

GOLDHANGER



IN THE PAST



Goldhanger in the Past

David Newman

Goldhanger History Group

This book is dedicated to the local authors and characters from the past who are described in the book and to the many past and present residents who have kindly donated material to the village archives, and the Goldhanger Past website. Without all these contributions the book could not have been produced.

This is a short sample of the 160 page book published in October 2016 and sold to raise funds for St Peter's Church and the Goldhanger Village Hall improvement project. Copies may still be available from...
david@churchside1.plus.com

Contents

Chapter 1	Name of the Village	1
Chapter 2	Past Descriptions of Goldhanger	4
Chapter 3	Street Scenes from Early Postcard	7
Chapter 4	St. Peter's Church	15
Chapter 5	A History of the Bells	26
Chapter 6	The Chequers Inn	29
Chapter 7	Goldhanger Friendly Brothers Society	43
Chapter 8	The Cricketers Inn	45
Chapter 9	Manor Houses, Halls and Rectories	48
Chapter 10	The Great War	54
Chapter 11	The Goldhanger Flight Station	61
Chapter 12	Memories of World War Two	65
Chapter 13	Estuary Activities in the Past	70
Chapter 14	Smuggling and the Coastguards	79
Chapter 15	Local Authors from the Past	87
Chapter 16	Local Characters from the Past	98
Chapter 17	Group and Family Photographs	118
Chapter 18	Art from the Past	124
Chapter 19	Goldhanger to Spitzbergen	126
Chapter 20	Goldhanger Lost	134
Chapter 21	Did you know about...?	145
Chapter 22	Panoramic Scenes from the Past	156
	References and Bibliography	158

Chapter 1 Name of the Village



In 1768 Philip Morant wrote in *The History of Essex*. . .

“How come this place to be dignified with the fine name of Gold we cannot well conceive?”

There are several theories as to the origin of the name Goldhanger, and over the centuries, as the English language developed, the name of the village has been spelt many different ways which has led to speculation as to the origin. Some spellings are probably relatively modern typesetting errors or modern misinterpretations of ancient scripts, and today Computers and Optical Character Recognition(OCR) provides yet another source of misinterpretation. For example, there are 26 items held in the Essex Records Office with the name *Coldhanger* which undoubtedly refer to Goldhanger. However many of the forms of spelling appear to be original ways of recording the village name..

In the Domesday book Goldhanger was spelt: *Goldangra* and *Goldhangram*

In Maura Benham's book: *Goldhanger-an Estuary Village*, published in 1977, several methods of spelling are identified and one origin is put forward. . .

'Goldhanger, Goldanger, Goldangra, Goldangre - the name was spelt in many different ways from the Domesday records to the 19th century. Always the first part was 'gold', and this is said to refer to a yellow flower. For the second part there could be two meanings, 'hanger' a hill, or 'anger' grassland (as in Ongar), and the village being set on flat land, the latter is the more likely. As to the yellow

flower, this is thought to be the Corn Marigold, giving the name the meaning of grassland where the Corn Marigold grows.'

Here are some of the ways the name has been spelt in the past:

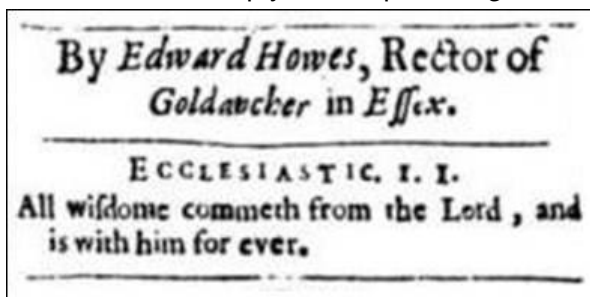
*Caldhangre, Coldanger, Coldangre, Coldhanger, Coldhangre, Galdhangr,
Goelanger, Golanger, Gold Anger, Gold Aungre,
Gold hanger, Gold Onger, Goldancher, Goldanger, Goldaucher,
Goldeanger, Goldehanger, Goldhangram, Goldhaunger, Goldynger,*

Early references to the village recognise the Lord of the Manor affiliation with Lt.Totham and refer to...

Goldhanger-cum-Totham-Parva (Hugo Verdrun, 1375)
Goldhanger-cum-Lt.Totham - (Sammes era, 1600s)
Goldhanger-cum-Capella de Totham (1600s)
Totham-cum-Goldhanger (1700s)

Goldanger spelt without the "h" is also a small village in the Salzburg region of Austria, near the town of Wagrin.

In documents from the 1650s emanating from the Revd. Edward Howes, Rector of Goldhanger and his friend John Winthrop, the then Governor of Massachusetts, the village was spelt *Goldancher* or *Goldaucher*, leading to a suggestion that the name is simply a corruption of *gold anchor*. . .



The title page of a book on mathematics written by the Revd Howes in 1650

An article about flooding in the *Newcastle Courant* newspaper of 1736 referred to:

Gold Onger near Malden in Essex.

Another origin of the name is identified in *Maldon and the River Blackwater* published in 1898, in which Edward A Fitch wrote:

...still a parish noted for the fertility of its soil, as its names denotes, cf. Dan. Guld (see Streatfield's Lincolnshire and the Danes p291) [cf. Dan. = compare with Danish]

In *Lincolnshire and the Danes*, published in 1884 by the Revd. G S Streatfield, page 291 revealed:

Guld is a reference to the fertility of soil, eg Guldager.

Guldager is a village in northern Denmark near Esbjerg and Ribe, with the geographical coordinates of: 55 degrees, 32minutes North, 8 degrees 25 minutes East, and *Guldager* is also a reasonably common surname in Denmark.

In *Names and their Histories*, published in 1896 Isaac Taylor wrote. . .

A few names, such as Wetwang, and Wenghale or Winghill, may be referred to the A.S. *wang* or *wong*, O.N. *vangr*, an enclosed field. More usual is the A.S. *hangra*, a meadow, grass plot, or village green, whence Birchanger, Essex, A.S. *Birchanger*; Moggerhanger, Beds, formerly *Morhanger*, the moor-field; Clehonger, Herefordshire, and Clayhanger in Devon, Staffordshire, and Suffolk, the last of which appears in A.S. charters as *Cleghangre* and *Cleighangra*. Ongar in Essex is called in Domesday *Angra*, and *Aungre* in a late charter. To these names we may add Tittenhanger and Panshanger in Herts, Ostenhanger in Kent, Goldhanger in Essex, and Shelfanger in Norfolk.

In a letter published in *The Essex Countryside magazine* in 1956, Goldhanger historian Crawshay Frost wrote...

As my village of Goldhanger is somewhat opposite on its Blackwater estuary to the Bergen district of Norway I feel that it was settled and named after the Romans left by Norse rovers seeking new homes, and not by Saxons from the Continent. Five places near Bergen end with anger (a slope): Geiranger, Kanpanger, Hardanger, Samnanger and Stavanger. . . Norsemen sailing up the Blackwater would think of their fjords, as the ground does rise somewhat, and there is a rise at Goldhanger.

A final theory is that name is derived from *Gore-hange*. In Middle English *Gore* means a small triangular piece of land, as in *Gore Saltings* a named area of land near Goldhanger Creek that is exposed at low tide with shingle, sand and mud.