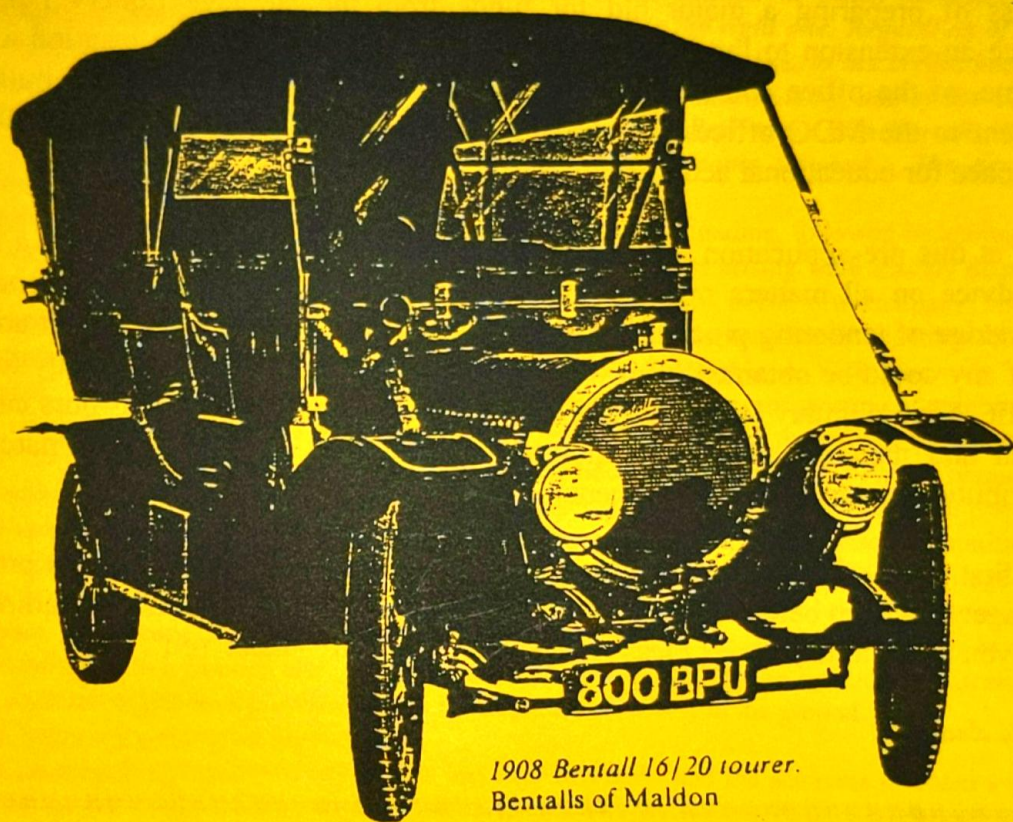


# THE PENNY FARTHING

The Newsletter of Maldon District Museum Association



1908 Bentall 16/20 tourer.  
Bentalls of Maldon

Model	9	16	11	16/20	16/20	18
Years	1906	1907-10	1908-09	1908-12	1911-13	1911-13
No Cyls	2	4	2	4	4	4
Bore	90	90	100	100	93	90
Stroke	95	95	95	95	120	140
Capacity	1208	2418	1492	2986	3261	3563
Valves						
CR						
BHP at ... rpm						
Coolant	W	W	W	W	W	W
Carburation						
Wheelbase	8'0"	9'3"	8'0"	9'3"	10'0"	9'9"
Track	4'0"	4'4"	5'0"	4'4"	4'8"	4'4"
F Suspen						
R Suspen						
Length	11'4"	12'0"	10'9"	12'10"	13'8"	13'4"
Width	4'8"	5'2"	5'0"	5'2"	5'6"	5'2"
Weight		15½	13½	15½	20(ch)	16½(ch)
Top Gear R						
Tyre Size	750x85	810x90	750x85	810x90	820x120	810x90

From your Chairman -

It would not be the "Penny Farthing" without an appeal for help but on this occasion it is a very special one. As outlined at the Annual General meeting the Museum, with the support and encouragement of the Maldon District Council, is in the process of preparing a major bid for funds from the Heritage Lottery Fund to finance an extension to the Museum building. This could allow the location all on one site, of the office and store room, presently situated in the St. Cedd's building adjacent to the MDC offices, improved display space accessible to the less abled, and space for educational activities.

Even at this pre-application stage it is becoming apparent that there will be a need for advice on all matters relating to the planning and building process including knowledge of tendering procedure. It would be possible to buy in this expert advice but if any could be obtained from within our membership it would be greatly to our benefit. Any voluntary help coming from within an organisation such as ours can be costed and then set against the money we shall have to raise as our matching contribution towards the development.

The first stage of the Lottery bidding process is to obtain funds to employ a project manager, but even before this can be done some expert help and advice is required. Can you assist in any way? Please let me know.....and "Thank You".

*Paddy Lacey*

#####

*Olive Kathleen Memmott 1915 - 2003*

*It is sad to report that Life Member Mrs Olive Memmott, mother of Judy Tullett, died on 5th May 2003 almost exactly a year after the death of her husband Albert. She will be recalled as a cheerful friendly lady always interested in Judy's work as Displays Officer at the Museum. Olive would have loved to have seen the 'Edwardian Scullery and the 'Best Parlour where 'tea is being taken with grandmother' that she had been told so much about by Judy and Tony as they cared for her. Our sympathies go out to all her family.*

#####

### A brief A.G.M. Report - 20th May 2003 - St. Cedd's.....

*The AGM was attended by thirteen members, with seven apologies for absence, thereby following much the the same pattern as most AGMs, with members by their absences either silently stating that they do not want to get involved in organising or administration, or alternatively, thereby expressing their satisfaction at the manner in which the association is managed. It would be nice to feel that the latter reason is the right one. Regardless of that, we are still without a regular Honorary Secretary and Tony Tullett has, to his credit, been filling this post most efficiently. On this occasion however he was, unavoidably, one of the absentees, and his secretarial duties were carried out by Membership Secretary Colin Barrell. We would all be most appreciative if a suitable volunteer were to come forward - The post is not particularly time-consuming.*

Paddy, as Chairman, opened proceedings and thanked those attending, followed by apologies, and the acceptance and signing of last year's AGM minutes. Matters arising were quickly disposed of. There was no movement on the suggestion that the museum become a company limited by guarantee. The Gift Aid scheme for subscriptions was not adopted. Paddy reported four major advances during the year - 1. Our full registration; 2. In September a Web Site was 'up and running'; 3. The courtyard was fully paved and completed; 4. The reorganising of exhibits during the winter months was most pleasing. He thanked all Stewards for the successful opening this year, with only one closure, and thanked Stewarding Secretary Lynda Barrell for her organising of the Stewards. Amongst other matters he chose for special mention the 'Special School Events' and free opening for the public which gave the museum good publicity. The Liaison Committee with the MDC had worked well together, and there was good association with Maldon Heritage Group. With Penny Cook having left the area, Liz Willsher had efficiently taken over her curatorial duties. A grant was received from the MDC towards upgrading our copier, and the Bric-a-brac sales organised by Mike Bennett had produced useful funds. We shall not be opening on Carnival Day this year due to previous problems with a few unpleasant visitors to the ground.

Hon. Secretary's report not produced.

Hon. Treasurer's report from Tony Tullett was read by Paddy, and the accounts revealed a surplus for the year of £1,029. The accounts were accepted 'subject to audit'. Nick Wickenden remarked that all visitors to the museum should be recorded.

Membership Secretary's report. Colin B stated that to date he had received 60% of the expected subscriptions with the balance no doubt following in the near future. The current membership total, including late payers, is 115.

Accession Officer's report. Liz W stated that she had learned much from Penny Cook and appreciated her helpful assistants. With a reshuffle they had increased useful space. The computer and printer were now in St.Cedd's and Books and Documents were now listed on it.

Heritage Group Ray B advised that they were investigating the possibility of combining related organisations for insurance quotes.

Stewarding Secretary, for Lynda B (absent) thanked all Stewards for their cooperation during the year. There were four new volunteers.

Election of Officers and Committee. All as listed on the back cover.

Hon. Auditor thanked by Chairman and Peter Maynard re-appointed.

Closing. Paddy commented that he had 'put the wheels in motion' for enlarging the museum.

He declared the meeting closed at 8.55 p.m (as last year)

#####

## THE STEWARDS MEET

*It was with some measure of satisfaction that we welcomed about thirty five stewards, old and new, experienced and otherwise, to the St. Mary's Octagon on the 31st March, to meet both old and new friends and acquaintances, to hear Chairman Paddy outline any Stewarding changes for this year, and above all, to sort out any discrepancies in the 2003 rota and proceedings.*

*We use the term 'satisfaction' as there is quite a lot of unseen thought and effort put into each year's rota and 'The Meet' gives some idea of the response of both members and friends. Remember one does not have to be an Association Member to be a Steward, and in fact many Stewards are not Members and it was with some pleasure that Paddy was able to welcome more new faces for this year, who will no doubt be offered any assistance asked for. They seem to have balanced out those lost for varied reasons during the past twelve months.*

*Also welcomed to the meet was Cllr Mrs Julia Bass, Chairman of the District Council 'Community Services' who attended to formally present the 'Museums and Galleries' Registration Certificate of full registration on behalf of the Resources' Registration Scheme. Cllr Mrs Peel has for several months taken considerable interest in the development and the activities of the Museum, and we are particularly grateful to her, (as we were to Cllr Brian Mead in years gone by).*

*On completion of the meeting, and the serving of refreshments, the assembly moved across to the Museum itself to inspect the displays for 2003 which now surpass anything which has gone before, thanks to the efforts of Judy Tullett, Mike Bennett, and their supporting teams; the results are quite outstanding.*

#####

JEAN TOWNSEND

We regret to report the loss of another respected member, the wife of S/Ldr 'Mike' Townsend of Church street, who passed away peacefully in her sleep on 5th April, matriarch to four generations by whom she will be sadly missed. Her funeral was at 'St. Mary's' on Friday 11th April.

#####M&BS100403#####

## MEMORIES of Ms B. EVERS, an OLD MALDONIAN in 1985.....

"When I was a child - a long time ago now, and many changes have taken place -

to begin with, there were two railway stations, both with good connections to London and Southend. Not only that, a 'bus' (albeit horse-drawn) met every train - carried passengers if required, luggage, newspapers, mail and parcels up the Market Hill. This 'bus' was owned by the King's Head Hotel.

Market Hill was much more dangerous in those days as the angle of the bend was more acute, there being a little shop and a house right on the bend where that path is now.

Felled Trees for Sadd's Wharf were chained to trailers and until steam traction engines came in to use, were hauled by horses. Shoe-shaped wedges were placed under trailer wheels to prevent the weight of the trees over-running the horses. Many times these trailers jack-knifed and many accidents occurred.

Later I attended school in Colchester and the 'bus' constantly got stuck on the bend of the hill and everyone had to leave the 'bus' and walk.

Beeleigh We children used to save our pocket-money sometimes and walked to Beeleigh (it was safe to do that then). Over the hump-backed bridge by the Golf Course was a field where we picked Marguerites, Scabious, Maidenhair fern and occasionally purple Orchids to take home to Mother. This field was ploughed during the war and the flowers lost forever. At Langford we boarded the train to Maldon for a penny.

Market Maldon was a market town. It had a cattle market and incidentally, the cattle pens at East Station were demolished by the first bomb to fall on Maldon in the 1914 war.

Fair As a Market Town Maldon was allotted two Fairs, one in May and one in September, also a circus. When the circus came, school childrens' dinner-hour was halved so they were allowed to leave school early to attend the special performance.

You must remember that there was very little entertainment then and fairs and circuses were highlights.

A further highlight of the year was the Sunday School Treat. I speak of All Saints' as that was the one I knew. The Millers of the town loaned their flour wagons and lovely old shire horses to carry the children to Baddow Rodney for the day. We took sandwiches etc. and there was a little kiosk there where we could buy ginger pop and lemonade. After cricket, rounders, races and so on we were given buns and tea before our homeward journey. Although very tired we managed to sing all along the lanes. Do you know, I can't remember a wet day!

School Both my parents attended All Saints' School and in those days parents had to pay fourpence a week for each child. This could prove quite expensive for large families.

Scripture was high on the curriculum and examinations held and prizes and certificates awarded.

We were taught to be observant and every day's page had to be headed with the date, temperature, and wind direction. This was not as difficult as you might imagine as there was a very large thermometer on the wall of the Moot Hall and a weather vane on the Fire Station.

Fire Station The Fire Station doors were level with the pavement and Maldon Museum was on top. When the old fire engine was replaced it was found the new engine would not go into the station. (typical Maldon job). The new station had to be built way back where you see it today.

viz - 1985

**Museum** I have often wondered what happened to the exhibits from the Museum?

I well remember we schoolchildren being buttoned into fat Mr. Bright's waistcoat but cannot now remember with accuracy how many.

**Forges** With so many horses of course there were forges. One in London Road was one of four. This was where the house "The Forge" is now and on our way to school we often stood watching the farrier shoeing a horse. Another forge was where Walter Blow's workshop is now (1985); one opposite Bunting the butcher's in the High Street and a further forge at the corner of Mill Road/Mundon Road.

**West Square** At the corner of London Road/Spital Road and attached to Wentworth House was a small shop - Orth's. This was the start of Orth's Garage. You can just see signs of this. Opposite, on the site of Doe's Garage was an antique/ second-hand shop (Burns) the windows of which came to the edge of the present pavement. You can imagine how narrow was the road then. It's bad enough now!

**Ice Cream** I am sure you all know there was a row of shops in front of All Saints' Church where the War Memorial stands and I cannot pass over the fact that Mr. Volta owned one, which was very well-known locally and by visitors. The grandfather of the two Volta brothers we know introduced ice cream to Maldon, quite unknown here before, and what ice-cream it was! My uncle then farmed South House Farm (scene of the Battle of Maldon) and I have seen large baskets of new-laid eggs (gathered some sometimes) and bowls of cream which were delivered to Mr. Volta each day for his ice-cream. No powdered stuff in those days!

**Milk** Milk was delivered twice a day after each milking - carried on a cart in a churn and measured into customers' jugs. I always admired the beautifully laundered and starched covers on these churns and the brasswork bright and shiny.

**Fish** Fish, freshly caught in the river were also delivered door to door. Sprats in season, Plaice, Dabs and shrimps. My mother kept a small enamel bucket specially for this purpose and it was filled for a shilling. Visitors bought fish direct from the boatmen on the 'Prom' -(often Flounders which Maldonians scorned). The fish were threaded on a wire ring and carried away like that.

**River** The river in those days sported a Dredger which kept it navigable right up to Fullbridge. Large ships from Holland, Germany and Sweden sailed up to the three millers - Greens, Eves, and Bakers, also Sadd's wharf with timber.

On the Downs was of course the Salt Works and a lime kiln which has completely disappeared.

**Custom's House** With these ships coming to Maldon there had to be a Customs Office on Market Hill (now a private residence). It was a colourful sight when the foreign Captains and crew ventured into the town for provisioning their ships. The Captains sported uniforms with a great deal of gold braid and the sailors were quite unlike our own with their colourful jerseys and "stocking-shape" headgear. The Customs Officer acted as interpreter and their trade was greatly welcomed.

**Problems?** This next statement I cannot verify but it was told to me by someone who had a great interest in the river. Apparently Maldon Council demanded an extra farthing a ton for the gravel dredged from the river, but the London firm refused and removed their dredger from the river. This has caused the river to silt up - more's the pity!

The foreshore of the river used to be free of mud. Boatmen hired out rowing boats and could always be seen at low tide wielding long poles on the end of which were open-ended boxes in how I can best describe them. These were filled from the river and washed over the shingle which kept the foreshore clean.

**Lake.** The Southern Counties Swimming and Diving Championships were held annually in the Marine Lake and attracted enormous crowds from long distances. I can only liken it to crowds at the Carnival fireworks.

**Visitors** Families came to Maldon for holidays when we had railways and Victoria Road and Mill Road houses advertised accommodation. Where in Maldon could families stay now? Hotels are too pricey!

There were more attractions of course. A resident Concert Party (Billy Taylor & Co.) gave performances in the Band Stand daily and always a band played there on Sunday afternoons. It took quite a lot of courage to walk along the Promenade near the band stand on a Sunday. Deck chairs lined the roadway and around the lake and these were usually filled to capacity, the passers-by thoroughly criticised no doubt.

**Living** The standard of living has vastly improved. Houses are smarter, have water on tap, baths and indoor toilets. All those years ago it meant a walk to the bottom of the garden in all weathers. A case in point is North Street, now an attractive place, but was then known as Dagger Lane, and even Policemen patrolled in twos. Being near the docks I suppose this is often the case.

**Cinema** There was a cinema, The Hippodrome, situated opposite Wenlocks. A resident pianist played suitable music to stir us up when the heroine was chained to the railway and an express train was approaching, and quieter music for serious episodes.

**Dances** Dances were chiefly military. They were held in the Drill Hall in Tenterfield Road (afterwards the Telephone Exchange); also some dances held at Heybridge Headquarters, the Essex Regiment Band playing.

**Meadows** Children had far better facilities for play in those days. Butchers of the town owned meadows where they kept where they kept the animals they bought at market until such time as they were ready for slaughter. They did themselves, When these fields were unoccupied, children were allowed to play there.

**Home Life.** Home life was much more disciplined then and Mother was always at home. Church and Sunday School was a 'must' and I well remember getting into trouble from my grandmother when she caught me sewing buttons on my glove on a Sunday. I was told I should have done this on a Saturday 'But it only came off today' said I. 'It must have been loose on Saturday' said she.

---

*I have endeavoured to paint a picture of Maldon as I remember it years ago. I hope I have not bored you or been too long because I guess 'a cuppa' is in the offing. Should there be time and anyone is interested and asks questions, I will try to answer.*

*B. Evers.....1985*

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**Extension of Ms Evers' notes.....**

In 1911 I think it was, there was an epidemic of Scarlet Fever in Maldon. The Isolation Hospital in Broad Street Green Road, Heybridge, was overfull. Tents were erected in the grounds which in turn became full. There being no electricity or gas lighting lamps were used and in one case a lamp was overturned and set fire to a tent; all patients were evacuated and no tragedy occurred. When patients were out of Quarantine a horse-drawn ambulance returned them to their homes.

Sometimes if only one patient was due home, Nurse Miles, the Matron, drove a dog cart to Maldon to deliver this patient home. In the procession to mark the coronation of Edward VII was the first motor car I had ever seen. This belonged to Mr. Bate who had previously ridden on three-wheeler cycles. Mr Bate was the founder of Bates Motors of Maldon.

### A TWINKLE IN THE EYE

At the May Committee meeting it was recorded that in recent times we had received items related to Bentalls of Heybridge from Pauline Player, Terry Ruggles and Nick Wisbey to add to our growing collection of items from this firm that for over 150 years was so important locally. The help too, of Jean Wade and Michael Clark in donating related artefacts was also remembered. It was mentioned that Bentalls dated their foundation from 1805 the year in which William Bentall erected his first building close to the banks of the Chelmer and Blackwater canal where he was to produce the famous plough that he had perfected in Goldhanger. Would it not be appropriate to mount a significant display of these momentos in 2005 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of this event? The idea was accepted enthusiastically by all present and initial thoughts on how this could be done were given. It would be helpful to learn if there are other items in possession of our members and friends that could be loaned for such an exhibition bearing in mind that at this stage it is just a twinkle in the eye of the committee, but it is very likely to become a reality if the same response is obtained generally as that at the committee meeting.

*Our contacts for this event are Mike Bennett, Paddy Lacey, & Liz Willsher.*

#####

### **NOW URGENT !!**

**Help is required for the running of the Promenade Sale on August Bank Holiday in the absence of Mike Bennett, not available on the day... We need -**

- a) A Team Leader
- b) A Collector with use of van
- c) Storage for items collected.
- d) Help on the day .. 26th August !

**Meanwhile, contact Mike as soon as possible for more information and/or to offer your assistance. (Maldon 854659)...and thank you !**

#####

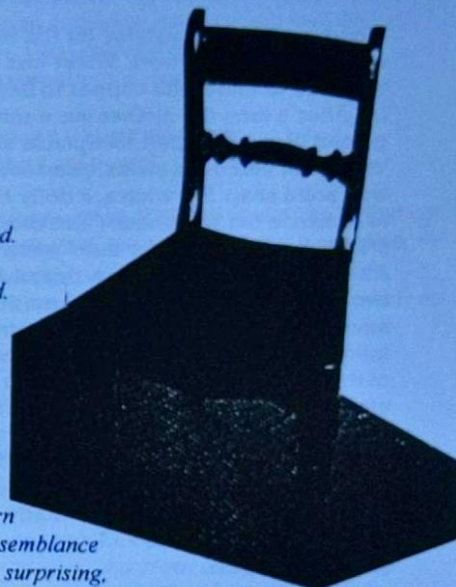
### **COLLECTORS' CHAIRS**

INTRODUCING A SUBJECT NOT PREVIOUSLY EXAMINED IN "PENNYFARTHING" BUT WHICH THANKS TO CLLR. SHRIMPTON, MAY BE INCLUDED IN FUTURE ISSUES

#### Essex Chairs

##### Description -

- Front Legs.....turned in applewood.*
- Seat.....slightly curved and back with camas in plum wood.*
- Back Legs and stretchers and cross-pieces on back shaped but but not turned, in pear wood.*
- Black stripes - two on waist stretchers on back in blackthorn wood.*
- Wood below seat at front and sides.*
- Height.....83 cms.  
to seat 45 cms.*
- Width.....at front below seat 41 cms.  
of seat at back 33.1/2 cms.*



*These rather pretty little chairs come, as their name suggests, from the eastern part of England. They bear a strong resemblance to the Mendlesham chairs which is not surprising, Essex being a neighbour of Suffolk in which county Mendlesham is to be found. They were a simple chair, made with hollowed-out seats -comfortable to sit on without a cushion. In shape they were a simplified edition of the country-made Sheraton. There were two narrow rails across the chair at waist level, joined together in the middle by two or more small balls, or, very rarely, a small piece of carving. Sometimes, narrow strips of wood joined the top to the waist rail. The legs were straight, with straight stretchers. The chairs were made in fruit-wood or elm. There are two drawbacks to them; the seats, when made all in one piece are liable to crack - they should be lined underneath with stout canvas to strengthen them; and they are apt to be attractive to woodworm so should be regularly examined. But these disadvantages apart, they are very useful chairs to buy for a small cottage as they do not take up too much room round a table, and look well anywhere in the house.*

#####

*Another memory, this time of President 'Maldon' Fitch, as seen by him on a wartime Post Office counter.....*

**Courtesy costs nothing and may do you much credit !**

#####

## MORE MEMORIES - WASH DAY

Monday was the usual day for the wash. It would have taken all day and was very hard work. Water was carried to fill the copper; a fire was then lit under the copper to heat the water and the clothes put in. After a time the clothes were removed with wooden tongs and placed in a galvanised receptacle and pummelled with a washing 'dolly'. For stubborn stains, items were rubbed against a washboard with solid soap. For whites, a dolly blue bag was added to the wash to enhance the whiteness ("Reckitts" was the well known brand). Starch was also used for most white items.

After washing, clothes were rinsed and then mangled (Sometimes two people were required to turn the handle for thick items!). This squeezed out the water most effectively and the items were then hung out to dry on long clothes lines with a prop to hold the middle of the line high off the ground. After partial drying, clothes, linen etc were ironed. Several irons of different sizes were heated on the range and used in rotation. For special items and bed linen home made lavender water was sprinkled on before ironing which made them smell pleasant and kept moths at bay when placed in drawers etc. Lavender bags were also made with dried lavender flowers and placed in drawers and cupboards with fabrics to prevent attacks by moths.

#####/T030403#####

## Official recognition for museum

THE Museum in the Park has been officially presented with full museum status.

Councillor Julia Peel presented workers with the registration at a ceremony at the Octagon Building, St Mary's Church, on Monday.

The centre, in Mill Road, then opened its doors to the public once again yesterday with a range of new exhibitions.

Exhibitions for the 2003 season include 'Upstairs Downstairs', which will display a Victorian parlour and kitchen, and the Railways of Maldon, with a layout from original plans of Maldon East Station.

Also on show throughout the season will be plans from the John Sudd 1940s Joiners' Shop, Green's Flour Mill, and a collection of medals, coins and dance cards.

Changes have been made to the museum's opening times meaning it will open between 11am and 1pm on Mondays and 11am to 4pm on bank holiday Mondays, closed on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, 2pm and 4pm on Wednesdays, for parties by prior arrangement on Thursdays, 2pm to 4pm on Fridays, 2pm to 5pm on Saturdays and Sundays.

Entry costs £1 for adults and 25p for children aged between five and 15.



New status - Mike Bennett, of the display team, outside the Maldon Museum. Picture: ROB SAMBROOK 27271-2

Our thanks to the M. & B. S. of the 3rd April for this welcome entry. Member Mike Bennett is responsible for many of the displays seen within.

## Wantz Road Investigated

Association Member Ray Brewster instigated this 'dig' into his own property at 83 Wantz Road and in so doing opened up an interesting subject which took the knowledge and expertise of member W. Geo. Ginn who examined his own information on Maldon and which we now offer for your own consideration.....

Ray 'kicked off' by selectively distributing a few questionnaires.....viz -  
Do you know anything about our house?

"We live at 83 Wantz Road, Maldon, Essex, CM9 5DB. We would like to find out more about our house; we moved in April 1996. We have heard that it was a bakery and we know Mr Kennedy the last baker (he lives next door) So if you know anything about our house please write to us or give us a call on 01621 840931"

Ray and Chris Brewster

"Do you know what or who is a Wantz, as in Wantz Road?  
Please write into the NewsLetter with your answer"

*At this point the 'PennyFarthing' consulted our old friend George Ginn, local historian, who provided a history of the whole row of houses in which Ray lives, with sometimes unexpected facts --*

83 - 93 Wantz Road - previously 55-65

Today a terrace of private houses standing on the corner of Dyers Road. It bears visible testimony to its commercial past. The unbroken concrete forecourt running its entire length betrays the fact that at one time it was a local shopping parade, and indeed its recorded history is intriguing.



No. 83 - previously No. 55

For the whole of the period for which we have records this was a bakery - a period which we know covered over seventy years and probably a good deal longer.

The advert. for Coult was taken from the "Maldon Advertiser" for 1913.

1866-99	John Harridge Gill	baker
1902	Ernest W. Mann	"
1906	Thomas Eaton	"
1910-13	Arthur Coult	"
1917-37	Frank Gosling	"

85 Wantz Road - previously 57

1891 -	Ernest Walliker,	letter carrier
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87 Wantz Road - previously 59

1891	Charles Freeman ,	aged 72, of independent means
------	-------------------	-------------------------------

89 Wantz Road - previously 61

1891	Mary Playle,	Aged 54, of independent means
------	--------------	-------------------------------

91, Wantz Road - previously 63

**A. COULT,**  
BAKER AND CONFECTIONER,  
55, Wantz Rd., Maldon, Essex.

Best Bread and Flour only.  
All kinds of Cakes & Buns.  
THE CHEAPEST HOUSE for BRIDE CAKES.  
SATISFACTION GUARANTEED.

Agent for Home & Colonial and Lyons Tess,  
— 1/6 per lb. —

A TRIAL RESPECTFULLY SOLICITED.

Here we have one of the longest-serving businesses in Wantz Road, stretching from 1870 to 1937 and beyond. For over 50 of those years it was the place of business of the Allen family, and their entries in Kelly's are given below -

1870 - 74	John Allen	tobacconist
1878 - 82	" "	music seller
1886	Allen & Son	" "
1890 - 1902	Frank Allen	" "
1891	also "Professor of Music"	
1906- 10	Allen & Son	music seller
1917	Frank Allen	" "
1922	Mrs Allen	(Private)

It is possible to interpret the above entries as depicting a founder (John) perhaps taking over an existing tobacconists and then converting it to a high-risk trade nearer his heart, later bringing in his son (Frank), who later still is joined by his son (Un-named) for a few years, and then dying perhaps at the early age of 50 to leave a wife who shortly afterwards disappears - perhaps selling up and moving away.

The advert reproduced on the previous page was taken from Fitch's 1906 yearbook. The one given below was taken from a 1995 article commemorating the 100th anniversary of the opening of the Promenade.

**F. ALLEN,**  
Pianoforte Tuner & Selector,  
63, WANTZ ROAD,  
MALDON.

American Organ,  
Pianofortes,  
Harmeniums,  
Violins and Bows,  
Mandolins,  
Guitars,  
Music Folios,  
Banjos,  
Auto and Zither Harps,  
Tubors,  
Accordions,  
Stands,  
Concertinas.

**Tuning & Repairing**  
SPECIAL ATTENTION.

PIANOS ON HIRE -  
For Concerts, &c.  
Old Pianos exchanged.

**SHEET MUSIC**  
Always in stock and  
prepared to order.

VIOLIN, MANDOLINE  
and BANJO STRINGS of  
the BEST QUALITY.


Composer of Valse  
**'SWEET THOUGHTS'**  
Acknowledged by  
Her late Majesty  
QUEEN VICTORIA,  
Buckingham Palace,  
August 14th,  
1897.

Printed and Published by  
W. Walliker, Maldon.

**Marine Lake - -  
Serenade,**

F. ALLEN, Bandmaster.

DEDICATED TO  
ALDERMAN L. BENTALL, J.P.  
DEPUTY MAYOR OF MALDON.



**MARINE LAKE  
SERENADE**

MARINE Lake Serenade was written by Mr. Frank Allen, Bandmaster, and dedicated to the Deputy Mayor of Maldon, Alderman L. Bentall, J.P.

This was to commemorate the grand opening of the Maldon Marine Promenade and Recreation Park and was performed by the Maldon Town Band.

to be continued in News 34

## Your President replies....

*albeit with some reluctance, to our suggestion that he prepare an autobiographical sketch of himself and the more memorable episodes of his life. This despite his "I do not find it a pleasant exercise reviewing annals of the past". The following article would suggest that he is more able to recall history than he would like to admit -- He writes.....*

Born at Hazeleigh Grange on 21st April 1922, the second son of Maldon and Ethel Fitch.

Like Admiral Nelson whose mother died at the age of 42 when he was only 9 and left a lasting impression on him, so likewise I had the same experience only it was my father who died aged 42 and I was only 9 when he died in April 1931 at Mundon. He and his younger brother were killed by the Germans in World War I. My father and his regiment, the 20th Middlesex, had mustard gas set against them at the Battle of Loos in 1916. Invalided from the army in 1917 it was a choice between an outdoor occupation or the rest of his life in a sanatorium since the gas had affected his lungs; so he went into farming. He survived somewhat longer than his younger brother Leonard who served with the Essex Yeomanry, and suffered a mustard gas attack during the Battle of Ypres. After a short spell in Colchester Hospital he went to stay with my parents who were then living at Limbourne Park, Mundon, but had only been with them a few days when he suffered a massive haemorrhage and died in my mother's arms. He was only 22; a tragedy since he had just passed his final exams to become a surveyor and had just become engaged to a Colchester girl.

My mother was widowed at 39, was granted a widow's pension which in those days was an insulting pittance. Education of the first child, my sister, was taken care of by the Ministry of Pensions. Any other children were not allowed for. Fortunately my father had been a Freemason and I was sent to their school for war orphans - a boarding school at Wanstead. My introduction to this monastic establishment was not a pleasant one since the junior house master used to physically abuse the boys until it happened that one half-term when our mothers were allowed to visit us and I was sporting a black eye which I had been given by this master. My mother wanted to know how it happened and I and another boy who had been maltreated and his mother appeared before the school governors; also of course the master in question who was dismissed at the end of term.

The remainder of the staff were good as was my education but only to a point; at the

age of 16 irrespective of what stage you had reached in your education the guillotine dropped at that point; in other words an unsatisfactory truncated education. Further education and universities were never mentioned although the headmaster/chaplain of the school was an M.A.(Oxon). Careers were never mentioned. My sister and I would have fared better if we had been left at the Maldon Grammar School which we had attended briefly between 1931-2. This underlines the deplorable state of education back in the thirties. I attended Wanstead for 6 years between 1932-8 which was the sum total of my education. The Royal Wanstead School is no longer - the judiciary have taken over and it is now Snaresbrook Crown Court.

Now the war years....At age 17 I joined the R.A.F. in 1939 attending a wireless operator's course at Cranwell. From there to the seaplane base at Felixstowe where I remained until 1942 when I was sent to India and Burma for 4 years. We joined the convoy which formed up at Clydebank off Greenock and in March 1942 we set sail for India. A large convoy under naval escort to India via Freetown and Cape Town where we stopped for 3 or 4 days, going ashore where many of us were entertained in the homes of the South Africans. We climbed part of the way up Table Mountain and visited the Kirschenbosch Botanical Gardens.

After landing at Bombay we went to Victoria Station and boarded a troop train. Then followed a very long journey across India to Calcutta via Lucknow. From Calcutta to Cuttack on the Mahandi Delta in Orissa State where we were to serve with No 353 Squadron - a Dakota squadron whose role it was to drop supplies to the 14th Army in Burma. My particular unit had the role of defending the squadron against ground and air attack, not that the Japanese had very much air power in the Indo-Burma theatre. In 1943 our unit were sent to Secunderabad in the Hyderabad State in the south of India. Here we were to be trained as commando units. We became the founding fathers of what is nowadays the RAF Regiment with their base at Honiton in Suffolk, and who now have a paratroop as well as a commando role. We were trained in jungle warfare, unarmed combat, assault courses carried out under live fire, and trained to use machine guns and hand grenades. We were kitted out in jungle green khaki drill and Australian bush hats which are the answer against the tropical sun and monsoon rains, and in this outfit you merge completely with the jungle.

After the unit's rest at Otercamand Hill station up in the Nilgiri Hills we all were transported by troop train up the east coast of India to the north-east frontier to what is now known as Bangladesh to a point where we were ferried across the river Brahmaputra with all our equipment.



Our role in Burma was to defend forward air strips and carrying out reconnaissance patrols, firstly in the Arakan coastal strip in 1943. My unit was to be involved in the siege of Imphal and the Battle of Kohima which marked the turning point when the Japanese were turned and driven back through Burma.

In 1944/5 I joined another unit and with them was to go right through Burma terminating at Rangoon and the battle of Meiktula where the Japs made their last stand on the airfield before being driven across the River Salween into Siam. My unit were engaged in this action and several of my colleagues were killed including the C.O. and his runner who were both shot through the head by a Jap sniper from up in a palm tree, but he was shot out of it by one of our marksmen gunners. Our casualties rest in the Rangoon War Cemetery.

We ended up encamped in the jungle at Prome on the banks of the River Irrawaddy where I contracted my last attack of dysentery and was flown back to the military field hospital in Dacca and from there via Calcutta to Darjeeling for a month's convalescence up at 7,000 ft in the Himalayan foothills. Quite a joy after Burma with its tropical heat averaging 120F, monsoon rains and flash floods, swamps with their leeches and the jungle with its snakes, and on the floor of which we used to sleep with just a groundsheet underneath which was useless against the damp. When my spinal trouble started showing itself about ten years ago I immediately thought of those days and consider it to be a contributory cause which has shown itself years later.

My occupational pension is a Police one. I belonged to a special detachment of armed Police Officers responsible for the security of MI5, and retired from the force in 1977 on compassionate grounds since by then my mother had become a chronic invalid, and died in 1978.

I married the widow of Rev. Alan Carey, - Muriel (Pixy), a Kings Lynn girl. [Alan, as a Major with the Royal West Kents, was also at Kohima where my unit had been although we did not know that at the time.] We were married in Cheam village in Surrey by my cousin Canon John Fitch, and my other cousin Admiral Sir Richard Fitch, the 2nd Sea Lord was my best man; he has since died. Muriel too died at Christmas 1999 having become a chronic invalid.

As a result of an augmentation of honour signed by the Queen, the College of Arms granted to me under Letters Patent, signed and sealed by the King of Arms, a badge and battle standard in recognition of my services in Burma. The badge consists of the

Burmese mountain partridge and the Burmese orchid named after and in honour of Lt. General Albert Fytche who was a Governor of Burma in the 18th century.

My battle standard, published in a previous 'Penny Farthing' consists of the badge and my arms with my motto '**Facta non verba**' (deeds not words).

DMF14030

### Committee Man - 'Mike' Townsend

*We sent Mike a card which he acknowledged. We extracted the following.....*

*"I have not been active on the Committee for many years and it was nice to be remembered.*

*I took the opportunity to visit the museum today and was tremendously impressed. The displays had a stamp of professionalism that our amateur efforts in Spindles and earlier the High Street could not begin to approach.*

*Cath Backus' efforts and persistence have been amply rewarded".*

*Well done, Committee!*

*Sincerely,*

*Mike Townsend*

*To which we can only reply "Thanks, Mike; Those earlier 'amateur' efforts laid the foundations for any successes achieved today!"*

### The FREEDOM of MALDON

Copied from the local news

A pensioner whose father was given the Freedom of Maldon for services to his country during the Boer War has offered to present the historic certificate to the town.

Witham resident Harold Hammond was awarded the rare Freedom of the Borough when he returned from serving with the Essex Regiment in the South African conflict, which ended in 1902.

The certificate, - which in theory entitled its owner to do as he pleased in the former Borough of Maldon without fear of repercussions - took pride of place in the family home for years afterwards, before passing to Mr Hammond's son Cyril, the youngest of ten children.

The 74 year old recently sent the rare accolade to the Maldon District Museum Association and Chairman Paddy Lacey has replied saying the group would be keen to display it somewhere in the town. Mr Hammond, of Harvey Road, Great Totham, has agreed in principle, but says he would most like to see the certificate go up at the Moot Hall in the High Street, next to an existing list of Boer War soldiers from the area in which his father is included.

For that to happen, permission will have to be granted by the Town Council.

## A Letter from America.....Terry Ruggles

Your article "MORE MEMORIES" in the Spring 2003 Issue was very interesting, although I was unable to recall the majority of the Maldonians mentioned.

The one exception was the reference to the Duke of Wellington Pub in London Road which Mrs Collings visited and she stated "The Smiths" were the landlords at the time! The Smiths had a daughter named Ida who married James Hinton of Heybridge, Ida and James were my grandparents on my mother's side of the family. James played football for Heybridge Swifts during the period 1900-1905.

There is also a connection on my Ruggles side of the family to High Street businesses of the 1915 period. William Archer was operating a Pork Butcher's Shop at 115 High Street. He married my grandfather's sister Lily Ruggles in August 1915 and they resided at this address; by 1920 they expanded their business and operated an additional Shop at 81 High Street. Their first three children were born in Maldon and in 1925 the family left Maldon for Colchester where William opened several Butcher Shops. I would appreciate it if someone could inform me of the location of the two shops in the High Street.

Does anyone remember Moe Mansfield who used to deliver milk for the Co-op? On an occasion when he visited his brother in Heybridge who happened to be a neighbour of my family, he asked if a would like to earn some pocket money by helping him on a Saturday morning which was the time to collect the money for the week's deliveries. I was eleven years old at the time and agreed to be his assistant; the year would have been 1946. The method of delivering the milk was by horse and a low mounted cart which had an overhead covering and was open on all sides; the milk was in glass bottles. The route was Wantz Road from the High Street down to Mill Road where we turned right by the Co-op Grocery Store and continued until we reached Farnbridge Road. We then proceeded to King and Queen Streets to complete deliveries. The horse was as familiar with the route as Moe and it knew exactly when to stop, except when a customer was standing outside her house with a "snack"; the horse would proceed to the person and enjoy the offerings whilst Moe stood cursing mildly in the Street.

I have recently made contact with a former Maldonian on this side of the "pond"; her name is Patricia (Trish) Ballentyne and her maiden name was Nicholls. Her father owned the Nicholls Cycle Shop in the High Street, located opposite Butt Lane. Her husband Keith who was a doctor sadly died several years ago; he was the son of Mr Ballentyne who was the owner of the Optician's Shop which was located almost opposite the Nicholl's business. Trish lives 90 miles north of us in the state of New Hampshire

Whilst obtaining copies of an article on the Bentall car for the Museum at a nearby Office Supply Store, the person making the copies asked where the car was manufactured and I replied Heybridge, Essex, in England. Immediately a lady approached me and stated that she had relatives in Tolleshunt Major. Their name is Frost and they are farmers.

Congratulations to the Maldon District Museum on the "launching" of their new website; I found it to be very informative and I am sure it will encourage more visitors to view the wonderful exhibits at "The Museum in the Park".

Terry Ruggles,  
Duxbury, Massachusetts, USA.

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## A Letter from Goldhanger... Margery Bailey

Dear Paddy,

I did not get round to giving you this card at the meeting. Derrick and I visited this little museum during our visit to N.Z. and it reminded me of the Maldon Museum, run on a shoestring entirely by volunteers. I took the liberty of writing greetings from Maldon Museum in the visitors' book.

This small town stands on a large estuary and was founded as a port to export Kauri trees. The earliest photos show people living in very basic conditions, but by the end of the C19th - early C20th it was a very thriving community with an annual rowing regatta (a last boat on show) and many other opportunities to enjoy special occasions.

The Kauri trade died as the supply of trees dried up and it became a small backwater of a place, miles from anywhere by road (as we found out) and it only became revived as a holiday resort and tourist location. The day we were there it was overcast and drizzly. Perhaps that is why I felt it was like home!

Wh is pronounced somewhere between an f and a v and Kawhia ends up sounding like Karfvey. The i has disappeared altogether.

Have a good holiday  
Margery



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## A Century of Orths....

Museum Member 'Bob' Orth, the last of that local family line, has produced, with pictures, a history of his family motor repair business from 1900-2000, now closed. With a foreword by David Courtman it describes the progress of a typical small business through the years, and will be of interest to those who knew the family whether through business or socially.

Bob has a few spare copies which are available at £6 each, 'first come, first served'. 'Phone him on 851224 or write to him at 'Silso', Fairfield Chase, New Street, Maldon, CM9 6AH.

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Several readers will remember meeting Fiona Bengtson when she visited the museum in the course of her researches on Ladies' Boarding Schools. She produced a long article for the Essex Archaeology and History Transactions Vol. 32 (2001), 222 - 227. Fiona has kindly given us permission to reproduce the Maldon Case Study from this article. A copy of the complete article together with its comprehensive annotations is held by the museum and can be made available to Museum Members and Friends.

*Paddy Lacey*

### Maldon Case Study

According to Richard Poole, Cromwell House School was regarded as the best ladies' seminary, not only in Maldon but also in the whole of Essex. Mrs Catherine Wilmshurst, the wife of Reverend Simon Wilmshurst, Congregational minister in Maldon from 1773 to 1800, started the seminary in the 1780s and, after her second marriage to Reverend Morris, continued her involvement with the school until she died on 23rd November 1846, aged 92 years. So grateful were her pupils for the excellent education they had received, that they raised a monument over her grave 'setting forth her virtues'. She was succeeded by her daughters Catherine and Ann Wilmshurst.

Maldon is situated on a hill at the head of the estuary of the Rivers Chelmer and Blackwater, and within easy reach of both London and Chelmsford. The town's location meant it was well placed to facilitate the flow of goods from sea-going vessels to the capital and inland towns. Its greatest period of economic development occurred big the eighteenth century with a general increase in maritime trade. In 1775 the Maldon Stage Fly ran through Danbury, Great Baddow, Stock and Billericay to Shenfield where it connected with the London stage. Re-routed through Chelmsford, it became a daily service in 1785. There was also a packet, which linked Maldon to Kent. So, although Maldon appears isolated, it was well connected to both London and other towns. This was an important factor if boarding school owners wanted to attract pupils from outside the area, which Cromwell House School appears to have done. In 1801, the population of Maldon was 2,300, which had more than doubled to 5,144 by 1841.

The 1841 census shows that Catherine Morris, aged 86, wife of Reverend Morris, the Congregational Minister of Maldon, was head of the Cromwell House Seminary, but the Catherine and Ann Wilmshurst, daughters by the first marriage, were running the school with eight additional live-in teachers. Two of the younger teachers at this time, Mary Ann Dillerson aged 17, and Maria Lowe aged 20, took over the running of the school ten years later.

The school was advertised as 'in a commodious, airy and healthy house' which it certainly was, as the building (which exists today) is situated high on a hill overlooking the estuary. It was built by Sadd, a timber merchant with his own fleet of barges, who installed a belvedere on the roof to observe his ships' movements on the river. It is a very large, three-storey Georgian house, with cellar, partial attic and adjoining coach house. All of this would have been necessary to house a total of fifty-five people; a huge number to feed and sleep, requiring good organisational skills. In 1841 there were forty girl pupils aged from 6 - 19, a staff of twelve, assuming all the teachers and servants lived in, and three family, in an entirely female household.

The first record of the house is a lease for one year between Catherine Wilmshurst, John Sadd and David Queneborough of Dunstable dated 1807. A detailed plan of the site in 1848 shows Ann Wilmshurst as owning three adjoining plots. There is a plantation and garden surrounding the buildings, which is larger than the plot size of the house, and would have given the whole a spacious feel.

Of the forty girls, slightly less than half, eighteen in fact, are shown as out-of-county, with seven pairs of pupils sharing common surnames. Sisters and cousins were frequently boarded together. This often accounts for the large disparity in ages between the girls. Although the school may have been intended for girls over eleven years, occasionally there were girls as young as six years also boarding, probably for reasons of convenience. It is unlikely that the school principals objected as it brought in much needed funds. It was also quite common for brothers, and other male relatives of girls in boarding schools, to be sent to comparable, or better schools, in the same town. There were two male boarding schools in Maldon in 1841; Reverend Salisbury Dunn's School and William Wyatt's. There is no apparent kinship link between the pupils in Dunn's school and Cromwell House in 1841, but Wyatt's school has five boys with the same surname as five Cromwell House girls. This is significant because Dunn's school taught classics whereas William Wyatt's school taught modern, commercial subjects, more in keeping with bourgeois needs.

An undated prospectus exists for Miss Wilmshurst's and Miss Banger's Seminary, Maldon, Essex. 'In a commodious, airy, and healthy house'. This probably refers to Catherine Wilmshurst, daughter by the first marriage, who may have taken over the running of the school from her mother, Mrs Morris, some time after 1823. The young ladies were boarded and educated in English, French, Geography and history with useful and ornamental needlework, at 24 guineas a year, plus one guinea entrance. Pupils paying 34 guineas a year could be taught all accomplishments 'by ladies of the family' and supplied with the use of music (which suggests that either singing or instrument lessons were given). School books and materials for drawing were included in the cost; only washing was extra. Bills were to be paid half yearly and a quarter's notice was required of removal.

The Wilmshurst school was very progressive in its choice of curriculum subjects. Few schools appear to have taught history, and then only as an optional extra. Miss Wilmshurst not only taught history and geography, but she wrote a geography textbook for use in the lessons. This clear, concise book appears to have been popular, and ran to eight editions as it was doubtless a boon to teachers in a period when few instructive were available. Geography and 'use of globes', taught together, was the furthest most girls ventured into the field of science, largely, one suspects, because it was considered unladylike, but also because of the dearth of school manuals on scientific subjects, even if the women knew how to teach them, which they probably did not. Teachers were not formally trained, so could only offer the subjects they knew. Specialist teachers were brought in to supply pupils with additional subjects. The Wilmshursts offered 'Dancing and French taught by Mr Mason and M. Danet'; the latter title suggesting that authentic French was offered by a Frenchman. Many French and dancing teachers were male, French nationals, particularly after 1789 when society was permeated by refugees from the continent. This intrusion of males into the convent-like conditions of these female establishments must have been potentially disruptive to life in the school.

An intriguing extra on the original Wilmshursts' and Banger advertisement is a subscription to the salt water bath for 'one guinea the season'. In *Encyclopaedia Londinensis*, 1816, under Maldon, it states 'a new and handsome bath erected, which brings a much genteel company'. John Handley owned the sea water baths at The Hythe, on the south side of the Chelmer, which he had purchased in 1840 for £150. He died on the 8th March 1863 and left the bath house to Benjamin Turnage Handley, so presumably it was still operating at that date, although bathing machines were certainly in use later. A photograph of the building exists, dated 1927, which shows Bath Cottage at the edge of the creek blocked to form the popular Marine Lake which was completed in 1905. Quite how these baths operated is not known, but no doubt it was an amusing, and healthy, optional extra for Miss Wilmshurst's pupils, to relieve the tedium of lessons.

The 1851 Census records Maria Lowe, aged 29, and Mary-Ann Dillerson, aged 27, previous teachers, now governesses, running the school with Lowe's sister Rachel, aged 20, plus two other female teachers, and a retired governess, Catherine Wilmshurst, as 'boarder'. All these females were unmarried. By the 1850s, there was a growing number of unattached women due to the widening gap between the number of males and females in the population, which meant there were plenty of females available as both teachers and pupils. There were then only twelve pupils, four from London, the others from Essex county, plus two female servants. No girls came from Maldon, although one was from Heybridge. Several had been baptised within a five mile radius of the town, from places such as Woodham Mortimer, Little Baddow, and Witham, but there were also pupils from Waltham Abbey and Norton Mandeville, distances of over 30 miles away, assuming the children still lived at the place of baptism. Of the eight pupils from Essex, four pupils were traced using nominal record linkage, and tentative links were made with two others. These show that Mary Bygrave was the fourth child born to Edward and Julia Bygrave in Little Baddow, of five girls and one boy baptised there between 1830-39. Her father is shown as 'gentleman farmer'. Two other pupils' parents were listed as farmers; one was a druggist, another, Joseph Going, was a 'ship owner, sail maker, coal merchant and agent in Heybridge Basin' in Pigot's Directory for 1850. The Going family became well-established as ship owners, and a Going's Wharf still exists in Heybridge.

There were numerous reasons why girls were sent to boarding school, but for Sarah Jane Kernot of Rayleigh it was probably because her father had died, and her mother may have taken over the family business. Her mother is listed in 1850 as 'Druggist' although the baptismal register shows George as the 'chymist'. He was buried on 26 May 1848, aged 45 years. One of the other girls, Ann Pitcairn, appears to be related to a local councillor, a land tax commissioner and a wine merchant, and Harriet Hutley was from a farming family in Witham. It would appear therefore, that the girls attending this school were all from well-connected, middle-class families with good incomes. Hobsbawm states that generally the middle-class income in mid-Victorian Britain was between £1,000-£5,000 a year; this group included merchants and ship-owners.

By 1861, former teachers Sarah Carter and Rachel Lowe are shown as principals of a much diminished school, with Catherine Wilmshurst, now 74, as a boarder. There is only one female teacher, a servant, and five pupils. One pupil is from Kent, the remainder from Essex. One child is the daughter of a farmer in Hockley, the other may be a cousin. Perhaps the reason for the reduction in student numbers was due to the effect upon navigation of competition from rail transportation, creating a local depression. It may also have been that the Cromwell House school

was in decline, as Catherine Wilmshurst died the following year in October 1862 aged 75 years. Mrs Morris's educational establishment had survived for 59 years during her lifetime, and continued as a ladies' school for at least another fifteen years after her death.

Cromwell House was a long-lived and successful school. The quality of education it offered is unknown, but it appears to have been better than the average ladies' boarding school. Nevertheless it was still a business supplying a demand for genteel education, which included accomplishments. To prepare girls for marriage and motherhood at this time was becoming increasingly in appropriate as many now faced the prospect of spinsterhood. But, throughout the 18th and well into the 19th century these schools continued to be both class and gender-based. They provided an education which did not equip the girls to earn their own living, and yet, as the century progressed it became increasingly necessary for them to do so. One of the few options open to them was teaching. This was regarded as an extension of child-rearing and therefore socially acceptable as an occupation for women. Unfortunately, these women were merely perpetuating their own poor education. It needed a radical change in social attitude to break the cycle, but this was still some years into the future.

Despite all the criticism levelled against them, these private ladies' schools delivered the kind of education demanded of them by their middle-class clientele. If they had not done so they would not have survived as long as they did.

Author - Fiona Bengsten, *The Bury, Mamuden, Bishops Stortford, Herts CM23 1DG*



Places of baptism in Essex of girls attending the Cromwell House School, Maldon, in 1851 and 1861.

# Maldon District Museum Association

—Registered Charity 301362—

President - Mr. Derek Maldon Fitch

Vice President - Mr L.F. Barrell

## Committee - to A.G.M. 2004

Chairman.....Paddy Lacey.....

Vice-Chairman .....Tony Tullett.....

Hon. Secretary..... to be advised

Hon. Treasurer.....Tony Tullett.....

Membership Sec:.....Colin Barrell.....

Committee.....Lynda Barrell.....

Committee.....Mike Bennett.....

Committee.....Ray Brewster.....

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

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

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Curatorial Adviser....Nick Wickenden Esq  
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(Answerphone when museum unattended)

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