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SUMMER. 2024, ISSUE 201

# Newsletter

*Essex Society for Archaeology and History*



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**Copy for the next issue should be sent to the editor at the above address by no later than 16th February 2025.**

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

The illustration on the front cover: The Colchester Vase

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# From the President

## Phillip Wise

I am honoured and delighted to have been elected to serve as your President for the next three years. In taking up the role I am very conscious of my distinguished predecessors stretching right back to the foundation of the Society in 1852. I will do my best to maintain, and hopefully enhance, their legacy during my term of office.

For those of you who don't know me, I am currently the Heritage Manager at Colchester and Ipswich Museums. As a member of the senior management team I have very wide ranging responsibilities which extend well beyond museum curatorship. It might however be relevant for me to mention here that I am currently a member of the team working on a National Lottery Heritage Fund project to redevelop Holy Trinity Church, a historic church dating back to the 11th century in the centre of Colchester. My role is to provide historical and archaeological information about the building and those buried in the church and its associated graveyard. There are several historically important figures buried at Holy Trinity, including the Elizabethan scientist William Gilbert (1544-1603) who undertook pioneering research into magnetism, John Wilbye (1574-1638), a composer of madrigals or love songs, and Capt. Thomas Pinto RN (1772-1851), who as a lieutenant served aboard HMS Agamemnon at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805.

I have been working in museums for over forty years, having started my career at the City Museum and Art Gallery, Stoke on Trent (now the Potteries Museum). As well as cataloguing the archaeology collections using handwritten A5 cards – how very old-fashioned this now seems! – I also compiled a report on a century of excavations at Hulton Abbey, a medieval Cistercian monastery, which was eventually published as 'Staffordshire Archaeological Studies' vol. 2 (1985) and would, in due course after I had left the museum, lead to a modern professional excavation.

After studying for the Certificate in Museum Studies at the University of Leicester, I moved to Grimsby Museum where I coordinated a project to reconstruct the local Iron Age settlement on its original site. I also undertook research into what was then known about the archaeology of Grimsby and Cleethorpes which culminated in a synthesis published in 'Humber Perspectives: A Region Through the Ages' (1990), the proceedings of a conference held at the University of Hull in 1987.

My next move was to the West Midlands, to be Keeper of Archaeology at the Warwickshire Museum. During my nine years there I organised several temporary exhibitions, including 'Offa's Kingdom', a study of Anglo-Saxon Mercia, which, as well as being shown in Warwick itself, toured to four other venues in the West Midlands in 1992-93. A major activity was recording finds made by metal detectorists in Warwickshire and adjoining counties – quite a task in the days before the Portable Antiquities Scheme was established. I also somehow found the time to research the Chesterton estate near Leamington Spa which is notable for an unusual 17th century windmill often claimed to have been designed by Inigo Jones, but, as I discovered in the archives of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust, this is almost certainly not the case.



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Since September 1998 I have been working in Essex, having originally been employed as the Curator of Archaeology at Colchester Museums. Over the years I have researched and published on a variety of subjects – archaeological, numismatic and historical – relating to Colchester and Essex. This has also included editing ‘Colchester: Fortress of the War God – An Archaeological Assessment’ (2013), written by Adrian Gascoyne and David Radford, for English Heritage which was intended to synthesise knowledge about the archaeology of Colchester as it was understood at the turn of the millennium. Most recently, I collaborated with Gareth Williams (formerly of the British Museum) on writing up the Braintree Hoard of Late Saxon and Byzantine coins, a selection of which were acquired by Colchester Museums with support from the Society last year. My main achievement whilst at Colchester to date has been working on the redevelopment of Colchester Castle Museum in 2013-14, including a complete redisplay of the collections undertaken in conjunction with Paul Sealey and Tom Hodgson.

The Society’s 175th anniversary year falls during my presidency in 2027. This milestone seems to be increasingly marked by organisations so it would be very good to do something ourselves. I am interested in receiving suggestions from you, the members, on how it might be marked. Indeed I would like to hear from you about any aspect of the Society’s activities – publications, outings or seminars – as well as any matters of concern relating to the history and archaeology of Essex. My email address is [philip.wise@colchester.gov.uk](mailto:philip.wise@colchester.gov.uk)

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## From the editor 😊

I wanted to make my first written appearance (in the almost 4 years I've had the privilege to edit the newsletter!) to write you all a written plea. I get a lot of emails and these sadly can get missed in my inbox. If you haven't received an acknowledgement email from me within a week please do feel free to chase and pester me!

I'd also like to take this opportunity to say thank you for trusting me with the newsletter these last 4 years, especially now I have left the county - if you didn't know I relocated to Wales at the start of this year so life has been a bit manic (especially with all the castles I've been trying to visit whilst the weather is glorious!).

Please do continue to send your copy for the newsletter, from the short to the long from the mundane to the exciting I love receiving everything you research and write. I will endeavour to include almost everything (within reason!) and will assist you if you need to edit your work down so please don't hesitate to reach out!

Victoria Rathmill

## Antiquaries Journal and Antiquity

Hon. Secretary has come into possession of runs of the above two archaeological journals. If you would like any copies to fill in gaps in your own collections, please let Howard Brooks know..

## Newsletter from Kent and CBA East

We receive digital copies of Newsletters from the above. If you would like to receive these, please contact Hon Secretary.

## Septaria - a stony problem

Linda West is researching the use of septaria in East Anglia, but has found a dearth of writing on or research into the building stone used, for example, in Colchester's Roman walls. If you have come across and research into septaria, she would be very pleased to hear. Please contact Hon Secretary.

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# Annual General Meeting in West Hanningfield

The Society held its 2024 AGM at St Mary and St Edward Church. These photos show the outgoing and incoming Presidents Nick Wickenden and Philip Wise, and those in attendance. This Society grant-aided part of the cost of repairing the Miles Gray bells.



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# Roman Collections at Colchester – New Research

Glynn Davis, Senior Collections and Learning Curator at Colchester Museums

The Roman archaeology collections of Colchester Museums have been recognised as being of national significance since 1998 when they were awarded Designated status by the Museums and Galleries Commission (now Arts Council England). In recent months there has been an upsurge in interest in these collections and their potential to reveal new information about life (and death) in both Colchester and Britain. There are several collaborative research projects currently being undertaken.

The 'Decoding the Dead' project assesses the Roman cremation burials in the museum collections. This project started in 2020 and continues to develop as techniques of scientific analysis evolve. Researchers at Durham University's Department of Archaeology were recently re-sent the petrous bone samples, a tiny bone in the human ear, of twenty-one individuals to conduct lead isotope analysis. This is the first such analysis to be undertaken on Roman cremated remains from the UK. Combined with the previous strontium isotope analysis, which when undertaken was also the first instance in the UK, it will help narrow down where these individuals were likely to have been born in the Roman Empire. A case in point is the occupant of the Colchester Vase. The new analysis would suggest it is now more likely that this individual grew up somewhere in the Mediterranean as opposed to a region of Britain.

This year is the culmination of four years' work into the re-assessment of one of Colchester's most important Roman objects – the Colchester Vase. The latest study has revealed that the Vase is not an off-the-shelf pot with a later inscription referring to named gladiators being added, but that the inscription is contemporary with its manufacture. In other words the Vase is a commissioned piece, recording a real combat between actual gladiators at Colchester.



The Colchester Vase is now seen as being a souvenir of a real event in Colchester (Colchester City Council: CIMS).

The project “‘A veneer of Empire’: decorative stonework in Roman Colchester” is a collaborative project between Colchester Museums and two leading specialists in Roman stonework: Dr Penny Coombe and Dr Kevin Hayward. This involves examining a huge collection of multicoloured marble that was excavated at the former site of Kent Blaxill in Colchester High Street in the 1950s. This collection is the largest of its kind from anywhere in Roman Britain, representing over fifteen coloured stones sourced from across the Empire. Its re-assessment will have major implications for understanding the physical make-up of the Roman town and the economics of the Roman stone trade in the northwest provinces.

‘From the Cradle to the Grave: Research into Roman infant feeding bottles’ is a project looking at a type of Roman pottery known as a tettina. Colchester Museums hold the largest collection of these pots from anywhere in the country. New scientific analysis by Kayt Hawkins and Dr Julie Dunne hopes to establish the presence and type of fat and oil residues absorbed within these vessels to determine what foods they may once have contained. The results of their work should be published later this year.



2. This decorated lead coffin was found in Butt Road, Colchester (Colchester City Council: CIMS).

Colchester Museums recently hosted placement student Katie Munby from the University of Reading. Katie's research is into Roman mirrors, of which Colchester Museums hold the largest examples of complete types from a single site. Katie has been analysing the metallic content of the mirrors including using X-rays.

We are also a lead partner in supporting Andrea Mobbs, a PhD student from the University of Reading, in researching Roman coffins in Britain. Andrea has used X Ray analysis as well as sampling, for chemical analysis, all the Roman coffins and lead urns or ossuaria in the Museum's collections. Her initial work has already revealed notable results such as the ossuaria being made of pewter, a tin-lead alloy, as opposed to pure lead. The chemical analysis of lead is some of the first undertaken for 40 years and the results will be of national and international importance.



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# An Essex Journey c.1662

By Michael Leach

Thomas Baskerville (c.1630-1700) was a member of a minor gentry family from Sunningwell and Bayworth in what was then Berkshire, but now is in Oxfordshire. Though his father was a university graduate, Thomas himself was not. Instead he had travelled to Newfoundland as a young man in 1649, though it is not known how long he stayed, or why he went there. He also made a journey with his brother to Barbados in about 1655, but again nothing more is known about this event. He was certainly back in his home country by 1662 when he made his journey through Essex, and later through other parts of England, though the fair copy of his travels seem to have been compiled many years later, presumably from contemporaneous notes. To add to the confusion, his account appears to be written in a number of different hands, as well as covering various other topics, such as a history of Oxford University colleges, a list of London taverns, some verses, and various other miscellanea. Little known till now, most of his account has now been edited and published for the first time.

Much of his Essex journey, in common with those in other parts of England, read more like a gazetteer of a list of towns visited, the mileages between them, where he put up for the night and how well he was fed and watered. But his accounts are scattered with other notes of matters that had interested him, particularly country seats and their owners. He regretted that Essex 'is so level' that he was 'unable to gain any considerable prospect' from the road between London and Colchester, and that the rivers he crossed were all 'so slow of motion' that he was unable to determine their direction of flow. Ingatestone, however, was a 'sweet town on rising ground', 'with a handsome church where the family of Peters (sic) have an ile for the buriall of their dead and in it some fair monuments'. There was a bowling green adjoining the churchyard. Between Margaretting and Widford he noted the medicinal herbs camomile, organy (probably marjoram) and orpin(e) growing by the roadside. In the church at Chelmsford he saw the tomb of Lord Thomas Mildmay and his wife, with their seven sons and eight daughters.

However, what really caught his eye (as indeed it did on some of his other journeys) were the 'large hop yards' at Chelmsford. He noted that the picking was done by women, employed on a day rate of sixpence a day, and that green hops were the best, provided that they were not too green – the 'brown sort being lower prized'. The hops were at their best when glutinous and prone to stick to the pickers' fingers. Twelve hours drying in the kiln was necessary, as soon as possible after picking, after which they would be spread for a week before bagging to avoid the risk of mould. The validity of these injunctions would have been recognised by the commercial growers in twentieth century Kent. Baskerville clearly knew about hop growing and harvesting, perhaps from personal experience in his native Berkshire.

He also had an eye for designed parkland, and recorded the double avenue of lime and hornbeam at New Hall, an unusual combination of planting. At Boreham he noted a tantalising (but unidentified) house belonging to Mr Cammock 'finely planted with out landish trees whose ever verdant topps overlook the vale adding delight to travellers that pass that waie'. This would seem to be an early example of coniferous tree planting in garden/parkland design.

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Witham had a life-sized wooden effigy of George and the dragon carved on a sign post.. Then on to Colchester where he had much to say about the legend of 'King Coyle', and more about the recent Civil War siege of the town, including the failure of grass to grow on the execution site of the Royalist commanders, and the ruination of St Botolph's church. Baskerville reported that some 10,000 men were employed in the local manufacture of 'ruggs and bays' – if accurate, this figure must have included a good many outworkers in the surrounding area.

He then left Essex and crossed the border into Suffolk. But on another journey to Cambridge nearly two decades later, he made a diversion south to Audley End, 'a great and sumctuous (sic) house inferior to none in England for biggness', together with 'a fair park and sumptuous fish ponds adjoining'. He mentioned many rooms 'hung with Arras, and many rare pictures, and Chimney pieces in most roomes of well polished marble of various collours' – and 'in that most noble gallery is the best sealing for plaister work as ever I saw, having many various figures of birds, beasts, flowers, and fishes, trees, and men'. He would have seen the house when still in royal ownership, and before its significant reduction in size driven by the need to economise. Before leaving the county, he lodged at the Bell in Saffron Walden and enjoyed their 'very good bottl'd ale'.

## References

Jones, A (ed)., 2023, *Journeys in Industrious England*, Hobnob Press, Gloucester

A historical map of Essex, England, showing various towns and geographical features. The map is divided into sections, with numbers like 11, 15, and 19 visible. Key locations include Sudbury, Colchester, and the River Thames. The map is overlaid with a blue banner containing text and a logo.

# Essex Publications

The Essex Publications series publishes readable, scholarly studies on all aspects of Essex history. Topics covered can range broadly in period and theme, reflecting the long, complex history of the county, and be published in a variety of formats including monographs, multi-authored studies and conference proceedings.

We seek submissions that we are confident of publishing successfully, in terms of their quality and appeal. Our first four volumes have received very positive reviews, highlighting the significant contributions they have made to the history of the county and wider historical debate.

The logo for Essex Publications, consisting of the letters 'EP' in a stylized, white, serif font on a blue square background.

EP

# Invitation for book proposals

The series is produced in collaboration with an editorial panel of experienced Essex historians. Ideas for books about Essex history are always welcome. Why not contact the editorial panel for a preliminary discussion? Please contact the panel's secretary: [c.c.thornton@btinternet.com](mailto:c.c.thornton@btinternet.com)

## Current titles and availability

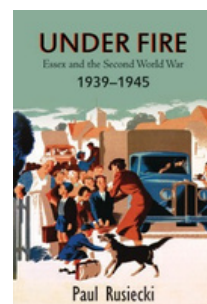
Essex Publications are produced in soft cover and e-book formats. They are available from all good bookshops in Essex as well as from online retailers and direct from UH Press: [uhpress.co.uk](http://uhpress.co.uk)  
Under Fire: Essex and the Second World War, 1939–45

Paul Rusiecki

ISBN 978-1-909291-28-7; May 2015; paperback; £18.99

“Paul Rusiecki’s book will be the key reference point for sources and for interpretation by local historians working on Essex in the Second World War, and can serve as a model for other county histories. [It is] a landmark history of a county in World War Two.”

Sally Sokoloff, **The Local Historian**

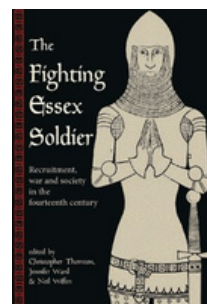


The Fighting Essex Soldier: Recruitment, war and society in the fourteenth century  
Christopher Thornton, Jennifer Ward and Neil Wiffen (eds)

ISBN 978-1-909291-88-1; May 2017; paperback; £18.99

“The book overall is a model of a local study set within a national context and should serve as an example for others. It is beautifully produced with high quality illustrations and a striking cover.”

Anne Curry, **The English Historical Review**



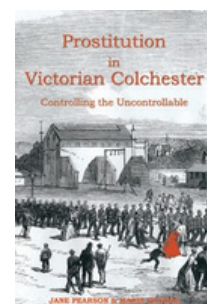
Prostitution in Victorian Colchester: Controlling the uncontrollable

Jane Pearson and Maria Rayner

ISBN 978-1-909291-97-3; Mar 2018; paperback; £18.99

“This is a highly original local study... Pearson and Rayner are to be commended for opening up the uncharted territory of gender relations in Victorian Colchester and for carefully positioning their local study in relation to other scholarly works on prostitution.”

Joseph Cozens, **Urban History**



Dr Thomas Plume, 1630-1704: His life and legacies in Essex, Kent and Cambridge  
Christopher Thornton and Tony Doe (eds)

ISBN 978-1-912260-16-4; Dec 2020; paperback; £18.99

“The editors are to be congratulated on successfully bringing together a range of disparate authors, subjects and historiographical approaches into a single coherent volume... As with the best local history this volume has an interest that extends beyond its ostensible geographical constraints.”

Jan Broadway, **The Local Historian**



image: Langley's new map of Essex,  
Langley & Belch, 1817.

University of Hertfordshire **UH** Press

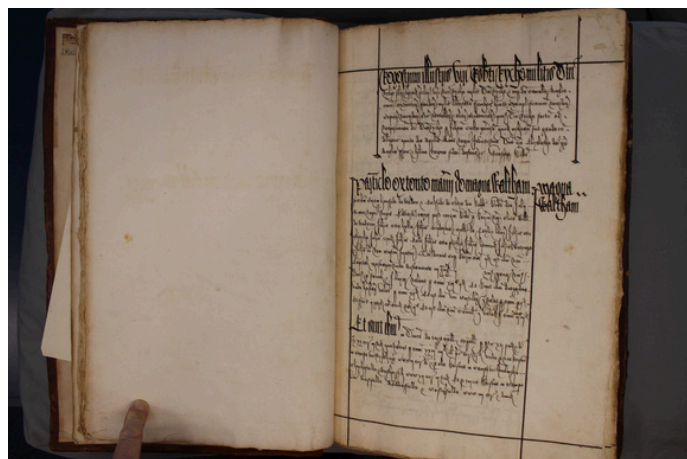
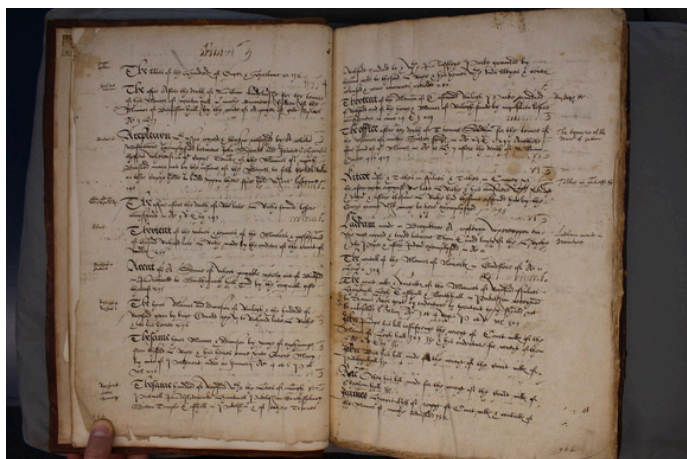
# Survey of the Essex lands of Robert Rich, 3rd Baron Rich Rich, 1st Earl of Warwick

By Ken Crowe

The library of the late Christopher Foyle of Beeleigh Abbey is being sold in discrete batches through a major auction house. A considerable amount of the library's holdings comprise manuscripts relating specifically to Essex, which are, of course, of interest to Essex historians and particularly to the Essex Record Office (ERO). The Friends of Historic Essex (FHE) support the ERO by raising funds through various channels to enable the Record Office to purchase relevant items. In January of this year The National Archives informed the ERO of the upcoming sale of some important Essex material from the Beeleigh Abbey library, including medieval deeds and an early 17th century survey of the lands of Robert Rich. From past experience it was realised that these items would be likely to achieve several times the auction house estimates, and so FHE began an urgent fund-raising campaign, and with generous grants from ESAH, Friends of Historic Essex, Friends of the National Libraries and private donors, all of the items bid for were secured. This brief article describes just one of them, the Rich survey.

The survey was commissioned by Robert Rich, son and heir of Richard Rich, in 1580, and was completed by 1610 or shortly afterwards, in the time of Richard Rich's grandson, another Robert. The survey is in Latin and English, comprising almost 500 numbered pages in a bound volume, measuring 471mm high by 230mm wide. It appears to have been very tightly rebound at some stage, making it impossible to read some of the text adjacent to the spine. On the inside front board are two 'ex-libris' bookplates. The earlier is an armorial bookplate of Charles Montagu, Earl of Manchester, Viscount Mandeville and Baron Mandeville of Kimbolton, the volume being in the library at Kimbolton Castle. Anne, daughter of Robert Rich (2nd Earl of Warwick) married Edward Montagu, 2nd Earl of Manchester, in 1626. The later bookplate is from the library of W.A. Foyle of Beeleigh Abbey.

The survey, or register, records all of the lands in Essex belonging to Robert Rich, how they were acquired, and the rights, privileges and income associated with those lands. Beginning with the manor of Great Waltham the survey records the family's manors in central Essex (including Broomfield and Leighs), in the Dengie Hundred (for example, Southminster and Tilingham), and towards the west of the county (including Hatfield Broad Oak, Northweald Bassett, Lambourne, Theydon Bois and Ongar). Rich's powerbase, however, was concentrated in southeast Essex, where property, patronage and advowsons are concentrated in the Rochford Hundred and the Honour of Rayleigh, which is reflected in this survey. The majority of the manors acquired by Richard Rich were the properties of the now-dissolved religious houses, which he was granted by Letters Patent. Some were acquired by purchase, such as Rochford Hall, in order to consolidate holdings in that area. Evidence for the acquisition of these manors, liberties, rights, profits, lordships, advowsons, etc., by grant, purchase or inheritance is detailed in this survey.



Rich survey; © Neil Wiffen of the ERO

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This volume is a rare survivor of documents relating to the Rich/Warwick estates. Lists of the family's holdings survive from other periods, such as BM Harley 3959, a 'recovery' of the lands of Charles, Earl of Warwick (the last of the male line) which was produced to enable property to be sold to pay off debts; a terrier or rental (ERO, D/DU 514/29/21), of Robert Rich, dated 1577, giving the clear annual value of the 'manors, lordships, lands, tenements and hereditaments...'. At a more detailed level are surveys and rentals of individual manors taken in particular years (and probably on a regular basis, but few have survived) such as those for Milton Hall (1591; ERO, D/DSc M2) and Prittlewell Priory (1600; ERO, D/DSc M10). A substantial archive of Warwick accounts is held at Alnwick Castle, among the archives of the Northumberland estates. These include a 1622 rental of the Honour of Rayleigh and other estate accounts and rentals of the Essex estates of Earls of Warwick covering the period 39 Eliz I to 1674.

This is a fascinating manuscript, providing a detailed account of the whole of the Warwick estates in Essex that will be of great interest to historians of the county in the early modern period, especially when used in conjunction with other surviving archives relating to the Rich/Warwick family.

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# Unveiling the Mystery of the Colne Valley Railway Coat of Arms

By Dr Jane Pearson

I volunteer at the East Anglian Railway Museum at Chappel. As a local historian I am working through the museum's archive making a list of what it contains and flagging up potential exhibition material. I recently came across an exhibit which stopped me in my tracks. It was an arresting – not to say beautiful – illustration entitled Coat of Arms of the Colne Valley Railway incorporating three shields representing Essex, Halstead and Haverhill. This branch of the railway was built c1856-1860.

I stared at it for a long time, admiring the plump symmetry of its design, its cheery colourfulness, including the strange red ermine stripe, and wondered about the process that would have produced it – the decision that the CVR needed a coat of arms, the choice of designer, the placing of the order and what exactly was produced. It was destined, as a transfer, to decorate first class railway coaches, but might the design also have been used as an official company seal for legal documents? Is it an official coat of arms recognised by the College of Arms or just a company logo? Did every railway company decorate its rolling stock with town or county shields?

Accompanying the photograph was a note made by the depositor; 'this transfer was used on Colne Valley engines and carriages but the original (German) plates were destroyed by RAF bombing 1939-45.'

This note was intriguing and made me curious to know more. But before I make contact with the Science Museum and the York National Railway Museum, I wonder whether there may be a member of the ESAH who may already know the answer to some of my questions.



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# The President's Badge

By Philip J. Wise

Some members may have noticed the President occasionally wearing a medallion, or more properly a badge, during meetings of the Society, but few perhaps know anything of its history. Following its recent repair, it seems appropriate to say something about the origins of the badge.

The President's Badge of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History is made of silver gilt and measures 2½ inches (6.3 cm) in diameter. The front is decorated with a shield bearing the historic arms of Essex: three Saxon seaxes on a red background. The shield is set within a circle which has three segments decorated with trailing foliage. An inscription runs around the outside of the badge: 'ESSEX ARCHÆOLOGICAL SOCIETY 1852'. The badge is suspended by two chains from a lozenge-shaped fitting, measuring 1½ x 1½ inches (3.8 cm x 3.8 cm), which is attached to a crimson ribbon. The badge, fitting and ribbon together weigh 3.2 oz (92g). The fitting is decorated with trailing foliage forming a spiral pattern; the foliage is similar to that which appears on the badge itself. On the back of the badge is the inscription: 'THIS BADGE COMMEMORATES THE CENTENARY OF THE SOCIETY IN 1952'. There are also silver hallmarks for London 1953, including a stamp with the head of Queen Elizabeth II in profile only used at the beginning of her reign, and the maker's mark FNS for Frederick Newland Smith.

The badge is kept, when not being worn, in a small wooden box which has a printed paper label with the words: 'F. Newland Smith, A.R.C.A., D.A. (MANC.) 1 High Grove, Welwyn Garden City, Herts: Welwyn Garden 378'. There is also a handwritten inscription 'ESSEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY HOLLYTREES MUSEUM'.

In passing, it should be explained that the Essex Archaeology Society was renamed the Essex Society for Archaeology and History in 1985.

The President of the Society in 1952 was Rev. Gerald Montagu Benton (1881-1959), the Vicar of Fingringhoe, near Colchester, and a highly respected authority on medieval wall paintings and church fittings. As part of the celebrations of the Society's centenary a 'Medieval Feast' was organised at Colchester Town Hall on 1 May 1952 at which members dressed up in medieval costume, Benton himself playing the role of Cardinal Wolsey. From the proceeds of this feast a presidential badge was purchased at a cost of £27 10s 0d. The badge was designed by Mr Kenneth Richard Mabbitt FSA and made (as we have seen already) by Frederick Newland Smith.





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Ken Mabbitt (1899-1999) was a long standing member of the Society and a former President (1967-70). He trained at Colchester School of Art, studying woodwork and metalwork. With his brother Harold, he established a specialist woodcarving business H & K Mabbitt which provided church furnishings and fittings for a number of Essex churches, including Chelmsford Cathedral and the parish churches at Dedham, Frinton, Birch, Tollesbury and Margareting. Ken Mabbitt was therefore a very appropriate choice to design the President's badge.

Frederick Newland Smith (c. 1882-1969) was born in Bridgewater (Somerset) where he attended the School of Art. He was a student at the Royal College of Art in London from c. 1905 to 1910 and subsequently Head of the Gold and Silversmithing Department at the Manchester School of Art for thirty-three years. He moved to Welwyn Garden City in 1943 where he became a founder member and later Master of the Welwyn Craftworkers Guild. Newland Smith undertook commissions for several churches and his work is the collections of Manchester City Art Gallery and the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths.

It is clear that the Rev. Benton was very enthusiastic about the President's Badge as he included it as one of the highlights of his term in office when he retired in 1955. The report of that year's AGM shows him inspecting the badge with Sir Mortimer Wheeler, then President of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

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- Obituary Kenneth Richard Mabbitt (1990), Essex Archaeology and History 21 (3rd Series), 5.
- F. Newland Smith ARCA (Lond), DA (Manc)', Mapping the Practice and Profession of Sculpture in Britain and Ireland 1851-1951, University of Glasgow History of Art and HATII, online database 2011 [[https://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib5\\_1217428738](https://sculpture.gla.ac.uk/view/person.php?id=msib5_1217428738), accessed 13 Jul 2024].

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# Essex seen from elsewhere

By Michael Leach

i) Oak Farm barn at Wickham St Paul, and Schoolings at Steeple Bumpstead have both been de-listed by National Heritage (formerly Grade II) due to alterations or extensions which have resulted in the loss of too much historic fabric to justify their retention on the List. A later report noted that Oak Farm barn had actually been blown down and totally destroyed in the gale of 1987.

## References

*Heritage Now*, nos: 7 & 8, Winter 2023 & Spring 2024.

ii) SS Peter & Paul church at (Great) Birch. This newsletter has reported several times on the perilous state of this very large rural church designed by S. S. Teulon, and the various attempts to find a new use for it. All have now failed and the church is to be demolished shortly, with its site planned to be landscaped as a memorial garden. There have been concerns about the surviving east stained glass window – a striking Arts and Crafts work of 1908 designed by Mary Lowndes. A new home has been found for it in the Stained Glass Repository at Welbeck Abbey.

## References

*Friends of Friendless Churches*, December 2023.

iii) Roman Catholic church of Our Lady of Fatima, Harlow. This striking modernist church, built 1958-60, was the first architectural commission for Gerard Goalen with large areas of coloured glass walling by Dom Charles Norris of Buckfast Abbey. Listed Grade II in 2000, it has recently been upgraded to Grade II\*. Those familiar with the building will know that unfortunately it has recently lost the finial which topped its slender spire.

## References

*Heritage Now*, no. 8, Spring 2024.

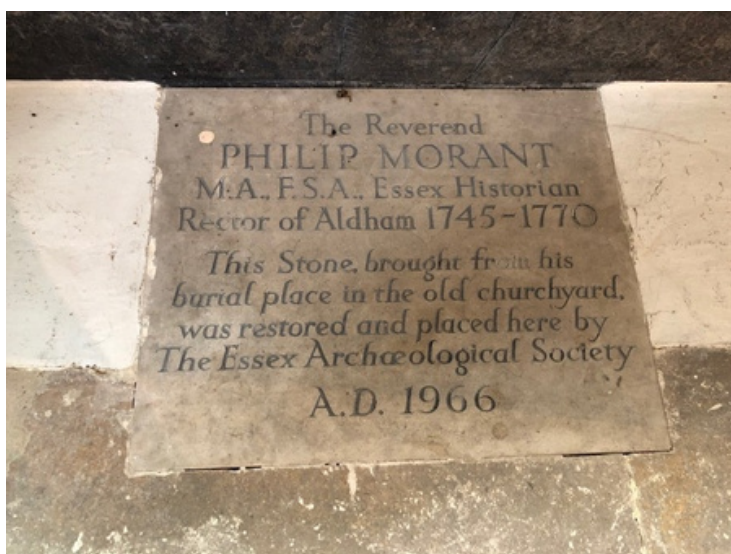
iv) St Mary's church, Mundon. This newsletter has also previously reported the extensive work to rescue this building which has been prone to significant historical subsidence leading to the collapse of its chancel in the C18. The nearby explosion of a World War II V2 rocket may have aggravated these longstanding problems and by 1970 this very remote church had been abandoned and vandalised. Five years later it was vested with the Friends of Friendless Churches (FoFC) and some repair work was done under the supervision of Laurence King and others. But there has been further significant movement since, measured by means of technical monitoring installed in 2020. This indicated that significant underpinning and piling would be necessary to rescue the building from further damage. A grant of £275,551 was obtained from the Government's Culture Recovery Fund towards the total cost of £345,000. This also included the cost of masonry and plaster repairs, and the provision of new drainage. The work has now been completed, the church is open again and has been nominated for two conservation awards by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

## References

*FoFC online newsletter*, March 2024

## Visit to Aldham

On 10th July we visited Aldham. We were hosted by Adam Scott, who showed us around the church, which, surprisingly, is a Victorian building. The old church, a mile and a half away on Adam Scott's own farm, was considered to be dilapidated and inaccessible, so it was demolished and mostly carted off to the new site. Some bits of the old church are very evident in the Victorian structure, particularly in window and door surrounds, and in the form the splendid porch. After looking at the site of the old church, and splendid tea and cakes, we were given a very good talk on Philip Morant, delivered with panache and without visual aids by our member Christopher Thompson. Morant was of course Rector of Aldham, so it was particularly satisfying to see his grave slab in the church, but even more so to see the accompanying slab recording that the stone was moved and restored by our Society in 1966! Thanks to Jane Pearson for arranging this visit, and for bringing copies of Morant's History and Antiquities of Essex for us to look at.



# Exploring Essex History: Religion, Reformation and Society

Galleywood Heritage Centre, Saturday 12 October 2024

Galleywood, The Common, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 8TR

Join us for an exciting in-person afternoon event exploring research about the rich religious and social history of Essex in early modern times

## Programme:

- 1.00 - Welcome and announcements (Ken Crowe , VCH Essex)
- 1.15 - Lord Petre:  
‘The Catholic Experience 1535 – 1829’
- 2.00 - Dr Amanda Flather:  
‘Women and the Reformation in Essex’
- 2.40 - Afternoon Tea and Cake, Booksale and Raffle
- 3.30 - Sir Graham Hart:  
‘Scandalous ministers’? Parliament’s Persecution of the Clergy of Essex, 1644’
- 4.10 - Dr James Bettley:  
‘The Architectural Consequences of the Reformation in Essex’
- 4.50 - Close

Booking: Conference tickets will be £15 (incl. tea), with booking via EventBrite (see link below).

Should you encounter difficulty with online booking, please contact [herbert.eiden@sas.ac.uk](mailto:herbert.eiden@sas.ac.uk).

Please note lunch is not provided; please eat beforehand or bring your own. The venue will be open to delegates from 12.30pm, and the conference starts promptly at 1.00pm.



<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/exploring-essex-history-reformation-and-society-tickets-922763238687>

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## ESAH Events for 2024

The following events are still available for you to attend this year.

**Monday 19th August, Time 2pm. Guided tour of the Bata factory in East Tilbury. £5**

The Bata Heritage Centre presents the history of the British Bata Shoe Co Ltd., and its fascinating industrial and architectural heritage.

**Wednesday 18th September, 2pm. Talk & tour of famous wooden church at Greenstead. £10**

**Wednesday 16th October, 11am. Walking tour of Halstead, £5 cash.** Led by Malcolm Root. Meet at the Butler Road Car Park (CO9 1LL). Please bring cash to donate to Halstead Heritage Museum,

*Please note: this tour may not suit you if you have mobility issues*

**Saturday 2nd November, 10am-4pm. Annual Archaeology & History Symposium, £10.**

Includes lunch and tea/coffee. At Roman Circus House, Colchester. There will be a post-medieval and industrial theme to this year's programme. Speakers include: Andrew Phillips, Peter Jones, and Tim Murphy

Please email/write to the Excursions Secretary to book (howard000brooks@gmail.com). **Payment: Online as before.** Let us know if you require account details. Please give event reference and number of bookings (e.g. HAR 2). Alternatively: send a cheque to Hon Sec's Colchester address.

*PLEASE NOTE: If you pay online you must tell us otherwise we won't be expecting you. June 29th event has different pay details as above.*

**The visits on the Society's programme are open to members and associate members only. Non-members attending may not be covered by insurance.**

**The Society can accept not liability for loss or injury sustained by members attending any of its programmed events. Members are asked to take care when visiting old buildings or sites and to alert others to any obvious risks. Please respect the privacy of those who invite us into their homes.**

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## Membership

Subscriptions are due 1st January each year as follows:

Single Member - £25

Family Membership - £30

Student - £15

Associate Member - £15

Institutions - £25

Associate Institutions - £25

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## The Society's Publication and Research Fund (PRF)

This Endowment Fund supports the publication of articles in the *Transactions* of the Society as well as Occasional Papers. It is also available to support research consistent with the Society's objectives. As an endowment fund, only the interest earned from it can be used to provide such support. The amount of the Fund is in excess of £50,000 and we continue to seek further donations.

Donations for this Fund, or the to Society's General Fund where the capital can also be used in support of the Society's objectives are welcome.

Donations should be made payable to the 'Essex Society for Archaeology and History' and could attract Gift Aid.

Please address all enquiries to the Hon. Treasurer, Bill Abbott at 13 Sovereign Crescent, Lexden Road, Colchester, Essex, CO3 3UZ or [bill.abbott@btinternet.com](mailto:bill.abbott@btinternet.com)

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## DATA PROTECTION ACT

In order to run the Society it is necessary to keep paper and electronic records of members' names and addresses. It is the Society's policy to keep members' names, addresses, telephone numbers and subscription status only. This information is disclosed to no one, inside or outside the Society, other than those officers and members of Council who need it in order to run the organisation.

Members do have the right to refuse to allow any information about them to be stored on a computer, and they should let me know if this is their wish. However, we hope that this note will reassure members that the very limited information held about them is secure and will not be used for any purpose other than the efficient running of the Society. Anyone requiring further details can contact Howard Brooks or Victoria Rathmill.