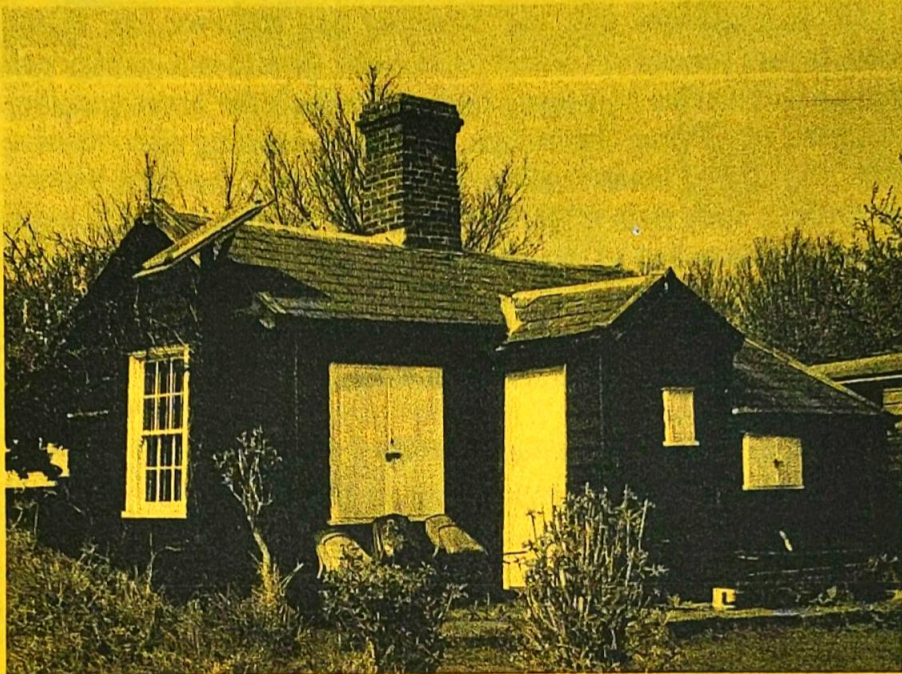


THE PENNY



FARTHING

The Maldon District Museum Association Newsletter



Rare Napoleonic war early-warning signal station at Bradwell.

See story page 2

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT By Paddy Lacey

On this occasion I have some important news to impart. Maldon Museum has just been granted Full Accreditation by the Museum, Libraries and Archives Council. This is a great achievement and demonstrates that our Museum has achieved the nationally agreed standards on how to care for and document collections, govern and manage collections, and deliver information and service to users to quote from the letter accompanying news of our success. It is a tribute to all your Committee, who have, meeting after meeting for the past eighteen months, considered items required for submission. Thanks are due especially, to our Accessions Officer, Judy Betteridge, and our new Vice President and Acting Treasurer, Betty Chittenden, who have had to provide me with the essential facts to answer the many queries and points raised by the Council. I must also acknowledge the help from Tony King, a young History Graduate from Heybridge, who has written our Documentation Procedural Manual, which was one of the requirements for Accreditation.

It is hoped that obtaining Accreditation will benefit the Museum in many ways particularly in its relationship with funding organisations and other external bodies. Sources of funding for necessary conservation work on our collection have dried up in recent times causing concern that we may have difficulty in maintaining the rate of progress that has been made. I hope very much that this is not so and that our achievement in gaining Accreditation will open new avenues.

The presentation associated with the Award will take place at an event planned at the Museum on Saturday 8th September when members, stewards and friends will gather there to celebrate 10 years of our presence at the Promenade Park. I look forward to seeing you there.

10th Birthday Celebrations

Maldon Museum was officially opened at the Promenade Park on 30th August 1997, although the public had been visiting since early July of that year following fifteen months of trials and tribulations which have been documented in past Penny Farthings. The Ceremony was performed by our President, Arthur Simpson, assisted by John Smith, Chairman of the Maldon District Council and Peter Roberts, the Town Mayor. To celebrate the Museum's 10 years in the Park there will be a gathering of members, stewards and friends on the evening of Saturday 8th September. This should be a very happy occasion!

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 Winter Issue of *Penny Farthing* is 5 November

MALDON'S EARLY, EARLY WARNING SYSTEM

A visitor to St Peter's on the Wall, Bradwell, could be forgiven for overlooking a rare, historical building only a hundred yards away. To the right of the Chapel, when facing the sea, is a small copse in which is hidden what is now known locally as Linnet's Cottage (See front cover photo).

It was not originally intended as a domestic dwelling, but rather as a signal station to give warning of surprise attack during the Napoleonic War. Built in 1798 at a cost £165 19s 1d, it was one of a chain of such stations around the coast and would have communicated with similar stations at Beacon Hill, at St Osyth to the north, and with Grange Outfall, Tillingham, in the south.

At first communications would have been conducted by a system of flags and balls displayed on a mast, then from 1812 a semaphore system was used. In clear weather these were surprisingly quick and accurate ways of conveying messages and would have allowed valuable time to alert defence forces in the event of a potential invasion.

All built more or less to the same basic design, each signal station consisted of a single storey, weather boarded cottage with a slate roof. It contained two small rooms with two additional narrow lean-to rooms at the rear and a store room / pantry at the front.

A small range stove stood in one of the main rooms to provide all cooking and heating facilities for one naval officer and two midshipmen.

A Navy directive specified that each signal station be provided with a stove for the officer; fire irons and fender, three ash chairs; two deal tables; a cot for the officer and hammocks for the men. No doubt the officer and men would have provided themselves with a few additional items to relieve their Spartan existence in such a lonely and desolate posting.

drunken behaviour and illness

At one time the officer in charge at St Peter's was a Lt. John Leckie and several of his letters still exist in the Public Record Office. In one he requests the Admiralty Board to provide some means of providing drinking water, because the local farmer had cleaned out the pond at the rear of the cottage, leaving what remained unpalatable.

Other letters from Lt Leckie complained of the drunken behaviour and illness among his men, and on another occasion asked for assistance in claiming a reward for recovering a smuggler's vessel and its cargo of gin. It appears that the vessel in question had been stranded by the tide, and

although Leckie had originally claimed the ship, a stronger force of excise men had usurped his claim. Normally prize money, based on a percentage of the value of the prize, was payable to the captors so one can understand Leckie's annoyance and complaint.

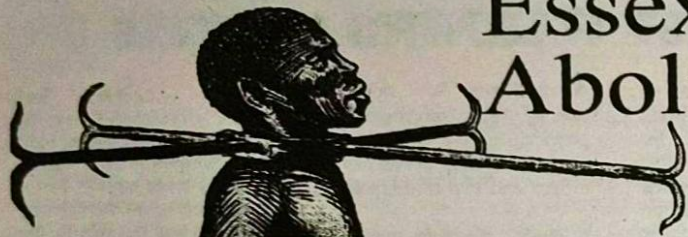
In accordance with Admiralty policy, once the signal station was no longer required by the navy, it was handed over to the owner of the land on which it had been built. An 1872 map of East Hall Farm shows that the signal station was by then being used as an agricultural worker's cottage.

In 1871 a farm labourer called William Linnett and his family were living there. Ten years later William had changed his occupation to that of wildfowler and fisherman. His son, Walter, continued the trade and was known as the "King of the Fowlers". He supplemented his income by harvesting cockles which he then took by rowing boat to Mersea Island for onward transportation to Colchester.

After Walter Linnett's death in 1958 the cottage was used by falconers for a few years and was later used for bird-watching. The Essex Bird Watching Society have since erected a wooden building as an observatory alongside the cottage.

Linnett's Cottage is now a listed building and currently being restored as funds allow.





Used to prevent a captive from escaping into the jungle, these hooks would entangle him in the vegetation. Also used as a punishment on the plantations, so the slave could not lay his head down to sleep.

Essex and Abolition

In the year that Britain celebrates the 200th anniversary of abolition of the slave trade, it is a fortuitous coincidence that Judy Betteridge recently sent your editor a copy of an abolition pamphlet found some years ago, whilst her Uncle was carrying out repairs to the stairs of an old house where he and his wife lived in Goldhanger.

In 1807 the transportation of slaves from Africa was made illegal, though it would be another 26 years before slavery itself was ended in Britain's colonies and would continue until 1865 in the United States of America.

Slavery could not have existed without the willing and active co-operation of black Africans themselves who eagerly sold fellow blacks, captives from their tribal wars, to white merchants. Regrettably, several ports in Britain, such as Bristol and Liverpool, owe their immense wealth to the inhuman transportation and exploitation of slaves. Slavery never played a significant part in the commercial activities of

Essex, although there is evidence that limited trading did take place - records show that in 1763 a ship called the "Blue Horizon" left Colchester bound for Jamaica with a cargo of 77 slaves. How they came to have been in Colchester is not known as the town was well off the usual direct trade route to the West Indies.

Nevertheless such instances would appear to be rare and Essex was more noted for its abolitionist sentiments than otherwise.

Many of the most renowned opponents to slavery had their roots in Essex, probably the most famous being Thomas Fowell Buxton who was born in Castle Hedingham. He founded the "Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery", commonly known as the Anti-Slavery Society, and after the retirement of William Wilberforce in 1825, took over as leader of the anti-slavery campaign in Parliament. In 1839, six years before his death, he published "The African Slave Trade and its Remedy".

Essex women also played an active part in the abolition movement. From the late 1820s two groups of female abolitionists, The Colchester Anti-Slavery Society and the Chelmsford Female Negro's Friends Society, were among the most vigorous campaigners for abolition in the county. The pamphlet found by Judy's uncle, dated 1828, may quite possibly have been distributed by one of these societies.

It covers in great detail the abuses suffered by the slaves in the colonies and includes regulations on how their masters could treat them, such as "All persons are forbidden to inflict more than thirty lashes on their slaves", "Slaves going out at night without a light and a licence, shall be flogged and put to a month's labour on the public works. Even free blacks shall be liable to arrest if they go out at night".

Slaves assembling together by day or night could be flogged and branded or, on a subsequent repetition of the offence suffer death. Slaves were simply possessions

and were not allowed to profit in any way from their own industry - anything they might earn became the full property of their master.

The strength of female support for the cause of abolition can be demonstrated by the Chelmsford branch of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society. From 1852 the male auxiliary organisations of this society virtually ceased to provide monetary support, whereas the related female societies continued to provide considerable income from their fund-raising activities.

One of the more important local women in the abolition movement was Anne Knight. Born in Chelmsford in 1786 into a Quaker family, from the late 1820s she began to campaign tirelessly for the complete abolition of slavery. She sought support for her

petitions by carrying out door-to-door canvassing and regularly travelled to London to meet with national leaders in the abolition movement.

In 1834 she added an international dimension to her campaigning when she undertook a lecture tour in France. Her contribution to the cause was acknowledged when a newly founded village for freed slaves was named Knightville in her honour.

Not only were people of Essex alerted to the horrors of slavery by white activists but also by first hand accounts of freed slaves who gave lectures on the subject and the need for its abolition. Most prominent of these was Thomas Ringgold Ward, who had escaped from slavery in Maryland, and addressed an anti-slavery meeting in Chelmsford in 1854.

It was not simply by listening to lectures or by signing petitions that Essex demonstrated its abhorrence of slavery. A more direct and practical measure was undertaken by Robert Marriage, a Quaker, who decided to try to undermine the financial viability of the sugar-cane industry in the West Indies.

In 1832 Marriage set up the very first sugar beet factory in Britain at Ulting in the hope that beet-sugar would be cheaper than that produced from cane and therefore be more attractive to the buying public, with the result that the plantations would become uneconomic and the practice of slavery would be forced to be abandoned. Unfortunately there was large-scale opposition to his scheme from vested interests and his project failed two years later.

THOMAS FOWELL BUXTON 1786-1845

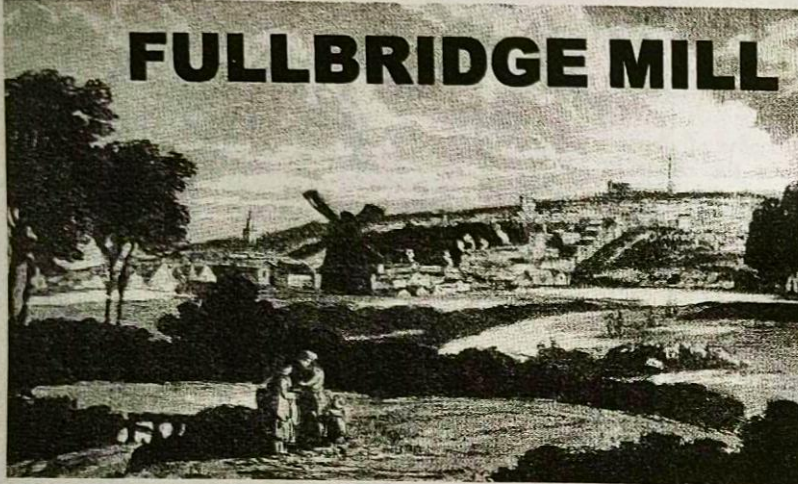
Thomas Buxton was born at Castle Hedingham in 1786 and went to school in Kingston-upon-Thames. In 1801 he returned to East Anglia, this time to Norwich where, although an Anglican, he became friends with the Quaker Gurney family. He studied at Trinity College Dublin from 1803 to 1807, graduating with great distinction. In 1807 he married Hannah Gurney and a year later became a partner in Truman Breweries.

Inspired by the Quakers he became an advocate for social reform and in 1816, at a time when the population of Spitalfields in London was starving, he joined and became one of the most forceful voices in the campaign for their relief. Between 1816 and 1820 he campaigned for prison reform, working with Elizabeth Fry, and after 1820 became involved in the campaign for the abolition of capital punishment. He became Member of Parliament for Weymouth in Dorset in 1818, a seat he held until 1837.

Although the slave trade (the actual transportation of slaves from Africa) had been abolished in 1807, the ownership and exploitation of slaves continued to be legal in the British colonies. Working with William Wilberforce, Buxton founded the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery in 1823. Two years later, on Wilberforce's retirement, Buxton assumed the leadership of the campaign in Parliament.

He campaigned tirelessly until the passing of the Slavery Abolition Act in 1833 that ended slavery in Britain and its colonies. Nonetheless, slavery was still a major activity by other nations in many parts of the world, and in 1839 he published "The African Slave Trade and its Remedy," which advocated diplomacy with African nations to end the trade. The British government accordingly sent a mission to Niger, but it met little success. Worn out by the affair Buxton died in 1845. He had been created a baronet in 1840 and there is a monument to him in Westminster Abbey.

FULLBRIDGE MILL



The Fullbridge smock mill c.1804. In the distance is Market Hill and the spire of All Saints Church.

According to a Royal Exchange fire policy there was a smock mill in Fullbridge from at least 1799. The policy was issued to John White, a farmer and miller. It is believed that the mill was situated in St Peters Parish, at the end of Mill Lane near the present Station Road and is described as a timber built windmill used for grinding corn and bark.

At the time the policy was issued the building was valued at £500 and the gears and grinding equipment at £200, with stock-in-trade being calculated at a further £200. Importantly it was warranted that there was no steam engine present. As mills were notorious for catching fire due to the combustible nature of flour dust, it made sense not to increase the danger by having the flames from a steam engine added to the mix. When the policy was renewed a year later the cover for the mill was increased to £600.

Eighteen years later, in March 1817, the executors of the late John Tiffin insured a substantial tower mill and gears in Fullbridge for £700. This mill had been in existence since at least September 1813. As it was a tower, rather than a smock mill, it is unlikely to have been the one owned by John White above, although it may have been built as a replacement. Two competing windmills would not have been built in such close proximity.

The tower mill contained three pairs of stones with a potential output of six to seven loads a week (there is no indication of how big a load was), and the trade with London was stressed. At the time the insurance policy was taken out it was occupied by a man called Smith. Less than a year later many of the movable utensils were sold by a Mr A Smyth of Tolleshunt D'Arcy.

In 1823 the freehold windmill, together with bakehouse and orchard 'in an excellent situation for shipping of flour, and for trade generally being near the bridge,' was once more for sale. In 1830 it was owned and occupied by Henry Francis, but a year later in November 1831 a Mrs Drake (presumably the owner of the freehold) was selling the mill by auction. Three years later it was again for sale and was described as having six floors and a pair each of patent and common sails driving three pairs of stones.

What eventually happened to the tower mill is not known. It is not mentioned in the tithe apportionment of 1841, which returned a William Francis (descendent of Henry Francis?) as resident at the presumed mill site.

Maldon's Historic Churches

With due acknowledgement to Maldon District Council's leaflet "Historic Churches" and other sources.



The Friends Meeting House - Maldon

The first Quaker meeting house in Maldon was purpose-built on land off the High Street in 1707. This eventually proved to be too small and the current meeting house in Butt Lane was built in 1820. The previous one was then sold for £200, but it was destroyed by fire in 1962.

The present building is a modest oblong structure, clearly urban, of dark red brick with a slate roof. The plain late Georgian facade is broken by three blind windows framed in a pleasing rubbed brick, two large round arched windows flanking a smaller circular one over the central porch. The brickwork on the left of the building does not match the rest, indicating that there has been some reconstruction work in the past.

Inside the building is partitioned by a wooden screen into two main meeting rooms, a throwback to when men and women worshipped separately. When the two sexes began to worship together in 1863, the former women's room was subdivided to be used for other purposes. Apart from the lowering of the original ceiling to reduce the cold in winter, the meeting room is exactly as it was built and furnished. The three tiers of plain benches facing the entrance were originally provided for the elders and recorded ministers, but are no longer needed for that purpose. The high windows flood this room with light.

There is a small graveyard in front of the meeting house shaded by trees. All the tombstones are identical and carry the same style of inscription.

THE BRIGHT BROTHERS

Part 2

Cecil Desborough Bright was born at home in either London Road or at Cromwell House, Cromwell Hill, Maldon, on 9 January 1893. He was the second son of Florence (nee Denne) and Frederick Bright and a direct descendent of the "Fat Man of Maldon". His brothers were Frederick Gerald and Basil Herbert Bright (*featured last issue of Penny Farthing*).

Cecil's primary and secondary education was at St Lawrence College, Ramsgate, Kent, where he became a member of the Officers Training Corps. In September 1910 he went to Ceylon to be a tea planter. Why he went is not known, but whilst there he joined the Ceylon Mounted Rifles.

At the outbreak of World War One the Mounted Rifles was attached to the Ceylon Planters' Contingent and sent to Egypt, Cecil went with it. Soon afterwards he accepted a commission as a 2nd Lieut. in the Indian Army Reserve of Officers, 93rd Burma Infantry Regiment, made up of British and Indian officers plus Sikh and Punjabi Moslem infantrymen.

He joined the 93rd on 13 February 1915 at Moascar, close to the Suez Canal. The regiment travelled by train to Kabret and for the next six weeks he swam, fished and caught large juicy oysters. Life became more serious when the regiment moved along the canal to give support to the allies against the Turks.

Officers and men met with many frustrations: newly dug trenches filled with sand, flies constantly tormented them, and long marches were plagued with high winds and mid-year heat.

In July the 93rd split into small detachments to patrol an 18 mile stretch of canal. To deter the enemy from mining the canal, each night the men dragged six foot planks of wood along the water's edge to leave a clear track in the sand. The next morning the track was examined for footprints. This tactic proved so successful that only one ship was damaged, and this was in the Great Bitter Lake, so there was still room for other vessels to pass. During the six months Cecil spent in Egypt, he only heard the sound of battle in the distance.

In September 1915, the 93rd sailed for France where the men were issued khaki uniforms, gas masks and the latest model rifles. Cecil was trained as Machine Gun Officer for the regiment. Eventually the 93rd formally became part of the 19th (Dehra Dun) Brigade of the 7th (Meerut) Division, and was sent to defend part of the Armetieres - Loos front line, close to where his brother, Basil, was in action.

Cecil now had his first taste of trench warfare - the rain poured incessantly, the enemy bombarded relentlessly, there was no shelter, nights were passed in the open and time

was spent recovering the dead and wounded lying inside the barbed wire. When relieved it took 12 hours for the men to stumble through the mud to new billets at Vieille Chapelle.

In October King George V was due to inspect the troops prior to an imminent offensive, but it was only after the men had spent many hours standing about in the cold and rain that the parade was cancelled, because the King had been involved in a car accident. The King's mishap was thought to be a bad omen and the offensive was called off.

Five days later the brigade returned to the front line trenches. In heavy rain, the trenches filled with between one and three feet of water, and the only communication between the front line and Battalion HQ was along a pot-holed trench waist-deep in ice-cold water. Cecil and his men spent six days and nights in these dreadful conditions without any protection. When relieved the men were unable to march because their feet were in such a terrible state and they had to be motored to their rest lines, where most of them crawled to their billets on all fours. Many of the men had frost-bitten feet, others feet the size of a soccer ball - a few had to be amputated. [These symptoms describe trench foot, which can lead to gangrene].

A month later the Brigade was transferred to Mesopotamia to

relieve the 6th Division besieged by the Turks at Kut.

Conditions in the area, although different, were little better than those in France. There was hardly any cover or rise in the terrain with no trees and only sparse undergrowth. Cold weather and rainfall of Spring 1916 exceeded all records, turning the ground into a sloppy sea of almost impassable mud, and everyone had to sleep in hollows scraped in the ground covered by waterproof sheets. Lice thrived and any chance of a bath was remote. There was no hot food with officers eating biscuits and tinned bully-beef and the Indian officers and men eating a restricted diet of uncooked Indian food.

At Dujailah the brigade had to advance over two miles of level, open ground where the men were mown down by entrenched Turkish troops. By dusk 45 per cent of the British troops were dead and the remainder were forced to retire.

For the next twelve days the 93rd marched and counter-marched to little purpose. Then in the build-up to the battle of Beit Aeissa, Cecil was killed, two miles south of Fallahiyah. He was 23 years old.

A letter to Cecil's parents, written two days after his death describes the circumstances:

"I am writing on behalf of the officers of the regiment and of myself to express our deepest sympathy with you on the death of your son on 22nd. From the day he joined us in Egypt he had by his kindly nature, constant cheeriness under all conditions, and the

keen interest he took in his work made himself extremely popular both with officers and men, and we all sincerely mourn his loss. We had often amongst ourselves hoped that on the conclusion of the war he might be induced to join the regiment permanently.

"At the time of his death, about 2.25 am on 22nd, the regiment was engaged in digging, under cover of night, a new line of trench somewhat in advance of the line already held by us. Your son, as Machine Gun Officer, was supervising the construction of emplacements for his machine guns and it was while so doing that he was struck by a bullet from the Turkish trenches.

"He just had time to say 'I am hit, catch hold of me' before collapsing unconscious. Within two minutes he was dead. The bullet entered his right side at the back and did not pass out again, and the doctor was of the opinion that it penetrated his heart or very near it.

"It was a stray un-aimed shot which killed him as is shown by the fact that there were no other casualties that night and only a few bullets passing, and it is very sad to think that he should have met his death in this way after passing unscathed through the attack on the Turkish position on 8 March when our Colonel was killed and the regiment suffered heavily. On that occasion he did splendidly and brought his machine guns up under heavy fire over a perfectly bare plain to the most advanced portion of the line.

"At 6am on 22nd the British officers of the regiment carried him to his grave close behind the trenches and ourselves buried him, and that evening

the chaplain came up and read the last service over the grave, the brigadier also being present. "We all hope that if you can spare a photograph of your son you will kindly let us have one for our regimental album on the conclusion of the war, as a memento of him whom we looked on as one of our own and whose death we so much deplore. "With deepest sympathy, Yrs sincerely, W H Simpson."

Three weeks later Simpson himself was killed.

Nine months after Cecil's death, a group of officers and men revisited the site of his grave and erected a cross but by 1926 the grave had disappeared and was unable to be identified - thus he has no known grave.

As to the fate of the 735 men of the 93rd Burma Infantry Regiment, by April only five officers and 96 men remained alive. All efforts to relieve the 6th Division were abandoned after its commander surrendered. Of the 10,000 British and Indian troops who surrendered with him over 6,000 later died as prisoners of war.

In April 1929 a memorial to the Missing of the Mesopotamia Expeditionary Force was unveiled at Basra by the then British High Commissioner for Iraq. It commemorates the 8,000 British and nearly 33,000 native officers and men who have no known graves. In 1997 the memorial was moved by Saddam Hussein's decree to the middle of a major Gulf War (1991) battlefield.

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The Fighting Parson of Fambridge



Sir Henry Bate Dudley
1745 - 1824

Born plain Henry Bate in 1745, the second son of a rector of North Fambridge, Henry took his second surname, Dudley, in middle age at the insistence of a relative's will. He was to achieve fame or notoriety as a parson, journalist, farmer, duelist, sportsman and man-about-town. In addition he became well known in London theatrical circles, writing plays and mixing with actresses, painters and writers who he invited to stay at his tasteful Essex home.

In 1775 Bate's father died and he succeeded to the Fambridge rectory. At that time however, he had more than a fancy for the showy splendour of London than for the bleak marshlands of Essex and he seldom ever went near his parish. It is believed that he devoted all its emoluments to the support of his eleven brothers and sisters.

In London Bate Dudley was notorious as a rakish gallant being a friend of such noted Regency personalities as the actress Mrs Siddons, the actor-manager Garrick, and the artists Hogarth and Gainsborough. He wrote comic opera as well as being the editor of the *Morning Post*.

He became a regular patron of the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens, which in addition to its fashionable attractions, offered more sleazy pastimes and opportunities for illicit

assignments among the bushes. Partly through his visits to Vauxhall and partly as a result of his provocative writings in the *Morning Post*, he was involved in a number of fist fights and fought several duels. As a result he became known as the "fighting parson".

In 1781 Bate Dudley was sent to prison for twelve months for a libel on the Duke of Richmond. On his release he embarked on an adventure for which he is possibly best remembered in Essex. He bought the advowson (i.e. the right to select the parish priest) of Bradwell-juxta-Mare. It was his intention to live in the rectory and farm the church lands, then on the death of the incumbent rector, to present himself to the living.

In order to create a property more becoming a man of his position in London, he added to the old rectory a beautiful new wing, designed by John Johnson, architect of the Shire

Hall in Chelmsford, this later became the home of Tom Driberg MP in the 1960s. He also restored the parish church of St Thomas which had become somewhat dilapidated and reclaimed much of the glebe land from the encroaching sea and put it into first class farming order. He faithfully served the parish as curate in place of the absentee rector, George Pawson.

Bate Dudley spent nearly £30,000 of his own money improving the Bradwell benefice, and waited sixteen years for the rector to die - but even then did not get the living! Knowing how much he was spending and perfectly aware of his intentions, the bishop waited until Bate Dudley presented himself before ruling that he was guilty of simony, or attempting to buy preferment.

When Bate Dudley tried to make the best of a bad job by putting his brother-in-law into the living he found that the Crown had taken over the right of patronage and put the Chaplain General in instead.

The unfairness of this was widely appreciated. The playwright Sheridan and Mr Strutt, the MP for Maldon, raised the matter in the House of Commons. The Lord Lieutenant of Essex petitioned the Chancellor of the Exchequer while county magistrates presented an address to the Prime Minister.

But justice was not to be had, so a very angry Bate Dudley went to Ireland, not returning until 1812 when he came back to a Cambridgeshire parish and eventually became a canon of Ely cathedral.

In the sixteen years he was at Bradwell, Bate Dudley lived the life of a rich country squire, entertaining his famous friends from London in his beautiful new rectory. He is said to have been expecting a visit from the Prince Regent when trouble overtook him. The Prince Regent granted him a baronetcy in 1813, although whether this was a consolation prize for his disappointment or in appreciation of his support in the press for the prince's more controversial policies is not known.

Bate Dudley kept a pack of foxhounds and hunted regularly, being reputed to have once shinned up a drainpipe to the roof of Creeksea church to kill a fox, as he put it himself, "without benefit of clergy". But he was not just a playboy. He was an excellent magistrate known as a spirited and firm suppressor of poachers, smugglers and rioters. He worked hard to improve the roads wherever he had authority and studied the problems of poverty. He was a generous patron of the arts and even Dr Johnson, who had not otherwise a good word to say about him, had to admit: "I will indeed allow him courage and on this account we so far give him credit."

Sir Henry Bate Dudley died in 1824 age 79.

WELL WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

What links 'Jack the Ripper', Osea Island, smuggled alcohol and a Victorian philanthropist?

The philanthropist in question was Frederick Charrington of the famous brewery company who rejected his family's lucrative business, reputedly because he once witnessed a drunken man beating his starving wife and children, when they begged him for money for food. Frederick therefore determined to dedicate his life to trying to alleviate the high incidence of drunkenness among the poor of Victorian England. In 1902 he purchased Osea Island to develop it as a temperance resort and treatment centre for alcoholics at a house called 'Rivermere'.

The island, which can only be reached for four hours a day at low tide, should have been ideal for keeping patients isolated from temptation, but local fishermen with an eye to profit kept smuggling bottles of spirits to the patients. The enterprise eventually failed.

And the 'Jack the Ripper' connection? Well according to a new book *"The Good Old Days"* by Gilda O'Neill, Frederick Charrington is suspected by some as being implicated in the notorious Whitechapel killings! While those who have speculated about his involvement do not go so far as to claim that he was the actual murderer, they do suggest that he was responsible for arranging the murders. They claim that he wasn't just a good man and anti-vice campaigner, revolted by the depravity and immorality he saw in the East End, he was also determined to rid the area of prostitutes and set about having them picked off one by one, till eventually the rest would be scared away.

Another theory is that far from being a moral man, he was a hypocrite who wanted the numerous brothels closed in order that he could purchase the properties at knock-down prices to redevelop the area to his own great personal profit.

Frederick would appear to be a rather unlikely suspect for 'Jack the Ripper', but then so are many of the others who have been accused from time to time.

EARTHQUAKE ROCKS

MALDON

On the bright, sunlit morning of 22 April, 1884, East Anglia experienced the most damaging earthquake ever suffered in English history.

The epicentre of the quake was about four miles south of Colchester around the villages of Abberton, Peldon and Wivenhoe, with major structural damage occurring within twenty miles radius of this area, covering some sixty square miles. However the shock of the earthquake was felt as far afield as Exeter, Yorkshire and even across the Channel in Boulogne and Ostend.

At 9.18 am a rumbling sound was distinctly heard and everything began to shake violently. The ground heaved like a passing wave, causing buildings to rise up, sink down and rise up again as the tremor travelled beneath them.

Though the quake lasted for only five or ten seconds,

whole villages were wrecked. Colchester was reduced to chaos and panic as hundreds of chimney stacks crashed through roofs; tiles cascaded to the ground like hail; windows shattered and walls buckled and cracked. In some places gaping fissures, some as long as 100 yards, opened up in the ground.

Frightened women and children fled screaming into the streets terrified that their homes were about to crash about their ears. At first no one was sure what had happened, some thought the gas works had blown up, others thought there had been an explosion at the local military garrison.

In Maldon Head Constable Wombell and Police Constable Parrott, stationed in the Moot Hall, were alarmed by a thunderous crash at the back of the Hall, believing that it was about to collapse around them. The noise was in fact caused by the violent collision of the town clock's weights.

Mersea Island and Wivenhoe were particularly badly affected. Old, poorly maintained properties were hit the hardest, although timber-framed houses seemed better able to withstand the shock than brick buildings, even some of the relatively new ones.

Mersea Island, Virley Church and Wivenhoe badly damaged

Many churches such as that at Virley were badly damaged with towers, parapets and roofs being particularly vulnerable. The most famous casualty was the top of the spire of Lion Walk Congregational Church in Colchester which crashed to the ground, just missing a young boy by inches.

In London the shock was fairly severe. The Houses of Parliament were violently shaken and a three foot wave engulfed some boats on the Thames. While in

places as far away as Portsmouth, Birmingham and Leicester, houses shook, windows rattled, furniture and crockery moved, church bells rang and clocks stopped.

Everybody feared considerable loss of life, but in

spite of the damage to over 1,200 buildings in Essex alone, it is doubtful that there were any deaths or serious injuries caused by the earthquake. Yet even where the earthquake was too weak to cause any serious damage, the vibrations still left many people feeling frightened and nauseous.

Although it is thought that earthquakes are rare in Britain they do in fact occur quite frequently. Approximately 300 are detected each year by sophisticated

monitoring equipment, but only about 30 of these are strong enough to be felt.

Records show that well over a thousand such earthquakes have occurred in Britain which have caused minor damage, but the data is too incomplete and patchy to allow proper comparisons. Nevertheless it seems that perhaps only six (i.e 1185, 1246, 1248, 1275, 1382 and 1480) were comparable in magnitude to that of 1884. In 1692, one is said to have cracked the tower of St Peter's Church, Colchester.

The tremor of 1884 has been estimated as being 5.2 in magnitude on the Richter Scale and was probably due to movement along a fault in the ancient Palaeozoic rocks under Essex, which would have affected the overlying cover of Cretaceous and Tertiary strata.

Sources: Essex County Geology of Essex; Colchester Archaeological Trust; Virley Church written by Philip Crummy; and web pages.

STOP PRESS

Maldon Museum is pleased to welcome its newest member (although he won't be undertaking any stewarding duties just yet).

We offer sincere congratulations to our Hon. Secretary, Jenny Sjollema and her husband on the birth of a son, Johannes Maurice, who weighed 7lb 14oz. He was born on 09. 08. 07 at 06 hours.

Mother and Baby are doing well.

WANTED

Does anyone have a back issue of 'Essex Countryside' for May 2001 they no longer require?

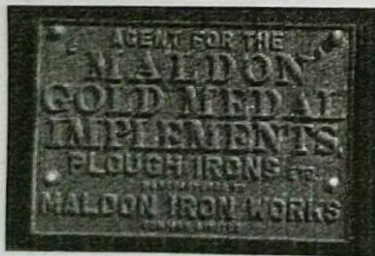
Willing to pay original cost of magazine plus post and packing.

Please phone Tony Mandara, 01621 840056

Rare signs at Bradwell



During a recent visit to Bradwell village, I discovered this delightful and somewhat geriatric workshop which still displays two cast-iron signs for two famous Maldon businesses of yesteryear, namely Bentalls and the Iron Works. Perhaps the owner of the workshop is unaware that these companies ceased trading about 50 years ago and is probably wondering why he is not getting much work lately!



ST. CEDD'S CHATLINE

By Liz Willsher

Greetings from the new reporter, I hope my prose is as flowing and descriptive as that of my predecessor Judy Betteridge.

After a brief flirt with summer in April, when we emerged from the St Cedd's office with a "healthy glow" on our faces, Judy kindly purchased two electric fans for our use. Since then our main concerns have been "will rain leak through the window frame onto the desk?" or "can we venture out without an umbrella?". I think at last there is an improvement so hopefully I can call this the **Summer Report**.

Judy, Betty, Margaret and I meet as often as possible on a Monday afternoon at the St Cedd's office to try and keep up with the routine business of accessions and improvements to the the storage and filing of the papers and photographic archive. Julia brings the computer records up to date at regular intervals.

Sometimes an interesting donation will set us off on a voyage of discovery and information seeking (am I getting dramatic here?). Recently Betty received, as a donation from a Maldon resident, what appeared to be a pair of basic wooden sandals, child size, with a metal ring under the sole to keep them off the ground. After some speculation amongst us as to their origin, Judy contacted the Northampton Shoe Museum enclosing a photograph and was lucky enough to receive a swift and very informative reply. The shoes are known as pattens and protected the wearer's footwear from mud and water when walking out of doors. Ours could date from the early 19th century. They are now displayed in the Maldon Museum Childhood Room.

Unfortunately my quest to track down items associated with Edward Bright's time as a post-boy have not borne fruit. The person I contacted at the Postal Archive, where we believed them to be kept, was less than helpful, although as they were last heard of in that location in the 1960s, it was possibly before my contact was born!

Another new item which came into our hands was a large silver plate trophy from the heyday of John Sadd & Sons, awarded for excellence in the horticultural section of their social club. We all had a brief try to restore it with some metal polish as it was very tarnished, but Christine Steele worked magic on it. Did she produce a genie from all that rubbing I wonder. The cup is now on display in the cabinet with the other trophies in the Sadd Room.

Judy has recently made contact with another fishing family member, Mr D Pitt, who provided some interesting photographs of his family, and information on the Maldon Sea Scouts in the 1930s.

A week ago a teenager, Oliver Dowling, started some work experience at the Museum and St Cedd's, photographing and recording our picture collection. This will take a few weeks but the result will be most useful for display planning, and hopefully rewarding for Oliver too. I expect his mum, Julia (chairperson of SWANS) will keep us up-to-date on that.

Thinking of displays, ideas are already being thrown around, figuratively speaking, for the next year, always with our collection of stored items in mind. It is good to bring things out into the spotlight and we do have some treasures in our store.

More news from the *human treasures* at St Cedd's in the next Penny Farthing.

DRUNKEN OUTRAGE IN MALDON 1930's STYLE

The following Essex County Constabulary "evidence reports" detailing a 1935 crime in Maldon were recently found in our Museum archives.

Name of Accused Charles Sheldon
Address 4 Stebondale Street, Cubitt Town E.14
Occupation Labourer **Age** 26
Charge At Maldon on 4th day of August 1935, did unlawfully assault one Stephen Gozzett, by pushing him with his hands. Contrary to Offences against the Persons Act, 1861. S. 42
Witnesses Stephen Gozzett, Church Street, Maldon
George H Brech, High Street, Maldon
P.S. 41 F J Goddard, Maldon

STATEMENT

About 3pm on Sunday, 4th August 1935, I was on duty in Mill Road, Maldon, in company with Inspector Smith, outside Promenade Gates.

I received certain information and in consequence we went through the main gates on to the Promenade, where I saw Sheldon. I stopped him and Mr Gozzett the Park attendant came up to us.

Gozzett said in the presence of Sheldon, "This man has pushed me over because I had occasion to speak to him for picking flowers from the bed". Inspector Smith then said to Sheldon, "You have heard what this man said, it amounts to a common assault, you had no right to do what you have

done, the man was quite right in speaking to you about your conduct." He replied "What's the matter, what's wrong, I have had a few drinks I have not done any harm".

He was asked for his name and address which he gave as Thomas Jackson of 28 Newcastle Street, Poplar. Enquiries were made and this was found to be false. We later saw Sheldon who again said that this was his correct address. His correct name was obtained from other members of his party.

*Frederick John Goddard.
Police Sergeant stationed at Maldon.*

STATEMENT

I reside at 61 Church St. Maldon, and am employed by the Maldon Borough Corporation as Park attendant. About 3pm on Sunday, 4th August 1935, I was on duty in the Recreation Ground, Maldon, when I received certain information. I looked towards the main entrance and there saw three men who were strangers to me. I saw one of the men pick a geranium from one of the beds. I went across to them.

I said to the man whom I had seen pick the geranium, "If you cannot behave yourself you had best keep outside the gate".

Without any reply or warning the man shot out his hands, placed them on my shoulders and pushed me backwards. The back of my legs came in contact with the railings around the flower bed causing me to fall backward, on to the

bed. I then saw Inspector Smith and Sergeant Goddard approaching and I told them what had occurred in the presence of the man who had pushed me.

Stephen Gozzett

STATEMENT

I am editor of the 'Maldon Courier' and reside at 101 High Street, Maldon. At 2-55pm on Sunday 4th August 1935, I entered the main gates of Maldon Recreation Ground and was walking towards the flag-staff. When opposite the 'Maldon Follies' stand I saw 3 men bending over flower beds. Each plucked a geranium which they placed in their coat lapel. From their manner I formed the impression that they had been drinking. I saw a man in a peaked cap come up to them.

All three men answered back, at the same time circling round him until he was between them and the flower beds. Then one of the men gave him a violent push. He fell back against the rail of the flower bed and toppled over on to his head, and lay still for a minute. Then he got up and made his way to the entrance gates just as Inspector Smith and Police Sergeant Goddard entered. I saw the speaker speak to the police officers and they went towards the three men, who scattered throwing away the geraniums. I saw the Inspector and Sergeant speak to the man who had pushed over the keeper. Then I left the scene.

George Hardman Brech

LETTER IN MITIGATION

Town Clerk, Maldon Borough Council.

Dear Sir,
On Sunday last my eldest son, who by the way is the main support of my home, went with some local men, with whom he plays darts, for an outing. My son who in the usual way is very temperate in his habits must have got led away by his jovial company. I want to apologise (sic) most sincerely for my son's unusual conduct, also please convey my thanks to all concerned who so kindly assisted my son, when he was unable to help himself. He has never been to such an outing before and promises never to go to another. We are a well-respected working-class family and I trust you will accept my apologies (sic).
Sir, I remain yours faithfully
*(Mrs) H Sheldon
4 Stebondale St, Isle of Dogs,
E 14.*

LETTER OF THANKS

Town Clerk, Maldon
Dear Sir,
Your letter dated the 4th inst to hand this morning. I have done as you requested by sending a letter to Mr Gozzett thanking him for not pressing my son's offence. I want to take this opportunity of thanking you all, who have been so kind to us in this affair. It certainly has impressed my son. Thanking you once again and assuring you of our appreciation
I remain Sir
Yours faithfully
Hannah Sheldon

WELL WHAT DO YOU KNOW?

What links one of the nation's most famous hymns with the West Country author of an epic Victorian novel about smuggling and intrigue, and an East Mersea Rector?

The author in question is the Rev. Sabine Baring-Gould who wrote over 30 novels, including "Mehalah", a story of smuggling set among the salt marshes of the Blackwater.

Born in Exeter in 1834 and educated at Clare College, Cambridge, taking the degree of B.A. in 1857 and that of M.A. in 1860, Baring-Gould was appointed curate of Dalton, near Thirsk in Yorkshire in 1867.

In 1871 he became Rector of East Mersea and it was here that he gained the idea and background material for his novel. He became Rector of Lew Trenchard in Devon in 1881 and remained there until his death in 1924.

Oh, and the famous processional hymn which Sabine Baring-Gould wrote was the stirring "Onward Christian Soldiers". Among his other compositions is the hymn "Now the Day is Over".

SHOW US YOUR METAL

Have you ever wondered where the expressions "show us your metal" or "let's see your steel" come from? In fact they derive from the days when itinerant stone-dressers travelled the countryside looking for work re-cutting and sharpening millstones. If the miller did not know the applicant he would ask one of the questions above. In response the job seeker would be expected to roll up his sleeves to show his scars caused by the hundreds of small red-hot particles of steel used for dressing stones which had broken off and embedded themselves into his skin. Such scars revealed the extent of the man's experience, or lack of it.

From the very earliest times milling was of crucial importance to the country's economy and to the life of a population whose staple diet was bread. The earliest written record of a windmill in Britain is of a mill in Yorkshire in 1185 which was available to let at eight shillings per year.

However both milling and millstone-making were highly dangerous occupations. The fine dust and powder created during grinding had the nasty tendency to spontaneously combust, while millstone-makers rarely lived beyond the age of 45 years due to the frequency of accidents.

So essential were millstones to the nation's survival that in 1809 the British Government issued a special three-month licence granting the importation of millstones from France - in spite of the fact that Britain and France were at war at the time!

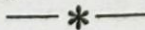
Corn windmills were often erected at crossroads in order to serve customers from several directions and they often became the centre of a new village or hamlet. After the mill was built a beer house would usually follow to serve the miller and the carters as they waited for their next load, followed by cottages for the millworkers and their families.

As a result of several tragic accidents caused by windmills, Parliament passed an Act in 1826 which forbade the erection of any windmill within 200 yards of a road lest the moving shadows cast by the sails should startle any passing horses.

Millers were often paid in kind for their services. Known as "Knave-ship" this allowed the miller between a 32nd to 16th of the customers' ground flour.

By the 1890s many millstreams began to dry up due to local water boards extracting so much water, to meet the demands of an urban population and the need to flush the newly fashionable water-closets.

The advent of rolling-mills signalled the death knell of the traditional wind and water-mills. The modern roller-mill could produce up to 16 times more per day than traditional grinding methods, increasing productivity and cutting costs at a stroke.



When The Army Came to Maldon

Readers may be aware that there was once an army barracks based in Maldon, but few will realise just how great the town's involvement with the military really was. Now, thanks to a recent gift to Maldon Museum of the research notes of Mr and Mrs Benians, the story can be told in more detail.

Whilst transcribing the parish registers of Maldon Borough and its hinterland from 1560's to 1812, Mr and Mrs Benians carried out an in-depth survey of all births, deaths and marriages relating to military personnel during that period. The results are surprising and the following article is based on their findings.

Over a 70-year period, from about 1743 to 1812, at least sixty-one different regiments were based in Maldon! They were not all here at the same time, most regiments appear to have stayed for just a year or two, sometimes in the company of two or three other regiments, before being moved to another army camp elsewhere in the country.

Some regiments visited Maldon on several occasions with the main period of military activity taking place when Britain feared invasion during the Napoleonic Wars, Maldon being seen as a prime location for a landing.

There is evidence that Maldon had played host to troops long before Napoleon became a

threat. For instance, as early as 1636, Maldon objected to a Privy Council directive that it should increase the town's militia from 50 to 60 trained men. The town pleaded poverty and decay and that it had been promised a respite from further expense after the Privy Council had billeted a company of Irish soldiers here.

The Irish were not the only troops from afar to serve in Maldon, indeed it was very unusual for a regiment to be based in the area where it had been recruited. This was a measure designed to make it hard for a soldier to desert when he was hundreds of miles from home and the only method of getting back, even if he knew the way, was by walking. Therefore the 60 units based in Maldon came from all over the country from Pembrokeshire, Lincolnshire, Lancashire, Ayrshire, Durham and even Holland among others.

Some bore romantic regimental names such as The Company of Invalid based in Maldon in 1717, The Surrey Fencibles here in 1799, General Cornwallis' Regiment of Foot, which was stationed in the town in 1760 before embarking for service in Germany, and General Frampton's Regiment in 1743 - 1749.

A regiment would have consisted of between a couple of hundred to one thousand men divided into battalions and companies. It is



therefore most unlikely that the number of troops based here at any one time would have been as many as a thousand - that many men would have almost doubled the town's population (for most of the 1700's the civilian population was around 1,300) turning Maldon into a garrison town similar to present-day Colchester. More probably only a single battalion or even just a company of troops from any one regiment were stationed here at a time, especially if two or more regiments happened to be in Maldon together.

The men were quartered in London Road, their barrack ground being sold off in 1833 to become the home of the grammar school in the mid 19th century. "The Lodge" was built as officers' quarters around 1807 on a six-acre site at the Beeleigh end of Lodge Road. The property was still used as such during the Crimean War before eventually being turned into a private house.

Continued page 19

Naturally with so many single soldiers based in the town it is not surprising that some of them met and courted local women. Parish records indicate that at least 84 military marriages took place between 1743 and 1812, resulting in 236 children. How many present-day Maldon families can be traced back to these unions I wonder.

Sadly, as is to be expected, a number of the soldiers and members of their families died and are buried in the town. Records show that at least 150 burials occurred in the grounds of Maldon's churches. One, James Upton, Adjutant of the 1st Royal Lancashire Militia, was actually buried in a bricked grave under the pews at the entrance to the east door of All Saints Church. In one instance during a three-month period in 1799 the South Essex Militia lost 13 men from smallpox. Whether this outbreak was confined to just the military or if it

affected the civilian population as well is unknown.

Officers were just as susceptible to dying on duty as ordinary soldiers. The Colonel of a Dutch Regiment, Hendrick Swigters, was buried in the churchyard of St Peter's on the 25th of April 1744.

Not all deaths resulted from disease or accident. In June 1809 Assistant Surgeon Lewis O'Hara of the 11th Regiment of Foot was shot dead whilst fighting a duel with Ensign P Mahon. Their quarrel had arisen over a game of cricket and they met upon Woodham Mortimer Common to exchange shots. Each missed on the first round, but on the second round O'Hara was wounded with a ball in his body and he died shortly afterwards. He was buried on the 18th of June in All Saints' churchyard. Mahon was

immediately taken into custody but managed to escape and nothing more is known of his fate.

Mr and Mrs Benians' research ceases at 1812, though the army continued use to Maldon as a base. From about 1860 Maldon had its own volunteer unit called the Maldon Rifles, part of the 23rd Maldon Corps of the Essex Rifle Brigade, which became part of the Essex Regiment in 1883.

From the middle of the 19th century military activity then seems to have declined until the First World War. Then thousands of troops were again stationed in the area and regular troop trains passed through Maldon en-route to London from where they would depart for the front.



BEWARE OF HOMICIDAL TOMATOES



In Mediaeval England, the wealthy ate off pewter plates instead of the wooden ones used by the poor. Unfortunately food with a high acid content caused some of the lead in the pewter alloy to leach into the food, causing lead-poisoning and sometimes death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered to be poisonous!

Similarly lead cups were used for drinking ale and

spirits too. The combination of lead and alcohol could sometimes knock out an individual for a couple of days. If found lying in this state, they might be mistaken for dead and arrangements would be made for their burial. So they were laid out, usually on the kitchen table, for a day or two and the family would gather round, eating and drinking, waiting to see if the corpse would wake up!

Hence the custom of holding a 'wake'.

Based on information contained in the Rev Keith Lovell's books on the subject and we are most grateful for his kind permission to use his research.



During the 16th century an inn called "Brichley's" was established at Fullbridge, near the present "Welcome Sailor". It later changed its name to "The White Hart".

Aristotle records that Diomedes consecrated a white hart to Diana the goddess of hunting, placing a golden collar around its neck. Richard II (1367-1400) later adopted the white hart as his family symbol and ensured it was worn within his household. The earliest "White Hart" inns occurred around his succession.

Richard came to the throne in 1377, when he was just 10 years old. During his coronation he fell asleep. When he was 14 years old, Richard made various promises to the people during the Peasants' Revolt and he became very popular, with many "White Harts" appearing in several market towns. But upon the death of Wat Tyler and the crushing of the uprising, his promises were ignored by Parliament.

His later reign was one of terror due to his obstinate belief that the monarch was divinely appointed. He became a ruthless tyrant, treating the barons and leading men of the day with contempt. Everyone was forced to bow down before him and many pub landlords, with an eye to self-preservation, quickly renamed their inns "The White Hart".

Richard was eventually deposed in 1399 by Henry IV and he was imprisoned in Pontefract Castle, where he is believed to have been starved to death a year later.

Maldon's "White Hart" closed in the 1970's and became a private house. The present building is of 18th century construction.

THE MIST HAS RISEN

On a marvellous Spring evening earlier this year the Essex Storytellers presented their production, "A Green Mist Rising", being an account of the Witches of Manningtree and the activities of the Witchfinder General. A full capacity audience of 54 listened with interest to their accounts of the evil deeds attributed to the Witches and their eventual fate.

The venture proved that with the help of Maldon District Council, our Museum could make good use of its courtyard. Jenny, our secretary, and her husband are to be thanked for their hard work in putting this presentation together and producing a profit of £100 for Museum funds. Thanks too must be given to Charlie Middleton and Graham Reeve who

helped prepare the courtyard and everyone else who assisted.

Given this summer's weather we were blessed with the fine evening and the fact that an European Cup match was taking place that greatly reduced any noise from passing youths. In fact the Storytellers said that their only problem was the continual bird-song!

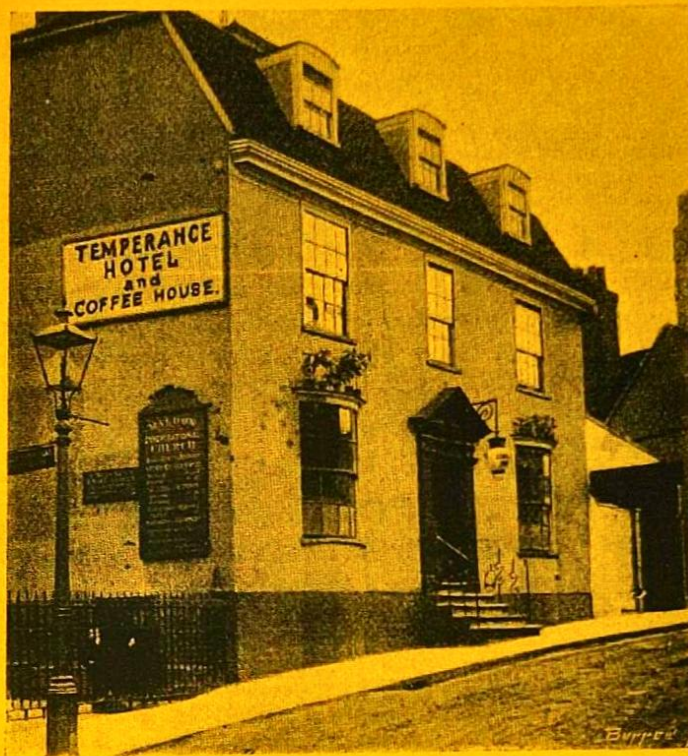
An Arrival at Maldon East

Over the weekend of 28th / 29th July the Museum celebrated the arrival of a new edition of the book, originally written by Dennis Swindale thirty years ago, **Branch Lines to Maldon**. Hardly a week goes by when we are not asked at the Museum for a copy of this book which has been out of print for ten years. It is a delight therefore to receive this latest edition, produced by the publishing arm of the East Anglian Railway Museum at Chappel and Wakes Colne. It contains updated information on the remains of the the railways to Maldon and for the first time some coloured images of the line as well as some new well chosen black and white photographs.

Two of the publication team, Rob Boyce and Mark House, brought our supply of the new book to the Museum on the Saturday morning when there was a special opening at 11 am. Sales were brisk and continued so over the weekend. Rob and Mark brought with them on temporary loan to our Museum the large notice, Maldon East, which originally hung on the signal box that governed train movements into the station and was easily visible from the Causeway.

The main attraction of the weekend was the splendid model of Wickham Bishops Station, built by Len Wilkinson who is one of our stewards. The model includes the famous wooden trestle bridge and has won acclaim in the national railway press. Len operated it for many hours whilst explaining the intricacies to the 100 visitors that we received over the weekend, ranging from 6 year olds to expert railway modellers who had travelled considerable distances to see the layout following publicity on BBC Essex, when our Chairman, Paddy Lacey, was interviewed by Steve Scrutton in his Friday afternoon programme. Thank you Len for your appearance and enthusiasm on this most enjoyable weekend!

"Branch Lines to Maldon" is available from the Museum for £4.95 plus postage.
Why not call in for your copy.



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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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