
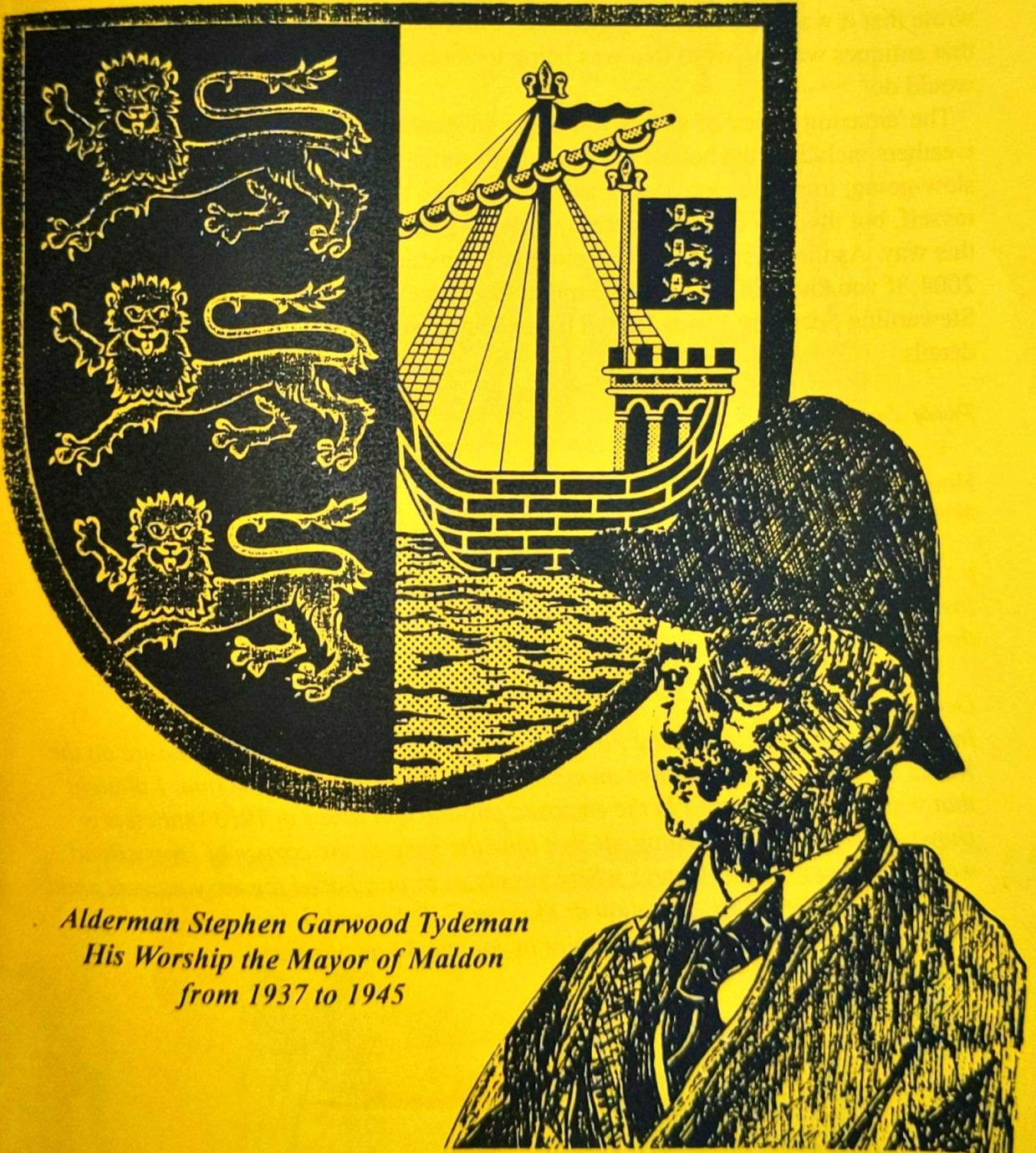


Issue 35

Winter ~~Autumn~~ 2003

THE PENNY  *FARTHING*
The Newsletter of Maldon District Museum Association



*Alderman Stephen Garwood Tydeman
His Worship the Mayor of Maldon
from 1937 to 1945*

Your Chairman's Chat...

At the beginning of September we welcomed to the Museum over 100 children from Theydon Bois Primary School with their teachers. The children showed a lively interest in all that we had to show to them. Some days later we received a mounted set of alliterate sentences written by our visitors that formed a rather unusual appreciation of our exhibits. I hope that our trusty editor will find space to include some in this issue *. One of them that caught my eye was the pupil who wrote that it was the amazing antics at the museum that he appreciated most. I think that antics was the word that was being looked for rather than antics, but either would do!

The 'amazing antics' of all our volunteers in stewarding the Museum through all weathers including the hottest day on record, sometimes very busy, sometimes very slow-going, impresses me greatly and I would like to say on behalf not only of myself, but the Association generally, a very big thank you to all who have helped in this way. As the season comes to a close we immediately start planning the rota for 2004; if you know of any one who might like to steward next year do please let our Stewarding Secretary Lynda Barrell have their names so that they can be sent details.

Paddy Lacey

*see centre pages Ed

Hon. Chairman

p.s.
Inside the rear cover you will find two photographs. They came accompanied by the following note.....

Dear Editor,
In the last edition of the Penny Farthing you published an interesting feature on the Want: Road home of committee member Ray Brewster, by George Ginn. I thought that you may be interested in the enclosed photograph taken in 1973 that clearly shows the bakery of F. Gosling. At that time the shop at the corner of Dyers Road was a very busy General stores where sweets were purchased for my youngest child who had just started his education at Maldon C. P. School. I look forward to reading the continuation of this feature in volume 34 as promised.

Yours truly
A keen reader!

COSTUME DURING THE REIGN OF QUEEN VICTORIA 1837-1901



Maldon Victorian Evenings 4th & 11th December 6.30pm - 9.30pm + 1871
DSC



MORE THOUGHTS ON THE PAST

You will recall in an earlier edition, the list of Maldon Mayors in which the name 'Tydeman' was somewhat prominent. Having comparatively recently welcomed son John and nephew Nicholas to our association we took the opportunity, (having recorded the profile of our President Derek Maldon Fitch) of asking John for some Tydeman family history. We were delighted to receive his reply.....

"Belatedly, following the letter and list of Maldon Mayors in issue 29, and some strong nudgings recently from Len B, I have at last set about assembling information about my grandfather and father, which I hope may be of interest"

CAPTAIN STEPHEN TYDEMAN 1849-1920.

My grandad was Stephen Tydeman, builder (he built the house in which I was born and where Len now lives), carpenter, cabinet maker, plumber, decorator, sign writer - a considerable craftsman. He was a very active member of the Maldon Voluntary Fire Brigade, becoming Captain and serving for almost 40 years.

He was responsible for initiating regular practise drills and as a result the Maldon Brigade was highly regarded, winning several challenge cups for high efficiency. He received a special gift of an inscribed writing cabinet (which is now the cherished possession of his great grandson Nicholas) from a grateful borough.

Some of the many outstanding fires they attended included Beeleigh Mill in 1875 (which was particularly hazardous due to falling machinery), Sadds timber wharf, Langford Mill in 1879, and an even more dangerous one at the Drill Hall in 1907, where live ammunition and gunpowder was stored and began to explode.

Stephen was awarded the National Fire Brigade Union *Silver, Bronze, and Long Service* medals. On his retirement from the Brigade in 1911 he received a special gift from a grateful borough presented by the then Mayor Cllr H.W. Sadd.

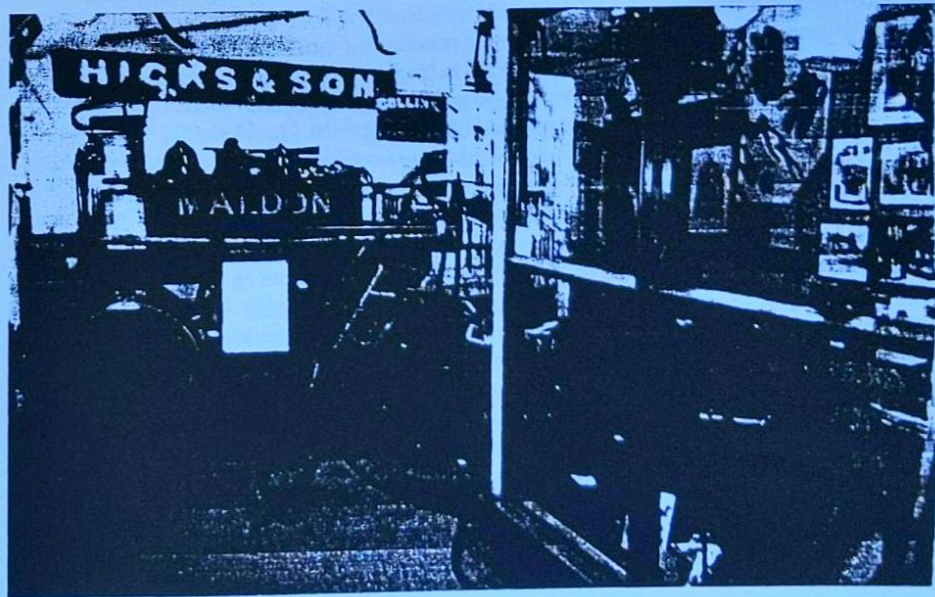
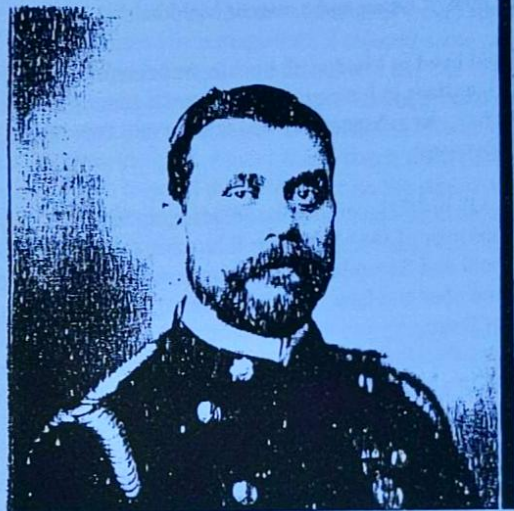
The engine and crew dashing through the streets, drawn by four horses, bells ringing, polished brass pump and helmets gleaming, must have made an impressive and inspiring sight!

Stephen was never injured on fire service, but came close to losing his life whilst working on a London Road house in 1906. His ladder collapsed and falling, he was impaled on iron railings beneath. Seriously hurt he nevertheless recovered eventually and later was able to resume both work and his other various activities - including that of County Court Usher, a job fulfilled by his father Robert before him and also, later, by his son who subsequently became the Mayor. I am the proud owner of several of his tools, some of which he made himself, and still giving good service.

<<<000>>>

Fire Officer - Captain Stephen Tydeman

For the original Maldon Horse-drawn Fire Engine, see
The Museum display accompanied by informative narrative.



ALDERMAN S. G. TYDEMAN 1880 - 1971

My father, Stephen Garwood or "SGT" as he became known, was involved in many aspects of public life in the town and county from a very early age - a tribute quoted in the 'Essex Weekly' when he retired from one commitment said "... he takes just pride that he is a man of Essex and a man of Maldon..."

Born, educated and lived in Maldon all his life, he became a Councillor and member of the Board of Guardians in his early twenties and a committee member of Maldon Co-operative Society - he subsequently was auditor and then President for 45 years - a record in the movement.

He was elected a J.P. in 1921, serving for 38 years; an Essex County Councillor for over 20 years, Chairman of the Mid-Essex Education Committee as well as of both the Grammar School and Secondary School Governors - it is interesting to note here that as an active member and later Vice-President of Maldon Cricket Club, he had earlier been one of those very much opposed to the building of the new Grammar School on what was then the cricket ground! The building went ahead (fortunately for my brother and me; we only had to cross the road to school) and the club was resited.

A dedicated Baptist, 'SGT' became a member of Maldon Baptist Church, lay preacher and President of the District Free Church Council. His Church activities covered an extensive range of duties. He was an ardent Free-Churchman, a Life Deacon of Maldon Baptist Church, and a president of the District Free Church Council. He was a Trustee responsible for helping to organise and maintain mission and memorial chapels in Gay Bowers, Woodham Walter and until 1969 at Runsell Green, Danbury. He is still remembered at Maldon Baptist Church for his idiosyncratic behaviour which included taking issue with sermons from his seat at the back of the church, and calling overly verbose ministers to get to the point! There is a seat dedicated to his memory in the Church at Butt Lane, Maldon. His activities in all aspects of church life again highlight his high ideals of service to his fellow man and his belief that life within the community was to be lived to the full.

Rejected as unfit for military service in the first world war, he was advised to take out-door employment. He joined the local Red Cross and after a number of jobs he became District Agent for the Prudential and served for nearly forty years. Elected an Alderman of the Borough in 1937 he also became Mayor that year when, during the 'crisis' of '37/38 it was decided to suspend, temporarily, mayoral elections, and

Dad was asked if he would continue 'until things settled down' - he agreed and remained mayor for eight years throughout the subsequent war, until 1945.

As a teenager growing up during that period I became used to our house in Farnbridge Road being a sort of public building - Dad maintained an 'open-door' welcome to anyone who needed help, people called at all hours for advice, grumbles, or things to be signed by a magistrate. I enjoyed some privileges as mayor's son; for example I had access, via a friend and ally Mr Waldoock, (Mace bearer and Town Crier) to the Moot Hall. I enjoyed taking friends to see the prisoner's dock in the court room and up to see the view of Maldon from the roof top - preferably just before the hour, when I could watch them jump as, unsuspected, the great bells boomed out! However, as the son of a deacon and lay preacher I endured sometimes four separate services and sermons on a Sunday! - but I had a happy childhood and the mayor still found time occasionally to play cricket or clock golf with me and my friends.

It is a great compliment to my mother Edith that it was a happy, organised and contented home. The Essex Chronicle paid tribute to her on her death, aged 81, in 1968 "...the former mayoress will be remembered with affection and gratitude; she would have preferred the background but she shared and supported her husband in full in their public life... she carried out her public duties with dignity in an unassuming way and was also a kind and devoted wife and mother". She, too, was involved in several spheres, such as helping the poor, the Guardians, Sunday School and the band. She helped to organise the arrival of evacuees (before the authorities realised that sending children to the east coast was not a good idea!) and the W.V.S.

My souvenirs include a 1938 Carnival Programme full of well-known Maldon names and businesses, swimming sports in the Marine Lake, Best Ankle Competition (separate classes for married and single ladies!), floating fireworks, and dancing by the bandstand on the Prom until midnight. I have a lavishly illustrated programme from the 1938 Colchester Oyster Feast to which all Essex Mayors were invited - I remember Dad coming home and feeling 'queasy' after trying to do his civic duty and not let the borough down!. The brief history it includes of Colchester reminds me of how strongly my father felt about the dispute between the two boroughs, with Colchester's claim to be the oldest recorded town, but Maldon was the older borough, having an earlier charter - how sad Dad and his contemporaries would be now to see that the old borough "has been emasculated by absorption into the District Council.....with its puny powers and responsibilities" (Quote from 'The Changing High Street', W.G.Ginn, issue 28).

Wartime papers include German propaganda leaflets dropped on Maldon (one in our garden) at the start of the war and local correspondence showing how these were treated with amusement and collected to be sold to raise money for the Red Cross! I also have a civil Defence record, published in 1945, showing the types and total of 26,777 "missiles" dropped on the Maldon district. Although not a specific target, Maldon and Burnham districts saw a lot of wartime activity and suffered considerable damage. My friends and I did a lot of cycling around looking at crashed aircraft and collecting (probably illegal) souvenirs as well as disagreeing with the Royal Observer Corps, stationed in the corner of the Grammar School playing field, about aircraft recognition. Sadly, on one occasion I cycled to Heybridge Basin to find my friend's house demolished - luckily he survived but his mother had died. Our house in Fambridge Road had two near misses from flying bombs - one passed by to land behind us near Mount Pleasant. Dad's friend and Prudential colleague E.D.Roberts was an air raid warden who lived just down the road. Going out on duty one night he (fortunately) put on his helmet and stepped from the front door, to be knocked over by a lump of falling shrapnel - he was surprised but unhurt, and very funny when he told us about it next day. A few weeks later his, and his neighbours' houses were hit by a flying bomb, but again Mr & Mrs Roberts were uninjured.

An Essex Chronicle cutting from July 1945 shows a picture of Dad, as Mayor in 1940, addressing a group of the newly formed L.D.V. (later to become the Home Guard, then "Dad's Army"). Interestingly the censor prevented it from being published at the time - presumably so the Germans would not see the strength of opposition in Maldon!

"S.G.T." stood down from public life as age and a changing society overtook him. Edith having died in 1968 he followed in 1971, not quite reaching 91.

I am proud of my parents and the contribution they made to Maldon people during their lives.(as were my brothers - Bob, our last direct link with Maldon died at 86 in 2000; Gar at 91 in 2001).

I hope these notes will have been of some interest and perhaps revived a few memories.

John Tydeman, Fingringhoe, Essex. August 2003

P.S. John will, I trust, forgive me for mentioning the powerful voice of his father who spoke with such real authority, commanding respect and even affection..... Len B. and sadly we must now record the death of Bob's wife Ivy who moved away when Bob died but was really another part of Maldon.

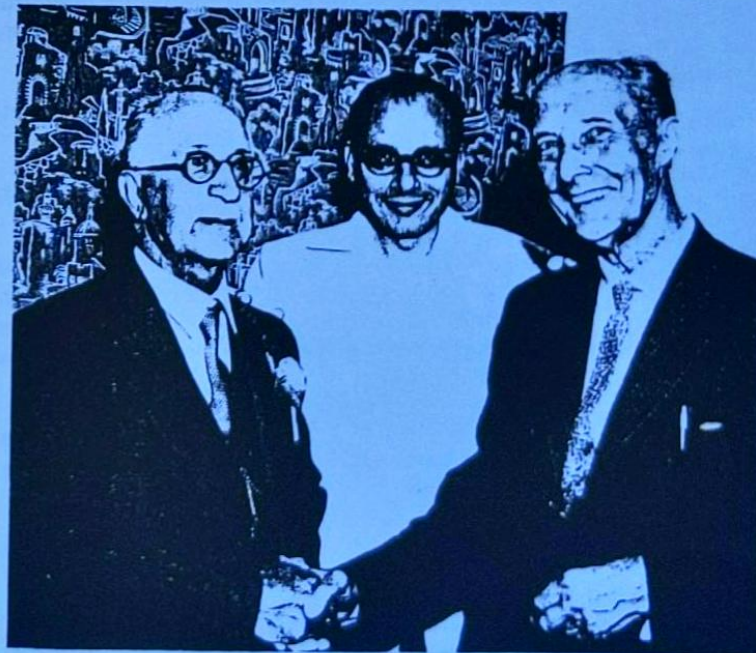
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The Three Maldoneers

In 1959 Cllr W.G. (George) Ginn J.P. reintroduced F.J. (Freddie) May to Alderman Stephen Garwood Tydeman. Pre-war, 'Freddie' had been Headmaster of Wantz Road Secondary School, as well as a Borough Councillor. He left Maldon to become Headmaster of Grafton Road School, Dagenham at which George was then a pupil. Ald. Tydeman was later to be Mayor.

In 1959 'Freddie' learned that George was Mayor of Maldon. He decided to check, and subsequently revisited Maldon. Our photocopy happily records the result.

Left to right.....Ald. S.G. Tydeman - Cllr. W.G. Ginn - Mr. F.J. May



Part of our heritage is the . . . Borough Mace

Originally a mace was a weapon of war and made of iron or steel. Mediaeval bishops carried them into battle instead of swords. The clergy was thereby able to comply with the canonical rule which forbade priests to shed blood.

Ornamental civic maces were not allowed to any but the king's sergeants, according to a commons' petition of 1344, however the privilege was extended to York in 1396 and Norwich in 1403. By the seventeenth century most important cities and towns possessed a silver mace. Maldon obtained its emblem of civic pride in the year 1687.

"Constitu. & fac. J.P. prim. & modeni Major, 1687". (Designed and made for John Pond, first and present Mayor, 1687). Thus reads the inscription on Maldon's fine silver-gilt mace.

The words are of particular interest as it was in the previous year that James II's charter created the office of Mayor. Until then two Bailiffs had been the borough's controlling officers.

It can therefore be said that Maldon's mace has been in ceremonial use for 284 years.

The mace-head is divided into four sections. These contain the rose, the thistle, the harp and the fleur-de-lis.

The initials "A.R." appear on the head. This is an interesting point since it is obvious, upon close examination, that an alteration has been made. The original letters were "J.R.", after James II. An attempt to up-date the inscription must have been made when Queen Anne came to the throne.

The head is surmounted by a crown, at the base of which is a plate bearing the royal arms and the mark "I2.R.". "I" being the initial for "Iain", the Scottish version of James.

It is thought that the maker was a Francis Garthorne. The initials "F.G." on a shield support this supposition.

Measuring 52½ inches in length and weighing 10 lbs., Maldon's mace is amongst the largest in the country.



Photograph L. J. Saye

The Borough Mace

Theydon Bois Primary School
Orchard Drive
Theydon Bois
Essex
CM16 7DH
16th September 2003

Dear museum curators,

Theydon Bois Primary School would like to thank you very much for showing us around your very interesting museum yesterday. It was really fun and we saw lots of fascinating artefacts. Here are our best 'alliteration' sentences:

Observing the mysterious mummified cat,
in the nature room.

Observing the mummified fabulous fruit bat
in the Nature room.

Looking at the amazing alligator.

Glancing at the magnificent mummified cat and rat.

Feeling the icy iron.

We viewed the horrible hand.

I liked the amazing antlers.

Looking at the boney horrible hands

We viewed the horrible hand in the victorian doctors cabinet

Seeing the hairy head in the cabinet

Glancing at the wonderful woodwork
illumination

Seeing the long savage sword

Seeing the shiny sharp swords up the stairs

Looking at the incredibly stuffed and amazing animals

Staring at the big jagged jacket.

Feeling the brilliant bike in the living-room.

Looking at the terrific trains.

Sneaking Past the models of brilliant boats.

Looking up at the large 42 stone monstrous man.

Looking at the luxury living room.

Observing the magnificent museum.

Glancing at the old ornaments in the
circular room.

Glancing at the shimmering speckly swords.

Looking at the old fashioned coin collection.

Seeing the fat fish in the animal room.

Showing us the terrific toy train station

Seeing the brilliant brown bow going up the stairs.

Looking at the bow and arrow on the white wall

Glaring at the Glamorous Guns

It Will Never Catch On!
by Member Charles Middleton

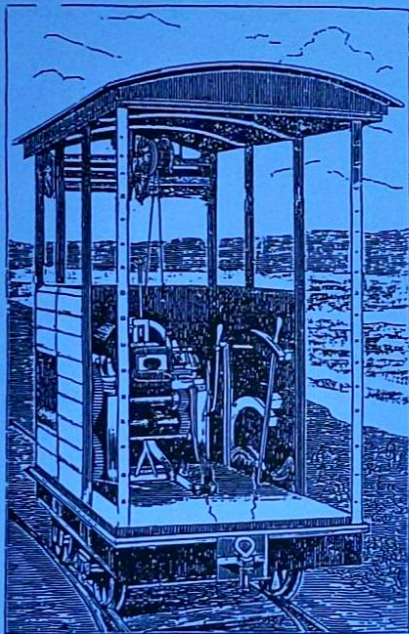
I came across the attached illustration in a book on electromagnetism published at the end of the 19th century. Reading the text I felt that there was a parallel to be drawn with the Bentall motor car. It is generally accepted and believed that Bentall after making a few cars saw no future in the car business and so stopped making them. Maybe it was for the best as can anyone imagine what would have happened to Maldon as a town if he had carried on? Would we have become an industrial city like Birmingham? It doesn't bear thinking about.

It was felt at the end of the 19th century that there was no real future in the electric motor except maybe to power small lathes or they were at their best powering sewing machines. Some people believed there were advances that could be made in giving freedom from smoke and fumes in underground railways but that this was seen as a far fetched idea.

The locomotive shown in the illustration was in France and current was supplied by sixty Faure's cells weighing half a ton. When charged they would work a train weighing over six tons for three hours.

Some small experiments had been carried out in Berlin and Paris but bad insulation meant a huge wastage of current. At that time the belief was that any reports on the future of electric transportation had been compiled by advocates of the use of electricity and in every case the financial calculations had been based on experiments and not working costs. Moreover, the experimental demonstrations of electric trains were mainly used for advertising purposes and the running costs were higher than the income they were likely to generate. Therefore a future for electric traction was not seen as a plausible option at the time.

Today we can look at the total use of electric trains (diesel electric are also electric locomotives carrying their own generators) on our rail networks and look back at early experiments with a sense of humorous delight. It leaves me wondering if there are experiments going on today that we feel will never catch on and will future generations of historians find humour in our lack of foresight.



MRS MURIEL BINDER (Nee Baker)
Reported in the absence of 'Liz' Willsher, Accessions Officer,
by Member Judy Betteridge

An exceptional Bequest for our Museum

Earlier this summer our Chairman, Paddy Lacey, was contacted by the family of the late Mrs Muriel Binder, daughter of a former Mayor, E.A. Baker, and wife of Wallace Binder, a local farmer and also a former Mayor. Mrs Binder's family were in the process of clearing the house, and had discovered many items which they thought would be of interest to our Maldon Museum.

Three visits were made by various members of the museum and a veritable treasure trove of artefacts resulted. The house itself, 'New Trees', built by Mrs Binder's father in the early thirties, is an Art Deco gem, virtually unchanged in seventy years. The Bakers were a large family, and, it seemed, hardly ever threw anything away. Many of the items were stored in old chocolate boxes, in themselves of interest, as many are over 50 years old. Another thrill was to discover a box of Christmas cards from about 1951, many of them sent to the Binders from local Maldon families, including the Foyles at Beeleigh Abbey.

A sad discovery in the garage was an old leather suitcase containing the effects of Ned Baker, Mrs Binder's little brother, who died in 1908 aged nine, whilst at Felsted School. His complete school uniform and personal effects had been returned to the family, and remained in the suitcase for nearly a hundred years. It is interesting to record that the clothes are in excellent condition and could be worn today. In one hundred years' time, will any of our modern clothes be discovered in a wearable condition? We also have Ned's school exercise books, including one entitled "Impositions", presumably an Edwardian expression for "Lines".

In another box we discovered a huge number of old newspapers, all covering events of national importance such as the death of George V, followed by the abdication crisis, and other from WW1 and later. There were also numbers of local papers which contained items concerning the Baker and Binder families.

Among the many items of local ephemera, Museum Volunteer Mrs Betty Chittenden (nee Askew) was particularly moved to discover a programme relating to the Dedication of the Avenue of Remembrance on the promenade in 1935. Three members of Betty's family, who died during the First World War are listed in the programme and have trees dedicated to their memory.

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It is very poignant to note one of them, Oxley Askew, aged only seventeen years, who had lied about his age to enter the army. It is even sadder to note that Betty's own father Arthur Askew, brother to Oxley, also died whilst serving in the army during a war, but in the Second World War. What a huge sacrifice the Askew family have made in the service of their country.

There are many other items of ephemera relating to Maldon - does anyone remember the Maldon Sheep Dog Trials held in 1946, for instance or the Maldon Choral Society's rendering of "The Gondoliers" in 1931? Many items relate to WW1 - 'Application for Enrolment in the ARP' - a Notice from the Regional Commissioner re. the Immobilisation of Vehicles - an M.B.C notice re. the formation of an Invasion Committee, and so on.

If we were to go on to list all the items, so generously donated by the Binder family, we would need to take up the whole of this magazine. To date, work on listing and storing is on-going; we have now reached 200 items, with more to deal with. For those of us working on this bequest, it has been an exciting journey of discovery and delight, and we regard it as a great privilege to have been instrumental in preserving these gifts, which form such an important part of Maldon's history

I could go on and on - I haven't even mentioned the items from the kitchen - Mrs Binder's Girl Guide Captain's uniform (I was a member of her troop!) - toys - clothes, some of which belonged to her, her Father, and some to Wallace - his Alderman's cape for example, and so much more, like photographs of the family, endless WW1 notices. When we have finished accessioning everything, which will be quite soon now, we shall have a complete list of all artefacts available for examination, and posterity.

A Fishy Tale...?

Most Maldonians will remember or at least have heard of 'King' Wright, a respected Maldon fisherman, and might well be amused by his favourite joke.....

"Proceeding through the Prom late one afternoon, I came upon the old road sweeper seated on the kerb, dejectedly looking at his broom, which was in two pieces. "What's up, mate?" says King "You're looking a bit down today". "I should think I am", says the road sweeper, "All day long the handle's been coming off this broom, and now the head's fell off"!!

RE-TIRED

*Just a line to say I'm living, that I'm not among the dead,
Though I'm getting more forgetful, and mixed up in my head*

*I've got used to my arthritis, to my dentures I'm resigned,
I can manage my bifocals, but Oh God I miss my mind.*

*For sometimes I can't remember, when I stand at the foot of the stairs,
If I just went up for something or I've just come down from there.*

*And before the fridge so often, my mind is filled with doubt,
Have I just put food away, or come to take some out.*

*And there are times when it is clear, with my nightcap on my head,
I don't know if I'm retiring, or just getting out of bed.*

*So, if it's my turn to write to you , there's no need in getting sore,
I may think I have written and don't want to be a bore.*

#####Gibby#####

From the M.D.C. Fact Sheet ... The District

The Maldon District is an unspoiled, largely rural area covering some 89,000 acres with over 60 miles of coastline. It is one of the region's fastest growing areas and has a population in excess of 55,000.

Did you know that.....?

The Marine Promenade and Recreation Ground (known to our older generation as *The Prom*) was opened on 26th June 1895. The Lake followed on the 21st June 1905. The original area comprised of 14 acres of land laid out with grass, trees, and shrubs. It cost between £4,000 and £5,000 to construct the Park, and for the opening, almost every house in the town was decorated. Mr Cyril Dodd Q.C. M.P., observed that if young Londoners knew what boating, fishing, and bracing air were to be enjoyed at Maldon, the town would soon become a London suburb.

The opening was performed by the Mayor and local Historian Mr Edward A. Fitch FLA, the well-known local farmer who donated some of his land to create "the Prom".

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(Other) MUSEUMS

2. The Ashmolean

...opened in 1683 when the University of Oxford was the first corporate body to receive a private collection and agree to house it in a building erected for this purpose; then make it available to the public. The gift was from Elias Ashmole and contained much of the Tradescant collection, 'on condition that a place be built to house it'.

The resulting building inevitably became 'The Ashmolean Museum', later to be moved to another new building nearby, whilst the original museum is now occupied by the Museum of the History of Science.

#####pB5#####

More "Black" Info

We are grateful to resident Russell Elder for his contribution to the Blackshirt item in our Autumn Issue No.34. We relate as received.....

The article "Blackshirts in Maldon" in the Autumn 2003 copy of your magazine caught my eye. It crossed with a book I was reading recently and as a result I can add one local name to the story.

Captain William Hart Gregson was resident in Maldon 1938. He was involved with Sir Oswald Mosley's British Union of Fascists and was area organiser in this district.

After clashes with a mob at the time of Mussolini's war in Ethiopia he changed sides and became Garrison Engineer with the Royal Engineers at Southend-on-Sea, finally departing to Tasmania. He died in 1957.

I suppose his real claim to some sort of fame was as the last owner of Borley Rectory - The most haunted house in England. He bought the Rectory from the Church authorities for £500 - insured it for £10,000 - and some would say he set the place on fire. He lost his insurance claim, settled out of Court for £750. He was described as "a man of straw".

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Seen in Public place...."Do not enter if door is closed"

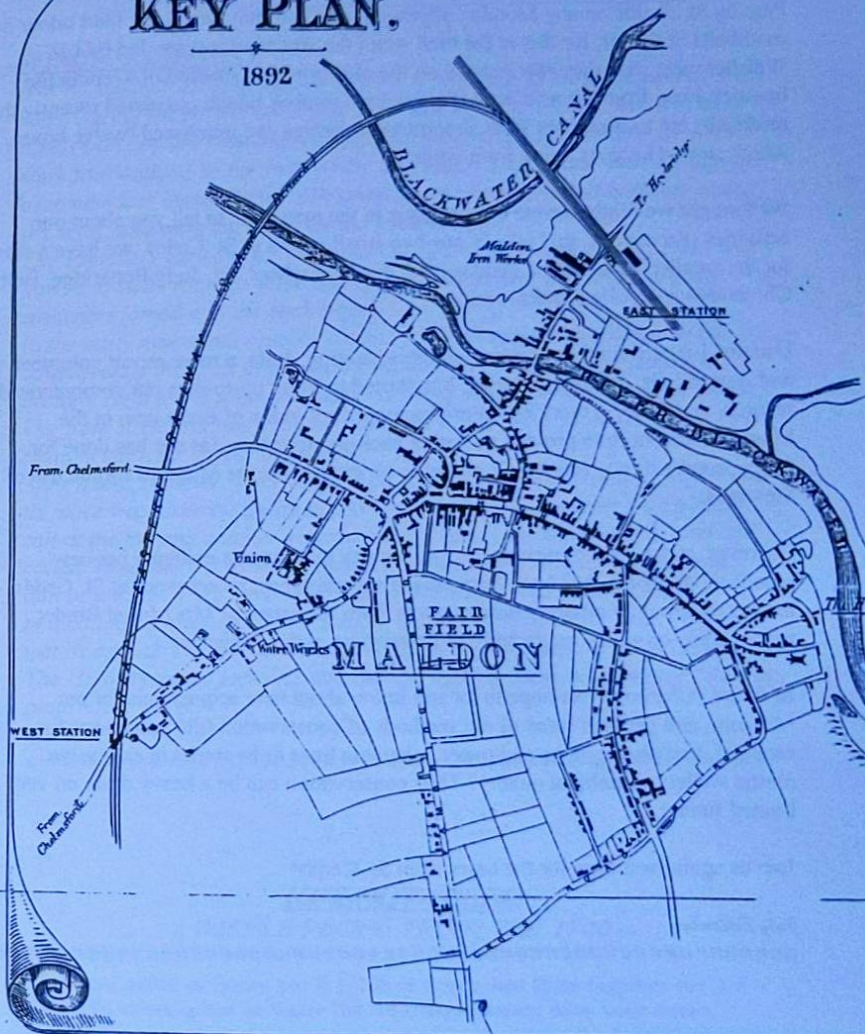
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KEY PLAN.

1892



ST. CEDD'S CHATLINE

Pass by St. Cedds on any Monday afternoon, and you may detect the faint odour of mothballs in the air, for this is the time when the Accessions team, led by Liz Willsher meet, and they rely heavily on the old fashioned method of keeping the beasties away from the artefacts! (Following a rumour which circulated recently that mothballs are to disappear from supermarket shelves, we purchased twelve boxes, which should keep us going for a while!)

We thought we might devote a little space in the magazine to tell you about our activities (accessions, that is!). In our two small rooms at St. Cedds, we have a store for the smaller items not on display, and an office where Liz, Judy Betteridge, Betty Chittenden and Julia Barnes work.

Usually, Liz and Judy concentrate on accessioning; Julia, a more recent volunteer and, joy of joys, computer literate, has started to bring up-to-date our computerised records, and Betty is working on producing a card index of every item in the Museum and store to provide us with a back-up inventory, (as she has done for many months now), which will probably be installed at the Museum for the use of Stewards.

However, at the time of writing, as Liz is away in Australia enjoying her new grandson, and Betty has been hospitalised several times, recent work at St. Cedds has centred mainly on accessioning items from the estate of Mrs Muriel Binder, more details of which are to be found elsewhere is this Magazine.

In future "Chatlines" we hope to let you know about new acquisitions for our Museum, and perhaps some of our methods of conservation (did you know, for example, that photographs and paper ephemera have to be stored in expensive plastic wallets of archival quality? Thus conservation can be a heavy drain on very limited funds).

Join us again next time for the news from St. Cedds!

Judy Betteridge

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From the M.D.C. Fact Sheet ... The Promenade Park

Covers a total area of 59 acres....viz. 24 hectares or approx 24,000 sq.metres

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COLLECTORS' CHAIRS - WINDSOR

Continuing a series introduced by Cllr Shrimpton in News 33

WINDSOR CHAIRS

It is not difficult to date Windsor chairs, if one calls to mind the kind of dress worn during the period when they were made. Up to the beginning of the nineteenth century wide-skirted coats for men, and hooped skirts for women, were fashionable; so the seats of the arm chairs were made wide enough to accommodate these clothes. The arms of the chairs finished half-way round the seats, and were cut away for the same reason.

The stretchers varied also. The front one of an eighteenth century chair was bowed to make room to make room for the hoop, and two small straight stretchers joined it to the back legs.

In the early nineteenth century, clothes for both sexes were skimpy in cut, consequently the seats of the chairs became narrower and the arms were brought right to the front, the supports being merely turned pieces of wood. The front stretchers ran from the front legs to the back, joined together by a straight stretcher across the middle.

After about 1850 the 'wheel-back' type of chair disappeared for a while, and its place was taken by chairs of a much more ordinary nature with a plain rail at the top and another at waist level. These were made in sets, and still called 'Windsors'. They were regarded as suitable chairs for the servants' hall or kitchen. They were well made of various woods, and look quite well in a cottage if nicely polished. But the hooped-back Windsor chair had not lost its appeal. The Chiltern 'bodgers' never stopped making them by hand. The High Wycombe factories also started making them, on conveyor belts, in plain white wood.

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WALNUT MEAD

a SIMPLE RECIPE FROM THE 1700's

To every gallon of water put 3.1/2 lb of honey; boil them together for 3/4 hour. To every gallon of liquor put 24 walnut leaves, pour your liquor boiling hot upon them, let them stand all night, then take the leaves out and put in a spoonful of yeast and let it work for 2 or 3 days, then make it up and let it stand for 3 months, then bottle it.

John Luff

A WAIL FROM THE HOMESTEAD

Origin and writer unknown

Wheat, barley, and oats; oats, barley, and wheat,
Two quarters an acre - two quarters or less is all the poor farmers can get.

Rent, rating and tithe, tithe, rating and rent;
Two quarters an acre will never pay all, though all the broad acres are spent.

After the landlord's hand, after the agent's receipt,
After the overseer's quarterly call, woe for the little ones' feet.

After the beasts are all sold, after the mill credit stops,
After the straw-yard is empty awhile, woe for the next year's crops.

"Royal Commission", indeed - Had it not better have been
A Government grant, which would cover the tithe, wherever deficiency's seen

Instead of a party of men sent hunting for misery's roots
How welcome a bevy of wagons had been, with blankets, potatoes, and boots.

Time was - in England's youth when the whole tithe was given
To feed or clothe the poor, and mend the fabrics reared for Heaven.

Where does the tithe go now? Outside the parish bound,
And to sustain the parish Church the velvet bag goes round.

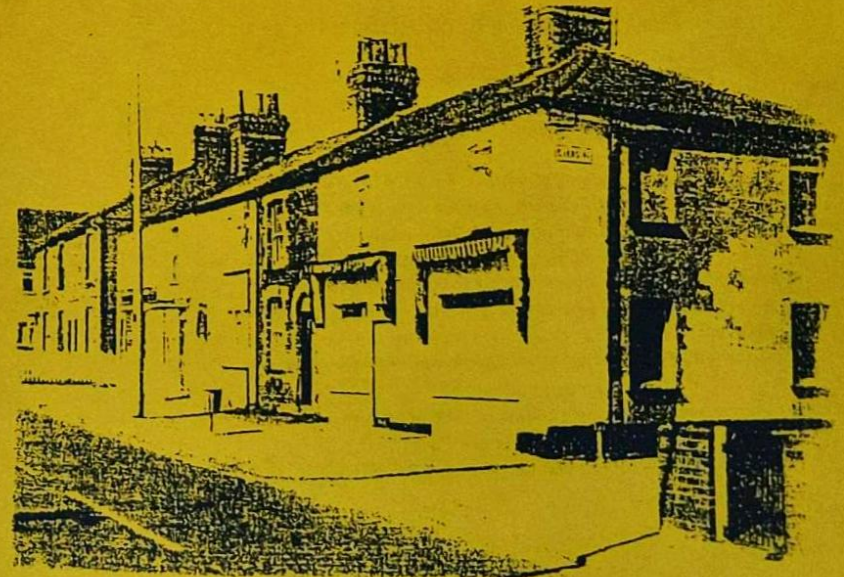
One little thought of mine can do no harm if told -
If the tithe holders gave us trust, would they be short of gold?.

And would they really think benevolence were cheated,
If in these dreadful times they sent their notices receipted?.

#####Martha#####

Brief extract from "Punch".....The late Lord Mayor, rope maker as he was, was
not satisfied with the rope the Aldermen gave him. He actually took more!

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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-ChairmanTony 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 Willsher.....

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Curatorial Adviser....Nick Wickenden Esq  
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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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