

Essex JOURNAL

A REVIEW OF LOCAL HISTORY & ARCHAEOLOGY

Spring 2011

DAVID SIMPKIN ON THE FIGHTING ESSEX GENTRY

PLUS

HIPPOLITO DE LUZANCY,

THE SIDNEY FAMILY PART 2

AND

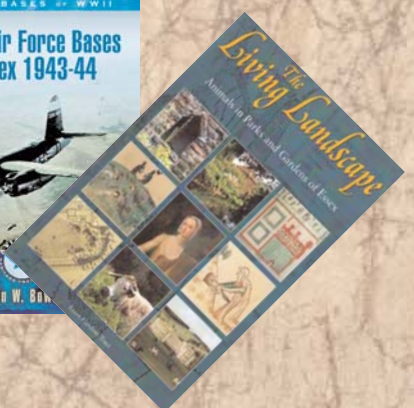
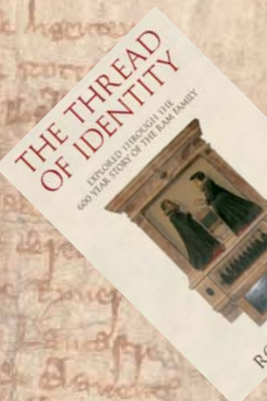
SARSEN STONES IN BROOMFIELD

ALSO

BOOK REVIEWS

AND

EJ 20 QUESTIONS



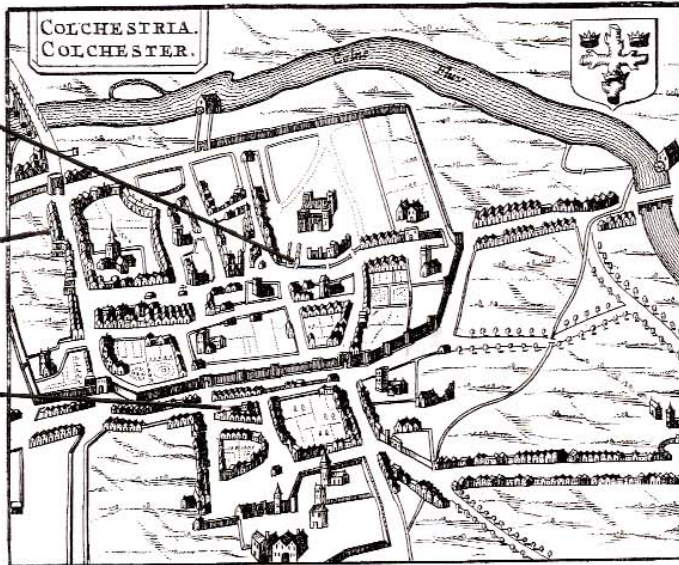
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CONTENTS

Editorial	2
The Contribution of Essex Gentry to the Wars of Edward I and Edward II by David Simpkin	7
'A World of heat and clamour': the life and times of Hippolito de Luzancy by Hannah Salisbury	15
The Sidneys – zenith and decline: Who Did They Think They Were? Part 2 by David Williams	21
Sarsen Stones on Broomfield Green by Ken Newman	28
Book Reviews:	32
Twigs Way, Editor <i>The Living Landscape; Animals in Parks and Gardens of Essex</i> , (R. Brooks)	
Randal Bingley, <i>Behold the Painful Plough – Country Life in West Tilbury, Essex 1700-1850</i> , (A. Corder-Birch)	
Ronald Ram <i>The Thread of Identity</i> , (S. Durgan)	
Martin W. Bowman, <i>US 9th Air Force Bases in Essex 1943-44</i> , (N. Wiffen)	
David Pearson, <i>Why Do We Need So Many Old Books?</i> , (M. Leach)	
EJ 20 Questions? Andrew Phillips	37

Main cover illustration:

Sheriff's return for the counties of Essex and Hertfordshire,
(Reproduced by courtesy of The National Archives, C 47/1/6, m.15.)

Apart from no Icelandic volcano disrupting the travelling public, this spring has been much the same as last year, if not better. The weather has been outrageously good with negligible rain in March and April (and none to speak of for May so far) which has meant that, for us gardeners, we have been able to 'get on'. Hoeing is so much easier when the weeds don't have rain to keep them going although I'm sure that once the rain comes so will the weeds. Reading this you might think that you have unwittingly opened the pages of a gardening magazine but there is a point to my eulogising. When the weather is good it makes undertaking historical research so very difficult. The urge to get outside and enjoy the garden once the evenings start lengthening is unstoppable. How must our ancestors, when life was so much harder, have greeted those warming days? A bitter-sweet feeling no doubt for gardens and farms had yet to produce any harvest to speak of so there were still some weeks to go before bellies could really be filled. I find historical research is very much a pastime for the darker months. The chance to sit huddled from the elements in front of a book or in an archive are times to savour. For those with deadlines, however, sunny weather is another matter!

The weather also reminds us, like history, of years gone by. We can compare and contrast, not only the weather we have experienced but that of years when we were far in the future. Historic weather records play a big part in scientific research, helping to guide those whose job it is to predict what might happen with our climate. If only historians were able to influence policy to the same extent. Just imagining how we could feed in research in an effort to try and save us from repeating mistakes from the past. However, I would like to think that historians are never too dogmatic in their findings; it would, after all, be a very brave, or foolish, historian who said that we had eradicated something as complex as the economic cycle of boom and bust.

The current weather we are experiencing reminds us that it is a century since a very hot and dry summer was had. David Smith, farmer, writer and broadcaster from Broomfield wrote, in *No Rain in Those Clouds*, about the double edged nature of the hot weather for farmers: 'While father was enjoying this wonderful summer [1911] on the heavy West Hanningfield land, Uncle Frank at Sandon was dried up on his gravelly soil, and had very light crops.' I wonder if this year is set to be the same? We shall see but I'm not going to try and predict it - I'll let you know when I have the historical facts to digest!

This issue sees an update on the situation with the Victoria County History of Essex. In these straightened times I suppose it is not surprising but one would like to think that in a county of our magnitude there are those with the wherewith-all and the cash to help support this important institution in a major way. Information about making a donation is included and I urge you to help as the VCH is too important to lose.

Our first article, on medieval military service, is a real eye-opener, demonstrating that Essex military men played an important part in various campaigns and theatres far away from home. A comment frequently heard in the ERO from researchers starting out is 'well they wouldn't have travelled far in the olden days' (I paraphrase but you get the idea). I think David Simpkin blows this theory away - our ancestors were very well travelled.

Hannah Salisbury's curiosity about Hippolito de Luzancy du Chastelet was kindled by his name. From this initial curiosity a wonderfully interesting article has been crafted, all the more so when we reported in the last issue that Hannah was the successful entrant, with an original version of this article, in the 2010 Frank and Patricia Hemann Award. David Williams rounds off his history of the Sidney family demonstrating the highs and lows of human relationships before Ken Newman takes us way back in time to discuss sarsen stones.

Finally I would like to clarify a point I made in my article published in the last issue of *Essex Journal*, 'Pillboxes of the GHQ Line in mid-Essex'. I mentioned the Council for British Archaeology's *Defence of Britain Project* and the *Defence of Sussex Project*, which are both web based resources. I went on to say that there 'is no equivalent of these specific projects in Essex' before mentioning Essex County Council's *Unlocking Essex's Past*, Sites and Monuments Record (now known as the Essex Historic Environment Record (EHER) <http://unlockingessex.essexcc.gov.uk/uep>) which mentions pillboxes and defensive structures. However, Essex does have the 'The World War Two Defences in Essex' project. This initiative, started in 1994, and part of the EHER, means that Essex now has what is probably the largest county database of Second World War defences in the country. The findings of this can be found as part of the EHER and not as a separate, stand-alone web-site which I meant in my statement. I hope this has not led to any confusion.

Oh, and I hope you approve of the improvements we have introduced yet again. Hopefully, like the sunshine and your support, they'll last!

Cheers,

Neil



From the Chairman

I would like to take this opportunity, in my capacity as Chairman of the Essex Journal Editorial Board to write a few words. I'm sure that you are all aware of the squeeze on funding that all manner of organisations and both national and local governments have experienced due to the parlous situation the country has found itself in. Any green shoots of recovery look to be very tender and delicate as I write and the future course of our economy looks very uncertain, especially when seen in a global perspective. This situation has affected us all personally be it through reductions in interest rates to increases in the cost of living but also on another level. As historians we all try to do our bit to support and encourage organisations and research into our local past but we need to remain vigilant to threats of reduction in funding. You will have seen that Essex Library Service is in the process of going through a public consultation regarding how it will be affected by cuts to public spending, with, no doubt, the Essex Record Office (ERO) also being considered sometime this year. Also Geoffrey Hare reports in these pages on the withdrawal of the Essex County Council grant to the Victoria County History of Essex. These will affect the way that we are able to undertake our historical research. Might I suggest that the best way to mitigate these potential reductions is to use and support the wonderful facilities that we have in our county? Please make sure that you visit your local library and that you undertake some research in person at ERO. If we can increase the usage of these wonderful institutions there has to be less incentive to prune them back.

On a happier note I would like to mention two pieces of good news that I have just become aware of. In 2010 our Honorary Editor, in his capacity as Public Service Team Manager at the ERO, was entered for a directorate Motivational Award which he was awarded. Following on from this the ERO Archivists' came third in the County Council wide You Make the Difference Awards 'One World' category for their role in protecting and promoting the heritage of Essex.

This just goes to show how dedicated the staff, are at the ERO and that we are fortunate to have such a first class county institution – no excuses now to make use of it.

Adrian Corder-Birch



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Victoria County History of Essex:

the current position

It is now well known that Essex County Council has ended its 60 year long financial support for the Victoria County History of Essex. The loss of the grant (the major element of support for the salaries of the editor and assistant editor) has necessitated a complete reorganisation of the finances and management of the VCH Essex. With effect from the New Year, the following new structure has emerged through discussions between the Victoria County History of Essex Appeal Fund and London University's Institute of Historical Research (IHR), the body responsible, nationally, for the Victoria County Histories.

The principal change involves the Appeal Committee taking over the role as manager of the VCH Essex; the function fulfilled before the move to Essex University by the old County Committee. The editor and assistant editor, hitherto on the staff of the IHR, will now become freelance contractors, working to the Appeal Committee on VCH research. They will still be called editor and assistant editor and their formal linkage to the IHR is likely to be retained by their designation as Associate Fellows. Under the new arrangements, the Appeal Committee will commission VCH research from its contractors; the IHR acting to verify the quality of the research.

The key problems for the VCH Essex and for the effective continuance of the research programme are, firstly, the willingness of the editors to continue to work within the new and more tightly-constrained financial framework and, secondly, the necessity for the Appeal Fund to continue to raise sufficient money through its donors and research grants to sustain an acceptable pace of progress in the hard times for charities which lie ahead.

The good news is that Volume XI (the Clacton volume) is almost complete and that earlier work on Volume XII means that almost 60% of that volume, too, is in rough draft. The process of continuous publication on the internet also ensures that, even if the rate of completion of future volumes slows, the contents are available from soon after the completion

of drafts. For the Diamond Jubilee of the VCH Essex, therefore, to be held on Chelmsford on the 8th of October, this year, there will still be much to be cheerful about.

Future funding, of course, is the key issue for our survival. Existing funds will allow work to continue for around two years at, perhaps, 30% of earlier years and a major fund-raising effort to be launched at the Jubilee in October is hoped to continue to maintain that rate for a further two years. After that, perhaps the national economic sun will begin to shine again!

A further major development in the work of the VCH, nationally and locally, has been the introduction of volunteers into the research process. Pioneered in Essex through the Clacton project, writing is also under way in Newport and Southend. Although a formidable challenge where pre-modern history is concerned, such a development has the benefit that it forges closer links between the community and the VCH. In Essex as elsewhere, for economic reasons alone, it may become an essential element of the research programme.

The Appeal Fund is determined to continue to guide the VCH Essex through the difficult years ahead but it will also need all those concerned for and interested in the history of our County to recognise that we are now alone in our work. Perhaps, knowing the fickleness of public funding, that may not be the worst outcome!

Geoffrey Hare
Chairman, Victoria County History of Essex
Appeal Fund

To support the VCH Essex, donations should be sent by cheque payable to **VCH Essex (Appeal)** addressed to:

H. Martin Stuchfield JP FSA FRHistS,
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Suffolk CO7 6JX

2011 Plume Lecture

Saturday 19th November 2011

Censuses and surveys and the rise of the Information State, 1500-2011

The Trustees of Thomas Plume's Library are pleased to announce that this year's lecture will be given by Professor Edward Higgs, Graduate Director of the History Department, Director of the Centre for Historical Census and Survey Research, University of Essex.

It will take place at 7.30 pm in All Saints Church, High Street, Maldon.

There is no entry charge and advance booking is not necessary.

News from the Essex Record Office

This year has got off to a busy start at the ERO. In January, Seax, our online catalogue, was overhauled. Although there is little difference to the way in which Seax now appears, the structure which lies behind it has been upgraded in order to keep pace with changes in technology. Other IT improvements at the ERO include the recent installation of Wi-fi. To use this free service, you will need a wirelessly enabled device and staff will advise on how to log on to the password protected system. You may even care to use the wi-fi technology to view the ERO's two new films on YouTube. 'An Introduction to the ERO' and 'An Introduction to Seax' were both produced entirely in-house by the ERO team and are intended to provide helpful guides to using the Record Office and our online catalogue.

The programme of events has been printed and distributed – if you have not yet received a copy, then you can download it from our website (www.essex.gov.uk/ero) or call 01245 244620 and we will send you a hardcopy. We try to distribute the programme as widely as possible, but if you know of a museum, library or similar location, that does not have copies on display, please let us know and we will make sure that some are despatched. The programme for 2011 includes the return of some favourite events, as well as some new ones – a walk around historic Southend and sessions on manorial documents and tracing criminal ancestors. This year there are two one-day conferences – one in September looking at fashion in history, the other, a celebration of local

history research in Essex, will take place in November. The second will also include a marketplace event where local history groups will be able to quite literally set out their stall and share their current work and interests. If you would like more information about this event, then please contact me at the ERO.

This year funds from the Newton Bequest have supported two further projects. About 400 medieval parchment documents of Thaxted are being individually wrapped in acid-free manila and re-boxed to ensure their long-term preservation. These are mainly manorial records and deeds from the D/DHu collection and Yardley's Charity deeds and leases c1275 onwards amongst Thaxted parish records.

Our new ERO Volunteers are in place and tackling their various tasks with enthusiasm and skill. At the time of writing the volunteer photography project *Essex Now and Then* is about to get underway.

We have just hosted the formal launch of South East Essex Community Archives. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, over the last 18 months this ERO community project has worked with volunteers and local libraries to create six online digital archives of photographs and memories of towns in the south of the county (Benfleet, Hadleigh, Billericay, Wickford, Laindon and Rochford District). The volunteers have created six informative and entertaining websites, all of which can be found by googling 'community archive' and the relevant place name.

Deborah Peers, Audience Development Officer
(Heritage Services)

A one-day conference at the Essex Record Office, Chelmsford **Local History: Our History** Saturday 19th November, 10am -4pm

Are you involved in recording or preserving the history of your town, village or community?
Are you interested in local history research but are not sure how to get started?
Do you want to find out about local history groups in your area?

If so, then this day is for you.

Come along and meet other local historians, share your research and swap ideas. Our speakers will offer a wealth of advice on researching and sharing your history.

Tickets: £5.00, includes buffet lunch and refreshments.
Booking essential. Call 01245 244620 to book.

History and heritage organisations!

Would you like a stall in our marketplace?
It's free **but you will need to book.** Call 01245 244620.

The Essex Gardens Trust

Most counties now have a gardens trust, each of which falls under the overall umbrella of the Association of Gardens Trusts. Their purpose is to stimulate an interest in the neglected area of garden and landscape design by undertaking research into all aspects of garden history, and by recording sites of local importance. A variety of programmes of lectures are organised for members throughout the year, as well as visits to gardens, many of which are not normally open to the public. A further strand of the Trust's work lies in fostering the interest of children through schools and other organisations.

Essex Gardens Trust (EGT) was established in 1996 through the energy and drive of Fiona Cowell and Marion Swetenham. Early work, largely driven by Fiona, centred on studies of the work of Humphry Repton in the county, as well as another largely forgotten eighteenth Essex-based landscape designer, Richard Woods. It was also planned to compile inventories, district by district, of parks and gardens of local interest, to complement the English Heritage (EH) national register. These inventories involved both archive research and site visits, and followed very closely the EH format. So far, Braintree, Epping Forest, Maldon and Uttlesford have been completed by members, and Chelmsford is in hand. Many important but little known sites have been identified, and it is hoped that these inventories, by informing the public as well as planning authorities, will assist in their preservation and better understanding. With the able assistance of a Cambridge academic, the group has also published booklets on Essex gardeners and designers, lost landscapes only known through archive records, and a study of the role of animals in the designed landscape of Essex. New researchers are always very welcome and will be given appropriate support.

As part of its aim to interest children, the Trust has been giving financial support to enable school

children from less well-off areas to attend educational days at the Royal Horticultural Society's Essex garden at Hyde Hall. It has also produced free educational resource papers for Essex schools and details can be found on the EGT website. These provide, amongst other things, practical guidance for setting up small gardens in school grounds, and are available to out-of-county schools for a small charge.

Another of EGT's aims is to provide informed comment about threats to important parks and gardens in Essex arising from inappropriate developments. The Trust's role is to highlight the importance of the particular landscape, and the implications of the proposed plans. While the Trust has to be pragmatic in recognising that changes may need to take place in order to provide a viable future for a site, it can suggest ways in which the impact of development on an important aspect of the county's heritage may be mitigated. Members are kept informed of these matters - and much more that is relevant to garden history - in a twice yearly newsletter, a specimen of which may be seen on the Trust's website:

www.essexgardenstrust.org.uk

This also provides details of how to apply for membership which currently costs £15 annually for an individual, £22-50 for two people at the same address and £7-50 for students.

Please see the review of *The Living Landscape; Animals in Parks and Gardens of Essex*, published last year by the EGT, on page 32 of this issue



The Contribution of Essex Gentry

to the Wars of Edward I and Edward II¹

by

David Simpkin

The wars of kings Edward I (1272–1307) and Edward II (1307–1327) represent a watershed in English military history on a number of levels. The scale and regularity of campaigns launched by the English Crown increased markedly during these years. Large armies were sent into Wales in 1277, 1282–3, 1287 and 1294–5. These were followed by those sent regularly to Scotland from 1296 as well as forces deployed to defend English possessions in Gascony, mainly between 1294–8 and 1324–5. As a consequence of this, the number of men involved in warfare – especially as soldiers – rose dramatically, to the extent that it would not be going too far to speak of a process of militarisation within English society. And, crucially from the point of view of the historian, these military expeditions are well documented by surviving materials, making it possible to say much more about the combatants involved than for earlier reigns. This is particularly true of soldiers drawn from the ranks of the nobility and gentry, who by and large continued to perform the traditional role of men of their status, as mounted, armoured warriors. This article will consider those Essex combatants who served in these many and varied campaigns.

from the magnate class; and from the 1360s the names of thousands of both types of soldier can be found on muster rolls preserved by the Exchequer.² However, during the earlier reigns of Edward I and Edward II, men-at-arms and archers were still recruited separately, the former in retinues gathered by members of the aristocracy, but the latter in large bodies of twenty, a hundred or a thousand selected by specially appointed crown officials known as commissioners of array. In this period, the names of archers are seldom recoverable, which explains why this article will focus only on the military service performed by the gentry of Essex and not on lower social groups.

It should also be borne in mind that the size of retinues varied depending on the wealth and status of the retinue leader. Later it became common for the Crown to contract with retinue leaders for retinues of specified size, but under Edwards I and II the magnates were usually requested to gather as many men-at-arms as they could. Among the most prominent landholders in Essex were the Bohun earls of Hereford and Essex and the de Vere earls of Oxford. Below these were also some prominent baronial families such as the fitz Walters. Such men as these had the resources to recruit quite large retinues for the time, normally comprising between 10 and 100 men-at-arms, the figures varying from campaign to campaign. Retinues gathered by ordinary Essex knights (as with knights of other counties), however, would usually contain no more than two or three men-at-arms, while many other Essex knights and sergeants (usually men of gentle status who had not taken up

knighthood) simply served in the retinues of other men, such as the Bohuns and the de Veres.

Some of the battles of these years have long since entered into popular memory and folklore, none more so than the Bruce-inspired Scottish victory against the English at Bannockburn in June 1314. One of the lasting images of that particular engagement, recounted in contemporary narratives and later paintings, is the pre-battle charge by the English knight Sir Henry de Bohun against the Scottish king, a duel that resulted in the Englishman's helmet and head being cleaved in two.³ Such personal, chivalric encounters – and there were plenty of them during the course of these wars – made for instant legend. Yet there is no need to cease our enquiry at this arresting image, for it is possible to place brave Sir Henry into the context of the army, and in particular the military retinue, in which he served.

Sir Henry was the nephew of Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford and Essex, and it was in his retinue that he served on the Bannockburn campaign.⁴ The earl was constable of England and ought by right to have been constable of the army in 1314, but Edward II had controversially given that role to the young earl of Gloucester.⁵ Nevertheless, Earl Humphrey sought to play a leading role in the battle, as befitted his status,⁶ and it is no surprise to find that it was a member of his retinue, his nephew, who led the

**a duel that
resulted in the
Englishman's...**

Later in the fourteenth century – during the Hundred Years War – it became common for men-at-arms (often of gentle status) and archers to be recruited together in 'mixed' retinues, with the retinue leader usually coming

**...helmet and
head being
cleaved in two**

The Contribution of Essex Gentry

attack during the early stages of the engagement.

What is also interesting, however, is the way that Earl Humphrey's status as a lord of the Welsh March and a major Essex landholder brought together in his retinue soldiers and officials from different parts of the realm.⁷ Despite the lack of a muster-roll or horse-inventory for this army, we do have the names of some 38 men who took out letters of protection in April 1314 ahead of their intended service in the earl's retinue.⁸ Featuring heavily alongside the earl's young kinsman, Sir Henry, were combatants and officials originating from the Welsh Marcher counties, on the one hand, and from Essex, on the other.

Among the Marcher men was none other than Master John Walwayn, a clerk made famous for being the possible author of the *Vita Edwardi Secundi* (the anonymous Life of Edward II),⁹ and Sir Roger Chandos, a long-standing associate of the earl who in May 1311 had been charged with the task of raising foot-soldiers from Herefordshire.¹⁰ Yet it is the Essex gentry that really stand out as a group. We find, for example, Sir Nicholas Engaine, a man who just a couple of years earlier had been listed among the Essex gentry on the Parliamentary roll of arms, an extraordinary heraldic armorial arranged, by and large, by county.¹¹ Also present were: Roger Clifton, one of the men-at-arms to be summoned from Essex in May 1324 as part of the preparations for the war in Gascony;¹² Sir John fitz Simon, who had been summoned for military service as an Essex landholder in 1297 and 1300;¹³ and Sir Bartholomew Enfield, an indentured retainer of Earl Humphrey who had been knighted at Westminster in 1306 alongside the future Edward II.¹⁴ If we add to these few men representatives of the Essex-based (or at least Essex-associated) families of Hemenhale (Robert), Goldingham (William), Rivers (Roger), and Mereworth (John),¹⁵ it can be seen that the Essex

influence on Earl Humphrey's retinue in 1314 was strong indeed.¹⁶

This example perfectly illustrates how association with a prominent local magnate and the more general obligation owed by all subjects to their king could lead a group of Essex men far from their homes to a boggy and murderous patch of ground in the heart of Scotland. Moreover, it also shows how the performance of military service served both to strengthen their bonds to one another and to bring them into contact with gentry from other parts of the realm, whom otherwise they might not have met. The question is: how typical is this example? Were the Essex gentry a highly militarised group by 1314? When they gave military service, did they usually do so alongside one another in the retinues of local landholders, as in this example? And to what extent did military service broaden the horizons of the Essex gentry, opening up new opportunities and creating new allegiances?

The first two decades of the reign of Edward I were dominated, at least militarily, by the intermittent but demanding Welsh wars of 1277, 1282-3, 1287 and 1294-5. The purpose of the first of these expeditions was to punish the Prince of Gwynedd, Llewellyn ap Gruffudd, for his failure to perform homage to Edward I. When this failed to dampen the ardour of the Welsh, a further expedition was launched in 1282 with the aim of conquering Gwynedd and annexing it to the English Crown, something only completely achieved following two further punitive expeditions, the last of which, in 1294-5, was a major affair in its own right.

One of the chief sources for the armies of 1277 and 1282 are the marshal's registers recording the proffers of feudal service made by the English tenants-in-chief. As the men arrived at muster their names were written down by the marshal of the army, who also recorded the identity of the man making the proffer (he was not always present in person)

and the county in which the tenant-in-chief held his lands from the king.

In the summer of 1277 a total of 12 landholders are recorded as making proffers at Worcester for estates held in Essex,¹⁷ but in August 1282, for the muster at Rhuddlan, the proffer roll is incomplete and the equivalent figure is just seven Essex landholders.¹⁸ At least some of the Essex tenants-in-chief are known to have drawn on local men to discharge their obligations. In 1277, for example, Sir Robert fitz Walter employed the Essex knight Sir William de Wauton.¹⁹ There was also a tendency for the Essex landholders to lead or send to muster members of their own families. In 1277 Ralph Perot used his son, a sergeant of the same name,²⁰ while five years later Sir Matthew Loveyn enlisted the services of his younger brother, Sir John Loveyn.²¹ For the men of Essex as with other parts of the country, military service in this era was often a family affair.

During the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, however, feudal service was only one way in which the kings of England went about gathering their armies. In fact many armies, including those of 1287 and 1294, were recruited entirely by other means, whether by men serving for crown wages, on the one hand, or gratuitously, on the other. Edward I and his son were also keen to create more knights to fight in their armies by forcing the better-off gentry (usually those with 20 or 40 pounds of landed income per year) to become knights or pay fines for exemptions. Such an order was sent out to the shires in 1278, between the first two Welsh wars, and fascinatingly Essex is one of the few counties for which the returns survive.²²

Forty-three men are listed in total, and of these, some 17 (40%) can be traced in the surviving records for at least one of the Welsh wars of 1277 to 1295, though not all served as knights. One distrainee was Richard Ewell, who served in the war

The Contribution of Essex Gentry

additional 65 men are described as being outside (*extra*) the county, by which was presumably meant either that they resided elsewhere or that they were actually away giving military service in the Crown's wars.

This, then, left just 24 members of the gentry who were actually residing (*comorantes*) in the county and fit for active service. An intriguing question thus arises: were the men away from Essex in December 1295 the most bellicose members of the county, with the men residing in Essex at the time the lists were drawn up shying away from service in Gascony, where a war was currently being fought? Moreover, how many of the men described as being outside the county can actually be shown to have been away on active military service at the time?

In fact, no fewer than 28 (43%) of the Essex landholders described as being away from the county in December 1295 had taken out legal safeguards (usually letters of protection or attorney) ahead of their planned service in Gascony during either 1294 or 1295.²⁶ This means that all of these men were almost certainly in Gascony performing military service at the time that the list was drawn up. Indeed, given that the Gascon campaigns of the 1290s are poorly documented (there are no horse-inventories or pay-rolls for the English men-at-arms), it is highly likely that most if not all of the gentry missing from Essex in December 1295 were engaged in the south-west of France. There can be few better indications than this of the degree to which Essex (like so many other counties) had become militarised by this stage of the wars, nor of the way that regional military communities were being utilised in the theatres of war that most concerned them directly. The gentry of Essex and other southern coastal communities were almost certainly over-represented in the wars on the continent, not surprisingly given the ongoing troubles in Wales and the fact that a new war was just about to break out in Scotland.

It is worth taking a look at some of the Essex gentry serving in Gascony during the mid 1290s in a little more detail. Some of the most prominent Essex landholders led retinues on the campaign, so that we find, for example: 27 individuals in 1294 and 1295 making preparations to serve in Gascony under Sir Robert fitz Walter;²⁷ nine individuals taking out letters of protection for service with Sir Henry Grey;²⁸ and at least five men serving in the retinue of Sir Robert Pinkeney.²⁹ Fitz Walter, Grey and Pinkeney were each among the Essex landholders described as being outside (*extra*) the county in December 1295. Also present among the retinue leaders in Gascony were the sons of the earl of Oxford, namely Sir Robert de Vere junior and Sir Hugh de Vere.³⁰ Despite his misleading title, the earl of Oxford held the bulk of his lands in Essex and other eastern counties of England.³¹

There is considerable evidence, within this sample of retinues, of Essex men serving together in Gascony and of Essex retinue leaders drawing on local recruitment pools. Taking, to begin with, the Essex knights described as being outside the county in December 1295, at least seven of these individuals served in the retinues of Essex landholders or men with strong Essex connections. Sir William Wauton and Sir William Haningfield joined the retinue of Sir Robert fitz Walter;³² Sir Thomas Meuse was with Sir Henry de Grey;³³ Sir John Heron served as a sub-leader under Sir Robert Pinkeney;³⁴ and Sir Henry Lacy, Sir Richard Weyland and Sir Guy Shenefield served in the retinue of one or other of the sons of the earl of Oxford.³⁴

Moreover, if we look beyond this list of men described as being outside the county in December 1295, other Essex gentry can be found serving in these retinues. Interestingly, Sir John Praers is listed among the gentry residing in Essex in 1295, but in September 1294 he had taken out letters of protection and attorney for service

in Gascony under Sir Robert de Vere junior.³⁶ Perhaps he had served in Gascony but returned to England by the time the sheriff's list was drawn up in the following year. The retinue of Sir Robert fitz Walter included, among others, Thomas Filliol, a man listed on the Parliamentary roll of arms for Essex some 17 years later and who would also be summoned from the county as a knight in 1324.³⁷

Perhaps more interesting than this considerable body of evidence of Essex men serving together on campaign, however, is the way that military service took some Essex gentry into the social circles of prominent figures from other parts of the country. Sir John Lenham and Sir Drew Barentin, for example, found service in Gascony in the retinue of Sir Fulk fitz Warin junior, a member of the powerful Welsh Marcher family,³⁸ while Sir Robert Cantilupe and Sir Robert Burneville found service with the king's brother, Edmund, earl of Lancaster.³⁹ This reminds us that the social networks of the gentry often extended far beyond the county,⁴⁰ and that military service offered up many opportunities for advancement to the ambitious.

If the 65 Essex gentry on business away from the county in December 1295 appear to have been a most bellicose group, perhaps the 24 men still residing in Essex were, by contrast, more inclined to dabble in the affairs of the county as local administrators, keeping well away from the cut and thrust of the Crown's wars. Certainly, such a division between warmongers, on the one hand, and peace-lovers, on the other, might have had some practical value. First of all, however, it is worth stressing that even if these men *wæ* inclined to shy away from war, Essex was still a highly militarised county, as these stay-at-homes constituted only 24% of the gentry named on the sheriff's list. Moreover, far from shying away from military service, some of the gentry residing in Essex during the winter of 1295-6 were active military campaigners in

The Contribution of Essex Gentry

their own right. In total, no fewer than 16 (67%) of these men can be shown to have given military service at some stage during the wars of Edward I and Edward II.

Some of these men were possibly quite elderly by 1295 with their warring days far behind them. Sir Bartholomew Brianzon could lay claim to having taken part in the Lord Edward's crusade to the Levant during 1270-2;⁴¹ but his last known service was as a household knight in the Welsh war of 1282-3, and it is likely that he had hung up his sword after that campaign.⁴² Nevertheless, many of the gentry residing in Essex in December 1295 were still in the prime of life and took part in military expeditions during the later 1290s and 1300s.

Far from looking forward to a quiet life, no fewer than five of these men appear to have served on the opening campaign of the Scottish wars, in the spring of 1296. Sir Ralph Bigod joined the company of the earl of Hereford and Essex;⁴³ Sir Nicholas Wokingdon and Sir Alan Goldingham made plans for service in the retinue of the earl of Norfolk;⁴⁴ Sir Jolland of Durelm enlisted for service in the king's division;⁴⁵ while most interestingly of all, Sir Nicholas Barentin obtained a letter of protection with the Essex and Scottish landholder, Robert Bruce, earl of Carrick, father of the future King Robert I of Scotland.⁴⁶

Other members of the Essex gentry to serve in Scotland (and probably at the battle of Dunbar) with the earl of Carrick in 1296 include William and Edmund Badewe of Great Baddow.⁴⁷ The Bruce family's connections to Essex remind us that for some Essex gentry at least, the Bruce rebellion of 1306 must have been especially shocking and potentially compromising. Personal ill-feeling arising from past acquaintance might even account for Sir Henry de Bohun's attack on King Robert I at Bannockburn, discussed at the beginning of this article.

It is clear that by the mid 1290s nearly all Essex gentry had

some experience of war or were to gain such experience in the near future. The landholding influence in Essex of prominent families like the Bruces, the Bohuns and the de Vere earls of Oxford meant that there would always be opportunities for military service in the retinues of great men, and this is confirmed when we find, for example, the relatively obscure Essex knight, Sir John Wascul, apparently serving on his one and only military campaign in the retinue of the earl of Oxford in Scotland in 1298.⁴⁸

Wascul seems to have been one of a large number of Essex gentry serving at the battle of Falkirk on 22nd July, including Sir John Lovetot (yet another knight included on the sheriff's list of 1295),⁴⁹ Sir Matthew Loveyn (a retinue leader in 1298),⁵⁰ Sir Ralph Perot⁵¹ and William Badewe, who again appears to have served in the Bruce retinue.⁵² Indeed, it is not at all surprising that at least 84% of Essex knights listed on the Parliamentary roll of arms of c.1312 are known to have given military service at some point in the four decades leading up to the battle of Bannockburn,⁵³ with participation levels for the major campaigns – such as that of 1298 – being especially high.

Having established beyond doubt that the Essex gentry, like the gentry of most counties, were heavily involved in the wars of Edward I and Edward II, we can now dwell in a little more detail on some of the personal experiences of these men during the Scottish wars of 1296 to 1328, including the range and depth of their service connections. There is no quick and easy way of summarising the range of military experience among all Essex landholders, so the focus will be on a few men whose military careers are particularly well covered by the extant documents.

It is clear that for many Essex gentry, networks based on shared kinship or shared locality were often paramount in shaping the contours of military service. Let

us take two of the knights listed under Essex on the Parliamentary rolls of arms, drawn up early in the reign of Edward II. We have already seen how one of these men, Sir Nicholas Engaine, served in the retinue of the earl of Hereford on the Bannockburn campaign of 1314, but before that he had already served in Scotland in 1300 and 1303 in the retinue of his brother Sir John Engaine,⁵⁴ one of the many Essex veterans of the war in Gascony in the mid 1290s.⁵⁵ Likewise, we have seen how Sir William Haningfield served in the retinue of Sir Robert fitz Walter during the Gascon wars, but he also went on to serve with fitz Walter in Scotland in 1300, 1301 and the year of the Bruce rebellion, 1306.⁵⁶ This kind of service was typical of many gentry who served with the same leader from campaign to campaign.

Fortunately a number of lists of Essex gentry survive from the years of the Scottish wars, although often the men of the county were intermingled with the gentry of Hertfordshire due to the fact the two counties shared a sheriff. From 1297, 1300 and 1301 there survive sheriffs' returns of 60, 91 and 53 Essex and Hertfordshire gentry summoned for military service in Flanders (1297) and Scotland.⁵⁷ We can add to these the 58 Essex knights named on the Parliamentary roll of arms of c.1312 and the 68 knights and 58 men-at-arms summoned from Essex to Westminster in 1324 to give a substantial list of local landholding society.

One of the few Essex families to be represented on each and every one of these lists is the Rochefords, who derived their toponym from the vill of Rochford in the south of the county.⁵⁸ As such, a brief summary of the Rochefords' contribution to the wars of 1296-1328 offers a good opportunity to observe patterns of service and changing lordship connections among the Essex gentry.

Not surprisingly, the military service of the Rochefords predated the Scottish wars, with Sir

The Contribution of Essex Gentry

Nicholas Rocheford, for example, being proffered at the feudal muster of 1277 by Sir Alexander Balliol of Cavers.⁵⁹ Yet it is with the outbreak of the war in Scotland that the record of their service becomes more complete, and yet again we find the usual combination of regular participation in the Crown's wars combined with links to other Essex gentry.

This is manifest in the career in arms of Sir Waleran Rocheford, who was summoned from Essex as a knight (and £40-landholder) for the Caerlaverock campaign of 1300.⁶⁰ It is not, in fact, certain that he served in Edward I's army in that year; but that he most probably did is suggested by his service on other campaigns. He first appears as a *valettus* on the Scottish expedition of 1296, being knighted on 25 March.⁶¹ Thereafter he went on to serve in Flanders in 1297 and in Scotland in 1298.⁶² Particularly worthy of note, however, is that he served on each occasion in the retinue of the Essex landholder, Sir John Engaine.

Nor was he the only member of the Rocheford family to have service links to other Essex landholders, for in 1300 Robert de Rocheford appeared at the feudal muster in Scotland as a sub-knightly man-at-arms on behalf of Humphrey de Bohun, earl of Hereford and Essex.⁶³ Later Robert served as a knight, leading his own retinue to the siege of Berwick in 1319 and taking part in the War of Saint-Sardos in Gascony during 1324-5, where he served in the retinue of Edmund, earl of Kent, half-brother of Edward II.⁶⁴ In fact he was one of a cluster of Essex gentry serving in Kent's retinue on the continent during the War of Saint-Sardos, with Walter de Colchester, Nicholas Belhous and John de Claryngg also present.⁶⁵ Belhous and Claryngg had been included on the sheriff's returns from Essex of 1324; and their service in Gascony reminds us of the high levels of participation among the Essex gentry in the Gascon wars of the 1290s.

Other members of the Rocheford family apparently to

serve in the Scottish wars were: Sir Ralph, in 1298 and 1301,⁶⁶ and Sir John, in 1308 and 1314,⁶⁷ both of whom appear on several of the Essex summons lists mentioned above. The pertinent point is that the commitment to arms of the Rocheford family was far from exceptional, and we continue to find examples of Essex men going to war in the companies of other Essex men into the 1320s. On the Scottish campaign of 1322, for example, we find three Essex men – Henry Longchamp, Martin Longchamp and Sir John Wauton – serving in the retinue of Sir Robert fitz Walter,⁶⁸ and Robert Bousser, one of the men-at-arms summoned from Essex to Westminster in 1324, being proffered at the feudal muster on behalf of the earl of Oxford.⁶⁹

To answer the questions posed at the beginning of this article, then, it can be said with absolute certainty that the Essex gentry was a heavily militarised group by the time of the battle of Bannockburn and that the example of Essex gentry serving together in that year was far from exceptional. The assertion made in the *Victoria County History* that 'Essex played no particular part in the larger aims and undertakings of Edward I' does not stand up to close scrutiny.⁷⁰ Certainly many more examples could have been given of Essex men serving with retinue leaders from other parts of the country; but often it is their service with fellow Essex landholders that stands out from the sources, and in this respect, it is certainly valid to state that there was a vibrant military community in late thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century Essex.

References

1. In this article I have relied primarily on contemporary lists of Essex gentry drawn up by shire officials. Some of the gentry considered in this paper also held lands in neighbouring counties such as Suffolk or Hertfordshire, but an attempt has been made to include only those gentry who at least had a substantial interest in Essex society.

2. The names of tens of thousands of soldiers from the years 1369 to 1453 can now be searched online at www.medievalsoldier.org.
3. *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, ed. N. Denholm-Young (London, 1957), p.51; 'Annales Londonienses', in *Chronicles of the Reigns of Edward I and Edward II*, ed. W. Stubbs, 2 vols, Rolls Ser., lxxvi (London, 1882-3), i, p.231. The *Scalacronica* of Sir Thomas Gray gives the identity of the slain English knight as Sir Peter de Montfort; Sir Thomas Gray, *Scalacronica* 1272-1363, ed. A. King, Surtees Society, ccix (2005), p.73. However, the *Vita's* identification seems more reliable, not least because (as noted here) the possible author, John Walwayn, seems to have served in the same retinue as Sir Henry Bohun on the Bannockburn campaign. Various modern artists have taken up the theme of the Bruce-Bohun duel in their works.
4. The National Archives (TNA), C 71/6, mm. 4, 5.
5. *Flores Historiarum*, ed. H.R. Luard, 3 vols, Rolls Ser., xcv (London, 1890), iii, p.158.
6. *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, p.53.
7. For the estates held in chief by the earl, see *Calendar of Inquisitions Post Mortem and other Analogous Documents*, 23 vols (London, 1904-2004), iii, no. 552.
8. TNA, C 71/6, mm. 4, 5.
9. TNA, C 71/6, m. 5; *Vita Edwardi Secundi*, pp. xix-xxviii. Walwayn had also served with the earl in Scotland in 1306; TNA, C 67/16, m. 9.
10. TNA, C 71/6, m. 5; *Parliamentary Writs and Writs of Military Summons*, ed. F. Palgrave, 2 vols in 4 parts (London, 1827-34), II, ii, pp.408-9. Chandos had served with the earl at the Dunstable tournament in October 1309; A. Tomkinson, 'Retinues at the Tournament of Dunstable, 1309', in *English Historical Review*, lxxiv (1959), p.73.
11. TNA, C 71/6, m. 5; *Parl. Writs.*, i, p.413.
12. TNA, C 71/6, m. 5; *Parl. Writs.*, II, ii, p.652.
13. TNA, C 71/6, m. 5; TNA, C 47/1/5, m. 4; TNA, C 47/1/6, m. 16.
14. TNA, C 71/6, m. 5; 'Private Indentures for Life Service in Peace and War 1278-1476', ed. M. Jones and S.K. Walker, in *Camden Miscellany XXXII*,

The Contribution of Essex Gentry

- Camden Society 5th ser., iii (1994), no. 14 at p.48; C. Bullock-Davies, *Menestrellorum Multitudo: Minstrels at a Royal Feast* (Cardiff, 1978), p.185. Enfield (Middlesex) was a Bohun manor. Sir Bartholomew held the tenth of a knight's fee in Wimbish, Essex.
15. TNA, C 71/6, m. 5.
 16. For further details of the links between Earl Humphrey and the gentry of Essex, see G. Jones, 'The Bohun earls of Hereford and Essex, 1270-1322', MLitt thesis, University of Oxford, 1984, p. 76, cited in A. Ayton, 'The English Army at Crécy', in A. Ayton & P. Preston, *The Battle of Crécy, 1346* (Woodbridge, 2005), p.213, n.266. The Bohun family's military links to the gentry of Essex continued later in the fourteenth century under William Bohun, earl of Northampton; *ibid.*, pp.206, 213. See also A. Ayton, 'Edward III and the English Aristocracy at the Beginning of the Hundred Years War', in *Armies, Chivalry and Warfare in Medieval Britain and France*, ed. M. Strickland (Stamford, 1998), pp.174, 192 (this article is freely available online at: www.deremilitari.org/resources/articles/ayton2.htm).
 17. Henry de Gaunt; the earl of Hereford; the earl of Oxford; John de Neville; Ralph Perot; Ralph de Boxtede; John fitz William; Robert fitz Walter; John de Chauncy; Hugh Peverel; Edmund Kemesak; and Andrew Heliun; *Parl. Writs.*, i, pp.198-208.
 18. Matthew Loveyn; William Say; William Fiennes; Robert fitz Walter; Robert fitz Roger; Robert Bruce; and Ralph Perot; *Parl. Writs.*, i, p.232.
 19. *Parl. Writs.*, i, p.204.
 20. *Parl. Writs.*, i, p.203.
 21. *Parl. Writs.*, i, p.232.
 22. TNA, C 47/1/2, m. 21.
 23. *CPR*, 1281-1292, p.272.
 24. TNA, C 67/8, m. 7; TNA, C 67/10, m. 3.
 25. *Parl. Writs.*, i, pp.273-4.
 26. The letters of protection, attorney and of respite of debts relating to the men of Essex and other counties can be found at various points within *Rôles Gascons 1242-1307*, ed. F. Michel, C. Bémont, and Y. Renouard, 5 vols (Paris, 1885-1962), iii, pp.127-327.
 27. *Rôles Gascons*, iii, pp.120, 123, 136, 294-5, 299, 306-7, 318-20.
 28. *Rôles Gascons*, iii, pp.295, 308.
 29. *Rôles Gascons*, iii, pp.101, 131, 161, 164, 180.
 30. See, for example, *Rôles Gascons*, iii, pp.121, 159.
 31. *CIPM*, iii, no. 367; vii, no. 379.
 32. *Rôles Gascons*, iii, pp.136, 295, 307.
 33. *Rôles Gascons*, iii, p.295.
 34. *Rôles Gascons*, iii, p.105.
 35. *Rôles Gascons*, iii, pp.121, 137, 166, 178.
 36. *Rôles Gascons*, iii, pp.121, 137.
 37. *Rôles Gascons*, iii, pp.120, 136, 295, 307; *Parl. Writs.*, i, p.414; *Parl. Writs.*, II, ii, p.652. On the 1324 list, however, he is described as not having land: 'non habet terram'.
 38. *Rôles Gascons*, iii, pp.118-9, 125, 138.
 39. *Rôles Gascons*, iii, pp.296, 325, 326
 40. The same point has been made in J.C. Ward, *The Essex Gentry and the County Community in the Fourteenth Century* (Chelmsford, 1991), pp.20, 24.
 41. S. Lloyd, *English Society and the Crusade 1216-1307* (Oxford, 1988), appendix 4.
 42. TNA, C 47/2/3, m. 13; TNA, E 101/4/8, mm. 1, 2. He was summoned to serve on the Flemish campaign of 1297-8 (TNA, C 47/1/5, m. 4), but it must be considered doubtful whether he joined the army.
 43. TNA, C 67/11, m. 1.
 44. TNA, C 67/11, mm. 1, 5.
 45. TNA, C 67/11, m. 1d.
 46. TNA, C 67/11, m. 6.
 47. TNA, C 67/11, mm. 4, 6.
 48. TNA, C 67/13, m. 8.
 49. TNA, C 67/13, m. 1.
 50. *Scotland in 1298: Documents relating to the Campaign of Edward I in that Year*, ed. H. Gough (London, 1888), p.232.
 51. TNA, C 67/13, m. 1.
 52. On 8 June 1298 he had a letter of protection enrolled for service in Scotland with Robert Bruce, Lord of Annandale; TNA, C 67/13, m. 6. This would again seem to have been the father of the future Robert I of Scotland, recent work suggesting that the latter did not fight on the English side at Falkirk; M. Morris, *A Great and Terrible King: Edward I and the Forging of Britain* (London, 2008), p.313.
 53. D. Simpkin, *The English Aristocracy at War: From the Welsh Wars of Edward I to the Battle of Bannockburn* (Woodbridge, 2008), p.22.
 54. TNA, E 101/8/23, m. 5; TNA, C 67/15, m. 9.
 55. *Rôles Gascons*, iii, p.162.
 56. TNA, C 67/14, m. 10; TNA, C 67/14, m. 4; TNA, C 67/16, m. 11.
 57. TNA, C 47/1/5, m. 4; TNA, C 47/1/6, mm. 15-16; *Parl. Writs.*, i, pp.352-3.
 58. The Rochefords held by barony tenure in Rochford, with John Rocheford being the incumbent tenant in 1303; *Inquisitions and Assessments relating to Feudal Aids, 1284-1431*, 6 vols (London, 1899-1920), ii, p.137.
 59. *Parl. Writs.*, i, p.209.
 60. TNA, C 47/1/6, m. 16.
 61. TNA, E 101/5/23, m. 1i.
 62. TNA, E 101/6/37, m. 2; *Scotland in 1298*, p.190.
 63. *Documents and Records Illustrating the History of Scotland and the Transactions between the Crowns of Scotland and England*, ed. F. Palgrave (London, 1837), i, p.209.
 64. TNA, E 101/378/4, fol. 28v; TNA, E 101/35/2, m. 7.
 65. TNA, E 101/35/2, m. 7; *CPR*, 1321-1324, p.403.
 66. TNA, C 67/13, m. 8d; TNA, C 67/14, m. 8d.
 67. *Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland*, v, ed. G.G. Simpson & J.D. Galbraith (Edinburgh, 1986), p.447; TNA, C 71/6, m. 5.
 68. *CPR*, 1321-1324, p.188; TNA, C 47/5/10, m. 1b.
 69. TNA, C 47/5/10, m. 1c.
 70. *The Victoria County History of the County of Essex*, 10 vols (London, 1903-2001), ii, p.212.

Acknowledgements

I should like to thank Dr Andrew Ayton of the University of Hull for the data on the armies of 1314, 1319, 1322 and 1324-5. I should also like to thank Dr Tony Moore of the ICMA Centre, University of Reading, for his advice on the land-holding backgrounds and name-spellings of several of the gentry named in this paper. Finally, I am grateful to Dr Jennifer Ward for her comments on a draft of this article.

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‘A World of heat and clamour’:

the life and times of Hippolito de Luzancy¹

by

Hannah Salisbury

When, after 12 years of exile, Charles II was restored to the British throne in 1660, the Church of England was restored along with him. More than a century of religious turmoil had left an England in which many different strands of belief jostled uncomfortably with one another, all claiming to be the one true path to salvation. The restored Church of England was caught between the Roman Catholic Church on the one hand, and Protestant dissent on the other. Roman Catholics and Protestant Nonconformists were technically excluded from participating fully in society; they were barred from holding office, and suffered harassment, imprisonment, and even execution. This article will examine the life and beliefs of one particular man who, through his clashes with Roman Catholics, Quakers, and Socinians, provides us with illuminating snapshots into the religious landscape of his time, on both a national and a local scale. Hippolito de Luzancy du Chastelet spent the last 35 years of his life as a Church of England vicar in Essex, and as far as he was concerned, he really did live in ‘a World of heat and clamour’.²

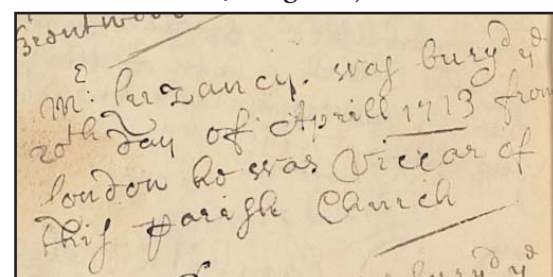
Luzancy was vicar of Dovercourt and Harwich from 1678–1702, and then of South Weald until his death in 1713 (Plate 1).³ Discerning readers will already suspect that he was not an Essex man born and bred; he was born in Roman Catholic France, and he initially embraced that religion. He must have received an excellent education, as his later writings in English, which include passages of Latin and Greek, demonstrate that he mastered these languages as well as his native French. He was a skilled rhetorician, and was extremely well-versed in

church history and theology. The details of his early life remain murky, but we can be sure that he began his career in the service of the Roman church in one way or another. Later sources refer to him variously as having been a ‘papist’, a ‘Jesuit’, and a ‘Trappist’ monk.⁴ This last term applies to monks of the Abbaye de la Trappe in Normandy, a branch of Cistercians which under the reforming influence of the Abbot de Rancé in the 1660s became ‘one of the most fervent, austere and influential monasteries in...France’.⁵ Luzancy himself provided no details of his past beyond acknowledging having been a Roman Catholic, but for all his early devotion to this faith, in the early 1670s he made a radical conversion to Protestantism and fled to England. It seems he quickly made friends in high places; some sources refer to him being taken in by the French ambassador and his wife, and preaching at court. There are further intriguing rumours that Luzancy had met Charles II as a young king-in-exile, and whether or not this is true Charles certainly did take an interest in Luzancy when he arrived in England, protecting him in times of trouble, and possibly even having a hand in Luzancy being given the living of Dovercourt and Harwich.⁶

On arriving in London, Luzancy publicly announced his conversion in a sermon given at the French church at the Savoy, on 11th July 1675. Published in 1676 in both French and English, it provides our first insight into his underlying religious beliefs, which from this point onwards remained remarkably consistent. The Roman Church, he stated, had deviated from scripture, and instead honoured tradition, in the form of ceremonies such as the

Mass and practices such as selling indulgences. He argued that as the pure word of God, scripture had all the authority, clarity, and comprehensiveness necessary to lead us to salvation. While scripture had been received directly from God, tradition was based only on the weak, unreliable words of men. In renouncing the Roman church, he praised the Church of England for breaking from its bonds, and basing its theology on Godly scripture rather than human tradition.⁷ In a treatise published in 1677, Luzancy further extolled the virtues of the Church of England: unlike other Protestant groups, it was not founded on the words of Calvin and Luther, who were great writers but men nonetheless, but instead based its creed on the words of the Prophets, Apostles and Gospels.⁸ These two works make clear two fundamental principles which underpinned the rest of Luzancy’s beliefs: a belief in the primacy and authority of scripture as the pure word of God, and a belief in the imperfect and corruptible nature of human reason. During his life in England, he would go on to publish another of his sermons and three further treatises, throughout which these fundamental beliefs resurface time and again.

Plate 1. Entry in the South Weald register recording Luzancy’s burial in 1713. (Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office, D/P 128/1/3, image 86.)



‘A World of heat and clamour’

Much as Luzancy praised the Church of England, it did not hold a total monopoly over the hearts and minds of the people. In passing an Act of Uniformity in 1662 the government had done its best to make it so, but still sects persisted. The Act meant a return to the pre-Civil War situation, requiring all ministers to use the Prayer Book and assent to everything it contained, and all office-holders to take a religious test to prove their commitment to the Church of England. These measures were initially provoked by a fear of Protestant dissent, but by Luzancy's arrival in the 1670s these concerns had been replaced by the fear of Popery and France, and the royal court's inclination towards both. By 1673, writes John Spurr, 'the country was alive with rumour', fuelled by public realisation that the heir to the throne, James, Duke of York, had converted to Catholicism. Although the Catholic community in England was only about 60,000 strong and confined to the gentry, the popular imagination entertained visions of a bloody uprising and massacre of Protestants.⁹ Many Englishmen equated Roman Catholicism with the absolutist style of rule of Catholic monarchs in France and Spain, and were fearful of finding themselves under a similar regime if a Catholic monarch sat on the English throne.¹⁰ Most feared was Jesuit 'statecraft', which allowed the deposition of Protestant monarchs and dissolution of their subjects' political allegiance in the name of religion. In some minds, this fresh wave of anti-Catholic fear combined with distrust of dissenters, producing the idea that Jesuits were using Protestant sects as a Trojan horse, hoping to win freedom for themselves through toleration of Dissent.¹¹

In October 1675, barely three months after making his sermon abjuring the Roman Church, Luzancy ended up at the centre of the anti-Catholic whirlwind: he appeared in Parliament to accuse a Jesuit, Pierre St Germain, of threatening to kill him if he did

not return to Roman Catholicism, and his tale was later published for public consumption as *An Account of the Barbarous Attempt of the Jesuites upon Mr. De Luzancy*. According to Luzancy, St Germain and an accomplice had arrived at his chambers on the evening of 4th October, and threatened to stab him if he did not comply with their wishes. 'Affrighted out of my wits and all my senses', Luzancy had signed a statement of recantation. Apart from threatening Luzancy, St Germain had allegedly asserted that 'there was an infinite Number of Priests and Jesuites hidden in London, that did God very good Service', that 'the King was a Catholick in his Heart', and that within two years England would acknowledge the Pope.¹² An extra twist was added to the story since St Germain was the personal confessor to the Duchess of York.¹³ Luzancy swore that he regretted the statement he had signed, and on 31st October again publicly preached against the Roman church. In consequence, on 2nd November, he purportedly received a letter from the Jesuits, accusing him of having committed 'a thousand Debaucheries' and 'several Thefts and Robberies' while in France, and ending ominously, 'Have a care of your self, Infamous Renegado'. Luzancy had resolved to make the whole case public, and to beg for protection from the king, so 'that I may live in these Countries without always being afraid of my Life'.¹⁴ A royal proclamation was issued in which Charles II affirmed that he had taken Luzancy 'in a more especial manner into his Royal Protection', and promised a £200 reward to anyone capturing St Germain.¹⁵ Under such pressure, St Germain fled the country.¹⁶

He may have had the king on his side, but not everyone took Luzancy's part in the affair. The anonymous pamphlet, *A Letter from a Gentleman at London, to his Friend in the Countrey*, despite pretensions to impartiality, savagely attacked Luzancy as a fraud. The author complained that Luzancy had charmed high society, all the

while being presumed to be Abbot Luzancy of the Sorbonne, before it was revealed that he was actually the son of an actress, who had left France because he was wanted by the authorities for committing fraud. The author further derided Luzancy's story about St Germain as absurd, asserting that Luzancy wrote the recantation of his own volition. Later on, Luzancy is accused of being a 'Cheat', a 'Wencher' and a 'crafty Hypocrite'.¹⁷ The whole piece feels like propaganda crafted by Luzancy's Catholic enemies, and indeed Anthony à Wood's *Athenae Oxonienses* of 1692 tells us that the pamphlet was published by William Rogers of Lincoln's Inn, 'a zealous Proselyte for the R. Cath. Cause'.¹⁸ This does not mean Wood spared Luzancy from any repetition of the accusations made by the pamphlet; despite his acknowledgement that it was authored by Luzancy's enemies, he quotes from it as if it were a purely factual work.

Still, Luzancy's version of the story seems to have been more widely accepted than the accusations made against him, and when it was first heard in the House of Commons on 13th October 1675 it caused uproar, and deep concern that Catholics in England were growing ever more 'bold' and insolent.¹⁹ Over the 8th and 9th of November, the House debated the implications of Luzancy's case in particular, and the threat posed by Jesuits in general, and questioned why so many of the Catholic Priests and Jesuits previously convicted had been released. One man, Sir Allen Apsley, did attempt to tell St Germain's side of the story – that Luzancy had signed the recantation of his own accord – but was received with outbursts that the Jesuit's testimony could hardly be trustworthy.²⁰ The truth of the matter was almost immaterial: Luzancy's story confirmed the public's worst suspicions about Jesuits, and spurred Parliament on in its determination to take tougher action against Catholics.²¹ The House resolved that the Lord Chief Justice should

‘A World of heat and clamour’

issue a warrant to apprehend the Jesuits who had threatened Luzancy, and ‘another to search for and apprehend all Priests and Jesuits whatsoever’, and asked that the king might offer all encouragement possible to converts such as Luzancy.²² The incident even made news internationally; the Venetian ambassador included the story in his reports, accusing Luzancy of lying, and bemoaning the harm that the dispute had done to the Catholic cause in England.²³

This drama over, Luzancy left London for a brief spell at Christ Church in Oxford, where he was awarded an MA.²⁴ Shortly afterwards, he was given the living of Dovercourt and Harwich, arriving there in January 1678/9 (Plate 2).²⁵ As a major port, Harwich had strong links with both London and the continent. Charles II’s continental post passed through the town (indeed, Luzancy preached to the crews aboard the ships which carried it).²⁶ During the reign of William and Mary, more than royal post passed through the port; William himself stayed in Harwich four times on his way to and from his native Holland.²⁷ Luzancy was not greeted by an undivided congregation in Harwich. The town was home to a group of Quakers, a sect which, because of its members’ efforts to reduce contact with the outside world, has sometimes been thought of as the most extreme religious

group of the Interregnum.²⁸ As well as the Quakers’ own desire to avoid contact with a world which might ‘pollute’ their beliefs, the wider community often distrusted them in return; some neighbours considered that they undermined parental authority and familial relations, the most basic building blocks of society.²⁹ Consequently, Quakers were not left alone to practise their religion without interference. There are plenty of references to Quakers spending time in prison for their beliefs during the 1660s, 1670s and 1680s, including in Harwich.³⁰ At other times, interference was more creative; in 1682 in Saffron Walden, the doors to the Quaker meeting house were nailed shut.³¹

Despite this, however, it seems that Luzancy did not inherit a state of open religious warfare in Harwich. Adrian Davies, in a study of Quakers in local context, argues that in Essex especially, relations were more harmonious than previously thought.³² The county, he believes, was predisposed to be more tolerant of its Quakers due to its history of religious dissent and the economic structure created in some parishes by the textile industry, while Quaker attitudes towards the outside world also softened during the 1670s.³³ Friends and family helped each other in times of trouble, regardless of religious affiliation; in Harwich in the 1680s, Quakers were bailed out of

prison by non-Quaker relatives.³⁴ As Davies puts it, during Luzancy’s lifetime, relations between Quakers and non-Quakers in Harwich were neither ‘uniformly hostile’ nor ‘uniformly cosy’.³⁵

Luzancy made no explicit mention of Quakers in print, but given his lack of tolerance for dissent of any kind it seems likely that he would have disapproved of them. In 1678, shortly before arriving in his new parish, he published his *Treatise against Irreligion*, which contains the telling words ‘God is not to be found but in true Religion. The Church he has founded is *his dwelling place*. There is from it but illusions and deceit’.³⁶ It seems reasonable to suppose that Luzancy would have counted Quakers among those who had cut themselves off from ‘true’ religion; furthermore, there is evidence that he did have at least one disagreement with them. In 1680, a Quaker named John Tyso published an angry little pamphlet in which he claimed that Luzancy has falsely reported him as a Jesuit to the Bishop of London, thereby landing him in prison, where he was further accused of having a part in the ‘Popish Plot’ fabricated by Titus Oates.³⁷ On his release Tyso, a shoemaker by trade, travelled to Harwich to confront Luzancy. He tells us that Luzancy initially denied any knowledge of Tyso’s existence, finally admitting buying shoes from him, but refusing to admit

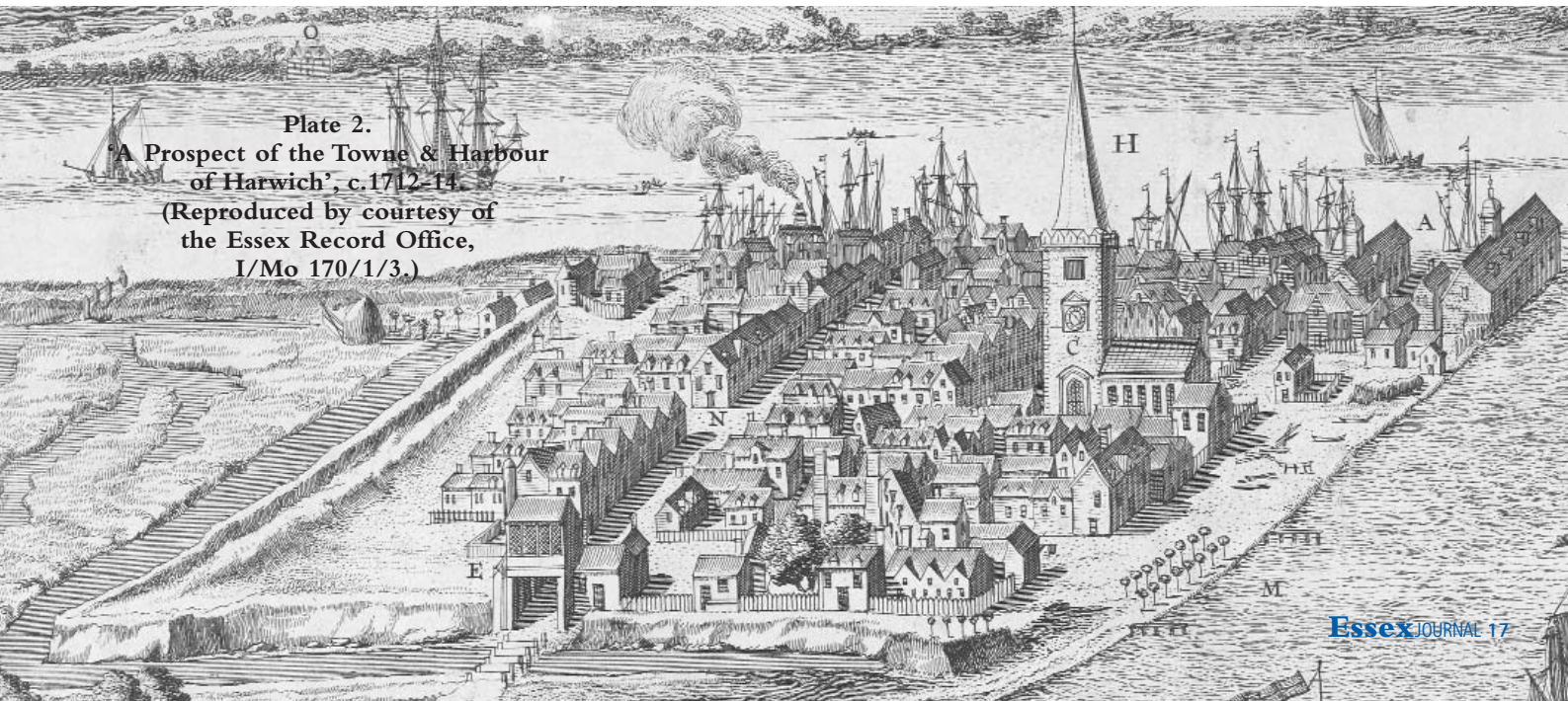


Plate 2.
‘A Prospect of the Towne & Harbour
of Harwich’, c.1712-14.
(Reproduced by courtesy of
the Essex Record Office,
I/Mo 170/1/3.)

‘A World of heat and clamour’

any involvement in his conviction as a Jesuit. Tyso names several Harwich men who witnessed his meeting with Luzancy and can corroborate his story, including prominent Harwich Quakers, John Vandewall and William Marloe. Given the Quakers’ emphasis on honesty, it seems unlikely that they colluded to tell a definite lie about Luzancy, but equally it seems unlikely that a man of Luzancy’s courage of conviction would have lied if he really had turned Tyso in to the Bishop of London. Possibly the whole incident stemmed from a misunderstanding, but it demonstrates that there must have been some tensions between Luzancy and the Harwich Quaker community. Luzancy clearly did not win the Quakers over to the Church of England during the rest of the 1680s. In 1689, the Toleration Act allowed nonconformists to register their meeting houses at the Quarter Sessions and to obtain a certificate to worship freely; the Harwich Quakers soon built a meeting house between West Street and Newhaven Lane.³⁸

We do not hear much of Luzancy again until the late 1690s, when he re-engaged in national theological debate in print. Through the works published during the second half of his time at Harwich, it is clear that he still held to his fundamental belief that scripture was a far better guide to salvation than anything the human mind could provide, and he continued to denounce those who believed otherwise. The main opponents that he now took on were the Socinians, or Unitarians.³⁹ The Socinians committed what was to Luzancy the grave error of using their human reason to question what they saw as contradictions in scripture. As a result, the Socinians rejected orthodox beliefs on the nature of the Trinity, that is, that ‘in ONE adorable and Divine Nature are Father, Son and Holy Spirit, every one God, and yet but ONE God’.⁴⁰ For the Socinians, this seemed a plain contradiction;

they refused to accept the ‘Mystery’ of how three things, complete and eternal in themselves, could also be one thing. Instead, they regarded ‘the persons of the Trinity as several modes of the one God’, that is, as one God appearing in different guises.⁴¹ This raised the further question of the nature of the Incarnation, that is, whether Jesus Christ was human or God; Socinians held that Christ was human rather than God, and did not exist until he was conceived as a human being. For Orthodox believers like Luzancy, Christ was uncreated and eternal, ‘God manifested in the Flesh’ (Plate 3).⁴²

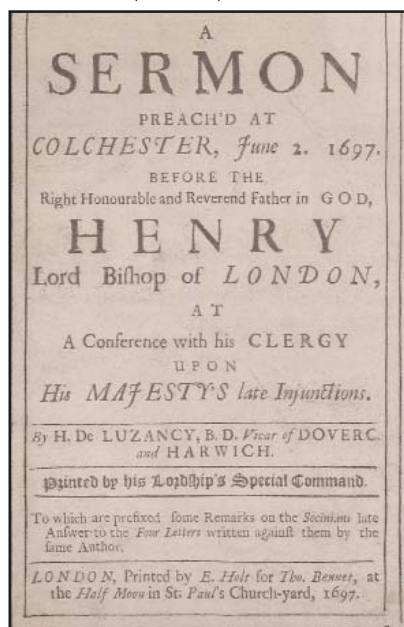


Plate 3. Luzancy's 1697 sermon. (Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office, LIB/SER/12/9.)

Luzancy's argument centred on the premise that even if the idea of the Trinity seemed contradictory, it was not. God does not – cannot – contradict himself, and if he appears to do so, it is only because he is simply beyond our understanding. Reason, Luzancy believed, will only get you so far before you need to rely on faith, and what cannot be understood should simply be believed and adored.⁴³ Humans were utterly surrounded by phenomena they were unable to explain; why, Luzancy asked, admit ‘Mysteries in most of Nature’s Operations, and exclude them only from Religion?’⁴⁴ To

question scripture was a dangerous exercise which stretched human reason beyond its limits. ‘Nothing is worse for any Man’, he wrote, ‘then [sic] to abandon himself to his own sense’.⁴⁵ The Unitarians, however, took a much more positive view of human reason. Stephen Nye, in answer to Luzancy’s objections, wrote that reason was the light given to us by God, and was much more powerful than Luzancy gave it credit for.⁴⁶ He did not believe that there was anything wrong with having faith only in things which seemed reasonable rather than incredible. Furthermore, he argued that scripture gave no firm definition of the Trinity, and that the orthodox view had itself been merely implied from scripture using human reason. Luzancy believed that some Socinians were men who had led immoral lives, for whom religion was an afterthought. Having no real understanding of religion, such men took these grave matters out of church where they belonged to ‘every Club Coffee-house [and] Tavern’, where sacred subjects were ‘villainously prostituted over a Dish of Coffee or a Bottle of Wine’.⁴⁷ He did, however, believe that some Socinians were educated men who deserved to be replied to seriously, and expended much time and ink trying to persuade them of the error of their ways; much more ink than they used in replying to him. Their beliefs provoked his second-longest work, his *Four Letters* of 189 pages, published in 1696. This was replied to by Stephen Nye, who devoted just part of his *Agreement of the Unitarians with the Catholic Church* to Luzancy. Luzancy pursued the matter in a sermon given at Colchester in 1697 which was later published, and then again in his *Four Dialogues* of 1698.

The language, style and rhetorical flourishes of Luzancy’s publications in this cause imply that he wanted to reach as wide an audience as possible, and give us an insight into what his parishioners would have heard from the pulpit every Sunday, yet they must surely also have been aware of

'A World of heat and clamour'

the personal accusations made against their vicar. In engaging in controversies publicly, Luzancy was not only attacked for his religious beliefs, but on personal grounds too. The attacks made on him in the *Letter from a gentleman* in 1676 and *Fasti Oxonienses* in 1692 discussed above have continued to resurface despite the fact they were written by men predisposed to animosity towards him. Their version of Luzancy's early life appeared again in 1829 in *A History of England* written by John Lingard, another English Roman Catholic, and in 1855 in *The Rambler*, a Catholic journal, both of which present him as a dishonest and opportunistic man.⁴⁸ Luzancy appears even more recently in Ruth Clark's 1932 history of the Jansenists at the abbey of Port Royal in Paris, followers of Dutch theologian Cornelius Jansen (1585–1638), whose doctrines included predestination and who were therefore judged by the Catholic Church to be heretical.⁴⁹ Clark states that he assumed the name Luzancy on arriving in London, and in so doing claimed to be part of the famous Jansenist family the Arnould d'Andillys, who considered him to be an imposter.⁵⁰ Luzancy acknowledged that he had enemies, but never answered in print any of the accusations made against him in his lifetime. It is probably impossible to know now whether these accounts of him contain any grains of truth, but

it seems unlikely that they do. Besides the fact that the original accusations were made by Catholic adversaries, Luzancy was obviously extremely well educated, gained royal favour, dedicated 35 years of his life to the service of the Church of England, and had a long marriage, all of which imply that he was a serious and sincere man.

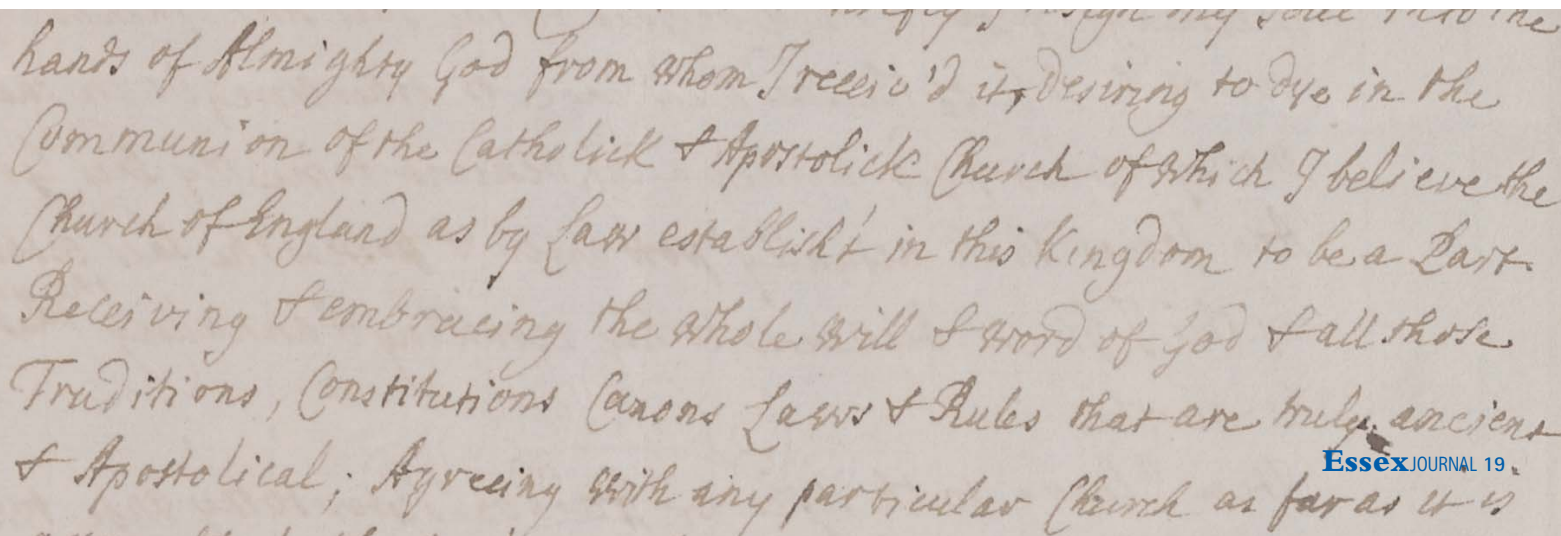
Luzancy was a man of determined beliefs. Confident, intolerant, he is not a character who would easily fit into the modern world. His two core beliefs, in the authority of scripture and the weakness of human reason, held fast from the time of his conversion, and led him to vociferously oppose anyone who deviated from these fundamental principles, and to defend the Church of England, even in the preamble to his will (Plate 4).⁵¹ Despite the very public disputes he became involved in, Luzancy claimed to abhor arguments within the church, yet he was not prepared to avoid them simply for the sake of a quiet life. Toleration, he wrote, may enable men to live more easily with one another, but did not acquit us 'in the sight of God'.⁵² Yet, for all his efforts to persuade people that there was but one way of worship that we should all adhere to, and that to question scripture with our human faculties was a dangerous and nonsensical thing to do, Luzancy was ultimately fighting a losing battle. In the years after his death in 1713, views such as

Luzancy held increasingly gave way to liberty of conscience, and Enlightenment ideas which celebrated human reason and empirical observation as a basis for making our decisions about the world. In 1734, 35 years after the 1689 Act of Toleration, Voltaire wrote that England was 'the land of sects. An Englishman, as a free man, goes to Heaven by whatever route he likes'.⁵³

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Plate 4. Part of the preamble to Luzancy's will: 'Desiring to dye in the Communion of the Catholick & Apostolick Church of which I believe the Church of England as by Law establish't in this Kingdom to be a Part Receiving & embracing the whole will & word of God & all those Traditions, Constitutions Canons Laws & Rules that are truly ancient & Apostolical'. (Reproduced by courtesy of the Essex Record Office, D/AEW 31/107.)



hands of Almighty God from whom I receiv'd it, desiring to dye in the
Communion of the Catholick & Apostolick Church of which I believe the
Church of England as by Law establish't in this Kingdom to be a Part
Receiving & embracing the whole will & word of God & all those
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'A World of heat and clamour'

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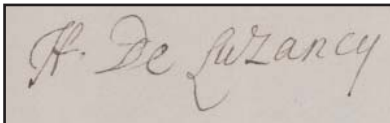
Acknowledgements

My thanks are due especially to Mr Tony Doe for his comments on drafts of this essay, and to the Plume Librarian Mrs Erica Wylie and staff, as well as the staff of the ERO. I would also like to thank Mr and Mrs Herrmann for presenting the Award, named in their honour, and to Mr Ken Bernard for making the Award possible.

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Luzancy's signature
on his will.
(ERO, D/AEW 31/107.)



The Sidneys - zenith and decline:

Who Did They Think They Were? Part 2

by

David Williams

For most of the century after the death in 1700 of David Sidney, merchant of Whitechapel, whose story was covered in the first part of this article,¹ the Sidney family seems to have prospered on its Essex estate at Peacocks, Margareting (Plate 1). David's eldest son, named Humphrey after his uncle, the merchant of Livorno, and Humphrey's own eldest son who bore the same name, were between them 'squires' of Margareting from 1700 until the younger Humphrey's death in 1787.

The elder Humphrey (1669-1731) married Honor Prescott,² daughter of Alexander Prescott of Thobies Priory. Already wealthy in his own right by inheritance, in 1723 he was given 127 acres in the nearby parish of West Hanningfield³ by Edmund Humphrey, a bachelor and the last of a wealthy family which had been given lands in Essex by Henry VIII,⁴ who was also godfather to the younger

Humphrey Sidney. In addition to their existing estates at Sandon and Margareting this gift must have greatly enhanced the Sidney fortunes and also brought them Church House in West Hanningfield (Plate 2), where they seem to have lived from the early nineteenth century.

The younger Humphrey (1705-87) married Susanna Brage, the daughter of William Brage of Hatfield Peverel whom he outlived by some years. In his time the family fortunes seem to have been at their peak. His Will⁵ left properties in several parts of Essex as well as substantial amounts of cash and stock, but closed simply: 'I desire to have no tombstone or inscription put over me but choose to have my grave [in Margareting churchyard] turfed and brambles put over the same as soon as I am buried'

Humphrey the younger's son, Charles William (1756-1823), became a Commissary, or supply officer, in the army during the Napoleonic Wars and also a deputy

lieutenant for Essex.⁶ It was in his time that the family fortunes seem to have taken a downward turn. This could be connected with the fact that in the late eighteenth century Peacocks was rebuilt in the latest style, and the estates there and at West Hanningfield appear to have become heavily mortgaged. As early as 1809, he was contemplating the sale of Peacocks to raise funds,⁷ and latterly he seems to have lived in Suffolk, Dorset and finally Sussex; he had given the West Hanningfield estate to his son, Charles Algernon Philip (1783-1864), in 1808, and the Margareting estate in 1822. By then the latter was mortgaged for at least £3,000, and Charles Algernon Philip sold it in 1833 to John Disney for £6,300.⁸ From about this time, Charles Algernon Philip seems to have lived at West Hanningfield (itself mortgaged for at least £1800 by 1809), sinking steadily into further financial trouble.

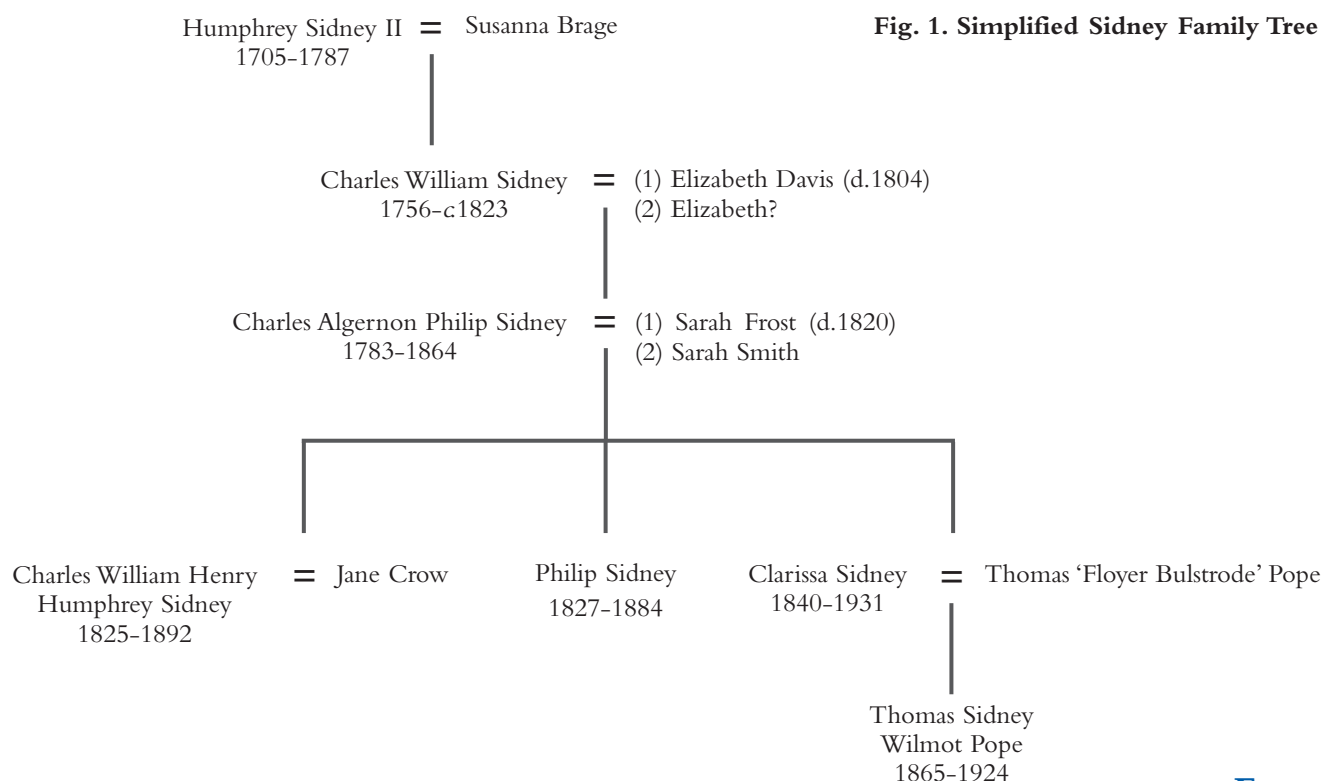


Fig. 1. Simplified Sidney Family Tree

The Sidneys - zenith and decline



Plate 1. Peacocks Margareting. (By courtesy of Philip Torr)

Charles Algernon Philip's children-troubles come not single spies

Although his father's expenditures may have started his problems, the younger Charles hardly helped himself by having at least 14 children with Sarah Smith, the daughter of a Writtle farmer, who does not seem to have married him until 1828,⁹ five years after the birth of the eldest child. Misfortune dogged several of them in later life. We will focus on three: the eldest son to survive to adulthood, Charles William Henry Humphrey (CWHH), and his siblings Philip and Clarissa.

'Mr Pope produced credentials...

Born in 1825, CWHH graduated from Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, and was ordained in 1850. In 1853 he became Vicar of Gooderstone, in the west of Norfolk, and held that post until 1891, only a year before his death, but he seems to have lived elsewhere for part of that time; presumably he had to pay a curate to take his place, which must have strained his pocket since the Gooderstone post was worth only £170 a year.¹⁰ We will return to him a little later. Philip, two years his junior, qualified as a Master Mariner in 1855,¹¹ and by February 1857 his father had bought a half share in the *Sir Colin Campbell*, a 248 ton brig, of which Philip became master.¹² Over the next two years this

modest vessel sailed under his command to Trebizond [modern Trabzon in Turkey] on the Black Sea, then on to Constantinople [Istanbul], then to Queenstown [Cobh], Ireland, and then to Rio de Janeiro, via Madeira, a voyage which took just under six months, before returning, via Constantinople again, to Falmouth in January 1859.¹³

We do not know how financially successful these voyages were, but Philip's father sold his share in 1860 and Philip had to look elsewhere. In August 1861 he bought a 100% interest, for £2,000, in the *Leading Star*, a 210 ton barque built in Essex, at Fingringhoe, and registered at Colchester.¹⁴ We have part of the story of his only voyage in this vessel in his own words, as told to a bankruptcy court in South Africa six years later. Although his ancestors, David and Humphrey of Leghorn, may have been economical with the truth when pursued by their creditors, Philip's account is substantially confirmed by the records in *Lloyd's List* and at The National Archives. On 31st August 1861, the *Leading Star* sailed from Gravesend, bound for Natal, a journey then requiring the rounding of the Cape of Good Hope, and arrived there on 1st April 1862. In Philip's words, 'She was loaded with timber for the harbour works, and 12 or 15 passengers. I became sick on the voyage out and was obliged in consequence thereof to remain in Natal.'¹⁵

Philip seems to have spent the next two years in Natal, which had been a settled British colony

only since 1843. Around the end of 1862, he was joined by two of his younger sisters. One of them was definitely Clarissa (born 1840) and the other was almost certainly Lucy (1835). The sisters may have originally come out for a holiday and to see their brother, but events fell out otherwise, because on 28th February 1863, Philip and Lucy witnessed the marriage, at Pinetown (now a suburb of Durban), of their sister Clarissa to Floyer Bulstrode Pope;¹⁶ at least, that was what everyone (except the bridegroom) thought at the time. In fact, they had witnessed a deception that was to have sad consequences. By January 1864, at West Hanningfield, Clarissa's father, Charles Algernon Philip, now 80 years old, had received such distressing news from his daughters that he instructed his solicitor, Albert Copland, of

...of the most satisfactory nature'

the Chelmsford firm of Copland & Sons, to write to the bridegroom's father, Thomas Pope, a substantial farmer at Horningsham in Wiltshire. Explaining how the sisters had sailed for Natal, Copland went on:

'During the voyage a Gentleman calling himself Floyer Bulstrode Pope but who eventually was found to be Mr Thomas or Tom Pope...engaged the affections of Miss Clarissa Sidney...who was a very fine girl of 23 years of age & a short time after the arrival of the ship at Port Natal¹⁷... they were married at Pine Town church nearby...Mr Pope produced credentials of the most satisfactory nature apparently, before the marriage, and was I am informed generally believed both on board the ship and in the Colony to be a respectable man.'¹⁸

The Sidneys - zenith and decline

The bridegroom was indeed Tom Pope, one of several sons of his namesake father, and Floyer, whose name he used, was in fact his elder brother, by 1871 a wine merchant in Yeovil, Somerset.¹⁹ Tom may have decided that his brother's name was more impressive than his own, although it is clear that his wife soon discovered the truth. Worse was to follow. Albert Copland continued:

'After the marriage Mr & Mrs Pope went up into the country to a place called Durban [far away in Chelmsford, Copland seems to have been rather hazy about his geography] and lived there together for 2 or 3 months. Mr Pope then left to go...to the Cape of Good Hope²⁰ upon urgent business which required his personal superintendence, promising his wife to return as speedily as he could. I am informed that he reached the Cape and whilst there he by some act (said to be forgery) made himself answerable to the Law and was imprisoned but afterwards liberated thro' the intervention of Sir W. Hodges with whom he was in some way connected. He fully acknowledged to persons there that tho' he had married Miss Sidney he should not return to her or ever live with her again or visit her. [Clarissa] some time afterwards received information that at a place called Stellenbosch [Stellenbosch?] her husband had represented himself to be unmarried and had made an offer of marriage to a girl living there with whom he had gone off into the country. Mrs Pope was thus left alone at Durban, without friends or money & the cruel deception of her husband wrought so upon her as to produce premature confinement from the evil effects of which she was on the 28th October last miserably suffering.'

Nothing more is heard of this pregnancy, which appears to have ended in a miscarriage or neonatal death. Whether Tom indeed 'went off' with another woman is unknown, but he certainly ran into trouble in Cape Town. In July 1863, he was charged there, under the even more exotic but equally false name of Floyer Balstrode A'Court Pope, with passing a cheque for £15 in the knowledge that he lacked the funds to meet it. He was, just as Copland had said, acquitted, after producing a letter offering to back his cheques up to £50, signed by Sir William Hodges, then President of the Legislative Council and Chief Justice of the Cape Colony.²¹ Professional discretion may have stopped Copland short of a direct plea to Pope senior for cash, but that was clearly his object. His letter ended by referring to Charles Algernon Philip's great age and how 'he has had large property and is very respectably connected but by the expenses of a large family [he] is now much reduced in worldly importance', before ending with this plea: 'Such a sad calamity falls heavily upon an old man and I am sure you, who have a good and honourable name, must feel for him & Mrs Sidney as well as the unfortunate girl who has been so cruelly deceived.'

We do not know whether Thomas Pope senior replied, but from later evidence we do know that Clarissa and Tom were reconciled for a time. We will return to them shortly, but meanwhile, Clarissa's brother, Philip, was running into misfortunes of his own. When he fell ill in 1862, Philip appointed William Graham²² as acting master of the *Leading Star*, and from May 1862 to early 1864, she toured the China Sea under Graham's command. She sailed first to Kurrachee [Karachi], then to Penang, Singapore and at the end of 1862 to 'Kongpoot', which may be Kampot in modern Cambodia; 1863 found her calling at Bangkok, Batavia [Jakarta], Surabaya (also in what is now Indonesia), Amoy [Xiamen, on

the Chinese mainland opposite Taiwan], Shanghai, and Tamsui [Danshui in Taiwan]. Early in 1864 she began to work her way back to Batavia, from where she sailed on 28th February, bound, according to *Lloyd's List*, for Amsterdam. However, this was not what Philip had intended when appointing Graham. As he told the Pietermaritzburg Bankruptcy Court in 1867:

'The ship sailed from [Natal] for China in ballast under the command of a person named Graham...She cruised 18 months in the China seas and afterwards loaded in Batavia for Amsterdam the arrangement being between Graham and myself and the Charterers that she was to take me up here [in Durban] on her return voyage.'

Philip claimed that when the ship returned to Durban from Batavia, he had gone inland for a while, leaving his Durban agent instructions to send for him as soon as the *Leading Star* arrived so that he could return with her to Europe. The agent, however, was away in Cape Town when the *Leading Star* arrived, and she sailed without Philip (on 16th April according to *Lloyd's List*), bound for Amsterdam. In Philip's words:

'I followed after her as soon as I possibly could and found the ship empty-cargo in the hands of the merchants & the crew waiting for their wages. The ship was arrested and sold & the proceeds applied in paying the crew's wages, so she was a total loss to me. She was my own bona fide property and all paid for. I found on my arrival at Amsterdam that I had been robbed by the Master Graham who had reduced the Charter amount from £200 to £130 which for 18 months amounted to £1,260 - which I presume he shared with the merchants & which led to my ruin.'

The Sidneys - zenith and decline

Lloyd's List, dealing only in hard facts, records that the ship arrived in Amsterdam on 12th August. Soon after this she had a new owner, Richard Page, who presumably bought her from the port authorities after discharging the dues, and retained her until, in November 1875, she sailed from the Tyne, bound for Folkestone, but as the official register recorded the following January, 'has not been since heard of, is considered lost.'¹²³ By then, Philip had been declared bankrupt in Pietermaritzburg in 1867, and eventually died at Ficksburg in the Orange Free State in 1884, aged 57.²⁴

'dragged her across the room by the hair of her head'

Clarissa and Tom had by now been reconciled and returned to England. Her father, whose lands at West Hanningfield were mortgaged for almost their full value by 1861,²⁵ had died in April 1864, only a few weeks after his interview with Albert Copland. In April 1865 they were living at Hounslow, and a son, Thomas Sidney Wilmot Pope, was born, but the relationship was still unhappy. According to Clarissa, Tom 'struck [her] several times on her head' on the return voyage, and in the last days of her pregnancy he also 'struck [her] in her stomach and dragged her across the room by the hair of her head', and- a particularly squalid touch - 'forced one of his dirty socks into [her] mouth.' By 1870 the couple had moved to Guernsey, where Tom allegedly committed repeated adultery with a local woman.²⁶ By early 1870, Clarissa had returned to West Hanningfield, evidently alone,²⁷ and had instructed Albert Copland to seek a divorce.

For a provincial solicitor, this may have been a novel experience, for divorce had been feasible only for the very wealthy until the 1858 Divorce Act. Copland initially

advised a separation,²⁸ perhaps because to obtain a divorce a woman had to prove *both* adultery, *and* either cruelty or desertion, whereas a separation required only one of the latter pair.²⁹ Clarissa was adamant, however, and despite continual problems paying Copland's fees she persuaded him to obtain evidence from Guernsey of Tom's adultery. This involved asking a local solicitor to take statements from various women in the island, including the alleged co-respondent's landlady, which took until the middle of 1872. Even then, some of Copland's advice seems rather naive, suggesting that Clarissa ask Tom for a written 'confession',³⁰ and later that they should subpoena the alleged 'other woman' herself, because 'I have no doubt [she] could be got to tell the truth as her only chance with Mr Pope is to get him, if divorced, to marry her.'³¹ But it gradually became clear that Tom, who was 'living upon the charity of his relations',³² could not afford to contest the divorce, and once the witnesses' statements from Guernsey arrived, Clarissa was granted a decree nisi in January 1873. Bizarrely, her husband was described in the Court papers as Floyer Bulstrode Pope right to the end. When Clarissa queried this, Copland replied, with a touch of male condescension:

'you were married to a person calling himself Floyer Bulstrode Pope... Whether his name really is Tom is immaterial. It was the man who signed and presented himself as Floyer Bulstrode Pope that you want to be free from. Once free you will not be troubled by 'Tom Pope' or 'Floyer Bulstrode Pope' any more.'³³

Did the real Floyer Pope discover that in the eyes of the law, he had been married, in a country he probably never visited, to a woman he probably never met? Copland's work did not end there,

however, and correspondence continued for some years about his fees. Clarissa had been left almost penniless at her mother's death in 1871, and the only funds available to pay Copland were held in a trust created by her father for her twin sister, Clara, described in the relevant censuses as an imbecile from birth. Once Clara had died, in 1876, these funds were to be distributed to the other children, and although Tom should have paid Clarissa's costs it was obvious that he would never do so. Copland persuaded Clarissa to assign her share of the fund to him to settle the costs, which came to £110; even then, Copland claimed to be out of pocket by over £20.³⁴

At this point Clarissa's other siblings started to pepper Copland with requests for their share of Clara's trust; the most frequent requests came from the Rev Charles William Henry Humphrey, the eldest son. With only £170 a year from the meagre living of Gooderstone, CWHH took curacies elsewhere to supplement his income, in St Ervan, Cornwall, 1875-77, Burton, Pembrokeshire, 1878, and Menheniot, also in Cornwall, 1878-82, as well as holding two other Norfolk curacies in parallel. His wanderings may have had a darker aspect; as early as 1873, when he first seems to have applied for help to the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy, a church charity, he was described as 'in an asylum', and when his wife applied on his behalf in 1885, he was 'in Bodmin Asylum, mentally incapacitated for duty.' By now his income from Gooderstone had reduced to £140 a year and by 1890 it had halved, to £72 (this may have been the amount left after paying a curate). He died in Kimberley, South Africa, while visiting his sister Lucy, in 1892, and his widow was forced to seek help from the Corporation again; her income was now less than £10 a year, and the minutes granting her an additional £10 recorded: 'Husband long suffered mentally and bodily.'³⁵

The Sidneys - zenith and decline

Sad as CWHH's story was, did Clarissa's fortunes improve? Soon after the divorce, she seems to have returned to South Africa and was married again, to a man called Best,³⁶ but there the trail seemed to run cold, until I decided to trawl the internet for the name of her son, Thomas Sidney Wilmot Pope. This produced a much happier conclusion. Young Thomas emigrated to Australia, settled in Adelaide, and in 1891 married Hannah Roads, a second generation migrant. Through one of their descendants, Merryn Zepfel, I contacted a descendant of Hannah's family, Douglas Roads Maschmedt, who sent me a copy of the family history he had written in 1991. There I found a group photograph from the 1920s, showing, seated in the place of honour, an elderly lady, described as 'Clarissa Oastler, mother of Thomas Pope' (Plate 3). After the marriage with Mr Best ended, Clarissa joined her son in Australia, and in 1884 she married John Churchill Oastler, son of a Derbyshire doctor. Widowed in 1909, she lived to the age of 91, dying in the Adelaide suburb of Semaphore in 1931, a world away from her early tribulations.³⁷ Tom Pope senior (alias Floyer Bulstrode), meanwhile, by 1911, was living alone, unmarried and without occupation, in a single room in Portsmouth.³⁸

Who did they think they were?

In 1832–33, several anonymous articles appeared in the *Gentleman's Magazine*.³⁹ The author was trying to trace 'lost' modern descendants of the Elizabethan courtier, soldier and poet, Sir Philip Sidney, and of his nephew Algernon Sidney, the politician executed for treason on trumped-up evidence in 1683. The main lines of this family are well known and (indirectly) their present day descendants are the family of Lord De L'Isle of Penshurst Place in Kent.⁴⁰ There is some evidence that some of the Essex Sidneys may have believed in a relationship with this family.



Plate 2. Church House, West Hanningfield. (Author's collection.)

Their repeated use of the Christian names Philip and Algernon is one hint of this: so, perhaps, is Charles William Henry Humphrey's membership of Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, founded by Frances, Countess of Sussex, a member of the Elizabethan dynasty. When William Henry, one of CWHH's sons, died in 1941, his death notice in *The Times* included the motto of the Elizabethan family, *Quo fata vocant*, (Whither the fates call),⁴¹ and three contemporary descendants have told me that they were brought up believing that the family was so descended.⁴² But the most suggestive piece of evidence is the following paragraph in one of the *Gentleman's Magazine* articles mentioned above:

'There are two families of certain respectability whose ancestors are not known to have been in trade, and whose connections with the ancient stock may be discoverable. To assist the County Historian or Genealogist, I submit what has come to my knowledge. One family is of Essex.'⁴³

There follows a complete listing of the descent of Charles Algernon Philip Sidney from

David, the merchant of Whitechapel. (The other 'family of certain respectability' lived in Northumberland). The author goes on to claim that David's father was the Thomas Sidney, gentleman, of Fetter Lane, who was buried at St Andrew's, Holborn, in 1641.⁴⁴ This man's will,⁴⁵ summarized in the article, mentioned a wife called Elizabeth, an eldest son called Humphrey and younger children called David, John and Elizabeth. I have certainly found no better candidate than this couple for the parents of the mercantile partners, David and Humphrey (who had a sister Elizabeth, mentioned in the papers of their lawsuit related in my first article), although I have not traced their own marriage. Baptisms of children of a Thomas and Elizabeth Sidney which look reasonable candidates for those mentioned are David, at St Andrew's, Holborn on 7th February 1636, and John on 9th July 1630; earlier, at nearby St James, Clerkenwell, a Humphrey was baptised on 6th July 1627.⁴⁶ The parents of this David lived in the now vanished Gunpowder Alley, off Fetter Lane. Also, the inscription on Humphrey's tomb in the English cemetery at Leghorn described him as 'a noble Englishman, the son of Thomas.'⁴⁷

The Sidneys - zenith and decline



Plate 3. Clarissa Oastler, mother of Thomas Pope, seated fifth from left. (By courtesy of Douglas Roads Maschmedt.)

Could the author of these pieces have been none other than Charles Algernon Philip Sidney himself? Beset by debts and an expensive family, might he have looked for some consolation in a noble ancestry? If so, there is little hard evidence in his favour in the published sources, which do not offer any 'stray' descendants of the noble family with whom Thomas, David or their descendants can be linked. In his marathon lawsuit against Humphrey's estate and David, launched less than a century after Sir Philip Sidney's death in 1586, Francis Pargiter alleged that Humphrey: 'had some estate in England in lands of inheritance...which descended or came to him from his father who is long since dead or from some other of his ancestors.'¹⁴⁸ It seems likely that if there had been a connection with the noble family, it would have been known in the 1670s, and that the commercially sharp Pargiter would have exploited it. But nowhere in the mass of legal papers is there the slightest hint of it. One thing Pargiter would not have known, however, was that his adversary's tomb at Leghorn was decorated with what its recorder in 1906 described as 'a pheon with an orle of seven mullets.' The pheon, or arrowhead, forms part of the arms of the Sidneys of Penshurst.

Does this decoration support a connection with the noble Sidneys? Unfortunately, enquiries at the College of Arms have not revealed any grant of arms to Thomas of Fetter Lane, David of Whitechapel and Margaretting, or Humphrey of Leghorn, and they do not appear in the records of heralds visitations. The College's files did, however, contain correspondence from the very end of the eighteenth century between an assistant to the eminent genealogist Sir Isaac Heard, and a 'Mr Morris', probably William Morris of Havering-atte-Bower, whose father had married into the Northumberland Sidneys mentioned above in the *Gentleman's Magazine* article. Morris claimed that both the Northumberland and Margaretting families were descended from a Rev Thomas Sidney or Siddan, who had been a secretary to Charles I, so dedicated to his duties that he was found dead at his desk. Morris went on to claim that this man's sons were David and Humphrey, merchants at Leghorn; and that 'we have seals in both our families, the arms alike, a pheon, a blue porcupine with a gold chain.'¹⁴⁹

I have been unable to find any reference to 'Thomas the secretary' in the records of Charles I's household at The National Archives or elsewhere.⁵⁰ The will of Thomas of Fetter Lane describes him as a 'gentleman'

and not as a cleric or royal official. It could well be that Morris was merely repeating oft-retold and sincerely believed family legends in the hope of finding some independent confirmation; just as David Sidney, over a century earlier, may have believed in such connections to the point of adorning his brother's tomb with similar devices. Could such beliefs have solidified over the next 150 years to inspire later generations, and perhaps provide comfort to those who, like Charles Algernon Philip Sidney, fell on very hard times? The truth remains elusive, but no less fascinating for that.

References

1. D. Williams, 'David and Humphrey Sidney: Stuart merchants and litigants - Who Do They Think They Were? Part 1;', *Essex Journal*, 45, II, (2010), pp.39-44.
2. St Mary Matfellow, Whitechapel, 16/09/1703.
3. Essex Record Office (ERO), D/DCr T40, deeds of various properties and land, 1723-1887.
4. Philip Morant, *History and Antiquities of the County of Essex*, Vol 2, (London, 1768), pp.38-40.
5. ERO D/DDS T30, will of Humphrey Sidney (dated 1786).
6. *Gentleman's Magazine*, art. Cit.
7. ERO, D/DDW B1/4, letter book of Copland and Sons, correspondence from, John Copland the elder, 06/05/1809.
8. Documents in bundle ERO, D/DDS T30.
9. Guildhall Library (GL), St Bride's, Fleet Street, marriage register, 02/12/1828, MS6542, Vol.8. Sarah was baptised at Writtle in 1802. Charles seems to have been previously married to Sarah Frost, at St Mary's, Lambeth, 19/03/1807; she was buried at Margaretting, 14/03/1820, and no children of this marriage have been traced.
10. Crockford's Clerical Directory, *passim*.
11. The National Archives (TNA), BT122, certificate number 12485.
12. TNA BT 108/93 and 108/4.
13. These voyages, and those of the *Leading Star* mentioned later, can be traced from the relevant editions of Lloyd's List, available at the Guildhall Library in London.

The Sidneys - zenith and decline

14. ERO, A/SR 3/1/10, Port of Colchester Shipping register 'A', June 1855–August 1863, f.24.
15. Philip's account is in the National Archives of South Africa, Pietermaritzburg Repository, NAB/MSC/LEER Vol 1/53.
16. Marriage certificate at TNA J77/115 no 2053.
17. The original name of the city of Durban.
18. ERO D/DDw B1/29, f.681. This is Copland & Sons outgoing letter-book, consisting of 'jellygraph' manuscript copies. These are sometimes difficult to read but I have I hope made reasonable inferences where words are doubtful.
19. 1871 census, RG10; Piece: 2417; f.35; p.5.
20. Then a separate colony, with its capital at Cape Town.

The truth remains elusive, but no less fascinating for that

21. National Archives of South Africa, Cape Town Repository, KAB/CSC/LEER vol 1/1/1/19. The full details of this case are distinctly bizarre. Hodges, like Pope's father, came from Dorset (see *DNB*) and may have been a family friend, but did he think he was writing about the real Floyer?
22. Confirmed by the register at TNA BT108/44.
23. Lloyd's Register, January 1876.
24. Free State Archives, South Africa, death notice, reference MHGS647.
25. ERO, D/DCr T40. In 1861 he was forced to sell the West Hanningfield estate, on which outstanding mortgages appear to have been at least £6,900, to William Thomas Wright for £7,768, but appears to have leased back Church House where he lived until he died.
26. All these quotations are from the divorce papers at TNA J77115 no. 2053. It is important to state that these only tell Clarissa's side of the story because her petition was undefended.
27. In the 1871 census she is still described as married but there is no trace of Tom.
28. ERO, D/DDw B1/38, letter book of Copland and Sons, f.811, letter of 18/03/1870.
29. A man had only to prove adultery, see J.H.Baker, *Introduction to English Legal History*, (London, 1990), ch.27.
30. ERO, D/DDw B1/38, f.463, letter, 09/01/1871.
31. ERO, D/DDw B1/40, letter book of Copland and Sons, f.1016, letter, 26/06/1872.
32. *Ibid.*, f.822, letter, 11/05/1872.
33. ERO, D/DDw B1/38, f.1341, letter, 14/10/1871.
34. ERO D/DDw B1/46, letter book of Copland and Sons, f.674, letter, 13/11/1877.
35. Records of the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy at the London Metropolitan Archives, A/CSC/417A.
36. This emerges from several letters by Copland in 1877, ERO, D/DDw B1/46. No other details of this marriage have been discovered.
37. D.R. Maschmedt, *Roads Across the Ocean*, (privately published), 1991, and correspondence with Merryn Zeppel and Rhonda Embee, 2007.
38. In 1881 he was shown in Alverstoke, Hants, as living with a wife called Rachel, born in Paris but of British nationality; whether she was the lady cited in the divorce is unclear but there is no trace that he ever remarried. In 1891 he was a 'dockyard warden' in Alverstoke, still described as married but with no wife accompanying him; by 1901, he was in Southsea, now described as unmarried and 'living on own means'. His date of death is unknown.
39. Especially (1832) Vol CII, Pt I, p.604 & (1833) Vol CIII, Pt I, p.406. The author signed himself 'Genealogical Enquirer'.
40. P. Sidney, *The Sidneys of Penshurst*, (London, 1901).
41. *The Times*, 03/12/1941.
42. Conversation and correspondence, December 2007 & February 2010.
43. *Gentleman's Magazine*, 1832.
44. GL, St Andrew's, Holborn, burial register, 15/08/1641, MS6673/2, giving the date of death as the previous day.
45. TNA, PROB11/187, will of Thomas Sidney, Gentleman of London, 26/08/1641.
46. Registers at the Guildhall Library, Holborn and London Metropolitan Archives (Clerkenwell).
47. G.G. Milner-Gibson-Cullum & F.C. Macauley (eds), *Inscriptions in the Old British Cemetery at Leghorn*, (Leghorn, 1906). The inscription reads:
Dom. Honuphrii Sidnei Thomae Fili/nobilis Angli et negociatoris providi/hoc sub marmore mortalia/conduntur spolia/ex hac vita migravit/die VIII Augusti AD MDCLXXVI/aetatis vero suae LIV:
'Beneath this marble are consigned the mortal remains of Mr Humphrey Sidney, son of Thomas, a noble Englishman and a prudent businessman, who departed this life 8 August 1776 in his 54th year'.
I accept that this age does not exactly tally with the Clerkenwell baptism.
48. Pargiter's Bill of Complaint at TNA, C6/78/83.
49. College of Arms, Ms BP Collection BP15/302a–304. The probable date of Morris's letter is 13/02/1800.
50. TNA, LC3/1 lists the Royal household, but only from 1641. As this was the year of Thomas of Fetter Lane's death, his absence is not therefore conclusive. But see also G.E. Aylmer, *The King's Servants: The Civil Service of Charles I, 1625–42*, (London, 1974), and its source files at the Library of the Institute for Historical Research, which also fail to mention anyone who could be the 'secretary' Thomas Sidney or aliases.

Acknowledgments

My thanks for their help in connection with this article go to Mr Douglas Roads Maschmedt, Mrs Merryn Zeppel and Mrs Rhonda Embee from Australia, Mrs Lynette Warwick and Mrs Joy Wellbeloved for their help with archival sources in South Africa, Mr Peter and Miss Anastasia Heath (Sidney descendants), Mr Philip Torr (the current owner of 'Peacocks', Margareting), Mr Peter O'Donohue (Bluemantle Pursuivant) of the College of Arms, and to Mr Matteo Giunti and Professor Steffano Villani of the University of Pisa for their help in obtaining the photograph of Humphrey's tomb at Livorno.

The Author

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Sarsen Stones on Broomfield Green¹

by

Ken Newman

Fourteen years ago, Mr Jim Thorp the groundsman for the parish of Broomfield, two miles north of Chelmsford, was involved in the task of protecting the edges of Church Green from damage caused by parked cars. Jim remembered that he had been told of some large boulders by an ex-resident of the Green who was 'into stones'. He located them in the ditch running along New Barn Lane adjacent to Broomfield Hall. Having confirmed that they were not wanted by the landowner, Jim moved the stones to their present position near St.Mary's church lychgate (Plate 1).

Although relatively small, the stones are good examples of Sarsens. The name may come from Anglo-Saxon *sar-stan* (trouble stone) or *sel-stan* (great stone). Some think it is a general name derived from Saracen (an Arab or Muslim, especially at the time of the Crusades). Sarsens are common across South-Eastern England where they are often called 'grey wethers' and can be mistaken, at a distance, for sheep resting on chalk hillsides.² Other names for these scattered blocks and boulders are druidstones, bridestones, breedingstones, motherstones and heathstones -

there are more. They are of course, well known from their use in the impressive outer ring of Stonehenge³ and in the Avebury Stone Circle.⁴ Some excellent examples can be seen in the museum at St.Albans, but Essex also has its prominent sarsens.

Sarsens are brown in colour and either composed entirely of very hard seemingly re-crystallised grains of silica (quartz) or they have a hard and very tough skin of iron-rich silica and a paler, almost yellow, somewhat softer interior of sandstone.⁵ The latter variety generally weather grey-white on the surface. Some may be rippled and show intricate flow patterns ('mammilated'). Most are relatively smooth with shallow dimples and occasional deep circular holes of varying diameters. Yet others may be striated or grooved. One or two grade into or interleave with Hertfordshire Puddingstone - dark round pebbles cemented by paler silica cement - 'Spotted Dick' puddingstones. This association is shown by the stone in Beauchamp Roding churchyard.⁶ Hertfordshire puddingstones are common in west Essex (Saffron Walden - Arkesden - Newport - Harlow area) but they are also found across Essex, including the coast, especially near Harwich. They should not be confused with Essex Puddingstone composed of pebbles cemented by iron.⁷

The origin of sarsens and indeed Hertfordshire Puddingstone, to which they are obviously closely related, is not fully agreed or even understood. They have been a topic for discussion and investigation for many years. Well in excess of 60 geologists (amateur, academic and professional) have written on sarsens (which are now classified as silcretes) since 1900 and many more before that.⁸ However, there is still 'no unifying

Plate 1. General view of the position of the sarsen stones on Broomfield Green. (All photos N. Wiffen, 08/05/2011.)



Sarsen Stones on Broomfield Green

silcrete theory'.⁹ Some sarsens (quite complex forms) may have been part of soil profile formation or flash flood deposits and owe much to climate.¹⁰ Other sarsens (simple types) seem to be the result of underground water-table movement, or drainage lines and perhaps rivers. With either group, it seems that the scattered stones we see now, were once part of a much more extensive horizon,¹¹ sheet or layer, perhaps never entirely continuous. Sarsens apparently developed under semi-arid conditions like those in parts of Africa and western Australia today. Here, thorn bushes and scrubs grow (creating deep root holes) on mixed spreads of sand and pebbles round the edges of temporary playa (mud) and salt lakes.¹²

The position of sarsens in the geological time-scale and the conditions under which they were formed, point to origins in one or another of the following warm period rock formations:-

1. Reading Beds (Lambeth Group) of Palaeocene age c59-57 million years ago (m.y.a.) for those in north Essex.
2. Woolwich Beds (Lambeth Group) of Palaeocene age c59-57 m.y.a. for those in south Essex?
3. Bagshot Beds (Eocene) c51.5 - 49.5 m.y.a. for those in south Essex?
4. Barton Beds (Eocene) c45.0 - 43.5 m.y.a. for those in Hampshire (and perhaps south Essex) - although some geologists think they are all of this age.
5. Of mixed age in some areas e.g. the Chilterns.

There is also a suggestion that some sarsens in south Essex are from local Thanet Sands (Palaeocene) c60.5 - 59.5 m.y.a. (older than the Woolwich and Reading Beds).

The various authorities also disagree on when these sands were lithified (turned into hard

sandstones) - at the conclusion of their deposition? During the Miocene 25-23 m.y.a. when much of south-east England was planed-off by erosion? Or, during the Anglian Glaciation 470,000 - 425,000 years ago, or at least during the Pleistocene period? In some areas however, the process of lithification was very patchy.¹³

Once solidified, these quartz-rich sheets (sometimes called duricrusts) seem to have been fractured by Miocene folding, opened up by weathering, broken apart by cambering (a kind of slumping) on valley slopes and then later, spread widely over the countryside in glaciated areas by the Anglian Ice Sheet. Some blocks moved down into the valleys by solifluction (soil flow) around the ice sheet margins and in the peri-glacial conditions that existed over Southern England as the ice sheet melted and retreated. Lines of such boulders in valley floors are called 'blockstreams'. These are well shown in the Valley of Stones near Portesham, Dorset. In places where the duricrust was only partial, the loose sand was probably washed away leaving the solid blocks isolated.

The distribution of sarsens in England has been mapped many times, notably for north Essex and south Suffolk by P.G.H. Boswell in 1929.¹⁴ They are concentrated along the south west - north east outcrop of the Reading Beds beneath the Anglian Chalky Boulder Clay from Gt Yeldham to Sudbury, and are found especially along the valleys of the Colne, Stour and Box. There are relatively few sarsens to the north west of this line, but their occurrence here does suggest that the source rocks covered a much larger area than at present. Mineral analysis of these sarsens is said to be 'precisely similar'¹⁵ to that of the local Reading Beds.

Where sarsens are found on or just below the Boulder Clay surface they were apparently dragged there by the Anglian Ice Sheet from the already broken-up outcrop of the Reading Beds. Many were superficially smoothed,

hollowed and striated by the slow file-like action of the ice, but most were virtually untouched and did not travel far enough to be considered as true glacial erratics.¹⁶ Where sarsens are found in deepish stream valley floors, or well beneath them in Hertfordshire and central/north Essex, some could have been distributed initially by the proto-Thames which crossed this area, but more probably, they were spread by glacial melt-water streams and later local rivers. In south Essex, the Woolwich Beds, which outcrop in a narrow discontinuous belt from West Thurrock to Stanford le Hope, are the likely source of most of the sarsens in the Grays area, but one or two further east may have been brought from Kent by an early course of the Medway.¹⁷

Sarsens... are often called 'grey wethers' and can be mistaken...for sheep

There is a big concentration of sarsens in north Essex round Gestingthorpe (over 60 officially recorded in the parish), where some of the best examples can be seen at Hill Farm (with permission from Mr Cooper) and on the roadside at Nether Hall. A large sarsen is to be found in Ovington churchyard and many occur in and around the churchyard at Alphamstone which has caused some archaeological speculation.¹⁸ Well noted sarsen stones occur at Newport (Leper Stone), Greenstead (Colchester), Thurrock, South Ockendon, Little Waltham (Channels), Hatfield Forest (lake side) and at Audley End Park gates.¹⁹ In recent times, sarsens extracted from fields and ponds have been placed at the entrance to farms - White Hall (Margaret Roding)

Sarsen Stones on Broomfield Green

has an excellent example. There are many more displayed in Essex. In Kent, sarsens form most of the fascinating remains of Coldrum Long Barrow and the megalithic dolmen burial chamber of Kit's Coty House (both of which deserve to be better known). In east Berkshire sarsens were utilised extensively as a facing stone for the local chalk blocks which make up much of Windsor Castle.²⁰ They have long been used in church foundations, notably at Little Marlow (Bucks), but examples can also be found in Essex at Gt. Bardfield and Eastwood. Church naves and walls (at least 60 in Essex) often include sarsens. At Pentlow church, the nave quoins contain several small flattish sarsens, and they can be found in property walls as at Wendons Ambo. Berkhamsted (Herts) has sarsen kerbstones and at Ipsden (Oxon) they were used in 1827 to build a folly, 'The Devil's Ninepins' - it took nine horses to move the largest. Others have been used as mounting blocks and still more as house corner protection against the wheels of wagons and coaches (e.g. Castle Hedingham). Corner protectors have many local names, among them knocking-posts or stones, spur stones, pallstones, hurters, and glinters (especially where made of old gun barrels). Boundaries are often marked by sarsens²¹ and some have routeway or religious significance.²² They may also appear in place names - as is probable with Ingestone.²³

From very early times man has been a prime mover and user of sarsens - especially of detached blocks from hill tops and valley slopes. They are notoriously difficult to work and originally this may have involved heating. It was not until the nineteenth century that they could be cut and trimmed easily.²⁴ However, the sarsens in Essex show little conclusive evidence of early placement, tooling or shaping and 'cup' marks can be largely accounted for by areas of structural or textural weakness, solution and glacial transport (Plate 2). Some



Plate 2. The north facing side of larger of the two sarsens on Church Green, Broomfield, showing the 'cup marks'.

sarsens may have been taken to church sites for footings, repair work or extensions and then either become surplus to requirements, or because of size, weight and difficulty of manipulation, not used and discarded close by. Sarsens are a great nuisance to farmers, damaging, tipping or overturning ploughs. Since the invention of steam-engines, and even more so the development of tractors and diggers, farmers have had no difficulty in moving sarsens²⁵ and have been pleased to put them (with permission) in churchyards or round village greens. One must remember that sarsens and other stones have been supplied by merchants for building works, rock gardens and ornamentation for many years and distributed widely over South-East England by railways and lorries.

And thus the narrative comes full circle - or nearly so. Jim Thorp used a tractor and chain to move and then re-position the sarsen stones at St Mary's lychgate. The larger 'pointed one' shows all the main features of a sarsen, including fossil root holes (Plate 3). It has also been broken across and reveals the internal structure. Jim recalled that there were originally three stones. That

which is 'missing' is much the smallest and cone shaped, and could well have functioned as a 'hurter'. It now adorns a local rock garden. Nevertheless, the story is still not quite complete. In looking at an old photograph of Church Green displayed in Broomfield Community Centre, Mr Thorp realised that the brown 'blobs' shown near Main Road were probably the sarsens he had re-discovered. Some searching of the parish photographic records, revealed that the original photograph is one by Fred Spalding, dated 1900. Unfortunately the stones are not clearly depicted, and another photograph of the verge in this area, taken in the 1920s/30s, shows no evidence of them at all. In conclusion, it is known what the stones at the lychgate are, how they probably originated, that they could have come from local fields or pits (recorded in Beehive Lane pit, 1906)²⁶ and who placed them where they are now. But, who put them on the Green in the first place (if at all)? And, who put them in the ditch, when and why?

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Sarsen Stones on Broomfield Green

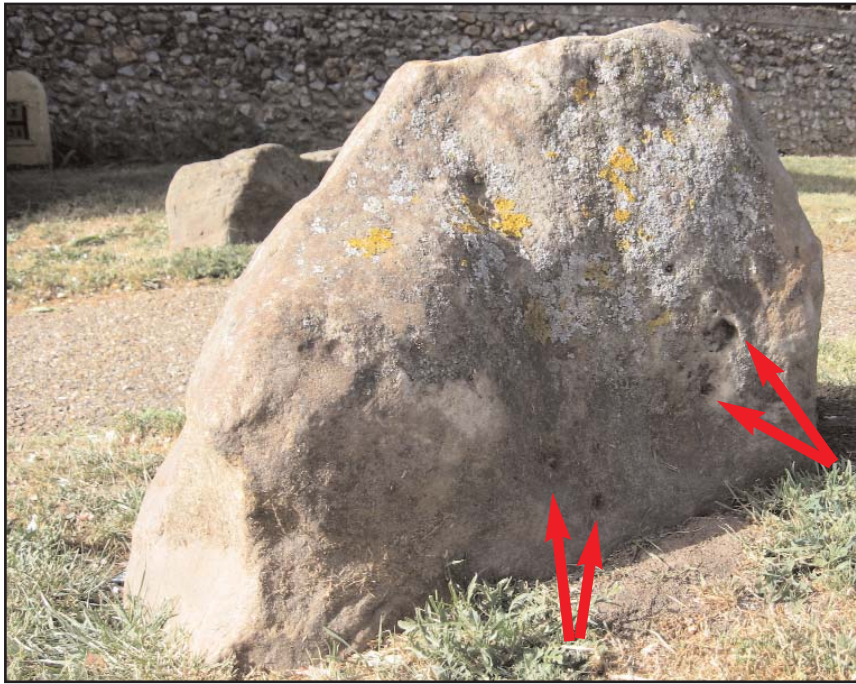


Plate 3. The south facing side of larger of the two sarsens on Church Green, Broomfield, showing the root holes, arrowed.

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Acknowledgements

With thanks to Mr Ian Hughes for putting me in contact with Mr Thorp who knew the recent history of the Church Green sarsens and to whom I am much indebted. Also thanks to Mrs Wendy Martin (Parish Office) who methodically examined the parish records for me.

The Author

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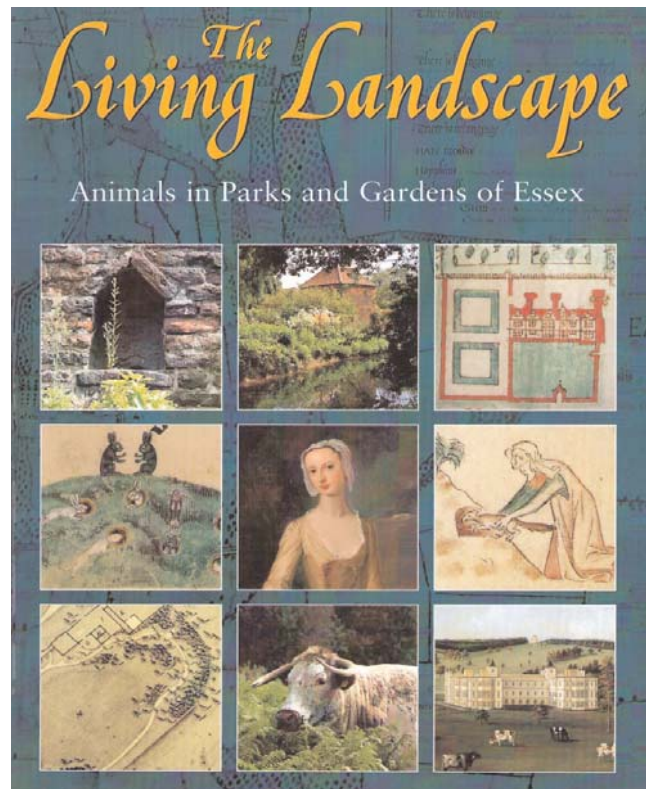
Book Reviews

Twigs Way, Editor,
The Living Landscape; Animals in Parks and Gardens of Essex,
pp.90. ISBN 978-0-95651-980-1.
Essex Gardens Trust, 2010, £10.
Available from: Michael Leach, 2 Landview Gardens,
Ongar, Essex CM5 9EQ. Please add £2.00 for P&P.

The *Living Landscape* has been written by members of the Essex Gardens Trust Research Group. It represents a notable achievement. The volume contains ten research papers. The subject of each paper has been carefully chosen so that the volume forms a coherent and comprehensive review of the historical evidence and the utility of animals in park and garden landscapes. The papers often give fascinating insight into the management of animals for both consumption and pleasure. Seven papers relate directly to animals; fish and fishponds; rabbits and warrens; dovecotes; honey bees; cattle; horses and stabling; aviaries and menageries. Two papers examine specific aspects of particular estates; the evolution of Braxted Park from a medieval deer park into a landscape park and an investigation of the typography of the Thorndon Hall estate to understand the accommodation of diverse groups of animals (including a menagerie). A further paper records those references to Essex deer parks in court rolls, drawing on a wider, national exercise. Wherever possible the focus is towards Essex parks and gardens. Some illustrations from the papers may help to demonstrate the special relevance and wide scope of the work.

Honey bees? Essex has a long tradition of bee-keeping, well documented even in the Domesday Survey of 1086. The unit of management of the honey bee was the 'sklep'. A traditional sklep is a closed basket constructed from coiled rope. Larger colonies with several skeps would be accommodated in bee-houses. These were usually wooden garden structures, becoming increasingly elaborate and decorative with some designs incorporating glass windows to enable viewing of the bees. The protection of bees in adverse conditions is necessary, often effected by some suitable wooden construction but sometimes utilising a bee bole, a brick or stone alcove in a wall sufficient to take a sklep. Much interest has been shown in surviving bee boles and a national register for them has been compiled. Fourteen, out of 23 early surviving structures, related to bees in Essex, are listed and described in *The Living Landscape*, but just one of these is a possible bee house, the remainder being boles. It is hinted that discoveries of such boles are still to be made, but it must be anticipated that these, like many of those listed, are privately owned.

Consider the prominent 'fishponds' at Leez Priory. Fishponds are stated to require four general design features; a ready supply of fresh, aerated water; means to provide effective, independent sluice control of the pond levels to circumvent flooding; means to drain a pond for maintenance of both pools and fish stocks;



provision of varied habitats within the pools for the needs of breeding fish etc. Although now silted, the 12 ponds at the priory still form a visible chain along the course of the River Ter to the north of the priory. Were the ponds really fishponds associated with the monastery?

Although there are examples of such chains in other monastic fishponds, none approach the extent of that at Leez Priory. However, the priory was not wealthy and it is unlikely that such an expensive chain was affordable, and in any case the complex would have been too productive for the needs of the monastery. Furthermore, the situation of the ponds does not demonstrate that they could have been independently drained and managed. An alternative purpose for the chain of ponds must be sought and some documentary evidence suggests that it might have been a landscape feature associated with the enhancement of the estate by Sir Richard Rich, who was granted the priory in 1536. (This departs from the conclusion of one earlier commentator that the ponds were prehistoric!)

There are many results throughout the volume that are the product of diligent, thorough research. For the deer park seeker, the study of references to deer parks in the *Calendars of Letters Patent and Charter Rolls* has generated seven 'new' Essex parks, candidates for further investigation, to add to around the 160 already listed. For a further eight parks an earlier date is discovered which predates the anticipated date of imparkment already suggested.

The agricultural revolution and the increasing importance of profitable agriculture meant that cattle gradually replaced deer in the park. This change is explored by close examination of both textual sources and paintings. Repton is often found commenting on

Book Reviews

the attractive dynamic introduced into the parkland scene through the movement of the cattle. Furthermore, Repton was aware that the use of smaller breeds of cattle, for example Alderney cattle, could enhance the illusion of the extent of the park. In 1837 Hillyard in a book, *Practical Farming and Grazing*, wishing to maximise the decorative effect, promotes the use of the breed because of their 'generally gay colour, red and white'.

A further example of an intriguing list records historical references to warrens and warreners that occur in documents in the Essex Record Office. Although the warren might support game as well as rabbits, in the majority of these entries rabbits are specifically noted. The records are listed against parish and seventy parishes are included, sometimes with more than one warren or warrener. The earliest Essex warrens are attributed to the Bishop of London in 1241 in the parishes of Clacton and Horsey Island. Most entries are late-sixteenth and seventeenth

Randal Bingley,
**Behold the Painful Plough – Country
Life in West Tilbury, Essex, 1700–1850,**
pp.x & 398. ISBN 0-9506141-8.
Thurrock Unitary Council Museum Service,
2009, £10.00

This is an excellent book to add to Randal Bingley's impressive list of previous publications including his articles in *Essex Journal* to which he is a valued contributor. As indicated in the title this is principally a record of country life in West Tilbury during a period of 150 years from the reign of Queen Anne to that of Queen Victoria. However more recent history is occasionally recorded where necessary to enable the reader to relate the past with the present.

This book is the result of many years hard work collecting material relating to the archaeological, agricultural, civilian and military history of West Tilbury. With nearly 400 pages of quite small type this is probably one of the most comprehensive histories of any community in Essex during a 150 year period. The detailed descriptions of numerous buildings, some of which still exist, together with their owners and occupiers, is an important feature of this book. Tilbury Fort and its vital position in the defence of our country is described together with information about artillerymen and others stationed there. Vessels associated with West Tilbury, located as it is on the north bank of the River Thames, have not been forgotten and many are referred to.

Some of the families and residents of West Tilbury, including its characters, will be of immense value to all family historians with ancestors who lived and worked here. In addition many events which occurred in West Tilbury and interesting anecdotes are detailed.

centuries, reflecting the transition from the noble ownership of a warren to the later widespread and commercial success of the rabbit.

These scattered extracts from *The Living Landscape* can only hint at the well-planned, scholarly and readable volume that is the result. The volume contributes much to our awareness of the garden and park landscape in Essex. The common theme linking the papers, of course, is the influence of animals on the landscape and in this respect the organization of the volume ensures that the ground is well covered. The opportunity for the interested reader to add to the understanding and interpretation of the subject is invited by the work. Tight editorial control and production has ensured that the research carried out by the contributors is presented in the best possible manner. All involved should be congratulated on their achievement. A must buy and at a bargain price!

Robert Brooks



This is a well illustrated book containing many photographs, drawings and maps. There are numerous drawings by the author whose talent as an artist equals that of his research and writing. Some of his illustrations are reconstructions so the reader can see how a particular building appeared.

It has no less than 12 very useful appendices and a very comprehensive index divided up into personal names, locations, buildings, workshops, etc., integral parts of Tilbury Fort, public alehouses, farms and estates, institutions and services. There are numerous footnotes and details of sources to enable the reader to carry out further research if desired.

The author should be thanked for the vast amount of research which he has undertaken and for recording it in this splendid publication.

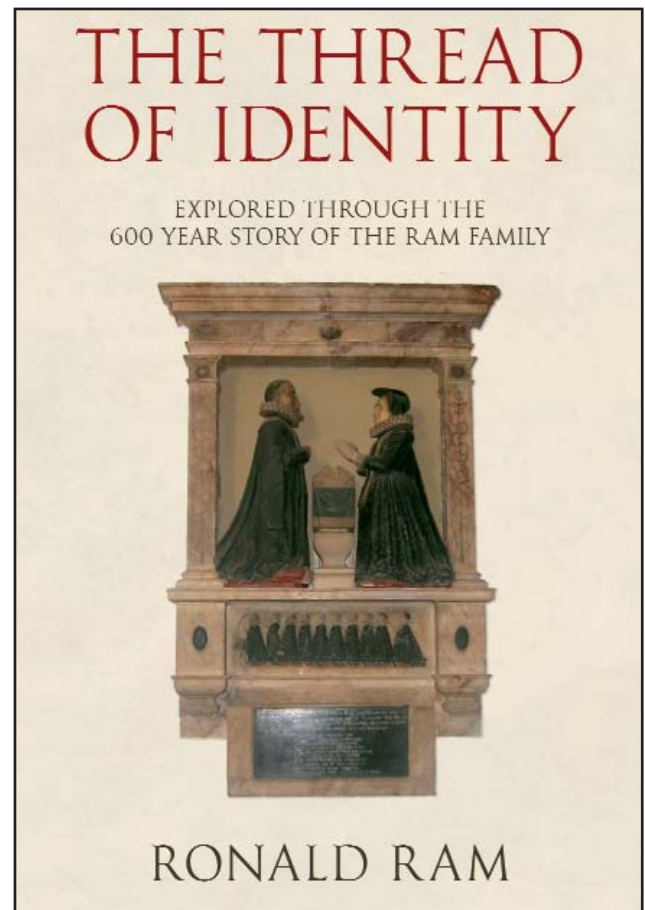
Adrian Corder-Birch

Ronald Ram,
The Thread of Identity,
pp.448. ISBN 978-1-84868-264-1.
Amberley Publishing, 2010, £18.99.

Ronald Ram's ambitious book represents nearly a decade of diligent research and writing, drawing on the author's studies in history, theology, sociology and psychology and his considerable practical experience of small groups. He tells the story of one line of his own family history, the Rams, a 'middling' family, from the fourteenth century, set mostly in Essex, principally in Great Waltham, but also in Colchester and Hornchurch, and in a few other places including London. He attempts to demonstrate how a sense of 'community' based on 'mutuality' existed in such places in the past, and how it 'can inform current concerns about weakness in community life'. Thus the book is aimed at a wide spectrum of potential readers. The author's extensive use of primary and secondary sources is impressive, though some, for example Macfarlane's work, could be approached more critically, and, as he notes, in the absence of a Victoria County History account, he has undertaken much original research on Great Waltham. Ram has also coped well with distinguishing between the many family members who have the same first names, and his thorough footnoting is very useful.

In Part One, *Themes and Inspirations*, the themes are: what has gone wrong with modern society; and what can be done about it. A sub theme is the value of historical research about ordinary people, like the Ram family. The inspirations are the author's small-group work, his interest in the role of values, and his family history.

In Part Two, *Unpacking Identity*, the complex concept of identity is discussed. It is argued that it can be explored through historical writings with the Ram family as an example. The analytical structure of *The Thread* is outlined and set out in a complicated table which has three categories of 'influences' containing 19 'yardsticks' or units of assessment. 'Influence 1' covers general forces in society which include economic, demographic, customary, political, and legal frameworks, with the economy apparently the driving force. 'Influence 2' - how individuals and groups express themselves - comprises: 'freedom of choice among the middling sort'; and arbiters of choice - life chance, wealth, influence and power; individual beliefs and values (in the past not easy to express, but Ram argues that wills show how people related to other people); and religious practice. 'Influence 3' is concerned with how individual and group formation occurs and includes family influences; and dealing with people through citizenship, mirroring (about bonding with others), exchange, the interaction of body and mind, the management of diversity, and the need for coming together within the group.



Part Three, *The Ram Story*, describes the family history in depth and much of Great Waltham's parish history. In Part Four, *History and the Thread*, the concept of *The Thread* is used 'to detect patterns in [the Ram] story which throw light on the content of human identity'. Ram suggests interpreting the data using two profiles of identity: firstly, by a conventional top-down approach; and secondly, by looking outwards from the local community. He does admit that 'this exercise is a subjective one', and also that the identification of the Rams with 'the middling sort' means that it cannot be assumed that the findings relate to all social groups.

In Part Five, *The Modern World and The Thread*, Ram argues that the two profiles can co-exist. The author states, 'the major impression obtained from this study is that communities in the past were not riddled with disharmony,' and he affirms the importance of the nuclear family. He argues that perhaps administrative change in the nineteenth century was excessive, so that modern society is too centralised, and ways need to be found for people to organise themselves and deliver services through mutuality in small groups. He acknowledges that the evidence suggests that mutuality in community life is easier to achieve in smaller contexts and also that values are not shared as much as they were in past. However he contends that giving people respect and encouraging independence might be a more cost-efficient way of dealing with social problems than spending large amounts on bureaucracy which only addresses the symptoms.

Book Reviews

This book would benefit from tighter editing. That would reduce the length and eliminate some of the occasional typographical errors and stylistic inconsistencies. The structure of Ram's approach leads to a considerable amount of repetition and an over-complicated system of parts, sections and chapters. The concept of *The Thread* itself is not easy to grasp. Descriptions of academic work, and technical terms such as lay subsidy and copyhold, could be more concise, with footnoting to the sources for more detail. Lengthy quotations could be avoided. More discussion of the limitations of the existing sources would be welcome, and of the immense problems (as always in historical research) of sources that do not survive and of material which has never been recorded at all. *How* serious is the (acknowledged) problem of basing theories on the experience of one sector of society, and mainly the male members of it?

Martin Bowman,
US 9th Air Force Bases in Essex 1943-44,
pp.208. ISBN 978-1-84884-332-5
Pen & Sword, 2010, £14.99.

The 9th United States Army Air Force was the tactical component of America's UK based contribution to the invasion of occupied Europe (it's strategic equivalent was the famous 'Mighty' 8th based primarily in Suffolk, Norfolk and Cambridgeshire). From autumn 1943 through to autumn 1944 Essex was the centre of operations for the 9th Air Force's bombers which by June 1944 comprised eight groups of Martin B-26 Marauders and three of Douglas A-20 Havocs, totalling 45 squadrons of well over 700 aircraft. The 9th also operated a lesser number of fighter groups in Essex, the majority of these being based to the south and south-west of London to be in closer proximity to Normandy beaches.

For as long as I can remember the Martin B-26 Marauder has been my favourite aircraft. There is something about its sleek lines and interesting service history that is fascinating. To top it all they're local, nowhere else in World War II was there a greater concentration of them on operations than our county, so Essex by April 1944 was truly 'Marauder country'. I have a heap of books on Marauders and the 9th Air Force so I have been looking forward to this one from Martin Bowman for some time. Bowman, a prolific author, has a whole host of titles to his name, predominantly relating to the 8th Air Force. Anyway a safe pair of hands.

Following on from a general introduction to the history of the 9th Air Force, covering its entire wartime service, for a large part of which there was no Essex connection, a chapter (14 in total) is devoted to each of the Essex airfields associated with the 9th, as well one as each for sites in Cambridgeshire and Suffolk. Each entry follows a similar format outlining the history of the airfield

There is little reference to conflicting interests. Might sub sectors not so fully represented, differentiated, for example, by sex, sexuality, illness, disability, income and wealth – most of whom did not usually exercise power through office-holding – tell a different story if they had had a voice? Might some of them have felt stifled by the dominant interests in a small community? Are there different understandings of 'community' and 'mutuality' which complicate the central argument?

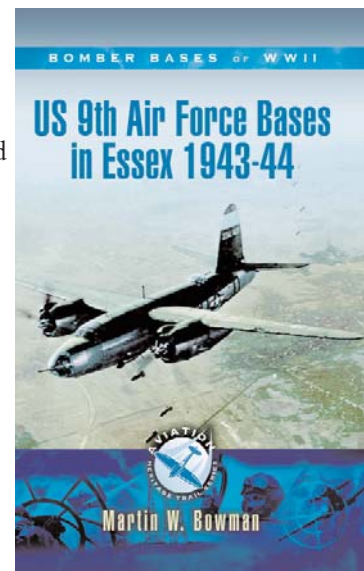
Nevertheless the author makes his own position and values clear, and offers his ideas to stimulate debate. In this book he makes a useful contribution both to historical research, particularly to the history of Great Waltham, and to the discussion of problems in modern society.

Shirley Durgan

from construction through to the present day, concentrating on the period when the 9th were active. Obviously Marauders are the predominant type of aircraft mentioned but it is good to see the Douglas Havoc well treated. It is copiously illustrated with well reproduced images although many of the illustrations featuring aircraft will be familiar to aviation buffs. Some of the captions have been reproduced twice for different images, such as pages 89 & 144, (but that is the sort of problem we are all suffer from!) while *Idiots Delight* (p.34) is from the 320 BG in the Mediterranean.

The crowning glory of the publication though, are the wonderful selection of images relating to the construction of the airfields that I have never seen before (Two reproduced here). My father, then a young teenager, has always said how staggered he was by the amount of 'stuff' the Americans had; the fantastic earth movers and cement mixers (indeed the first of these he had ever seen in his life was when cycling past what was to become Stansted air base while it was being built) and just their amazing energy. These photos show this incredible aspect and go some way to reminding us of the enormity of operations that had to be completed before even an aircraft could take off to drop a bomb. The impact this all had on local communities and the landscape would have been a nice theme to have picked up on.

Four appendices follow; *A Summary of Airfields and Other Locations* (With some random entries for places connected with America as well as useful information on memorials and the contemporary state of the airfields); *9th Air Force Airfields and Airstrips in the United Kingdom* (which summarises the units stationed at the 14 most important Essex airfields already discussed



Book Reviews

but does not mention the very many other 9th airfields throughout the rest of the country); *IX Bomber Command Order of Battle 9 June 1944* and finally *9th Air Force Fighter Aces (Air-to-Air Victories) ETO*. An interesting bibliography rounds the volume off but it is a shame not to see a location map.

Writing a book on this subject is a difficult task. What more is there to say following the many great books by just the late Roger Freeman? His classic *B-26 Marauder at War* (1978) (which I was surprised not to see in the bibliography) and seminal *UK airfields of the Ninth then and now* (1994) are basic texts for anyone studying this subject along with those by Rust and Scutts to name but a few. What Bowman has done here is to condense this mass of information

Below. The 834th & 840th Engineer Battalions built Matching airfield. Runways were laid in bays using dismountable metal shuttering [p.124.]



David Pearson,
Why do we need so many old books?
pp.vi & 22, ISBN 978-0-95099-051-4.
The Trustees of the Plume Library, 2010, £5.
Available from: Thomas Plume's Library, Market Hill,
Maldon, CM9 4PZ. Please add £1.00 for P&P.

This 2010 Plume Lecture has been published as a booklet and anyone reading it will regret having missed the lecture. Dr Pearson asks a very important question: why do we need to keep old books? It is not surprising to find that librarians, pressed for shelf space and over-run with obsolete publications, have asked this question for centuries, and most libraries have undergone periodic culls. The Plume Library is somewhat different, as it has had relatively few additions since the death of its founder, so that it now represents the sort of books that an educated seventeenth century gentleman would have regarded as essential sources of knowledge and debate about the discoveries and controversies of the period. Some might be surprised to find that, in addition to theological works, it covers a wide spectrum of subjects including geography, medicine, science and law.

However it could still be argued that a mere list would suffice to inform the enquirer about the nature of a seventeenth century library, and the texts themselves could be easily digitised for those who really



Above. Airfield construction equipment passing through Stansted Mountfitchet village [p.160.]

into one book which will serve as a good introduction to the subject. It is a well priced, for the construction pictures alone, and accessible but I feel it could have done with an introduction discussing those secondary sources which have been heavily relied on to write it. I couldn't help feeling, as I read some of the passages and image captions, that I was already familiar with them.

Neil Wiffen

needed them. However historians are always encouraged to make maximum use of their sources, and Dr Pearson's enthusiasm shows how this can be achieved. Books often contain information left by previous users which is usually lost on digitisation. This includes handwritten annotations, additions and comments, shelf marks and prices, as well as the signatures and bookplates of earlier owners, and even graffiti and exercises in penmanship and drawing. Fine bindings say much about the owner who was responsible, and worn bindings indicate heavy usage of an important work. Often scraps of earlier books or even manuscripts were used to repair worn bindings. Up to the end of the seventeenth century books were often shelved spine first, and titled in ink on the pages of the opening side. Such ink titles may survive even after owners had employed bookbinders to gild and label the spines. All these clues provide useful additional information, and this beautifully illustrated booklet shows will enthuse any book lover.

Michael Leach

Your Book Reviewers are:

Robert Brooks, a retired scientist and founder of the High Country History Group.

Shirley Durgan, a historian who worked for 24 years researching and writing history for the Victoria County History of Essex.

Michael Leach, a retired GP and currently the Honorary Secretary of the Essex Society for Archaeology and History.

Adrian Corder-Birch, Chairman of the Essex Journal Editorial Board.

Neil Wiffen, Honorary Editor of *Essex Journal*.

EJ 20 Questions? Andrew Phillips

Andrew Phillips was born in Ilford in 1938 and has lived in Colchester since 1964. He read History at Bristol University and completed a Certificate in Education at Nottingham University before teaching in a mining village for four years. He followed this by teaching at the Colchester Institute for rest of his career. After 'retirement' in 1998 Andrew taught local history at Essex University having become engrossed in Colchester history from training Colchester Tourist Guides between 1972-98. He has served as both President (1984-86) and Librarian of the Essex Society for Archaeology & History and Chair of the Friends of Colchester Museum, these latter two each for 21 years. In 1988 he founded the Colchester Recalled Oral History Project. Since 1982 Andrew has written a monthly local history feature in the *Essex County Standard* as well as many articles and seven books on the history of Colchester and Essex, the most recent a *Children's History of Colchester*.

1. What is your favourite historical period?

Assuming the Neolithic is not allowed, the Victorian.

2. Tell us what Essex means to you?

A low key, rural county, short on trees, estuary hugged, inexorable being engulfed by humanity.

3. What historical mystery would you most like to know? What happened in Essex between 400 and 900 – it's so long!

4. My favourite history book is... Oh dear, only one? – OK, specialist interest, that landmark in Oral History: Samuel & Thompson *The Myths We Live By*.

5. What is your favourite place in Essex?

The Old Hall Marshes, north of Tollesbury.

6. How do you relax? Either watching wildlife or sleeping.

7. What are you researching at the moment?

The Post-war history of Paxman's, the Colchester engineering firm.

A low key, rural county, short on trees, estuary hugged, inexorable being engulfed by humanity

8. My earliest memory is... Waking up in the night in the coal cellar, where we slept in the *Blitz*, aged 3.

9. What is your favourite song/piece of music and why? a) *All I Need is You* (Sonny & Cher) for a happy year spent in America & b) Shostakovich's *Fifth Symphony* for its subtle ambiguity.

10. If you could travel back in time which event would you change? The decision to invade Iraq in 2003. Is that history yet?



(Photograph: A. Phillips)

11. Which four people from the past would you invite to dinner? Brihtnoth, Eardoman of Essex, killed at the Battle of Maldon 991, Michael Augner, town clerk of Colchester 1380-98, the clothier Alderman Benjamin Clere, Puritan leader in Colchester 1540-76, and the political warlord Sir Isaac Rebow, alderman, mayor, MP, Recorder and High Steward of Colchester 1696-1726. Then turn the tape recorder on...

12. What is your favourite food?

A good traditional English Christmas Dinner – the lot.

13. The history book I am currently reading is... *Nine Wartime Lives: Mass Observation & the making of Modern Self* by James Hinton

14. What is your favourite quote from history?

Talleyrand, when asked what he did in the French Revolution, answered, 'I survived'.

15. Favourite historical film? Ingmar Bergman's *The Seventh Seal* or Richard Attenborough's *Oh! What a Lovely War*. Most films about history irritate me by their shameless adoption of contemporary attitudes but these two transcend the problem by their brilliance.

16. What is your favourite building in Essex?

Sadly, Essex has no 'breath-takers', but I'll settle for Spains Hall over the Barley Barn at Cressing.

17. What past event would you like to have seen? The building of Colchester Castle; and then find out what was there before.

18. How would you like to be remembered?

I know this is pious, but by my family.

19. Who inspires you to read or write or research history? The many local people who constantly express interest in local (in my case, Colchester) history.

20. Most memorable historical date? 1066 – it really did change everything.



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