



THE ESSEX FAMILY HISTORIAN

The Essex Society for Family History Magazine

Dodgy Scales and
Delivering the Mails

Mike Fogg

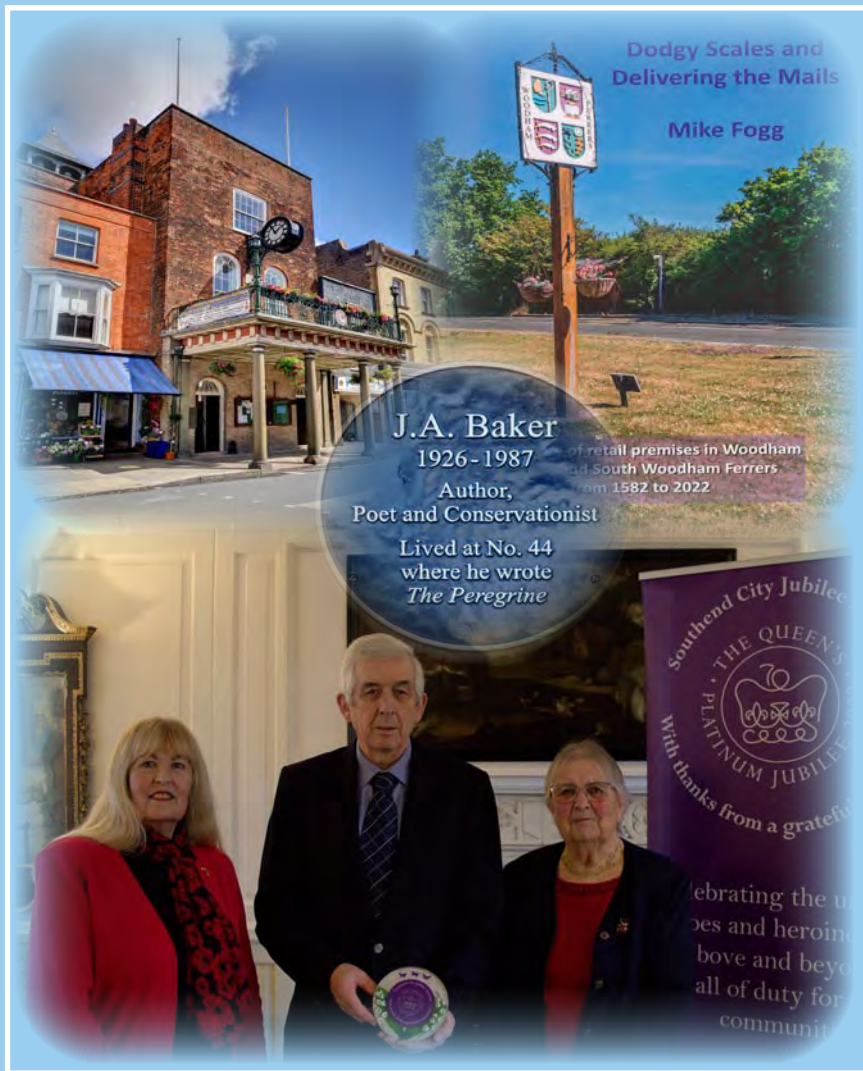
J.A. Baker

1926-1987

Author,
Poet and Conservationist

Lived at No. 44
where he wrote
The Peregrine

of retail premises in Woodham
and South Woodham Ferrers
from 1582 to 2022



www.esfh.org.uk

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:-

- A Research Centre at Essex Record Office open on a regular basis with volunteers on duty. Bookable one-to-one meetings to help with family history.
- Access to the Members only area of the website where members can find valuable genealogical records.
- Addition of DNA (GEDmatch) kit numbers to our database allowing members to find out if other members have a connecting match.
- Receipt on a regular basis of THE ESSEX FAMILY HISTORIAN - the Society family history magazine, with the capability to download the latest issue and access an archive of back copies.
- Access to a number of publications from other family history societies.
- 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

PUBLICATION DEADLINES

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Advertisers offering professional or commercial services to members are accepted. Advertising costs for Black and White insertions are whole page £45, half page £35, quarter page £25. Colour costs available on request. All advertising subject to availability of space. The Society undertakes no responsibility for quality of services offered and members respond to these advertisements at their own risk.

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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.

SEE IF YOUR ANCESTORS ARE LISTED

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

From the Editor

I feel that one of my responsibilities as Editor is to bring to the attention of the membership new publications by their ESFH colleagues. Therefore in this edition I have featured a recently published book by Mike Fogg, a new member, which details the history of retail outlets and the families who ran them in Woodham Ferrers and South Woodham Ferrers. Another new publication, about the history of the National Agricultural Labourers Union in the Basildon area, written by the local historian Ted Woodgate, also appears in this edition. Mentioning Essex agricultural labourers reminds me to thank Stephen Norris, on readers' behalf, for his final instalment of his article entitled Agriculture in the Chelmsford Area.



COLLEEN DEVENISH

Earlier this year Essex Record Office recognised the 70th anniversary of the 1953 flood disaster that took the lives of people, many from Essex. Page 11 details the reissue of a classic book about the disaster.

I am delighted to introduce the contribution of a new member James Leeds, who lives in America, with his tale of how easy it is to pursue the wrong details when searching for ancestors. We also have a contribution from Rebecca Bailey, who is a family historian from another family history society, regarding her links to Henry Devenish of Maldon and how he was part of a prestigious oceanographic voyage. Still in Maldon Toni Neobard recounts the divorce of the Brights who lived in the town. Again, in Maldon, there is information on page 47 of a project requiring volunteers to transcribe records for the Moot Hall Project 600.

On further pages in this issue it was nice to hear again from Jill Williams, who wrote about her progress in tracking her great uncle. Royston Jones completes his story about an amazing genealogical coincidence in his tale of footballers and long-standing member Greg Holmes supplies information about an ancestor who was a volunteer in the Essex Rifle Corp.

As normal my thanks to all the members who have contributed to this spring edition.

Lastly it only remains for me to report that I will be stepping down from the Editor role at the October AGM as it is time for someone else to take the editorial reins. If you feel you would like to volunteer for the role and would like to know more about what is involved, please contact me.

My last few words on the page must be to thank Ian Fulcher, our Production Manager, for his technical support and who has put up with my editorial idiosyncrasies for a number of years. Without his valuable contribution this magazine would not be the publication it is today.

From the Chair

The Essex Record Office (ERO) have confirmed that they will support us in a joint project to digitise more unpublished parish records. We will be offering to replace any registers that are still in use with a new one, so that the original copy can be digitised and then stored by the ERO, appropriately, and for posterity. These digitised records will then be freely available to our members on our website, and also on the ERO Essex Archives Online (chargeable).



ANDREA HEWITT

We held a Virtual Open Day on 21/01/2023 with over 40 visitors hailing from Adelaide to Massachusetts. Visitors could discuss research queries and/or join in 3 talks/workshops, with our volunteers. We also took part in the East Sussex Virtual Show on 28/01/2023, both events were very worthwhile.

I am very happy to announce a 'live' HQ meeting at Galleywood Heritage Centre on 18/03/2023, (morning only) and I thank our other branches for continuing to hold regular meetings, if you are able to, please support them!

Our editor, Colleen has reported that, for some time, not enough content is being submitted for our magazine. This has resulted in her spending considerably more of her own time, trying to locate and persuade members and even non-members, into writing articles. Very sadly however Colleen's personal circumstances have also changed, and she is now no longer able to give up the time necessary to edit the magazine. She also feels that she has given her all to our magazine, (and I'm sure you will all agree!) and that it's now time for some fresh ideas to be introduced, which can take our much-admired magazine, to the next level. Colleen will support and guide her replacement through the next production, but in an effort to reduce her workload in the short term, the Executive Committee have decided that the summer edition of the magazine is to be replaced by a newsletter (produced by other volunteers). Please contact Colleen for an informal 'chat' if you are interested in this post.

Special Interest Groups have been formed on DNA for Beginners, DNA for Advanced Users, Brickwalls etc. and we are also inviting volunteers to set up informal Local Interest Groups. You could share/exchange local knowledge based on your Essex city, town or village, with other members, and/or act as a liaison between your local library, or museum. (Details on our website or by post via the Secretary).

Please also see page 56 where volunteers are also urgently required for actual posts/deputies for posts.

I hope you appreciate that many of us have been busy, trying to bring you more resources, and will continue to do so, with your support.

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
- 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 9.

www.warmemorials.org



Official Receipt

War Memorials Trust acknowledged the generous donation from Essex Society for Family History. The Trust greatly appreciates this support.

Amount donated:	£150
Date:	29 November 2022
Donation for:	Donation
Receipt number:	47303
Supporter Number:	28875
Supporter Details:	Essex Society for Family History

RECEIVED WITH THANKS

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.

04 March 2023 2:30pm GMT	Basildon - The Way We Were a film shown by Reg Wells. This film gives the history of the first settlers from London who came to Pitsea, Laindon, Vange and Fobbing to the building of modern Basildon.	Meeting Southend branch
11 March 2023 2:30pm GMT	Computer Search Hints & Tips with David Cooper.	Meeting Colchester branch
18 March 2023 10:30am GMT	Video of a Talk on Wills by Dan Pottenberger of Family Search with questions and answers afterwards.	The Galleywood Centre
18 March 2023 7:30pm GMT	The Mayflower and its links to Essex American speaker Linda Maclver examines the early and final history of the Mayflower including the ship's captain and signers of the Mayflower Compact.	Online
01 April 2023 10:30am BST	Genetic Genealogy: Making it work for you. A talk by Toni Neobard.	Online
01 April 2023 2:30pm BST	The Pewter Tankard - Was it a Family Heirloom? a talk by Heather Feather.	Meeting Southend branch
08 April 2023 2:30pm BST	Royal Navy Service Records a talk by Ian Waller. Many of us have ancestors who have served in the Senior Service since the 1600's. This talk is an overview of the most comprehensive records.	Online
19 April 2023 7:30pm BST	Workshop on Using Book Marks, Toolbars etc led by Trevor Rix.	Online
13 May 2023 2:30pm BST	Music Hall Memories a talk by Fred Feather on how British and American songwriters of long ago used a variety of subjects, words and poetry to amuse.	Meeting Colchester branch
03 June 2023 2:30pm BST	To Be Announced	Meeting Southend branch

10 June 2023 2:30pm BST	Essex Towns and Villages a talk by Patrick Denney. This will be a 'virtual tour' of several towns and villages located mainly in the North of Essex including Dunmow, Thaxted, Castle Hedingham and much more.	Online and Meeting Colchester branch
01 July 2023 2:30pm BST	Workshop led by the Committee Please note this workshop may be swapped with the June meeting depending on Speaker availability.	Meeting Southend branch
09 September 2023 2:30pm BST	Branch A.G.M. followed by YouTube Presentations on Family History with David Cooper.	Meeting Colchester branch
14 October 2023 2:30pm BST	Family History Help Session with the Committee.	Meeting Colchester branch
21 October 2023	Society Annual General Meeting Details to be confirmed.	Online

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Essex Branch of the Historical Association

<https://essexbranchha.com>

On Saturday March 4 at 3.00 p.m. John Pullen-Appleby, author of English Sea Power 871-1100 AD will talk about Warfare in the 10th and 11th centuries with particular reference to the Battle of Maldon.

On Saturday April 22 at 3.00 p.m. Professor David Stevenson of the London School of Economics will give us a talk on The Cuban Missile Crisis Revisited.

These two talks will be held in Trinity Methodist Church, Rainsford Road, Chelmsford CM1 2XB and will also be available live on Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89012164046> meeting ID: 890 1216 4046.

The year's programme will conclude on Saturday, May 13 with a talk at 2.30 pm on The Romanov Family by Helen Rappaport, author of Ekaterinburg: The Last Days of the Romanovs. This talk will not be at the church but will be on Zoom only using the link above.

Tony Tuckwell

Vice-Chairman of the Essex Branch of the Historical Association

The Great Tide Remembered

January 2023 marked the 70th anniversary of the 1953 North Sea Flood

by Colleen, Editor

Extracts from the Essex Record Office (ERO) blog posted 26th January 2023 by kind permission of ERO.

“On the night of Saturday 31 January 1953, a severe storm coincided with a high spring tide in the North Sea. The resulting tidal surge caused devastation along the east coast of England. 307 people were killed, 120 of them from Essex. The worst hit communities in the county were Canvey Island, where 58 people died and Jaywick, where 37 people lost their lives. Essex Record Office have re-launched, ‘The Great Tide’, a book to coincide with the anniversary.

The ‘Great Tide’ was written and researched by Hilda Grieve, then Senior Assistant at the Essex Record Office. It was commissioned by Essex County Council shortly after the flood, with the intention of documenting the ‘complete story’ of the disaster. Essentially this would be Essex County Council’s official report into the floods, but in writing it became so much more.



HILDA GRIEVE AFLOAT ON SHRUBLANDS CLOSE IN CHELMSFORD DURING A RIVER FLOOD IN THE LATE 1950s



HILDA GRIEVE WITH HER CAT

Published in 1959, ‘The Great Tide’ told the story of the county’s relationship to the sea, the meteorological conditions preceding the flood, the events of 31 January and 1 February, and the subsequent rescue, relief, and restoration efforts in meticulous detail, drawn from six years of careful, patient research. It has since been described by the writer Ken Worpole as “one of the great works of twentieth century English social history”.

The Essex Record Office is privileged to hold Hilda's original notes and early manuscripts, along with many of the documents that she would have had access to. Robert, one of the Archive Assistants, pulled together a selection of these documents to create a display in the ERO Search Room.



THE DISPLAY CASE

As Robert found, there is substantially more in the archive than could be displayed. Hilda's typescript itself comprises about eleven or twelve foolscap folders, full to capacity with her timetables and diagrams, all hammered out by typewriter and then reorganized in scraps on the page – the original Word formatting. Also illuminating were the more exacting records of people who lived through the flood. Still beautifully preserved in the collection of the South Benfleet branch of the Women's Royal Voluntary Service are their case cards of missing persons, evacuees, primary school children, all meticulously accounted for, along with the faded newsprint clippings and telegrams of thanks from flood victims.

Since the publication of 'The Great Tide', the Essex Record Office as well as our partners like Canvey Community Archive and Harwich Museum have continued to collect material to add to the wealth of knowledge about the events of the evening of 31 January 1953, including photographs, radio broadcasts, and oral histories".

Note from Colleen, Editor

At ERO there is preserved, in the Essex Sound Archive and Video library, the voices of those who experienced the flood.

In February 2023 Essex Record Office held events at Canvey Library and Harwich Museum to inform the public, especially school children, about the event.

Copies of the 'The Great Tide' are available to purchase for £20.00 in person from the Essex Record Office or £25.00 postage to the UK.

Email ero.searchroom@essex.gov.uk for further information.



Barking up the Wrong Tree

by James Leeds (ESFH 33269)

A well-known Englishman once had a grinning cat help a little girl named Alice. When she asked for directions, he said, “If you don’t know where you are going, any road will get you there”. Lewis Carroll was the author of that thought. An American baseball player put a different spin on it by saying, “If you don’t know where you are going, you’ll end up someplace else”.

In any case, when it comes to genealogy, it is all too easy to not know where you are going. My family and I are perfect examples.

It all began with my uncle, Lewis Benjamin Leeds (1885-1961). He wanted to join the Sons of the American Revolution and hired someone to search our family tree to prove he was eligible. The researcher went above and beyond. Not only did he find a man who fought the British, but he also traced our tree back to Thomas Leeds (1620 -1687). Thomas, a Quaker, left Stansted-Mountfitchet in 1676 with his three sons and settled in the New Jersey colonies. That is about all we knew about Thomas until my brother and I took an interest.

After a few years of research, we came to this conclusion: while some accounts state that Thomas and his sons were born in the city of Leeds in Yorkshire, we discovered that there is a village of Leeds located in Kent. Since Thomas - according to his son, Daniel (1651-1720), who authored the first almanac in the colonies - was “born of an armorial family of Kent” we figured that, most likely, Thomas and his sons were born in or near that village. At this point, we were well on our way in the wrong direction.

Over the years I have travelled to England, visited the village of Leeds, joined the Kent Historical Society, and studied the history of Kent extensively. I even tried to reclaim the Leeds Castle only to learn our family never owned it.



THE BLACK HORSE PUB IN STANSTED IN KENT
PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

At one point, I learned that there is a village in Kent named Stansted and decided that someone may have made a mistake when they named the town from which Thomas sailed to the colonies. Having to travel to London on business, I took the opportunity to hire a car and dragged my wife on a wild goose chase. On that trip we learned that Stansted is at the end of a long single lane dirt road and consists of a single pub...and little else. We enjoyed a nice lunch and eventually found our way to Stansted-Mountfitchet.



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR



PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

I have no idea what Stansted-Mountfitchet was like in 1676, but it is easy to assume it was a much more bustling community than Stansted.

We even discovered the Quaker meeting house. It should have been obvious at that point, that Thomas not only departed from Stansted-Mountfitchet but also lived there for some time prior to 1676. However, the mindset was still on the village of Leeds and Kent. I tried to learn when and why Thomas moved from Kent to Essex.

My major problem was that the little bit I knew about Thomas led me to concentrate my search in Kent. I knew he was a Quaker, and I knew he was a barrel maker. I also learned that Kent was famous for growing hops. What better way to ship hops than in barrels! Above all, Daniel, son of Thomas had stated in one of his almanacs that his grandfather was a gentleman from Kent. It all made sense!

Add to that the question of surnames. Prior to the late 13th century, surnames were rare. That was made apparent when we visited St. Nicholas church near the village of Leeds in Kent.

The first vicar who had a surname was Adam de Maydenstan (from Maidstone?) in 1285. This is a perfect example of how surnames came about.

When there were multiple people with the same name (can't say 'first' since it was their only name) something had to be done to tell them apart. Thus, we have Thomas from Leeds. He might also have been called Thomas the Cooper. The Thomas that made horseshoes became known as Thomas the Blacksmith, and so on.

In my mind, Thomas was the cooper who came from Leeds. Thus, it was easy to ignore the hints that continued to jump up and say "Look here!"

By the way, during my research of my ancestors and the early colonists, I discovered that another famous American was taking advantage of earlier technologies. Henry Ford was simply following history when he created the assembly line.

The Parish of Saint Nicholas, Leeds

Until its dissolution in 1540, the care of the parish belonged to the adjacent Priory of Saint Mary and Saint Nicholas. Robert de Grevecourt (or Black) Canons in 1199. Queen Elizabeth I gave the advowson to the Archbishop of Canterbury, in whose personal gift the living remained until 1793. The Archbishop remains patron of the living.

<u>Priors of Leeds:</u>		<u>Vicars of Leeds:</u>					
Alexander	occurs 1175	Henry Tilden	before 1557	Fred Tyrie AKC			1945
Robert	occurs 1191	Thomas Angood	1610	John Ellis Robinson ALCD			1960
Nicholas	occurs 1205	William Cragg	1618	John William Dilnot MA			1974
Fulk	occurs 1231	Matthew Lawrence	1622	Adrian Christopher Bell AKC			1979
Roger	occurs 1237	John Blackburne	1624	Christopher Mattinson Dcnt.			
William	occurs 1249	John Lockwood	1625	MA MTh DPhil			1984
Nicholas	occurs 1261	Richard Marsh	1635	David Charles Brookes			1994
Richard	occurs 1267	William Francis	1641	<u>Priest in charge:</u>			
Stephen	occurs 1283	Nathaniel Willmot	intruded 1643	Robin Gill			2000
John	occurs 1285	Thomas Paramore	intruded 1647				
Adam de Maydenstan	elected 1299	Thomas Chowning	intruded 1651				
William de Bordonne	occurs 1306	Thomas Shewell	intruded 1659				
Adam	occurs 1314	John Moore	1662				
William	occurs 1324	James Willson	1665				
Robert de Maidstone	occurs 1347	Edward Waterman MA	1685				
Thomas	occurs 1368	Edward Harrison MA	1725				
Thomas de Roffa	elected 1380	Denny Martin (Fairfax) MA	1760				
Aymer Odenhelle	occurs 1397	Charles Cage MA	1794				
William de Verdun	died 1409	James Young BA	1795				
Thomas of Sidyngbourne	elected 1409	William Horne MA	1799				
John Survuden	elected 1447	George St John Mitchell	1801				
John Wittisham	elected 1453	Thomas Lomas MA	1814				
Robert Goudeherst	occurs 1487	William Burkitt MA	1843				
John Bredgar	occurs 1495	Adolphus Philippe Morris MA	1877				
Richard Chetham	elected 1524	Henry Robert Hughes MA	1906				
Thomas Chetham	elected 1528	Stanley Nothard Swain AKC	1920				
Arthur Senleger	elected 1536	Thomas Herbert Jacques BA	1927				
Thomas Daye		Cyril Wallis Carter AKC	1936				

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

When Thomas Leeds first arrived in America, he earned a living by making barrel parts, which were then sent back to England and assembled. America at the time had an overabundance of trees and lumber; England did not. So, in England barrel makers assembled the parts and filled the finished barrels with goods to be sent to the colonies.

One of the things I have tried to do in my genealogical research is to try to look beyond the names and dates to see what my ancestors were experiencing. For example, I read "The Journal of George Fox" to try to understand what Quakers were experiencing in England and why Thomas Leeds, at the age of 56, would leave everything behind and sail off to an unknown future. I could only guess based on what George Fox was experiencing. Quakers risked losing everything and Fox was certainly not endearing himself to the crown and church leaders.

I also learned that while my 8th great-grandfather was using wood to craft barrels, a man named Stradivarius was using wood to make violins in Italy. It makes me wonder what a barrel made by Thomas Leeds might be worth today.

Over the years I have learned quite a bit about Kent, delved into the records of various churches and communities, and discovered nothing more about our family tree. A few months ago I decided it was time to try something different and began my research of Stansted-Mountfitchet and Essex.

Within hours, I found records indicating that Thomas Leeds was arrested at least twice for holding Quaker meetings at his home - March 18, 1666, and again on March 1, 1672. I still didn't know if he was born there, but it was definitely a possibility.

After a bit more digging, I discovered that Thomas was born the son of Thomas Leeds (1599-1661) and Ann Wright (1597-1687). After decades of looking in the wrong places I was able to add that 9th great-grandfather.

When I added this new information to my online records (I use Family Tree Maker) I discovered that I had numerous "Wrights" among my records. I decided I needed to look more closely. I soon discovered that the Wright surname had become part of my ancestry beginning with my 5th great-grandfather, Robert Leeds (1706-1787). Of course, his wife was not a Wright, but rather a Higbee - Abigail Higbee (1713-1759) to be exact. However, Abigail's 3rd great-grandmother was Mary Wright (1643-1700), making her my 8th. Continuing to follow the Wright line, I now know that my 14th great-grandfather was Thomas Wright (1422-1509).

I still have lots of research ahead of me, but it is with renewed vigour.

I have always said that genealogy is spending years trying to find that one puzzle piece, and when you find it, you realize there are ten more missing pieces. In this case, I have found those ten and now need to find at least 100 more.

At the age of 78, I'm not sure if I will ever get back to England, but if I do, I will try to reclaim Stansted Mountfitchet Castle and spend my time in Essex. Any suggestions for a good pub?

☆ ☆ ☆

Essex Record Office Presents

For presentation details please see www.essexrecordoffice.co.uk under the Events tab.

Saturday 1st April 2023 10:30 – 15.30

Playing to the Whistle: the railways of Essex and East Anglia

A nostalgic exploration of the 'iron roads' that dissected the county.

For almost the last two centuries, railways, both main and branch lines, have dissected the county, taking commuters to the metropolis, goods to market and trippers to the seaside. The advent of the railway opened up all sorts of opportunities for Essex residents and continues to do so today.

Saturday 29th April 2023 10:30 – 12:30

Hunting for Witches through archives and archaeology

The broad-brush of witchcraft in Essex has been extensively studied over the years – is there anything else to discover about those accused? Well, yes there is! Join us to hear how, through the detailed examination of documents looked after by the Essex Record Office, Prof. Marion Gibson has been able to trace their lives and give them back their identities before they were accused of witchcraft. Marion will explain why the 'St Osyth' witches of 1582 – actually from St Osyth, Little Clacton, Thorpe and Walton-le-Soken and Little Oakley – might have been accused in the first place.

Henry Devenish and the HMS Challenger Expedition of 1872-1876

by Rebecca Bailey - a member of Cambridgeshire and Huntingdonshire
Family History Society.

Henry Devenish first came to my attention when he appeared on the 1881 Census, residing in Maldon, Essex with my two times paternal great grandparents Joseph and Matilda South (née Devenish). At this point Joseph was fifty-six years old and a Beer House Keeper, his wife Matilda was fifty-three and, living with them in addition to Henry, were four of their grown-up children. It was quickly obvious that Henry was Matilda's younger brother and having always primarily focused on my direct ancestors, I probably would not have given this man my great, great uncle, much further thought except that aged forty-three, his occupation was stated as Navy Pensioner. This unexpected detail triggered so many questions: did all Navy personnel irrespective of rank, receive a pension. If not, what had Henry Devenish done to receive one and was it usual practice to be in receipt of such a pension at what is to us today, more than twenty years short of 'normal' retirement age. Henry was born in Maldon in February 1837 the son of Robert and Hannah Devenish (née Loker) and he joined the Royal Navy, with as far as I know his parent's consent, in February 1854 as a:

Boy 2nd class— a boy aged 15 to 17 rated as such on entry to a training ship of the Royal Navy. Such entry was conditional on a boy's adequate physical height, weight and medical fitness and evidence of being of 'good character'.

Fortunately locating Henry in the 1871 Census proved relatively easy. Not surprisingly perhaps he was on board a ship, the *HMS Philomel*, a wooden screw gun vessel launched in 1867 and sold in 1886, which on the night of 2nd April 1871 was berthed in the Dockyard of Ireland Island, Bermuda. Additional records on Henry were soon identified amongst which was one held by the National Archives, (accessed via the Ancestry website) and from the following record set: The UK, Royal Navy Registers of Seamen's Services 1848-1939.

This turned out to be a great source of information even providing personal details regarding Henry's height, hair colour, eye colour and the fact that he had a tattoo on his right arm. I would love to know what the tattoo was, but sadly that is not stated. This form goes on to list *HMS Challenger* as the final ship he served on and when that came to an end, he remained a Naval Reserve for a short period. At that time, I had not heard of *HMS Challenger* but then neither had I heard of *HMS Philomel*; what caught my attention however, was the duration of the voyage: 15th November 1872 to 12th June 1876. My initial thought was that this must be an error, surely one voyage would not have lasted more than three and a half years.

Wikipedia was my first 'port of call' (pardon the pun, ha, ha) and soon confirmed that yes, the voyage of *HMS Challenger* was known as The Challenger Expedition and it did indeed last more than three and a half years. Many readers may well be much more familiar with this expedition than I was, certainly initially. There are numerous

articles online, a website, books that have been written and a YouTube video which tell the entire story of why and how what turned out to be such a significant undertaking, was first embarked upon.

Despite all the well-publicised negative aspects of life in the Victorian age, which cruelly and adversely blighted so many people's existence, (unless, you were a white, middle class/upper class male) it was an era of great exploration, innovation, invention and endeavour. In 1843 Edward Forbes (1815–1854) a naturalist, proposed what became known as the 'azoic or abyssus theory' and this stated that 'no life could live below 300 fathoms (1,800 feet) as the pressure was too intense for any creature to withstand'. This idea was beginning to be accepted as fact and even Charles Darwin had referred to the oceans as "a tedious waste, a desert of water". Some years later, an Edinburgh University professor and marine zoologist Charles

Wyville Thompson, had become convinced that this theory was almost certainly incorrect, as sailors and fisherman had reportedly caught fish at depths greater than this. In 1870 when life beneath the waves was still largely a mystery, he persuaded the Royal Society of London to support a lengthy and detailed voyage of exploration across the world's oceans. The Royal Navy provided a strong, sturdy ship that had spent the first decade of its life on active duty, its name: **HMS Challenger**. She was a British Navy corvette, the smallest class of warship, measuring two hundred feet long and for power she had three square masts and an auxiliary coal fired engine that provided 1,234 horsepower to two twin bladed propellers. Throughout the voyage the ship would predominantly rely on its sails, only using the engine when needed or when dredging samples from the ocean floor.

Eventually, fervent preparations were able to begin; all but two of the ship's guns were removed to make space for on-board laboratories, workrooms and storage areas. The latter of which were created for the marine samples that would be collected on the trip. A crew of more than two hundred men and boys was assembled to be skippered by Captain George Nares, along with six scientists including Charles Wyville Thompson and John Murray. Also on board was the natural history illustrator and lithographer Jean Jacques Wild, who joined the expedition as its official artist; altogether they comprised an unusual and somewhat eclectic mix of shipmates. How the crew were selected, whether they volunteered, whether they had any choice in the matter, after all this was no ordinary voyage, I do not know. At least the Royal Navy had abolished



CREW OF HMS CHALLENGER EXAMINING THE CONTENTS OF THE SHIP'S NETS

SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA

their policy of using press gangs by 1815. On Saturday 7th December 1872 **HMS Challenger** set sail from Sheerness, her immediate destination south towards Lisbon and the Canary Islands.

Unusually and somewhat fortuitously, an Assistant Steward named James Matkin was on board for the duration and wrote numerous letters home which were not re-discovered, until the early 1980's. Predominantly his correspondence was addressed to his mother, but some letters were also sent to other members of his family. Matkin's role as Assistant Steward, which effectively gave him control of the storeroom, together with the elevated level of education he had received by default, probably contributed to his semi self-imposed sense of isolation. Despite this isolation Joseph Matkin's letters provide a remarkable insight into shipboard logistics, the crew's attitudes toward scientific operations and officer-scientist-crew relations. These letters were edited and annotated by Philip F. Rehbock and eventually published by the University of Hawaii Press in 1992. A preview can be accessed via Google Books - see list of websites under Further Reading etc. at the end of this article.

At the voyage's completion, **HMS Challenger** had sailed a staggering 68,890 nautical miles and gathered data on currents, water chemistry, temperature, bottom deposits and marine life at three hundred and sixty-two oceanographic stations. More than



CENTENARY OF HMS CHALLENGER'S VISIT TO
TRISTAN DA CUNA

four thousand seven hundred new species of marine animals had been discovered and many of these were located on the sea bed disproving Forbes' 'azoic or abyssus theory' once and for all. In addition, it should not be forgotten that the Challenger Expedition's discoveries included the first ever rough map of the ocean floor and the finding of an enormous depression in the north-west Pacific Ocean. This depression contains the deepest places in the Earth's crust which are now known as the Mariana trenches and the deepest point in these trenches is named the 'Challenger Deep' in honour of the expedition. The greatest

'discovery' of the expedition however is generally agreed to be confirmation of the existence of the Mid-Atlantic Ridge; a mountain chain close to the centre of the Atlantic Ocean and extending its entire length.

When this British Navy corvette returned to England in the summer of 1876 it was to a rapturous welcome; only one hundred and forty-four crew however remained from the original two hundred and sixteen who had set sail. Seven people had died, twenty-six were left in hospitals or were unable to continue the journey and several had deserted at the various ports of call. The long task to study and catalogue the findings started immediately and, to facilitate this, the numerous collections were distributed to various museums and institutions across the globe. The fifty volume, twenty nine thousand

five hundred page report, would take 23 years to compile and publish!

As for the answer to one of my questions, apparently:

'It was not until 1859 that pensions for service were granted automatically to all ratings who had served for 20 consecutive years in the Royal Navy. Up to 1859 there was no guarantee that a rating would receive a pension for service. Before then, pensions were rarely awarded to ratings unless they had been wounded or killed in action or on duty.'

The above is from the National Archives website: Royal Navy ratings' pensions 17th-20th centuries. [https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-ratings-pensions/#:~:text=Council%20\(PC\)-,3,years%20in%20the%20Royal%20Navy.](https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/royal-navy-ratings-pensions/#:~:text=Council%20(PC)-,3,years%20in%20the%20Royal%20Navy.)

Sources, further reading and watching:

Wikipedia: HMS Philomel - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Philomel

HMS Challenger: The voyage that birthed oceanography - <https://www.bbc.com/travel/article/20200719-hms-challenger-the-voyage-that-birthed-oceanography>

The Doom and Gloom of the HMS Challenger Voyage... (It wasn't all ho, ho, ho and a bottle of rum) - <https://www.hmschallenger.net/2015/05/18/the-doom-and-gloom-of-the-hms-challenger-voyage/>

New Atlas: Logbook from the famous 1872-1876 journey of HMS Challenger goes to auction: - <https://newatlas.com/logbook-1872-1876-journey-of-hms-challenger-auction/12210/>

At Sea with the Scientifics: The Challenger Letters of Joseph Matkin - https://www.google.co.uk/books/edition/At_Sea_with_the_Scientifics/mx4euRM1-3UC?hl=en&gbpv=0

Natural World Facts: The Pioneering Voyage of the HMS Challenger - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mNWpAm6FB78>

64662

Name in full
Henry Devenish

Date of Birth *11 Feb 1837*
Place of Birth *Maldon Essex*

Date and Period of C. S. Engagement.	Personal Description.						Trade.	Country Engagements.		
	Height.	Hair.	Eyes.	Complexion.	Wounds, Scars, or Marks.					
<i>14 Oct 1865 To complete 35777 A</i>	<i>5 ft 11</i>	<i>Brown</i>	<i>Blue</i>	<i>Fair</i>	<i>Scar on Right arm</i>		<i>None</i>			
Ship served in. Coast Guard. Seaman Riggers.	Ship's Books.		Rating, de.	O. C. Badges worn.	Period of Service.		Time.	Character.	If Discharged, Whether and for what cause.	Remarks.
	List.	No.			From.	To.				
<i>Challenger</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>11</i>	<i>P.B. 1.6</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>15 June 72</i>	<i>12 June 74</i>		<i>1853-1872 in Coast Guard</i>	<i>Chosen Resigned</i>	<i>8 B. 1854</i>
<i>Naval Reserve</i>	<i>15</i>	<i>262</i>			<i>13 June 76</i>	<i>23 Aug 76</i>				

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVE RECORD OF HENRY DEVENISH. SOURCED VIA WWW.ANCESTRY.CO.UK

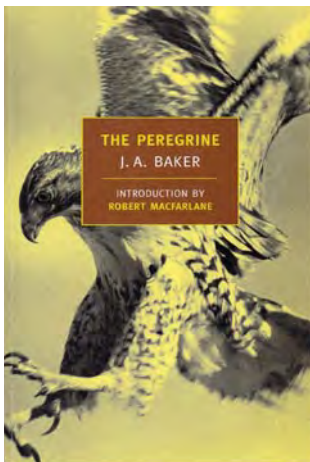
A World-Renowned Naturalist

by Colleen Devenish (ESFH 6237)

I was recently introduced to the books of an Essex author, John Alec Baker (1926-1987) who has a world-wide reputation as a naturalist writer. I must admit that I had not heard of him before or knew of his writings about Essex wildlife. I have to thank David Simmonds, who visited the Little Baddow History Centre, for making me aware of this talented author who resided in Chelmsford.

John was the son of Wilfred S Baker and his wife Pansy K (née Collis). His father worked as a draughtsman at the local electrical engineering company Crompton's. John was born on 6th August 1926. He was educated at Trinity Road Primary School and King Edward VI Grammar School both in the county town. At the age of 18 John was employed by L.P. Foreman of Roxwell Road Chelmsford. L.P. Foreman were originally willow tree growers and cricket bat manufacturers and had been established in the outskirts of Chelmsford by Luther Foreman in 1886. (www.lpforeman.co.uk).

JA Baker married Doreen (née Coe) at Christchurch Chelmsford on October 6th 1956 and they lived in central Chelmsford. Doreen was the daughter of Reginald Coe who, according the 1939 Register, worked at the local ball bearing manufacturers, Hoffman Bearings, which was the first UK ball bearing manufacturer established in 1898 and situated in Chelmsford.



John is renowned for his books 'The Peregrine' written in 1967 and 'The Hill of Summer' in 1969 which are now widely regarded as two of the greatest natural history writings of the twentieth century. In addition, he was a conservationist and a poet. After the publication of 'The Peregrine' he gave up paid work altogether and lived on National Assistance and money from awards. One of the awards he received was the Duff Cooper Prize.

Unfortunately, John suffered from ill health and died in 1987 at the age of 61.

There is a J A Baker archive at the University of Essex. Chelmsford Museum has an exhibition board about his life. For those readers that would like to know more about this talented man see <https://jabaker.co.uk> or read his biography 'House of Sky' by Hetty Saunders.



Channel Islands Research

by Colleen, Editor

Last year, following contact from a Mr John Higgs, he kindly sent me a few photographs belonging to the Holby family. I have discovered a lot about them and the photograph below shows twins Isabella and Reginald born in the early 20th century to Reginald Isaac Holby, a stone mason who married Emily Foulshaw in 1886. Reginald Isaac Holby's ancestors all seem to come from the Romford area.

I know that just before the Second World War Reginald and his sister lived at his pig farm called Sutton Bridge Farm near Rochford which he lost owing to swine fever. After moving to the West Country to become a farm bailiff, Reginald and Isabella retired to Guernsey in 1960 where they both remained until they died.

There are numerous references to the surname Holby on the ESFH database so if you have connection with this surname, please let me know.



THE TWINS ISABELLA AND REGINALD HOLBY

Whilst researching the Holby family history I came across this announcement regarding Jersey family history records which I thought I would bring to the attention of readers.

Two Jersey heritage organisations have merged their collections to create an online catalogue of the island's history. Jersey Heritage and Société Jersiaise hope to make them more accessible to the public. Heritage will provide its archive and museum collections, and Société Jersiaise have brought its photographic and library collections to the website at <https://catalogue.jerseyheritage.org/>

Director of Archives and Collections at Jersey Heritage, Linda Romeril, said the website was the "culmination of a number of years of work" between the two organisations. She said: "Researchers can now search across the collections of both heritage organisations, allowing them to see documents and photographs that were previously held in different places. Linking up the resources available makes them more accessible to the public, whether they are carrying out research about their family history or on a professional basis".

The website has more than 800,000 descriptions of items.

Archivist at the Société Jersiaise, Photographic Archive Patrick Cahill, said: "The new shared online catalogue is great for users and demonstrates the benefits of taking a collaborative approach to cultural heritage in Jersey".

Congratulations to Eric, Linda and Heather Three South East Branch Members!

by Andrea Hewitt, Chair ESFH

A new award from the City of Southend-on-Sea.

On Saturday January 14th 2023 three members of the South East Branch, with about thirty other local people, were awarded the Southend City Jubilee and Queen's Memorial Award.

The ceremony took place at Porters, the Civic House and Mayor's Parlour in Southend-on-Sea. (<https://www.southendtimeline.co.uk/southend-timeline-porters-history-of-southend-on-sea.html>) This was organised by Blade Education (<https://www.blade-education.co.uk/>) with thanks to the Lottery Players and the Southend Community Investment Fund. The awards were presented by Southend City's Mayor Kevin Robinson.



AWARD PLATE

PHOTO COURTESY OF HEATHER FEATHER

Eric Jude has been chairman of the branch for the last five years and has supported projects run by Blade Education. As a member of the Rotary Club of Leigh-on-Sea he has been involved with the installation of defibrillators along the sea front and other sites in Leigh. He has been responsible for checking each one on a monthly basis and if one is used he makes sure that it is again ready to help save a life. He will always volunteer to collect for charity at local supermarkets and runs the Rotary Club's annual Pier Walk, another charity fundraiser.

Soon after **Linda Medcalf** joined the Society as a novice family historian a plea went out for an M.I. (monumental inscription) coordinator for the South East Branch. Learning what an M.I. was and what was involved, Linda volunteered for the job. For many years she and her group of stalwarts have recorded memorials, both inside and out, of the majority of the churches in the area, battling with annoying churchwardens, brambles and nettles. These records are now available to all our members on the ESFH website. Linda now runs our branch second-hand book stall, has represented the society at family history fairs and worked on several projects with Blade Education involving family and local history.

Heather Feather has been a Society member for more years than she cares to remember! When the South East Branch was formed, she joined the committee and was asked to be Vice-Chair. Unfortunately, not many months later the Chairman passed away and she was thrown in at the deep end! She has been a supporter of the branch ever since.

Like Linda and Eric she has been involved with Blade Education projects. The first was in North Road Burial Ground, Westcliff-on-Sea, when children from a local primary school were involved and learned the history of some of those interred there. Branch members also assisted in transcribing the burial register to create a database which is available to our members. The HMS Leigh project (a community led heritage and arts project that aims to connect people of all ages with the history of Southend Pier, also known as HMS Leigh, during WW2) involved some local and family history. "Heather, can you find out about Mona, please"? No surname, age or details except what she did in World War 2. But not only was she able to identify Mona and her family but contacted her niece who lived in the next road and was able to provide more information about her aunt.

I would like to congratulate Eric, Heather and Linda on behalf of all ESFH members for their sterling efforts and contribution to the local community.



LINDA, ERIC AND HEATHER RECEIVING THEIR AWARD.
PHOTO COURTESY OF BLADE EDUCATION

The Battle of the Brights

by Toni Neobard (ESFH 32898)

For several months during 1872 the readers of Essex newspapers were gripped by the twists and turns in the unhappy love life of Edward Bright and his wife Grace Matilda (née Sandys), a Maldon couple.

It must have been tough if you were trapped in a bad marriage during Victorian times. Divorce wasn't really an option for normal people, especially as prior to 1858 you needed a private Act of Parliament in order to get one. Things changed in 1858 when the Court for Divorce & Matrimonial Causes was set up. But still it wasn't easy to get one. The rules were skewed in favour of men. In order to divorce they had to prove adultery by their wives, however women had to prove adultery and an aggravating factor such as cruelty or bigamy. It was an expensive and shameful experience for all concerned, but this did not deter Grace Matilda, for it was she who sued her husband for divorce.

Grace was only around 19 years old when she married Edward in 1851. As a minor she needed permission to marry, but her father had already died. We know from various papers that her father was Thomas Sandys, a solicitor, and that after his death the High Court of Chancery had appointed her a legal Guardian. His name was John Flather who was a Barrister of Lincoln's Inn. Edward's marriage licence application indicates that John Flather had given his consent to this marriage.



CHURCH HOUSE WHERE EDWARD BRIGHT (1721-1750)
LIVED

After the marriage Edward and Grace are living in the High Street, Maldon. It is not clear from the census, but it looks like it was in Edward's old family house which is on the corner of Bright's Path (the lane probably being named after the family). It is currently the site of Mrs Salisbury's Tea Rooms. In fact there is a blue plaque on this house which relates to Edward's great grandfather, also called

Edward Bright. This Edward was a grocer in Maldon who was known as the "fat man of Maldon". At the time of his death in 1750 he was alleged to be the "fattest man in England" weighing at least 42 stone. Readers may be interested to know that Edward Bright's great grandfather featured in an article in Essex Family Historian No 137 on

SUPERINTENDENT REGISTRAR'S DISTRICT <i>Marylebone</i>									
1857. Marriage solemnized <i>Trinity Church in the Parish of Marylebone in the County of Middlesex</i>									
No.	Wife's Name	Name and Surname	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Residence at the time of Marriage	Groom's Name and Surname	Rank or Profession of Groom	Rank or Profession of Witness
<i>4th</i>	<i>Edward Bright</i>	<i>full Bachelor</i>	<i>Merchant</i>	<i>Maldon</i>	<i>Edward Bright</i>	<i>Merchant</i>			
<i>13th</i>	<i>March</i>	<i>1857</i>	<i>Grace Matilda Sandys</i>	<i>Miss</i>	<i>Spinner</i>	<i>Trinity Dist</i>	<i>Thomas Sandys</i>	<i>Solicitor</i>	<i>Deceased</i>
Married in the <i>District Church of Trinity</i> according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the <i>Catholic Church</i> by licence.									
by <i>Ed. P. Horwood</i> off. min.									
The Marriage was celebrated between us <i>Edward Bright</i> in the presence of us <i>John Hather, William Bright, Anne Isabella Long, Susan Barnell</i>									
I CERTIFY to be a true Copy of an Entry in the Certified Copy of a Register of Marriages in the District above mentioned.									

EXTRACT OF THE MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE OF EDWARD AND GRACE

SOURCE: WWW.ANCESTRY.CO.UK

pages 17 and 18.

Of course, we have no idea whether our Edward inherited any of the physical attributes of his great grandfather, and perhaps he did and that was an additional factor in the disharmony between the pair. But, what we do know is that the marriage was already breaking down before the first decade was out.

It was probably the legal connections that Grace already had, plus the small income that she had been provided with, that allowed her to pursue the divorce route. Her divorce petition was brought in 1870 and in it Grace Matilda complained of Adultery, Cruelty and Desertion by Edward.

This petition stated "That about the year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Fifty Nine the said Edward Bright took to habits of intemperance and thence forward habitually conducted himself between your petitioner with great harshness and cruelty frequently abusing her in coarse and insulting language and on some occasions, but the particular dates of which, your petitioner does not now recollect, striking her with his fist".

Grace further alleged that she was taken ill, and on examination by her doctor, was found to be harbouring a venereal disease. Grace had her own theory about where that came from. Once again the divorce petition explains: "...and July in the year One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixty Five the Respondent committed adultery at Maldon in the County of Essex with a woman named Crabb who lived with her mother at the Hithe, opposite the Gas Works at Maldon aforesaid...."

This medical evidence helped prove Grace's case and she was granted her decree nisi. She was on track to get her decree absolute, but there was a last minute hitch for someone had spilled some beans, and as a result a Queen's Proctor was appointed.

Now this only happened where collusion or the suppression of facts is alleged after a decree nisi has been granted but before the decree absolute has been issued.

The Proctor alleged that Grace too, was not innocent. He was in receipt of some intelligence that "The petitioner lived and cohabited with Charles Ball as his wife and habitually committed adultery with him." It was further alleged that this wasn't just a 'one-off' it was stated that it not only happened during the latter part of the year 1868, but also continued in 1869 and listed that it happened during the months of January, February, March, April, May, June, July, August, September and October.

Witnesses were then called to evidence the claims. This included the concierge of the house in which Charles Ball resided, plus the laundress who washed for him. They confirmed that Mrs Bright had occupied his apartments for some months, whilst Mr Ball was travelling about, but that sometimes he stayed at the apartments. And shockingly that on some occasions the clothes of Mr Ball had been sent to the laundress mingled with those of Mrs Bright!

Grace Matilda and Charles Julius Ball were called in the case and both positively denied that any impropriety had ever occurred between them. The pair were obviously given the benefit of the doubt, for the jury found that Grace was not guilty of the adultery charged and therefore she was entitled to her decree absolute.

Grace Matilda eventually got her divorce in December 1873. To our eyes it seems ridiculous that had it been proved that she had committed adultery after her husband had left her, then that would have been sufficient reason to not grant the divorce. But they were the rules at the time.

However, what the courts didn't see was that Grace gave birth to a son in 1876, called Charles Comer Sandys Ball. You may not be surprised to learn that his father was none other than the Charles Ball who was named by the Queen's Proctor as her lover in the divorce petition, and which she had strenuously denied.

Grace eventually did marry Charles Ball but not until 1884. We don't know why she took so long to marry him, as she was free to do so straight after the divorce in 1873. Perhaps she was worried that she might be found to have committed perjury or some such notion, as the strong indication is that they were more than just good friends at the time of the court case.

Edward Bright died in 1878, but Grace and Charles Ball stayed together as a married couple, until Charles died in 1904. Grace died 6 years later in 1910, and her entry in the probate indicates that she left in excess of seven and half thousand pounds which was quite a considerable amount at that time. Let's hope her marriage the second time around was a happier experience.

BALL otherwise **SANDYS** otherwise **SANDYS BALL** Grace Matilda of Monte Rosa St. Leonards-on-Sea **Sussex** widow died 5 August 1910 Probate **London** 13 September to Charles Comer Sandys Ball electrical engineer and John Beale commercial clerk. Effects £7354 7s. 9d. Resworn £7626 14s. 2d.

year out of which your said Petitioner has supported herself and Daughter and also contributed from him to time towards the support of her Son who is living with your Petitioner's said Husband.

- 9- That since the said seventh day of September One thousand eight hundred and sixty six your Petitioner has lived separate and apart from her said Husband and has never returned to cohabit with him.

Your Petitioner therefore humbly prays that this Honorable Court will be pleased to decree that the Marriage of your Petitioner with the said Edward Bright be dissolved.

And that your Petitioner may have such further and other relief in the premises as to your Lordship may seem meet.

Grace Matilda Bright

- 10 That in or about the months of September October and November in the year One thousand eight hundred and sixty four and in or about the months of May June and July in the year One thousand eight hundred and sixty five the Respondent committed adultery at Malden in the County of Essex with a woman named Crabbe who lived with her mother at the Pithe

$\frac{2}{6}$
amended by
order of Court
dated 7th March
1871.

Had
19/4/71

EXTRACT FROM THE DIVORCE CERTIFICATE OF GRACE BALL (CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

SOURCE: WWW.ANCESTRY.CO.UK

opposite the Gas Works at Malden aforesaid
 and that in or about the month of March
 one thousand eight hundred and sixty
 six, the Respondent committed adultery
 with some person unknown at some place
 or places unknown to your Petitioners and
 that your Petitioners was in consequence
 of such last mentioned adultery afflicted
 with the disease in the fifth paragraph
 of this petition mentioned.

☆ ☆ ☆

Society of Genealogists Announcement

Towards the end of last year the UK Society of Genealogists announced the following: -

“At last, the news that so many of you have been waiting for – we can finally announce our new home! We are delighted to inform you that we picked up the keys for Unit 2, 40 Wharf Road, London, N1 last night and have started to plan its refurbishment as a wonderful library, archive and social venue for genealogists, local and family historians.

We shall be welcoming members back to our beloved library and archive in the first half of 2023. The venue is easily accessible from Euston, Kings Cross and Paddington and we will keep you up to date with our progress.

Over the coming months we'll be adding more exclusive content and more opportunities to interact with other members within the community or quiz our experts. We are introducing a brand new search platform in 2023, which will run alongside our current SoG Data Online and we are improving our catalogues. Soon you will be able to search our new archive catalogue online and view our parish registers and monumental inscriptions from the comfort of your own home.

We know it's been a long time coming, but we hope that you will be as excited as we are and that you will come and visit us. As we plan for this exciting year, we will also be sending out a survey to discover what you would like to see”.

The Sawtooth Slayer

by Nathan Dylan Goodwin

Book review by Andrea Hewitt (ESFH 6398)

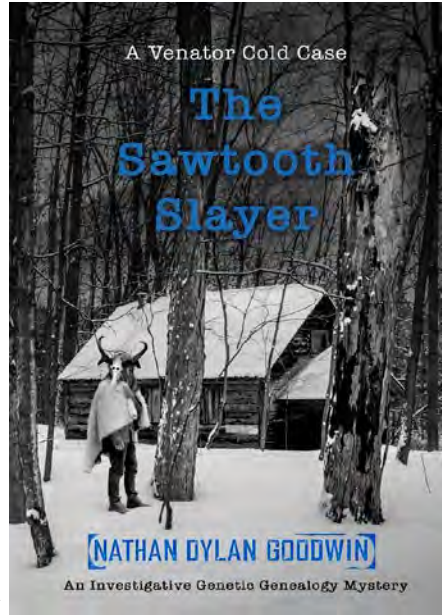
Nathan's latest book features the investigative genetic genealogy company called Venator, based in the USA. Nathan has written many other genealogical mysteries, most of which I have read and enjoyed but those featuring Venator are now my favourites.

I sometimes find it hard to relate to novels about cold cases which are set in countries outside of the UK, but despite this the first Venator book (the Chester Creek Murders) quickly had me hooked. It was great to catch up with the characters introduced in the first book in *The Sawtooth Slayer* and to find them, in April 2020, working from home due to the COVID pandemic lockdown.

A serial killer in Idaho has already claimed the lives of four young women in a relatively short time and the police have very few leads to follow, but they do have the DNA of the suspect. Concern is rising that he may already be stalking his next victim, so Venator are approached to trace the killer's relatives but having only solved cold cases before they are initially reticent to take on the assignment, however they decide to try to prevent another life from being taken.

The Venator team lead by Madison, who are based in Salt Lake City, take on the case amongst all of the dramas that are playing out in their personal lives, hers in particular, as they have to work from home. As each day passes they realise they may be too late to prevent the next murder. Although advised by Madison not to work too many hours so as to avoid burn-out because of the magnitude of the case, the team find themselves doing just that. I recommend you to read this gripping novel to find out what happens.

This paperback contains 335 pages and is self-published by the author see www.nathandylangoodwin.com and also available from online book vendors. It is available in large paperback at a cost of £8.99, hardback £17.99, and on Kindle £4.99.



NATHAN DYLAN GOODWIN

A Tale Of Two Footballers

by Royston Jones (ESFH 20182)

An Amazing Genealogical Coincidence – Part 2

We left George and Alf at the end of part one of this article in 1939, just as war broke out. For both of them it was a life-changing experience. Born the same year, they were at different stages of their footballing careers. George was the well-known and admired first division player for Middlesbrough while Alf had reached the less dizzy heights of the Dagenham Sunday League. Both players went to the other ends of the country for their military service: George to be ground crew at the RAF station on Sheppey and Alf to join the 6th Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry in Truro. After initial training, Alf manned sea defences in Cornwall and then Devon, progressing through the ranks to become a colour-sergeant and take command of an anti-aircraft battery. Towards the end of the war he was posted to Palestine. George, meanwhile, also rose to the rank of sergeant and joined RAF Bomber Command.



6 BATTALION DCLI FOOTBALL TEAM: SOURCE: CORNWALL REGIMENTAL MUSEUM

STANDING L TO R: MARTIN JENKIN HAYWARD LEWIS (CARDIFF CITY) BROWN GREEN

SITTING L TO R: WIGGINS (SPEEDWAY RIDER) ALF RAMSAY CARPENTER (SOUTHAMPTON)

SITTING ON GROUND L TO R: MILES (CARDIFF CITY) FREEMAN (CRYSTAL PALACE) HODGES (ARSENAL) SHEPHERD (SOUTHAMPTON) STANTON

Both men gave their all to the war effort but neither forgot nor lost their footballing skills. George gained seventeen caps playing for the England wartime team and won two wartime cup final medals guesting for Chelsea but Alf initially had to settle for being captain of his battalion XI. As such, while based in Hampshire, he led his team against a scratch Southampton side. It was not his finest hour: the Saints won 10-3. Nevertheless, the Saints' manager recognised a nascent talent in Alf and invited him to play as an amateur for the club when his war duties allowed. After several games Alf was offered professional terms: at £2 per match.

When peace came, both footballers had choices to make. For George it was easy. He moved effortlessly into the regular peacetime England team and became the only footballer to be captain in all his international games, a total of thirteen between 1946 and 1948. On the other hand, Alf returned to Dagenham, where the Co-op had kept his job open. He was on the point of accepting the security of the job, just round the corner from his mother's cottage, when Southampton offered him a permanent contract. Nothing, of course, is permanent in football and Alf was torn: security in Dagenham or the precariousness of professional football. Fortunately for the sporting credibility of the country, he chose the latter. He played initially as a centre half (in old football terminology) but did not shine until he was moved to full back where his dour defensive play secured him a permanent team place.



STATUE OF GEORGE HARDWICK
OUTSIDE RIVERSIDE STADIUM
MIDDLESBOROUGH

PHOTO COURTESY OF AUTHOR

Alf stayed at Southampton until 1949 when he transferred to Tottenham Hotspurs. But, shortly before that transfer, two things changed Alf's life again. The reserved, quiet, sometimes dull man from Dagenham fell in love – with a married woman. Rita Norris worked in a hairdressers in Southampton; it took three years for her divorce to come through but she and Alf were married in 1951. She changed her first name to Victoria but was known as Vickie. When Alf died in 1999 she wrote for his biography: 'I was privileged to have met and married Alfred and I enjoyed a very wonderful and happy life with a kind and generous man'.

Also in 1948, on 16th May, there was a significant shift in gear for Alf's football career, a shift in which the lives of George and Alf came into brief contact. George Hardwick's thirteenth game for England, as a back, had been unlucky: on 10th April against Scotland in Hampden Park he sustained a knee injury. England were about to set off on a European tour and they needed a full back to replace George. The man they chose was Alf Ramsey, the grocer's boy from Dagenham. For a brief moment the careers of these two 28-year-olds converged but then took, for a while, different directions.

George left Middlesbrough and played 190 games for Oldham before a spell as manager of PSV Eindhoven. Returning to England he managed Sunderland but was sacked in 1970 after 28 games. He remained a great supporter of the Borough in retirement, but his final years were spent at home being cared for by his wife Jenny. His memory lives on in the George Hardwick Foundation that she set up to support carers. Meanwhile Alf played for Spurs and England where he developed a style of play which transformed football: as a back he did not just defend but became a play maker, distributing the ball to start the next attack.



The rest of Alf's story is well-known: in 1955 he was appointed manager of unfashionable Ipswich Football Club and in four years took them from the third division to winning the first division championship. That led to his appointment as England manager and leading,

'YOU DID IT ALF: WE'D BE NOTHING WITHOUT YOU' QUOTE BY NOBBY STILES FOOTBALLER

SOURCE WIKIPEDIA

in 1966, to the only England team to have won the World Cup. But then, again coincidentally, in the same year as George was sacked from Sunderland in 1970, Sir Alf, as he was by then, was sacked by England. He spent the next 30 years in obscurity, largely ignored by the 'amateur blazers' running the Football Association (FA) who mocked his background as the son of a Beacontree Heath straw dealer and dustman. At his funeral in 1999 not a single current England player or official attended. But Alf's reputation as a son of Essex is again on the rise and hopefully this article will contribute to that.



SIR ALF AND LADY VICTORIAN RAMSEY
SOURCE WIKIPEDIA

All of that, to the sports' fan at least, is quite interesting. But where does the family history come in? When I tell friends that I 'do' family history they always ask the same question: 'How far back have you got?' I respond by saying that the interesting thing is not how far back, but how wide you get. To me, finding out about the life and travels of my gypsy great grandmother around the Moulsham area of Chelmsford in 1850 is far more interesting than knowing the name of an ancestor who lived in 1450 (although I have that too!).

So discovering the lives people led is far more rewarding than just collecting names and dates. This is where you need to refer back to the first part of this article which appeared in the December 2022 edition.

About ten years ago my wife, Jan, and I were researching her Harrison ancestors. Her great grandfather, William Harrison (1844-1938), ran a shoe factory in Stockton-on-Tees. Taking the line back we found his father, Thomas Harrison (1802-1875), was an agricultural labourer in Castleton on the North York Moors, and he was the son of William Harrison (1764-1841), a farmer in nearby Commondale. Now this William was fairly well-to-do: unlike most of our ancestors he could afford to pay the poor rate. He also discovered, when building a new pigsty, some church glass and a processional cross buried by the monks of Guisborough Priory at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries. Further research, including DNA matches, uncovered some connections with the smugglers of Saltburn and it transpired that William had a sister named Anne, the wife of John Andrew and four-times great grandmother of George Hardwick. So Jan was George's distant cousin: fame at last!

Much later, a couple of years ago, I began to research my Essex ancestors; the Smees of around Braintree and the Bixbys of Barking and Dagenham. A chance remark from the archivist at Valence House, Dagenham, led me to the discovery, strongly reinforced by DNA matches, that not only was Alf Ramsey's birthplace and childhood home just half a mile from mine, but that we shared James Bixby (1785-1857) and Ann Archer (1786-1864) as great grandparents: we were, in fact, third cousins. So my wife's cousin, George Hardwick, was replaced as a full back for the England football team in 1948 by my cousin, Alf Ramsey. Quite a coincidence!

It is findings such as these which are the true fascination of family history. We both come from very humble families: long lines of ag labs and coal miners. But the richness of and the connections within those families beat any regnal or political lines. Jan and I are also linked by a common thread to the father of our most famous English novelists, Patrick Brontë; Jan in Haworth, Yorkshire and me in Wethersfield, Essex. But that's another story.



The List and Index Society

by Colleen, Editor

www.listandindexsociety.org.uk

The List and Index Society is a not-for-profit society that publishes editions and calendars of historical records. It has also published monographs from time to time. Its publications can be found in the major British and American public and university libraries: they are also available for purchase by individuals.

John Holmes (1840-1917)

Information sent by Greg Holmes (ESFH 3981)

Introduction by Colleen, Editor

Last year member Greg Holmes sent ESFH an article that accompanied a photo of his ancestor John Holmes. John was baptised on 20th April 1840 in the parish of Roydon, Essex, died on 2nd February 1917 and was buried in Oakington, Cambridgeshire. His parents were John Holmes (1811-1875) and Jane Sarah Legerton (1844-1918). Jane was born on 3rd November 1844 at Brickhouse Farm, Hunsdon Herts.

The comments in the article which accompanied a picture of John Holmes in the 19th Essex Rifle Volunteer Corp had been sent to Greg by a distant relative and had been created 10-15 years ago by an acquaintance of Greg's distant relative who had military knowledge. I expect others may have ancestors in the 19th Essex Rifle Volunteer Corp Epping branch so I have decided to share the article with readers. At the time the photograph was taken John's parents were farming at Marles Farm Epping. Greg tells me that when John Holmes retired, he went to Ely to live and many family members followed him. Mr Reginald Holmes, a grandson of John worked for the railway and was a local historian of Ely.

"This is a fascinating photo, showing a steadfast young man in a typical rifle volunteer uniform and almost certainly during the 1860's judging by the uniform (and his facial hair). He wears a volunteer uniform modelled on the regular army, although almost grey, light brown or rifle green, rather than red, which was reserved for the regular army.

He wears a hat in the French shako style, all the rage in European armies following the military successes of Napoleon III against various enemies, especially the Austrians in 1859, right up to and even beyond 1870, when Prussia crushed France in the Franco-Prussian war. After this time the regulars promptly switched to Prussian style spiked helmets (everyone always apes the winners, although it took quite a while for the volunteers to catch up, presumably due to government financial policies).

He wears a single-breasted jacket (with



SGT JOHN HOLMES (1840-1917) MEMBER OF THE 19TH ESSEX RIFLE VOLUNTEER CORP, EPPING. PHOTO TAKEN CIRCA 1865.

sergeant's stripes) and trousers, plus waist belt (and somewhere on it, a leather pouch for his percussion caps) and a shoulder belt which carries a leather cartridge box on his right hip. The belts would be black or brown, difficult to tell from this picture. Black boots though. Buttons could be brass or white metal, again it is impossible to tell from the picture. They'd probably be domed, almost certainly with a raised/embossed corps marking on them.

I can't make out the type of rifle but it is definitely a rifle (as it's short and has a sword bayonet, worn on the left hip) – perhaps the 1838-pattern Brunswick – as opposed to the standard 1853 pattern Enfield rifle musket of the regular forces, which was much longer (so had a shorter bayonet). Design-wise the rifle he's carrying harks back to the earlier era when the regular soldier carried a longer smooth bore, and only the elite riflemen carried a (short) rifled musket (and dressed in green rather than red). Riflemen were thus seen as being more dashing/interesting than redcoats and this idea never really went away. No surprise then that volunteers preferred the image of riflemen!

Unfortunately, the Brunswick rifle "...was a complete failure rapidly earning the distinction of being regarded as one of the worst arms of its time". Difficult to use (especially with the heavy sword bayonet attached), not easy to load as the bore was too tight, and not as accurate as it should have been as the powder charge was too small to keep the bullet spinning in straight flight. It was apparently hopeless at 400 yards or more, so hardly better than the old flintlock Baker rifle of the Napoleonic era. Still, at least it was waterproof, as it used the percussion cap ignition system like the Enfield. It was used by regulars for 15 years, so it is quite likely that volunteers ended up with it thereafter. Still better than no rifle though, and infinitely better than a smooth bore musket. Of course, it might be a completely different weapon in the photograph. There were other short rifles around but whether they reached the volunteers, I don't know.

So, what he appears to carry is an older/"second rate" weapon compared with the state of the art military weaponry of the regulars, as one would expect of volunteer forces. Like the Enfield, it was muzzle-loading, breech-loading rifles being a brand-new concept at this time. The Prussians were first to issue the latter as standard armament and following their devastating victory over the (muzzle-loading musket armed) Austrians (who were shot to bits by the faster breech loaders) in 1866, the British government immediately panicked and arranged for regulars' muzzle-loaders to be quickly converted. However, the volunteers didn't get these Snider-Enfields until 1869 at the earliest (16,000 of them in that year). These were long rifles so definitely not as pictured.

The volunteers had a very important "social" side of things. In many respects, the Volunteers of the 1860's were quite like modern re-enactors, i.e., going off to have an enjoyable time, although of course most also took their duties seriously. Membership of the RV's appealed to middle class folk who would never have dreamed of joining as Regulars. Often minor industrialists (brewers and iron manufacturers) were members, using the Corps as a type of networking, and being well to do men can afford the new-fangled photographs of them in their uniform. If you like they were

technocrats with disposable income.

The 19th (Epping) Company of Volunteers formed in 1860, which was amalgamated with others to form the 3rd (Ilford) Battalion in 1861, and eventually became the 4th (Territorial) Battalion, The Essex Regiment. The original uniform would have been black or grey with scarlet braiding. A History of the Essex Territorial Battalions was written by the late John W Burrows, FSA, in 1932, and was published by J.H. Burrows & Sons Southend”.

☆ ☆ ☆

A Russian Connection to Essex

by Fred Feather (ESFH 27366)

Braintree. The church of St. Michael is near the centre of the town....an inscription on the south side of the tomb states that Samuel Collins, many years vicar of this church, died May 2nd 1667, and was buried here....in the exterior wall of the chancel is a brass with the following inscription:-

“This grave was ordered to be set up by ye last will and testament of Samvell Collins late Dr in physick eldest son to Samvell Collins, vicar of this parish, here under buried, who served above nine years as principal physician to ye Great Czar or Emporovr of Russia and after his return from thence taking a joverny into France dyed at Paris October 29th 1670 being the 51st year of his age.”

Kelly's Directory of Essex 1898, Page 47.

This would have been Tsar Alexis 1st – Alexis Mikhailovich Romanov (reigned 1645-1676)

Essex Society for Family History

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on **Saturday 21st October 2023** online. Live venue and time to be confirmed.

For details of the arrangements please check our website before the event or contact Meryl Rawlings Secretary at honsec@esfh.org.uk

Nominations for the Honorary Officers and Members of the Executive Committee, signed by two paid-up members of the Society, should be sent in writing to the Secretary, to be received not less than 28 days before the date of the meeting.

Nomination forms are available from the Secretary or can be downloaded from the Society website www.esfh.org.uk.

Buryinges & Deaths

by Mike Furlong (ESFH 7506)

Recently I had cause to carry out a review of the burial register in Saffron Walden for some research I was conducting between 1749 and about 1766. What struck me was the fact that the parish clerk had added much detail about each individual, something that I consider almost unique in church registers, especially for a sustained period of time.

In the 950 plus entries, there were, of course, many obvious remarks about the individual, and it came as no surprise that such words as "Infant" (288),{Nationally, mortality rates for infants were recorded as 50% of births at that time}¹ "widow" (112) or "workhouse" (72) made up a substantial number of the entries. Cause of death was mentioned quite often and "smallpox" loomed large, frequently associated with both infants and the workhouse. Also where people came from (village or town perhaps) or where they were laid to rest (inside the church "near north door" or "north chancel" etc.), or even what their trade or profession was (if still working) giving many valuable clues to the inhabitants of the town or those in its immediate vicinity.

Sadly, the occasional "No name" coupled with "Travelling woman unknown", "Workhouse unknown" or "A vagrant" showed that burials did occur with no one any the wiser as to who was being interred - not much help if it was one of your ancestors. I was however, warmed by the entry for Joseph Diamond, a "woolcomber" where it read "Honest & industrious".

As a family historian, what struck me particularly about travellers from that period is that wives (often heavily pregnant) regularly travelled with their husband and their first child would quite likely be baptised in whatever town or village it was born. This also applies to burials, so if you have a traveller (including tinkers, engravers, knife grinders, street performers or minstrels) in your family tree, and you cannot find their burial, it is worth extending your search to church registers within a given area from one that is known to you. Remember these people were compelled to travel significant distances to earn a living, even though the roads were often poorly maintained.

¹ Royal College of Surgeons

I was intrigued by unusual entries and found in just 12 years quite an interesting collection of reasons given for death.

ST. MARY THE VIRGIN CHURCH, SAFFRON WALDEN - BURIALS.

Surname	First name	Year	Date	Month	Death/Comment
CARTER	RICHD	1750	19	July	KILLED IN CLEANING A WELL
FINCHAM	JOHN	1755	30	May	KILLED IN CHALK PIT
CHALLICE	MARTHA	1756	24	May	DIED IN CHILD BED

Surname	First name	Year	Date	Month	Death/Comment
KNIGHT	RICHARD	1759	27	April	KILLED BY A WAGGON
SPICER	WILLM	1759	9	December	KILLED BY A WAGGON
CARLTON	ROBERT	1760	31	August	KILLED BY A WAGGON
FRANCIS	JOHN	1762	30	May	A YOUTH-KILLED BY ACCIDENT{I did find a John Francis in the baptism register who would have been 20 years old}
HESSLER	THOMAS	1762	28	June	KILLED BY A WAGGON. Clearly the Highway Code did not apply in the eighteenth century!

Coincidentally I had also been looking at the burials in Stebbing and was struck by the number of accidental deaths so recorded there in less than 2 years.

ST MARY THE VIRGIN CHURCH, STEBBING - BURIALS

Surname	First name	Year	Date	Month	Death/Comment
BARKER	JAMES	1810	6	May	WAS ACCIDENTALLY KILL'D MAY 1ST IN THE PARISH OF BLACK NOTLEY {8 miles away} BY A FALL FROM A WAGGON , THE REAR HIND WHEEL GOING OVER HIS BODY
BYATT	THOMAS	1811	19	October	WAS ACCIDENTALLY KILL'D OCT 16TH BY A WAGGON GOING OVER HIS BODY
SMITH	ELIZA	1811	13	November	AGED 3 YRS - 6 MONTHS DIED IN CONSEQUENCE OF HER CLOATHS ACCIDENTALLY TAKING FIRE
PERRY	JOHN	1811	25	November	WAS ACCIDENTALLY & INSTANTANEOUSLY KILL'D BY A FALL IN A BARN, AND BURIED NOV. 25TH

TED WOODGATE

BROTHERS, BE UNITED, AND YOU WILL BE STRONG

FARM WORKERS' UNIONS IN THE BASILDON AREA 1872-94



Available from the Author Email: tedw1@live.co.uk

Brothers, Be United, and You will be Strong The Farmworkers' Union in the Basildon Area, 1872-94

by Ted Woodgate (ESFH 31643)

Book review by Colleen, Editor

Ted Woodgate is a distinguished historian, with years of experience running courses and lecturing on social and political topics including the history of Essex farm labourers. As the subtitle on the cover of the book states, this is a study of farm workers who joined the National Agricultural Labourers Union (NALU) in the Basildon area in the 1870s and 1880s.

Initially the study describes the reasons for the discontent in the countryside in the 1870's when farm workers found themselves at the 'very bottom of the economic and social hierarchy'. The text proceeds to give the details of the background to the NALU which was formed in Wellesbourne in Warwickshire in May 1872 led by Joseph Arch (1826-1919). Later that year Joseph visited and addressed Essex meetings including one at Codham Hall, Beazley End, near Wethersfield, which was attended by 250 people.

Using newspaper reports Ted has identified names of local union activists including Charles Jay from Beazley End, 'Spiff' Cant from Mount Bures in the north of the county and James Redsell who was present at an assembly in South Ockendon in June 1872.

Ted goes on to describe how he traced the fortune of the South Essex branch of the Union from the pages of The English Labourers' Chronicle (ECL) published weekly until 1894. The book contains several tables which detail individual South Essex branches and their financial contributions made to the NALU covering the years 1877-1884. On inspection they clearly show the magnitude of the decline in the number of branches.

Where possible names of branch officials are identified including David Sage, who appears in the 1881 Census in Kings Road, Brentwood and who played an active part in encouraging Union membership in the area of Fobbing, Stanford-le-Hope, Horndon-on-the-Hill, South Ockendon, and Shenfield. Photographic illustrations include many of the venues used for district meetings including The Victoria Arms in Ongar Road Brentwood, The Wood Cutters Arms Thundersley, and The Chequers Inn High Street Billericay. He also documents the opponents to the trade union and confirms the practice of denying work to NALU members.

This 65-page private publication book is an absolute 'must buy' at £7.50 for both Essex family historians and students of Victorian studies. It gives the reader an understanding as to how the farm workers' union fared against a major agricultural depression and although they lost their strength Arch's union played a major part in the agitation for an extension of the Parliamentary franchise in the counties.

The Little History of Essex

by Judith Williams

Book review by Angela Hillier (ESFH 28397)

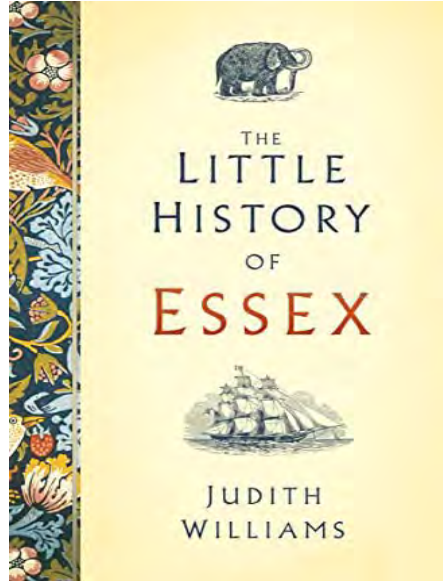
This little book is full of fascinating stories and facts about people and places in Essex from pre-historic times to the modern day with occasional line drawings of buildings of interest, maps and charts. Divided into historic eras it looks into people, places and facts, e.g. Tudor Essex has the topic of “monasteries in Essex” which examines how many there were, where they were and who bought the land at the dissolution, giving a potted history of the main purchasers. The author has looked at large boroughs to small villages and from the aristocracy to the poor so it contains something for everyone.

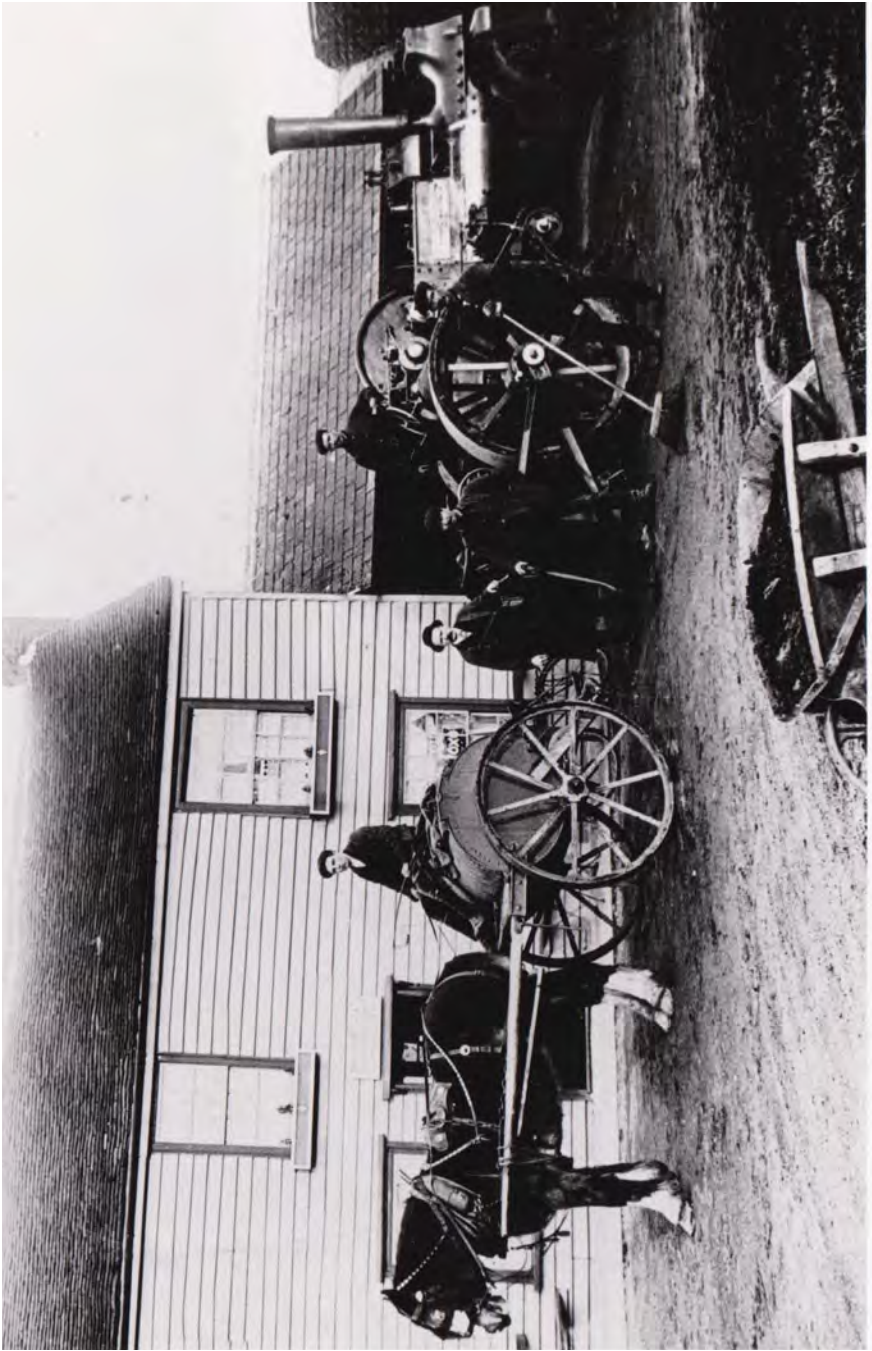
Did you know that in the Domesday book the 3 largest places in Essex were Colchester with 448 households, Barking with 236 and Maldon with 223 while Walton-on-the-Naze had around 125 households and Chelmsford had 4. The first secular witch trials in the country were held at Chelmsford in 1566. Between 1560 and 1700 17 people were accused of witchcraft in Sussex, 52 in Herts, 91 in Kent and 299 in Essex. It can't all have been down to the “witchfinder general”, Matthew Hopkins. The book names several of the Essex women and, for some, says why they were accused and where and how they died as well as information about Matthew Hopkins and his death.

I have no connection with Essex, other than living here for 10 years, and found it a fascinating and easy read, the perfect Christmas or birthday present for those who have everything.

A hardback price £12 published by The History Press in 2017 ISBN 978 0 7509 7041 9. 191 pages with a bibliography and index. (www.thehistorypress.co.uk)

In addition to this book Judith has written other publications about specific places in Essex including Voices of Shoeburyness, Shoeburyness - A History and Wickford - A History.





FORD END THE SPREAD EAGLE



HULLBRIDGE WELLS COTTAGES



LITTLE WALTHAM



31384. THE "LOBSTER SMACK" INN, CANVEY ISLAND.

CANVEY ISLAND THE LOBSTER SMACK INN

Moot Hall Maldon – Project 600

by Victoria George, Manager Moot Hall

www.themoothall.co.uk

The Moot Hall has been at the centre of Maldon life for more than 600 years.

Our Project 600 is researching the stories behind some of those who walked through this building over the last 450 years.

Since the late 1500's until the mid-1900's the Moot Hall housed the Maldon Court. The documents and registers of the cases heard in this court are now located at ERO (Essex Record Office). Our Project 600 is a volunteer project whose work is focused on digitising these court records. This involves us taking a photo of register pages and then transcribing them into Microsoft® WORD to produce a document which can be stored and read at the Moot Hall in our Court Room which is where the registers held at ERO would have originated from.



MOOT HALL IN MALDON HIGH STREET

As this project has developed, we are now creating a database of records which we plan to make available for interested parties to read via our website or when visiting the Moot Hall. All records are sourced with ERO references thus enabling interested parties to check and visit the original documents for themselves.

Our aim is to transcribe all of the Moot Hall's court records which span circa 450 years. The earlier documents are more challenging and we are hopeful, as we share the story of this project with a wider audience, we may be fortunate enough to find some honed expertise willing to volunteer and join the Moot Hall's Project 600 team.

We give a free hand to our volunteer researchers to further investigate records which interest them. Finding out more about the stories and lives of those who found themselves documented in the Maldon Court system. They do this by looking at the



MOOT HALL COURT ROOM

National Newspaper Archive and using recognised family history resources such as Findmypast. This research has uncovered a true insight into the lives of those who walked through the Court Room in a different time. Including a story researched by one of our volunteers, a local school teacher, who found a previous head master of the school she teaches

in today was in court accused of beating a child. Using the actual court transcript, the year 5 – 7 drama students have re-enacted the case and discussed at length how Victorian schooling and punishment differs from that of today. An example as to how we can use history to teach and engage with the next generation of historians.

This and many other stories form part of our Project 600 talk. These stories are also being developed into a series of booklets which will be sold to support the work of the Friends of the Moot Hall Charitable Trust, a not-for-profit organisation.

The Moot Hall's Project 600 gives a voice to those from the past providing a fascinating insight into the lives of those who walked through this space before us.

If you would like to know more about volunteering with the Moot Hall's Project 600 please contact Victoria via email: manager@themoothall.co.uk



BIBLE USED IN THE COURT



THE
MOOT HALL
MALDON

A 40 year Search for Great Uncle Frank (aka Walter Francis Bester)

by Jill Williams (ESFH 1049)

In 1978 when I began researching my family tree my father was a good source of information. One of the family photographs he gave me was taken in the 1930s outside a shop. He told me that apart from himself it showed his uncle Frank and wife Nellie (née Holloway) Bester and their daughter, his cousin, 'Jackie'. Dad also told me that Frank's parents and another uncle had emigrated to Canada and that after the Second World War Jackie married a Canadian Air Force man and went to live in Canada. The photo had been taken at Stanford Rivers Post Office in Essex. When the 1939 survey became available I thought this would solve my problem but it produced more questions than answers as it gave the occupants as Walter Francis Bester, born 5 January 1899 General Shopkeeper - Nellie Tyson (Bester) born 1 February 1899, village shop keeper - Joyce K Holland, single, born 20 May 1920, shop assistant - Doris Caldwell a 14 year old schoolchild and one closed record. How did all these people fit together and where was Jackie? At least I knew some dates of birth now. I also note that 'Frank' (Walter F) has his back to the camera. With hindsight I wonder if that was deliberate!



PICTURE OF POST OFFICE AT STANFORD RIVERS

So it was back to basics and starting again at the beginning, including trying to verify Dad's stories. Some proved to be true and some only partly true but it hasn't been an easy trail to follow. These past few years have been more productive as extra resources have become available, so this is the more complete, if somewhat complicated, life of great uncle 'Frank'.

Frank's father was Walter Beaumont Bester, the eldest of a family of eleven, of which my grandmother was the third child. The family story is that when she was born in

Edmonton, London in February 1881, there was a snowstorm so severe that her father had to climb out of the window of Montefiore Place as the door was blocked. Walter was then 3 years old and the next child, Anthony Cecil, was a year and a half. The weather may have been bad but it may just be a remembrance of some weeks earlier. The Essex Weather Book (Ian Currie, Mark Davison & Bob Ogley 1992) has an account of the 'Worst Blizzard Ever Known' which began on 18 January and produced drifts of snow seven feet deep at Barking. Not until 27 January did the severity slacken.



PICTURE OF MONTEFIORE PLACE

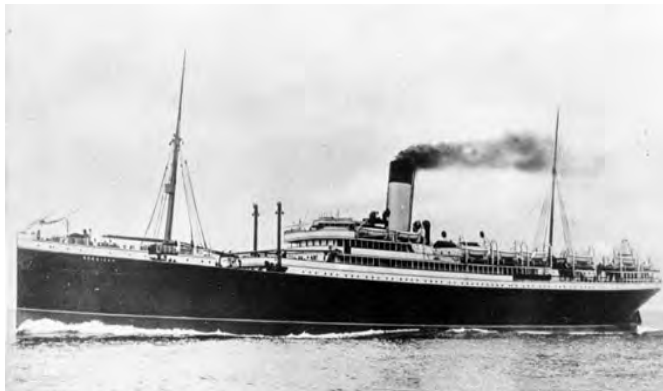
Moving on to Walter's adulthood, in 1891 this 13 year old was employed as a milk boy and still living at home in Vicars Moor Lane, Edmonton in North London. Somehow later, and this is still a mystery, he met Alice Louisa Goodchild who was born in the same year as himself (1878) in Winkfield, Berkshire. In 1881 as a 5 year old only child, she was living in Martins Lane, Winkfield with her parents Francis, 27, a labourer, and 26 year old mother, Louisa (née Soan). She and Walter married near her home at All Souls Church, South Ascot in April 1898. The church is now a Grade II* listed building.



ALL SOULS CHURCH SOUTH ASCOT

The groom was a milkman 'of Stoke Newington' and in 1901 they were still in London, living at 15 Union Road, West Hackney. Now they had a son, uncle 'Frank', actually Walter Francis, whose birth in Hackney Registration District followed promptly after the marriage. However, this was their only child so did Alice suffer some problem connected with the birth?

Something prompted them to emigrate to Canada, travelling on the **SS Corsican** on 21st April 1910. With them was another, younger brother of Walter Beaumont called Harry, then aged 21. The latter's army record (National Archives) tells us that in the First World War he had served in the Machine Gun Corps in the Training Reserve and in the Royal Engineers (army number 84801). He married Alice Greene in Edmonton in 1919 and four years later they emigrated to Canada.



ALLAN LINE SS CORSICAN. SOURCE WIKIPEDIA

In 1910 all three emigrants were said to be Church of England and the British Bonus was allowed (see Note 1). Harry was a butcher and 34 year old Walter said he was a farmer. However, 6 years later in the Canadian Census, when they are residents of 477 Brooklyn Street, St James, Winnipeg, Walter is employed as a 'milk carrier', the same work as he did in England.

Possibly encouraged, yet another brother, Archibald John left England for Canada three years later in April 1913, with his wife Lily Florence and son, Leonard Douglas, born in 1906. They also settled in Winnipeg living two streets away from Walter and Alice where Archibald worked as a labourer in the City Cement Works.

The start of the Great War prompted many men abroad to fight for Great Britain and Walter Francis was just one of them. In the 1916 census he was still living at home and had just been engaged as a farm help. However when he enlisted into the 1st Canadian Lord Strathcona's Force on 6 April 1917 he was employed as a 'moving picture operator'. Fortunately, his army record survived and although he is referred to as both Walter Francis and Walter John his date of birth is given as 5 January 1899 confirming it is him. His physical description was of a man 5 foot 8¼ inches tall with a fair complexion, blue eyes and medium hair (brown). He also made his will shortly afterwards dated 15 May leaving everything to his mother. As she was also described as his next of kin I wondered initially if his father had died. But no, Walter Beaumont (sic) Bester was alive, not dying until 11 November 1949 at Lorne, Winnipeg aged 65. We assume this is the Walter F's father, the age is right. He was certainly alive in 1937 (see later).



WALTER BEAUMONT AND ALICE LOUISA
BESTER, TAKEN IN CANADA

an essential visit for me. Early in 1918 Munnings was sent to the Canadian Cavalry Brigade commanded by General Jack Seeley and it is the painting of this soldier on his horse, Warrior which is probably the one best known to the public. Looking at others showing columns of mounted soldiers set me wondering if Frank was one of



CANADIAN CONVALESCENT HOSPITAL, BEAR WOOD,
WOKINGHAM, BERKSHIRE

the anonymous figures but his time in France was short. By 12 August he was in the Canadian Hospital, Camels Head Section, Southern General Hospital, Devonport where a large wound to his left buttock and another in his right calf required treatment. After this he was transferred to the Canadian Convalescent Hospital, Bear Wood, Wokingham, Berkshire. He was discharged on 4 October 1918 and embarked on **HMT Melita** to return to Canada on 10 December.

He arrived at St John's, Newfoundland on 18 December and was demobbed on 23 January 1919 to 609 Garfield Street, Winnipeg (his former address had been crossed through). We must assume from this that he was no longer fit for active service and this might have been a relief to any serving 20 year old as one report in 1918 said

'there were dead men and horses scattered all over the areas'. He could now resume civilian life. Perhaps he was lucky but even with the extensive carnage of the First World War some families, of which the Besters were one, suffered no fatal casualties. (see Note 2).

A year later he married. This information was a recent find and his bride was Nellie Alice Hollingsworth. So it seems Dad's memory was correct about the name of Nellie but wrong about Holloway, but why then in the 1939 survey is she down as Nellie Tyson (Bester)? We will see later. The marriage was in Winnipeg on 19 July 1919 and two children, both daughters, followed. Joyce Hollingsworth Bester was born on 20 May 1920 and Jacqueline Victoria on 24 May 1922. They are Joyce (not in the photo at Stanford Rivers Post Office) and Jackie (who was). A Canadian connection found by the Essex Family History Society unfortunately did not reply to me and I was concerned since they had the latter down as daughter of Nellie Hollingsworth and Thomas Bester. They also say on Ancestry that Nellie died about 1957 whereas she is alive until 1958.

We can pick up the family in two Censuses, the Manitoba Census in 1921 and the 1926 Prairie Provinces Census. In the first of these their address is Lorne Section 36, Township 6, Range 8 Meridian 10 and in the second they are living in Macdonald Township, Lorne. In 1921 Walter is a 23 year old farmer. With him are Nellie, 23, Joyce 1, Louisa 46, (mother) and Louisa Goodchild, 68, grandmother and widow. Quite a family, for it seems that Walter's mother's mother has also come to Canada. She is not with them in 1926, just Walter, 27 and wife Nellie both born in England, daughters Joyce and Jacqueline aged 6 and 4 and Walter's mother Alice, 57, also English born. A Louis Goodchild died in Canada on 25 March 1935 at St James (Winnipeg) with a date of birth of 2 August 1855 (Manitoba Vital Records) so this is likely to be her. Nellie is down as having arrived in Canada in 1919 so there are two questions. Did Nellie come out to marry Walter, having met him in England (again how did they meet) and where was Walter B, father of Walter F as he did not appear in either Census?

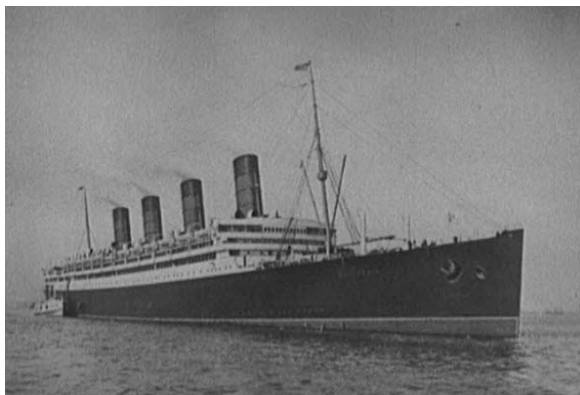
There is (just to make life difficult) another Nellie Hollingsworth in Canada. As a daughter of John she appears in censuses and is of English origins (not birth) but I cannot decipher her place of birth – it might be Quebec. However, there is another, a Nellie Alice, born in Hackney in 1899. Her father was Herbert Simeon Hollingsworth, a Sub Postmaster. He had retired by 1936 and was living at Finchley but a 1937 Kelly's Directory lists the Stanford Rivers Post Office as being kept by Herbert S Hollingsworth. He was still in Stanford Rivers in 1939 and was buried there on 1 October 1942 (Stanford Rivers Memorial Inscriptions) aged 70. Is this the connection with Stanford Rivers?

There is no other information about Walter and Nellie in Canada until Walter departs from Montreal in September 1937 and arrives in London on 16 October. This seems to be consistent with being in Stanford Rivers from then on as a Directory has him resident in Essex c1936. His daughter Joyce might have already been in England as she arrived on 24 June 1936 as a 19 year old student and gave her place of stay as Stanford Rivers. Has she come to visit her maternal grandfather? She must have

stayed as she appears in the 1939 survey as Shop Assistant at the Post Office. After the war she eventually married G W Holland at Epping Registration District in early 1949, which explains why the name of Holland appears in the 1939 survey.

Jacqueline also came to England as she arrived with her grandparents, Walter and Alice, on 30 October 1937 as a 16 year old student. In 1949 she is working in the NAAFI on an RAF Station at Burnett Avenue, Bedfordshire (see Note 3) before setting off for Canada on 11 July. She was then described as Canteen Manageress and her intended country of residence was given as England, so one presumes she meant to return. She sailed on the **RMS Aquitania** from Southampton to Halifax, Nova Scotia.

However, rather than marrying a Canadian Air Force man as Dad thought she did, it seems to be a minister of the church, Rev. Edwin Francis Eaton. Her death occurred on 11 June 2009 in New Brunswick and she was buried in St Marks (Anglican) Cemetery, Sunbury County. An obituary appeared in the Daily Gleaner on 18 and 25 June.



THE RMS AQUITANIA. SOURCE WIKIPEDIA

After the Second World War an Alice Bester arrived from Canada on 11 April 1948, also on the Aquitania. As she gives her intended place of stay as Stanford Rivers, I assume this is Alice (née Goodchild). She was then 72 and retired. As an Alice Bester death is recorded in Lambeth RD in the last quarter of 1954, the location of Walter and his second wife, I assume Alice never returned to Canada.

I assume Walter F and Nellie A divorced for they both marry again. Nellie married Robert Tyson on the first quarter of 1951 (Epping Registration District) and they moved to the north of England. Nellie died on 2 October 1958 at Park Hospital, Davyhulme and in her will left £2200-19-2d to Robert. Her address was 43, Barton Road, Davyhulme, Lancs. This explains the Tyson entry in 1939.

By 1944 Walter F's address was in London, in Waterloo and by 1945 he was in Lambeth where he also married again in 1951, but in the third quarter, to André Henriette Louise Trochet, in Lambeth. At the time of Walter's death on 13 April 1964 they were residents of 13, Mead Row, Lambeth, this being stated in the grant of Probate. He left £1908 to his widow; the latter died on 17 October 2018 at Gravesend.

There are still details to clarify but I feel I have made progress on this one side branch of the family who criss-crossed the Atlantic, tried several ways of earning a living and

none of whom I ever met. In fact it has come as a surprise to me while doing this research that many lived relatively close to my parents but they were hardly ever mentioned, and as far as I can remember, never visited.

Note 1. British Bonus. The Canadian Government Immigration Branch paid a commission to steamship company agents in the United Kingdom for each suitable immigrant who purchased a ticket to Canada. Generally, the person themselves did not receive payment.

Note 2. Of the eleven children two of the three girls died very young and two of the boys died in their teens. Walter B (nicknamed Wol) and Archibald (Arch) remained in Canada but the English residents - Harry (1899-?), Frank Harold (1892-1954) and Sydney Smith (1896-1957) also were in the British Army in the Great War. The medal cards for them are in the National Archives, although the most certain attribution is for Sydney S Bester Private 36748. Harry, I believe, was Army Service Corps Private S4/158025, TRBn TR/10/45429, MGC 84801, RE WR/100786. Frank Harold (who my father believed trained Alsatian dogs on the Western Front) could be in the Royal Scots No. 21179 as his discharge address was to Barrowell Green, the same road he was living in when he died. Anthony Cecil (1879-1945) does not have a medal card. Harry married an Alice Greene in 1919 and although they went back to Canada in 1923 (as shown by the Passenger Lists) they returned to England in September 1933 (I found this written in pencil inside a drawer of an old kitchen unit when clearing my parent's house and as an entry in my father's diary). They remained in England appearing in the 1939 survey in Enfield and I believe he died in 1975.

Note 3. The RAF Station was RAF Henlow and its history appears on the Wikipedia page https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/RAF_Henlow

In the Second World War Hawker Hurricanes were assembled there having come from the factory operated by the Canadian Car and Foundry in Fort William, Ontario Canada. 1,000 Hurricanes (about 10% of the total) were built by the Canadian Car and Foundry organisation. Henlow was also used as a repair base for many aircraft types. Could this have been an added attraction for Jacqueline?

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Student Project Creates Accessible Database of Canada's First Newspapers

by Colleen, Editor

The University of Toronto announced in September 2022 that researchers are providing valuable insight into Canadian history by creating an accessible free database of the nation's first newspapers. It is hoped that the project will be online in 2023. "Early Modern Canadian Newspapers Online" is a collection of newspapers from the second half of the eighteenth century – from 1752-1810 – printed in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, Quebec and Ontario that may interest family historians many of whom had ancestors that travelled to that part of the world. More details in an article on the University of Toronto website at <https://bit.ly/3RJ70A9>

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Peculiar Essex Names!

by Colleen, Editor.

Found on www.findmypast.co.uk

Death of Fish Pool Neville (Ongar 1837).

Death of Easy Pease, aged 80 (Billericay 1889).

Death of Methuselah Shonk aged 66 (Romford 1902).

Death of Valentine Card (Chelmsford 1993). (There were a couple of middle names which I have omitted).

Agriculture in the Chelmsford Area

by Stephen Norris

Introduction by Colleen, Editor

In this final part of Stephen's article, covering the history of agriculture in the Chelmsford area, he looks at the rise and decline of the Essex Agricultural Show and the closure of Chelmsford's animal market.

He details the development of the fruit growing industry in Essex led by the Seabrook family and the continuing success of Marriage's, the Chelmsford millers.

He touches on agricultural education facilities based at Writtle and the development of Writtle College known today as Writtle College University which offers an extensive range of educational qualifications and produces leaders in land-based industries.

Part 5

The Essex Agricultural Show

During the period between WW1 and WW2 the Essex Agricultural Show had difficulty maintaining its importance but still survived. The 1922 show was held at Chelmsford. Each year the show was built from nothing on a different site. In 1927 it was held again in Chelmsford, this time at Hylands Park, but attendance was hit by the weather. Despite £1,500 being raised by donations, a loss of £600 had to be carried forward. Hylands however was seen as the ideal site because of the ample facilities for parking. By the 1930s each show had an enormous range of machinery which the typical farm labourer would never have seen before. By 1938 attendance was almost 40,000, with many brought by motor buses from all over the county.

The first Essex Show after the Second World War was held at Hylands. Despite rain and mud 20,000 people turned up causing traffic jams for miles around. In 1952 the show was also held at Chelmsford and 35,000 people turned up on the first day. The 1953 show was held at Springfield but crowds were again reduced because of bad weather. Consideration was given to making Springfield the permanent site for the show but the town council refused to recommend to Essex County Council that the Essex Agricultural Society be allowed to use the site because it was needed for housing. Boreham airfield was also considered as a permanent site. After the show made a big loss in 1955 at Halstead, the search continued for a permanent site in the area of the county town. The show still retained its popularity among farm workers of which there were still 30,000 in the county. Every year the machinery agents and corn merchants were generous with their hospitality. This was not limited to trial rides on tractors, and free three and four course lunches were not uncommon.

The Show finally found a permanent home on a 158-acre site at Great Leighs. It was bought in 1956 and the first show was held there in 1958. Unfortunately, the curse

of the show, bad weather struck again, and the crowd was limited to 15,000 on the first day. By 1962 the crowds had reached 50,000, the best since 1949. For 1966 the show was switched to weekends to attract more non-farming people. In 1988 the addition of a Sunday meant that attendances topped 100,000 for the first time, but the show still lost money. The Essex Agricultural Society decided to mortgage the showground after bankers demanded action on a quarter of a million-pound overdraft. The site was bought by the Essex Farmers' Union, with half the proceeds of the sale of their New London Road premises. Unfortunately, the show was again hit by bad weather in 1994 and 1995, resulting in the site being put up for sale for the second time in five years. Thirty thousand pounds had to be advanced by E.C.C. to ensure the 1996 show went ahead. During 1997 John Holmes, an equestrian eventer, bought the site and in 1999 took over the running of the show. In 2002 the show was finally axed after 134 years.

The site is now the home of Chelmsford City Racecourse.

Chelmsford Market

In 1945 the Chelmsford cattle market was being criticised by farmers and the public for its position and lack of space. It added to the traffic congestion in the town. Initially a move to a site on the Victoria Road was vetoed by the government even though it was agreed that Chelmsford was one of the worst markets for 'attested cattle'. A new market was not actually built until 1961. No longer did the cattle come to market on foot but in single or double-decker lorries. "The cattle drovers are the same rough long coated unshaven noisy lot their fathers were." In the late 1980s a major facelift was planned for the covered market which caused considerable opposition. The modernisation was not finally carried out until 1993. Later the livestock market was moved again to a five million pound out of town site on the Boreham interchange. It however was smaller than the Victoria Road site and shared facilities with a car auction. In 1996 the cattle trade collapsed after the onset of mad cow disease. As a result cattle prices at the livestock market dropped by a third. This proved the final straw for the market and it ceased trading in June 1999.

Writtle College University

After the second war the War Agricultural Executive didn't move out of the Institute at Writtle until 1948, by which time one hundred and five students had enrolled. The farm was started with field trials of the main crops. A dairy herd of fifty-five Friesian cows was established and a new turkey farm built. Commercial fruit farming was started and a vineyard planted in 1959. Despite extra hostels and halls of residence shortage of space was an increasing problem at the college in the 1950s. The 1960s saw further expansion and a four-storey block built to accommodate the now two hundred and fifty students. The Hubert Ashton Recreation Centre was named after the Chelmsford M.P. because of his support for the college. In the 1960s all the students were finding employment. The Institute was renamed the Agricultural College in the 1970s. An increase in degree courses and the expansion of research by contract, involving increasing links with industry, occurred during the latter part of the century. The gardens were developed as a teaching resource and in 1986 the

staff began working on an arboretum at Hylands. When the college started a farm shop, local nurserymen complained of unfair competition. In 2006 it was announced that the college was in serious financial difficulties despite being rated third out of seventeen agricultural colleges nationwide. Fears were voiced regarding the likely effect on the village if the College were to close. In 2009 however, multimillion pound plans were announced for the college including a new sports hall to be built on green belt land. The College celebrated 120 years of existence in 2012 and in 2016 acquired University College status.

Nowadays the University is linked to media celebrities including Jimmy Doherty who was appointed Chancellor in 2022 and the celebrated gardener Alan Titchmarsh who previously acted as a patron.

Fruit Growing

With regard to fruit growing in the Mid Essex area in the inter-war period, the major firm was W. Seabrook & Sons, which started in Boreham, but had also established itself in Great Leighs. In the 1880s, after two years of investigating business opportunities and thinking of emigrating to the USA, the elder son William Seabrook pioneered fruit growing in this part of Essex as a diversion from the depression in mainstream farming. Due to the cheapness of land in Essex compared with America, costs were considerably below those in the U.S.

Seabrook himself designed a fruit farm plough which reduced hand labour with the garden fork and hoe. By the 1920s he was conscious of the need to spray the crops. The first grading and sizing machine to be used anywhere in Britain was erected at Seabrook's Chantry Farm. Later the larger packing shed at Little Leighs Hall was the largest anywhere in Europe at the time. After a time, there were improvements in the spraying operation and by 1934 the first automatic one-man sprayer came onto the scene. Seabrook introduced bee houses because bees were needed to pollinate the crops. Boreham was the centre for fruit tree raising. Trees were lifted and sent to all parts of the country. His first book 'Modern Fruit Growing' went through nine editions. Seabrooks became particularly well known for its variety of blackcurrants. The firm was a large employer in Boreham and the Leighs. In Boreham between the wars about thirty families lived in houses owned by the firm but many also came from Chelmsford to work on the fruit farms.

W.Seabrook & Sons Ltd is still listed as growing vegetables and melons in 2022.

Pre and Post WW2 Farming

The inter-war period saw labourers continue to leave farm work in all the local villages. In many cases they just went to work in the now sizeable engineering firms in the town. Traditional craftsmen were also often under pressure. In Great and Little Leighs for example these craftsmen were still functioning but as in other villages, the blacksmith was finding it a struggle to survive. The depression during the 1930s hit the villages hard and as elsewhere there was a big increase in poaching.

The demands of food production in WW2 gave a massive boost to farmers but farm workers were not preserved from call up so there was an immediate shortage of

workers. Five thousand farm workers left the county for the war. Schoolboys on their holidays and Italian prisoners of war helped locally but this was not enough. Boys from the grammar school worked at harvest time. The Women's Land Army were drafted in large numbers. In the county this was organised from the new Writtle Institute. All derelict land was commandeered by the War Agricultural Executive Committee but was not handed back immediately after the war. Land Tribunals had to establish who owned what. The Chelmsford area was one of 13 established in the county. Every farm was visited by the Ministry to gauge its potential. The War Agricultural Executive used its powers to reclaim over a thousand acres from building estates in the Chelmsford area for growing crops. Around Boreham airfield, like other airfields in the county, the land was intensively farmed. The Executive directed the digging of four thousand miles of ditches in the county as a whole. As elsewhere the Chelmsford public made a valuable contribution by growing vegetables.

Pasture was halved in favour of arable farming. WW2 saw 144 thousand tons of wheat produced per year in the county compared with a peak of 162 thousand in WW1.

WW2 saw a big decline in the number of horses and an increasing move towards mechanisation.

The new Writtle Institute played a major role in 'Dig for Victory' advising on soils, cultivation, cropping and pests. Women came to the Institute for short three-week courses. As in the first war most staff were seconded to the War Agricultural Executive.

In the immediate post war period agriculture was very prosperous with increasing guaranteed prices. The relative wages of those workers who remained improved. Working hours that had often been above 60 hours in the inter-war period were reduced to 39 by 1990. By the end of the twentieth century the practice of tied cottages had ended but the arrival of commuters to the villages around Chelmsford had raised rents way above what farm workers could afford. In general, however, the later part of the century was a good one for farm workers. During the 1980s farm workers received a wage increase twice the rate of inflation. This didn't prevent local farm workers following up the increasing trend of protest. In the later years of the century the membership of the Essex Farmers Union drastically declined as the size of farms increased and the number of farmers fell.

Amalgamations of farms were led by orders for large quantities of high-quality food. Vertical integration also occurred where big commercial concerns took over contract farmers.

WW2 had seen a decline of 5,000 horses in the county but there were still 3,000 in 1960. It took another twenty years for tractors and combine harvesters to fully take over. Massive tractors increasingly crossed the fields. Combines took time to become popular requiring fields to be enlarged and the countryside stripped of many hedges.

After WW2 the Chelmsford area continued to be well known for market gardening, although it was generally on a smaller scale compared with the southern part of Essex. The region specialised in forced crops including onions, Brussel sprouts, early greens, radishes, carrots, celery, runner beans, asparagus and the first early potatoes. There was a big increase in local turkey production after the war. Pig rearing, after previously being popular, decreased towards the end of the twentieth century.

W. & H. Marriage and Sons Ltd.

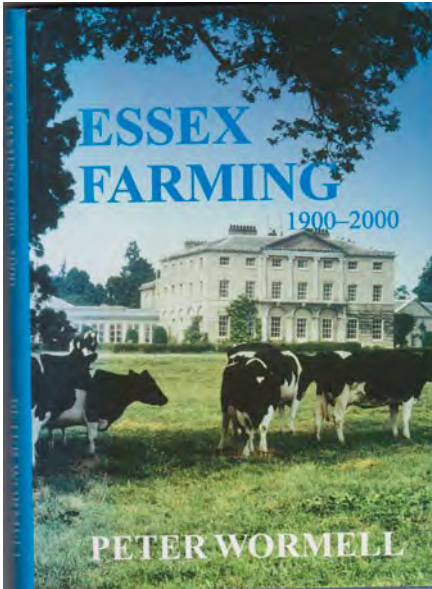
The mills belonging to the Marriage family escaped damage during the WW2, even though the Chelmer Mill was in real danger because it was so close to the Hoffmann factory, a manufacturer of ball bearings and a target for the German bombers. Henry Marriage died in 1938 and Croxtons Mill at Little Waltham was sold along with other parts of the estate. In the 1950's Marriages had to expand their silos at Chelmer Mill to hold much more grain. By 1971 1200 tons could be held at the mill. Most of the flour went to master bakers, usually family businesses. W. & H. Marriage & Sons Ltd were successful in the packeted, domestic, white flour trade where there were still many small grocers to sell to. When the supermarkets took over the firm concentrated on producing specialised flours for the 'more discriminating housewife'. In 1970 a new animal feed mill was built replacing the old one at Moulsham Mill. It used a Christy and Norris hammer mill but by the end of the century the firm was using computers to calculate the amounts of different raw materials needed for the feed. Marriages separated the farming business from milling in 1960. Its farms later became known as Brick Farms Limited but the two businesses remained closely intertwined. Towards the end of the century 'Cash and Carry' warehouses were opened at Colchester as well as Chelmsford for orders of animal feeds and pet foods. In the early 1980's Marriages closed Moulsham Mill and it was refurbished to be used by a charity operating small businesses, mainly arts and crafts. Forty jobless people worked to restore the building, which is still owned by the Marriage family. Despite deaths of three family directors, three young members of the Marriage family became the sixth generation of the family to become involved with the business. In 2012 the firm bought a second feed mill this time in Lincolnshire. Hannah Marriage featured on one of Michael Portillo's TV programmes on British railway journeys because of the historic importance of railway links to the firm, particularly Chelmer Mill.

Agriculture in Essex, post the year 2000

At the start of the new millennium rural areas bore no resemblance to the tight knit communities of a hundred years before. Commuters with their ability to pay hitherto astronomic prices for village cottages sounded the death knell for many rural institutions such as the village shop. The green belt meant however, that although villages such as Great Baddow and Danbury became absorbed into the urban spread of Chelmsford, others such as Writtle have managed to retain their identity.

Note from Colleen, Editor

For readers who are interested in the history of Essex farming I highly recommend the book by Peter Wormell 'Essex Farming 1900-2000' which details the 'fame



and influence of Essex farming and the contribution it provided to the 20th century which no other county could equal'. It includes lots of historic pictures of farming scenes in Essex. Published in 1999 it is still available from second-hand book sellers. ISBN 0 9525903 2 8.

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A Reminder

Keep checking The Eureka Partnership website for the latest news regarding their booklet releases covering Essex records including Non Conformist, Poor Law Union, and Miscellaneous. Their booklets cover other counties as well!

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BARKING and ROMFORD
WESLEYAN METHODIST CIRCUITS



BAPTISMS 1835 – 1922

Transcribed and published by
The Eureka Partnership

Barking and Romford Wesleyan Methodist Circuits - Baptisms 1835 - 1922

Extracts for Essex from Lewis's Topographical Dictionary of England published in 1835

Selected by Angela Hillier (ESFH 28397)

Based in London, Samuel Lewis (circa 1782-1865) was an editor and publisher of Topographical Dictionaries and Maps of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Second-hand copies of these books are still available today and some editions have been digitised see www.ancestry.co.uk and the Internet Archive <https://archive.org>

Althorne.

This Parish is situated on the estuary of the river Crouch, from the overflowing of which the lowlands are protected by very strong embankments, nine feet in height, constructed by labourers from Holland, whose descendants are still resident here.

Ballingdon anciently Brunton.

Owing to the decay of the ancient parochial church, the village of Ballingdon, which was previously only a chapelry in the parish of Brunton, became the head of the parish, and now gives name to the whole. The inhabitants now resort to the church of All Saints, Sudbury, and contribute towards the church rate of that parish.

Springfield.

The convict gaol for the county is situate here, and contains fourteen divisions, day-rooms, and airing-yards, two reception cells, an infirmary, and a lazaretto (with an airing-yard to each), and eight tread-wheels, a pump worked by two cranks, two capstans, one of Hase's patent machines and three of Richmond's, for hard labour in solitary confinement; and a building has also been lately erected for the reception of vagrants, consisting of four rooms and an airing-yard, capable of holding conveniently 48 prisoners. Dr. Goldsmith composed his "Deserted Village" whilst residing at a farm-house nearly opposite the church. Joseph Strutt, the engraver and antiquary, was born here in 1749; he died in 1802.

Stanway.

A number of large bones and other remains, probably of elephants brought over by Claudius in 43, was found here in 1764, lying in a stratum of sea sand and shells.

West Tilbury.

The parish is bounded on the south by the Thames, and lies directly opposite to Gravesend, with which town and the interior of Kent there is a constant traffic, by means of ferry-boats stationed here for the conveyance of foot passengers, cattle, carriages, and merchandise. Tilbury Fort, partly in this parish, and partly in that of Chadwell adjoining, was originally a block-house, built in the reign of Hen VIII.; but after the memorable attack of the Dutch fleet, in 1667, upon the English shipping in the Medway, it was converted into a regular fortification, to which considerable additions

have since been made. It is encompassed by a deep wide fosse, and its ramparts present several formidable batteries of heavy ordinance, particularly towards the river. It contains comfortable barracks, and other accommodations for the garrison, which at present consists of a fort-major and a detachment of invalids. In a chalk hill near the village are several caverns, termed Danes' Holes curiously constructed of stone, being narrow at the entrance, and very spacious at the depth of 30 feet; and some traces of the camp formed in the neighbourhood, to oppose the invasion of the Spanish Armada, during the reign of Elizabeth, are still visible. A medicinal spring was discovered in 1737, which is beneficial in haemorrhages, scurvy, diabetes, and some other complaints.

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Corrections from Issue No.178 of the HISTORIAN December 2022

On page 46 an incorrect email address was published for Simon Mynott (ESFH 416) it should have read annrosslyn08@waitrose.com

On page 53 - Unexpected Burials in Newport Cemetery - in paragraph 4 the date should read 1928 not 1923. Seven lines from the bottom of the article - James Charles W. Hoseason his date of birth was omitted - he was born in 1967.

Page 74 Tragedy at Manor House report. Martin apologies to all parties regarding the name of the train in the first paragraph. It was not the Flying Scotsman.

The Commonplace Book of Jane Bunting (née Seabrook) (1813-1888)

by Colleen, Editor

Some of our members are very fortunate to inherit a great deal of information about their ancestors through family heirlooms including photograph albums or what are known as 'Commonplace' books. So it is with Mary Rix (ESFH 27126) who not only has in her possession two wonderful family photograph albums, but also has a Commonplace book created by her 2 x great grandmother Jane Bunting. This 'book' comprises of a number of looseleaf different coloured paper pages between undecorated homemade covers. Detailed on the pages are gems of information collected by her ancestor including poems, all dating from around the 1830s, penned by various members of her family including one, which is a favourite of Mary's, written by Joshua Nunn which I have reproduced on page 68.

Commonplace (or Commonplaces) books may include drawings but usually include writings copied or original, covering a vast range of subjects. Often included is poetry, copies of proverbs and sayings of all sorts, religious and philosophical thoughts, legal and mathematical formulae. Jottings can include medical tips and household hints, details of family events, observations about neighbours or the local community, royal snippets – in fact any information the creator wants to detail. This practice of compiling knowledge in books has been evident since the earliest times and examples of Commonplace books survive from mediaeval times. The creation of these books by 'ordinary people' was a common pastime in the nineteenth century.

Using a few of the photos in Mary's albums and the Commonplace book created by Jane, the following is a glimpse into the world of Jane Bunting (née Seabrook) living in Essex during the 1800s, about 200 years ago.

Jane Seabrook was born in Boreham on 4th January 1813 and baptised at the local parish church. She was one of a large family born to Thomas and Ann Seabrook. In 1837 she married John Bunting and by 1851 they had moved to Tolleshunt D'Arcy where John farmed Tolleshunts Farm which had been in his family since the 1700s.

If we follow the census information, we learn that all his life John was a farmer. One can only image the life Jane had as a farmer's wife but we know she had time to create her book. Maybe she got involved with the lives of the labourers her husband employed. From the census details we learn about the acreage John farmed. The census also details the number of labourers he employed. In 1851 he was farming 284 acres employing 16 men and 6 boys. Ten years later he was farming 400 plus acres employing 23 men and 3 boys. However by 1871 his land had decreased to 280 acres and he was employing 15 men and 2 boys and finally in 1881, two years before his wife Jane died, he was employing 7 men and 3 boys. John Bunting of Tolleshunt D'Arcy died on 29th August 1893. A few weeks later Probate on 28th September named John Bunting farmer and Mary Ann Nunn, widow, as the beneficiaries. The

effects amounted to £1055. Both John and his wife can be found on the ESFH database of MI's and were buried at St Nicholas Tolleshunt D'Arcy.



JANE BUNTING NÉE SEABROOK



JOHN BUNTING

Connections to the house named 'The Chestnuts' in Boreham

Here is the signature of John Seabrook who was a brother of Jane's and who lived in 'The Chestnuts' in Boreham which was a butcher's shop. These days a butcher's shop stands on a site adjoining the garden of this house, near the junction of Plantation and Main Road in Boreham.

A local Boreham history book published in the year 2000 states:-

"Apparently this property was connected with a butchery business when, in 1573, Philip Prior applied to the Chelmsford Quarter Sessions for a licence to keep an ale house. It was, of course, situated on the London-to-Harwich turnpike road long before the surface was properly macadamised under the supervision of James MacAdam in the early 19th century. From 1635 to 1675 it seems probable that the property was in the hands of the Ingram family and subsequently the Wilshires. In 1769 Elizabeth Runsell*, who was beneficiary of a Wilshire will, married William Seabrook, a butcher. They lived and prospered in this house until William's death in 1823. It was then taken over by John, son of Thomas Seabrook of Brent Hall, until 1847. John Seabrook married Hannah Bunting. After John's death it was run by Hannah Seabrook and her children". **



HANNAH SEABROOK NÉE BUNTING



JOHN SEABROOK

Another descendant also called John Seabrook became the owner in 1865 and he married Ellen Rice in 1883.

SEABROOK—RICE.—July 17th, at St. Andrew's Church, Boreham, by the Venerable Archdeacon of Essex, John Seabrook, of The Chestnuts, Boreham, to Ellen (Nellie), third daughter of Mr. J. Rice, of Ford-street, Aldham.

Below is the public announcement of the death of one of their children born 1889 and who died in 1890.

SEABROOK.—Dec. 26th (very suddenly), Catherina Elizabeth (Little Tiny Mite), daughter of John and Ellen Seabrook, of the Chestnuts, Boreham. c184



THE CHURCH OF ST. ANDREW
BOREHAM

The Poetry of Joshua Nunn

Joshua Nunn was Vice-deputy Consul-General of the United States in London for 25 years and a Grand Master of the Freemasons. In 1882 he married Mary Ann Bunting, Jane's sister. He lived at Bocking Hall near Braintree and died in October 1886 at the age of 60.

1882. Marriage solemnized *14 Decemr* in the Parish of *Tolleshunt D'Arcy* in the County of *Essex*

No.	When Married.	Name and Surname.	Age.	Condition.	Rank or Profession.	Residence at the Time of Marriage.	Father's Name and Surname.	Rank or Profession of Father.
211	<i>July 13.</i>	<i>Joshua Nunn</i>	<i>full</i>	<i>widower</i>	<i>Gentleman.</i>	<i>Bentons Row London, W.</i>	<i>Joshua Nunn</i>	<i>Squire</i>
		<i>Mary Ann Bunting</i>	<i>full</i>	<i>Spinster</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>Tolleshunt D'Arcy</i>	<i>John Bunting</i>	<i>Farmer</i>

Married in the *Parish Church* according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the *Established Church* by me, *Rev. Vernon Graves*

This Marriage was solemnized between us, *Joshua Nunn* in the Presence of us, *John Bunting* *Allen David Nunn* *Mundy* *Vicar*

1882 MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE OF JOSHUA NUNN TO MARY ANN BUNTING
SOURCE: ANCESTRY.CO.UK

NUNN—BUNTING.—On 13th July, at St. Nicholas, Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Essex, by the Rev. Robert Vernon Graves, vicar, Joshua Nunn, Esq., late Vice-Consul General of the United States of America, at London, to Mary, youngest daughter of John Bunting, Esq., of Tolleshunt D'Arcy.



JOSHUA NUNN

In the early 1880s Joshua Nunn added the most beautiful painted east window to the church, St Nicholas in Tolleshunt D'Arcy in memory of his mother and the Perry family who had lived in the parish some 200 years. The window contained 27 figures and was excellently drawn and painted by Mr A Gibbs. I understand that the window is still in place today.

On the following page is reproduced a poem dated 1856 and written at Tolleshunt D'Arcy which appears in Jane Bunting's Commonplace book.

Written at Solleshunt, D'Arcy. 1856.

Upon giving up - Brook House Farm - to Mr Bunting,
to whom, with his beloved wife and family, this poor attempt
to acknowledge their affectionate kindness and disinterested fran-
-ship is humbly dedicated by Joshua Sims -

Oh! must I take a last fond look,
A lingering last farewell;
Of the home where my forefathers dwell
The spot I loved so well.

Whose hands and hearts in gladness joined
So welcome and so true,
Pleasure and joys both unalloyed,
That in childhood only live.

The grave has swept them all away,
That graced my early time
And now 'tis only strangers greet,
These wandering steps of mine.

And is that home thus lost to me!
Are all its memories fled,
So all its olden lineaments;
I sink with the honoured dead.

Ho! ho! a cherished friend still holds,
The land and homestead dear
Where my Grandsons both lived and died
For many a changing year.
And grateful to those cherished ones,
Who still the old home tend,
I dedicate these simple lines
These thanks with blessings blend.

FUNERAL OF MR. JOSHUA NUNN
AT TOLLESHUNT D'ARCY.

On Monday last the remains of the late Mr. Joshua Nunn, of Bocking Hall, Braintree (whose decease was recorded in last week's *Essex Standard*), were interred in the quiet Churchyard of Tolleshunt D'Arcy, amidst signs of general mourning. The body left Bocking Hall in a funeral car at noon, followed by the carriage of the deceased, and two other carriages, containing the chief mourners, and arrived at D'Arcy punctually at three o'clock. Here the *cortège* was met by the Vicar of the parish, the Rev. R. V. O. Graves, and the principal residents of the district, together with a Deputation representing the Essex Freemasons, of which Order Mr. Nunn had been a distinguished member. On reaching the Churchyard, the *cortège* entered in the following order:—

Essex Freemasons.—W. Bro. Thomas J. Ralling, P.G. Sec.; W. Bro. J. J. Cavill, P.P.G.D., P.M. 1312, S.W. 2154; W. Bro. E. H. Inman, P.M. 1312, Sec. 2154; W. Bro. Richd. Clowes, P.M. & Sec. 650, P.P.G.S.W.; W. Bro. John J. C. Turner, P.M. 51, P.P.G.O.; W. Bro. Thos. Malyu, P.M. & Sec. 1312; Brothers James Fuller, Isaac Claydon, J. Rankin, H. Suckling, J. Bradbury, T. K. Moore, and John Hutley, all of 1312; J. Hudson, 1024; W. Rudrum, S.D. 1977; and J. Grout, 1977.

THE BODY.

The mourners, walking two abreast, as follows:—

Mr. John Bunting,	Mr. Collett,
Father-in-law.	Brother-in-law.
Mrs. Payne (niece)	and her husband.
Mr. John Bunting, jun.,	Mrs. Conrath.
Brother-in-law (exr.).	
Mr. Henry Bunting,	Mr. Thomas Bunting,
Brother-in-law (exr.).	Brother-in-law.
Mr. John Seabrook.	Dr. Harrison (Braintree),
	Medical Attendant.
Mr. Johnson (solicitor).	Mr. Frigout,
	Chief Clerk U.S. Consulate.
Mr. W. A. Baskcomb,	Mr. Atkinson.
Chief Clerk to H.R.H. the Prince of Wales.	

Deputation from the Richmond Lodge, No. 2032, of which deceased was a Founder, viz.:—
W. Bro. W. R. Phillips, W.M., bearing a handsome floral wreath; R. E. Blasby, P.M.; and W. F. Reynolds, Treas.

Mr. H. W. Mason and Mr. T. Bedingfield, personal friends—each bearing a floral wreath;

And the following local residents:—Messrs. Benj. Page, R. C. Seabrook, T. Sadd, C. Sanders, Edw. Harvey, F. Wakelin, D. Smith, W. Otway, H. Jackson, Jas. Jackson, E. Emery, Rev. J. Emery (Chicago), W. Sparling (Colchester), John Lay (Colchester), J. Munro (Richmond), Duffield Smythe, Livermore, Stevens, &c., &c.

While entering the Church a solemn march was played by Mrs. Sanders, and the sacred edifice was crowded, most of those present being attired in mourning. The service was impressively read by the Rev. R. V. O. GRAVES, and at its conclusion the Freemasons present deposited the usual emblems.

In connection with the sad event it may be interesting to note that six years ago, when the Church was restored, the late Mr. Nunn presented a handsome stained-glass East window, which bears the following inscription:—

“Erected by Joshua Nunn, to the memory of his Mother, Mary Nunn, and the Perry family, late of this parish. A.D., 1880.”

THE ESSEX STANDARD
DATED OCTOBER 9TH 1886
PUBLISHED DETAILS OF
JOSHUA NUNN'S FUNERAL.
NOTE THE DISTINGUISHED
MOURNERS INCLUDING MR W
A BASKCOMBE CHIEF CLERK
OF HRH PRINCE OF WALES.

NUNN Joshua.

Personal Estate £28,062 8s.

23 December. The Will of Joshua Nunn formerly of Montague House 63 Bartholomew-road in the County of Middlesex but late of Bocking Hall Bocking in the County of Essex Esquire who died 29 September 1886 at Bocking Hall was proved at the Principal Registry by John Bunting the Younger of Nipsells Mayland in the County of Essex and Henry Bunting of Brook Farm Tolleshunt D'Arcy in the County of Essex Farmers the Executors.

THE INDEX OF JOSHUA NUNN'S WILL. SOURCE: WWW.ANCESTRY.CO.UK



THE CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS IN TOLLESHUNT D'ARCY

In 1886 The Grand Master of England (HRH the Prince of Wales) signed a warrant sanctioning the consecration of a Masonic lodge to be known as the "Joshua Nunn" lodge at Halstead.

Further Reading

*Mary Rix has this surname as Ruffell in her family tree and it has been transcribed as Russell by Ancestry and Family Search in their records.

**Boreham, History and Tales and Memories of an Essex Village (ISBN 0 9513823 0 6). This publication was followed by More About Boreham (ISBN 0 9513823 1 4). For readers who have an interest in Boreham I can thoroughly recommend these publications which are still available on the second-hand book market.

For an informative read regarding Tolleshunt Knights, Tollesbury, Tolleshunt Major and Tolleshunt D'Arcy, Keith Lovell's 'In the Land of the Tolles' printed in 1991 is a good source of family history information. Again, available on the second-hand book market. No ISBN number documented.

Why Not Start a Retail Research Project?

by Mike Fogg (ESFH 33307)

The research project to discover how the retail businesses in Woodham Ferrers and South Woodham Ferrers (SWF) changed and developed started from the volunteering I did at the Essex Record Office. I used to go in for a morning every other week and catalogue and upload recordings of people speaking about Essex as it used to be. For some reason the recording by Ernest Poole, listing the shops in Chelmsford Street set me thinking and I asked my wife if she remembered where the tripe shop was at the place that the No. 4 bus turned round in the centre of our native Derby. This started us talking about how shops have changed in the places that we have lived over the years and to me researching how the shops have changed in Woodham Ferrers and SWF resulting in my book "Dodgy Scales and Delivering the Mails".



MIKE FOGG

Supported by the SWF Local History Society of which I am a member, we took over a weekly social meeting at the chapel in Woodham Ferrers and asked the older residents to identify the shops and shopkeepers as they remember them. One 92 year old lady wrote me a list of all of the shops in SWF from the river to the Wickford Road. This was a marvellous foundation, and is still a prized possession. In Woodham Ferrers everyone told me that a certain building was "Richardson's", but no one could remember it being open. I now know that Richardson's closed in the 1930s, not without some scandal and so it's not surprising than no one alive now remembers it.

Using the twin tracks of picking the brains of local people and searching the British Newspaper Archive, the flesh grew on the bones of the story such that I have 133 datasheets, some 24 pages long, over 400 documents and 1142 images relating to the businesses in the two villages. People have lent me their house deeds, lent me photographs, spent an hour on the phone with me during lockdown and told me who else to talk to. There have been several "Eureka" moments when a missing link was discovered. For example, some deeds told me that Sydney Grubb and his family rented a house they called "The Emporium" before it became the Telephone Exchange in Woodham Ferrers – no one alive today had ever heard of them. The tragedy is that without that one set of deeds being lent to me they would have been lost to history.

Since the book was published more people have been phoning and writing to share their memories and to ask if I know about "this". One person said to me, "I have lived in this village all my life and you have told me things I didn't know". I am sure that there are still things to find out!

Dodgy Scales and Delivering the Mails

The History of Retail Premises in Woodham Ferrers and South Woodham Ferrers from 1582-2022

by Mike Fogg (ESFH 33307)

Book review by Colleen, Editor

This brightly coloured publication featuring the village sign of Woodham Ferrers on the front cover is 163 pages and A4 size. Scanning through the book it consists of clearly presented pages including black and white vintage images, colour photos, schematic drawings with numbers for identification of premises and flow diagrams showing ownership of properties in both Woodham Ferrers and South Woodham Ferrers over the centuries.

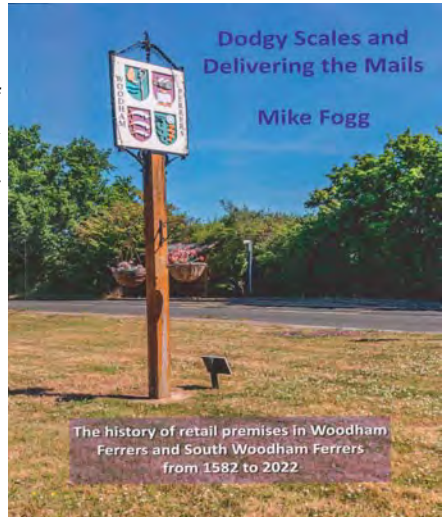
Immediately one has the impression that the author has done a great deal of research on his subject which he has presented in an 'easy on the eye' format.

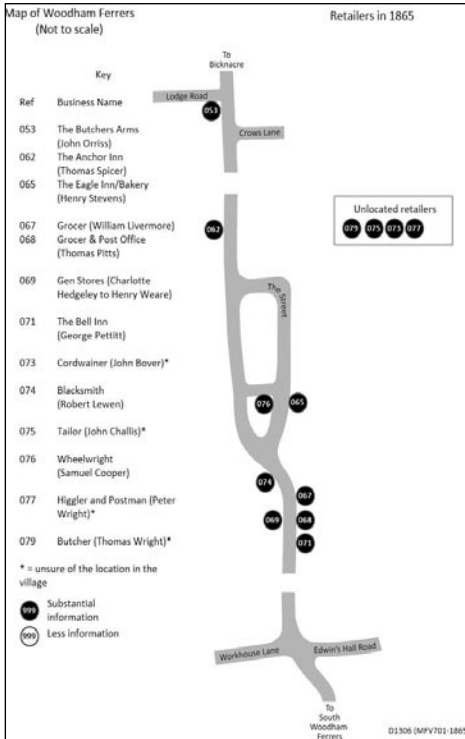
In the first chapter of twelve, Mike Fogg, a volunteer at the Essex Record Office and also a committed member of the South Woodham Ferrers Historical Society, relates as to how he set about creating the publication and why he believes 'shops and shopkeepers reflect the nature of society'.

In chapter 2 he begins to detail historical data which consists of diagrammatic designs, initially of Woodham Ferrers, showing the position of retailers covering the years 1845, 1865, 1900, 1921, 1945, 1965, 2000, 2021. The diagrammatic maps of businesses for South Woodham Ferrers cover the years 1901, 1911, 1921, 1931, 1941, 1951, 1961, 1971, 1981, 1991, 'Turning the Millennium', 2011 and 2021.

Chapter 3 and subsequent chapters go into the history of each of the retail premises accompanied by a flow chart chronicling the owners alongside their family history information. Many photographs of the retailers enhance the text. There are also plenty of references to historical data from newspaper publications, the main one being the Chelmsford/Essex Chronicle and, of course, numerous references to information found in the censuses. In many instances Essex Record Office references are listed to enable further research.

Diagrammatic maps for both locations show numerical references with a clear key with the names of the retailers.





At the end of the book there is an index showing the surnames of people involved in the retail services over the centuries in the areas covered. This is divided into further sub sections including Shopkeepers and Pubs.

The surnames mentioned in the book are extensive and too numerous to mention here. However they include: - Anderson, Balls, Barnard, Blanks, Broadway, Challis, Collins, Coward, Davis, Dennison, Dones, Dunn, Eve, Fairclough, Frost, Hearn, Layzell, Mudford, Nobbs, Norton, Pegram, Pike, Rumsey, South, Whitworth and Wright.

This private publication is likely to appeal not only to those who suspect or know they have ancestors in the area but also those that currently live in the Woodham Ferrers and South Woodham Ferrers vicinities showing them the rich commercial history of the two places and proving the plethora of commercial concerns that have come and gone in the area during the centuries. This

publication would also be of interest to social historians as it offers an understanding of social changes to two Essex locations: one a pre-medieval village and the other a 1970's 'new town'.

The book is available from the author at a cost of £12.99. Email mikefogg@btinternet.com or telephone 01245 328337. Copies may also be purchased from the Mister Gees Foundation shop on Warwick Parade in South Woodham Ferrers.

I thoroughly recommend this book.

Also be sure to view Mike's photography page www.compassphotography.co.uk where there are some stunning photos of Essex.



In Remembrance

Beryl Sidney

27th February 1936-2nd November 2022

Beryl passed away on 2nd November 2022 in her residential care home in Chelmsford where she had lived since 2018. I had visited her in February 2022 to celebrate her birthday along with her daughter Kim the day before the family party as there was a limit on the number of visitors that could gather in the home.

Beryl was a volunteer in our Research Room in the Essex Record Office from its inception and took over as Volunteer Co-ordinator when Jenny Abel stood down. This entailed sending out the volunteer rota every quarter for the then three weekly sessions plus being on duty, often at short notice if a



volunteer was unable to be on duty. While on duty she loved helping visitors with their research and ensuring the library stock was in order and well labelled. In the early days the microfiche were in demand as computer discs were in their infancy, therefore she was frequently having to replace the dividers and check they were in order plus starting the pedigree files boxes. She did a magnificent job of organising the contents of our Research Room.

During her career she had been a secretary working at Marconi and Christy Brothers in Chelmsford then the House of Commons and BP in London.

She was researching her own family history - her maiden name was Moss. She managed to find her long lost cousin who was sent to live in Australia. They reunited on two occasions when he visited England one was for her 80th birthday, plus researching her husband's Sidney line plus a family name Vallerine who were French Huguenots – French Protestants of the 16th – 17th centuries who suffered severe persecution at the hands of the Catholic majority and came to England from France. Her family history has been passed to her son Roger.

Another love of Beryl was cake baking including icing and several times when we gathered at her house for our research room committee meetings, there were cakes



In Remembrance

Beryl Sidney

27th February 1936-2nd November 2022



in various stages of being decorated plus a homemade cake for our refreshments. Later our meetings moved to her care home so that she could still feel involved.

Beryl married George E. Sidney in 1957 and had 3 sons and 3 daughters, one who died in infancy plus 10 grandchildren, 9 great grandchildren and 1 great great granddaughter born in 2022.

Our condolences go to all her family.

Elizabeth Cox
Research Room Committee Chairman

Memories of Beryl Sydney

I first met Beryl when I used our Research Room at the Essex Record Office, that was in the early 2000's. In those days members had to book a computer place as there were very few genealogical records on the internet. Beryl was always a cheerful face to greet you and offered any help that she could. When I retired, I joined the Research Room volunteers and saw Beryl on a regular basis. Beryl was asking for someone to take over the volunteer rota, however as I had only just become a volunteer, I left that to someone more experienced. No one offered so Beryl carried on, as was her usual way. When she asked again a few years later I enquired as to what was involved and took over the rota. Beryl continued to carry out many other tasks at our Research Room and eventually I joined the Research Room Committee. This met at Beryl's house where we were provided with cake as well as tea!

Unfortunately, Beryl had to move to a care home but we continued to meet with her there until the COVID pandemic when we were unable to visit her.

She will be sadly missed by many members as she worked unstinting for the good of the Society and family history. Thank you, Beryl, for all your past hard work for ESFH.

Gill Peregrine
Chair North East Essex Branch



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

October 2022

North East Essex Branch Meeting

The Parish Chest by Lady Teviot

Summarised by Pauline Adlem (ESFH 6098)

Lady Teviot started her talk with an explanation of the origins of the parish chest and what it was used for. Parish churches created more than just baptism, marriage and burial registers in the management of their parish—these records are collectively known as “parish chest” records, after the chest they were typically preserved in. The parish chest was a strong wooden box wherein the parish registers, alms for the poor and church silver were kept.

All kinds of records have been found in parish chests, but the most common fall into a few categories: settlement, illegitimacy, care of the poor and care of the church, any of which could be useful in your family history research. Settlement laws were officially revoked in 1834 when the poor law unions were instituted, but mentions of the practice have been found through to 1876.

I personally had come across these records in my own parish church about 20 odd years ago when we were compiling the village history. At that time they still had the marriage register in the chest as it was still in use as the church was not used very often for marriages.

Luckily these days the contents of many parish chests are found in local government record offices.

Lady Teviot then went on to discuss the contents in more detail which included -

Settlement Records

Settlement in a parish was allowed if born there, working there for at least 4 years, by holding public office and paying rates. It was sometimes difficult to establish. Those entitled to stay were given a settlement certificate. Those not entitled to stay were issued a removal order and had to leave, they were escorted to the parish boundary by the parish constables. They were trying to avoid people being a burden on the parish.

Illegitimacy

Illegitimacy was a problem to the parish trying to establish the father who would be responsible for the child's upkeep and not the parish. You can gain quite a lot of information about the mother. If they could find the father they issued a bastardy bond to get him to pay.

Vestry Minutes

Certain male members of the village were responsible for the upkeep of the village. Local landholders generally dominated them. In general the Vestry Minutes contain regular parish business like the appointment of officers, making the poor and the church rates, examining and allowing the accounts for matters including repairs to the church and churchyard, the village school, consideration of appeals by paupers, removal orders and authorized payments that ensured the smooth running of the village.

Churchwarden's Accounts

There were usually two churchwardens who were responsible for the upkeep of the church and the churchyard plus the religious behaviour of the priest and congregation. If you can source churchwardens accounts for a parish they will show details of payments to individual named craftsmen such as carpenters, glaziers, decorators and stonemasons for the upkeep of the church and its surroundings. Churchwarden duties included arranging the baptism of foundling children and the burial of strangers.

Overseers of the Poor

Two vestry members were elected to act as Overseers of the Poor. They were responsible for deciding what kind of care was needed. Most care was in the form of outdoor relief, which could be money, food and even work for those who were able-bodied. Those receiving indoor relief lived in workhouses or were bound out as apprentices. Sometimes overseer's accounts might name an illegitimate child's father's name, information not available elsewhere.

Rate books

Poor rates were charged to parish householders and covered the care and upkeep of the parish. Householders included all parish residents who were not paupers, including labourers, not just landowners. Poor rate accounts can show you how well off villagers were, as the rate was assessed based on the value of the property the individual owned or occupied.

Other Records

Other miscellaneous paperwork may include the records of the parish school, almshouses and charities, terriers of the vicarage and glebe, burial certificates, briefs for the relief of distress in other parishes all over England, Quarter Session orders, apprenticeships indentures, royal writs requiring payment of subsidies, parish surveys, militia books and muster rolls.

In some parts of the country the records of the parish constable are preserved detailing all the numerous duties of the position and in some cases they are tied up with the role of the overseer.

This very interesting talk gave the audience a lot to think about and ideas for more leads to follow to add more flesh to the bones of your family history.

Note from Colleen, Editor

Village records are an extensive subject so here are a few standard books that you might want to seek out. The book by Tate is a classic text first published in 1946 and the author refers to his friends in the Preface, in particular to Mr F. G. Emmison, (who was the county archivist at Essex Record Office in 1938) and who gave him the 'benefit of his labours among the parish records of Bedfordshire and Essex'. I love all the references to Essex parishes in *The Parish Chest* by Tate.

Eastwood, David. *Governing Rural England: Tradition and Transformation in Local Government 1780-1840*: Clarendon Press, 1994

Osborn, Helen. *Our Village Ancestors: A Genealogist's Guide to Understanding the English Rural Past*: The Crowood Press, 2021

Raymond, Stuart A. *Tracing Your Church of England Ancestors: A Guide for Family and Local Historians*: Pen & Sword Family History, 2017

Stephens W.B. *Sources for English Local History*. Cambridge University Press, 1981

Tate, William Edward. *The Parish Chest*: Phillimore, 1983

West, John. *Village Records*: Macmillan, 1962

South East Essex Branch Meeting

Victorian Photographers: their Studios and their Images by David Weedon (ESFH 33264)

Summarised by Martin Hayden Roberts (ESFH 3860)

Looking into the past is a fascinating subject, made real when you can see it, and that's where the photograph comes in. 'Curtains Up' to our Victorian ancestors who wanted their picture taken, mostly in a photographer's studio or outside once the process of taking pictures had improved around the 1870s-80s. That and more was explained by this month's speaker, Dave Weedon, an avid collector of Victorian photographic memorabilia which is something our guest has been pursuing for quite some time. Information is what it's all about - where the photographer ran their business and for how long. Dave doesn't stop there. He likes to look into their personal lives, right up to the time of their deaths. Some include a will detailing the beneficiaries and what relationship they had with the deceased.

The history of the photographic process began in 1839 when William Fox Talbot printed his first photograph from a successful negative produced in 1835. In France, Louie Daguerre came up with the idea of producing an image onto a metal plate, which was far superior to Fox Talbot's wet plate image put onto paper; developing onto a metal plate was also far more stable. Being British, we didn't hold much store on going to France just to have our photo taken. 'Besides, that chap probably eats frogs! No thank you very much!'

Some wonderful examples were there to be seen and enjoyed for what they were, a superb collection of memorabilia going back to a time when our ancestors were living, so different from how we live ours here in the 2000's. Or was it really that different? You decide?

The equipment and conditions they had to work under would have been a challenge in itself, and yet they managed to 'come up with the goods' as required. As said before, these are pictures of another time and that's why we need to preserve them: a part of our history as much as a remembrance of a moment that's now gone.

I liked the idea from our Editor, Colleen offering to put some of Dave's database information up on our website in the hope that members might recognise some of the faces that had been photographed or be related to any of the Essex photographers. I know she is in discussion with David, so watch this space.

The Hundred Parishes Society by Ken McDonald, Trustee and Secretary

www.thehundredparishes.org.uk

Summarised by Janice Sharpe (ESFH 5481)

The Society was set up to try to gain some sort of recognition of the area covered with its richness of agricultural and built heritage. It covers 103 parishes - 9 in South Cambridgeshire, 27 in Hertfordshire and 67 in Essex. The website covers numerous walks, a page on each parish giving the location, brief history, places for refreshment and walks in the area. The website also gives links to many other useful sites. Ken illustrated his talk with excellent photographs and interesting details about some of the lesser known features of the area such as The Bartlow Hills, Chickney and Strehall Churches, together with the crypt in Hempstead Church containing the lead coffins of the Harvey family some with faces!

South East Essex Branch Meeting

Commonwealth War Graves located in Sutton Road Cemetary in Southend-on-Sea by Simon Last (ESFH 10925)

Summarised by Martin Haydn Roberts (ESFH 3860)

Our guide and speaker, Simon Last, who works as a volunteer for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, explained the background to the Sutton Road Cemetery, from its inception to the present day.

Simon is a stickler for detail and that stems from his interest in family history. He has put those skills to good effect when looking at family graves since they often become their own research tool to further information about other members of the family; this is a point worth considering when looking for links with your family should you find a grave with a certain name or names on it.

With regard to the Commonwealth War Graves in Sutton Road the cemetery contains

127 Commonwealth burials of the 1914-18 war and 152 burials of the 1939-45 war. The majority are commemorated by having a proper gravestone. The cemetery also includes the graves of 2 women who were in the Air Force, 4 foreign nationals and 1 unidentified merchant seaman. There are 2 small Screen Wall memorial panels naming those of the 1914-1918 war whose graves are not marked by headstones.

Simon has managed to study the personal lives of many of those commemorated including where they came from originally, who their parents were and their time as soldiers. For his research he used the likes of Ancestry and Findmypast websites. Both are extremely good and as they have military records you might even have the chance to view digitised images of original documents.

Check out the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website <https://www.cwgc.org> where you can find the details of many of those buried in Sutton Road including their name, rank and service number, Unit Regiment, Country of Service and date of death.

Collecting information from gravestones of those who died during battle or later from their injuries made for a very interesting talk and it was nice to hear the talk on a day which practically coincided with Armistice Day. The one-minute silence on this day is our way of saying we have not forgotten those who made the ultimate sacrifice.



THE CROSS OF SACRIFICE IS PRESENT IN ALL CWGC CEMETERIES WHICH CONTAIN MORE THAN 40 OR MORE GRAVES, SUCH AS SUTTON ROAD CEMETERY.

(IMAGE COURTESY OF SIMON LAST)

Additional Comments by Andrea Hewitt, Chair.

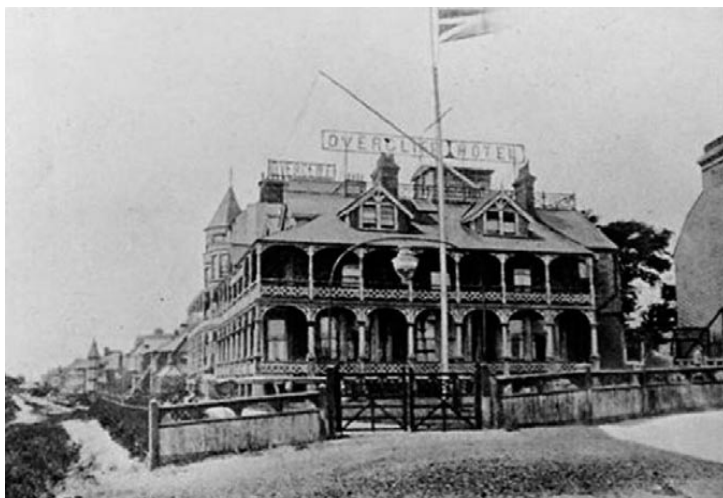
Simon began his presentation by explaining that the Imperial War Graves Commission (IWGC), later renamed the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC), was the very first war grave organisation. It was inaugurated in WW1 to honour and care

for the men and women of the Commonwealth who died as a consequence of WW1, and continues to cover all such military actions to this day. It was deemed that there would be no differentiation between the dead on the grounds of social or military rank, or by religion. So far, they have constructed 2,500 war cemeteries and erected more than a million headstones worldwide.

Families of the war dead could make two contributions to a headstone, specifying a religion, and writing a personal inscription, sadly this was not often the case, as this came at a cost. Some families at Sutton Road chose a CWGC headstone and others added information to existing family headstones.

You may not think you have a familial link to anyone who's war grave might be found in Southend-on-Sea, Essex UK, but there are casualties from all over the UK, from Australia, Canada, and European countries. There were some German casualties commemorated at Sutton Road, but they have now been relocated. Simon did a lot of research for this bespoke talk, and found photos, and various documents for many of those surnames listed below, which he is happy to share. You can contact him at charnwoodresearch@virginmedia.com

Some of those mentioned on the next page may have been cared for in the Overcliff Hotel, or the Palace Hotel on Southend seafront, which were commandeered as Red Cross Hospitals in WW1.



OVERCLIFF HOTEL
IMAGE COURTESY OF SIMON LAST

The Tweedie-Smith family have 3 memorials on one plot at Sutton Road, having lost family members in 1915, 1916 & 1940, one is marked with a cross and another appears to have a personal inscription.

Alice Brignal, who was an ambulance driver who died in 1918, is honoured at this cemetery, as are individuals with the surnames of: Fisher, Bunting, Wordley, Jackson, Seebold, Smellie, Underwood, Hine, Barker, Brooks, Leech and Barnett - all from the UK, and 2 Australians named Yelverton & Naylor, all serving in WW1.

Marjory Dray of the ATS, who died in 1946, John Leon Behar of the Royal Artillery, R. Hughes of the Essex Regiment, Sidney Frank Swaisland of the Merchant Navy and Jack Tritt, a Navigator from the Royal Canadian Air Force (his monument is marked with the Star of David) were mentioned by Simon, from the many that died during WW2 and are honoured at Sutton Road.



ABOVE LEFT: THE GRAVE OF HERBERT EDWARD BUNTING

ABOVE RIGHT: LIEUT. J. D. SMELLIE

LEFT: THE GRAVE OF JAMES WORDLEY

IMAGES: COURTESY OF SIMON LAST

Christening and Marriage Records recently added to our Genealogy Database

Christenings

Parish	Church	Dates	Records
Abbess Roding	St Edmund	1813-1851	163
Aldham	St Margaret & St Catherine	1813-1851	469
Alphamstone	St Barnabas	1813-1851	349
Arkesden	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	500
Ashdon	All Saints	1813-1851	1222
Ashen	St Augustine of Canterbury	1813-1851	354
Ashingdon	St Andrew	1813-1851	1164
Bardfield Saling	St Peter & St Paul	1813-1851	394
Barling	All Saints	1813-1851	506
Barnston	St Andrew	1638-1812	829
Barnston	St Andrew	1852-1922	466
Belchamp Otten	St Ethelbert & All Saints	1813-1851	519
Belchamp St Paul	St Andrew	1813-1851	959
Belchamp Walter	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	696
Birch	St Peter	1813-1851	718
Birchanger	St Mary	1813-1851	452
Birdbrook	St Augustine of Canterbury	1813-1851	516
Bocking	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	2339
Borley	The Parish Church	1813-1851	203
Boxted	St Peter	1813-1851	682
Braintree	St Michael the Archangel	1813-1851	2553
Brentwood	St Thomas of Canterbury	1813-1851	1775
Buckhurst Hill	St John the Baptist	1852-1921	4929
Canewdon	St Nicholas	1813-1851	827
Castle Hedingham	St Nicholas	1813-1851	1126
Chappel	St Barnabas	1813-1851	416
Chickney	St Mary the Virgin	1673-1810	217
Chickney	St Mary the Virgin	1852-1865	80
Chrishall	Holy Trinity	1813-1851	494
Colne Engaine	St Andrew	1813-1851	681

Parish	Church	Dates	Records
Copford	St Michael & All Angels	1813-1851	693
Cressing	All Saints	1813-1851	506
Debden	St Mary	1813-1851	987
Earls Colne	St Andrew	1813-1851	1414
East Donyland	St Lawrence	1813-1851	940
Easthorpe	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	278
Eastwood	St Laurence & All Saints	1813-1851	620
Elmdon	St Nicholas	1813-1851	856
Elsenham	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	655
Epping	St John the Baptist	1891-1922	1764
Feering	All Saints	1813-1851	587
Finchingfield	St John the Baptist	1813-1851	1967
Fordham	All Saints	1813-1851	816
Foulness	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	730
Foxearth	St Peter & St Paul	1813-1851	532
Frinton	St Mary Magdalene	1813-1851	37
Gestingthorpe	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1847	781
Goldhanger	St Peter	1813-1851	628
Good Easter	St Andrew	1678-1812	1458
Good Easter	St Andrew	1852-1922	971
Gosfield	St Catherine of Alexandria	1813-1851	754
Great Bardfield	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	923
Great Braxted	All Saints	1813-1851	517
Great Chishall	St Swithun	1813-1851	376
Great Coggeshall	St Peter ad Vincula	1813-1851	3109
Great Henny	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	550
Great Holland	All Saints	1813-1851	613
Great Maplestead	St Giles	1813-1851	431
Great Saling	St James the Great	1813-1851	393
Great Sampford	St Michael	1813-1851	684
Great Stambridge	St Mary & All Saints	1813-1851	460
Great Wakering	St Nicholas	1813-1851	1264
Great Waltham	St Mary & St Lawrence	1813-1851	2203

Parish	Church	Dates	Records
Great Yeldham	St Andrew	1813-1851	713
Hadleigh	St James the Less	1813-1851	521
Hadstock	St Botolph	1813-1851	540
Hatfield Peverel	St Andrew	1813-1851	1269
Havering-atte-Bower	St John the Evangelist	1813-1851	993
Hawkwell	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	444
Helions Bumpstead	St Andrew	1731-1936	3948
Henham	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	888
Heybridge	St Andrew	1813-1851	941
Heydon	Holy Trinity	1813-1851	459
Inworth	All Saints	1813-1851	625
Kelvedon	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	1279
Lamarsh	Holy Innocents	1813-1851	450
Lambourne	St Mary & All Saints	1813-1851	959
Langenhoe	St Mary	1813-1851	166
Langford	St Giles	1813-1851	395
Leigh-on-Sea	St Clement	1813-1851	1595
Little Bardfield	St Katharine	1813-1851	390
Little Braxted	St Nicholas	1813-1851	151
Little Chesterford	St Mary	1813-1851	253
Little Chishall	St Nicholas	1813-1851	48
Little Clacton	St James	1813-1851	659
Little Maplestead	St John the Baptist	1813-1851	282
Little Sampford	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	337
Little Stambridge	St Mary	1813-1851	109
Little Tey	St James the Less	1813-1851	142
Little Totham	All Saints	1813-1851	417
Little Wakering	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	367
Little Yeldham	St John the Baptist	1813-1851	509
Littlebury	Holy Trinity	1813-1851	1192
Loughton	St John the Baptist	1732-1923	6644
Loughton	St Mary the Virgin	1887-1903	798
Marks Tey	St Andrew	1813-1851	369

Parish	Church	Dates	Records
Messing	All Saints	1813-1851	904
Middleton	All Saints	1813-1851	127
Mount Bures	St John the Baptist	1813-1851	421
Newport	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	833
Noak Hill	St Thomas	1842-1851	87
North Fambridge	Holy Trinity	1813-1851	210
North Shoebury	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	239
Ovington	St Mary	1813-1851	177
Paglesham	St Peter	1813-1851	593
Pattiswick	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	484
Pebmarsh	St John the Baptist	1813-1851	679
Peldon	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	563
Pentlow	St George	1813-1851	480
Pleshey	Holy Trinity	1738-1812	604
Pleshey	Holy Trinity	1852-1878	359
Prittwell	St Mary the Virgin	1812-1851	2150
Quendon	St Simon & St Jude	1813-1851	230
Radwinter	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	1156
Rawreth	St Nicholas	1813-1851	456
Rayleigh	Holy Trinity	1813-1851	1473
Rayne	All Saints	1813-1851	441
Rickling	All Saints	1813-1851	576
Ridgewell	St Lawrence	1813-1851	551
Rivenhall	St Mary & All Saints	1813-1851	683
Rochford	St Andrew	1813-1851	1786
Shalford	St Andrew	1813-1851	471
Shopland	St Mary	1813-1851	43
Sible Hedingham,	St Peter	1813-1851	1721
South Fambridge	All Saints	1813-1851	108
South Shoebury	St Andrew	1813-1851	231
Southchurch	Holy Trinity	1813-1851	724
Southend	St John the Baptist	1842-1851	274
Stambourne	St Peter & St Thomas	1813-1851	359

Parish	Church	Dates	Records
Stanford Rivers	St Margaret	1813-1851	1043
Stansted Mountfitchet	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	1578
Stanway	St Albright	1813-1851	866
Stapleford Abbots	St Mary	1774-1862	932
Steeple Bumpstead	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	1032
Strethall	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	79
Sturmer	St Mary	1813-1851	454
Sutton	All Saints	1813-1851	129
Takeley	Holy Trinity	1813-1851	1074
Terling	All Saints	1813-1851	797
Tilbury-juxta-Clare	St Margaret	1813-1851	200
Tollesbury	St Mary	1813-1851	1098
Tolleshunt D'Arcy	St Nicholas	1813-1851	834
Tolleshunt Knights	All Saints	1813-1851	368
Tolleshunt Major	St Nicholas	1813-1851	535
Toppesfield	St Margaret of Antioch	1813-1851	1185
Twinstead	St John the Evangelist	1813-1851	255
Wakes Colne	All Saints	1813-1851	507
Wendon Lofts	St Dunstan	1813-1851	140
Wendons Ambo	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	400
West Bergholt	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	728
Wethersfield	St Mary Magdalene	1813-1851	677
White Colne	St Andrew	1813-1851	443
Wicken Bonhunt	St Margaret	1813-1851	155
Wickham Bishops	St Bartholomew	1813-1851	615
Wickham St Paul	All Saints	1813-1851	501
Widdington	St Mary the Virgin	1813-1851	368
Wimbish	All Saints	1813-1851	874
Wormingford	St Andrew	1813-1851	596

Marriages

Parish	Church	Dates	Records
Helions Bumpstead	St Andrew	1731-1812	324

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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, 1 Robin Close, Great Bentley, Colchester CO7 8QH or by email to memsec@esfh.org.uk.

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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.

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.

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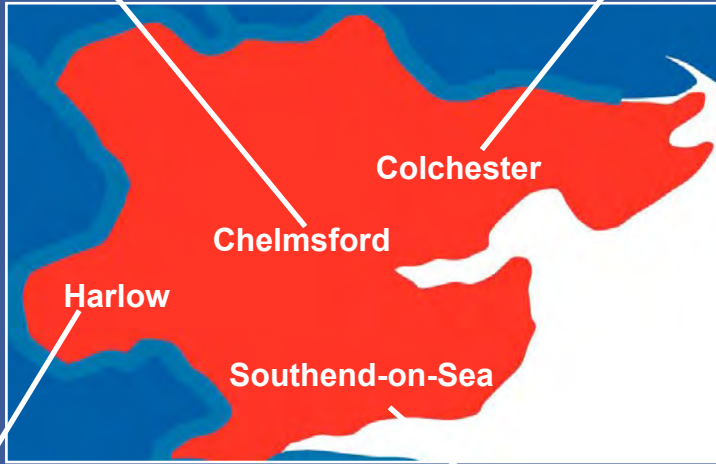
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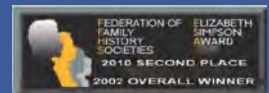
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