

THE PENNY



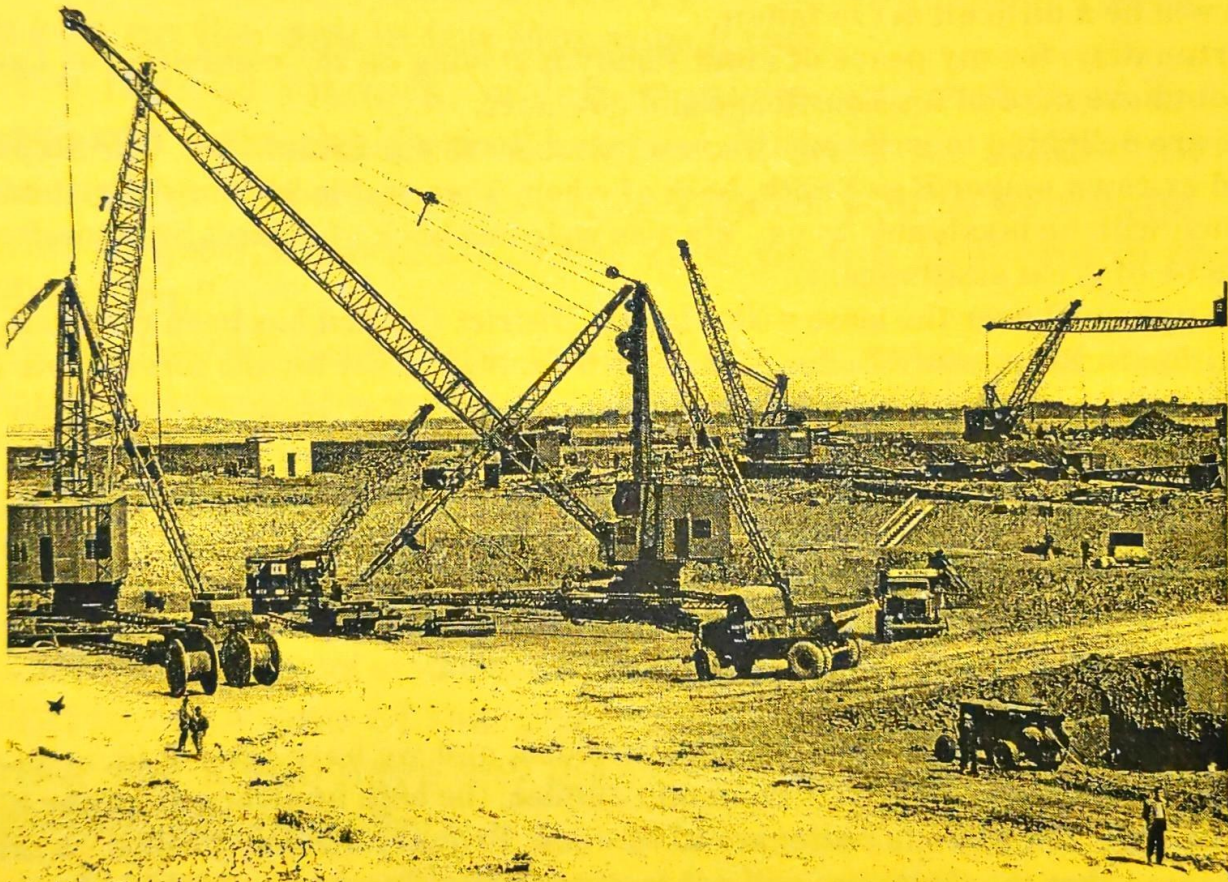
FARTHING

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The Maldon District Museum Association Newsletter



Building Bradwell power station

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As the new chairman of Maldon Museum, it gives me great pleasure to present my first Chairman's Chat.

I must begin, however, by thanking Paddy Lacey, our retiring chairman, for his many years of committed loyalty to the Museum. He has given a great deal of his time to ensuring the future of the Museum and now feels that he deserves a well-earned rest. He will be a difficult act to follow.

Fortunately, for my peace of mind Paddy is staying on the committee as I shall no doubt have need of his knowledge and guidance.

We are delighted to welcome two new members to our committee. Cllr Stephen Nunn and ex-town mayor Ken Smith, both of whom have vast local knowledge and influence which will be invaluable to us. We also welcome back Margaret Simmonds who will also be of great assistance.

The upheaval over the lease with Maldon District Council has been resolved, and our position in Promenade Lodge seems more secure at least for the foreseeable future. We shall be negotiating an acceptable rent at the end of 2012, depending on visitor takings.

However, although the lease is renewable, it is only short term, which unfortunately will affect some of our grant applications, as many funders require a 10-year lease. However, there are others to pursue.

Currently, we are seeking funding for an audio/visual display for wheelchair visitors and those who cannot manage the stairs. It remains to be seen whether this will be in place for next season.

Our displays for 2012 are now being decided, and we have several ideas to choose from. Not least, the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, the 60th anniversary of the black cabs visit to Maldon and the centenary of Maldon Primary School. I think we are generally agreed that the Olympics will not feature in the Museum, as Maldon has no direct link and also everyone will be making a feature of the games.

Whatever we decide to do, I am sure it will measure up to our usual high standards. At this point it is appropriate for me to thank all those who work so diligently during the winter months to make the displays possible. However I must make an urgent plea to all our members and stewards for help during the closed season with mounting our new displays. Please contact me if you have a few hours to spare.

Finally, I must extend my sincere thanks to all our committee members and stewards.

Christine Steel

Penny Farthing is dependent upon your contribution.

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

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Tel: 01621 856528 or e-mail: kelvinbrown @ tinyworld.co.uk

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Bank Holiday stalls help raise some very welcome funds

Our latest Bank Holiday bric-a-brac stall outside the Museum entrance raised £211.81, and another £67.70 was taken on the day in the Museum itself

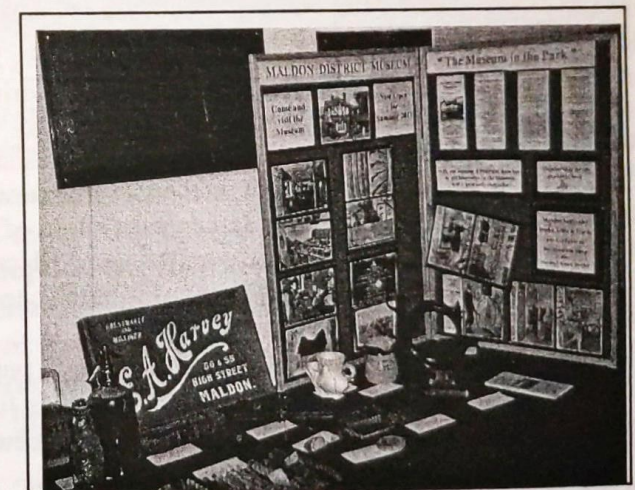
"We had 58 visitors, which must be some sort of a record," said chairman Christine. "I think we should all be very proud of ourselves, and thank you to everyone who helped, both prior to the sale, on the stall and in the Museum."

As we have said before, fund-raising is now a necessity for organisations such as the Museum as pressure on financial resources grows.

Someone out there must have a bright idea or two to help us raise some funds towards paying the Museum's essential running costs, which cannot be covered by admission charges and sales to visitors alone.

Christine or one of the committee would love to hear from you if you have any ideas to raise a few pounds for the Museum's coffers.

Paddy Lacey raised £13.30 with a Bank Holiday bookstall in the tower at All Saints' Church, Purleigh, where visitors were treated to a display of artefacts and could take home pamphlets about the Museum



The Waring Room was a memorial to Heybridge's eccentric cleric



Now 150 years old, the Waring Room now sadly appears to be in a poor state of repair, but is still used regularly and is a valuable asset to Heybridge

The Waring Room in Heybridge Sreet was built as the St Andrew's In Memoriam Schools in the 1860s by Walter Waring JP, in memory of his father Francis Waring MA, vicar of Heybridge from 1798 until he died in 1833. The building has been used by St Andrew's Church, just across the road, since the schools closed in 1900.

Francis Waring was an eccentric character, with a ready wit and a bizarre dress sense, once wearing scarlet breeches to a clerical function; he was equally fond of strange headgear.

His parishioners became used to seeing him walking home from Maldon in the evenings, clutching a teapot full of beer bought to drink with his supper from the Ship inn at the foot of Market Hill.

Walter Waring obviously had fond memories of his late father, despite the fact that he and his siblings apparently had to eat from a wooden trough, in a vicarage where, instead of chairs, the family sat on logs of wood!

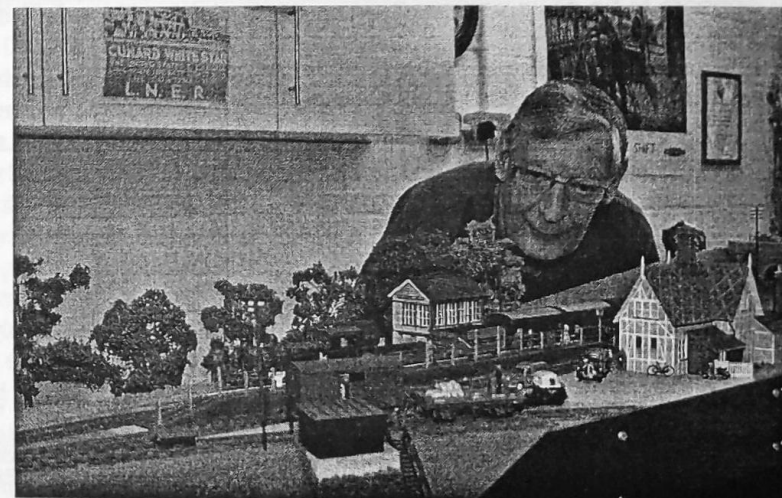
St Andrew's Church dates in part from the late 12th century but largely from the 15th century after major rebuilding was made necessary by flooding which undermined the original foundations.

A. E. Fitch, in *'Maldon and the River Blackwater'*, published in 1898, puts forward the view that the Battle of Maldon was fought not at the end of Northey Island causeway but here, near St Andrew's Church.

Len's local railway book is a sell-out success

Museum steward Len Wilkinson has almost sold out his second print run of *'The Maldon to Witham Railway, a pictorial history'*. The book is the result of 20 years collecting photographs about the line, which closed to passengers in 1964 and freight in 1966. Profits from the excellent book are being donated to the Museum. He has also spent 20 years building an exact replica of the old Wickham Bishops station.

Len with his superb railway layout, the result of 20 years work. It is exact in every tiny detail.



Bright's waistcoat on TV series

The Museum's replica of the waistcoat worn by Edward Bright, Maldon's famous fat man, will feature in an episode of the BBC's *Great Railway Journeys* series, due to be screened in January. Former cabinet minister Michael Portillo visited Maldon to meet historian and Museum committee member Stephen Nunn and to film part of the episode, which will feature Maldon East station, Bright's burial place in All Saints' Church and his former home off the High Street.

The series is based on Bradshaw's Victorian railway guide.

Limbourne - Mundon's historic park farm

Located off Main Road, on the outskirts of the ancient farming parish of Mundon, Limbourne Park farmhouse is a fascinating, if somewhat enigmatic Grade II listed building.

Nestling at the end of a grand, tree-lined avenue, it sits sedately in what appears to be all its porticoed Georgian grandeur.

However, that deceiving façade of gault brick in Flemish bond, complete with a range of broad sash windows and a roof of handmade red clay tiles, hides a much older, and more complex story.

There is no doubt that the property was re-fronted towards the close of the 18th century, as a brick with a corresponding date of 1793 has been re-discovered within part of its fabric. Inside there is an impressive, classical late-18th century stairway with stick balusters, wreathed rosewood handrail, with a beautiful inlaid 6-pointed star and fretted tread-ends. So perhaps it isn't that complex after all – one of a number of Essex yeoman farmers' homes, built during the reign of George III (r.1760-1820)? But that clearly isn't right because if you look more closely the clues suddenly come thick and fast. Other parts, mainly at the rear of the house, contain timber-framing and plaster that is a good 100 years earlier – of around the mid to late 17th century.

By Stephen P. Nunn

There is even a curious wall painting of a winged cherub's face from the same era. Not only that but on three sides of the structure there is what appears to be an incomplete and much older rectangular "homestead moat"!

And what of the strange place-name itself – 'Limbourne'. It is recorded as 'Lymbourne' on a rental dated 1526 and it has been suggested that the site was possibly associated with a mysterious man called John de Lymbourne. According to the Subsidy Rolls, John was around as early as 1327 and he carried what we now know as a locative byname – he was literally "of Lymbourne".

Not far away, snaking off the salty River Blackwater is Limbourne Creek and John probably lived somewhere near that inlet and adopted it as his surname. There is other evidence to suggest that the centre of the village of Mundon gradually moved from the creeks and marshlands to the area around the inn.

Contrary to popular belief, the creek-name has nothing at all to do with lime burning, but derives from the ancient British word "lim", linked to the Old-English "burna" - the 'lime-tree brook'. It appears in



The lovely old Grade II listed farmhouse at Limbourne Park is approached through an avenue of trees

the written record in 1276 but must be even earlier than that. Indeed, it even features in Maldon's oldest known Charter of 1171 as a boundary point described as "Limburne". So could the rear section of the farmhouse actually date from John de Lymbourne's migration inland? The moat would support that idea. And so, are some of those old timbers really as early as the 14th century? Or do they perhaps date from the time of that 16th century rental? Only dendro-chronology, or tree-ring dating, will confirm the true date of those gnarled old beams.

What we do know is that, like the house, the associated 'Park' or farmlands have changed considerably in size and shape over the succeeding years. The 1805 Ordnance Survey shows the then extent of the estate and curiously calls the place "Limdon". 215 acres were then sold off in 1834 on behalf of the trustees and executors of one James Whitehead.

That parcel of land passed to Mr



Hart of Woodham Mortimer Hall who, in turn, was involved in a deed of covenant to Charles George Parker the following year. However, William Henry Hart is listed as the owner/farmer of Limbourne in 1841 and 1851.

The Perry family were there throughout the 1860s to 1880s, employing six men and two boys, working 248

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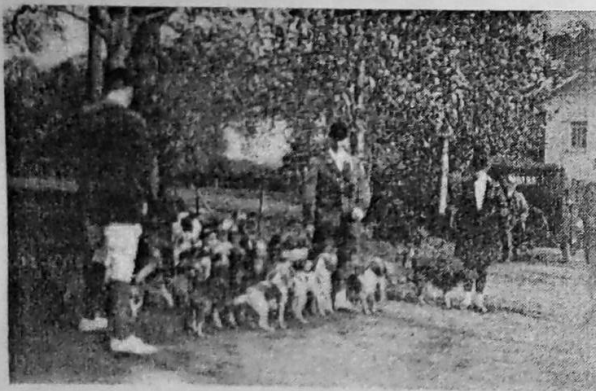
acres. By 1891 the Hendry brothers from Scotland, John and Henry, were there growing wheat and barley in the acres of clay soil.

The house was uninhabited at the time of the 1901 Census, but the owner of Limbourne Park shortly afterwards looks to have been a Mr. G.A. Wilson and he applied for a temporary iron cottage to be built later that year.

Moving the clock forward to 1908 and Edward Frederick Worn lived there, but by 1912 the grandly named, William Purnell Lambert was the resident farmer.

We are told that from 1915 to 1921 the well-known Fitch family (also once of Brick House Farm, Maldon) were at Limbourne.

In 1921 the Simpson family moved in. During their tenure, in 1926, a bungalow called 'The Grove' was sold on behalf of the late Willifred Norrell and, yet again, the site was described as "formerly part of the Limbourne Park Estate".



MEET AT LIMBOURNE PARK, MUNDON

In that same year the Limbourne Beagles was formed, a privately owned pack that was kennelled at the Park.

They hunted twice a week until they were disbanded on the outbreak of the Second World War. In 1940/41 'Mapledean Farm' and 'Crosby Croft', were then also sold off separately.

In more recent times, the Carr family purchased the estate in 1969 and have farmed Limbourne, as well as adjacent Butterfields and Lawling Hall, ever since.

'Limbourne Lodge' was disposed of separately in 1998, but the underlying shape of the park farm and, of course, the grand old house itself carry on in a time honoured pattern of agricultural heritage and continuity.

And who knows, we could even be looking at a place that has been continuously ploughed and occupied since the time of John de Lymbourne all those centuries ago.

The Limbourne Beagles in the 1920s. Photograph courtesy of Shirley Carr, from her 'History of the Essex Farmers' and Union Hunt'

Carry on, chaps, and show our paters what fine fellows we are!

It is obvious, from browsing old copies of 'The Maldonian' that sport was a very important element of school life at Maldon Grammar School back in the 1920s and '30s - an age when boys were still referred to as major and minor and their fathers were their paters.

Back in 1926, Hurrell major was the boy to watch; after winning the inter-schools challenge cup at Braintree High School, he walked off with the boys challenge cup at sports day after winning the long jump, 100 yards, high jump, quarter mile, 220 yards and throwing the cricket ball. But, not to be completely outdone, Hurrell minor won the under-11 100 yards.

The cricket first 11 that year, captained by Volta major, won nine and lost only one; the tennis team did not fare so well, losing their first match of the season 69 games to 30 against Langford Grove.

Fortunately for the other boys, the elder Hurrell had left before sports day 1927, although the younger Hurrell acquitted himself well in a number of events.

The cricket team's form was described that year as "most gratifying", with Hanning the captain giving "an excellent lead" and, although his bowling was described as erratic, he managed to take two for 15 in the "School v Paters" match.

By 1933, everyone in the school was being encouraged to learn to swim, and those who could swim 25 yards earned a house point for the Blackwater Cup. There was also a diving cup, presented by Sir Claude de Crespigny of Champion Lodge at Great Totham, himself a fine swimmer and diver, which was won by Denison. There was a swimming sports day that June, presumably using the Promenade lake.

The school beat the "paters" in their annual cicket match; the report of the year's cricketing activities ended with a reminder that there would be "footer" next term, and told those boys looking forward to donning their long shorts and wooden-studded boots: "Plenty of vim, plenty of go, use your brains and keep it low".

Writing in 1937 about the start of the cricket season, a young man who signed himself EMW, said: "How we love the sound of the smack on the Fambridge Road fence when we've driven a fast one back past the bowler; yes, it's all very, very good, and memories of this kind will be pleasant indeed to think back upon when a few more years have rolled by."

Life was still idyllic in those inter-war years!

Kelvin Brown



Maldon East station was once a busy place, with eight passenger trains a day and a fair volume of goods traffic, but the line and its signal box became redundant in 1966

Did you know?

When the Martians invaded in H.G.Wells' *War of the Worlds*, "they passed through Tillingham which, strangely enough, seemed to be quite quiet and deserted, save for a few furtive plunderers hunting for food. "Near Tillingham, they suddenly came in sight of the sea, and the most amazing crowd of shipping of all sorts that it is possible to imagine." Among other local places mentioned was Maldon, from where an escape was made across the Channel.

The *Ship and Anchor* pub at the bottom end of Maldon High Street was formerly known as *The Rodney* and dates back to at least 1769. It had two playing fields and orchards attached to it, stretching back almost as far as Wantz Road. When it was sold at auction in 1828 it was described as very spacious and having "two bedrooms attached at the east end thereof and on the west side is a timber and tiled tenement, upwards of half an acre of productive garden ground, a yard and a well of water, slaughter house and stable adjoining."

The last public execution in Essex was on January 26, 1865, when Ferdinand Kohl was hanged for murdering Christian Fuhrop on Plaistow Marsh, which was then in the county.

A doctor's war in Maldon 1939-45

Dr J.L.R. Philip's war was a busy one, as a Maldon GP and, after the local Medical Officer of Health's call-up, undertaking that work as well. In his memoirs he recalled how the war unfolded in Maldon in 1939: "On the night of September 4th we had our first air raid warning. Nothing happened, but it was reported that the vicar of a nearby parish, who was also an air raid warden, had cycled up and down a hill in his area, complete with gas mask on his head, alternately blowing his whistle and dutifully relacing his mask.

"Air raid shelters were opened in the High Street and elsewhere. Some people were putting up their own shelters who had laughed at us a few months previously for doing just that."

At the outset of war, Maldon had 1,000 evacuee children billeted on it and more were to follow. "In a small community of roughly 1,100 people this was quite a problem, but few of the foster-parents complained. After a while a few of the parents removed their boys and girls back to London but at the isolation hospital we were busy de-lousing the heads of those who remained." By November 50% of the child evacuees in the rural district had returned home.

Air raid activity increased all the time and, by the end of 1939, "people, especially the old, seemed rather dull and depressed. Blackouts, rationing and air raid allowance were I think responsible.

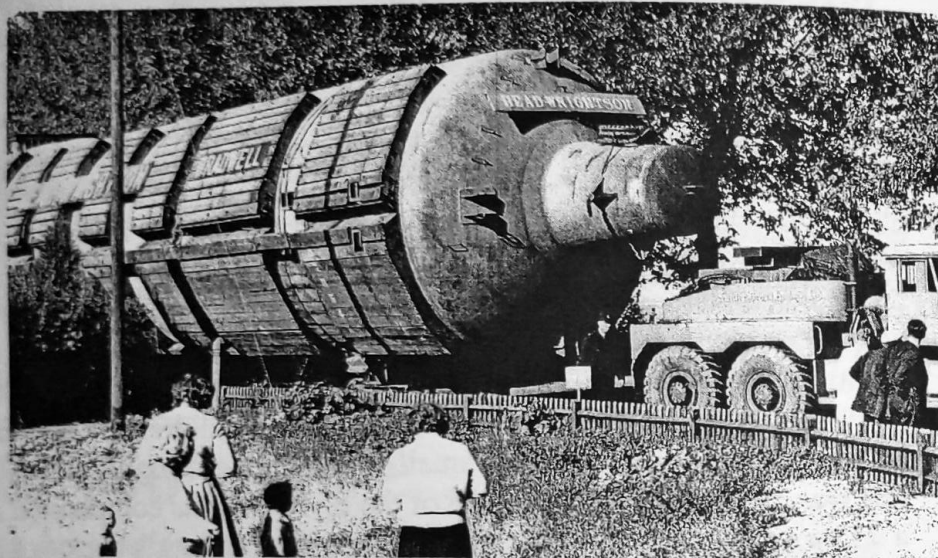
"At about this time three balloons broke loose from the London barrage, causing considerable damage to telephones and electric circuits. They came over trailing their mooring cables and some hours elapsed before things were normal."

At the start of 1940: "The country carried on the war in leisurely fashion, with a million and a quarter unemployed at the end of January. The Germans, if they had any, put their unemployed on munitions, whilst we put ours on the dole."

Dr Philip's gardener joined the Local Defence Volunteers "and although he had never done any military training, was issued with a rifle and two rounds of live ammunition. This was if anything more alarming than a possible parachute attack and would certainly add zest to motoring by night. Identity cards were frequently called for by sentries in the dark."

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Boilers were a heavy haul to Bradwell power station



There is a large black structure at the mouth of the River Blackwater, a steel-piled wall that protects the end of the inlet that once supplied cooling water for Bradwell nuclear power station.

When the power station was being built in the 1950s there were occasions when there were other large black structures in the river – the huge 238-ton boilers that were towed round by tugs from Head Wrightson's fabrication yard in the north east.

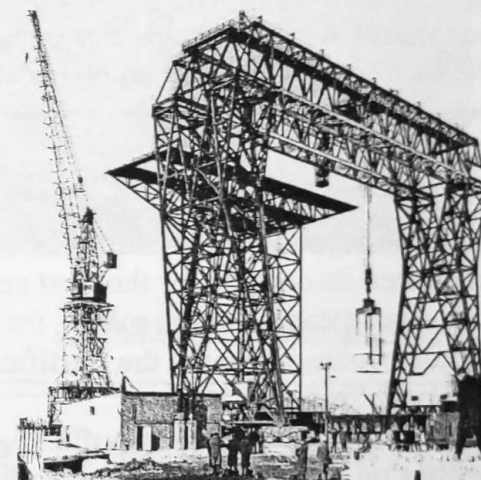
Once arrived in the Blackwater after their coastal voyage, these massive cylindrical boilers had to be transported by road about two miles to the power station site; they were floated on to multi-wheel trailers at Bradwell

Waterside, then pulled by a giant Rolls Royce-engined Rotinoff Super Atlantic tractor unit owned by heavy haulage contractors Sunters and capable of operating at a gross train weight of 300 tons. It must have been an awesome sight! To reach the shore, and a position from which they could be manoeuvred on to a trailer, the boilers were first inched in by the tugs along Bradwell Creek, with the shore on one side and Pewit Island on the other. (This little island is really no more than a strip of marsh providing a haven for wildfowl and shelter for yachtsmen and has never been inhabited or farmed, and is actually one of three



Above: the size of a boiler can be judged from the height of the man alongside.

Right: Bradwell's 200-ton Goliath crane. The main contractor, McAlpine, employed around 7,000 men - mostly Irish - on site, either directly or indirectly. Most of the men were Roman Catholic, and daily services were held on the site in a wooden church



islands in Essex called Pewit, Peewit or Pewet).

The rest of the huge boilers' journey was painstakingly slow as they were moved with great precision to the power station. The power station opened on January 1, 1957, and was supplying electricity to the National Grid by 1962; it finally closed in 2002 and demolition has been underway ever since.

The 41,194 fuel elements were removed several years ago and all that is left today is the two nuclear reactors which will be left to cool until 2087. Meanwhile, the uncertainty continues over whether Bradwell will one day see a replacement nuclear station on the skyline!

Bull-baiting - 'sport' of gentlemen

Crossing the River Chelmer at Fullbridge, Maldon, only one pub - *The Welcome* - survives of the many that once traded in this area, including the *White Hart*, which in the 18th century offered its patrons the 'sport' of bull-baiting.

An advertisement in the the Essex Chronicle in December 1784 proclaimed: "*This is to give notice to all gentlemen bull baiters that there is a bull to be baited at Mr Talladay's at the White Hart, Maldon, for a silver spoon of fourteen shillings value (the dog that wins the best of three heats to be entitled to the spoon) on Wednesday, Old Christmas Day, the 5th day of January, and the second best dog to be entitled to half a crown. The bull to be at the stake at ten o'clock.*"

Bull-baiting, which was not abolished by Act of Parliament until the early part of the 19th century, had earlier been a Sunday evening spectacle at the town bull stake. Elsewhere in the town, the *King's Head* and *Crown* both offered their patrons the equally unsavoury spectacle of cock-fighting.

History courses at Essex University

The Centre for Local and Regional History at the University of Essex has announced its courses for the next academic year.

Each course can be taken purely for personal interest, or as an assessed module counting towards the Certificate of Continuing Education in Local Historical Studies.

Most of the courses, which cost £95 each, comprise ten two-hour evening sessions on campus at Wivenhoe Park; one, *Practical Archaeology Part 1: the prehistoric and Roman landscape*, will comprise five classroom sessions and three extended Saturday field trips.

The other courses are: *Constable's Cornfield: cereal production, mills and landscape in the Stour Valley*; *Histories of house and home in Essex 1700-1900*; and parts one, two and three of *Meeting Your Ancestors*.

The classroom sessions are from 7-9pm and usually take the form of a lecture, followed by discussion.

For further information, contact Lisa Willis, graduate administrator, History Department, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Cochester CO4 3SQ.

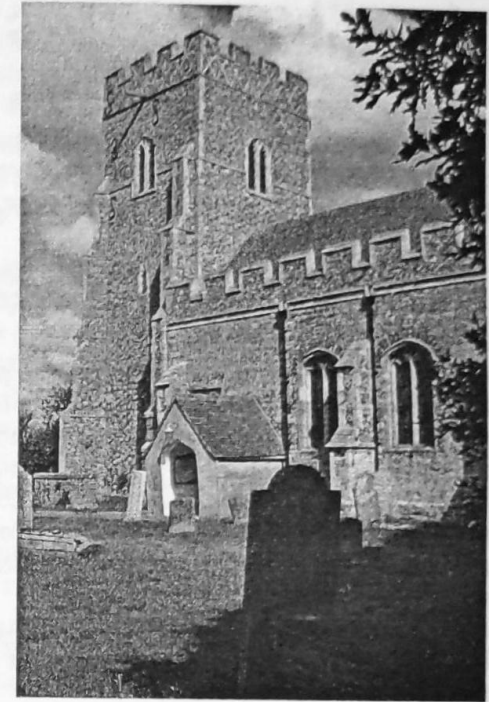
Maldon's Historic Churches

This lovely old church is probably unique in the Dengie Hundred, in having a view from its tower of four rivers, the Blackwater, Crouch, Roach and Thames.

The nave dates probably from the 14th century and it is thought there may well have been an earlier church on this site.

The tower's two bells were rehung in 1807: one was cast by Colchester bellfounder Miles Graye in 1638 and the other by Thomas Harrys in 1480.

Inside the church is a plaque in memory of three younger men from the village - aged 16, 17 and 19 - who drowned in a boating accident on the Crouch on Easter Monday 1919.



St Andrew's, Althorne

Can anyone help in David's search?

Museum association member David Moulder needs help to trace his maternal family tree. "My mother's maiden name was Wallis and her ancestors appear to originate from Bradwell-on-Sea and Maldon," he said.

He believes the Wallis family lived in the Bradwell and Maldon area throughout the 1800s until the mid 1990s.

"There were connections also by marriage to the Playle, Davey, Stowers, Bacon, Beecham and Crisp families.

"Any information concerning births, marriages and deaths connected to James, Charles, Sarah, Hannah and Eliza Wallis would be very welcome." David can be contacted at 18 Margherita Road, Honey Lane, Waltham Abbey, Essex EN9 3TU or at david@samm.orangehomeco.uk

Lonely coast provided perfect landing places for smugglers

By Kelvin Brown

The long, lonely stretch of coastline from Holliwell Point at the mouth of the Crouch to Bradwell-on-Sea was perfect for the landing of contraband from northern France or Holland by smuggling gangs benefitting from the effects of punitive taxation in the 17th century.

There had always been customs duty on imports, but the government imposed a new tax - excise - to pay for the English Civil War of 1642-1651, which led to a surge in smuggling activity.

But the golden days of smuggling were probably the 100 years from 1730, and a large percentage of the population was involved in some way - either directly or indirectly - perhaps simply by seeing and hearing nothing, and being rewarded by the occasional gift of brandy or other spirits left at their back door.

It was impossible for the revenue men to effectively police the wild and desolate marshland, where tubs of geneva - the over-proof gin sometimes called Hollands, produced in enormous quantities by Dutch stills - were secretly sunk for collection later.

This isolated stretch of coastline remained a favourite dropping-off point for smugglers, many of them fisherman or oyster dredgermen, until the middle of the 19th century.

But it was not just geneva which was smuggled. Tobacco - pressed into small bales to take less space in a vessel's hold - was brought in in huge quantities during the 18th century after being bought for as little as 3d a pound in Holland or France and sold for up to 1s 6d, and by the mid-19th century was selling for around 2s 6d a pound, which was less than the import duty alone on legally imported tobacco.

Brandy and French silk and lace produced big profits and so did tea, which was smuggled in large quantities. *'Smuggling in Essex'* by former Customs officer Graham Smith tells how two Revenue cutters seized a smuggling lugger off Bradwell in 1780, capturing a huge quantity of spirits and nearly a ton of tea; the duty payable on that quantity of tea was around £450, which was a staggering amount of money in those days.

The Revenue cutters had many run-ins with the most notorious of the Crouch smugglers, the Dowsetts, William and John, who are thought to have been brothers; they survived many a skirmish at sea with the cutters towards the end of the 18th century.

While the cutters patrolled the sea, riding officers patrolled the land, watching for signs that may indicate smuggling was taking place.

But smuggling was not always a one-way trade, and in medieval times large

quantities of wool from the flocks of sheep that grazed the marshes, were shipped illicitly to avoid payment of tax on its export.

In 1353 King Edward III put England's wool trade in the hands of foreign merchants, who paid higher customs duty on the exports than English merchants. Those foreign merchants would buy the wool in 'staples' - certain designated towns - and ship it to the continent. Then in 1359 the English wool merchants, tired of having to smuggle their wool abroad or accept low prices, agreed to pay the same customs duty and, as a consequence, were allowed to export wool on their own and to set up a body to regulate the trade - and it was a big trade.

They set up a staple in Bruges, Belgium, which was moved to Calais (which then belonged to England) in 1363, and any English merchant wanting to export wool then had to do it through the staple. The average price for a 364lb sack of wool in England at that time was £8, but customs and subsidy added 40 shillings, increasing the cost by a quarter. From the 1350s more than 40,000 sacks of wool were exported in some years, but that declined to an average of 13,000 in 1401-1439 due to a major growth in the English cloth industry, which meant the wool was needed at home.

By the mid 16th century, cloth exports were huge, exceeding 100,000 lengths of cloth per year, and wool exports were down to just 4,000 sacks annually. The overseas wool trade ended in 1614 when exports were prohibited by royal proclamation.

Smugglers bringing illicit goods in, rather than taking them out, had plenty of places on this coast to land their cargoes, with accomplices ashore to watch for the riding officers.

H.W.Tompkins says in *Marsh Country Rambles*, published in 1904: *"Examine a large map of Essex and you will see how truly the county was made for smugglers. There are at least 50 well defined rivers, creeks or outfalls; to search for some notorious gang on a dark night was like looking for the proverbial needle in a haystack. What artificial deep ways cut into cliffs were to the Cornish men, the sea wall was to the Essex smuggler. Both afforded excellent shelter when goods - whether kegs, bales or what not - were being stealthily conveyed up country. The Preventive Officer could see nothing unless actually on the wall in which case if there was enough light to serve his purpose it also served to render him a conspicuous target for a bullet. A revenue cutter pursuing a small smuggling craft along one of the winding creeks in the neighbourhood of the Blackwater could see nothing of what was going forward on land where even the country gentleman was in league with the smugglers often sending ponies to the appointed landing place to bear the kegs many miles inland."*

Smuggled goods would be dropped off in quiet places for pick-up by accomplices ashore, and carried, sometimes on processions of ponies with muffled hooves, through the lanes and villages for onward shipment to the nearest big towns, or perhaps on to London.

A doctor's war - continued from P11

By the middle of 1940, pill boxes were being built, iron railings were removed and aluminium pots and pans were being collected as part of the war effort.

Bombing in the area was becoming more frequent. "On August 18th a big formation of 42 enemy planes went over our house - they were both fighters and bombers. Very soon machine-gun fire was heard and a solitary Spitfire hanging on to the tail of the enemy was shot down.

"Before long a formation of Spitfires appeared and the Germans wheeled off. However, half an hour later more than 30 enemy planes came over. Bombs and incendiaries were dropped but no one was hurt. A tiddler bomb was dropped on Mount Pleasant next day while I was taking surgery - it caused alarm, but nothing else."

Six days later a German bomber on a daylight raid was shot down and crashed near Langford Cross; in the days that followed, there were more dogfights overhead and bombs were dropped at Purleigh. "We often had to pick up our own pilots after air battles and in a raid on Burnham on Crouch ten people were killed. Southminster was badly damaged by a magnetic mine and one adult and two children died."

Unexploded bombs became a problem, and one fell in a field near Maldon cemetery. "This was examined by the Army and pronounced harmless. For months this quite large bomb lay on the surface, serving as a happy if bulky toy for children who rode on it, hammered it and generally treated it with little respect.

"One day, the Navy arrived and said it was live, very dangerous and should be taken away at once. The roads from Maldon to the marshes where it was exploded were cleared of traffic....this rather shook us as to the value of the military opinion in our area on UXB (unexploded bombs)."

Another bomb fell on the road at Cemetery Hill in Maldon "making a large crater which cause funerals to make a wide detour until it was filled in."

Dr Philip's wartime memories will continue in the next Penny Farthing

A muddy grave for a pair of workhorses of the east coast

Anyone walking the sea wall between Heybridge and Heybridge Basin will be familiar with the extensive lakes which are home to countless sea birds, and they have the need for roads and ousing in the 1950s and 60s to thank for them, because they were once sand and gravel pits.

The Heybridge Hall pits were worked first by the Williams family and then by A.J.Brush who shipped much of the sand by sea, both from Fullbridge Wharf and also loaded on to coasters just along the sea wall from the pits.

A huge three-legged derrick which stood at the point where the sea wall turns away from Maldon and points towards Heybridge Basin, discharged tons of sand into waiting vessels, including Alan Brush's own '*Maureen Brush*', which was named after his wife, and which became '*Bill Brush*', named after his father, when the marriage ended.

A pair of barges have finished their days in Colliers' Reach, near the place where Brush's derrick once stood high on the skyline; the '*Charles Burley*' and '*Lady Helen*' have been trapped in their muddy grave for years, joined by others including a former naval vessel now just a keel and a few ribs.

'*Lady Helen*' was one of the many barges built at Maldon at Cook's yard, and part of a fleet owned by Francis & Gilders of Colchester.

The '*Charles Burley*' was built in Sittingbourne, Kent, by C. Burley and Co in 1902, and worked for Burley's Dolphin Brand Cement Works, first under sail and, after 1947, as a motor barge.

She finished her working days de-rigged as a lighter transferring Baltic timber from ships bringing it in to the River Blackwater for Sadd's of Maldon, off-loading at the Stone, and was later converted into a house barge in Colliers' Reach before being hulked.



'Charles Burley' and 'Lady Helen' slowly rot away in the River Blackwater mud in Colliers' Reach, just along the sea-wall from Heybridge Basin. Both barges spent their working lives on the East coast.

TIMES PAST



This was the year that Abraham Lincoln succeeded James Buchanan as 16th president of the United States of America - less than a month before the start of the American Civil War on April 12 when southern forces bombarded Fort Sumter in South Carolina into submission. Later in the year, Jefferson Davis was elected president of the Confederate States of America.

The civil war was to last for four years of bloody conflict between Union and Confederate forces, until April 1865.

1861

A month after the start of the American Civil War the British government pledged to remain neutral

Martin Doyle became the last man in Britain to be hanged for attempted murder when he went to the gallows in Chester. The death penalty was limited to murder, high treason, espionage, piracy with violence and acts of arson perpetrated upon docks or ammunition depots

The British Empire established bases in Lagos, Nigeria, to stop the slave trade

HMS Warrior, the world's first ocean-going all iron-hulled armoured battleship, was completed and commissioned

Thomas Cook ran the first package holiday, from London to Paris

Mrs Beeton's *Book of Household Management* was published, as were Charles Dickens' novel *Great Expectations* in book form and George Eliot's novel *Silas Marner*

Queen Victoria's mother, Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, Duchess of Kent, died in March; she had been born in 1786 in Germany. Victoria's beloved husband Albert, Prince Consort, died just two weeks before Christmas; he had been born in 1819



ST. CEDD'S CHATLINE

By Judy Betteridge, accessions team

Sorry folks – you'll have to put up with me for this issue, as Liz is laid low with the dreaded shingles. We hope that by the time you read this, she will be feeling better and looking forward to her visit to Oz later in the year.

Just for a change, I thought you might be interested to read about a fairly typical week in the life of our accessions team. Sometimes it's quieter than this, and sometimes not!

Day 1: 9.30 – 14.00 Attended Museum to help with school visit – 85 children and 12 adults. Arranged for a supply of copier toner to be delivered to St. Cedds. It did not arrive and later received a message that it had been left in our mail box.

Day 2: Visited St. Cedds to refill toner and restore copier to working order. Copied some press cuttings and delivered them to Lucy at Tesco, who is allowing us a display table to promote the Museum. Also, called in to Woodleys to deliver empty toner cartridges.

Day 3: Assisted Liz with ordering a new supply of Len Wilkinson's book. Received a copy of Stephen Nunn's report to Maldon Town Council and responded on two items – focused grants and our response time to enquiries. Assisted Liz with copies of our display notices on Edward Bright and the waistcoat wager – these are to be forwarded to the BBC for use on the Portillo program, recorded earlier in the month.

Day 4: Emailed Christine re faulty guttering and cistern at the Museum. Forwarded fault report to MDC and requested update on provision of the new Open sign. We also decided to put up a request for bric-a-brac at the Museum, and I will do this on Sunday.

Day 5: Received a request from a donor who wishes to reclaim a sock knitting machine, donated in 1999. (This item was located in store, the donation form retrieved from the file, and the item has now been returned). Received info that Rev. Speight, retired URC minister, would like to donate items relating to his retirement. Contacted him to make arrangements. These items have now been received and accessed into our collection.

Day 6: Personal outgoing email ceased to function, and cannot be fixed for a few days. Received a request from a local school asking if we can help them with a loan of Tudor artefacts – still no email, so have asked Christine to inform the school that we are unable to help with this request.

Day 7: All Museum activities cease for me, as I have an attack of vertigo – therefore cannot help with stewarding tomorrow either.

In addition to the above, here are some more interesting items, which we have accessed into our collection recently:

A jigsaw of a photograph of mud race day in 1994.

A collection of Royal Navy WWI medals, photographs and other related items which belonged to Henry Collin, who was born in Bradwell.

We have also had the offer of some 1930s underwear and a WWII police helmet and we await their arrival, when they also will be accessed into our collection.

Three interesting books from the 1930/40s, one of which, a tribute to ITMA, has been accessed and put on display in the 40s room.

This is a fairly typical week for us. Our official working session is for three hours on Monday mornings at St. Cedds, when Liz, Betty, Mags and I, carry out all the usual activities of conserving, administering and maintaining our collection in the by-gones store, which I am pleased to say these days, is neat, tidy, well catalogued and not in the least bit dusty!

Wurlitzer memories of Maldon

Life member Mrs Rosemary Willsmer relates her mother Edwina's memories of life at the old Embassy Cinema:

When Edwina was a young girl, Maldon still had two cinemas, the Hippodrome which she only visited once, but had vivid recollections of the lady who played the piano music that accompanied the films, and the second the Embassy, a larger and more prominent cinema noted for the vibrant Wurlitzer organ music played by (Cecil) Vic Hammett.

Upon leaving what is now the Plume Schol at the age of 14, Edwina followed her sister Esme and obtained work as an usherette at the Embassy and stayed for three years. Shipman and King owned the cinema at that time, with Mr Smith, who lived at Oak House before moving to Spital Road, the manager.

He was feared but respected by staff in the days when one had more respect for people and employers. The sharpness and strictness of the man in charge was taken in good heart by staff who learned to know their place and how to behave at work.

'Inspections of staff before performance' was one of many orders of the day, so before opening time staff were line up in regimented fashion for the manager's fearful but hopefully approving eye. 'All tidy and ready for ation' for each performance, which started early afternoon and finished at ten.

'God Save the Queen' then followed before the audience had time to dash from their seats to avoid standing to attention. For those not quick enough to escape, they stood to attention in respectful silence until the music had finished.

The films shown then were only interrupted by short intervals for Movie Time News, adverts and county news features. Once the interval time arrived, ice cream girls (Edwina being one of them) stood laden with a heavy tray that contained a selecton of chocolate boxes as well as ice creams.

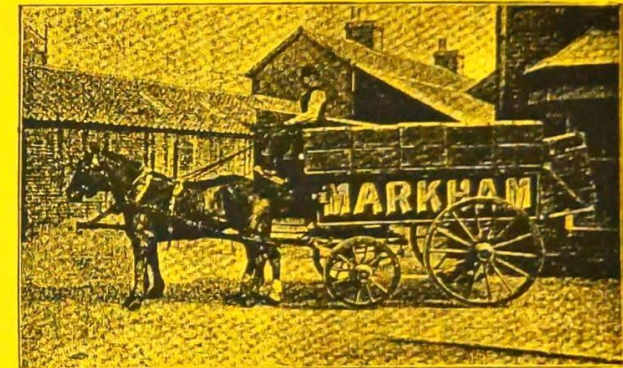
It was during the interval that Cecil Hammett came into his own, when the Wurlitzer emerged from the ground beneath the front of the stalls, alighting like the power of a space ship ready to take off, but did so with graceful mystique.

As it stood before the stage, its prominent position ensured a glorious view of this magnificent organ that appeared to glisten like expensive pearls. When fully in sight, it appeared to sparkle even more as its music vibrated the ground beneath as the skill of the organist's fingers gave life to this large space-like object as it pounded out the popular music of its time.

Sadly, when war was declared in 1939, war news became one of the more regular features, as did 'March of Time'. But it was business as usual as people attended ready for war action, with gas masks at the ready and, at the outbreak of war, it was Mr Smith the manager made the announcement by flashing it upon the screen; when war was declared, the cinema closed for a week.

W. S. MARKHAM,

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MANUFACTURER OF ALL KINDS OF

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Once a familiar name in Maldon and surrounding district, Markham's mineral waters and ginger beer were excellent but, like so many other local products, could not compete with regional or national brands

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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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