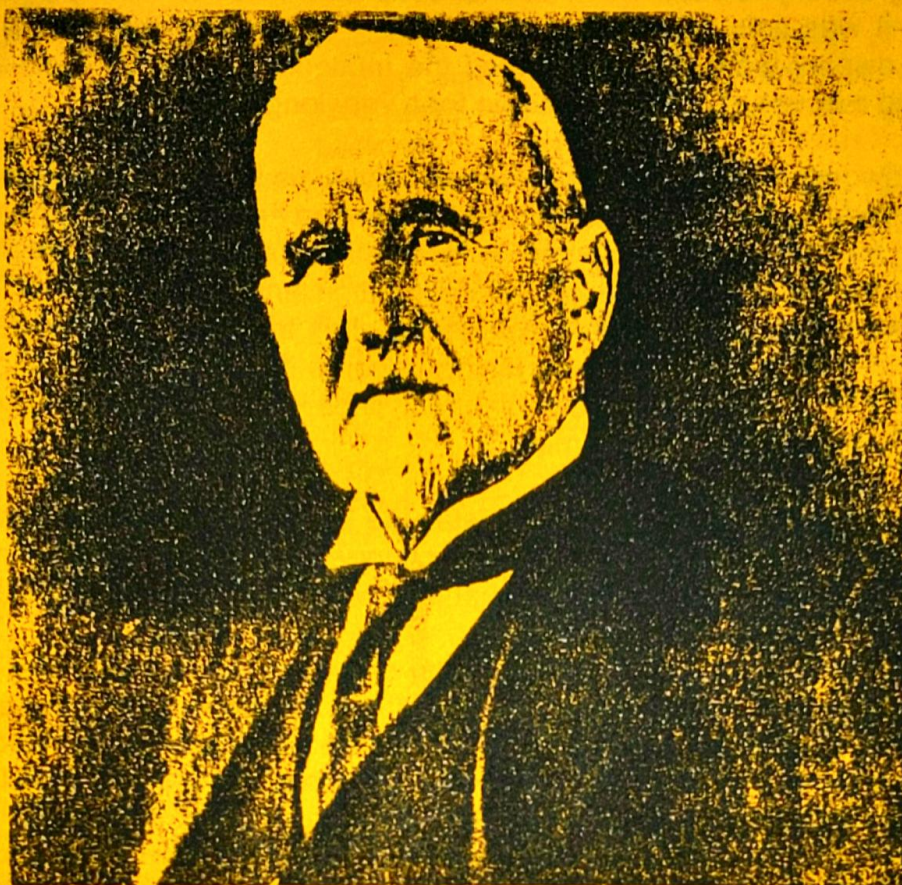


THE PENNY FARTHING

The Maldon District Museum Association Newsletter



JOHN PRICE SADD
see story page 8

In this issue

Chairman's Chat	1	The Penny Farthing Bicycle	13 & 14
The Maldon Moneyer	2 & 15	Friends of Thomas Plume Library	16
Murder Most Foul	3, 4 & 5	What Do You Know?	16
The Swan	6	St Cedd's Chatline	17
As It Might Be Fought	7	The Butcher, the Baker - Part 9	18
John Sadd Part 3	8 & 9	St Mary, Maldon	19
East London Cabbies' Outing	10	Letters	20 & 21
Prittlewell's Saxon Tomb	11 & 12	Acquisitions 1928	22



CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

At our recent AGM I pointed out that the coming year would be one of change. This is because of the loss of Mike Bennett last December and the retirement of Judy Tullett as she is gradually relocating in Rutland, coupled with Geoff Albury having decided that at 85 it was time to hang up his overalls. This marks the natural end of the wonderful display team that has served the museum so well for the past 9 years, establishing a house style that will serve for a very long time.

These hardworking and extremely talented individuals started with a blank canvas of the Promenade Lodge in 1996 and have produced a kaleidoscope of images of time past in Maldon that is accessible both to local residents and visitors from near and far alike. Our job will be to build on this foundation and to continue to improve the displays and therefore, the visitor experience. It is tempting to say that there is no need for major alterations because history records that even the smallest variation can have a very considerable knock-on effect, such is the concentration of objects on display with space being at a premium.

Both Judy and Geoff have agreed to install the travelling exhibition, "Essex and the Sea" at the end of August, this mid-season change being a unique event in the history of the Museum in the Park. I am sure that they would welcome help with this change.

"Essex and the Sea" is a co-operative effort of ten museums that includes us. We were represented at the meetings that set up the exhibition by Julia Cottam, a young volunteer, who is more normally found driving our computer at St. Cedd's. Each museum produced a display board on a different aspect of local maritime life and also loaned an associated artefact. We hope to show as many of the boards as possible but will have insufficient room for all of the artefacts, many of which duplicate what is already on display elsewhere in the museum. It should prove a most interesting exhibition however.

Until September do not miss the present display of paintings recently given to us on a variety of subjects and of images of Beeleigh Abbey, dating from the early 20th century, that are not often displayed.

I wish everybody a very happy summer.

Paddy Lacey

Penny Farthing is dependent upon your contribution.

All articles, items, photos, comments and letters are welcome:

Please send to Tony Mandara, 41 Abbotsmead, Heybridge, Maldon, Essex CM9 4PT.

Tel: (01621) 840056

Copy deadline for the Autumn issue of *Penny Farthing* is 5 August



The Maldon 'Moneyer'

At the time of the Domesday Survey in 1086 Maldon was recorded as having an established mint which was under the control of a 'moneyer', who was responsible for the reliability and quality of all coins minted there. The mint was located in Silver Street, hence the name of the thoroughfare

In 1000 A.D. England, under the reign of Ethelred the Unready (meaning 'ill advised'), was enjoying a prosperity and civilisation unmatched in northern Europe. Though his later reign was to end disastrously with him being forced into exile, the early part of his rule saw a kingdom unified and richer than ever before. Evidence of this can be found in his coins which are discovered almost everywhere that late Anglo-Saxon remains are excavated.

Thin and smooth, they are elegant little wafers of hammered high grade silver. They are duller and lighter than modern machine-made coins, but they are bursting with personality.

The images of Ethelred which appear on the coins are not intended to be portraits of the king, rather they are symbolic representations of some

aspect of kingship. They change with each issue of new coins to reflect the particular propaganda messages he wished to communicate at various times during his reign - sometimes wise and saintly, at others powerful and warlike.

Unlike modern coins they carry no date, but letters around the face indicate who minted the coin and where, (Maldon mint would have had its own code letters) and from this information it is possible to discover a sophisticated economic and administrative system covering the whole of England.

There were over seventy local mints spread around the country, each being located within a market town or within very close proximity to one, to permit silver and minted coins to be transported safely to and from the mint in daylight.

Each mint was protected by a stockade or some other strong fortification and Maldon's mint is sometimes said to have been situated within the tower of All Saints Church. However this claim cannot be substantiated because, although the tower's stone walls would have provided a secure building for the storage and

working of silver, the 14th century tower was not built until two centuries after the mint was first mentioned.

By the end of Ethelred's reign, English coins had only short periods of validity, usually no more than two or three years, after which they ceased to be legal tender. The reason for this was two-fold, firstly the quality and genuineness of the coins could be warranted and secondly to act as a form of tax.

To redeem the value of the out-of-date coins it was necessary to take them to the local mint where, for every ten returned, the owner received only eight or nine of the new issue. The difference went to the crown, making the 'moneyer' an unofficial tax collector on behalf of the king.

This apparently unfair system was tolerated because it guaranteed the coins as being good and trustworthy. The soft silver alloy of the time allowed for easy shaving or clipping whereby the unscrupulous removed small quantities of silver from each coin to gradually build a substantial quantity of illegal bullion.

continued page 15



MURDER MOST FOUL

Towards the end of October 1814 Maldon was agog with ghoulsh excitement. In an age without television, radio or cinema and with few people able to read, life was mostly one of dull repetitive monotony so a good, juicy murder on one's own doorstep was to be savoured - and that's just what the town was now enjoying.

On Tuesday, 25 October, William Belsham, a milkman, had been brutally clubbed to death and robbed. But this was no ordinary murder committed for petty financial gain and the circumstances of the case lift it out of the mundane, making it worth the retelling. Even today Maldon Museum on the Park retains a grisly reminder of that event almost 200 years after the outrage.

I became interested in this crime while preparing the current issue of *Penny Farthing* when I discovered that the Acquisitions and Accessions of the Museum for 1928 (see page 22) recorded that we had been given several artefacts relating to the incident plus copies of the Maldon & Heybridge Gazette for 1900 containing an account of the trial. My curiosity was aroused as to why any paper should devote four issues (6th, 13th, 20th and 27th April 1900) to reporting details of a 86 year old murder so I decided to do some research into the story.

The first stop was the Essex Records Office in Chelmsford where, in my naivety, I expected to find copies or microfilm of the 1900 Maldon & Heybridge Gazette, but was told that these are only available at Collingdale. I find this is very odd - surely local papers which

are primarily of interest to local people should be kept in some form at the nearest Records Office?

Deciding to search the microfilm of the only local paper available for the date of the crime, the 1814 Chelmsford Chronicle, I discovered that early 19th century local papers carried little or no news, being almost entirely devoted to advertisements for auction sales of land and property or quack cures for various ailments. What little news the paper did contain consisted of reprints of items culled from other papers from London and around the country, often having no importance or relevance to the local readership. It would appear that the Chelmsford Chronicle had no reporters and relied exclusively upon contributions from readers or what could be "lifted" from other publications.

However I did eventually come across one very small entry about the murder. It was almost lost on an inside page of a November issue of the Chelmsford Chronicle printed some two weeks after the crime. In essence it read:

Tuesday 25th October between 4pm and 5pm William Belsham was found murdered in his cow house in the Parish of St Marys,

The crime is supposed to have been committed by a seafaring man who is marked on his hand and arms with gunpowder and is about 5ft 10ins tall, dressed in a round hat, red waistcoat and large greatcoat with pocket holes on the side in one of which he had a short stick or bludgeon, who was seen going towards the cow house. A bludgeon answering this description (sic) was found near the deceased covered in blood. Since perpetrating the crime it is supposed that he has changed his dress, or concealed it by wearing a smock frock. A reward of 50 guineas is offered upon conviction for apprehending the murderer. A silver watch, made by I Richards, London, No 38991, with a steel chain and a common gilt seal and steel key, a one pound note and some silver were taken from the pockets of the deceased.

As this report appeared two weeks after the murderer had already been apprehended it is obvious that the paper had not followed up what was surely the most important local story of the day. Even more surprising, the next twelve months' issues of the paper fail to make any further mention of the murder or the apprehension, trial and conviction of the killer.

Thus far, the story appeared to be little more than murder and petty robbery which was hardly worth retelling. However I phoned Judy Betteridge, our Museum Acquisitions Officer, to see if, by any chance, we still had the newspapers given to the Museum in 1928 to check if they contained any more details. Although unable to locate the newspapers (not surprising when one considers that our museum has moved several times and been placed in store at least once during the last 70 years), Betty knew all about the murder and was even able to produce a 1918 hand-written copy of a contemporary account of the crime! This proved to be a far more tragic story than at first appears and is produced below in its entirety:

Murder of Mr William Belsham, at Maldon

On Tuesday the 25th October 1814, about 5 o'clock in the evening the body of the above named, who was a milkman, was discovered by some boys who went to the cowshed to ask for a stick.

The head of the unfortunate deceased, upon examination, was so crushed that there did not remain one piece of the skull as wide as a crown piece. A large club stick, the instrument of death, was found lying by the deceased stained with his blood. Information being immediately given to the authorities, the whole garrison, consisting of the 17th and 80th regiments of foot then lying in the barracks, together with the

greater portion of the inhabitants, on foot and on horseback, went in pursuit of the supposed murderer, a seaman named William Seymour, who had been observed speaking to Belsham about an hour previous to the horrid deed being committed.

A meeting of the inhabitants of the Borough took place the following day at the Blue Boar Inn, at which the Rev. Charles Matthew presided, and the committee composed of the following gentlemen was appointed to receive subscriptions and carry out the necessary steps for the apprehension of the assassin - Messrs Tomlinson, Pattison, Coates, Thorp, Sadd, Bugg, Lawrence, J Hance (?), G Busbridge, Matthew Bygrave, G May, Sharp, Loup, Baker, Wells, Garr (?), C Hurrell, May, Edward Chase, Wray, Payne, Bridges, Hance, and J Poud (sic). Handbills and advertisements were published containing a description of the suspected party, and offering a reward of £50 raised by subscriptions.

Seymour was traced to Farnbridge Ferry the same evening where he had crossed and taken the route to Tilbury Fort. On the road he had stopped at Pitsea where he had sold the watch for 12/- and a pot of beer. One of the handbills having reached the latter place the morning after the murder, Seymour was so well described therein, that the young man who had purchased the watch was convinced that he was the suspected party although he had artfully changed his dress.

He instantly went in pursuit, and although he frequently overtook him till he reached "The Crown" at Mucking where he found him sitting in the tap room, where he instantly arrested him, telling him he was his prisoner: he made no resistance but suffered himself to be conveyed before Revd. Mr Newman of Burstead, by whom he was committed to Chelmsford Gaol; from there he was taken to Maldon to be present at the examination of the witnesses before the Coroner who held the inquest the same afternoon. He was taken into a room where the deadly instrument lay upon a table, and the muscles about the lower part of the cheek, and the lower lip were observed to be slightly agitated.

On being told that the bludgeon was an old friend of his, he replied "I see it now, but have never seen it before". On the Friday the prisoner was fully committed to take his trial under the Coroner's warrant at the Spring Assizes which took place at Chelmsford on 6th March 1815 before Sir Allan C But (?), one of the Justices of the Common Pleas. On the 16th he was arraigned in the name of William James Seymour, and was described as a fine, handsome young man. He pleaded not guilty.

Mr Pooley, Mr Gurney, Mr Toddy and Mr Sheen (?) appeared as Counsel for the Prosecution, and Mr Andrews defended the prisoner. The whole of the evidence was entirely circumstantial, but the chain was so complete that the Jury immediately found him guilty, and the sentence of death was passed upon him.

Master Francis Tomlinson proved seeing the prisoner and the deceased in conversation on the afternoon of the murder. He had a bundle under his arm and a short stick. Jacob Oreral (?) proved going to the cowhouse a short time previous to the murder when he observed money in the deceased's purse, and a chain and seal of his watch: he also saw the prisoner going towards Mr Belsham, and shortly afterwards heard someone shriek. Mr Raymond described finding the body of the murdered man and observed that his watch had gone and his pocket turned inside out.

William Harwicks (?) detailed the circumstances of his pursuing the prisoner and his ultimately finding him at "The Crown" at Mucking. When taken he denied his name was Seymour, but as a proof of his guilt, when the handbill was read to him he offered £40 to be set at liberty. Mr May, Surgeon of Maldon was called to prove the cause of Belsham's death and several other witnesses gave confirmatory evidence.

The execution took place on Monday morning 13th March at the gaol at Chelmsford at 9 o'clock, in the presence of the vast assemblage of spectators. The prisoner had had a slight education which assisted him much in his devotions, and he ascended the platform with great(?) having previously acknowledged his guilt. He appeared to die almost without a struggle. After hanging an hour, his body was cut down and given to a surgeon in the neighbourhood for dissection.

Now comes the revelation of Seymour's reason for committing the crime:

Seymour was a native of Maldon and it appears he was activated by feelings of revenge as well as robbery when he was sent on board one of His Majesty's ships about a year and a half previously for some offence of which he had been guilty - poor Belsham was the principal witness against him and on leaving the town he declared that when he returned to Maldon he would pay the old man for all his services.

The fact that Seymour had been 'pressed' into the Royal Navy, it is surely little wonder that he felt vengeful. If he was not brutalised before he went into the service, he would have been by the time he came out.

This was a time, only nine years after the Battle of Trafalgar, when seamen were subject to the harshest of discipline and lived under the most ghastly conditions which were likely to deprave far better men than he. One must surely feel a little pity for Seymour even if we do not condone his crime.

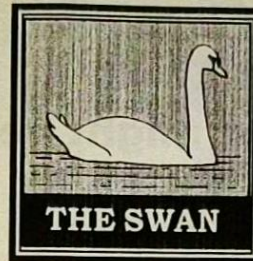
Three others were executed at the same time as Seymour: Thomas Sandling for the murder of John Bolday at West Ham on the 20th May 1810 (his two accomplices Sweeney & Pierre had been previously executed), and William Pratt and Thomas Turner for the murder of Henry Trigg at Berden, 25th March 1814.

At the beginning of this article I said that Maldon Museum still retains a grisly reminder of the crime - to wit, residing in a cardboard box in our acquisitions store is **Seymour's skull** which we were given in 1928 along with the 1900 newspapers and a painting supposedly of the inquest of Belsham. Presumably the surgeon who took his body for dissection purposes removed the head as some sort of macabre souvenir and it eventually found its way into the hands of the unknown person who donated it to us.

It is fascinating to see how Maldon handled criminal detection almost 200 years ago when there was no police force and no sophisticated communication systems. Amazingly the town was able to organise a hue and cry and circulate handbills with a description of the fugitive across a wide area within hours of the crime being committed. Just over 48 hours later the culprit had been traced almost 30 miles away, arrested, charged, brought before an inquest and committed to trial - something our police and criminal courts, with all their sophisticated criminal detection methods and legal procedures, would find almost impossible to achieve today.



Any further information about the above case, especially where Belsham or Seymour lived in Maldon and where Berden was or is, would be welcome.



Based in part on the books about Essex Public House Signs by Rev Keith Lovell and we are grateful for his permission to use his research.

There has been a "Swan Hotel" in Maldon High Street for over seven hundred years. Although the external appearance of the inn was extensively altered in 1908, much of the original 14th century structure still remains and internally it contains 17th century wood panelling, identical to that used in the Moot Hall, "Blue Boar" and the Vicarage. This panelling was probably part of a job lot taken from a larger building which had been demolished. The premises are reputed to be haunted.

In the 18th century a second "Swan" was situated at Fullbridge near the corner of Mill Lane. Formerly the "Blue Anchor" it later became "The Hoy" and yet again the "Victoria Inn".

"The Swan" has been a popular name for ale houses and inns ever since the mute swan, Britain's only resident swan, was introduced from Cyprus sometime around 1100 AD. and the bird has been included in various badges of English royalty ever since. All swans on open water are still, without exception, the property of the crown. For centuries referred to as "birds royal", swans were served at banquets in the Middle Ages and the perception that they were an exotic delicacy may be another reason why the swan was considered an appropriate pub name.

During the 15th century some swans were allocated to trade guilds and by the time of Elizabeth I there were special courts, called "swanmotes", with 900 different private owners each with their own swan-marks to establish ownership, which were usually cut into the birds' beaks.

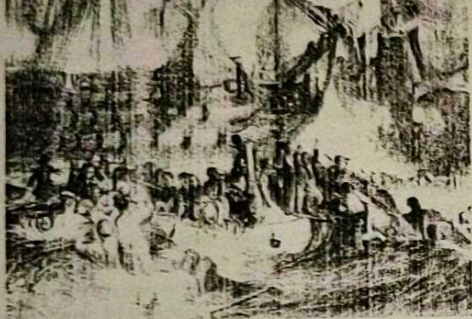
The privilege of having a "game" of swans on the River Thames between London Bridge and Henley was given to the capital's livery companies, though only two, the Vintners and the Dyers, still retain the privilege. They check and count the birds each July when "Swan Upping" takes place. This is done when the moulting birds are flightless and the cygnets are only two months' old and thus easy to catch. For four days teams under three Swan Herdsmen, dressed in traditional livery, row the river. Each bird is "upped" - lifted from the water - and checked for health and ownership. The beaks of Dyers' birds used to be nicked once, Vintners' birds twice. The crown had its own mark until 1908 when it was decided that any swan without a mark belonged to the monarch, this meant that the crown immediately increased its flock. Those cygnets whose parents are identified as belonging to the sovereign are left unmarked to show that they too are the property of the Crown. Because all unmarked swans belong to the monarch it is illegal to kill any of them.

In 1996 the practice of cutting beaks was replaced by a system of ringing the birds' legs, which is less traumatic and painful for the birds and allows more information to be carried on the ring.

In the 17th and 18th century "Swan Upping" was the excuse for feasting on magnificent barges - nowadays the liverymen make do with an annual "swan" banquet. Swan upping serves no practical purpose other than to check on the bird's health and this traditional practice is only continued by the good offices and at the expense of the Vintners and Dyers Companies.

— * —

The Battle of Trafalgar ... as it might be fought today



Nelson Order the signal Hardy

Hardy Aye, aye sir.

Nelson Hold on a minute, that's not what I dictated to the signals officer. What's the meaning of this Hardy?

Hardy Sorry sir!

Nelson (reading aloud) "England expects every person to do his duty, regardless of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religious persuasion or disability." What sort of gobbledegoose is this?

Hardy New Admiralty policy. I'm afraid sir. We're an equal opportunities employer now. We had the devil's own job getting the word 'England' past the censors, lest it be considered racist.

Nelson Gadzooks, Hardy. I need to think about this - hand me my pipe and tobacco.

Hardy Sorry sir, no can do. All naval vessels have been designated smoke-free working environments now.

Nelson Hells Bells. You'll be telling me next that we can't splice the main brace any more!

Hardy Precisely sir. The rum ration has been abolished as part of the Government's policy on binge drinking.

Nelson Good heavens, Hardy. In that case the only thing left to do is get on with the battle ... full speed ahead.

Hardy I think you'll find there's a 4-knot speed limit in this stretch of water. It's part of a new EU directive sir.

Nelson Damn it man! Don't they understand we are on the eve of the greatest sea battle in history? We may just as well go home.

Hardy I'd like to oblige sir, but I'm afraid your home has just been compulsorily acquired by the Deputy Prime Minister for a new development of social housing, wind farm and travellers' site. What's more you are likely to be arrested for an outstanding parking ticket from the last time we moored the "Victory" in Portsmouth harbour.

Nelson Oh my sainted aunt. I might just as well climb a tall column to somewhere these damn politically correct busybodies can't reach me.

Hardy I'm afraid that's not possible either Admiral. Health and Safety are objecting on the grounds that members of the public might get a crick in their neck from looking up at you ... and the RSPCA are concerned that pigeons could suffer vertigo if they land on your head.

Nelson I do believe it would be better if some damn Frenchie shot me right now and had done with it but before they do, you may kiss me, Hardy.

Hardy Certainly sir, that's one order I can obey ... not only is it legal between consenting adults now, it's actively encouraged in the Royal Navy!

From an anonymous text currently doing the rounds.

THE RISE AND GROWTH OF THE FAMILY FIRM

JOHN SADD & SONS LTD

PART 3

In 1871 Sadds purchased a steam traction engine for hauling trees to their works. The engine, made by Aveling and Porter, was a monster weighing about 12 tons. In those years, traction engines were very much a novelty and there was an outcry from around the county against this one being on the Essex roads. Complaints poured in about the amount of noise it made, the amount of black smoke which belched from its tall chimney, the effect it had in frightening cattle and terrifying the horse traffic on the roads, and the damage it did to roads and bridges.

That June the engine, amongst its other excesses, succeeded in destroying Battles Bridge at Rawreth. For a time, the firm was deluged with summonses, and in several cases was fined by the Courts for damage done by the machine.

Two years later, in 1873, the new sawmill was destroyed by fire and was replaced by another at a cost of £1,797 6s 8d. This mill was extended several times over the next 30 years to absorb the ever-growing business. It was again destroyed in a disastrous fire in 1909 and this time replaced by two mills, a resawing and planing mill being built on the same site, and a log mill at the opposite end of the Yard.

The opportunity was taken during this reconstruction for

a complete reorganisation and layout on modern lines, and considerable care and thought was devoted to every detail of construction and machinery installation to make the works one of the most modern and efficient in the country. As part of the reconstruction, electricity was introduced to bring added efficiency to the plant.

Following the ordeal by fire came another by water. In 1910 an exceptionally high tide swept over the wharves and flooded the buildings to a depth of four feet. Tree trunks, staked on either side on the works' road, floated away, to come at rest at random, in some cases more than a mile from the original stack. The task of collecting it all together again and re-stacking it was a tremendous one, but even more serious was the loss and damage to the large quantity of planed timber and other material. Indeed other floods have occurred from time to time, leaving behind them their toll of damage and loss.

In the meantime John Granger Sadd and his partners, faced with a business that had grown almost beyond recognition, decided that the firm should become a limited liability company. For a long time the business had been trading under the name of John Sadd and Sons and on 23 July, 1889, it was incorporated as a private limited company under the

Companies Act as John Sadd & Sons Ltd. The capital, all held by the Sadd family, was £38,000, divided into 7,600 shares of £5 each. Alfred Thorn was appointed Secretary at a salary of £20 per month, and in 1892 a maiden dividend of one per cent was declared.

Continuing Expansion

John Price Sadd, the eldest son of John Granger Sadd, served his apprenticeship with Messrs. Price Walker & Co, of Gloucester, before joining his father in the 1880's, where his special task in the firm was the importation and processing of softwoods. The next son, Harry William, also joined the Company in 1882 before it became incorporated as a limited liability company, and his special interest was in the buying, carting, and sawing of home-grown hardwoods.

A third son, Herbert Eustace Sadd, served his time with Ransome and Rapiers of Ipswich as an engineer, and subsequently went to sea as a marine engineer. He later spent a short period in Western Australia employed in erecting sawmill machinery. His next job was in the South African gold mines, from where he was called home shortly before the outbreak of the Boer War to become the Company's chief engineer.

continued page 9

All three brothers were keen and enterprising businessmen, and ably seconded their father in his determination to keep abreast of all modern developments in the timber trade. After the death of John Granger Sadd in 1900, followed by that of his brother Alfred in 1902, John Price Sadd succeeded to the chairmanship.

The big fire of 1909, mentioned previously, proved to be no more than a temporary setback, and the opportunity presented by the fire for a major reconstruction of the works was seized by the three brothers. The sawmilling activities of the English timber department were separated from those of the softwood department, and full use was made of the fact that all three brothers had made journeys to North America and Sweden and had seen all the latest equipment in use in those countries.

The electrification of the plant in place of the old steam power plant was made possible by the installation of two Crossley wood refuse gas boilers in the works. The wood refuse from the sawmills was used as fuel for the boilers, each of which fed a horizontal low-speed engine connected to a generator. The company was among the very first in the country to use this method of generating electricity.

The power generated was used not only to supply power to the machinery but also to provide lighting throughout the works. This proved so successful that the Directors decided to carry electricity by overhead wires to provide lighting to their own homes.

The success of this operation led to a number of outside applications for electricity supply and by 1912 electricity from the works was available throughout the whole of Maldon and Heybridge. In addition to lighting it was used for cooking, and in 1912 the first water heater was installed in the town. The cost charged was 2d a unit for heating and 3d a unit for lighting. The whole supply of Maldon and Heybridge was provided by the firm until 1931, when the town supply rights were sold to the County of London Electric Supply Co. Ltd.

By the time of the First World War, the Company's sawmills were among the most modern in the country, and the demands made by the various ministries for timber work of all descriptions forced the firm back into the carpentry business in a large way.

The first move in this direction came through a substantial order from the War Office for huts, doors, window sashes, and frames for military barracks. This order was followed by others, keeping the firm working to capacity throughout the four years of the war. The demands of the Services naturally reduced the male labour force, and to keep pace with the increasing demand for its products the firm was forced to recruit female labour.

The post-war boom led to a further rapid expansion of the joinery side of the business. This entailed considerable extension of the joinery shops and the occasion was taken to carry through a complete reorganisation of the overall layout of the works. A great

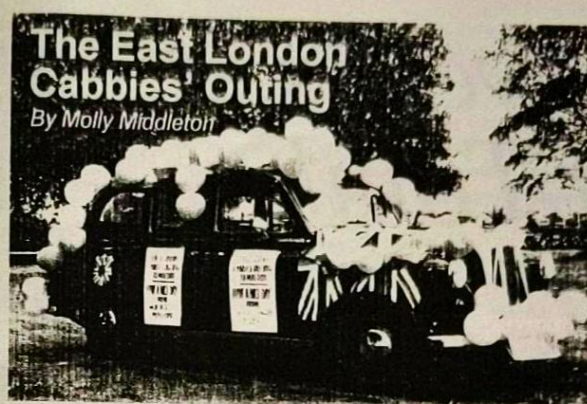
deal of additional machinery was installed to compete with the huge upsurge in demand and at the same time a considerable investment was made in property in the Maldon area, particularly in adjacent land, which the Directors foresaw would be required for expansion in the years to come.

The early years of the 20th century saw the business continuing to expand steadily, if not quite so spectacularly. Branches were opened at Southend, Clacton, Wickford, Hornchurch and Chelmsford, mainly for the supply of material to builders, and a London office was opened. Just as the joinery business developed during these years, so also did that of builders' merchants, and the variety of goods kept in stock grew with the development of more modern building techniques. In common with almost every other firm in the country, the 'slump' years of 1929 to 1934 caused a contraction of business and falling profits, but the Company was by now too firmly established to suffer more than a purely temporary setback.

to be continued

Do You Know?

In 1555, after her marriage to Prince Philip of Spain, Queen Mary granted a new charter to Maldon, which included the right to have a tumbrel (ducking stool) situated on the Hythe, plus a pillory gallows. The ducking stool was used for nagging wives.



An article in the Maldon Standard recently caught my eye. It concerned the annual taxi day which, due to various circumstances, was not held last year after 52 years. But, it seems that the East London Cabbies Outings Committee with their Chairman Ken Flemwell, the son of the founder, is going to organise the day on the first Monday of July this year. This set my memories flowing about the Women's Royal Voluntary Service because the Maldon District group has been involved for some 30 years.

The event which began in 1952 was organised by Charlie Flemwell, himself a taxi driver, until his death. He had visited the Elizabeth Fry special school and felt the children would benefit from a trip to the seaside. Contacting various seaside towns in Essex he found only Maldon was willing to help so they came to Maldon.

On the first visit they brought ten children in five cabs and over the following years a pattern emerged. There would be a cavalcade of cabs, highly decorated, through the High Street and thence to the Promenade Park for refreshments and entertainments.

By 1977 the numbers had enlarged and the cafes in the park were being overstretched, so the Mayor of Maldon, then Bill Hutchinson, asked Olive Berridge the Maldon District Organiser for the WRVS to meet Charlie Flemwell with a view to organising and providing food for the outings.

Olive delegated this duty to Mrs R M 'Tilly' Pink, her deputy, and Mrs Betty Chittenden, the district secretary. They were asked to provide a 1 pm lunch with sandwiches for the afternoon tea for the children. Lunch was to be in the Jubilee Hall (with Maldon WRVS members) for the two larger schools and the Methodist Hall (with Burnham WRVS members) for the two smaller. A volunteer was enlisted to cycle between the two halls to keep the kitchen informed as to requirements.

The menu consisted of sausages, beans and chips with strawberries and ice cream to follow. Eunice Hill was in charge of the kitchen and the chips were supplied by John Copey.

Sandwiches, peanut butter and jam for tea, were made in the morning and packed into plastic bags provided by Halifax Building

Society. Although the menu has changed over the years to accommodate dietary and multi-cultural requirements the strawberries and ice cream remain to this day!

In 1978 Maldon WRVS was asked to cater also for the taxi drivers and the Mayors and sponsors from the London boroughs involved. From that time, in addition to the food for the children, a roast meal for the taxi drivers and a salad meal for the other guests was provided. Three years later Carole Mayers, then District organiser for the WRVS, arranged for the Plume School to become involved and the school became the venue for the lunches.

The day became an event for the whole town with people decorating the route with flags and balloons and waving at the cabs and their occupants on their arrival and, as 7 pm approached, waving the children on their way home. The excitement and pleasure on the children's faces was a joy to behold and the noise and chatter in the dining-room told its own story.

The WRVS involvement continued until 2003 when, due to national reorganisation of the WRVS, their remit was changed to working with the elderly and their work with children came to an end. However some of the women involved with "Taxi Drivers Day" had such warm and happy memories of the event they joined the "Friends of the Cabbies" and continue helping and organising the day even now in 2006.

Long may the day continue and be successful. Maldon Museum on the Park holds a file about these East London Cabbies outings and a folder made by Christine Macdonald to mark the 50th outing.

Prittlewell's Saxon Tomb

Although not within the Maldon District, the Saxon Tomb at Prittlewell is sufficiently close and of such world-wide importance that readers may be interested to know a little more about this sensational discovery.

The amazing find is on a par with the Sutton Hoo burial site, found in 1939, and it is believed to be the tomb of a Saxon king from around the middle of the 7th century.

It was discovered by chance in October 2003 by experts from the Museum of London Archaeology Service who were carrying out a routine evaluation of the site prior to a road widening scheme. The area was already known to have been inhabited since prehistoric times because previous discoveries had been made during construction of the London to Southend railway line in the late 19th century. Knowing that the area contained a number of Roman and Anglo-Saxon graves, the intention was to assess the full extent of the cemetery, but the experts had no expectation of what they were to eventually find.

Had the evaluation trench been dug where it was originally planned the burial chamber would have been completely missed, but because spoil from the trench could not be removed from the site a new position had to be selected.

The first clue that something extraordinary lay beneath the surface was a tiny piece of bronze poking out of the mud. Further exploration revealed a burial chamber with a lavish collection of grave goods which had lain undisturbed for over 1,400 years.

More than 140 beautifully preserved objects from bronze cauldrons and gold foil crosses to glass jars, copper buckles, a sword and shield, were eventually taken from the soil. What was even more remarkable is that all the items were still in exactly the same position as where they had originally been placed on the day of the funeral - even the copper-alloy bowls still hung from the hooks in the walls.

The chamber itself measured about 12ft square by some 5ft high. It had originally been made from wooden planking with the deceased's body, together with the artefacts, placed carefully in position before the tomb was covered in soil. Over the centuries the timber gradually rotted away but as it did so the soil, which is particularly sandy, poured through the gaps to completely fill the chamber and trap all the items in situ. As there was no major collapse of the tomb everything remained entirely undisturbed.

The king's body, together with

most of the organic material, had been eaten away over the centuries by the acidic soil but most of the non-wooden items survived extremely well.

As to the identity of the king it cannot be established with any certainty. The 7th century being at the very beginning of written English history means records are scarce. Even the most revered text of early English history by the 8th century monk, Bede, was written a century later in 731 AD and his work contains just one brief mention of a Saxon king in Essex.

However speculation as to the king's identity centres on two possibilities: Saeberht*, who converted to Christianity in 604 AD and died in 616 AD, or Sigebert II who converted in 653 AD, although little is known about either of them. After Saeberht's death his three sons expelled the Christian Bishop, Mellitus, as part of a revolt against Kentish domination and returned to their traditional pagan ways. The three sons were all killed in battle against the West Saxons in 623 AD.

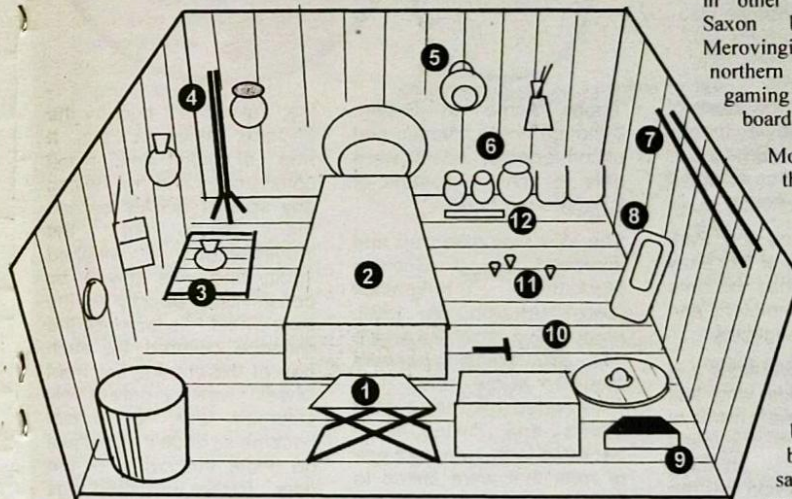
Sigebert, who returned to Christianity shortly before he died, is the less likely candidate as his death is probably too late for the tomb to be his.

The Christian symbols together with the grave goods and the way they were arranged shows that whoever did occupy the tomb shared both pagan and Christian beliefs. It is likely that the body was placed in a coffin rather than being on display, with just a few objects

accompanying it (although no trace of a wooden coffin remains). This would have been compatible with a Christian burial, while the display of objects in the tomb is what would be expected of a high status pagan burial.

Among the items found were two small gold foil crosses, about 30mm in length, which, from their position, may have been laid on the eyes of the deceased, much as in Victorian times coins were

** Note: There are several spellings of the name Saeberht, Saebert, Sabert.*



Representation of how the tomb originally looked

- 1 Iron portable folding stool
- 2 Remains of wooden coffin with small gold crosses
- 3 57 bone gaming pieces (board disintegrated)
- 4 Iron stand on tripod legs, possibly for candles or banner
- 5 Bronze bowl from Eastern Mediterranean
- 6 Various gilded drinking vessels
- 7 Two iron spears
- 8 Remains of a wooden lyre
- 9 Inscribed silver spoon inside wooden box
- 10 Iron sword and parts of wooden shield
- 11 Animal teeth
- 12 Drinking horns with copper and gold rims

often placed on the eyes of the dead, or perhaps sewn on his shroud. These are a clear indication that the king was a newly converted Christian but was also taking with him everything he needed for the afterlife - a vestige of pagan beliefs (a case of hedging his bets?).

It is therefore probable that the treatment of the body in the coffin was in deference to Saeberht's Christian conversion, while the rest of the tomb was

in keeping with his son's pagan beliefs.

The finds included some 20 vessels of one sort or another. Among them were perfectly preserved glass vessels, including one pair of beautiful decorated blue jars and another pair of green glass; ornate gold-rimmed drinking horns probably from Scandinavia; a complete gold belt buckle of a type popular in England from 600 AD to 640 AD; a Coptic bowl with foot-ring and handles (similar to those found in other high-status Anglo-Saxon burials); a lyre; Merovingian gold coins from northern France and 57 bone gaming pieces, although the board had rotted away.

Most surprising were the metal remains of a folding canvas stool similar to modern camp stools.

There were also a Byzantine silver spoon inscribed with characters beneath a cross; a cast bronze flagon bearing an image of a saint made in the eastern Mediterranean during the 6th to 9th centuries and the two gold foil crosses which all point to the Christian conversion.

The artefacts have now been removed for conservation and further in-depth examination. Eventually they will be found a permanent home in either in London or Prittlewell, and there are hopes that a complete replica of the tomb will be made for display in Southend.

* ———

A Closer Look at an Exhibit ...

THE PENNY FARTHING BICYCLE



In 1874 Sydney Isaac of Maldon rode a 'penny farthing' from Bristol to London, a distance of about 120 miles, in 14 hours.

The Museum on the Park has an example of this early bicycle and it has become the museum's emblem and the title of our magazine.

As with most inventions it is difficult to decide who first developed this early mode of transport. The earliest evidence of anything resembling a bicycle was the 'draisienne' or running machine devised by the German, Baron Karl von Drais de Sauerbrun. First exhibited in Paris in April 1818, his machine was made of wood and had no brakes or pedals. It was propelled by the rider sitting on the saddle and leaning forward onto a padded support to push himself forward by pushing his feet along the ground. This machine was called a

'hobby horse' in Britain. Although crude, clumsy and uncomfortable, riders were able to achieve speeds of 9.5 miles per hour.

The idea was taken up and improved by a Scottish blacksmith, Kirkpatrick Macmillan who, in 1839, produced a machine which had two swinging cranks mounted at the front. The rider rested his feet on the cranks and swung them back and forth, moving a pair of rods that were linked to the rear wheel, in the absence of a chain and chain-wheel. The front wheel was about 75cm in diameter, and the rear 100cm, both wheels being rimmed with iron bands. Even without gears, the machine could be propelled at a brisk pace and in 1842 Macmillan challenged a horse and carriage to a race and won!

Twenty years later this machine was superseded by

the 'Velocipede' built by the Michaux family of Paris. It was of iron and wood construction and not having any springs quickly earned the name of the 'boneshaker'. It weighed 160lb and was driven by pedals fixed directly to the front wheel. To increase the distance covered by each turn of the cranks, the front wheel was progressively enlarged until, the wheel became so large it would just go under the crotch of the rider. Riders with short legs had to have smaller Velocipedes made to fit them.

The Michaux family took on the Coventry Sewing Machine Company to manufacture the Velocipedes and by about 1865 they were producing about 400 machines a year. The original intention had been to market them in France but this plan was thwarted by the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war

so the company was forced to sell them in England instead.

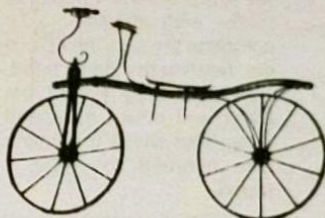
In 1869 the business was renamed the Coventry Machinists Company and it was here that the meeting between the Velocipede and the man who was to revolutionise bicycle design occurred. James Starley, the foreman of the Coventry Company, who was originally from Sussex, had already invented and patented a number of ideas for improving sewing machines and now seeing the primitive Velocipedes he decided to extensively improve them.

The first changes he made were to introduce a gear which allowed the wheel to be turned twice for each revolution of the pedals, and to reduce the weight of the machine by making the wheels much lighter using iron with tensioned wire spokes. These consisted of a single length of wire looped through holes in the rim and hub to which tension was applied by screwing up threads. This invention was later improved by the introduction of eyed and threaded nipples to hold individual spokes.

In 1870 Starley partnered with William Hillman to produce their first bicycle, the 'Coventry'. This was soon followed by the 'Ariel', in 1871, and noted for its use of centre pivot steering. It is the Ariel which is generally regarded as the first true or 'ordinary' bicycle, nicknamed the

penny farthing after the largest and smallest British copper coins then in common use. The large front wheel was designed to enable faster speeds but braking was very ineffective.

The saddle was placed over the front wheel which made it difficult to mount and dismount from the machine. This was best achieved by leaping on as the cycle moved or by using a mounting block or handy wall.



The 1817 Running Machine or "hobby horse"

In 1874 Starley devised tangential spoking as an improvement from the simple radial system. This considerably eased the sideways stresses imposed on the spokes.

Penny farthings weighed about 50 pounds, but could be as light as 21 pounds for track racing, with the driven wheel ranging in diameter between 40 to 60 inches, and usually tailored to the rider's leg length. The large wheel size brought with it dangers. Injury could result from falls and the term "coming a cropper" came about from the penny's habit of pitching the rider over the front if they dared to lean too far forwards.

However they did make a mean racing machine and there were many cycling clubs right into the early 1900's. One party of riders rode 890 miles from London to John O'Groats in 15 days. Speeds of 20 mph were often reached, and on one occasion 40 mph was achieved, over roads little better than cart tracks, on solid tyres without gears.

Construction was still very much in the hands of engineers and blacksmiths who introduced their own refinements. A variation on the normal theme was one with the smaller wheel at the front. Children's pennies were rare and normally made to order at the request of wealthier families. John Starley, James' nephew, invented the rear-wheel-driven version (Safety Bicycle) which made riding much easier.

Pennies were the first cycles ever to be fitted with lights. Filled with highly inflammable oil they were extremely dangerous, so were ingeniously fitted inside the main wheel hanging from the central spindle, to ensure the light shone where it was supposed to and to afford some protection to light and rider in the event of a fall.

The first cycle to use a chain-driven rear wheel was designed by H.J. Lawson in 1874. Constructed with two wheels both the same diameter, it looked just like a modern bike. This design eventually replaced the penny farthing.

The Maldon 'Moneyer'

continued from page 2

Clipped coins in turn affected the king's own wealth as the taxes he received were being paid in coins with a face value higher than their actual silver content. Regular changes of coin made counterfeiting difficult and clipping or shaving more easily detectable.

Silver pennies, the standard English unit of currency at the time, were not pure but did contain about 92.5 per cent silver in its alloy - which was kept constant. This meant that the coinage was considered to be reliable and acceptable both at home and abroad. Further protection and confidence was offered by the harsh penalties which would be imposed on moneyers who issued coins which were basely alloyed or too light. These penalties could include having his hand cut off and nailed on the wall of his mint.

Moneyers in busy mints such as London, Winchester and Canterbury were probably full-time government officials, but in the provincial mints he would usually be the local jeweller or goldsmith, producing coins under licence from the king. Each mint had its own licensed die, or coin stamp, with which he would imprint every coin with his personal details. Thus if he did issue 'bad' coins they were easily traced back to him.

Coins were made by beating out sheets of silver alloy to the correct thickness and ratio of alloy to silver. The sheet was then cut into small squares, each slightly larger than the circumference of the coin die, and each square blank was placed on the die and struck smartly with a mallet to imprint the lower surface with the moneyer's personal mark and details. To complete the coin the official die, bearing the king's head, was placed on top of the blank and struck a second time, after which the penny was trimmed to make it round.

Should a half-penny be required the coin was simply cut across the middle. A half-penny was exactly that - half of a circle. Many early coin designs bear a cross to indicate where it should be cut.

Between five and ten million coins were issued every two to three years, each one carefully made individually by this slow and laborious method. Huge quantities of silver were needed, unmatched by any other country in Europe, and although some of the silver came from Devon, Somerset, Gloucestershire, Derbyshire and the Mendip Hills, most of it came from Germany.

Naturally such wealth and imports did not go unnoticed

and soon avaricious eyes were cast upon England as a land ripe for plunder. The Vikings recognised an opportunity and began raiding the south and west coasts of Ethelred's kingdom in the early 980's. At first Ethelred tried to buy the raiders off with huge bribes but this simply whetted their appetite, and made them realise just how wealthy the country was and how weak its defences. Soon they were harassing the entire coast in search of plunder.

For the next thirty years they continued to either hold the country to ransom, the payments were popularly known as 'Danegeld', or to plunder any town which might offer resistance.

In 991 the Vikings raided Maldon, no doubt aware that there was a royal mint located here, and destroyed Byrhtnoth's army and sacked the town at the famous Battle of Maldon.

The Viking raids did not really cease until after the Norman Conquest when William the Conqueror wrested the crown of England for his own. This is perhaps no surprise when one remembers that he Normans were direct descendants of the Vikings (Norsemen) who had settled in France.

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THE FRIENDS OF THOMAS PLUME'S LIBRARY

Climb the winding steps of St. Peter's Tower at the top of Market Hill, push open the weighty door and you will be transported back to the 17th Century, to the library built by Dr. Thomas Plume to house his collection of books and pamphlets. Whereas many 17th Century benefactors left their collections for the benefit of the community who then had to find suitable accommodation, Dr Plume was almost unique in bequeathing both books and building.

Like Samuel Pepys and many of his contemporaries, Dr Plume had a wide range of interest and the 6,000 books that he collected cover anatomy, astronomy, botany, chemistry, mechanics, mathematics, medicine and travel in addition to theological works. His bequest included money (20 shillings a year) for the purchase of further volumes.

Since 1988 "The Friends of Thomas Plume's Library" have assisted the Trustees to conserve the existing collection and make new and appropriate purchases. This includes the repurchase of books that have been "borrowed" from the Library over the past 300 years.

The Friends usually meet three times a year for social gatherings including visits to places of relevant interest including some not easily accessible by the general public. The Friends would welcome new members whether or not they have any knowledge of antiquarian books. All that is necessary is a belief that Dr Plume's bequest should be enjoyed, protected and handed down to future generations.

The subscription is a mere £5 per year. Donations are also invited. If you want to join or would like more information, please write to: Hon. Membership Secretary, Friends of Thomas Plume's Library, Plume Library, Market Hill, Maldon CM9 4PZ.

Harry Bacon

Well what do you know?

What links a rather eccentric Lord, a balloon, bankruptcy, a fatal accident and the public hangman?

On the 10 June 1882 an attempted balloon ascent was made by Aeronaut Joseph Simmons and his passenger Sir Claude de Crespigny JP from near the gas works, at the bottom of Maldon High Street. The attempt was abandoned when the balloon accidentally collided with some nearby trees with the result that Sir Claude broke his leg in two places.

Sir Claude having recovered sufficiently from his injuries, the intrepid aeronauts tried again two months later, on 1 August (30 July according to some sources). This time their voyage was successful and they reached Holland.

Regrettably, a few years afterwards Simmons was charged with perjury for falsely trying to claim damages from the Great North Railway with the result that his balloon was confiscated and sold by the railway company. Undaunted he acquired another balloon to continue with his somewhat hair-raising exploits only to be killed when his balloon crashed into trees at Ulting in 1888.

Sir Claude de Crespigny eventually went bankrupt due to his extravagant lifestyle and impulsive gambling on horse races, and he was forced to flee to France to avoid his creditors.

And the public hangman? Well what was not known to the public at the time was that Sir Claude was the official assistant to the public hangman, and took an active part in numerous executions.



ST. CEDD'S CHATLINE

By Judy Betteridge

In my last Chatline, I was looking forward to Spring. As it is now well into May, with very few signs of good weather, I suppose the expression must be "don't hold your breath"! Luckily, at St. Cedd's we are not affected by the weather and soldier on regardless. I'm always very suspicious of folks who are always "busy", but it certainly describes our Accessions team's activities. We have a new recruit, a young Honours History graduate, Tony King, who has joined us to help, and gain experience in the Museum world. To this end, Tony is going to compile one of the many Procedure Manuals, which we have to produce in order to gain our "Accreditation" status, which, if awarded, will enable us to apply for grants to assist us in the future. A grant would help us restore two maps and an old painting of the trial of William Seymour, the infamous Maldon murderer (see the article "Murder Most Foul", in this issue of *Penny Farthing* for an account of this gentleman's activities - it's much more exciting than "Miss Marple", and it's all true!).

Recently we have been fascinated by some old newspapers, dated June 1949, from Malden, Massachusetts, a town founded by Joseph Hills from Maldon in 1649 (quite why it became Malden and not Maldon is not clear). The newspapers all contain reports of the visit of "Mr Wallace Binder - Lord Mayor of Maldon in Essex County England and owner of a large truck farm" who was invited to join with the people of Malden to celebrate their tercentenary. In one account, Mr Binder is described as "stocky built, rosy complexioned and suffering greatly from the heat in his English tweed suit". One kindly Malden tailor offered to supply him with a lightweight suit, so worried were they about Mr Binder's health. The Malden News, priced 3 cents, contains some wonderful advertisements - two pairs of nylons a dollar, dresses for \$3.99 and the Television and Refrigeration Company owned by a Frank Ginn offers a giant size 91 square inch screen television in a mahogany case for \$299.00 and a 9.3 foot capacity Philco refrigerator for \$292.00 less trade in! Remember the rationing and shortages of everything here in Britain in 1949

As usual, I have wandered off the beaten track, definitely a trait of advancing old age. You'll have to forgive me - everything (well almost everything) we deal with at St. Cedd's is so interesting.

We'll talk again later in the year, prostrate with heat - maybe.

Judy Betteridge
Accessions Team, St. Cedd's.

The Butcher, the Baker and the Candlestick Maker

Adapted from ten leaflets produced by, and available from,
J A Vesey, 9 Littlefield Way, Fairlands, Guilford, Surrey GU3 3JE.



No 9 THE BLACKSMITHS & WHEELWRIGHTS

White's Directory of 1884 lists only two wheelwrights (James Hayes and, somewhat unusually, Rebecca Harvey, although whether she was actually a wheelwright or simply owned the business and employed others to do the work is not clear).

CHARLES JAMES EVE
(1847-1929)

Charles was born in Boreham and in 1881 was living in Townfield Road, Chelmsford. By 1891 he and his wife Mary were living in Wantz Road, Maldon.

JOHN NORTON (1838-?)

John was born in Norfolk, the son of James and Martha. In 1851 he was employed as a groom. He and his wife Elizabeth, who was born in Suffolk, lived in Queen Street.

FREDERICK FROST (1856-1925)
JOHN CHARLES FROST (1849-?)
WALTER FROST (1850-?)

Sons of James Frost (also a blacksmith, born in Suffolk) and his wife Elizabeth, the brothers were born in Heybridge. John's wife, Mary Newton, was from Cheshire. Walter married Sarah Ann Moore in 1875 at St Mary's Church, Maldon. John was also an ironmonger.

THOMAS KIRBY (1852-?)

Thomas was born in Great Wakering, the son of John and Elizabeth. He married Ellen Sarah Sampson at All Saints Church in 1874. In 1881 they were living in America Square and ten years later were in New Street. By this time Thomas had become a road locomotive engine driver.

GEORGE JACKSON (1843-?)
ISAAC JACKSON (1837-?)

Brothers from Northamptonshire. George lived in Beeleigh Road and later Mount Pleasant. Isaac lived in Foundry Terrace.

JAMES THORNTON (1826-?)

Born in Foulness Island, James traded from Station Road and later Fullbridge.

CHARLES BARRETT THORNTON
(1850-?)
JAMES THORNTON (1852-?)

Sons of the above and his wife, Esther.

CHARLES HARRIS (1853-1912)

Born in Latchingdon, Charles married Emma Mary Davey in 1882 at St Mary's Church. Before his marriage he lived in Wantz Road and in 1891 he and Emma were in Farnbridge Road.

ALBERT KEMP (1876-?)

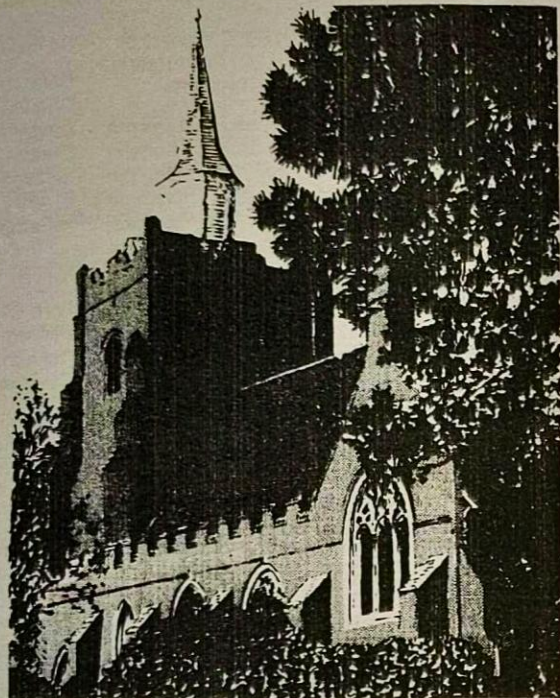
Born in Maldon, the son of William and Emma (nee Rushen), Albert traded in Farnbridge Road.

Other Maldon blacksmiths and wheelwrights:

Bourne, Sidney
Dowsett, William
Folks, William
Foreman, Albert J
Foreman, Edgar W
Foreman, Henry L
Gill, James
Gill, John Haywood
Gill, William (jnr)
Gill, William (snr)
Gozzett, Edward James
Gozzett, William
Harris, George
Harris, James
Harvey, Rebecca
Hayes, James
Humphries, Andrew
Kemp, Albert
Kettle, William
Manning, Ernest
Marsh, William
Mott, James
Nevill, John
Osborne, Thomas
Rutter, George
Smees, James
Smith, Joseph F
Smith, Thomas
Ward, Herbert
Wright, Richard
Wright, Sampson

Maldon's Historic Churches

With due acknowledgement to Maldon District Council's leaflet "Historic Churches"

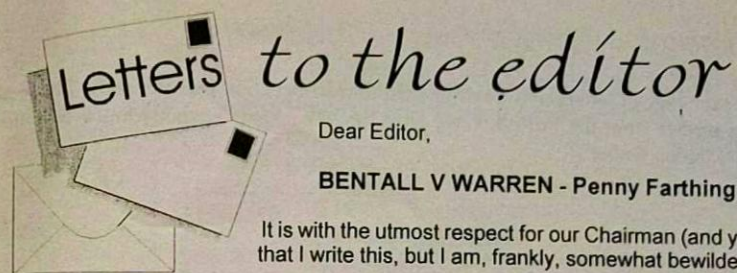


St Mary, Maldon

The history of this church, near the Hythe in Maldon, which is sometimes called the town or fisherman's church, extends nearly 1350 years. It is built on the site where, in around 660 AD, St Cedd is reputed to have preached from a platform and where the Saxons later constructed the first church. This place of worship is believed to have been destroyed during the Viking invasion of 991 but was replaced by a wooden church soon after.

A Norman church, parts of which still remain, was built on the Saxon foundations. Subsequent rebuilding in 1130, when the unusually large Norman nave which forms the nucleus of the present building was created. A tower was built during the 14th century and later an enormous stripped buttress was added to support the tower but it collapsed in 1598 and it was not until 1635 that it was rebuilt with a beacon on top to guide mariners. The lower part of the tower is of flint and stone, with reused Norman and Roman material, but the top was restored with red brick. The white shingled spire was erected in 1740 increasing the height of the tower and proving of benefit to mariners as a navigational mark.

The north porch was erected in 1420. The church has a fine set of Rood figures designed by James Brooks for St. Andrew's, Plaistow. In 1886 a thorough restoration of St Mary's took place at a cost of £3,000, in the course of which the chancel arch collapsed and had to be rebuilt. The present appearance of the nave and chancel derive from this time.



Dear Editor,

BENTALL V WARREN - Penny Farthing No 42, Page 8

It is with the utmost respect for our Chairman (and yourself of course) that I write this, but I am, frankly, somewhat bewildered.

All I have done previously with my comments and notes is to question the authenticity of the Bentall claim to fame against that of Warren. I personally have never seen any proof from either that they were the original designer of the Goldhanger Plough, and I would love to see something convincing.

There do seem to be plenty of Warren ploughs about, both at home and abroad, and it is hardly surprising that Norman Wasteneay could produce a "Bentall" as he is after all part of the Doe family, once Bentall agents, with more than average access to items for his collection.

That about sums up my case, and I'm still no wiser.

Regards,

Len Barrell

EDITOR

Whilst no expert on the subject, and in the absence of direct written proof, I would submit that it is still safe to assume that Warren copied Bentall's design and the name "Goldhanger" for the plough for the following reasons:

The fact that Bentall was already manufacturing his plough from around 1805, before moving to Heybridge between 1815 to 1820, it would seem logical that he call it a name that had some meaning for him, namely after his Goldhanger farm.

On the other hand, Warren according to one source, did not establish his foundry until almost 30 years after Bentall. He also appears to have had no direct connections with Goldhanger, so why choose that name for his plough, assuming he invented it?

Further more, sometime ago Len Barrell gave me some random pages photocopied from an unnamed book which appeared to be an in-depth study of foundries in Essex. These pages certainly show that Bentall was manufacturing before Warren and state "if Bentall had not set his sights on (trading with) the outside world from a quite early date it is difficult to see how the smaller foundry of Joseph Warren, established 1833 at Broad Street Green, a mile away, could have stayed in business. As it was, Warren did very well and founded the large and prosperous Maldon Ironworks in 1853 only half a mile from the Bentall's Heybridge foundry". The source for the statement that Warren started business in 1833 is given as John Sadd & Sons whose records show that they supplied deal and tar in 1833 to the company and that the factory was insured in 1834.

(Although this unnamed publication is a secondary source, will it suffice for written proof?)

Dear Editor,

The following exchange of letters may be of interest to members but, unfortunately, I have not heard anything further from the Suffolk Cage Bird Society. Does anybody know any more about the rare "Maldon Roller"?

Paddy Lacey

Dear Mr Lacey,

We were excited to learn that your book "Maldon and the Dengie Hundred" contained a Victorian photograph which included a canary. It was hoped we might better identify the rare "Maldon Roller". However, the only bird visible appears to be a lady's hat decoration!

Can you assist us in any way?

Mr C D Biques
Secretary, The Suffolk Cage-Bird Society

Dear Mr Biques,

Thank you for your letter regarding "Maldon and Dengie Hundred" which I compiled for the Maldon District Museum. The book is based on photographs held in the Museum collection. The photograph on page 75 is of a wedding group and includes at the top right hand corner an image of a caged bird. Unfortunately as the photograph is on a right-hand page this detail gets somewhat lost in the binding. I enclose a photocopy of the original photo together with a 400% enlargement of the bird cage and occupant. I am afraid there is a loss of definition at this setting.

I have been interested in anything to do with Maldon District for the past 30 years but I have never heard of the Maldon Roller. We have learnt more details of the wedding since the book was published and know that it took place on 17 August, 1912, between Frank Adams and Maisie Mary Ruggles so this would be in the post Edwardian period. I must admit that in my draft description I talked of a budgerigar but a friend of the Museum, who was born in one of the industrial cottages some 15 years later on, advised that it would have been a canary. Sadly my informant died 18 months ago so I can't add anything to this regarding the bird.

The MDMA publishes a quarterly magazine and if you would like to send me a description of the Maldon Roller coupled with a request for information I should be happy to see it included in our next edition. We distribute 150 copies amongst those who are interested and have knowledge of items related to the social history of the town and district.

Thank you for raising this intriguing topic.

Paddy Lacey

Extracts from the Acquisitions, Accessions of Maldon Museum Minutes 1926

Date	Item	From
8.12.27	1 Half-crown of William III	Mr Archer thro E Dowse Cllr Granger
	2 3 fossils from Langford	
	3 1 Silver ring	
	4 10 coins and 1 broken coin from St Peters	
	5 Copy of "A Discourse on Early Nonconformity in Maldon" by Rev R Burles	
12.1.28	1 Books and Pamphlets	Dr Laver
	2 Case for Mr Ed Bright's coat was with Cllr Furlong	
16.2.28	1 Correspondence Mrs Bentall/Crick & Freeman re: photo of Moot Hall etc.	Cllr Miss Freeman
	2 Poster 4th August 1892 from the Town Clerk (lent) re: "The Proposed Promenade"	
13.4.28	1 A Municipal Election Address Card issued by Mr Adolphus Pigget	Cllr Dines (?)
14.6.28	1 A glass case 3ft by 2ft	Cllr Granger
	2 Some lumps of burnt wheat from Beeleigh Mill, destroyed by fire in 1875	
20.7.28	1 An oil painting of the Inquest(?) on Mr Belsham murdered by Wm. Seymour at Maldon on 25th October 1814	Cllr Dines (?)
	2 The Skull of the executed murderer	
	3 Copies of the Maldon & Heybridge Gazette April 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th 1900 containing an account of the trial and confession. Reprinted from 1814, source not quoted. The paper of April 27th gives another account of the murder taken from "a book printed at the time" by P. Youngman and contains a sermon preached at the Meeting House now known as the Congregational Church by the Rev. Jas. Taft on the murder of a "consistent exemplary member of this religious society"	
	4 Skeleton of a Lady's Hand, set up to show the arteries. On stand in glass case.	
	5 Letter from Francis Barrington of Hatfield, Broadoake, 3rd January 1625 to "the Worshipful my very loving friends the Bailiffs and the rest of the Corporation of Maldon" advocating the return of his son to Parliament for the third time.	
	6 Three letters arranging for the presentation of an address from the Town Council to Prince Albert and the Duchess of Kent, on the birth of the Prince of Wales (later King Edward) March 1842	
	7 Reply from the Duchess of Kent "presented to the Mayor by the Duchess herself" signed by G. May (probably written by the Duchess)	
	8 Indenture of George Parker May to his father George May to learn the art of a Surgeon, Apothecary and Man Midwife dated 15th July 1829	
	9 Sword of Dr. G. P. May, Mayor of Maldon Engraved Maldon Town Rifles	
	10 Book of Poems by George Parker May MD dated 1889 (Mayor of Maldon 1874-1879)	










Maldon District Museum Association

Registered Charity 301362

President - Mr Derek Maldon Fitch

Vice President - Mr L. F. Barrell

Committee - to A. G. M. 2006

<i>Chairman</i>	<i>Paddy Lacey</i>	
<i>Vice-Chairman</i>	<i>to be advised</i>	
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<i>Committee</i>	<i>Molly Middleton</i>	
<i>Committee</i>	<i>Tony Mandara</i> ..	

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

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