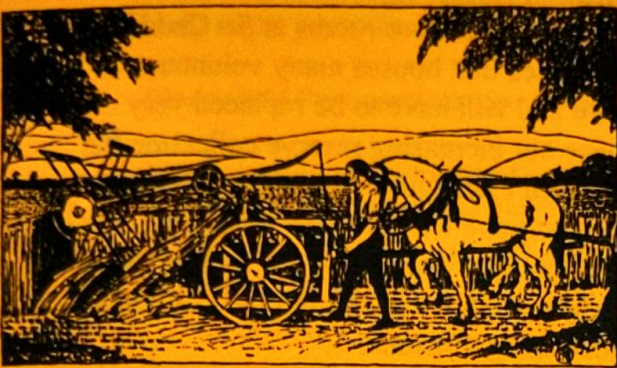


THE PENNY FARTHING

The Newsletter of Maldon District Museum Association



Bell's Reaping Machine, 1826



McCormick's first Reaping Machine, 1834

One Hundred and Fifty Years of Service in Printing

POOLES PRESS

LIMITED

Illustrations published in connection with their 150th anniversary.



Milkman With Yoke

1829



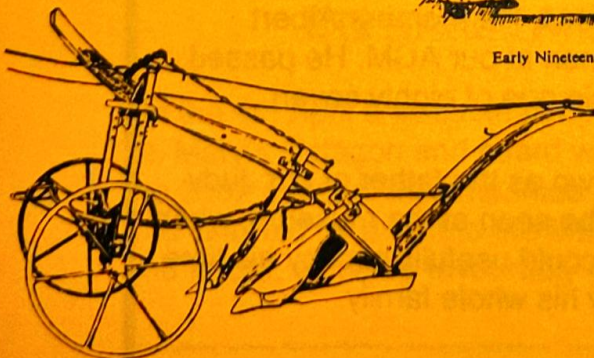
Early Nineteenth-century Carbon Range

Bailiff



A Farm Labourer

1979



A Norfolk Plough



The Essex Farm Cart

The Chairman's Chat....

Another AGM has come and gone and the main changes decided will be documented for you later in this issue of the Penny Farthing. I was able to report to the AGM that the Association was in good fettle but stood on the verge of change that could not be avoided.

The good news was that the District Council has renewed our lease on the Promenade Lodge for a further ten years to 2011 with the intent of further renewal after that date.

The downside is that we will eventually lose the use of the two rooms at St. Cedd's, the temporary building close to the District Council Offices that houses many voluntary groups. St. Cedd's is now well past its sell-by date and will have to be replaced very soon. The rooms there are really too small to house our increasing reserve collection but they are, at least, warm and dry. We have been offered extra space in garages but all that we have that is suitable to be housed in this type of storage which would be neither warm nor dry, is already suitably placed. We must find, therefore, alternative and additional permanent storage for we have reached a stage where we have to refuse offers of items for the Museum. Storage has in fact become a continuing dilemma.

The most acceptable scheme would be development at the Park Lodge that would allow for additional office and storage space but this must not be at the expense of display space. The scale of the changes necessary has not yet been decided and I would welcome any thoughts that any member of the Association may have on this matter, together with any suggestion for temporary, say up to five years' storage whilst a permanent solution is achieved. The crisis is not yet upon us but it will not be long delayed.

Paddy Lacey

P.S. Committee Members please note that the first meeting of the new committee will be on the 3rd Tuesday, the 18th June, (and not on the 11th, as originally announced).

Mr Albert J. Memmott

The loss of another of our octogenarians, life member Albert Memmott was reported by the Chairman at our AGM. He passed away on the 15th May at the venerable age of eighty seven.

Mr Memmott was perhaps better known as the father of our Judy Tullett, and was only occasionally to be seen at the museum, when something had arisen with which he could usefully occupy his time. A modest man who was endeared by his whole family.

Our sympathies go out to Judy and her mother Olive, also a member of our Association.

BANK HOLIDAY SUCCESS

On May 6th at the 'Prom' Table Sale, the indomitable Mike Bennett, ably assisted by wife Madeline with members Geoff Allbury, Paddy and Pam Lacey, chalked up yet another successful event and the Association's funds benefitted by a staggering two hundred and sixty eight pounds.

(Paddy and Pam were obliged to leave at lunch time to open the Museum)

The success is accounted for by the generosity of donors and the good quality of many of the items received. The Association is grateful for the interest and support of members and their many friends.

rb210502

DIARY DATE. ENTER IT NOW!!!

AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY - ANOTHER TABLE SALE !!

**WANTED !! PLEASE !!
MORE GOOD QUALITY BRIC-A-BRAC
(and more volunteers)**

**FOR COLLECTION CONTACT MIKE ON 854659
OR PER THE MUSEUM ON 842688**

THANKS AGAIN

rb210502

STEWARDS AND MEMBERS MEET

On the 4th April a sizeable party of Stewards and Members met in St. Mary's Octagon and heard what changes had taken place for the 2002 season, accompanied by the traditional tea and biscuits, and followed by a visit to the Museum to examine the latest exhibits and layout, all being favourably impressed and complimentary.

WOT???

ANOTHER OCTOGENERIAN?

Yes! It's perfectly true! and **who knows who's** next to claim the privilege? Geoff Allbury was the last known claimant and now we have our own President **Derek Maldon Fitch** celebrating his event with relatives and friends at the Blue Boar on April 21st, some coming from outside the county boundary, and together presenting a most sociable party.

Which leads us to comment on the selfless request by Derek, not we think, intended to set a precedent, that if anyone had thoughts of giving him presents he would be very pleased if, instead, contributions were made to the museum funds. Thank you Derek, for your generosity, and even without this, all wish you a healthy and happy octogenarian retirement. You are already part of the Maldon scene!

P.S. There will no doubt be other Members who, from time to time, will be proud to share their achievements, and the 'Penny-Farthing' will likewise be proud to record them.

ROBERT ORTH.....and others

This seems to be a particularly unfortunate year for several members and families so far as health is concerned. At the time of writing, (the end of May), several established members seem to be 'out of action' and under Doctor's orders and that includes our Hon. Sec. Daphne Daniel who has been obliged to resign for health reasons.

A comparatively new member, but a true Maldonian, with a considerable interest in the Museum and knowledge of model and historical railways in particular, Bob Orth has recently spent several days in hospitals but has now, we understand, returned home and will no doubt be available for advice and information when required.

We do of course wish 'good health and happiness' to all members, young and old, fit or otherwise.

A.G.M. REPORT (in brief)

The Annual General Meeting was held on the 21st May, reasonably well attended but fewer than last year, the difference being largely accounted for by the considerable number of 'apologies for absence'; others no doubt overlooked the event due to the lapse of time since the notice was sent out with PennyFarthing number 25 about the end of March, just before the Stewards/Members met on the 4th April.

Chairman Paddy Lacey opened with the sad news that 'life member' Mr Albert J. Memmott, father of our displays officer Judy Tullett, had recently passed away.

Proceedings then followed much the same pattern as last year -- apologies; May 2001 minutes and adoption; matters arising; and all efficiently disposed of by the Chairman, who expressed appreciation of the efforts of all concerned including the MDC, and those who were involved in the school and other special visits

Other reports followed almost verbatim those of last year, although the Treasurer's financial report was less enthusiastic, donations having failed to reach the giddy heights of 2001. Further helpful grants are still in the pipeline and changes in procedures may be to our ultimate advantage.

Colin B reported that Membership in the year 2001/2 had renewed 100% and for this he was complimented. He stated that so far in this current year 2002/3 Membership has again increased with only a few late subscriptions yet to come and should result in a total current membership of 123.

Penny C reported that accessions continued to accumulate, some of necessity being refused in the light of storage problems which in themselves continue to grow. She expressed her own appreciation of the assistance given by Judy Betteridge and Betty Chittenden, and to a disappointed meeting advised that she would of necessity, for unspecified reason, be resigning her post as Accessions Officer before the next AGM. School and other special visits had been arranged during the year, and further applications had been received for this year.

Lynda B, as Stewarding Secretary, reported that a Sunday problem arising from the hospitalisation of Jean Upton had been satisfactorily overcome by an encouraging response to a letter sent to several stewarding partners. Paddy commented that the organising of the Stewards had been very satisfactory.

Nick Wickenden elaborated on the expected amendments of applications for grants, and on the importance of accepting only accessions which could safely be stored. He also anticipated that our application for registered status would be accepted during the year.

Penny, in Judy's absence, commented on the displays created by Mike and his team. She reported that school and other special visits had been arranged during the year, and further applications had been received for this year.

Visits intended for our own members to other museums had not been well supported.

Subscriptions for the year beginning 1st April 2003 were agreed to be
Single - £7.00; Double - £11.00. Admission charges were not changed.

There being no new nomination for Chairman, Paddy agreed to stand for another year, with all other Officers and Committee as detailed on the back page, the only changes being Daphne and John Daniel who are unable to continue, John being replaced by volunteer Elizabeth Willsher as a Committee Member, leaving a vacancy for an Hon. Secretary.

We still await a volunteer as Editor of the PennyFarthing, and meanwhile news snippets relating to museum matters are accordingly welcomed from all sources.

Notice was given that at next year's AGM and in accordance with clause 18 of the Constitution, a proposal was carried that clause 4, second para. should be amended to read *New subscriptions paid during the first half year up to 30th September will be deemed to be for the current year to 31st March and those paid after 30th September will be deemed to include the succeeding year to 31st March (thereby acknowledging the closed winter period).*

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at approx 9.15 p.m., announcing provision for a period of general discussion.

162300502

SHOES CONCEALED IN BUILDINGS

DID YOU KNOW THERE IS A NATIONAL REGISTRY OF 'CONCEALED FOOTWEAR'?

FOOTWEAR BUILT INTO THE FABRIC OF BUILDINGS CAN BE TRACED AS FAR BACK AS THE 13TH CENTURY. CONCEALED SHOES HAVE BEEN FOUND IN THE SOUTHERN HALF OF ENGLAND, WALES AND ISOLATED CASES IN AMERICA AND CANADA.

SHOES ARE FOUND SINGLY OR WITH OTHERS, SELDOM IN 'PAIRS'. SOMETIMES THEY ARE FOUND WITH OTHER OBJECTS, SOME OF WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN SACRIFICIAL. GENERALLY THE SHOES ARE OLD AND WORN. SOME HAVE BEEN DELIBERATELY CUT.

THE MOST COMMON AREAS OF CONCEALMENT ARE CHIMNEYS, UNDER FLOORBOARDS, IN WALLS AND IN ROOFS. OTHER HIDING PLACES INCLUDE BRICKED-UP OVENS, AROUND DOORS, WINDOWS AND STAIRCASES. WERE THESE SEEN AS OPENINGS THROUGH WHICH EVIL SPIRITS COULD ENTER THE HOME? WERE SHOES AND BOOTS SEEN AS GOOD LUCK CHARMS?

THE ROMANS WERE KNOWN TO HIDE NEOLITHIC AXES IN ROOFS TO WARD OFF LIGHTNING. ONE FIFTH OF CONCEALED SHOES ARE FOUND IN ROOFS. COULD THIS HAVE BEEN A LATER ADAPTATION OF AN EARLIER CUSTOM THAT LOST ITS ORIGINAL MEANING THROUGH TIME? WE KEEP A BABY'S FIRST SHOES FOR SENTIMENTAL REASONS, BUT IN THE MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY THE WOMEN OF MONTROSE PUT A BABY'S FIRST SHOES IN THE ROOF OF THE HOUSE FOR LUCK.

HAS THIS PRACTICE VANISHED? IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT NORVIC BURIED ONE OF THEIR LATEST DESIGN OF FASHION BOOTS IN THE FOUNDATIONS WHEN BUILDING A NEW FACTORY IN NORWICH IN 1964!

MALDON DISTRICT MUSEUM ASSOCIATION CONSTITUTION

- 1. Name:**
The Association shall be called The Maldon District Museum Association
- 2. Objects:**
The object of the Association, a Charitable Trust registered with the Charity Commissioners as Charity number 301362, shall be to advance the education of the public by the provision of a Museum.
The Museum shall be managed in accordance with the allowable activities of a charity: the Committee of the Association are the Trustees of the charitable trust.
- 3. Aims:**
The Association shall seek to maintain the museum as a registered museum in accordance with the Museum and Galleries Commission instructions and guidelines.
The collection policy of the museum is to be defined by the museum's Acquisition and Disposal Policy which shall be maintained in accordance with the approval of the Museum and Galleries Commission.
- 4. Membership shall be open to any member of the public upon payment of an Annual or Life subscription as determined from time to time at an Annual General Meeting.**
The Membership Year shall run from 1st April. New subscriptions will be for the full amount during the first half-year up to the 30th September and 50% during the remainder of the membership year to the 31st March.
- 5. Committee and Officers:**
The business of the Association shall be conducted by a Committee of ten members including the following officers:
* Chairman * Vice-Chairman * Secretary * Treasurer * Membership Sec'y *
The Committee shall have power to co-opt members and to fill casual vacancies. The Officers and other Committee members shall be appointed at the Annual General Meeting and shall be eligible for re-election at subsequent Annual General Meetings. Other than in exceptional circumstances the Chairman should not serve for an unbroken term exceeding three years.
- 6. President and Vice-President:**
A President and Vice-President may, at the discretion of members, be appointed at any Annual General Meeting and shall be eligible for re-election at each Annual General Meeting. Such appointments may be made other than from the members of the Association.

7. General Meetings:

An Annual General Meeting shall be held during the month of May.
An Extraordinary General Meeting may be called by the President or the Chairman, and must be called within four weeks in response to a written request stating the purpose of the meeting, and signed by at least ten members of the Association.

All meetings shall require at least 14 days' notice to be given to all paid-up members. All business to be voted on must be stated in the notice; no new motions may be accepted.

8. Quorum:

Four Committee Members shall constitute a quorum at Committee meetings.
Ten Members of the Association shall constitute a quorum at General Meetings.

9. Funds:

The Committee shall maintain Banking Accounts in the name of the Association into which all monies shall be paid, and shall render audited accounts to the Annual General Meeting. Two Officers shall be required to sign cheques; at least one of these shall be the Treasurer or the Chairman. Transfers between the Association's accounts may be made against any one of the approved signatures.

The Association's Financial Year shall run from 1st April to 31st March.

10. Emoluments:

Committee Members must not receive any emolument from the funds of the Association.

11. Expenses:

Any member may reclaim reasonable out-of-pocket expenses at the discretion of the Committee of the Association.

12. Maintenance of Records relating to the Museum Collection:

Those items forming part of the Museum Collection shall be listed and identified in an Acquisitions Register maintained in accordance with the requirements for a registered museum as specified by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

Further records documenting the addition or removal of items to or from the collection, and associated transfer of ownership shall be maintained as required for a registered museum as specified by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

13. Items Received by the Association other than those forming part of the Museum Collection:

The Committee shall maintain a Register of all items held by the Association. This Register shall contain a description of the item sufficient to identify it, the date of acquisition and the mode of acquisition whether it be by purchase, loan or donation.

14. Termination:

Termination of the Association and Museum shall only be by a properly notified action brought to a General Meeting and voted for by at least two-thirds of the paid-up membership, and by the unanimous decision of the Trustees.

15. Disposition of Assets - other than those forming part of the museum collection:

In the event of the Association's existence being terminated the Officers shall to the best of their ability ensure that all items on loan to the Association are returned to their owners. Other assets may be sold and their value added to the funds of the Association.

16. Disposition of Funds on termination:

In the event of the Association's existence being terminated, funds remaining after payment of debts and return of any loans shall be given to a registered charity nominated by the Trustees.

17. Disposal of the Collection;

In the event of termination of the museum all items in the collection must be disposed of in accordance with the Acquisitions and Disposals Policy.

18. Alterations to the Constitution:

Subject to the following provisions of this clause the Constitution may be altered by a resolution passed by not less than two thirds of the members present and voting at a general meeting providing that the action to do so is carried by at least half the paid-up membership, whichever is the smaller. The notice of the general meeting must include notice of the resolution, setting out the terms of the alteration proposed.

18a. No amendment may be made to clause 1; clause 2; clause 10; clause 14 ; or this clause without the prior consent in writing of the Commissioners.

18b. No amendment may be made which would have the effect of making the Charity cease to be a charity at law.

18c. The Executive Committee should promptly send to the Commissioners a copy of any amendment made under this clause.

* * * * *

Chairman...T.C.Chapman.....Hon. Sec'y...L.F.Barrell.....Date...14.05.96....

(Approved per Minute No. 11 - Annual General Meeting - 14th May 1996)

MUSEUM VISITORS

On 9th May our President - Mr Derek Maldon Fitch - welcomed to the Museum a lively group of people interested in local history. Many were true Maldonians, but two declared they were born in Heybridge. Derek confessed that he had been born in Hazeleigh eighty years ago and to commemorate this event presented the Association with a welcome contribution to funds. (*His birthday party is described elsewhere*).

All the visitors expressed pleasure at this year's displays which feature Maldon's railways, and planned future visits to see other aspects of the social history of the town over the last two hundred years.

WEATHER SIGNS

(from 'Notes & Queries' - 1856)

A rainbow in the morning gives the shepherd warning; that is if the wind be easterly, because it shows that the rain cloud is approaching the observer.

A rainbow at night is the shepherd's delight. This is also a good sign, provided the wind be westerly, as it shows that the rain clouds are passing away.

Evening red and next morning gray are certain signs of a beautiful day.

When the glow worm lights her lamp, the air is always damp.

If the cock crows going to bed, he'll certainly rise with a watery head.

When you see gossamer flying, be ye sure the air is drying.

When black snails cross your path, black clouds much moisture hath.

When the peacock loudly bawls, soon we'll have both rain and squalls.

When ducks are driving through the burn (brook), that night the weather takes a turn.

If the moon shows like a silver shield, be not afraid to reap your field.

But if she rises haloed round, soon we'll tread on deluged ground.

When rooks fly sporting high in the air, it shows that windy storms are near.

If at the sun rising or setting the clouds appear of a lurid red colour, extending nearly to the zenith, it is a sure sign of storms and gales of wind

THE DISAPPEARING HIGH STREET

W.Geo.Ginn Esq., J.P.

Part 2.....

The date when Maldon High Street first began to take shape on its present line is not clear but informed opinion puts it in the 10th century, with timber buildings under the old "Chequers" dated at least as early as the 11th century or contemporary with the Norman invasion. That being so the High Street must have been built and rebuilt over and over again, so that if we attempt to catalogue the buildings which we have lost we must define our criteria. Here we intend to refer only to buildings which have disappeared during the 20th century - what we may call 'current losses' - losses which we regret today and perhaps resent. We will deal with the street in sections and as the stretch from West Square to Coach Lane contains no such losses that I am aware of, the first section extends from Coach Lane to Market Hill.

On the north or 'odd' side we had Nos. 27-33 which stood in front of All Saints' Church. They must have been very inconvenient to live in as they had no land of their own either at the front or the back, and so far as can be seen from an old photograph no rear exit of any sort, the rear wall standing in the churchyard. This is in the days before main drainage - and they had certainly stood for at least a hundred years - must have presented problems. They were demolished at the end of the first World War to make way for the War Memorial which stands on the site today, and if we regret their passing we are at odds with the vicar of the time who said that their removal was devoutly to be wished for. As the street has never been renumbered the gap in the numbering system which their removal left still exists today. Lower down on this side we have the new buildings at Nos. 47-61 which replaced those lost in the fires of 1882 and 1892.

On the southern side we have a long stretch where Budgens and Woolworths stand. In the case of Budgens we have lost the highly individual shop fronts which were their own original small shop, Charles, and Liptons, although fortunately the upper story is unchanged.

Next door Woolworths stands on the site of the three shops Nos. 44,46, and 48. Three individual businesses - Loveday the jeweller, Ifes the chemist, and Volta the confectioner were razed to the ground and the present practical but uninteresting building erected on the site about 1957. Volta (real name Consonni) had moved from No.31 when that was demolished, and not surprisingly retired from business and took employment.

The last building to be lost in this part of the Street was the "Chequers" in 1987, demolished to make way for Barclays Bank, a great loss to the townscape. Its "Chequerboard" sign was salvaged and today can be seen in the Maldon Museum.

The next stretch to be examined is from St. Peter's Church to Wantz Road, or "Jacob's Cross". On the northern side relatively little damage has been done. Only two buildings have been lost - Nos. 67 and 75. The first mentioned was demolished in 1969. It was a pleasant building with three shops under and four first-floor bay windows surmounted by four dormers. The present building housing the "Pound Stretchers" resembles it, but alas! for the ground floor!

No.75 was an imposing town house occupied for a time by the 'May' family. It was double fronted with a central door between two bays stretching from first floor to roof level and surmounted by two dormers. A wooden side gate led to a yard. It is thought to have been demolished about the time of the second World War when the present row of plain and architecturally uninteresting shops housing Boots the opticians, etc. were built. Another very great loss to the street scene.

Turning to the south side we are faced with an architectural disaster. Adjoining the demolished "Chequers" and stretching from Iceland up to and including No.82 - a range of twelve present-day shops - there has been a total clearance, admittedly at different times, but cumulatively totally changing the character of this part of the High Street. Where Iceland stands there was, up until 1971, three characterful shops - Hardy-King on the corner of Chequers Lane, and Turner's double shop, and very many Maldonians will remember them with affection. They were all demolished to make way for Iceland's predecessor, Tesco, and the mandatory 'dig' on the cleared site established that there had been a continuous succession of fully urban structures fronting the line of the High Street from at latest the 10th century, that is, coeval with the famous Battle of Maldon, A.D.991.

Next to No.66 and actually part of the same building was No.68 occupied by Finch the jeweller who had traded from the site for over 100 years. After demolition the Maldon Archaeological Group carried out a 'dig' on the site. They found portions of a 15th century timber-framed building and "two phases of domestic building of the late Saxon period".

Next to No.68 was Dr. Brown's most imposing house stretching the full length of all those present-day shops numbered 70A to 70D. It had an impressive central

doorway flanked by three bay windows surmounted by a range of six large windows on the first floor and crowned by two dormer windows. It had cellars and extensive grounds at the rear which ran alongside Chequers Lane and behind the gardens of houses lower down, reaching back almost to Tenterfield Road. Demolished in 1930 there are still a few Maldonians today who refer to it nostalgically, remembering it from their youthful years.

Proceeding down the High Street (Nos. 72 to 82 inclusive) the buildings are clearly modern but I have no information as to the nature of the buildings which stood there originally, though I do have some details of the people who were trading there. The Ordnance Survey map of 1873 shews a succession of small buildings, consistent with sole trading, and they were probably all similar in appearance to No. 84 which is a 17th century Grade II Listed Building.

Moving down the road to Nos.100 & 102 we do have a little more information. The present-day building at No.100 site on the site of the old "Hippodrome" which was cleared away some time around 1970 to make room for the first Tescos to be opened anywhere in England. Part of the "Hippodrome" can still be seen at the rear. It was no great loss as it had become a terrible eyesore.

Near to the "Hippodrome" site stood the "Dolphin" inn, an unpretentious building but one which blended pleasantly with its contemporaries. It was opened in 1867 as an alehouse and closed in 1907, after which it was divided into two shops which it is thought were not demolished until after the last war, and possibly contemporaneously with the demolition of the "Hippodrome".

I have kept until last a little mystery of this part of the High Street. A gap in the street numbering shews Nos. 91 - 99 (Odd) to be missing. There is no space for them on the High Street frontage, so where were they? A passage suggests that they may have stood somewhere at the rear, and I have further had it suggested that there was a row of cottages there, but early maps do not show them.

We have arrived at the final part of our tour - the lower High Street, and straightway we have King George's Place which is built on the site of the prestigious Baker mansion known as "Trees". It was a massive residence with a porticoed entrance to the High Street, and another to Wantz Road. It has six large windows reaching the full height of the ground floor, with seven similar windows above, surmounted by a central dormer window and two large pillared balustrades above roof level, one at each end. Three trees stood on the pavement

in front of it, and it had very extensive gardens to the rear and side. It is thought that it was erected in Elizabethan times and demolished alas! in 1935.

Adjacent to King George's Place and still on the site of "Trees" stood the "Embassy" Cinema, built between the wars and recently replaced by sheltered accommodation for elderly people. Approximately opposite stood the Maldon Gas Works which served the town for the best part of one hundred years until the last World War, after which the site stood unused for many years until 1994, when the present Edward Bright Close was built in its place.

Lower still and on the same side as the "Embassy" once stood a row of cottages-cum-shops recently demolished to make way for the Baker Mews flats development.

Lastly we come to the site next to the "Ship and Anchor" which holds some shops inexplicably built well back from the established building line. These have been built on the site of a row of almshouses - old cottages built probably during the early 19th century - very small and very much in the style of Victorian almshouses. The proceeds of the sale of the site were amalgamated with a bequest known as the "Price Charity" and the money used to build a couple of modern almshouses in Mill Road on the corner of Wantz Road.

With the developments commented on above the character of this stretch of the High Street has undergone a development totally out of keeping with what was there before and what is still surviving there. As with all the developments we have commented on in the whole length of the High Street, with one exception, the development has not been in sympathy with what has survived, and the street is losing its previous character.

WGG111001

To the Editor,
Penny-Farthing.

Mayors of the Borough of Maldon

Stimulated by articles in the most recent edition of the Penny-Farthing I sought the assistance of our ever-helpful Town Clerk, Helen Vincent, on the subject of past Mayors. She provided me with a list, which, together with earlier details from Fitch's Guide to Maldon and the River Blackwater, has enabled me to calculate that in the 138 years between the passing of the Municipal Corporation Act in 1835 and the year 1974 when the Borough ceased to exist we have had 43 persons filling the demanding and important role of Mayor. Included amongst this number is the author of 'The changing High Street' who we are honoured to have as a Member of our Association.

In the early days it was usual for Mayors to serve on a number of occasions, almost on a rota basis. Of the first four individuals who were Mayor, John Payne served on eight occasions, George May on seven, John Wilmhurst on six, and Alfred May, brother of George, on five. Cyril Dowsett was an exception, holding office in four Mayoral years.

The Mayor serving the greatest number of terms of office, however, was Arthur Laver Clarke, who was Mayor on ten occasions between 1923 and 1936, followed by Stephen Garwood Tydeman who served for eight consecutive years between 1937 and 1944. It was marvellous to read in the Penny-Farthing that descendants of Mayor Tydeman have recently joined our association. Can we look forward to some reminiscences of Stephen Garwood and his father, the bearded fire chief, portrayed in the photograph in the Long Gallery? I hope so! There must be some splendid tales to tell.

Incidentally, the Town's first Lady Mayor was Esther Frances May Brewster in 1956. A second Lady, Winifred Rix Keeble, followed her as Mayor in 1961 and again in 1963.

On a lighter note it is surprising, seeing that the list covers the high Victorian and Edwardian eras, that the grandest name was Dennis Trelawney Kernick Tonkin, who served the Borough in 1955 and 1958. It would be intriguing to learn of the background of all these good people, who served the Town so well. Two were members of the medical profession, George Parker May in 1875, and David Russell Cargill in 1959, but what of the others? There is material here for another article!

PJL

THE CATER MUSEUM, BILLERICAY

HAS RE-OPENED AFTER A PERIOD OF REFURBISHMENT

CURATOR CHRIS BREWSTER WILL BE PLEASED TO WELCOME YOU.

OPEN: 2:00 - 5:00 P.M. MONDAY TO SATURDAY, CLOSED BANK HOLIDAYS

MAYORS OF MALDON
 SINCE THE PASSING OF THE
 MUNICIPAL CORPORATION ACT
 >>>>>>>> IN 1835 <<<<<<<<<<<<
 [to the end of the 20th century]

1836 John Payne
 1837 John Payne
 1838 George May
 1839 John Wilmshurst
 1840 Alfred May
 1841 George May
 1842 John Payne
 1843 John Wilmshurst
 1844 Alfred May
 1845 Edward Bright
 1846 John Payne
 1847 John Wilmshurst
 1848 Arthur Jennings Aitken
 1849 Alfred May
 1850 John Payne
 1851 George May
 1852 John Wilmshurst
 1853 Alfred May
 1854 John Coe Payne
 1855 George May
 1856 John Payne
 1857 Robert Smith
 1858 John Wilmshurst
 1859 Alfred May
 1860 John Payne
 1861 George May
 1862 John Wilmshurst
 1863 Robert Smith
 1864 James Barritt
 1865 George May
 1866 George May
 1867 Henry Thomas Eve
 1868 Robert Smith
 1869 James Barritt
 1870 Henry Thomas Eve
 1871 John Granger Sadd
 1872 James Barritt
 1873 Robert Smith
 1874 George Parker May
 1875 John Granger Sadd
 1876 Henry Thomas Eve
 1877 William Humpherys
 1878 James Barritt

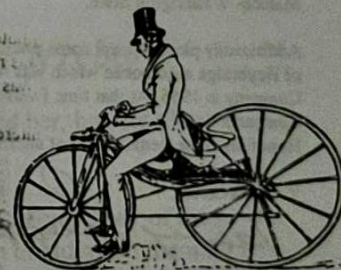
1879 George Parker May
 1880 John Granger Sadd
 1881 Henry Thomas Eve
 1882 Alfred Warren
 1883 William Humpherys
 1884 John Granger Sadd
 1885 Alfred Prime Clear
 1886 John Granger Sadd
 1887 Edward Arthur Fitch
 1888 Joseph Sadler
 1889 Albert Prime Clear
 1890 Leonard Bentall
 1891 Edward Arthur Fitch
 1892 John Charles Float
 1893 Albert Prime Clear
 1894 Edward Arthur Fitch
 1895 Leonard Bentall
 1896 John Charles Float
 1897 Edward Arthur Fitch
 1898 Edward Arthur Fitch
 1899 John Charles Float
 1900 Joseph Sadler
 ENDS 19TH CENTURY
 1901 Joseph Sadler
 1902 Herman Alexander Krohn
 1903 Herman Alexander Krohn
 1904 Edward Arthur Fitch
 1905 Leonard Bentall
 1906 Herman Alexander Krohn
 1907 Herman Alexander Krohn
 1908 Charles Ernest Barritt
 1909 Charles Ernest Barritt
 1910 Henry William Sadd
 1911 Charles Ernest Barritt
 1912 Herman Alexander Krohn
 1913 Herman Alexander Krohn
 1914 Herman Alexander Krohn
 1915 Charles Ernest Barritt
 1916 Edward Thomas Baker
 1917 Edward Thomas Baker
 1918 Edward Thomas Baker
 1919 Harry William Sadd
 1920 Harry William Sadd
 1921 Edward Thomas Baker
 1922 John Freeman
 1923 A. Ashley (Oct.'23)
 1923 Arthur Laver Clarke
 1924 Arthur Laver Clarke
 1925 Arthur Laver Clarke

1926 John William Tanner
 1927 John William Tanner
 1928 Arthur Laver Clarke
 1929 Arthur Laver Clarke
 1930 Arthur Laver Clarke
 1931 Arthur Laver Clarke
 1932 Edward Thomas Baker
 1933 Edward Thomas Baker
 1934 Arthur Laver Clarke
 1935 Arthur Laver Clarke
 1936 Arthur Laver Clarke
 1937 Stephen Garwood Tydeman
 1938 Stephen Garwood Tydeman
 1939 Stephen Garwood Tydeman
 1940 Stephen Garwood Tydeman
 1941 Stephen Garwood Tydeman
 1942 Stephen Garwood Tydeman
 1943 Stephen Garwood Tydeman
 1944 Stephen Garwood Tydeman
 1945 Sydney George Deed
 1946 Sydney George Deed
 1947 Wallace Binder
 1948 Wallace Binder
 1949 Wallace Binder (to May 1949)
 1950/51 Claude Cutting Cowell
 1951/52 Claude Cutting Cowell
 1952/53 Ernest Clifford Dines
 1953/54 Ernest Clifford Dines
 1954/55 David Russell Cargill
 1955/56 Dennis Trelawney Kernick Tonkin
 1956/57 Mrs Esther Frances May Brewster
 1957/58 Dennis Charles Fenn
 1958/59 Dennis Trelawney Kernick Tonkin
 1959/60 William George Ginn
 1960/61 Cyril Dowsett
 1961/62 Winifred Rix Keeble
 1962/63 Albert Edward Woodward
 1963/64 Winifred Rix Keeble
 1964/65 William Strutt Hutchinson
 1965/66 Stanley Hardy-King
 1966/67 Mrs Esther Frances May Brewster
 1967/68 Cyril Dowsett
 1968/69 Ronald F Dawes
 1969/70 Albert Edward Woodward
 1970/71 Cyril Dowsett
 1971/72 Cyril Dowsett
 1972/73 William Strutt Hutchinson
 1973/74 Dennis W. Hutchings

END OF MALDON BOROUGH

1974/75 Norman Smith
 1975/76 Gerry J. Hughes
 1976/77 D. B. Sewell
 1977/78 Ronald F. Dawes
 1978/79 William S. Hutchinson
 1979/80 D. B. Scott
 1980/81 Keith Munnion
 1981/82 Roy Pipe
 1982/83 Gerry J. Hughes
 1983/84 Ronald F. Dawes
 1984/85 Ronald F. Dawes
 1985/86 Keith Munnion
 1986/87 Keith Munnion
 1987/88 Roy Pipe
 1988/89 C. C. Norrington
 1989/90 Ronald F. Dawes
 1990/91 Ronald F. Dawes
 1991/92 Stewart Arnold
 1992/93 Geoffrey Coulthead
 1993/94 Lesley Ovenden
 1994/95 Lesley Ovenden
 1995/96 R. Hornett
 1996/97 Peter Roberts
 1997/98 Peter Roberts
 1998/99 Peter Nicholls
 1999/00 P. Rew

ENDS 20TH CENTURY



The Macmillan Bicycle, 1819

Copy of self-explanatory letter received from one-time local Terry Ruggles

161 Church St.
Duxbury
MA 02332
USA

March 12th. 2002

Dear Museum Curator,

I was born and raised in Heybridge and emigrated to the USA with my wife Pat, daughter Yvonne and son Stuart in 1967. We reside in Duxbury Massachusetts which is located 35 miles south of Boston and was originally part of the Plymouth Colony which was established after the Pilgrims sailed the Atlantic Ocean and landed in the New World in 1620.

Today many towns and villages in eastern Massachusetts are named after Essex towns including Maldon although the spelling here is Malden.

Malden is located six miles north of Boston.

A few years ago I obtained a book on the history of Malden which is signed by the author Ruth Kimball Randall and I would like to donate this book to the Maldon Museum.

I have reviewed the location of additional towns in the USA with the name of Maldon/Malden and the following list indicates in which State they are to be found:-

Malden- Massachusetts.

Malden- Illinois.

Malden- Indiana.

Malden- Missouri.

Malden on Hudson- New York.

Malden Bridge- New York.

Malden- North Carolina.

Malden- West Virginia.

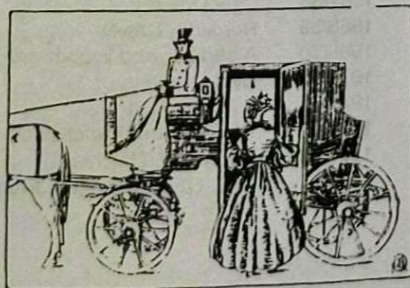
Malden- Washington State.

Additionally please accept some photographs and a newspaper clipping of a Bentall Co. of Heybridge automobile which was refurbished to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the Company in 1955. At that time I was serving an Engineering Apprenticeship with the Company.

Hopefully these items will be of interest to Museum visitors.

Yours sincerely,

Terry Ruggles.



The Original Brougham, 1838

"OLD LADY OF ROAD IS OFF AGAIN AT 47"

Such was the heading of a page in the "News Chronicle" of Thursday June 9th 1955, and passed to us by Terry Ruggles, once an engineering apprentice at E.H.Bentall & Co.Ltd. and now a member of MDMA, still remembered by some for his sporting prowess.



Both back from retirement.....Ernest Linnett (left) supervises the rebuilding of 800BPU, a 47 year-old Bentall car which will take the road again after years as a tractor.

Million miles and never a rebore.

By MICHAEL GILDERDALE

No one wrote a song about her, no one filmed her, but her place is with the immortals.

She is - begging Geneviev's pardon - the foremost lady of the English road, a car made as only the English could make them 50 years ago.

On the twentieth of this month 800 BPU - that's her registration number - sets out on a non-stop run from Hyde Park Corner to Edinburgh. It is a celebration ride to mark the 150th anniversary of the firm that built her - E.H.Bentall & Co.Ltd of Heybridge, Maldon, Essex.

800 BPU

From 1903 to 1910 the firm built 100 cars named BPU - "Best possible utility" shall be the legend - was one of them: "16-20 horse power, standard side entrance, five feet, market price £327.10s.0d."

She was built in 1908, sold to a civil servant in Ceylon but turned up four years ago doing yeoman service as a tractor on a Dorset farm.

Back she came to Bentalls with about one million miles behind her, and to the man whose hands created her, 72-years-old Ernest Linnett. He worked with the firm from the age of 13 until 1951.

Piece by piece over two years he has rebuilt BPU's engine entirely from memory. Never was man and his machine more truly wedded.

In 1908 - with a driving licence issued to him four years earlier - Ernest drove BPU in the Scottish motor trials. That was the day of the deerstalker, goggles and waterproof driving capes. That was the time he went to Glasgow by way of Inverness, by the Devil's Elbow and the Rest and be Thankful. That was the 45 mph flat-out time - with 18 miles to the gallon.

"She was a proper slap-up job" Ernest recalled. "With dark green coachwork and carbide lamps of brass. They don't make 'em like that nowadays. This one? Never had a rebore in all those years."

Yesterday BPU received the finishing touches to her coachwork at Munnion, Chelmsford, Ltd, the coachbuilders.

Craftsmen like Dick Bright and Edgar Larkinson, coach trimmer, have replaced the ash frame, green hide seats, and the hand-turned brass, mirror-bright.

"She is a lady - every inch of her." they say.

800 BPU

Of old Ernest Bentall - the man who designed BPU - Mr Linnett said: "It was no accident. He was a genius. He had only one blind spot. He should have continued manufacturing cars, but he turned out a luxury job, and the prices were just a bit too steep."

Of himself? Mr Linnett has no false modesty. "When old Mr. Ernest finished with cars I should have left and started up on my own."

One wish he holds most dear - that he will be at the wheel when, wet or fine, BPU sets out for Scotland again to prove that Britons build to last.

MALDON EAST STATION

In this year of our Railway Exhibition it seems appropriate that we should record an essay offered by Charlie Middleton (Yes - Mollie's husband) which offers an opinion on the reason that the Maldon East Station was built in the first place, bearing in mind the remoteness of the area at the time.....

Maldon East Station was built in 1848 with the intention that it would be the terminus of a line that would stretch from Maldon to Braintree to provide links with the river commerce from the Blackwater estuary. It was built under the leadership of David Waddington who was a Director of the Eastern Counties Railway.

Its splendour appears to present-day observers to have been far out of keeping with the expected potential traffic flow. It was also built with a large glass covered area but this was destroyed at an early date when a locomotive boiler exploded.

Many of today's publications make great play of the fact that David Waddington was the local parliamentary candidate and was able to gain his seat by employing a large work force who were expected to vote for their employer and duly return him as the member of parliament. There is obviously a great deal of truth in these allegations although a subsequent inquiry would later dismiss these claims. However, it appears that Waddington's ambitions to be a member of parliament are commonly given as the main reason for the building of such a grand station without any thought as to what other motives he and the board of directors may have had.

This essay is therefore an attempt to look at some of the possible thinking which may have influenced the shareholders at that time, that there was an opportunity for good financial rewards in the Maldon area which justified the building of such a grand station.

Maldon East is described in "Historic Towns of East Anglia" as "a Jacobean mansion with Flemish gables, tall chimneys, and a long arched loggia". Other descriptions suggest that the station is Queen Anne in style made with red and white bricks and having a glass roof. This greatly contrasts with the station at the Braintree end of the proposed line which was to be little more than a small hut.

This to my mind shows that Waddington was following the normal practices of the day by keeping a number of workers on his payroll who had no direct bearing on the station building. He was in fact cleared of any irregularities during the election at a later enquiry.

In order to see what potential was envisaged for the building of a line between Maldon and Braintree it is necessary to look at the potential assets of both towns at the time and the influence they had on the directors' investments.

The town of Maldon in 1823 was receiving ten large ships every week at the Hythe on top of its regular traffic. New businesses had been attracted into the town by the Chelmer and Blackwater canal and were encouraged by the potential trading opportunities the coming railway would provide. Figures show that trade at Maldon in 1838 was 47,295 tons whilst in 1842 this had risen to 60,000 tons; anyone looking at these figures would have seen a potential for trade and profit. Maldon was therefore an important asset of which surrounding areas would wish to take advantage.

One of the 1845 proposals envisaged the redevelopment of Maldon's harbour which had been neglected when bypassed by the Chelmer and Blackwater canal. If you look beside the roundabout at the back of "Tesco" you will see the remains of "the long pond" which was to have been the direct link between the proposed railway and the barges that had access to the sea. However, this partnership between rail and sea was never completed.

Maldon, because of its port, was growing as an industrial town with its own iron works. It imported the timber, lime, and coal which the thriving surrounding area needed. Agricultural produce was able to be speedily sent to London ports and the ships would return often loaded with manure from the city stables. Maldon also had "Sadds", the suppliers of building material and Bentalls who manufactured farm machinery, and would later start building early cars, which they gave up because "they would never catch on". Maldon therefore would appear to be a town to catch the investor's eye.

We have so far concentrated on the Maldon end of the proposed line. Although this is the prime purpose of this paper it is of equal importance to look at the Braintree end.

In "Branch Lines to Braintree" Carl Lombardelli describes Braintree as a thriving town and quotes the 1848 edition of Whites "History and Directory of the County of Essex" which talks of Braintree "as a well-built

improving market town - the principal street is a great thoroughfare, and has many good houses, inns, and well-stocked shops".

Braintree was also the corn depot for Essex and large producer of agricultural produce that needed to be sold to wider markets. It did however have one major disadvantage; because of very poor roads it had limited fast access to areas with which it needed to trade. The area also needed to import large quantities of coal, lime, slate and timber for its agricultural industries if it were to thrive. The line also held out the possibility of an extension to Saffron Walden, another prosperous town providing them with better markets and trading prosperity.

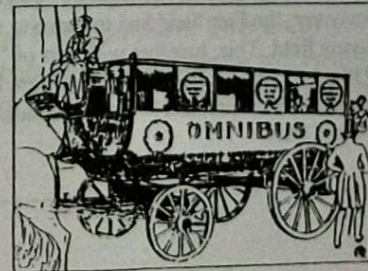
To sum up it would appear that there were, at that time, very good commercial reasons to develop Maldon which would be clearly seen by anyone investing money. However, there is no doubt in my mind that Waddington did use the station as a means of getting himself elected to Parliament. This was not the prime reason for the large investment in Maldon East station but was a secondary consideration for the shareholders when assessing the financial assets that the building was expected to provide.

The question still remains as to what would have happened if the directors of the Maldon, Witham and Braintree Railway had not accepted the offer from the Eastern Counties Railway and the line had remained independent. Braintree never really met its potential and was overtaken by new links as the railways spread out across the county. Maldon town also lost out to the expanding railways which took away most of its port trade.

Would this line ever have been profitable, and was the station a "white elephant"? If the investors could have seen into the future then I am sure that Maldon East Station would not have been such a grand building.

The station now stands deserted and unused for its original purpose. We do not know what the future holds!

~~~~~ Charles Middleton ~~~~~



## THE FAIR FIELD

*Prompted by an article included in a museum display dated 1985*

Maldon, as a Market Borough, was allotted two fairs per year - a May Fair and one in September. These Fairs were held in a large field adjacent to the Grammar School as it was then. This was approached at one end from a 'kissing gate' and large padlocked gate at Queen Street and another 'kissing gate' at the other end near the arched doorway leading to the Friary. Two pathways diverged from this end; one, now known as the 'Long Field', leading to Queen Street, and the other leading diagonally to a further gate which led to two market gardens. (Both of these actual pathways were really non-existent until much later).

Children played in the market garden area which was for some obscure reason known as 'the Conservation' or sometimes 'the Conservatory', where also were a few allotments.

One such garden was tilled by one Herbert Stratford who lived in Tenterfield Road and who grew his vegetables and fruit and trundled a loaded hand cart from house to house, beautifully fresh and possibly picked the same day. He may still be remembered by older members as a keen member of All Saints' choir.

The other garden was worked by a Mr Pugh who had a shop in the High Street on the opposite side but lower down than 'The Swan'. Here he sold his own produce as well as Dairy produce - himself having a Milk round. This meant a churn on a hand cart with measuring ladles - 1 pint, 1/2 pint and even a gill.

There was a pathway surrounding these plots, both leading to Farnbridge Road, the lower path now known as Park Road. Before being absorbed by the expansion of the school field, the upper path, largely a cinder track, was mysteriously known as 'The Lift' where, it is claimed, a ghostly obscure figure has been known to appear on unspecified murky nights. It was certainly a spooky place to be in the 1940s with no lights and very few pedestrians but the path no longer exists.

When the 1914 War broke out a Highland Regiment was billeted in Maldon and the 'Long Field' was dug up in trenches in case of air raids. (This area eventually became allotments, only recently taken over for Doctors' Surgeries and related car parks.) When war was over, the Fair Field had to move to what is now the Lower Plume school playing field. This, together with part of 'Long Field' was bought in around the 1930s, by E.E.C. Later two houses were built on the garden plots for school staff - gardener and caretaker? - and on a further plot stood the School House, now sheltered flats.

## *Derek Maldon Fitch recalls.....*

*When he returned to Maldon we invited Derek, now our President, to pen a few recollections for our magazine. This is the third and relates to his cousin 'Len', born at Brick House, Maldon, served in WWII with distinction, was in later years High Sherriff for the County of Essex and lived for many years in Halstead. He presently lives with his wife Dorothy just over the border in a small Cambridgeshire hamlet. He is spoken of by Derek with more than a little respect and even admiration.....*

Leonard was the third of four Ratcliff children, was born in 1919 and named after his uncle Leonard Fitch who had died at the end of the Great War; he was educated, like his two elder brothers, at Felstead. On leaving school, foreseeing the likelihood of a second war with Germany he joined the Volunteer Air Reserve and learned to fly. On the outbreak of war in 1939 he joined the Royal Air Force, before long gaining his wings and a commission.

Within weeks of joining up he was married. His bride was Betty Stewart and she bore him three sons and a daughter, - Rupert, Tessa, Clive and Robin - in that order. Sadly, she died in 1987.

By January 1944 Squadron Leader Ratcliff, known (inevitably) in the RAF as Ratty, having already completed one tour of operations with a bomber squadron, was sufficiently experienced and well thought of to be appointed, first, to command 'B' Flight of Halifaxes of No.161 Squadron (Special Duties) Bomber Command, and thereafter 'C' Flight of Lockheed Hudsons and Lysanders. His achievement at that time was to weld the Hudson flight into a cohesive force, the better to serve the top secret purposes for which squadron 161, based at Tempsford, Beds, had earlier been formed.

This was to maintain a regular flow of supplies and ammunition to Resistance forces in German-occupied Europe, and to ensure two way contact with them, in close collaboration with SOE (Special Operations Executive) and SIS (Secret Intelligence Service), dropping, and where necessary picking up agents behind enemy lines. These regular operations, in which Len was himself frequently involved, called for the highest degree of nerve, skill and judgement, landing and taking off at dead of a moonless night on rudimentary improvised airstrips almost under the noses of the enemy.

After numerous successful exploits of this kind Len, by this time promoted to Wing Commander, though only twenty five, was appointed in March 1945 to the command of 161 Squadron itself. Despite the final German retreat in the last weeks of the war in Europe, these crucially important operations continued, in the face of cruelly effective German air defences within the Reich itself.

On VE Day, 8th May 1945, together with another Hudson pilot, a Norwegian, Per Hysing-Dahl, Len flew into Trondheim in Norway to receive the surrender of the 60,000 strong German garrison there, and a tumultuous welcome from the liberated population of the city - an unforgettable experience.

This brilliant war record was recognised by numerous decorations, French as well as British. Len ended the War as Wing Commander L. F. Ratcliff, D.S.O., D.F.C. and bar, A.F.C., Croix de Guerre and Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur.

The war over, Len became 'a senior executive with an international company dealing in agricultural feedstuffs and is now Shooting and fishing in retirement'

~~~~~dmf170402~~~~~

From the Dublin "Freeman's Journal" of August 1812.....

Referring to the human race, it seems to show that men of gigantic stature were not unknown in Ireland in prehistoric times.....

It is not a little surprising, considering our veneration for Irish antiquities, that no notice should be taken of the skeleton recently disinterred at Leixlip. This extraordinary monument of gigantic human stature was found by two labourers in Leixlip churchyard on Friday, the 10th ult, when making a kind of sewer, near the Salmon leap, for conveying water, by Mr. Halgh's orders. It appears to have belonged to a man of not less than ten feet in height. It is believed to have been the same mentioned by Keating - Phelim O'Toole, buried in Leixlip churchyard, near the Salmon leap, 1252 years ago. In the same place was found to be a large finger ring of pure gold. There was no inscription or characters of any kind upon it, a circumstance to be lamented, as it might throw a clear light upon this interesting subject. Our correspondent saw one of the teeth, which was as large as an ordinary forefinger."

MAY DAY ON PURLEIGH CHURCH TOWER

When we were a more agricultural based and less sophisticated society the First of May was a highly significant date and many ceremonies and events in the rural calendar were associated with it. Some years ago Dr. Lacey found a reference to a Purleigh custom of singing hymns on the top of the Church tower early on May Day morning. This custom is well known in Oxford - Magdalen College Choir is famed for its May Day singing. Our rectors have, for the past two centuries had a connection with Oriel College and probably brought the ceremony with them to Purleigh. The Provost of Oriel has recently confirmed that they, in fact continue to observe the custom.

This year eight of us climbed the tower to sing our hymns from up there. A mild breeze at ground level turned out to be a roaring gale at tower top height. Nevertheless we all set to with a will and serenaded the treetops with our singing for a good twenty minutes. Then we descended to the vestry where our logistical support team of Mabs and Ruth had prepared hot rolls and croissants with hot drinks to reward us for our efforts up aloft. What a lovely way to salute May Morning!

~~~~~Don Lowell~~~~~

With thanks to the Purleigh Parish Magazine - June 2002

# Maldon District Museum Association

~~~~Registered Charity 301362~~~~

President - Mr. Derek Maldon Fitch

Vice President - Mr I.J. Barrell

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Vice-ChairmanTony Tullett.....

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Committee.....Molly Middleton.....

Committee.....Judy Tullett.....

Committee.....Elizabeth Willshire.....

~~~~~  
Curatorial Adviser....Nick Wickenden Esq  
~~~~~

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(Answerphone when museum unattended)

Please note that opinions expressed are those of the individual
contributors, and not necessarily agreed by the Association
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