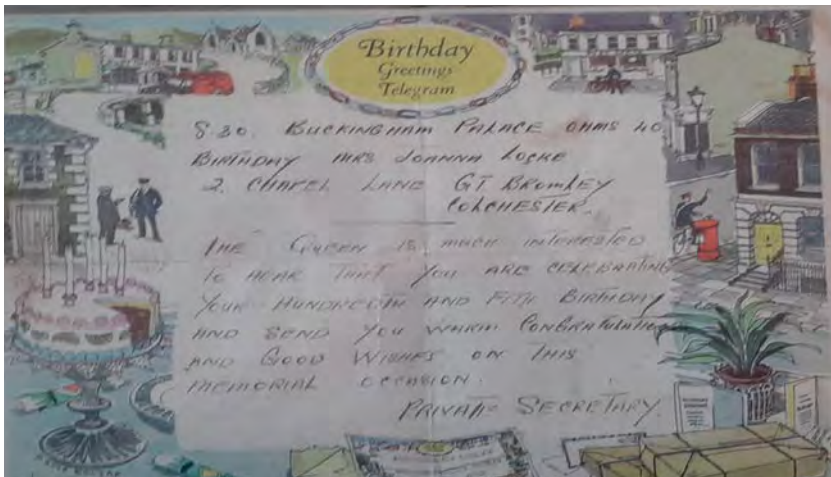
Any thoughts please email jleenelson33@gmail.com or editor@esfh.org.uk

H.M. Queen Elizabeth II

21st April 1926 - 8th September 2022



At a drop-in ESFH session at Colchester Library Mr Robert Ball told me his great grandmother Mrs Joanna Locke was spoken to by Her Majesty on a visit to Colchester in 1958. At the time Mrs Locke was 105 years old. He sent me an image of a telegram sent to her by Her Majesty's private secretary. Mrs Locke had a daughter Elsie, who went on to marry a Mr J Balls of Colchester and they had a son Peter who dropped the s of his surname. Peter married Betty Cottee of Tiptree and had Robert and his sister Jane. Colleen, Editor



CORONATION OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II.



ORSETT HALL

FRIDAY, 26th JUNE, 1953

Full Evening Dress,
Medals & Decorations,
Chain & Badge.

Reception - 7.45 p.m.

Dinner - 8 p.m.

*The Lord Lieutenant of Essex
requests the pleasure of the company of
The Worshipful The
Mayor of Chelmsford
at Dinner
on Friday, June 26th at Orsett Hall.*

R. L. V.P. to the Secretary, Orsett Hall

MENU

Tortue claire.

Filet de Sole Anglaise.
Sauce Mayonnaise.

Poularde à la Derby.
Petits Pois à la Menthe - Pommes Nouvelles.

Glace à la Reine.
Fraises Femina.

Canapés de fausse Crabe.

Fruits. Café.

THE QUEEN

Selections played by the
BAND of the 1st Bn. THE ESSEX REGIMENT

By kind permission of
Lt.-Colonel P. S. C. SMITH

**Poem written by member Brenda Mead (ESFH 33198)
when she was aged 10 years old**

On June the 2nd 53
Thousands will be there to see
A beautiful lady in her coronation gown
Ride to Westminster to be crowned

For this is Coronation year
Time for folks to laugh and cheer
People will come from far and near
To see the pageant of the year

Cecil G. Whitmore;
 John Ruggles Brice Manalata
Calves John
 Sydney Purner F. J. Dines (Medley)
 Robert Francis Ho White
 A. W. Kempson John Talbot Chelmsford
 Manalata John
 Daniel Curley John
 P. J. Taylor G. H. Gibson
 (Thos. Thomas)
 Alfred Sanders D. J. Ferrand
 Bennett E. Dacey
 Ald. Mr R. King R. M. Brown
 L. Chain A. Lyons Ald. Mr R. King
 W. W. Darthing

A. Whitmore W.A. Gullin

DRIVER, CHELMSFORD

SIGNATURES ON THE MENU CARD OF THE "GREAT AND THE GOOD" IN ESSEX IN 1953

My Coronation Day 1953

by John Young (ESFH 6399)

On the morning of Coronation Day, a section of the Embankment was set aside to accommodate London school children to see the procession to Westminster Abbey. Although in Hertfordshire, my primary school in Waltham Cross was invited to send three children to join the crowd. From the allocated school ID number on the badge I wore, Y198, I infer that we were invited because we were in the Y Division of the Metropolitan Police.



My class of forty, all wrote their name on a slip of paper and put each into a box. I was one of the three lucky ones whose names were drawn out. We set off from Waltham Cross station at 6:07am to stop at every station to Liverpool Street, picking up more children at each station. Then the long way to Westminster, via Paddington. The Circle Line was only operating in one direction on that day. We sat on the Embankment hoping that it would not rain before the procession had gone by.

We set out for home while the Royal party and guests had lunch in a pavilion erected next to Westminster Abbey. We got back to Waltham Cross to walk home from the station in the rain. I got home in time to see the ceremony and parade back to the Palace on our tiny, amateur built 9-inch mono television set.

JOHN YOUNG
Home Address:- 7 PARK ROAD
School Address:- HOLY TRINITY SCHOOL
CROSSBROOK STREET
WALTHAM CROSS.
Phone WALTHAM CROSS #471
Via LIVERPOOL STREET, WESTMINSTER.
(UNDERGROUND)
Y198 W2/3

NEW WALTHAM J.W.L. SCHOOL
ALEXANDRA ROAD,
WALTHAM CROSS.

18th May 1953.

Coronation, June 2nd 1953. Children's Party No.Y198

Dear Parent,

With regard to the party viewing the Coronation Procession from the Embankment, may I draw your attention to the following :-

No child will be taken without the parent's written consent.

The train will leave Waltham Cross station at 6.7 a.m. and all children must be at the station by 6.55 a.m. No transport will be provided from home to the station. All railway fares will be paid by the authorities.

All children should be home by 2.30 p.m.

No child may leave the party to join parents until reaching Waltham Cross.

No drink may be supplied. This will be provided by the L.C.C. on the Embankment.

Each child should bring a hat and coat or Mackintosh & carry food in small satchel etc., which can be used as a seat if necessary.

Yours faithfully,

(Sgd.) S.W.HUGGINS
Teacher in Charge.

child must carry a plain postcard with C.B.O.C.
IE AND ADDRESS



THESE PHOTOS WERE TAKEN BY
HEATHER FEATHER (ESFH 366) ON
29TH JULY 1988 WHEN HER MAJESTY
VISITED CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL

Buttsbury in 1086 and my ancestor Henry de Ferrers

by Simon Mynott (ESFH 416)

In June 2022 I paid a chance visit to Buttsbury Church. The door was open so I went in to look round. There was a copy of the History of the Church for sale. I started to read it and found on page four "In the Domesday Book, Buttsbury is entered in the name of Cinga and the land was owned by Henry de Ferrers". The Domesday Book of 1086 goes on to record Henry's holding in Buttsbury as five and a half ' hides ' in extent, about 660 acres.

This discovery excited me. Henry de Ferrers was a name I knew, because I had previously identified him as one of my early ancestors. Years of study of my family history, working from parish registers and wills in Essex, had led me back to the Tiffin family of the Earls Colne area. One of the Tiffins - a lawyer in London - married into the landed family of Jenour in Great Dunmow in the 16th century. Numerous published sources exist, documenting medieval families with manorial holdings. I was able to work further back from the Jenours (who held Bigods manor in Dunmow) and through the 15th and 14th centuries, reaching earlier baronial families such as: -

- the Husees in Sussex
- the Bohuns, also in Sussex, but related to the Bohun Earls of Essex
- and then the Ferrers family, whose daughter Sybil married Francis de Bohun in the mid-13th century

In the 12th and 13th centuries, successive Ferrers were Earls of Derby, starting with Henry de Ferrers' son Sir Robert. Sybil in the 13th century was a daughter of the 5th Earl of Derby. Henry himself had been born in France at Ferrieres in Normandy, from which the name Ferrers has evolved in English usage; he died about 1101 in England. At Domesday Henry had over 200 manors in the Midlands and just five in Essex: Tilty, Stebbing, Steeple, Woodham Ferrers and Buttsbury.

I live in Billericay, only 2½ miles from Buttsbury across the fields, and I now feel an affinity with that modern small settlement for more than purely geographical reasons.

Please contact me on the following email address annrossly08@waitrose.com if you have any comments regarding the above article. I have a full list of the generations between me and Henry, with names, dates and sources.



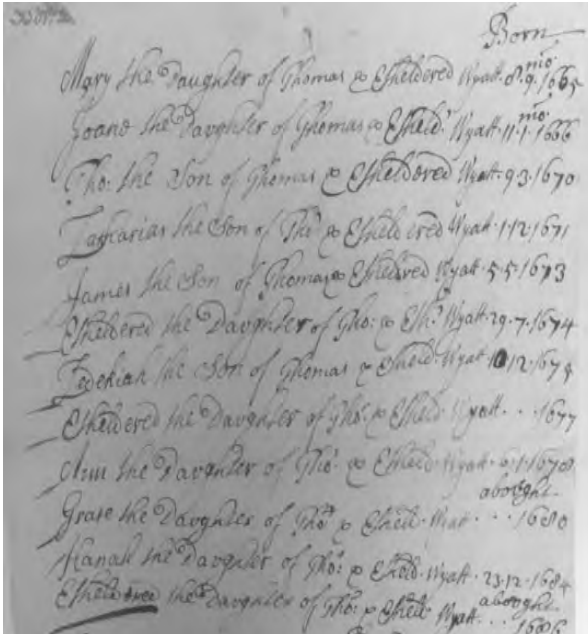
ST MARY BUTTSBURY

An Essex Quaker's Wife – Mary Farmer & her Daughters

by Julie Miller BA (Hons), MA

PhD Research Student University of Essex

There is an old saying that behind every great man there is a great woman. In the case of John Farmer, wool comber, disgraced Quaker, traveller and slavery abolitionist, this is certainly true, in that he had an unusually independent wife.



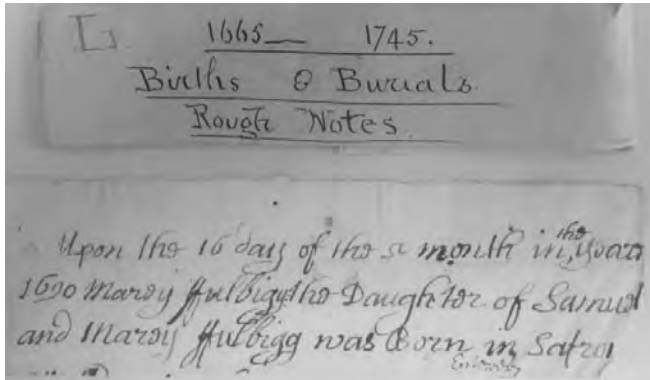
ANNOTATED LIST OF WYATT SIBLINGS ERO A13685 Box 49
BUNDLE OF BIRTH & BURIAL NOTES THAXTED 1665-1686¹

Mary Wyatt was born 8th November 1665 to Thomas and Etheldreda Wyatt, the eldest of twelve siblings. A list of the births and some deaths of her numerous brothers and sisters, is held in the Essex Record Office archive. The Wyatt family appear throughout the Thaxted and Saffron Walden Quaker archives, a large family regularly squabbling about money, who left a lasting mark on the records of their community in the 17th and 18th centuries.

Mary Wyatt married brewer Samuel Fulbigg of Haverhill in 1689. Their only daughter, also called Mary, was born on 16th July 1690 in Saffron Walden.²

Tragically this marriage was not to last long. Another note in the archives tells us that on 1st December 1692 Samuel was buried, having been killed when the funnel fell from his brewing copper the previous Monday. This awful accident left Mary as a widow at 27 years old, with an 18-month-old baby to look after and, from an early modern perspective, she needed a new husband.

Originally from Somerset, John Farmer came to Saffron Walden in early 1698. He appears at the Monthly Meeting at Thaxted in April 1698 donating a shilling for the relief of a Quaker in need³. He was an itinerant wool comber, as was fellow Quaker



BIRTH RECORD OF MARY FULBIGG : ERO A13685 Box 49 BUNDLE I.1
OF BIRTH & BURIAL NOTES THAXTED 1665-1745

Zacharias Wyatt, the younger brother of Mary Fulbigg. Perhaps Zacharias brought Farmer to Saffron Walden or maybe they met at the Quaker meeting, but at some point it seems Zacharias introduced his widowed sister Mary to John Farmer.

Mary had not been idle since being widowed. According to Farmer's journal she had travelled 1400 miles in the ministry before they met and had *"a gift of prophesy or preaching given her by ye Lord"*.⁴ John Farmer had agonised in his diary about the fears of giving into temptation and vanity. He wrote that, when they married 27th July 1698:

"Ye Lord preserved mee in many Temptations from being destroyed by them. In & by his advice and help I took an honest Friend to be my wife in ye way of marriage used amongst us".⁵

Married life did not stop either Mary or John from travelling. In July 1700, Sampford Women's Meeting heard from Mary that she intended to take a journey along with another Friend, Elizabeth Spice of Saffron Walden *"upon the sword of truth through Huntingdonshire and Bedfordshire to visit meetings there"* and permission to travel was granted.⁶

Ten months later John and Mary's daughter Ann was born 1st May 1701.⁷ In December 1702 Mary Farmer was asked by the Monthly Meeting to work with two other women Friends to sell the property of deceased widow Elizabeth James and settle her funeral expenses, bringing any residue back to the Meeting. A task which required someone to be held in the utmost trust, it seems to have gone well.

In 1704 Mary went on an extended five-month long journey travelling in the South and West of England, recorded in John Farmer's journal, while he was left at home to care for the children:

"In ye year 1704 my wife was moved & inabled by ye Lord to travel 5 months in his service in ye west & south of England. Shee had a good journey & did service for ye

*Lord in it & came well home to mee & our children wch bee also well. Blessed bee God for it.”*⁸

However the description of Mary as an ‘honest friend’ was possibly a little dubious. A significant issue had hung over the Farmer family for some years after their marriage and related to a legacy for Mary Fulbigg (Mary’s daughter from her first marriage) from Grace Fulbigg, her grandmother.

It was noted in the Monthly Meeting on 26th July 1698 (the day before the Farmers got married) the permission was granted “*Depending on the resolution of £10 owed to Mary Fullbigg Junior from her grandmother’s will*”.⁹ At the time £10 was worth the equivalent of 4 month’s work for a skilled tradesman.¹⁰

It rumbled on until 1705 when the matter was raised by John Mascall who noted in the Monthly Meeting on 20th March that he “*desires ye judgement of ye said meeting concerning JF*”. On 24th April John Farmer himself raised the subject, asking if the £10 given for the use of his stepdaughter could be placed in his own hands against him offering his house as surety. In June the Meeting asked John Farmer to sign a double bond of £16 for the use of Mary Fulbigg, and trustees were appointed, one of whom was Thomas Wyatt, Mary Farmer’s father. But at the meeting on 28th October 1705 the dispute came to a terrible head when Thomas Wyatt and his son Zacharias came to the Meeting and publicly accused Mary Farmer of destroying Grace Fulbigg’s will:

*“The case of difference being ...the said Mary of destroying a widdows will made by the advice of her relations before marriage to the said John and left in her own hands to address wherein was ten pounds given to a daughter which the said Mary had by a former husband.”*¹¹

The Meeting insisted it be urgently resolved and in January 1706 the Friends gathered at Henham to witness a bond given from John Farmer to John Wale of ten pounds by the direction of the Quarterly Meeting for the use of Mary Fulbigg. The Meeting directed that Henry Starr should keep it for her and John Farmer confirmed to the Monthly Meeting on 25th February 1706 that the bond was signed and sealed, and now in the hands of Henry Starr. Having sorted out the mess his wife appeared to have caused, at the same meeting John Farmer then advised them he would be heading off on his travels, but not surprisingly the somewhat irritated meeting advised him to request permission of the Quarterly Meeting first.

Perhaps the reluctance to allow him to travel was because in 1703 Zacharias Wyatt had advised the Meeting that John Farmer had “*gone forth a journey into ye Northern parts*”¹² and he had not waited to get a certificate, but asked Zacharias to procure one, and get Mary Farmer to send it on to him. It seems John was a rule-breaker and Mary was a willing accomplice. Perhaps it was Farmer’s unregulated travel that had prompted the Friends to pin down the details of Mary Fulbigg’s legacy before he took off again.

When John Farmer travelled north in 1707 Mary accompanied him to Nottingham before coming home to wait for him. When he reappeared in September 1708 he immediately moved his family to Colchester in something of a marked manner, where

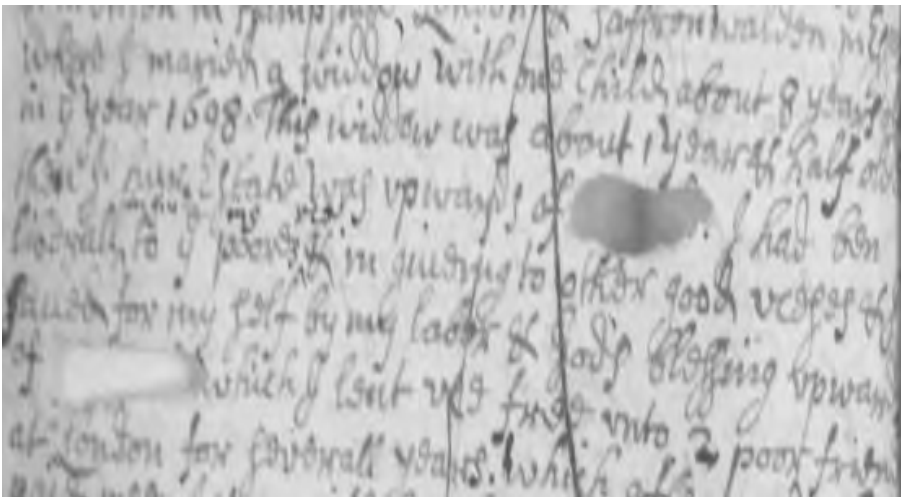
they resided for three years, him working as a wool comber and she as a nurse before he decided to go travelling again, this time on a 3-year trip to pre-revolutionary America. John moved Mary and her daughters back to Saffron Walden and the Monthly Meeting accepted them back on 20th September 1711. He noted that Mary had decided to be amongst Friends at Saffron Walden while she nursed her now lame daughter Mary Fulbigg and help her find a trade.

Whilst John was in America Mary continued her own ministry and in March 1713 she was granted a certificate to visit churches in Suffolk and Norfolk. In July 1714 she reappeared in the records having returned from travelling in the North and acquainted the Friends that she now intended to go to Holland to meet her husband.¹³

John and Mary arrived back in the Thaxted records on 30th November 1714. However at the same meeting he announced he was immediately returning to America, and they drafted a lengthy certificate allowing him to go. Interestingly although several women did sign the certificate, Mary Farmer was not one of them.

Before returning to America John Farmer wrote up his Journal leaving it behind to be published, though for some reason it never was. On page 6 he discusses financial matters and mentions when he married Mary "*Her estate was valued at upwards of ...*" and the next word has been neatly cut out of the page. Then he mentions "*I saved for my selfe by my labour and God's blessing upwards of ...*" and again the word had been cut out of the page. It's only a theory, but my hunch is that Mary may have removed this personal information – she did after all have previous for destroying financial information!¹⁴

Two letters from John Farmer to Mary survive at the ERO. A poignant one is from Virginia dated 1st June 1716 telling her to move permanently to America. He



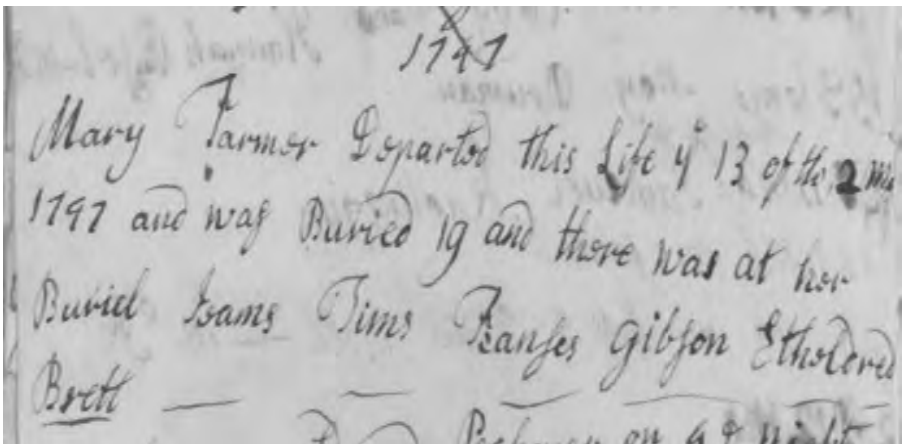
EXTRACT FROM JOHN FARMER'S JOURNAL SHOWING EXCISIONS - ERO A13685 BOX 51 – PAGE 6

instructed Mary to send her belongings to Philadelphia and detailed how she and the children were to travel to him. But for some reason, which we do not know, she never went, and never saw her husband again.¹⁵ His activities and fall from grace are discussed elsewhere and are too many to go into here.

John Farmer died in Germantown, Pennsylvania in 1724. In his will he left his English possessions to Mary Farmer and his American assets to his daughter Ann. Mary promptly sent Ann to Pennsylvania to claim her inheritance and Mary continued her own work, travelling to Holland and Denmark in the ministry in 1725 at the age of 60. She left an account of her journey, where alongside her testimony she revealed encounters with pirates, plagues, and other adventures.¹⁶

Mary Fulbigg stayed in Saffron Walden and kept a notebook detailing Quaker matters for over 35 years. She noted her mother Mary Farmer died 13th of April 1747 at the extraordinary age of 82.¹⁷ She is buried in a marked grave at the Friends' Burial Ground at Saffron Walden.

Whilst she never married, a copied letter in her notebook hints at a broken love affair in her middle years. The last entry in Mary Fulbigg's notebook is dated 24th March



EXTRACT - MARY FULBIGG'S JOURNAL – ERO A13685 Box 51

1762. She would have been nearly 72 years old. Her burial is recorded in 1763 and she lies near her mother, in an unmarked grave in the Saffron Walden Burial Ground. Inevitably her cousins were squabbling over the money in her will, within the year.

Ann Farmer moved to America in early 1725. She hadn't seen her father for ten years but applied to the Thaxted Meeting for a certificate to attend Philadelphia Meeting to claim her inheritance. Her certificate confirmed she was clear of any attachments in England, and she married Benjamin Boone, uncle of the frontiersman Daniel Boone, on 31st October 1726. They had one son, John Boone born in December 1727, but sadly Ann died very shortly after, seemingly of complications from childbirth, at the age of only 26.¹⁸ John Boone was reported to have been brought up at his Uncle

Squire Boone's house alongside his cousins including the famous Daniel (b 1734), until his father remarried in 1738. John Boone went on to have 9 children, founding a Boone dynasty in North Carolina, the eldest of whom, Benjamin Boone became a Baptist Reverend.¹⁹

I am not sure John Farmer would have approved.

References:

- 1 ERO A13685 Box 49 Bundle of birth & burial notes Thaxted
- 2 ERO A13685 Box 49 Bundle I.1 of birth & burial notes Thaxted 1665-1745
- 3 ERO A13685 Microfilm T/A 261/1/1
- 4 ohn Farmer Journal, Essex Record Office A13685, Box 51, p.22
- 5 John Farmer Journal, Essex Record Office A13685, Box 51, p.22
- 6 Essex Record Office A13685, Microfilm T/A 261/1/11
- 7 For more information on Quaker dating practises please see my earlier post: An Essex Quaker Goes Out into the World
- 8 John Farmer Journal, Essex Record Office A13685, Box 51, p.26
- 9 Essex Record Office A13685, Microfilm T/A 261/1/1
- 10 National Archives Money Converter Compare £10 in 1700 with 2017 values. <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency-converter>.
- 11 Essex record Office A13685, Microfilm T/A261/1/1-5
- 12 Essex Record Office A13685 Box 1 Thaxted Monthly Meeting Minutes book 1697-1723 – 29:4m 1703 (29th July 1703)
- 13 Essex Record Office A13685 Box 1 Thaxted Monthly Meeting Minutes book 1697-1723 – 27:5mo 1714 (27th August 1714)
- 14 Extract from John Farmer's Journal, Essex Record Office A13685 box 51 – p. 6
- 15 Essex Record Office A13685, Box 51 John Farmer letter from America 1:4mo 1716 (1st June 1716)
- 16 Extract from Mary Farmer's Journal 1725 ERO A13685 Box 51
- 17 Extract from Mary Fulbigg's Journal – ERO A13685 Box 51
- 18 For more information relating to Ann Farmer Boone and the family see:
<https://www.geni.com/people/Ann-Anne-Boone/6000000001744943746>
- 19 For more information relating to Benjamin Boone the younger see:
<https://www.geni.com/people/Rev-Benjamin-Boone/6000000009592914585>



FRED FEATHER PRESENTING JULIE MILLER WITH HER ESFH AWARD CERTIFICATES

Unexpected Burials in Newport Cemetery

A Response by Susan Hora (ESFH 32567)

I read the above article by John Sly in the August 2022 issue with interest, and like him, became curious about the three airmen who died in 1960, especially Zenon Waclaw Kaye whose forenames are clearly Polish but whose surname is very English. I like a challenge and decided to research this man with the help of Ancestry (www.ancestry.co.uk), Findmypast (www.findmypast.co.uk), Find-a-Grave (www.findagrave.com) and the London Gazette (www.thegazette.co.uk).

I first assumed that Zenon had changed his surname on coming to England and confirmed this from the London Gazette of 10th February 1950. The piece begins: "I, Zenon Waclaw Kaye of Wyck Beacon Farm, Bourton-on-the-Water, Gloucestershire, Flight-Lieutenant in His Majesty's Royal Air Force, a citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies by naturalisation, heretofore called and known by the name of Zenon Waclaw Krzeptowski, have assumed the name of Zenon Waclaw Kaye by deed poll dated January, 1950".

Ancestry's Will Indexes gave me "Zenon Waclaw Kaye of RAF Station, Debden, Essex, died 7th July 1960, at Hardwick, Cambridgeshire. Administration Norwich 7th November, 1960 to Lesley Jean Kaye, widow. Effects £2,113.3s.7d".

I then found Zenon W Krzeptowski marrying Lesley J Edmunds, 1st quarter, 1948, Norwich Registration District; and Lesley J Edmunds born 4th quarter, 1923, Meriden R.D., West Midlands, mother's maiden name Jones.

My next port of call was Find-a-Grave which gives a picture of the headstone at St Mary the Virgin Churchyard, Newport, Uttlesford District, Essex grave no.536. Zenon's dates are given (28/1/1922-7/7/1960) and the inscription is clearly visible. "Remembered with fondest love by his wife Lesley and Jonathan and Julian".

Assuming that Jonathan and Julian were the couple's sons, I soon found Jonathan S.E. Kaye, mother Edmunds, born 1st quarter, 1953, Norwich Outer R.D, and Julian M. Kaye, mother Edmunds, born 2nd quarter, 1955, Barnstaple R.D.

I then looked for marriages for the two Kaye sons, without success, but then it occurred to me that Lesley might have married again and her young sons could have taken their step-father's name (this happened in a branch of my family). Sure enough, I soon found that Lesley J Kaye married James W N Hoseason, 1st quarter, 1965, Norwich Outer, R.D. (James was born 4th quarter, 1927, Blything, Suffolk R.D.) and they had a son, James Charles W Hoseason, mother Edmunds, born 1st quarter, Lothingland, Suffolk R.D. It was then easy to find Jonathan S E Hoseason who married Annabel M Dunne, 1984 Waveney, Suffolk and Julian M Hoseason who married Suzanne C Gee, 1986, Norwich Outer and James C W Hoseason who married Christina H Levesley, 1996, Crawley, W. Sussex. I also found their children.

James William Nicholson Hoseason died 7th November 2009, aged 82 at Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital. Lesley Jean Hoseason died 28th April 2020, in Norwich.

I then found the following announcement in The Telegraph (placed by Jonathan Hoseason):-

“HOSEASON: Lesley (née Edmunds) died on 28th April 2020 aged 91 after a short illness. Widow of James Hoseason, O.B.E. and Flt Lt Z.W. Kaye, R.A.F. Beloved mother to Jonathan, Julian and James, mother-in-law to Annabel, Sue and Christina, and grandmother to Thomas, Erin, Sophie, Lauren, Emma and Sam. Private cremation. A memorial service will be held later in the year”.

There are therefore a good many descendants of Zenon Waclaw Krzeptowski Kaye in England – I wonder how much they know about their Polish ancestors?

Note from Colleen, Editor

Susan went on to find further information about this family from Passenger Lists and Wills. She also found a private family tree on Ancestry with 4 sources and 2 photos and 143 people. Her article demonstrates just how much information can be found online with basic research.

However, we still don't know the answer to the question posed by John Sly – why was Zenon buried in Newport Cemetery Essex?

☆ ☆ ☆

Members' Area of our website

by Colleen, Editor

Have you explored the Miscellaneous Records section of the Members' Area of our website?

If not why not take a look at the thousands of surnames listed in the various record sets. All the record sets have an introductory paragraph giving background information to the data. I would like to thank our Webmaster Paul Stirland and all the members, past and present, who collated the information thus making this material accessible to members.

At present this data consists of:-

1. The 1851 Census Surname Index for Essex
2. The 1861 Census Surname Index for Essex
3. The 1891 Census Surname Index for Stansted Mountfitchet and Birchhanger
4. Essex County Councillors 1894
5. Essex Special Constabulary in the Great War
6. Essex Special Constabulary Long Service Medal
7. Consistory Court of London Essex Wills and Admons – 1774-1814, 1815-1823, 1824-1846, and 1847-1858

A Tale Of Two Footballers

by Royston Jones (ESFH 20182)

An Amazing Genealogical Coincidence – Part 1

This is a story of two international footballers, almost contemporary in age; one probably well-known to you and one possibly not. They were raised at opposite ends of the country but were destined to play in the same position for clubs and country and eventually to become linked on the field of play. Let's call them George and Alf. But they were also linked by an amazing coincidence in my wife, Jan's, family tree and my own. This then is their tale.

Our story starts on the windswept north-east coast around the small harbour and village of Saltburn, in the final decades of the eighteenth century. A big smuggling centre at the time, the local beaches were often the setting for battles between the revenue men and the moonshiners. Smuggler HQ was the Ship Inn fronting the beach, as it still does, from which it was said secret tunnels went to the church and other inland houses for the safe onward transport of gin and 'baccy'. William Harrison was, for a time, both the publican and the ring leader but he was allegedly killed in a struggle with the King's Men in 1779 and replaced by his lodger and lieutenant, an adventurer from Scotland, John Andrew (1758-1835). The following year, Andrew married his late boss's niece, Anne Harrison (1756-1827).



SMUGGLERS' COTTAGES IN SALTBURN
PHOTO COURTESY OF AUTHOR

John Andrew led an exciting and adventurous life, spending time in gaol but becoming a local hero. He even became head of the local militia which, from time-to-time, was called out to deal with the smugglers! Forty years later, the bottom fell out of the smuggling market when the government set up the new coastguard service but both the Andrew and Harrison families were able to retire on their accumulated proceeds. William Harrison's grandson, also named William (1764-1841), moved to Castleton, near Danby, North Yorkshire and became a respected farmer: in 1820 he discovered stained glass and a processional cross under his pigsty, deposited there by the monks of Guisborough Abbey at the time of the dissolution.

One hundred years later, on 2 February 1920, John Andrew and Anne Harrison's four times great grandson was born in Saltburn North Yorkshire, named George (1920-2004). As the 'Daily Telegraph' reported in his obituary, 'many of his forebears

were Scottish smugglers'. Despite changes of surname through marriage, the name Andrew was maintained, down the family line, it being George's father's middle name. Brought up during the depression, smuggling was not an option for young George, so he turned to that mainstay of young working-class Britons, football. His grandfather, Francis Robert Hardwick (1859-1931), had played in the 1890s for the Ironopolis team in Middlesbrough. George Hardwick quickly showed talent, especially as a defender, and by the age of fifteen he had had offers from Arsenal and Glasgow Rangers. However, he was a local lad at heart, and had no hesitation in signing for his local team, one of the premier teams of the thirties, Middlesbrough F.C.



GEORGE HARDWICH IN 1956
SOURCE WIKIPEDIA

George did not cover himself with immediate glory.

With his first kick in his first match for his new team he scored a goal: in his own net. But he quickly redeemed himself and became a crowd favourite. His lady-killing good looks helped. He was well-built, debonair and sported a rare moustache, and soon became known as the Errol Flynn of football. On the field however, his ruthless and tenacious tackling scared even the likes of Stanley Matthews. But all too quickly, at the age of nineteen, the war interrupted his footballing career: George had to swap his red football kit for the blue uniform of the Royal Air Force.

Several hundred miles to the south, and exactly one month before George, another footballing wannabe was born, this time in the still rural village of Dagenham, although by then the tendrils of London were spilling out, with a direct tram service to the capital only a mile away in Chadwell Heath. Alf (1920-1999) was the son of Florence (Florrie) Bixby (1895-1979) and Herbert Ramsey (1890-1966), both with deep roots in the Essex countryside. The Bixbys were a well-known local family, with evidence of their ancestry in the Dagenham and Barking area found back to a Richard Bigsbee c1654. They had cornered the trade in hay and straw dealing, living mainly around Beacontree Heath and Bennett's Castle Lane. There were close connections with the gypsies living round the Heath and at least one of Alf's close relatives, cousin Elizabeth Bixby née Pearse (1847-1939), was a gypsy herself. Before her marriage to Charles Bixby in 1866 she was travelling with her family on an annual route which encompassed Battlesbridge, Writtle, Lambourne End and Fobbing. Their winters were spent in a cottage in Wood Street, Moulsham; a street in which the Chelmsford magistrates in 1822 had urged the constables to take care, it being '*a street principally the resort of prostitutes and thieves*' (1).

Alf's mother had had a tough upbringing. Her own mother, Fanny Ainsworth (1869-1943), had married Samuel Bixby (1863-1951) in 1889 in St. Mary's Church, Ilford, but the marriage was not a success. Samuel had an affair with a local woman considerably younger than himself and eventually deserted his family to go and live in

Grays with his new amour, but not before the two women in his life had ended up in court after an affray in a local pub. Alf's father, Herbert Ramsey (1890-1966), had an ancestry that originated in Suffolk, the family then settling around Maldon during the nineteenth century. It was there, in 1893, that a great uncle of Alf's was implicated in a murder and theft, for which he served a long term of imprisonment.

So Alf, perhaps, had a difficult background to overcome. He was one of six children, and lived with his parents, Florence and Herbert, and siblings in a tumbledown cottage near Beacontree Heath. Nevertheless, it seems a happy childhood and family life. A neighbour, Gladys Skinner, later wrote: *'Alf's mother was a dear old thing. When they were installing electricity around here, she wouldn't have it, said it frightened her. Alf's father was also a very nice man. He sometimes kept pigs and we would go round and have a look at the little piglets in the garden'* (2). Alf went to the local school on the Heath, with his brothers kicking a football all the way there and back each day. He showed early promise and played for his school team as captain, Essex Schoolboys and later in a junior Sunday League. Sunday play was banned by the Football Association (FA) at the time so this really should have barred Alf from any future management role: thank goodness it didn't.



ALF WAS BROUGHT UP IN ONE OF THESE COTTAGES KNOWN AS PARRISH'S COTTAGES ON FIVE ELMS FARM, BEACONTREE HEATH

IMAGE COURTESY OF LBBD VALENCE HOUSE ARCHIVES & LOCAL STUDIES



THE CO-OP FIVE ELMS PARADE WHERE ALF GOT HIS FIRST JOB AFTER SCHOOL. IT IS STILL IN THE SAME PLACE IN 2022

IMAGE COURTESY OF LBBD VALENCE HOUSE ARCHIVES & LOCAL STUDIES

While Alf was growing up momentous events were taking place around him. The London County Council (LCC) decided on Beacontree as the site of a huge estate; 'homes for heroes'. By the time Alf left school his home was surrounded by brick-built cottage style houses and parades of shops. It was in one of these shops in 1934, the Co-op at Five Elms, that Alf got his first job, as a delivery boy. He did well and never really

contemplated football as a career. He was once 'spotted' by a Portsmouth FC scout, but nothing came of it. Unlike George, when war came Alf's football career was still to take off. For him it was swapping the delivery boy's apron for army uniform and he joined the 6th Battalion Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry.

So George headed off to RAF Sheppey in Kent, and Alf hopped on to the train to Truro, his first train ride and a source of wonder to him. In the second and concluding article, to be published in the March 2023 edition, we shall see how the war treated these two football addicts, what became of them, how they were linked and to what family history coincidence this led.

References:

- (1) Hilda Grieve *The Sleepers and the Shadows*, Chelmsford 1608-1888
- (2) Valence House Archives, Dagenham



The Springfield Rector's Pyrenean Mountain Dog

by Fred Feather (ESFH 27366)

That the law of this land could concern itself with matters which some would consider trifles is illustrated by a case brought before Chelmsford County Court on Tuesday 7th March 1871. Jas. Rich. George sued a magistrate, the Reverend Arthur Cyril Pearson of Springfield for damages, after he had allegedly been bitten on the thumb by the Rector's large dog. The case was heard by a Judge, Mr. W. Gurden and a jury was empanelled.

George had visited the Rectory and a large dog had jumped on him and he alleged caused his thumb to bleed. He wanted compensation. Dr. Keene had treated his injury. Pearson's gardener had said to George "Oh it is always snapping at somebody". The prosecuting barrister Mr. Francis Turner gave his interpretation of the law at that time. "*A person who keeps an animal (prima facie) of a domestic nature is not liable for any injury it causes, unless they know that it habitually attacks people*". George's solicitor Mr. Brown wrote twice to Pearson but only received a reply written in red pencil "*business settled A P*".

The following witnesses spoke about the dog: James Haycockbaker said it had three times jumped on his horse. Curate Mr. Dennis had witnessed this whilst playing croquet with some ladies nearby (laughter in court). Witness told the curate he would shoot the dog. Evan Bedfordbaker said the dog once pulled him down by the trousers. John Cole, an employee of Mr. Benton, said the dog tried to pull him down by the trousers. Mr. W.B. Murrell, innkeeper of the Three Cups, Springfield and churchwarden of the parish said "*the dog had come out barking at him and had frightened him and also his pony*".

Continued on Page 60:-👉

Death and Probate Years Apart

by Colleen, Editor

My short paragraph on the above topic on page 14 of the August 2022 issue resulted in two members sending me information which blew my example of six years wait for probate out of the water so here they are:-

From Margaret Welham (ESFH 3153)

A 15-year gap from death to finalising the estates of three members.

Grandfather died in February 1940 having made a Will leaving his wife without a provision if she died first. She died April 1940 without a Will, her husband's not having been proved. Nothing was done in this matter until the death of their son in 1955, dying without a Will. Two spinster sisters lived in the family home when their parents died. The outbuildings surrounding the house were used by their father and brother running an undertakers/builds business. The son continued running the business from the premises until his death in 1955.

Reasons for the delay? – War conditions. The sisters continued to live rent free in the family home. Their brother continued the business supporting his wife and five children. Settling the estate for their father and mother, distributing the assets was, I suspect, just a step too far at the time.

From Patricia Gardener (ESFH 3516)

My great x4 grandfather, William Gardener was baptised in Ramsden Crays in 1756. He and his first wife had 4 children baptised at Nevendon, 2 of whom died in infancy, leaving a son, William, and daughter, Mary Ann to live to adulthood, marry and have children. Son William married Sarah Bell; their children were William, Eliza, George, Selina and Christopher. Daughter Mary Ann married William Such.

Great x4 grandfather William died on 14 September 1828 in Foulness and was buried in Prittlewell on the 20th of that month. An account of William's death appears in 'Climbing the Family Tree' by Graham Claydon. Probate of William's estate was granted to his son-in-law, William Such, on 9 December 1876, over 48 years after his death!

I only discovered William's probate record because a distant cousin, with whom I am in touch, was using the National Probate Calendar to look for the death of our great x2 grandfather, William's grandson (also William Gardener) and found it in 1876. When I looked at the page I found not only the probate of William Gardener (died 2 October 1871), granted on 7 December 1876 to Elizabeth Gardener, relict [Effects under £200] but also that of Christopher, otherwise Thomas, Gardener (died 4 August 1868) granted on 16 September 1876 to Selina Lukins, sister [Effects under £200] and that of Sarah Gardener, widow, (died 22 March 1847) granted on 13 December 1876 to George Gardener, son [Effects under £100]. On the next page was the probate for

William Gardener granted on 9 December 1876 [Effects under £450] to William Such, husband and administrator of Mary Ann Such, daughter.

I later found that William Such obtained probate for his first wife, Mary Ann née Gardener, who died 19 March 1829 on 23 October 1876, [Effects under £200].

All of the probate claims were several years after the deaths. There appears to be a need to show a claim to something, but I have never discovered what. If readers have any suggestions on why the family suddenly needed to make all these probate claims I would be very interested to hear. **patricia.gardener @ntlworld.com**

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The Springfield Rector's Pyrenean Mountain Dog

by Fred Feather (ESFH 27366)

Continued from Page 58:-

Mr. Taylor, barrister for the defence, said that it had not been shown that Mr. Pearson knew the dog was "*fierce and mischievous*" or that it "*was accustomed to bite people*". He said the point of law mentioned was generally considered to give a dog's master one chance. He said the dog often played with children at a nearby school. People may have been frightened because it was a large dog. The Reverend Pearson then gave evidence. He had bought a puppy in the Pyrenees and it had been in England since it was a few days old. He had visited George at home and given him a guinea to help with his doctor's bill, which is why he had not replied to the solicitor's letters. He had never told George that it was trained to worry wolves. Henry White, gardener, spoke about the incident and was corroborated by his assistant, a youth called John Warne, and Benjamin Brown, who had been in Pearson's service six years, who said of the dog "*he never knew him do harm to any person*". Mr. Taylor then addressed the jury, in a very racy speech, upon the evidence. His Honour then summed up in a clear and exhaustive manner, and the jury found for the plaintiff, damages £5-2s-0d. Ordinary costs were allowed for plaintiff and all his witnesses except Mr. Murrell.

So, here was the story of a little man (who had a barrister, despite earning just 16-17 shillings on a good week) winning a contest against a magistrate and churchman, who employed a number of staff. Except that this story from the Chelmsford Chronicle of 10th March 1871 was followed by another story in the issue of that newspaper on 24th March. At the local magistrates' court James Richard George was brought to court by Mr. Abrey, Assistant Overseer, for committal to gaol for non-payment of the "poor's rate" of £1-1s-6d. Local policeman Sergeant Pepper said that George had no goods of his own to distrain upon. He lived with Mrs Crisp, his mother-in-law at Springfield Wharf. Had Abrey found out about his £5 compensation? Perish the thought that a magistrate could have turned him in! Had he spent the money that quickly? George paid 10 shillings into court and promised the remainder in 14 days. The magistrates assented to this condition.

The British Army 1714-1783 An Institutional History

by Professor Stephen Conway

Book review by John Barrett BA MA

The British Army's performance in the eighteenth century can be described as 'patchy' when compared to what seemed the unstoppable rise of the Royal Navy. Having dealt successfully with the Jacobite uprisings and performed brilliantly in the Seven Years War, the Army rather struggled in the War of Austrian Succession and failed in the American Revolution.

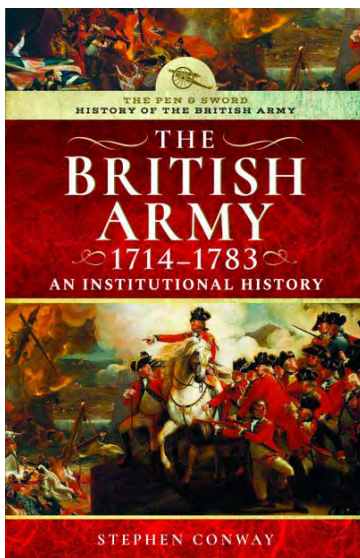
Professor Conway's history is not one of campaigns and battles, but the way the Army was built. He takes us thematically (not chronologically) through the century, discussing the social and political aspects of the Army, joining, leaving, the officers, the rank and file and even the relationship of women with the Army.

Great Britain was not a "nation under arms" - the experience of the Cromwell years ensured that standing armies during peacetime were kept as small as possible. The size of the army was

normally around 23-30,000, expanding to meet the requirements of a conflict and then retracting again. States such as France, Austria and Russia permanently kept 100,000 plus armies that lived parasitically on the country. Prussia was a militaristic state in its own right. In wartime the Army grew to around 100,000. Where a shortfall in domestic personnel occurred, the Army was supplemented by mercenaries – usually Germans from the kingdoms of Hanover or Hesse.

Professor Conway is at pains to suggest that European armies were remarkably similar in their tactics, technology and structures. The British Army differed in the way it was allotted a budget by Parliament in London and Dublin, which was controlled by the civilian Secretary for War and the military Captain-General (Commander in Chief). Also it was not supposed to be used as a permanent coercive force against the domestic population, except in Ireland or Jacobite Highlands, although the local militias performed as a "riot-police" in times of disorder.

The basic unit of the Army was the regiment – divided into battalions, companies and squadrons. To all intents and purposes, the regiment was the personal possession of its colonel. It was he who organised the regiment's provision and recruitment and until the 1740s, the regiment was named after him (thereafter regiments were given numbers based on seniority). The colonel was provided a budget from the War Office



and a canny officer could make a fine living from a colonelship. Commissions for officers were purchased, an entrepreneurial officer could sell on his commission and create a pension for himself. It was possible to be promoted from the ranks with British officers and non-commissioned officers priding themselves on their professionalism and discipline. An officer whose regiment was disbanded would go on half-pay until once more called to service. Professor Conway points out that the role of officer was not the sole preserve of the second sons of the nobility but very much open to the middle classes and merchants' sons.

The author gives us an excellent appraisal of the social background of the ordinary soldiery. As Wellington famously said, much of the Army consisted of the "scum of the earth". Becoming a soldier was often the only way out of poverty or unemployment. Criminals and vagrants could be impressed into the Army in the same way as they were for the Navy, but ordinary men often joined for patriotic reasons and the promise of adventure and reward. An industry grew in recruitment consultancy, where an officer could outsource his recruiting targets to private contractors.

This is a series of essays compiled into a single volume, it is rather short (150 pages of actual content) and apart from some real-world examples is necessarily a general overview. It is very engagingly written and is derived mostly from primary sources; either from local archives or from the letters and diaries of officers and men. The chapter on Women and the Army is slightly weak, as it is in reality a specialist topic and it would have been good if he had discussed more about economics and corruption in the Army and amongst its suppliers.

This is a well-written and fascinating book that will not intimidate the novice and will give extra breadth to the expert. It is thoroughly recommended.

Available from Pen and Sword Books, www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

200 pp including preface and notes and illustrations, cost £25.00 published 2021.

Tele: 01266 734222

☆ ☆ ☆

Researching Military Records?

by Meryl Rawlings Secretary

Just in case you missed the announcement last October, there is a new partnership between the Imperial War Museums (IWM) and the subscription company Ancestry. Ancestry will digitise and add thousands of pieces of content from the museums' rich collection to its website for the very first time. The digitisation of previously unseen items from the museums' archive will consist of photographs of people in military service and those on the home front, wartime documents, films, audio recordings and wartime objects including enlistment posters, uniforms and tools. The records will reveal wartime stories of people, places and events.

Secret City of Southend

by Ian Yearsley

Book review by Andrea Hewitt (ESFH 6398)

The first chapter of this book details the history of the streets of Southend and some of the unique street names found in the area. As I had lived and worked in the location for many years it was interesting to read how many of the street names were related to old landmarks, many now long gone. Some are illustrated by old photographs and maps, with some contemporary views for comparison. The city of Southend-on-Sea has become so large and well known that many readers will be surprised that in Saxon times the only settlement was around Prittlewell Priory, so the names Southend, Eastwood and Southchurch relate to compass directions from there.

The original borough of Southend was established in 1892 and only covered the eight historic parishes of Prittlewell, gradually being expanded until 1933, to the boundary that the City encompasses today. Having walked, cycled and driven around the area for years I found it fascinating to see the many milestones and boundary markers I had missed so I think that the numerous photos in this book would be both surprising and of interest to many who may think they know all there is to know about Southend.

The chapter on Trams and Boulevards also helps to explain how many of the roads were designed or adapted as Southend Borough Council became eager to take advantage of the Light Railway Act in 1896. It also covers the demise of the tram just prior to World War Two and the further development of highways for petrol driven vehicles.

The chapter on the Second World War shows how Southend played a major role and was often in the firing line. Southend was largely deserted during the conflict having been taken over by the military as H.M.S. Westcliff. Later the Pier was also requisitioned as H.M.S. Leigh. Details of many buildings or structures that were built or added to, but are no longer visible, are described. There are, however, many photos illustrating surviving evidence of the borough's significant war effort.

Chapter six covers the large number of blue plaques which can be seen in the area, along with other memorial plaques dedicated to the famous and the 'not so well known' residents of Southend.

The final chapter 'Hidden Heritage' features further details on the area's earlier history. This includes the 'Saxon King' found in 2003 in Priory Park, medieval marker stones, ancient water sources, statues and signage, and even a photo of the world's smallest museum.

This book has been well researched, and with the added 'Did you know' snippets if you have an interest in Southend, I think you will find it worthwhile reading. Sadly, it isn't indexed but contains a good bibliography and list of websites for further research. It has 93 pages, with lots of colour photographs and costs £15.99. Published by Amberley Publishing www.amberley-books.com Tele: 01453 847800

In Remembrance

John "Jack" Gardner

16th August 1941 - 28th June 2022

Branch Chairman with a Constant Smile

Jack Gardner served the South-East Branch from 2012-2017 with skill and a friendly smile for everyone. He was a typical "East-Enders" believing that work was completed better with a joke and encouragement. A photograph of him, as a young Londoner in shorts, features in Southend author Rachel Lichtenstein's book "On Brick Lane".

Of late his health had been a problem, but he still came to Branch Committee meetings, sometimes with his wife, Jacqui supporting him. He loved his family, particularly their eight grandchildren. On 9th August a packed Salvation Army Hall at Southchurch met to honour his memory, the service led by Lieutenant-Colonel Jill Girling. Jack was not a Salvationist, but attended their services. He was respected by their members, one of whom told me, for his "very Christian attitudes". He will be sorely missed at future meetings and our thoughts are with Jacqui.

Fred Feather (ESFH 27366)



The John Bull Weekly Magazine of 1824 (7p each Sunday)

by Fred Feather (ESFH 27366)

A friend and former member, who decided she needed more room, has just given me a newspaper-sized whole-year bound volume of a magazine, two hundred years old. I have read it all and am not yet decided what to do with it. It is full of material concerning the then thinking about slavery, and contains a letter, written on June 10th 1804, from H.M.S. Victory in Martinique, by Lord Nelson, Duke of Bronte. On Page 261 of 8th August 1824, he discusses William Wilberforce's ideas.

Here are a couple of extracts, relevant to the County of Essex: (Page 35) 25th January 1824: *"Yesterday Sen-night Great Baddow Church was broken into, by removing tiles from the roof. The Communion Plate and other valuable items were stolen. Enquiries moved to the "White Hart" at Moulsham, where Mr Wade, the Landlord reported that he had someone sleeping upstairs, who matched the description of a man seen hanging around the church. An officer was called, he was searched and all the missing items were found in his possession. His name was Francis Christill, who admitted his guilt, but "he regretted that he had not previously disposed of his booty". His fate was not shown, but a similar crime was also committed at a Colchester church, for which "Death" was recorded.*

Then, (Page 42) 1st February 1824 *"Chelmsford Sessions - The Magistrates discussed the question whether some respectable females of the town, disciples of Mrs Fry (Elizabeth, the Prison Reformer) should be allowed to visit prisoners in gaol custody occasionally and on coming to a vote they rescinded by a majority of 25 to 7 the permission which had been given by three of the five visiting magistrates".*

In the same issue (Page 45) is a discussion about women "being tortured on a prison tread-mill". *"It is not only at Cold-bath Fields* that the secret system is carried on. At Chelmsford, where there is a treadmill, two benevolent females have been excluded from the Jail (see above) the horrid cruelties of the toil will not bear the light. One woman, a labourer in the mill, has just miscarried. Another, on 17th of last month, caught her foot in the wheel and hung suspended by it. She has been in the infirmary ever since".*

This paragraph obviously upset the Keeper of the last-mentioned prison, who wrote to them (Page 53) 8th February 1824. Their almost apology followed. *'The first letter we submit today is from the Keeper of Chelmsford Jail, and although he writes under an erroneous impression as to what we said last Sunday, he shows that punishment of the wheel for females has never been adopted in that prison'.*

JOHN BULL:

"I consider it my duty for the CAUSE OF TRUTH, to say that it was never intended that women should work on the wheel here and THEY NEVER HAVE.

And, at present, no bodily inconvenience, injurious to health, have been experienced by the males.

I am Sir,

Your Obedient Servant, THOS CAWKWELL,

Keeper said Gaol and House of Correction”

So, a cornucopia of stories to read from two centuries ago.

☆ ☆ ☆

Note from Colleen, Editor.

In several digitised newspapers in 1824 and extracted from the Chelmsford Chronicle it is reported that ten prisoners from the goal of Chelmsford are destined for New South Wales and in the list is Francis Christill. The entry from TNA for Crime, Prisons and Convicts records 1770-1935 death is recorded against his sentence but he obviously gets a reprieve. He is then sentenced to 14 years and is sent off to New South Wales on the ship 'Asia'. Source www.findmypast.co.uk

*Cold-bath Fields Prison was informally known as the Steel and was a prison in the Mount Pleasant area of Clerkenwell London. It was founded in the 17th century and was also known as the House of Correction for the County of Middlesex. The prisoners condemned to hard labour were put to work upon two treadmills, one having been found insufficient for the number committed to hard labour.

Eccentric Church Officials

by Colleen, Editor

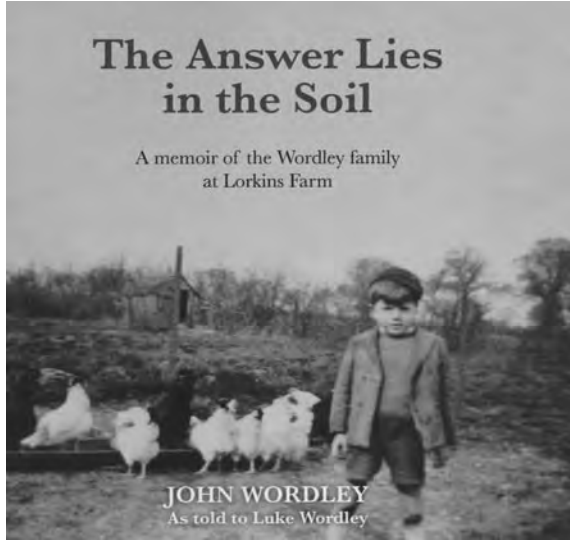
For those readers who are fascinated by eccentric church officials I refer you to the book 'Essex Eccentrics' by Alison Barnes published in 1975 by Essex Libraries ISBN 0 90363 30 41 9 where she details Parsons Extraordinary. These include Francis Waring who in the early 1800s might be seen walking from Maldon to Heybridge with a tea-pot clutched tightly in his hands having collected a teapot of beer that he always drank with his supper from the Old Ship Inn at Maldon. Alternatively, there was Thomas Archer of North Benfleet who, after his wife died, instead of asking a fellow clergyman to officiate at his wife's funeral, he drove the remains to the church himself and proceeded with the service. A few months later he married Susannah Page, the daughter of a Nevendon farmer. In addition to North Benfleet, Archer held other curacies including Rawreth and Canvey Island. He spent his Sunday mornings galloping furiously between churches conducting a hasty service in each. Other eccentric church officials include Thomas Heard of Takeley, James Salt of Barling, Ambrose Westrip of Great Totham, Henry Bate of Bradwell and Edmund Hickerlingill of Colchester. They were all as eccentric as they come and may well have been known by your Essex ancestors.

The Answer Lies in the Soil

by John Wordley

Book review by Colleen, Editor

For social, local or family historians the above book is an informative read telling the family story, via Luke Wordley, of his grandfather John's life in the rural area of Orsett. In fourteen chapters it details the challenges facing John and his predecessors running Lorkins Farm, Orsett, during the last few hundred years. The contents demonstrate the social and economic challenges faced by this particular family and farm - which would have been similar to those faced by hundreds of tenant farmers throughout Essex in the years gone by.



The Wordley's originally came from Glemsford in Suffolk where George Wordley had married Margaret Corder. The first few chapters tell the history of the early members of the family detailing their move to Essex under a John Wordley (born 1714) when he took the tenancy of Nevells Farm, Orsett at a time when the Orsett Estate supported 30-40 tenant farmers. By 1833, when the Wordley's moved to Lorkins Farm, John's great great grandfather, George, signed the tenancy agreement with a flourish of his beautiful copperplate calligraphy. The book goes on to detail the life of George who married Emma Massey at Langdon Hills Church on 21st February 1831. This particular George was a tenant of the Wingfield-Bakers family who resided at Orsett Hall and were a prominent family in the area.

After a boom in farming at the end of the 19th century subsequent chapters tell the struggle at the farm as UK farming faced bleak economic days at the turn of the 20th century. Another George Wordley managed the farm at that time and he had married Hettie Ebbetts, a teacher at Orsett School, in 1886. Several of the Wordley descendants emigrated to New Zealand and Australia. After WW1 one of the Wordleys called Cecil bought a farm called Hungary Hall in Pebmarsh later moving to Peverals Farm at Colne Engaine. Another family member, Elmer took a tenant farm at Warley part of the estates owned by an eccentric lady who was a member of the de Rougemont family, and, although failing at that farm he subsequently moved to

Stanford-le-Hope and ran a successful lettuce growing business. He married Holly H. Fielding in 1920 whose family ran the Whitmore Arms in Orsett.

With regard to the current John Wordley, we learn that his mother was Evelyn Brundish, whose family had owned a general store in Orsett, nearly opposite the Foxhound pub. Born in 1936 we hear about John's early schooling in Stanford-le-Hope and how his education was finalised at Clark's College in Victoria Avenue, Southend. There he befriended Graham Game from Grays who later became his best man at John's wedding at St Giles & All Saints Church Orsett in 1966. On that day he married Marilyn Ann Carter. Her father William Carter was born in Southchurch, Southend and developed the firm W.G. Carter and Sons involved in the purchasing of run down property in the East End of London.

Chapter six gives the reader entertaining stories of how the farm coped with the Second World War conditions including the dictates of the War Agricultural Committee and the actions of the Land Girls on the farm.

Further chapters detail the life of John as he makes his living running Lorkins Farm and the challenges he faces including the possible loss of his tenancy after Sir John Whitmore, in 1967, decided to dispose of his Orsett Estate which included twenty tenanted farms, over one hundred houses and Orsett Hall. This decision hugely affected the people of the area. The last few chapters tell of the farm's survival and how it had to diversify into other activities including renting out holiday cottages, a farm shop, providing land for boot fairs and a caravan site.

This is a well-presented book of 188 pages with good quality black and white and colour pictures. It is a very pleasant read and would make a Christmas stocking filler for anyone interested in the history of the area or with farming in South Essex. Cost £12.00 excluding postage, collectable from Lorkins Farm, Conways Road, Orsett RM16 3EL contact marilyn.wordley@icloud.com or call the office telephone 01375 891439

LUKE AND JOHN WORDLEY IN 2022



Grant For St. Mary's Woodham Ferrers

by Sharon Hutton-Mayson, Church Warden

The ESFH Executive Committee, amongst other bodies, wrote supporting the application for lottery funding for this church and we are delighted that their application has been successful. Colleen, Editor.

After many years of planning the Parochial Church Council is delighted to announce that St. Mary's Church has been awarded £189,200 from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The money has been awarded for the restoration of the church bell tower and urgent fabric repairs, to upgrade the lighting and sound system and to establish some exciting heritage projects within the church.

The financial burden of maintaining the Grade I* church building and churchyard falls on our small congregation. This project will enable us to preserve the building and heritage of St. Mary's for the next generation.

The bell tower is currently clad in white weather boarding whose regular re-painting is expensive, invasive and is far less environmentally friendly than the oak shakes we are replacing them with. The oak will weather naturally and last for a century. Work will commence in September 2022 and details of hard hat tours to see the extent of the fabric repairs will be published in due course.

In addition to upgrading the lighting and sound system for 21st century use we are very excited about the Heritage projects we have planned. Technology will allow visitors to use tablets and QR codes to rapidly select and consume all sorts of information. In addition, live streaming and the recordings of services, lectures and workshops will also give those unable to physically attend an opportunity to participate.

Visitors will learn more about the names of the fallen from the 1st and 2nd World War, the Sandy's monument, George III Coat of Arms and the Charity board.

St. Mary's boasts a rare Doom painting which was conserved 25 years ago. Through lectures, workshops and a permanent exhibition we plan to bring the details and significance of our Doom painting to a much wider audience.

Members of the South Woodham Ferrers History Society have been working on a project called "Recording Reminiscences" for a number of years and these files will also be available to access at St. Mary's.

St. Mary's has a very large and beautiful churchyard. We are often asked to assist people to find the graves of loved ones. This is challenging as our plan is thirty years out of date and the headstones become difficult to read. We intend to upload the existing plan to a digital platform, establish exact locations using GPS technology, update the records and add a photographic context. This information will be available via our new website (www.wfandbchurch.org) allowing anyone anywhere in the world to access it. We anticipate that the technical upgrades will be completed by Easter 2023.

We intend to include as many volunteers and organisations from our local community as possible in the development of these heritage projects. A Heritage Officer will be appointed to co-ordinate the work. We have already established partnerships with the South Woodham Ferrers Local History Society, the Essex Society for Family History, the Stow Maries Great War Aerodrome and schools in South Woodham Ferrers.

We are custodians of a special place which welcomes the interest and support of the local community. If you would like to know more of our plans or would consider getting involved, please contact me on 07773644326 or email maysons@talktalk.net



Comments in one of the Fordham Registers

Submitted by Roger Stirland (ESFH 3663)

From Fordham Baptism Register 1813-1851* written by Moses Dodd Rector from transcriptions by Vicki Crispin.

Margin Notes

Mem. No Wheat was carted in this Parish in the year 1816 before the 9th September, and only a few Loads of other Grain.

The whole Population of this Parish, as taken in the year 1821, was as follows: Males 335, Females 353, Total 708.

Wheat Ears were common in the year 1822 about the 20th April, and in every respect the Spring was unusually forward.

The Farmers began to reap Wheat in this Parish on the 14 Jul 1822, and in the neighbourhood of Wallingford, Berks, Wheat was carted about the latter end of June.

On Saturday 29 October 1836 there fell Snow to the depth of five Inches on the level - this was succeeded in the Evening by a smart Frost, and accompanied with vivid Lightning, and distant Thunder.

On Tuesday 29 Nov'r 1836 there was a violent, high wind, about noon, which did much Damage, both by Sea and Land.

The Spring of this year 1837 was so backward that the Cuckoo was not heard till Whit Sunday.

It rained on Tuesday June 25 1844, after a drought of 16 weeks.

It must be noted that the last 2 entries although in similar handwriting were not signed by him.

*Essex Record Office ref D/P 372/1/4 1813-1851

Summaries of a Selection of Presentations given between June and October 2022

June 2022

North East Essex Branch Meeting

My Ancestor was an Immigrant by Sue Gibbons

Summarised by Gill Peregrine (ESFH 5204)

There are five main reasons why people have the need to move from one country to another: Religion, Politics, Economics, Ambition and Wealth. Sue took us back many years as people have moved since the beginning of time for the reasons mentioned. However, there are some events in history that caused more movement than others. For example the potato famine which began in Europe as well as Ireland. Severe winters were another cause.

Sue continued by telling us what to look for in our ancestors in order to trace their origins of birth. You can start with the surname but that will not be enough. So many people changed that to fit in with the country and politics. You need to find the earliest reference in the adopted country, possibly a baptism or ship's list. Something to watch out for is the change from the Julian calendar to the Gregorian. This was different years depending on the country of origin. The British Isles changed in 1752. Research into the country of origin may well help you to find where you ancestor moved to, also why.

There are many documents to help you. The greatest resource is The National Archives. Although for us in Essex it is not an easy journey there, they do have a most useful website and catalogue. There are naturalisation papers, certificates of registration, shipping lists, change of name lists 1790-1909, to name a few.

The London Gazette [free online] is good also. The Red Cross has lists of First World War prisoners of war.

One of the biggest problems could be translating if you are researching abroad, however there are a great many books to help.

I have not found anyone from my family that came from anywhere other than the UK but this was a very interesting and useful talk as it made me think about the wide range of documents that are available to us if we actually visit the archives and not rely entirely on the internet.

Sue Gibbons is a Fellow of the Society of Genealogists and was their librarian from 1991-2010. She is a published author for the Anglo-German Family History Society.

July 2022

Newspapers for Family History Research by Ian Waller

Summarised by Pauline Adlem (ESFH 6098)

Ian started his talk by giving us a broad outline on what we would learn from his presentation. Newspapers are very useful for putting flesh on the bones through the various subjects they cover which gives us a more in-depth look at the lives of our ancestors. When you start you will be surprised at what you might find by looking at the different records they cover. Some useful articles are trade advertisements, court records, potted histories associated with marriages or obituaries, and information not found anywhere else. His talk was about where to find these records in the digital age though you can still see microfilmed copies and in some instances newspaper cuttings in places like your library, county record office or local studies centre.

He gave us a brief history of English newspaper development. Between 1640 and the Restoration around 30,000 'news letters' and 'news papers' were printed. By the 18th century more were published although the Stamp Act of 1712 put a tax on newspapers of one penny a page and therefore the price went up. There were more tax increases throughout the century. In the 19th century taxes were lowered on paper so more newspapers, magazines and advertisements began to appear.

Then Ian went on to talk about local and provincial newspapers. These are most useful as they reflect the interests of the local inhabitants and events such as meetings of organisations, trade unions, local trade advertisements, accidents at work or on the road and church matters. Letters to the Editor are also interesting and there might even be photographs of your ancestors. In some towns the local newspaper offices may have back copies going back many years.

Specialist magazines and periodicals, many of which were about occupations, were mentioned including: -

Railways with staff news

Police Gazette which had personal names, missing persons, criminals and deportees

The Stage for theatrical comments

Nursing Times & Mirror

Sport including Football, Cycling, and Fishing

Lloyds List which was daily from 1837 and covered shipping movements, wrecks and meteorological information

The Gentleman's Magazine, which was published from 1731-1921, contained family names, births, marriages, deaths and bankruptcies of the upper class

The Illustrated London News

The Penny Magazine (published 1832-1845)

Punch

Many of the above magazines and newspapers can now be found online.

Digital sources of old newspapers

The British Newspaper Archives has a vast collection of newspapers at
<https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk>

Findmypast also has digitised newspapers from the British Newspaper Archives
<https://www.findmypast.co.uk/>

Ancestry.co.uk has newspapers on its website including The London Gazette which is useful for military promotions, medals awarded and bankruptcies etc. They also have The Times, Illustrated London News and other more local newspapers
<https://www.ancestry.co.uk>

The London Gazette has its own website **<https://www.thegazette.co.uk/>**

Newspapers.com **<https://www.newspapers.com>**

Websites covering other countries include:

Australia **<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/>**

New Zealand **<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/newspapers>**

Ian gave us a very interesting talk full of useful tips and ideas and gave us much to think about. He certainly covered a lot of ground. A very useful afternoon.

☆ ☆ ☆

Note from Colleen, Editor

Historical American Newspapers

Announced in the press in September 2022 *Chronicling America*, the searchable online database of historic American newspapers, will soon include digitized newspapers from all 50 U.S. states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands **<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov>**.

Chronicling America offers free online access to 19.9 million pages of newspapers published in the United States between 1777 and 1963. Established in 2005, *Chronicling America* gives users on a computer, tablet or mobile direct access to American history as it was recorded locally in more than 3,700 newspaper titles in 22 languages.

Essex Library Facilities for Essex Residents

With an Essex library card, digitised newspaper sites can be accessed at some libraries in the county. Websites available include British Library 19th Century Newspapers, The British Newspaper Archive and The Times Digital Archive. Some of these newspaper sites can be accessed from home as well as from selective libraries, for example The Essex Standard can be viewed for certain years.

July 2022**South East Essex Branch Meeting****My Holocaust - The Story of a Hidden Childhood**

Summarised by Martyn Haydn Roberts (ESFH 3860)

A warm welcome to this month's guest speaker, Evelyne Raphael who came to talk about her time as a young girl, born in France six months before the Second World War, and the effect it had on many Jewish families living in uncertain times where fear and anxiety ran as one. Even friends were viewed as suspect.

Her father ran a business selling furniture, often under an assumed name. Every time there happened to be a knock at the front door, Evelyne and her brother Alan were placed in the cellars for safety. Imagine having to live like that day after day? Most of us can't.

Her parents had come to France, her father from Poland, her mother having Romanian roots. They never forgot they were refugees and it was much the same for other members of the family, of which 21 were victims of the Holocaust. All this and more Evelyne has documented as a personal tribute to them. The detail is staggering on the number of Jews who were executed by the Nazis. That too contributes to the archive gathered over the years.

Thank you, Evelyne, for sharing that part of your life with us, so personal and precious a memory. Talking about it takes courage. Few of us can do that, not in the way Evelyne has in front of an audience of nearly 50 people.

Note from Colleen, Editor

Readers may recall that Evelyne wrote about her experiences on page 65 in the August 2017 edition of this magazine which can be found in the Members' Area in the magazine archive on our website.

September 2022**South East Essex Branch Meeting****Tragedy At Manor House**

Summarised by Martin Haydn Roberts (ESFH 3860)

Our very own Peter Dixon (ESFH 4486) presented a story where tragedy may perhaps have been avoided had circumstances decided otherwise. The story partly takes place at Otterington, just north of Thirsk in the North York Moors where Peter's great-great grandfather, Thomas Kirby, was the stationmaster at Otterington Junction. Down the line from Otterington at Manor House, in 1892, an accident occurred between the Flying Scotsman and a goods train.

The accident was seen to be caused by signalman James Holmes having fallen asleep whilst on duty at Manor House. Holmes had earlier asked for time off having

received a message saying his child was dead. Permission was granted. The overall worry left the signalman hardly in a fit state to return to work. As a result of staff shortages he had no choice but to go back to work; in fact he was made to. Confusion over allowing two trains to be on the same section of line saw ten passengers killed and thirty-nine seriously injured. A fatal move that should have been avoided.

A full enquiry followed whereby he was found guilty of manslaughter having caused the death of the passengers on the express train. Although he was found guilty, he was finally given an absolute discharge. Holmes then lost his job. His time with the railways was finished from then on. The tragedy soon found its way into the papers. These included *The Times* and the *Illustrated London News*, who followed the accident practically on a daily basis, but then papers are like that, out to sensationalise rather than fully understand the effect something like this would have had on those caught up in the tragedy that was Manor House.

Known Unknowns and Unknown Unknowns

A Talk from John Young Vice-Chair

John told the story of the only great grandparent, George the blacksmith, of whom he had some knowledge. Traditional documentary research has revealed an interesting life with two marriages and three wives. A total of one son and five daughters were recorded, but his will mentions six daughters. The extra one was the illegitimate granddaughter of the 'wife' he didn't marry. She clearly grew up as part of the family.

With a DNA profile available, a surprising match was revealed with someone at the 2nd/3rd cousin level. John showed how he had identified the unknown unknown's link with his family through his mother's first cousin.

A lower match, showing a common ancestor through the sixth daughter, revealed the answer to a known unknown. Looking at the shared matches, her DNA appeared to contain elements not only from John's great grandmother, but from his great grandfather too. George must have been a very, very, very naughty boy!

A full recording of the talk is available in the Members' Area of the ESFH website.

October 2022 Hybrid Presentation at AGM

Searching For Ancestors When You Are Adopted

by Dr. Penny Walters

Summarised by Janice Sharpe (ESFH 5481)

Dr. Walters began by discussing the labels applied to children born outside marriage in the past – baseborn, illegitimate, bastard or born on the wrong side of the blanket. The mother was seen as a 'fallen woman' and the baby 'the girl's dirty little secret'. Before adoption became legal in England in 1926 often the child would have been brought up by a member of the family or a childless couple. Some babies were

abandoned – a foundling. The separation of mother and child was traumatic and often the mother would have symptoms of PTSD and the child would feel rejected, not good enough. Stories are coming out now about mothers who were forced to give up their babies for adoption.

Like me, our speaker was adopted and had a happy childhood, although she always felt different but she was chosen. Her interest in genealogy came about after she had her first child and she wondered about her biological parents. The first step was to obtain her original birth certificate. She found that she had Welsh and Irish ethnicity.

There are also records held by Adopted Children Register, Adoption Contact Register, Abandoned Children Register and Thomas Coram Register. In America many States do not allow access to original birth certificates. DNA testing has meant that adopted people will biologically match with people and that information can be interpreted as relationship predictors. Ethnicity estimates can also be gold dust for adopted people. DNA matches should be added to a biological tree rather than a family tree. Adopted people can also make use of GEDmatch (www.gedmatch.com) which allows DNA uploads from various sites.

Dr. Walters described the results of her DNA testing and how she had contacted distant relations with whom she is co-operating.

She warned adopted people to take things slowly when contacting biological relatives or maybe use an intermediary and it is important to consider people's feelings. It is very important to be diplomatic and patient. It must be remembered that the biological parents may not wish to be found.

Adopted people may take a long time to decide to search for their birth parents and do not wish to hurt the mother and father who have brought them up.

Penny gave the example of an Irish woman, Eileen Macken aged 81 who tracked down her birth mother with the help of a genealogist through DNA testing. Her mother was still alive aged 103 and she also found two half-brothers in their 70s.

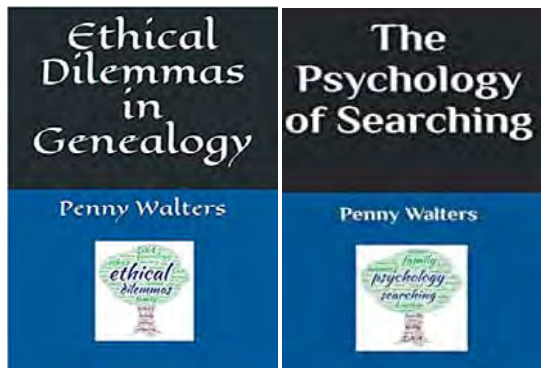
This was a very detailed and informative presentation.

Books by the speaker:

'Ethical Dilemmas in Genealogy'
ISBN: 9781724038241 Chapter
4: Adoption

'The Psychology of Searching'
ISBN: 9781687167262

Both available on Amazon in
paperback or Kindle



Trustees' Report 2021-2022

by Elizabeth Cox Chair

Throughout the year we have had a presence at the Really Useful Show and RootsTech both online and we are grateful for all the volunteers who helped us answer queries over a total of 73 hours at the two events. In the preparation for the shows we are grateful for the expertise of Trevor Rix in preparing the booth information.

We were given some statistics by RootsTech after the show; there were 616 visitors to the booth; 865 pages of information were viewed and the people who visited or read the information came from 15 countries so we are gaining some good publicity and also new members.

Some committee members have attended several virtual coffee mornings organised by Family History Federation and picked up useful information and discussed the running of hybrid meetings. We have also attended events at local libraries where we discussed family history with visitors to our stand, and several of them joined the Society. Also we had a presence on local radio stations where we were able to inform the listeners about our Society, our Open Day and library events.

During 2021-2022, a year which covered the end of Covid and the time we were coming out of the restrictions imposed, we held 39 zoom meetings of which 7 were hybrid meetings. There were 3619 zoom attendees with 66 people attending in person at 7 venues. This works out as an average of 93 attendees per zoom and 9 attendees in person, in halls. In addition to these talks there were several workshops where we hope the members have improved their knowledge about DNA, software packages and other resources.

The talks organised by the planning group have been incorporated into the programme with many of the suggestions from the survey we ran last year being added. More will be added to the schedule for 2023 and we are always looking for other ideas for talks so if you have any suggestions, please contact the Society Programme Co-ordinator via our website.

With regards to projects, we have many members transcribing parish registers; at home, in the Research Centre and at the Colchester branch meetings. This has increased the data on our genealogical database on our website which is available to all members or by purchase as digital downloads. The monumental inscriptions team continued to record MI's in several churchyards.

A member researching their family history noticed that a parish register was not listed in the Essex Record Office. She approached the church and informed the Society and we were able to borrow the register and then we paid the ERO to make a digital copy for the benefit of our members and other researchers using the ERO.

The Society is also reviewing its data from previous projects with a view to converting them to a modern computer format so that they can be incorporated into the databases on the website. The complete set of Poor Law indexes, originally published on

microfiche, c1995 and later, in 2004, on compact disc, have now also been uploaded to our website.

This year Paul Stirland, our webmaster, has, with help from John Lodge, our website hosting manager, made improvements to the website making it easier to view on tablets and mobile phones. He has also uploaded additional data to the members only area.

In keeping with our constitution, we have made a further donation to the Victoria County History project. The ESFH Student Award was given to Julie Miller, who was presented with her Certificate at a meeting this year. She gave a presentation about her research relating to Quaker families from Essex who emigrated to America which is still available to view on our website.

In order to ensure the smooth running of the Society we continue to review and amend where necessary any processes, policies and codes of practice and these are accessible on our website and include contingency plans for key roles within the Society.

During the year we sadly lost several of our members:-

Eric Probert, one of our Vice Presidents, who, during his membership of the Society, had twice been Chairman, was Programme Secretary, a volunteer at our research centre, a reviewer of Books for The Essex Family Historian and helped organise Essex Family History Conferences.

Jack Baxter was one of the first members of the Society. Jack had edited books listing Essex Marriages 1754 - 1851 and Burials 1813 - 1865 and he was responsible for researching settlement material for the Rochford Hundred.

Dave Wells, a one-time editor of The Essex Family Historian, who in 2002 was awarded the Elizabeth Simpson Award for an issue he had put together which was considered the finest in a worldwide competition.

Our condolences are extended to their families.

During the year Fred Feather retired as Vice President after many years as Chairman, Editor and speaker. Helen Matten is standing down as a member of the Executive Committee and we thank them both for their contributions to the Society.

The Trustees thank everyone who helps the Society in the running of meetings, acting as volunteers in the research room, carrying out specific duties and participating at meetings as without you there would be no Society.

Finally, we welcome to the Society our new Patron, the Rt. Revd. Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani. When informed that, as a Society, we are transcribing the Essex parish registers, together with recording Monumental Inscriptions and making all this information available to family historians, she replied that the Society is obviously doing valuable work to ensure this information is not lost.

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on Saturday, 15th October 2022

Conducted both online and at Galleywood Heritage Centre

Present: Lord Petre, President; Ann Turner, Ann Church and Yvonne Tunstill, Vice Presidents; Elizabeth Cox, Chairman; John Young, Vice Chairman; Meryl Rawlings, Secretary; Tanya Sewell, Treasurer; Executive Committee members and members online and at Galleywood Heritage Centre

1. Welcome: The Chairman welcomed all those present and then handed over to Lord Petre to conduct the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence: were received from Toni Neobard, Denise Somers, Angela Tugg and Hazel Notley.

3. Minutes of the AGM held on 16 October 2021: these were approved by both a vote in the hall and an online poll and signed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes: None.

5. President and Vice-Presidents: Lord Petre announced that it had been agreed by the Executive Committee as follows: President, Lord Petre; Vice Presidents, Ann Church, Ann Turner and Yvonne Tunstill. The appointments were ratified by the members.

6. Chairman's Annual Report on behalf of the Trustees: Elizabeth Cox gave the report, a full copy of which is attached to these Minutes and will also appear in the Essex Family Historian and on the Society's website.

7. Financial Report by the Treasurer: Tanya Sewell said that the Annual Accounts to 31 March 2022 had been approved by the Executive Committee

and signed by the Chair and our Examiner and these were available on the Society's website. The usual, shortened version of the Accounts was displayed during the meeting. A copy of the report is attached to these Minutes.

Following the treasurer's report and in answer to various questions Tanya Sewell confirmed:

* the Society's net assets including investments is £114,046.

* for the last five years there had been an excess of income over expenditure but looking back to 2006 there had been 9 years when the Society ran at a deficit.

* that the Society is currently in a good financial position going forward.

* the aims and values of the Society, as set out in the Charity Website, will be upheld.

Tanya Sewell then formally proposed adoption of the accounts for the year ended 31 March 2022 and this was approved. This was seconded by Andrea Hewitt and agreed nem.con by a vote in the hall and an online poll.

Tanya Sewell then proposed that Peter Kittle of Chelmer Company Services, who has acted as our Examiner for the past few years, continue as our Examiner, this was seconded by Colleen Devenish and agreed nem.con by a vote in the hall and an online poll.

8. Election of Officers/Holding Trustees: Andrea Hewitt, Chairman; John Young, Vice-Chairman; Tanya Sewell, Treasurer

and Meryl Rawlings, Secretary, have been nominated. As requested by the membership in the Hall, votes were taken to affirm these appointments individually. The Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary were all ratified, but the Vice Chairman only received a total of 22 votes of the 53 available.

Following considerable discussion regarding the Vice Chairman position and review of the Constitution, the Meeting was advised that this vote was only a confirmation process as where there is only a single applicant for a post no further action is necessary and the position will be declared as filled. Whilst the election stands, it is always possible to call an emergency General Meeting to put forward an alternative candidate and this was referred to Executive Committee for discussion.

9. Election of Executive Committee

The following had been nominated and were elected en bloc: Pauline Adlem, Colleen Devenish, Barbara Harpin, Toni Neobard, Mary Rix, Trevor Rix, Janice Sharpe, Denise Somers and Paul Stirland.

A further nomination was received from the floor: David Cooper was nominated by Melody Hurst and seconded by Linda Medcalf. He was duly elected.

The following would serve as ex-officio members of the Executive Committee

Gill Peregrine, Heather Feather and Elizabeth Cox.

Lord Petre then declared the meeting formally closed at 2.30 p.m.

Minutes taken by Meryl Rawlings Secretary.



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From the Chair

I am delighted to have the opportunity to lead, what I believe is one of the best family history societies, and I look forward to meeting many of you over the coming months, whether in person or online, and find out how we can make ESFH even better.

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in ESFH adopting virtual technology and has enabled us to communicate with all members worldwide thus allowing many more members to participate in our Society events. This mode of operation will not change.

Over the last few months we have reinstated face to face meetings, often trying to Zoom the event from the venues at the same time, (known as hybrid meetings). However the technology has been challenging and not satisfactory to all participants. In addition, members have been slow to return to venues and the whole membership now seem to be financing live speakers and venues with less than 100 members attending live meetings throughout the county.

With COVID cases rising again, we do not expect to see a resurgence of numbers at our branches so the Executive Committee has suggested ways that they could lower their costs. Suggestions have included using smaller venues for reduced audiences, and reducing the number of live meetings and in person speakers. Until circumstances change the Executive Committee has agreed that members attending meetings in person at our Headquarters, North East Essex, West Essex and South East Essex sites will be asked to contribute £3 each, as non-members currently do, to cover the cost of their live events. The Executive Committee will reassess costs at venues on a periodic basis and hopes branches will be able to reduce this payment if they can find cheaper or even free venues to meet in, and/or increase their attendance. These costs will come into effect immediately.

One of my first priorities as Chair is to investigate the possibility of bringing more digitised Essex records to members and it is my intention to meet with the Essex Record Office management to try and explore the many undigitized records they hold which are only currently available to those who can visit in person. Watch this space.

If you haven't had your DNA tested yet why not ask for a kit for Christmas? or give a friend this unique gift and open up a whole new area of discovery and, of course, have fun in the process!

I wish you and your family a Healthy and Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.



ANDREA HEWITT

Farewell Message from the Retiring Chair

When I accepted the post of Society Chair last year, I was planning to retire from work at the end of October 2021, so that I would have plenty of spare time to give time to the Society and a hobby I love.

Unfortunately, my employers aren't letting me go due to my knowledge, which I have to impart to my successors and newcomers to the team.



ELIZABETH COX

Therefore, I didn't stand at the AGM in October 2022 for the post but instead represent the West Essex Branch on the Executive Committee and was pleased when Andrea Hewitt accepted the nomination as my successor. By the time you read this she will have been in the role nearly two months.

I would like to thank all who made my year as Chair as interesting and challenging as it was, especially with the debate over the future proofing of the Society.

I look forward to 'properly' retiring in the near future, certainly in time to help the Society celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2024.

Happy Christmas to all members.

Christening and Marriage Records recently added to our Genealogy Database

Parish	Church	Dates	Records
Greenstead-juxta-Ongar	St Andrew	1813-1851	263
Hempstead	St Andrew	1813-1934	Baptisms 1602
		1813-1957	Marriages 600
Kelvedon Hatch	St Nicholas	1813-1851	502
Navestock	St Thomas the Apostle	1813-1851	1030
Norton Mandeville	All Saints	1813-1851	168
Shelley	St Peter	1813-1851	234
Stapleford Tawney	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	343
Stondon Massey	St Peter & St Paul	1813-1851	317
Theydon Mount	St Michael	1813-1851	326



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Launch of the Victoria County History of Essex Volume XII

by Angela Hillier (ESFH 28397)

On the 15th October, on behalf of the Society, I attended the official launch of the Victoria County History of Essex Volume XII part 2 for the Soken – Kirby le Soken, Thorpe le Soken and Walton le Soken. Volume XII part 1* – St. Osyth, Great and Little Clacton, Great and Little Holland and Frinton – which came out during COVID lockdown, was also officially launched at the same time. We were informed that a paperback “short” book on Southend was nearly ready for publication and the Volume XIII Harwich and Dovercourt volume was well on the way to being completed.

The first talk was entitled “**Very near as good as free**” and was given by Dr Chris Thornton and was about the Soken. He explained it was not really known when the Soken had come into being but by 1066 it is shown as being part of a large estate owned by the cathedral church of St. Paul’s. The estate was eventually split between the Dean and Chapter – who had Kirby, Thorpe and Walton, (the area comprising the Soken) and the Bishop– who received St. Osyth and the area around Clacton. Because the royal and public rights of the Soken had been granted away or purchased from the King it had become a piece of private property belonging to St. Paul’s. It also became “peculiar” within the Diocese of London meaning that neither the Crown nor the Church authorities had any say over how it was run and had no legal rights there either.

In the Reformation the Soken reverted to the Crown and was sold in 1551 to Thomas Darcy who reconstituted it for his own use. From then the estate passed through several families either by inheritance or purchase. The ecclesiastical peculiar finally ceased to exist in 1862 with the death of the last owner Rev. William Burgess. Though peculiars were abolished in 1845 he clung to his rights and refused to hand over any information about the estate and restricted visitations by any representative of the Bishop. Some of the rights that pertained to the Soken began very early and lasted until fairly recently.

Nationally the Crown created the post of Coroner in 1194, but soon afterwards granted those powers in the Soken to the Dean and Chapter. The Soken continued to have its own independent coroner until the last one resigned in 1928. By 1457 the Manorial Courts for all three Soken parishes took place at Kirby Hall. The Soken also held its own Church Courts, the rights of which passed to the new owners who appointed Commissaries who oversaw that their rights and the morals and behaviour of the inhabitants were upheld. There were 17 Commissaries from 1596, the last one being the Rev. Burgess, who, having already bought the advowson in 1816 was able to appoint himself after his predecessor died in 1823.

Some of the customs of the Soken seem to be unique, for example if there is no will land was inherited by a group of either male or female siblings, this continued up into the 1920’s. The landowner had the right to any shipwreck or stranded whale found

on their coast but often they were seized by the inhabitants. As late as the late 16th century the people of the Soken apparently did not have to appear before the Quarter Sessions, and in the late 17th century they tried to maintain their independence by, for example refusing to pay the County Rate for the upkeep of any county bridges, meaning that the title of the talk was a very apt one.

Two further talks followed the VCH lecture

The second talk entitled **“Agricultural returns and the Napoleonic wars in the Tendring Hundred”** was by Neil Wiffen. Mr Wiffen said he had found some very interesting documents in the Essex Record Office which he wanted to bring to our attention. He gave us an outline of what was happening in the country and our relationship with France around 1803. We had declared war on France in 1803 and there was great fear that Napoleon would invade the country, possibly on the coast of Essex. The records Neil talked about were for Tendring and are to be found in Ref: D/DHa/01(The Internal Defence of Tendring Division), though records exist for other places in Essex. They are the papers of John Hansen of Gt. Bromley, a Deputy Chief Lieutenant of the County, amongst other things, who was in charge of organising what would be done in the area if an invasion took place. As Napoleon’s troops usually lived off the land it was agreed that nothing would be left for them to eat and plans were put in place to organise the local populace to achieve this. The records go into great detail about what was to happen to any animals, produce, farm machinery etc. and who was going to organise what went where, who might be able to hold up any invading force by whatever means possible and what sort of weapons they may have available to them. It was a meticulous plan and the records name many people and what they were going to do in case of invasion.

The last talk **“The arrival of Mr and Mrs London and family at Southend”** was given by Ken Crowe. In 1780 Southend had become a place of “fashionable resort”. In 1830 the first pier was built and it became a lot easier and cheaper to get to Southend. The extension of the pier in 1846 and ten years later the arrival of the railway substantially increased the numbers visiting. The 1871 Bank Holiday Act and the introduction of 3rd class rail travel in 1873 meant that the number of day and weekend visitors exploded and by 1910 over 100,000 people came. The population of Southend were unhappy about the “loose and lowly rabble” that came as the respectable people said they would go elsewhere. The council overcame the problem by setting up entertainments on the greens on the east side of the pier for the trippers – the land allocated for the Beaumont housing estate was used as the forerunner of the Kursaal. On the west side an esplanade and large hotels were built for the “respectable” visitors. Southend was not alone in separating their visitors as Clacton and Blackpool, amongst others, did the same!

*There is a book review of Volume XII part 1 in the March 2022 Edition 176 page 24 written by David Eniffer (ESFH 917) which can be found in the Members’ area in the magazine archive on our website.

More information can be found by visiting their website:
www.history.ac.uk/research/victoria-county-history

Enhance Your Skills in 2023 with Family History Studies

by Sarah Bulson MA Director of Education at
The Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies (IHGS)
79-82 Northgate, Canterbury, CT1 1BA. Tele: 01277 768664
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IHGS The School of Family History has evolved a range of Distance Learning Courses for students who are at all levels and experience. The courses are all designed to fit around your life, you can enrol at any time and study at your own pace with no fixed timetable. With Workshops and Tutorials there is a vibrant student community to join.

The first three of these, **Awaken Your Ancestors**, **Broadening Your Family Tree**, and **Completing Your Ancestral Journey** were designed to provide

students with a thorough knowledge of core genealogical record sets, without the need to submit work for assessment. They stand alone or can be completed as a series. Moving on, the Correspondence Course is a comprehensive course with expert Tutors providing guidance and feedback through the practical assignment.

Whether you are a keen family historian looking to brush up on your knowledge about a particular aspect of genealogical interest, want to complete a course of study at your own pace, but without the pressure of written assignments and examinations, or are thinking seriously about becoming a professional genealogist and joining AGRA, IHGS 'The School of Family History' has something for you.

The **Awaken Your Ancestors Elementary Course** is suitable for those who are new to family history, those who have already started but need guidance on how to research more effectively and those who are looking for inspiration on how to break down that brick wall. The course consists of ten modules.

The **Broadening Your Family Tree Intermediate Course** offers a selection of records through its ten modules that will help further your research and extend your family tree.

The **Completing Your Ancestral Journey Advanced Course** represents a natural progression for those who have already completed the Awaken your Ancestors and Broadening your Family Tree courses. Its 20 modules are suited to the experienced family historian who wishes to gain a better understanding of a collection of valuable and accessible records that will help you complete your Ancestral Journey.





The IHGS Correspondence Course in Genealogy was launched in 1961. It provides an in-depth knowledge of UK genealogical sources and their application. Unlike other courses there is no fixed timetable and students are able to study in their own time, at their own pace, and from the comfort of their own home and their local archives. A particular benefit of the IHGS course is the emphasis on using the student's own family history research as the basis for research assignments, rather than using fixed research pieces. The course is suitable for both beginners and experienced genealogists, and the academic standards followed and depth of learning are also suitable for those intending to run a professional genealogical practice. The course consists of twenty-four modules, starting with the importance of beginning with records available in the home, moving through a detailed look at the basic sources such as birth, marriage and death records and census returns to more advanced sources such as criminal records, manorial documents and Chancery Court proceedings. The course also considers research in the UK outside England and Wales. Each module involves reading the provided lecture notes, conducting some background reading and completing a number of assignments, marked on a continuous assessment basis. Expert Tutors guide you through the course.

Our **Heraldry Course** is designed for beginners and those with experience of heraldry; this course comprises six lectures that will build a comprehensive knowledge of heraldic design and language, together with a thorough understanding of how heraldry can be used for genealogical research.

Reinforcing the highly practical nature of all IHGS courses, assessed assignments accompanying each lecture will enable students to put theory into practice under the guidance of Tutors.



Note from Colleen, Editor

There is much to read on the IHGS website including details of their Zoom presentations that are open to everyone. Under the heading Family History Library is a list of all the original Essex documents they hold and under Monumental Inscription details of transcriptions for several Essex churches. Their library is open by appointment on Mondays and Tuesdays so why not pay them a visit?



Society Information

www.esfh.org.uk

Payment of Membership, Services and CD's by post

Facilities on our website allow for Membership, Services, CD's published by the Society, Birth, Marriage & Death Certificates etc. to be ordered and paid for using a credit or debit card (payment taken via the PayPal website) or a PayPal account. New members wishing to pay their membership fees by cheque should send an email, or write, to our membership secretary Miss A Turner to enable her to send them a membership application form. A payment by cheque must be in GBP, payable at a UK bank, in favour of the "Essex Society for Family History" and crossed.

Membership applications and queries should be sent by post to Miss Ann Turner, I Robin Close, Great Bentley, Colchester CO7 8QH or by email to memsec@esfh.org.uk.

Research Centre and Services

Our research centre is based at the Essex Record Office Wharf Road Chelmsford CM2 6YT and is open to both members of the Society and non-members from 1.00pm - 4.00pm on Wednesdays and 10.00am - 1.00pm on Thursdays when you will find volunteers on duty. There is a direct telephone line during opening hours: Tele: 01245 264773.

Our research team offers a service to search indexes and databases where we hold the relevant data at our Research Centre. For details of the indexes we hold please see our website under the Services tab followed by Research and Services. For all enquiries regarding our Search Services please email searches@esfh.org.uk.

For products sold via our online shop and how to order and pay please see our website under the SHOP tab.

Essex Strays Index

References to people from Essex found in records elsewhere. Enquiries with stamped addressed envelope to Mrs Ann Church, "Windyridge" 32 Parsons Heath Colchester CO4 3HX E-mail: ann.church@mypostoffice.co.uk

Private Essex Indexes

Indexes of Essex Baptisms, Marriages etc are available at <http://sturnidae.com/Essex/index.htm> - this site provides links to independent researchers offering paid look-ups from Essex Indexes.

Society Information

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Treasurer: Paul Stirland
Registrar: Christine Chatfield
Committee Members:
Roger Stirland, Pauline Adlem

Harlow

Chair: Vacant
Secretary: Vacant
Treasurer: Val Jones
Programme Sec: Barbara Harpin

Harlow cont'd

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Committee Members:
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Southend

Chair: Vacant
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Secretary:

Meryl Rawlings, 4 Barbrook Way Bicknacre Chelmsford CM3 4HP

Email: honsec@esfh.org.uk Tel: 01245 225200

Treasurer:

Tanya Sewell, 24 Pyms Road Galleywood Chelmsford CM2 8PY

Email: thesewells24@gmail.com Tel: 07790 584906

Executive Members – some members can be contacted via the Contact Us section on our website.

Pauline Adlem

Mary Rix

David Cooper

Trevor Rix

Colleen Devenish

Janice Sharpe

Barbara Harpin

Denise Somers

Toni Neobard

Paul Stirland

The following Branch Chairmen or their Representatives have been elected by their branch members and serve as ex-officio members of the Executive Committee

Chair North East Essex Branch (Colchester)

Gill Peregrine

Representative West Essex Branch (Harlow)

Elizabeth Cox

Chair South East Essex Branch (Southend)

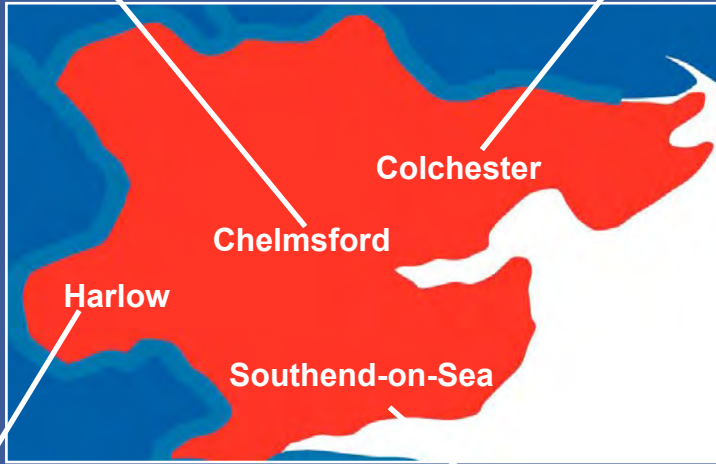
Heather Feather

HEADQUARTERS

The Galleywood Centre The Common (off Margaretting Road) Galleywood Chelmsford CM2 8TR
Chair: Andrea Hewitt
Email: andiehewitt@hotmail.com
Secretary: Meryl Rawlings
Email: meryl.rawlings@btinternet.com

NORTH EAST ESSEX BRANCH

Oyster Room Hythe Community Centre
1 Ventura Drive Colchester CO1 2FG
Chair: Gill Peregrine
Email: gpesfh@gmail.com
Secretary: David Cooper
Email: davidcooper@cantab.net



WEST ESSEX BRANCH

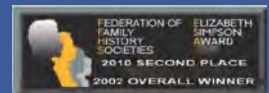
St. John's Arts and Recreation Centre
Market Street Old Harlow CM17 0AJ
Chair: Vacant
Secretary: Vacant
Contact: Elizabeth Cox
Email: emt.cox2@btinternet.com

SOUTH EAST ESSEX BRANCH

Avenue Baptist Church Hall Milton
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Chair: Vacant
Secretary: Heather Feather
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