

# Essex Archaeology and History News



**Spring 2010**

# THE ESSEX SOCIETY FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORY

NEWSLETTER 160

SPRING 2010

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### **COPY FOR THE NEXT ISSUE SHOULD BE SENT TO THE EDITOR AT THE ABOVE ADDRESS NO LATER THAN 10 JULY 2010**

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

#### Cover illustration:

Perspective view of the new scheme for Oaklands Museum by Thomas Ford and Partners July 2007. See Nick Wickenden's article on p.12.

David Buckley writes of Oaklands Museum that "it is particularly pleasing to see the emphasis given to the importance of Chelmsford's industrial past. This could be developed further since the Council's Cabinet member for Parks and Heritage, Christopher Kingsley, has spoken in the press about further extending the museum resource if arrangements can be negotiated for more of the Chelmsford Marconi archive, which was controversially given to Oxford, can be returned to Chelmsford for display."

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## FROM THE PRESIDENT

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I stated in the last newsletter that our Grant of Arms would be presented to the Society by Thomas Woodcock, Garter Principal King of Arms. I hope that you have received an official invitation to the reception to be held on Thursday, 13<sup>th</sup> May. Our Patron, Lord Petre, has agreed to accept the Letters Patent on behalf of the Society and has very generously permitted the presentation to take place at Ingatestone Hall, his family home. This is a significant occasion in the long and distinguished history of our Society and is surely one not to be missed! I greatly look forward to seeing as many members as possible on 13<sup>th</sup> May.

An excellent colour reproduction of the illuminated and highly decorated Letters Patent will be reproduced in volume 40 (2009) of the *Transactions*. This will be accompanied by a short account of the heraldic background relating to the Grant prepared personally by the Garter Principal King of Arms. I announced in the winter 2009 issue of the Newsletter that it was intended to publish this issue of *Transactions* in spring 2010. In the event, a decision has been taken to defer publication until the autumn. Future issues will appear at approximately the same time each succeeding year. Notwithstanding, members will still receive two issues of *Transactions* in one year! We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to our Editor, Chris Starr, and his Deputy, Helen Walker, for ensuring that our flagship publication is produced punctually and to the highest possible standards.

I am delighted to report that our indexer, Peter Gunn, continues to toil away on indexing the Third Series of *Transactions*. Having now reached volume 30 (1999) a further Index Volume will be produced. It is hoped that this will also be despatched with volume 40 in

the autumn. Peter is continuing to index the final ten volumes in order to bring this highly valuable work to a conclusion.

I previously made mention of the fact that the Society is structured on the basis of three separate committees, namely Library, Publications and Programme. The response to the appeal in the last Newsletter was highly productive and I express gratitude to those who have volunteered their services. Owen Bedwin has decided to retire as Chairman of the Publications Committee after a period of some twenty years. The Society has been most fortunate in being able to benefit from his expertise and support over such a lengthy period of time. Indeed, Owen's contribution has been considerable having also served as President (1986-7) and with distinction as our Editor from 1987-2000. Owen also came to the aid of the Society at a difficult period to edit and oversee three recent volumes of the *Transactions* through the press (35, 36 and 37 (2004-6)). I wish him well in his deserved retirement.

Most of the services that we (those with an interest in archaeology, local history and genealogy) greatly value are non-statutory and are increasingly coming under threat. The latest instance within our historic county is the Redbridge Local Studies Library and Archive which faced the prospect of draconian budget cuts. It is most pleasing to report that a vigorous campaign has resulted in the Council deciding to postpone its plans at a meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> March. Obviously, the threat is far from removed especially with a new government facing unprecedented levels of debt. Public sector net debt was £741.6 billion (equivalent to 52.6 per cent of GDP) at the end of February an increase of £144.7 billion in one year! In stating the

obvious, it is apparent that local authorities will come under increasing budgetary pressure for the foreseeable future. The postponement achieved in Redbridge represents a triumph and demonstrates the importance of making elected representatives realise that these types of services are used and are greatly valued by the community. This Society, as a long-established county organisation, continues to lobby vigorously in such cases. Letter writing and pushing at closed doors can and often does produce results. We must continue to remain vigilant.

The Society has also supported the campaign to purchase the Sergeants' Mess at Colchester with a contribution of £2,000 towards the successful public appeal to raise £170,000. Colchester Borough Council have pledged a further sum of £30,000 to secure the building and part of the site of Britain's only Roman chariot horse racing track.

It seems inconceivable that my second year as President is swiftly drawing to a close. The Annual General Meeting this year will be held in the magnificent surroundings of the Grade I Listed Council Chamber at Braintree Town Hall on **Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> June**. The appropriate A.G.M. papers are enclosed with this mailing. Council is proposing the election of Andrew Phillips as an additional Vice-President. Andrew is another who has contributed significantly to the Society. He served as President from 1984-6 and as Librarian from 1986 to 2007 during which period he negotiated the library's move from Hollytrees to Essex University. I hope you agree that a Vice-Presidency is entirely appropriate to acknowledge his outstanding contribution.

H. Martin Stuchfield

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## HAROLD CURWEN – A CORRECTION

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We are grateful to Richard Morris for pointing out an error in the note in last Newsletter. Curwen was born in Upton House, but this was in Upton Lane, West Ham (not Loughton). He lived in Loughton at a later period (from 1910 to 1940), first at 4 Spring Grove, then at 'Mansard' in Alderton Hill. There is more information about Harold Curwen in the Newsletters of the Loughton and District Historical Society (numbers 151, 174 & 175). These articles can be accessed on LDHS's website.

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## WORLD WAR II OCCASIONAL PAPER – VOLUNTEER NEEDED

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We are looking for someone who might be interested in researching, writing and editing an occasional paper of 40 to 50 pages on sources for local historians on World War II topics. This idea has been encouraged by a member who rescued a unique Essex Police document of some 500 pages listing all known incidents (details of bombings, crashed aircraft etc) in the historic county of Essex (excluding Loughton, Waltham Abbey, Southend and Colchester which came under different police authorities). It has been suggested that this entire document could be digitised and included with the occasional paper as a CD. The paper itself should include a description and evaluation of other sources of World War II archives which are now available for Essex, and which would fill the gaps in the information provided by the police document already mentioned. This would involve some research in the Essex Records Office and elsewhere. One of the ERO staff is

very willing to provide help and guidance, and the Society's Publications Committee will provide whatever other support is required.

Anyone interested should contact Michael Leach, Hon Secretary, at [leach1939@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:leach1939@yahoo.co.uk), or through the contact details inside the back cover of this Newsletter.

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## WALLASEA ISLAND

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Previous editions of this Newsletter have noted the RSPB's ambitious plans for Wallasea Island, intended to show how low-lying coastal areas might be managed in the face of rising sea levels – both for the benefit of people and wildlife. The RSPB has now acquired about a third of the island and has the other 1800 acres in its sights. Clay to be extracted from the projected new east-west railway line under London (Crossrail) will be used for an unprecedented landscape restoration. More information can be obtained from their website on [www.rspb.org.uk/wallasea](http://www.rspb.org.uk/wallasea)

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## A SCHOOL FOR YOUNG LADIES AT DEDHAM

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A member of the Leyland Historical Society is seeking information about Miss Agnes Gardner (1735-1813) who ran a school for 'young ladies' in Dedham in partnership with Mrs Mary Prior (to whom she left £100 in her will dated November 1813). The surviving diary of her sister, Dolly Clayton, who periodically visited from her Lancashire home, makes several references to the Constable family of Flatford Mill. Her son by her first marriage, Robert Barrie (b1774), was a school friend of John Constable and his mother's diary has a few, brief references to the painter. Any information about this family, the

school and the identity of Mrs Mary Prior, would be most welcome. Please contact Joan Langford on [joanlangford@talktalk.net](mailto:joanlangford@talktalk.net)

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## THE COMPLETE GRAZIER

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This slim octavo volume, published in 1767 at 3 shillings, was written by an unidentified 'Country Gentleman' as a practical guide for the efficient running of a small estate and was 'originally designed for private Use'. More than half of the book covers the buying, the rearing and the diseases (with suggested remedies) of cows, sheep and pigs; the remaining pages being devoted to the management of poultry, game birds, rabbits, bees and fishponds. It is not to be confused with a better known publication with the same name (but a different author) which ran through many editions in the early C19.

The particular interest of this work is the number of references to Essex. No other county is mentioned nearly as frequently, raising the possibility that the author was an Essex man. All the detailed examples of good practice on various types of farm come from North Essex. The first of these lists the profits that would be expected from a 100 acre dairy farm, together with the costs of the necessary equipment – from which it is clear that butter and cheese making were at the centre of this enterprise. A second Essex example shows the profits and expenses accruing from 50 acres of meadow ground, and a third sets out the economics of 100 acres of coppiced woodland (cut on a ten year rotation) – this was considerably less profitable than either of the others. He notes that, though the clergy were entitled to a tenth of the wood harvested, this could be offset against the woodward's costs in looking after that portion during its growing and felling (known as 'stub

money'). This doubtless led to some contentious disputes. Ten acres were expected to produce 80 'ranges' of wood (worth £80), though I have been unable to find a precise definition of this unit. However the profit from 100 acres of woodland was about one seventh of the same area of meadow, and one tenth of that of an equivalent dairy farm. Needless to say, the author extolled the advantages of dairy farming.

Cheese making – exclusively from cow's milk -- occupies three chapters of the book. If Henry VIII's poet laureate, John Skelton, is to be believed, Essex cheese did not have a good reputation in the C16:

*A cantle of Essex cheese,  
Was well a foot thicke,  
Full of maggots quicke;  
It was huge and great,  
And mighty strong meat,  
For the Deuill to eat,  
It was tart and punicate.*

Cheese making seems to have been a particular interest of the author of *The Complete Grazier*. He refers to the 'Essex method' of making rennet, though this does not seem much different from the techniques used elsewhere, apart from the amount of salt used. His instructions for making cheese are very exact, doubtless important for this delicate art. Two centuries earlier, Tusser had noted:

*Ill hussife unskilful, to make her own  
cheese  
through trusting of others, hath this for  
her fees:  
Her milkpan and cream pot so slabber'd  
and sost:  
That butter is wanting and cheese is half  
lost.*

It is difficult to know if the cheese recipes in *The Complete Grazier* derived from the Essex experience of the author. The first recipe is for Stilton. It is clear that this cheese was made generally, and

was not the blue cheese that we know today, as the author frowned on 'moldiness, cracks and rottenness within'. The other cheeses described were a cream cheese, and one called an Angelot, as well as a Cheshire, and another mature cheese coloured with marigold petals and flavoured with mace, cloves, pepper or herbs. Modern cheese aficionados will be familiar with the excellent cheeses which the Dutch usually keep for their own consumption – well matured, and containing cumin seed or cloves. Did Dutch immigrants introduce these flavoured cheeses to the English palate, or was it a widespread (but now forgotten) practice amongst earlier English cheese makers? Writing a century later, Mrs Beeton makes no reference to cheeses of this type (apart from one flavoured with sage and marigold) so perhaps they had fallen out of favour with the English palate. According to Miller Christy, the manufacture of cow's milk cheese was widespread in Essex until the early C19, after which it rapidly dwindled in favour of fattening beef for the London market. At the end of the C18, the Griggs brothers had noted the importance of Epping in the production of butter, and this aspect of Essex dairy farming seems to have survived longer than cheesemaking as, in 1861, Mrs Beeton specifically referred to the excellence of Epping butter in her *Book of Household Management*.

Other Essex references are scattered throughout the book. He is critical of the practice of regularly bleeding Essex calves to produce a white meat. Hay made from lucerne (mixed with straw) was much used for fattening Essex sheep. He refers to 'a lady of my acquaintance in Essex' who, in the winter months, moved her dairy to a warmer underground cellar to facilitate the separation of the cream from the milk

during butter making. A large breed of hog, particularly suitable for making bacon, was fattened in Hertfordshire and 'the north part of Essex'. His other chapters contain no specific references to Essex practices, but it is difficult to pass over his chapter on bustards, 'common on the plains of Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Salisbury-plain, and upon downs, and in the champaign country'. Being much easier to keep and rear than turkeys, these birds were recommended by the writer. Today's Christmas dinner might have been rather different if his advice had been more widely followed!

It would be good to discover the identity of the writer, though the chances of doing so must now be very slender indeed.

Michael Leach

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Christy, Miller, 1907 'Cheese-Making' in *Victoria County History of Essex*, ii, London

Griggs, brothers, 1794 *General View of the Agriculture of Essex*, London

Hartley, D., (ed) 1931 *Thomas Tusser, his good points of husbandry*

Steer, F.W., 1950 *Farm & Cottage Inventories of Mid-Essex 1635-1749*, Essex County Council

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## A MOST REGRETTABLE DISAGREEMENT

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144 High Street, Maldon, is a Grade II listed timber framed building of C16 date with various later modifications, including the insertion of C18 sash windows on

the street elevation. It was acquired by a building preservation trust which has regrettably (and without planning permission) removed the sash windows and replaced them with 'Tudor' windows, though there was no surviving evidence to show what the originals would have been like. Also the external lime render was removed (with planning permission, because it was in a poor state and had been patched with cement render). The plaster has been replaced, but within the frame, contrary to planning consent. The timber is not in good condition and was never previously exposed to the weather. Maldon District Council has understandably served an enforcement order, stipulating the replacement of the sash windows (though, if these have been destroyed, this will represent another false restoration) and the re-rendering of the exterior in lime plaster to cover the timber frame. It is most regrettable that a very commendable attempt to rescue an old building should have gone so badly wrong, and is a salutary reminder that anyone working on a listed building should work very closely indeed with the appropriate conservation officer.

The same issue of the SPAB magazine reports the much happier, though very protracted, rescue of Harlowbury chapel in Harlow over the last 25 years.

Michael Leach

Source: *Cornerstone*, volume30, no: 4, 2009

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## ESSEX ELSEWHERE

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The Friends of Friendless Churches reports that work on conservation of the C13 wall paintings at Wickham Bishops church has continued, with impressive results, as well as the recovery of the inscription "1613 IS" dating from a

previous re-touching. Benjamin Finn, who uses the church as a stained glass studio, has made a drawing showing his proposal for a replacement east window, aided by a donation from Maldon Council. His website at [www.stpetersstainedglass.co.uk](http://www.stpetersstainedglass.co.uk) carries further information. The wall painting conservator is Perry Lithgow, under the supervision of Julian Limentani of Marshall Sisson.

Work by the same conservator has continued on the remarkable C18 wall paintings at the east end of St Mary's Mundon. The origins of this ambitious Baroque trompe l'oeil decoration, in which a heavily tasselled curtain is partially pulled aside above the east window, remain unknown. Further work is still to be done in this church (mainly repair to its windows) but FoFC is quietly confident that funding for this will be found.

Michael Leach

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## **RICHARD BULL OF ONGAR, A VERITABLE VIRTUOSO OF GRANGERISING**

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The Bull family originated in the Isle of Wight but, in the mid C17, John Bull (d.1715) came to London to seek his fortune. His son, also John Bull (d.1742), became a wealthy Turkey merchant in London – a trader in Turkish produce, and a member of the Levant Company. He was knighted in 1717 and, in the same year, married Elizabeth, daughter of Richard Turner, a wealthy London advocate who lived in Chipping Ongar. Sir John Bull was living in Ongar, possibly at the White House, by 1722 when his infant son was buried in the churchyard. It seems likely that his business required a residence in the City

as well, because his son, Richard (the main focus of this note), was baptised on 15 November 1721 at the church of St Peter-le-Poor in London. Though most of his children were baptised elsewhere (presumably in London), at least seven were buried in the Chipping Ongar churchyard. The White House was Richard Bull's home from childhood and became his family home on his marriage in 1747 to Mary Alexander (née Ash), a neighbouring widow and heiress. They remained in Ongar until about 1783 when they moved to the Isle of Wight, though they continued to own the White House which was let to tenants for another 14 years.

A considerable amount is known about Richard Bull (1721-1805) who was described by a near contemporary as 'a veritable virtuoso of Grangerising'. This term was derived from the Rev. James Granger (1723-1776) who, in 1769, published a book entitled *A Biographical History of England from Egbert the Great to the Revolution.....adapted to a Methodical Catalogue of Engraved British Heads*. This was an extensive catalogue of engraved portraits, or 'heads', (of which Granger himself was an enthusiastic collector), each entry enlivened by a short biographical sketch. Various categories of biography were included, ranging from royalty to notoriety. The work, to which a third volume was added in 1774, fuelled a frenzy for the collection of engraved portraits. Though Granger himself kept his extensive print collection as loose sheets, his followers had them bound into printed books, even breaking up other books in order to obtain the required engraving. The process of adding additional material (particularly illustrations) to a printed book became known as 'grangerisation', even though it had never been practised by Granger himself. However some of the second

(1775) and third (1779) editions of his work were issued interleaved with blank pages and distributed to the most eminent collectors, with the aim of soliciting information about portraits that might be in their possession.

Richard Bull started collecting engravings in 1768 and added to his collection steadily over the next four decades. He and another collector (Joseph Gulston) were blamed by Horace Walpole for inflating the market price of engravings (from a few shillings apiece to several guineas). Bull himself blamed Gulston. Though it is not known how many engravings Richard Bull collected, his library eventually contained some 250 grangerised books containing about 20,000 inserted illustrations. One of his larger projects was the Holy Bible which, with the additional material, was expanded from 7 to 25 folio volumes.

His three daughters at Ongar shared his enthusiasm and provided practical assistance with the mounting of new acquisitions which were provided with elegant ruled and hand-coloured borders. One daughter, Elizabeth (d.1809), became a collector in her own right, specialising in religious works. Disbound books were collated with the necessary illustrations and despatched to a London bookbinder. If the engraving was larger than the printed page of the book in which it was to be inserted, pages printed on one side only were specially obtained from the printer and suitably mounted by the Bull family. If no suitable engraving was available, one would be commissioned from a contemporary artist or engraver. Amongst numerous other works, Richard Bull grangerised Granger's own *Biographical History*, and this work (expanded by the added portraits to some 36 folio volumes!) was sold to Lord Mountstuart in 1774 for the princely sum of £1000. It is now in the Huntington

Library in the USA.

Richard Bull became a great authority on engraved portraits and was widely consulted by fellow collectors. He was, however, quite up to teasing a fellow collector to whom he sent an engraving of the Biblical Adam. Concerning its provenance he noted "Mrs Adam gave it to young Abel, from whom Mr Cain took it by force .... it was subsequently hung up in Noah's cabin in the Ark .... and a pigeon brought it to England."

He travelled abroad in search of prints, as well as employing friends in the quest and exchanging material with fellow collectors. Bull travelled a great deal, regarding it as 'a Panacea for all manners of disorders, except that terrible disease, call'd the Pocket Consumption, which sooner or later is bound to seize all persons who take long journies'. Though he was MP for Newport in Cornwall from 1756 to 1780, it is not surprising to find that he rarely attended the House of Commons and there is no record that he ever made a speech there. However he did draw a Secret Service pension of £600 pa for most of that period – doubtless a useful subsidy for his hobby.

Though much of his collecting and grangerising was done during his time in Ongar, he moved permanently to North Court, Shorwell, Isle of Wight in 1783 where both his humour and his lavish entertainment were recorded in letters and diaries. At his death, his library contained about 3000 volumes, including most of the printed works on engraving, and a volume containing some 10,000 title pages from books published before 1749. Perhaps some of these came from books that had been destroyed by the frenzied collection of engravings. Such was the destruction of books that, by the end of the C18, it was unusual to find a volume of Dugdale's *Monasticon* that retained its original illustrations. By this

date the market for engravings was so brisk that even grangerised volumes were being broken up and sold piecemeal to collectors.

Michael Leach

#### Sources

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Peltz, L., 2004 'James Granger' in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*

Pinkerton J.M., 1978 'Richard Bull of Ongar' in *The Book Collector*, 27, i, 40-59

Watkins, J., 1826 *The Universal Biographical Dictionary*

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## LOOKING FOR A GOOD HOME

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Transactions of Essex Archaeological Society, new series, volume xiii, parts 3 and 4 (both published in 1914). These lack the articles on Essex tokens (A to C, and C to H respectively), but are offered free to a good home. Please contact Michael Leach 01277 363106 or [leach1939@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:leach1939@yahoo.co.uk)

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## ENGAGING YOUNG PEOPLE

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This was the title of a seminar organised by English Heritage which took place on 4 February. It took the form of six presentations by representatives of groups which had experience of work in this field. The following notes seek to draw attention to those elements which might be of use to some of our members.

There was an introduction based on a

survey of visitors by English Heritage which demonstrated that there was a sharp rise in exposure to the historic environment during early years which went on into early teenage years and then subsided in the late teens and early twenties. The rise was largely a result of parental influence, with factors such as visits with schools and voluntary groups playing a smaller role. Competition for time in later teenage years tended to reduce involvement which then picked up again as people found settled jobs in their twenties when engagement picked up and continued throughout adult life as people visited historic locations in the company of their families, partners and friends. The point was made that there was a general interest in history and sympathy with conservation of the historic environment even if this was not manifested in active membership of specific interest groups. The data from the survey is not published but it was hoped to put some of it on the English Heritage website.

The 'Young Roots' programme of the Heritage Lottery Fund offers finance for projects involving young people, and while not requiring matched funding, can make grants in the range £3000-£25000. These must be youth-led projects involving people in the 13-25 age group and aimed at groups which are socially disadvantaged, examples being ethnic groups and young offenders. They should incorporate 'creative delivery', that is a media element. This scheme is under-subscribed. If anyone feels they can make use of it they should go to [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk). Another website which should be considered is [www.do-it.org.uk](http://www.do-it.org.uk) which is used by the Churches Conservation Trust, and which uses young offenders for such work as the clearance of churchyards. Youth projects for tasks which involved manual

labour, in particular the removal of vegetation, were also used extensively by the National Trust. The National Trust was particularly keen on the use of social networking and saw an internet-based information strategy as the most appropriate way of gaining the attention and engagement of young people.

Most of the projects which were discussed stressed the social role of engagement with the historic environment rather than any educational or instructional function. The exception being the Natural History Museum 'Learning Volunteers Programme'. This sought to involve young people as part of family units which provide stewarding and general guidance to the public. This seemed to involve some degree of motivation from the volunteers. They are recruited in family groups in order to obviate potential child protection and insurance difficulties. Although no qualifications are asked for a sound level of knowledge is required and training is given. It was felt that using young volunteers enabled them to communicate with young visitors, and the volunteers have to have good communication skills. The volunteers saw the value of the work in providing a positive good material for their CVs. Individual volunteers are recruited from the age of 18. Generally however the speakers were aiming at very specific groups: inner city youth, and socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

John Hayward

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## BOOK REVIEW

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Working towards Foulness: the life and work of an Essex family of farmworkers over three centuries, by George and Brenda Jago, published in 2009 by the Foreshore Press, St Lawrence at £15. ISBN 978-0-9538593-4-4, pp.iii + 199,

numerous illustrations, no index.

This impressive book traces the history of eight generations of the Webb family (through the direct line of one of the authors) and relates their migration from Sandon to Foulness. Inevitably the details of the earlier generations are scanty, but the authors have tackled this problem by very thorough use of what records have survived. They have also provided much general information about contemporary Essex rural life from a range of other sources which are well referenced in the endnotes. The book provides a clear insight into how the life of an agricultural labourer evolved over three centuries and the relentless physical labour that was needed to keep the country fed. The sections on Foulness are particularly interesting, a reminder of the remoteness of this island until the construction of the Havengore Bridge by the War Office in 1922. Until then, links to the mainland were by sea-going barges, or by rowing boat ferries across the Blackwater to Bradwell (or from Wallasea Island to Creeksea), or by running the gauntlet of the offshore Broomway path at low tide for moving livestock to and from the island. One Webb ancestor, having lost his forearm in a chaff cutter, had to wait many hours for the tide to go out before he could be transported via the Broomway to a surgeon on the mainland. An excellent feature of this book is its information about forgotten agricultural practices, such as the method of setting out a field to be ploughed by horse. Apart from agriculture, breeding horses and wherrying were the main employments on the island. The ferry to Creeksea was used for carrying horses which must have been an alarming experience for man and beast! The book is copiously illustrated, though the quality of some of these is rather poor (which the authors acknowledge). The very full list of

references shows the considerable amount of work which went into the authors' research, and it should be an inspiration to other family historians. The authors are to be warmly commended, not least for their generosity in donating the profits from sales to the Foulness Heritage Centre.

Michael Leach

## **COX'S HISTORY OF ESSEX**

A rather poorly printed slim quarto volume of 103 pages carried this title on its spine, and proved to be the Essex section of *Magna Britannia* which was issued in monthly parts between 1711 and 1717, as a supplement to the five volume *Atlas Geographus*. The work was published anonymously, 'Collected and Composed by an impartial Hand'. However the author is generally assumed to have been the Rev. Thomas Cox (1655/6-1734), incumbent of Broomfield, Stock and Chignall Smealy. This particular copy of the book had been bound in 1907 (according to the book plate) and lacked a title page, an introduction and an index. The only clue to its authorship was what had been stamped by the Edwardian bookbinder onto its spine.

According to the ODNB, Cox was born on the western fringes of Essex, educated at Bishops Stortford Grammar School and at Queens' College, Cambridge. He became rector of Chignall Smealy in 1680, Broomfield in 1685 and Stock in 1703. He resigned Chignall Smealy in 1704 but held the other two livings till the end of his life. He had a particular interest in medieval and ecclesiastical history, and translated works from French, Italian and Greek authors on early church history. He contributed biographies of various medieval English kings to *A Complete*

*History of England* (1706), much of which was written by White Kennet, the Whig bishop of Peterborough. The author of the 2004 ODNB article notes the usual attribution of the authorship of *Magna Britannia* to Thomas Cox, but suggests that this is an error resulting from the publication of a later six volume edition (1720-31) by a bookseller who was also called Thomas Cox.

However there is evidence in the book itself that the Rev Thomas Cox, of Broomfield and Stock, did write much of *Magna Britannia*, including the entire Essex section. Under the entry for his own parish of Stock, he unusually recorded in full a monumental inscription which he also noted in one of his letters to William Holman in 1716. Under Broomfield, he referred to a document, a copy of which was "in the Vicar's Hand". This suggests personal knowledge of these two parishes. Stronger evidence, perhaps, comes from Philip Morant, who succeeded him in the Broomfield living and noted Cox's authorship of various works, including *Magna Britannia*, in his own *History of Essex*. It seems unlikely that Morant would have been mistaken in this. Irrefutable evidence comes from a series of letters dating from 1716 (now in Essex Record Office) from Cox to William Holman, in which there are frequent references to Cox's ongoing work on *Magna Britannia* for Essex. Holman had loaned Cox some of his manuscripts and provided other information on Hinckford Hundred. Cox was also working on Durham and Cumberland in 1716. There are letters to Holman from other Essex antiquarians (Samuel Dale, Nicholas Jekyll and Anthony Holbrook) some of which are not flattering about Cox's work on the Essex section of *Magna Britannia*. There is an undated letter from Cox to Holman, apologising for not sending him the Essex section before publication, and for

failing to acknowledge his assistance in its compilation. Cox excused this on grounds of haste, as well as not wishing to prejudice Holman's plan to publish his own county history. His reasoning was that, if the public knew that Holman had contributed material to *Magna Britannia*, they would be unwilling to lay out money to buy Holman's publication in order to read at greater length what had already been set down by Cox. He was clearly feeling under attack at this point, noting "...I am blamed on all sides, by some for being too long, & others too short ... I was under a covert once & slept secure but now I am made a marke for everyone to shoot their arrows at."

In fact Cox did energetically publicise Holman's project in his account of Essex. At the end of his section on Hinckford Hundred, he wrote 'we may expect a much fuller Account of it shortly from the industrious and learned Gentleman, Mr William Holman of Halsted, who has bent his Studies this way for some Years, and has had such Encouragement and Assistance in carrying on the Work, that nothing in Antiquity relating to it, either curious or useful, can be supposed to escape his Search and Judgement. He is solicited to carry his History through the whole County; but that being uncertain, whether his Life or Leisure will permit him to go through so great a Work, tho' he has Materials sufficient, this Hundred will be the first, and that soon published, to give the Publick a Proof of his Ability for so great a Performance.' Holman's *History of Hinckford Hundred* never reached the press, though it is interesting to note that Gough, in his *Anecdotes of British Topography* of 1768, stated that it had been published. Cox's letters give an insight into how he set about writing his county histories. His first undated letter in Holman's collection is a proforma, which must have been

sent out to many individuals. Without preamble, he wrote "I desire a short Account of anything of Antiquity or otherwise remarkable in the Market towns of Essex. As also, if conveniently, any Men of Note for Offices or Learning. Any Charitable Benefactions, as Almshouses &c. Any Particular Customs or Usages. Any Rarities in Nature as Mines, Minerals, Fossils, Chalybeate Waters & c. Any Monastries, Churchlands & Special Endowm<sup>t</sup> of Churches, Chappels & c. Any remarkable Monum<sup>t</sup> in Churches."

The subsequent letters (not all of which are dated) span from May 1716 to December 1716. It is clear that Holman provided Cox with much material, including the loan of his own MSS, and printed copies of Leland's *Itinerary* and Willis's *Notitia Parliamentaria*. Cox was working under huge pressure. In May he wrote "As to Essex, it has been laid aside because I was forced to compose Cumberland and Durham wh<sup>c</sup> another Gentleman had undertaken but through illness was forced to throw y<sup>m</sup> up." In December, when *Essex* was about to go to press, he was working on "Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Hartfordshire, Herefordshire &c." As if this wasn't enough, he was busy with a new edition of Puffendorf's *De Jure Naturae et Gentium* with annotations by Barbeyrac. He was under constant pressure from his booksellers who "confine themselves to so many Sheets for a Shilling, and they will not afford a page more.....We are always in haste & I can't get anything ready before they want it." He complained to Holman that "you put a pretty hard taske upon me to account for all the defects, as you esteem them, in y<sup>e</sup> Atlas of Essex."

One begins to feel sorry for Cox. In one letter he noted that, although he had a good horse, he did not much enjoy travelling and was much happier on a

comfortable chair in his study with his favourite books. These, apart from the ones already referred to, included Newcourt's *Repertorium*, Dugdale's *Baronage* and *Monasticon*, works by Norden and Speed, Gibson's edition of Camden's *Britannia*, Kennet's *Case of Impropriations*, Stokesley's *Registry*, Woods' *Athenae Oxoniensis*, Herne's *Life and works* by John Ray. Some of these titles appear as references in the text, others are referred to in his correspondence with Holman.

As far as the Essex volume is concerned, it is not surprising that the end result is patchy and derivative. There is a description, sometimes a mere mention, of about a third of the Essex parishes. This may include a brief account of the owners of the manor and advowson, notes on eminent residents and dissident clergy, a brief topographical description and a few anecdotal oddities. Occasionally the text comes to life with what must have been a direct personal observation. Under Stansted Mountfitchet, for example, he noted "of the Vicars of this Parish, Mr John Reynolds, the present one, deserves a particular Commendation for his Care and Expencc in building a neat Vicarage-House, with convenient Outhouses and Gardens, which his Predecessors had neglected so long..." At the end of the book is a list of the county's baronets (with the dates of their creation), and its gentlemen, notes on its natural history, a short description of its monastic foundations, some of its Marian martyrs, a list of its eminent divines and writers, a brief account of its charity schools, a table showing the value of the county's parishes (with their incumbents and patrons) and a mileage chart showing the distances from London to the county's market towns.

In spite of his shortcomings, Cox (or his importunate booksellers) must be given

credit for getting a history of Essex into print, something which many historians (including Holman himself) failed to achieve.

Michael Leach

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## CHELMSFORD MUSEUM REDEVELOPMENT

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A major building project which started in July 2008 has provided Chelmsford Museum with a two storey extension which has doubled the size of the Grade II, Victorian, Oaklands House. Chelmsford Borough Council provided the capital budget of £5m for the work. The enlarged museum opened to the public at the end of January 2010 and was officially opened by HRH the Duke of Gloucester on 25 February 2010.

The new building is unashamedly in the modern idiom, built partly using cream coloured bricks to fit in with the Victorian gault bricks, partly with a large glazed section and partly with zinc panels, which pick up the colour of the grey roof slate of the old house. The design has generally met with a favourable public reaction of 'pleasant surprise'.

The exterior is adorned with the Georgian Mildmay coat of arms in Portland stone, carved in about 1730 for Moulsham Hall for Benjamin Mildmay,

Early Fitzwalter. The Hall was demolished in 1809 and was where Moulsham Drive is now. Benjamin Mildmay's tomb is in Chelmsford Cathedral. The museum acquired the surviving stones from a garage in Brentwood in 1963, and don't know where the missing fragments are – the missing left hand supporter would have been another lion – there is just one paw surviving holding the shield. The full motto, ALLA TA HARA, means 'God My Help'. It has been in store for over 40 years, and this has been a wonderful opportunity to get it back on permanent display, relatively close to its original home.

The new building accommodates a new Essex Regiment Museum and small Essex Yeomanry display, and the Borough Council is grateful to the Trustees of the Essex Yeomanry and the Trustees of the Essex Regiment Museum for masterminding an Appeal which raised over £130,000. There is also a new interactive display, 'Bright Sparks', which tells the story of Chelmsford's industry, and particularly 'the big three', the world-beating Marconi, Hoffmann and Crompton. Indeed outside the new entrance is also erected an original Crompton lamp standard, made for the City of Plymouth, but re-erected at Marconi Radar on Writtle Road and stored more recently at Sandford Mill.

The Museum also now has a larger temporary exhibition room as well as an Education Room, which is capable of being hired out for evening functions. It can seat 65 people.

Chelmsford Borough Council has been keen to ensure the use of sustainable energy and resources. A Ground Source Heat Pump has been installed in the new building, which will extract heat from the ground in winter, and will dump heat in the ground to cool the building in

summer. The whole building has been super-insulated. Roofwater is now harvested for use in irrigating the park.

It has not been possible to refurbish all the displays in the existing Victorian House, but there is now a space to hang rotating exhibitions of the Borough's art collections, and there are new displays on the town's Georgian and Victorian history, and its popular culture, such as the music and sports club scenes, and the town's carnival. These opened in late July 2009 and include dressing up for children, oral reminiscences, and videos. A key exhibit is the Luftwaffe model of the Hoffmann and Marconi factories in New Street, recovered from a German airfield after the war.

Public admission remains free. Visiting hours are Mondays-Saturdays 10am-5pm and Sunday afternoons, 1pm-4pm. Phone 01245 605700, email [museums@chelmsford.gov.uk](mailto:museums@chelmsford.gov.uk), website [www.chelmsford.gov.uk/museums](http://www.chelmsford.gov.uk/museums)

Nick Wickenden, Museums Manager

Architects: Thomas Ford & Partners  
Main contractors: TJ Evers of Tiptree  
Museum Design: Ronayne Design  
Capital cost: £5m

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## INTRODUCTORY COURSES IN ARCHAEOLOGY

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The Copped Hall Trust Archaeological Project is running three taster weekends to introduce beginners to the basics of archaeology and excavation. These will take place at Copped Hall, near Epping, on the weekends of July 17 & 18, July 24 & 25, and July 31 & August 1. The cost is £50. In August there are two 5 day field schools for those who already know the basics of excavation and recording, either at Copped Hall or elsewhere. The

dates are Monday 9 August to Friday 13 August, and Monday 16 August to Friday 20 August. The cost is £90. Professional archaeologists and experienced supervisors are involved with all courses. Further details can be obtained from Pauline Dalton, Roseleigh, Epping Road, Epping CM16 5HW. She can be contacted by phone on 10992 813725 or by e-mail on [pmd2@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:pmd2@ukonline.co.uk)

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## THE DISCOVERING COGGESHALL PROJECT

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The development of the medieval settlement of Coggeshall is not obvious from maps of the town. There is no clear indication of the existence of burgage plots, or exactly where or the extent of the market place in the town. The market charter of 1256, granted to the Cistercian Abbey, established a market place on the old Roman road. This probably had the effect of drawing the focus of settlement away from the area of the church to its present position at a crossroads, but this theory has not been confirmed by either archaeological or historic research. However, the historic town centre is notable for its numerous well preserved timber-framed buildings, dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup> centuries. The Coggeshall Heritage Society (CHS) has, for a number of years, been interested in promoting further study of the town. To this aim a partnership with the Essex Historic Buildings Group (EHBG) and technical support from the Essex County Council Historic Buildings and Conservation Section (ECC, HB&C) led to a successful attempt to obtain sufficient funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to study a closely defined area in the centre of the town. This contained around 40 historic properties which would be subject to a preliminary examination to determine

layout and potential ages, the production of rough plans and assessment of their potential for dendrochronology. An important part of the project was to include the community and to this end talks have already been given to potential volunteers interested in assisting with measured surveys. The primary and secondary schools in Coggeshall have been involved in a competition to design a logo for the project and a photographic competition. The Honeywood Community Science School, within their local history module, attended a Technical Study Day at Cressing Temple. They were shown how timber-framed buildings were constructed and were given hands on experience in such skills as wattle and daub panels and bricklaying. The course was organised by ECC, HB&C. The website for "Discovering Coggeshall" has been designed by the Honeywood School and they will also be responsible for its updating and maintenance.

Whilst there is a considerable amount of time given freely by the volunteers from all the organisations involved in the project a major part of the grant will be directed at dendrochronology (tree-ring dating). This has extended the study of timber-framed buildings started by the late Cecil Hewett with his study of carpentry joints. In many of the Essex towns the results have been disappointing due to the use of fast grown trees with insufficient rings. When Ian Tyers, a leading dendrochronologist, did a rapid survey of Coggeshall he found, for reasons yet unclear, that many of the buildings showed good signs for successful dating.

Amongst the documentary material available for Coggeshall there is a rental survey dated 1574. This not only records ownership and rent but gives dimensions and area of the plots and adjoining owners making it possible to add into the

study of the buildings the very important social context. The documents are currently being transcribed by a local historian and another local volunteer is undertaking the task of mapping the properties onto a modern map base.

Hopefully the outcome of all this research will be a popular publication on the developing social history of the town, its buildings and their development with a permanent exhibition at the Coggeshall Museum that will be capable of display at other venues. The schools will be responsible for producing DVD's and other material for the use of young people, teaching packs on historical, heritage and technical projects and short drama productions on life in Coggeshall over the centuries. A Town Trail and detailed information board are planned so that visitors will be able to appreciate more fully the architectural, historic and social importance of the town of Coggeshall.

Brenda Watkin

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## **WALTER CHARLES DAVEY 1925 - 2010**

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Walter Charles Davey (Wally to his friends), who was well known as an historian, archaeologist and pottery expert in Harlow, died on 17th January, 2010, after a long battle against lymphatic leukaemia. Born in Bristol on 6th October, 1925, the youngest of seven children of William and Elizabeth Davey, he lost his father at seven years of age and moved around with his family, eventually settling in London. His father, a former regular soldier who was recalled to the colours in 1914, spent most of World War I as a prisoner of war, having been captured at Mons. Following demobilisation he became an active trade unionist and, despite his

early death, exerted a powerful influence on his son's political development.

After leaving school at fourteen years of age, he worked in engineering and then the building trade, eventually becoming a plumber. He became active in politics and joined the Young Communists' League, which led him to join an expedition to Spain to deliver food to comrades fighting in the Spanish Civil War.

When the Second World War broke out Wally tried unsuccessfully to join the RAF, but he was eventually drafted into the Army at his call-up. He volunteered to train as a pilot in the 6th Airborne Regiment and was subsequently posted to Palestine. Here, his left-wing outlook influenced his attitude to the formation of the state of Israel, and he condemned terrorism.

After demobilisation in 1948 he trained and qualified as a teacher. His first marriage had been a casualty of his war service, and he now met and married another teacher, Enid Hoddy. For some years they both taught in Inner London schools but, in the mid-1950s, they moved to Harlow and became involved in community activities including performances of the Moot House Players, CND and local politics.

As a teacher of pottery at Brays Grove Comprehensive School, Wally was fascinated to discover the remains of a 17<sup>th</sup> century pottery kiln on the school playing field. Recognising pottery fragments as Metropolitan ware, which had been widely circulated through Britain and its North American colonies, he realised when he discovered other local kilns that Harlow and Potter Street had been the centre of England's premier pottery industry before the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

He spent the rest of his life on further research, the results of which were encapsulated in an important book, *The*

*Harlow Pottery Industries*, produced in collaboration with Helen Walker and published in June 2009.

Wally also joined the West Essex Archaeological Group and helped excavate the Iron Age Camp at Wallbury, Great Hallingbury, and the Romano-Celtic Temple at Harlow, where he identified Bronze Age remains. He became an authority on local archaeology and spent many hours at Harlow Museum. His numerous other interests included jazz and he always regretted leaving a collection of records in Palestine.

His wife, Enid, predeceased him, but he is survived by two adopted daughters, Rachel and Miriam and four grandchildren in whom he delighted.

Stan Newens

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## JOYCE MAY JONES 1924 - 2010

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Joyce May Jones, an able Harlow local historian, died on 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2010. Born in Pendlebury, near Manchester, on 28<sup>th</sup> January, 1924, the only child of Harry Edmunds, a shipping representative, and his wife, Kate, she was educated at Pendleton High School for Girls and Manchester University, where she studied architecture. Her university course was interrupted by 2 ½ years service in the ATS during the Second World War – partly spent monitoring enemy wireless signals and partly as a teacher of arts and crafts to wounded and disabled soldiers.

After securing a First Class Degree (B.Arch) and winning the Haywood Silver Medal as the best final year student, Joyce gained an MA during the course of her first professional engagement in the Architects Department of Buckinghamshire County Council. From

there she moved to Cambridgeshire and, in 1953, she married another architect, Eric Jones, and came to Harlow. Here she worked for the Harlow Development Corporation and became greatly attached to the town.

She acted as the architect for the preservation of the historic Harlowbury Chapel, played a part in work on the Celtic Romano Temple and advised the Porch Committee at St. Mary's Church, Parndon.

She also wrote *Landlords and Tenants*, a history of Harlowbury; *How We Saved an Ancient Monument*, an account of the restoration of Harlowbury Chapel; *The Secret History of Harlow's Roman Temple Site*; *Passmores: the Story of a House*; *Seed Time and Harvest*, an edited edition of the weather diary of William Barnard of Harlowbury, 1807-23; *The House that Wasn't There*, a fascinating account of the timber-framed house in which she lived, which had been moved from Eastwick to Great Parndon in the 1850s. In addition, she assisted other local historians – in particular, Hazel Lake – in producing other historical works on Harlow.

Joyce and her husband, Eric, were also interested in a wide range of cultural activities. She painted watercolours and decorated the harpsichords and clavichords which Eric and their son built. She had an extensive knowledge of English literature and her whole family is very musical. She also involved herself in a school PTA, in Harlow Civic Society, the Friends of Harlow Museum and other activities.

Joyce is survived by her husband, Eric, their son, Lewis, their daughter, Sarah, and two granddaughters, who are all involved in cultural activities of their own.

Stan Newens

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