



THE ESSEX FAMILY HISTORIAN

The Essex Society for Family History Magazine



Advice for
Beginners to
Experts

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Meet the Team



Fiona Harvey
(ESFH 33535)

I've been interested in my family history for as long as I can remember and have various attempts at finding out who the people are in the family tree. My interest was enhanced when I was clearing out my parents house a few years ago and discovered a treasure trove of memorabilia.



Royston Jones
(ESFH 20182)

My first local history article appeared in Essex Countryside in 1963. I've been 'doing' family history for twenty years: from smugglers to football heroes via hundreds of Essex ag labs, I've got them all!



Colleen Devenish
Editor
editor@esfh.org.uk



Angela Parr-Burman
(ESFH 32016)

Inheriting my great-grandmother's photo album inspired me to research family history - this was over 20 years ago and the journey continues. Joining Essex Society for Family History (ESFH) 4 years ago was a logical step as so many of her family hailed from Essex.



Dawn Tibble
(ESFH 33361)

I found an interest in my ancestry after Brexit. I was hoping for an Irish relative. Now it's become a hobby and I've found out so much about family I didn't know. It still continues.



Ian Fulcher
Production Manager
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Join the Team

See your name in print in future editions of the magazine by building on your family history interests and creating regular content that will be informative for other members. If you would like to have an informal chat about any of the topics below and what is involved just drop Colleen the Editor an email editor@esfh.org.uk and she can email or telephone you back.

Forthcoming Presentations

This is an important column as it lets members know about forthcoming events. We need someone to make sure the details of upcoming talks are accurate and up to date – things often change right up to the printing stage. You'd work closely with our Programme Co-ordinator, and help create extra information to encourage members to participate in online and live events.

Upcoming Events in the Family History world and further afield

Help keep readers informed about events – both in person and online – hosted by other family history groups, archives like the Essex Record Office, The National Archives (TNA), The London Archives, local museums and national exhibitions. You'll also liaise with our own Publicity and Events Team to share where ESFH will be appearing.

Latest Online Releases – Essex Specific

Share updates on new Essex records available from major genealogy sites like Ancestry, Findmypast, FamilySearch, the Essex Record Office, The Genealogist and more.

Family History Societies Bordering Essex

Help readers explore other family history societies that border Essex – especially those that now cover areas that were historically part of the county. Reach out to those societies and see if they'd like to share news or benefits with our members.

Family Search Expert

Become our go-to person for everything related to FamilySearch! We'd love a regular feature showing which Essex records are available online especially where they have been digitised. This could also support our potential partnership with FamilySearch in the future.

☆ ☆ ☆

The Essex Family Historian is
hereinafter referred to as the HISTORIAN

*The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily
those of the Committee and Officers of the Society.*

Could
this be
you ?

We'd love to
welcome you to the
team!

The Essex Family Historian

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PUBLICATION DEADLINES

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Forthcoming Presentations

Our talks and workshops may be subject to change so **please always check our website by going to Activities>News&Events>Events for the latest information.**

Look out for regular emails sent by ESFH to your inbox advertising upcoming events.

Saturday 13 Dec 2025 2.30 pm GMT	North East Essex Branch Christmas Social	Oyster Room, Hythe Community Centre 1 Ventura Drive Colchester CO1 2FG
Saturday 3 Jan 2026 2.30 pm GMT	Films on the EKCO Factory - Presented by Reg Wells A collection of films from Southend Museum, advertising the EKCO Factory.	Avenue Baptist Church Hall Milton Road Westcliff-on-Sea SS0 7JX
Saturday 10 Jan 2026 2.30 pm GMT	My Ancestor died from An Unusual Cause Short talks by members of the audience about the unusual way their ancestor(s) died.	Oyster Room, Hythe Community Centre 1 Ventura Drive Colchester CO1 2FG
Tuesday 20 Jan 2026 2.30 pm GMT	Reframing Roots: Discovering the Emotional Legacy in Your Family History - A talk by Celia Heritage In this new talk Celia speaks from her unique position as both professional therapist and professional genealogist to show you how your family tree potentially holds hidden clues to your personality and your relationships. By means of a detailed case study she shows how family traits and mindsets and events that happened to our ancestors generations ago can be passed down through generations and still affect us today in the 21st century.	Online only

Saturday 24 Jan 2026 2.30 pm GMT	Researching British India Family History for Free Using Online - By Valmay Young Some three million Britons lived and served in India over the three and a half centuries of Britain's presence there. This talk will walk you through the key resources freely available online for researching your family history in British India without having to spend a penny. A couple of case studies will be included in the presentation to demonstrate these online resources and how much you can actually find out.	St Johns Art & Recreation Centre Market Street Harlow CM17 0AJ and Online
Saturday 7 Feb 2026 2.30 pm GMT	Pre War Mayors of Southend - the interesting ones! A talk by Carole Mulroney	Avenue Baptist Church Hall Milton Road Westcliff-on-Sea SS0 7JX
Saturday 14 Feb 2026 2.30 pm GMT	Inns, Taverns & Pubs in Colchester A talk by Jess Jephcott	Oyster Room, Hythe Community Centre 1 Ventura Drive Colchester CO1 2FG and Online
Saturday 21 Feb 2026 11.00 am GMT	Pomp, Circumstance & Jubilation: Royal commissions and connections - By Braintree Museum Warner & Sons' first commission for the royal household was in 1887, the beginning of a long and illustrious relationship for the company. Furnishing royal residences, dressing Queen Mary and the unique role of Warner & Sons in the last four coronations are the topics covered in this talk.	Galleywood Heritage Centre Galleywood Common Chelmsford CM2 8TR and Online
Saturday 7 Mar 2026 2.30 pm GMT	Margaret Thatcher A talk by Tony Harris Think you know our first female Prime Minister? Well, Tony Harris as Margaret Thatcher will help us learn a whole lot more!	Avenue Baptist Church Hall Milton Road Westcliff-on-Sea SS0 7JX

Saturday 14 Mar 2026 2.30 pm GMT	Family Secrets & Lies A talk by Toni Neobard Uncovering the Truth with DNA.	Oyster Room, Hythe Community Centre 1 Ventura Drive Colchester CO1 2FG and Online
Tuesday 24 Mar 2026 10.30 am GMT	Evidence Analysis: Proving what you think you know! - by Linda Hammond How many of the 'facts' in your family tree are truly proven - and how many are just educated guesses? In genealogy, it's all too easy to fall into the trap of assumptions: a family story that must be true, an 'obvious' connection that fits neatly, or a record that seems reliable at first glance. But without careful evidence analysis, we risk building a house of cards. This talk introduces you to the tools and methods that turn uncertain clues into sound conclusions. You'll learn the difference between information, evidence, and proof; how to distinguish direct, indirect, and even negative evidence; and why the Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS) is your best safeguard against errors. Through clear examples, we'll explore how to handle conflicting sources, weigh reliability, and avoid common misconceptions about records. You'll also discover practical tools - like evidence tables and research logs - that make analysis manageable and effective. Whether you're a beginner or a seasoned researcher, this talk will sharpen your detective skills, boost your confidence, and help you move from 'I think' to 'I know' in your family history research.	Online only
Saturday 4 Apr 2026 2.30 pm BST	Who's Been In Your House? - A talk by Mandie Adams How to trace the history of the previous inhabitants of your house.	Avenue Baptist Church Hall Milton Road Westcliff-on-Sea SS0 7JX

Looking for Henry Watson

A Great War Enigma Finally Solved

By John Sly (ESFH 10655)

Some of us military historians, while studying the way military events evolve and develop, also research the biographies of the men who took part in those events. That is, the soldiers or sailors or airmen themselves, not the senior commanders, about whom so much is already known. In this way we share all the same difficulties as family historians, and sometimes have the experience of finding locked rooms for which we have no key. This experience is often encountered when we are researching soldiers with 'common' names, even though we have had the advantage of service numbers since the 1830s. However, I have sometimes made the mistake of expecting that a search will not be difficult, only later finding the opposite.

When I bought the British War & Victory Medal pair and Memorial Plaque named for Henry Watson I was confident of a fully successful research path. I had the medals and plaque in a glass-fronted display case, along with miniatures and a cap badge, a framed sepia photographic portrait of the recipient, and basic research carried out by a previous collector, or, at least, by someone who had once owned these displays, perhaps one of Henry Watson's immediate family. So what could go wrong?

Well, in the first place, I could not find a birth registration for him. The medals were named for 40115 PTE H. WATSON. ESSEX REGT. The plaque was named HENRY WATSON. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) data and the information from Soldiers Died In The Great War (SDGW) agreed that the name was Henry Watson. So why could I not find his birth listed in the General Register Office (GRO) records (via FreeBMD), even though the CWGC recorded him as age thirty-seven when he died on 31 December 1916, so I looked first in the years 1878-1882. I then extended my research of the GRO records to any time between 1870 and 1900, but I still failed to find a Henry Watson registered in the South-East Essex area (as indicated by the inherited research). Granted, Henry Watson is not an uncommon name, and he might not have been registered at all (very unlikely), or he could have been mis-indexed (much more likely).

I had already found additional information, and tried to reconcile this with the details that came with the medals. For example, the CWGC data included reference to his



HENRY WATSON

(widowed) mother, Mrs Alice Watson, of Thatched Cottage, Bowers Gifford, Pitsea, Essex. (His father, John Watson, had died in the June quarter 1917). SDGW data stated that Henry Watson was born in North Benfleet, and resided and enlisted in Grays. I extended my research to the local newspaper of the time, the Southend Standard, and in time I received a paper copy (probably printed from a microfilm reader) of an entry datelined 15th February 1917, which recorded his death under the heading: 'Thundersley Man Killed In Action'. He was also recorded in the Southend and District Roll of Honour 1914-1921; the entry read: Born at North Benfleet, Private Watson lived at Plantation Cottage, Daws Heath, Thundersley, and subsequently moved to Grays, employed at the Tilbury Docks. He enlisted at Grays in March 1916, and died of wounds in France on 31st December 1916 aged 37. He was unmarried.'

I was beginning to wonder whether there had been a name change that I had not been able to find, or that Henry Watson had been registered somewhere other than in the Benfleet area where he had been born. If this were the case, it would make it impossible to identify him among all the other Henry Watsons. I then tried to find the marriage of his parents through the GRO indexes, hoping that this might help to provide a context for the birth registration, but without success.

The next sensible step was to research the census material, and here I discovered my first official fact about Henry Watson. In the 1881 census he was living with his family at Barstable Hall in Basildon; he was age one, born in North Benfleet, the elder son of the family, with his younger brother Herbert, age five months. His father John was an 'Ag Lab', possibly a worker on the Barstable Hall Estate, and his mother was called Alice, all of which tied in with the CWGC data. The good news was that I was now sure that I had found the right man in the right family.

Now the bad news: I could not find the family, or Henry Watson alone, in 1891. However, the good news was back when Henry turned up ten years later in 1901 with his brother Herbert, lodging with Alfred Grigg and his family in six rooms in Heath Road, Thundersley. Henry was recorded as age twenty-one, a farm labourer, born North Benfleet. This was clearly my man, and so I carried on to 1911, when he was still with the Grigg family, now recorded as age thirty-two, a carman, born North Benfleet. They were all living in five rooms at Well Cottage, Daws Heath, Thundersley.

It was quite clear that the Watson family was native to North Benfleet. Henry Watson, from the evidence of the census data, was working for most of his life in the area of Daws Heath. Thundersley, Bowers Gifford, Pitsea and Rayleigh are not far distant. Grays, however, is some seventeen miles to the south-east, and Tilbury is only three miles from Grays. Perhaps he wanted to put some distance between himself and his family for once, and a job opportunity in Tilbury suited him.

Turning again to the research that I had inherited, I realised that at least two things differed from the other information that I had found. The inherited material stated that Henry Watson enlisted in March 1916 at Southend, whereas SDGW and the Southend Roll of Honour clearly stated that he enlisted at Grays. There was also information that he was a carman (the equivalent today of a van driver) for the Great Eastern Railway. The previous owner also claimed that Watson was killed by shellfire

at Camp 124 Sailly Laurette along with seven Other Ranks; this does not square with information from the battalion war diary.

The war diary for 2/Essex Regiment for the last week in December 1916 does not help to clarify whether anyone was killed in action or died of wounds at that time. The entry for 28th December recorded that the battalion (or what was left of it, a hundred other ranks plus the transport column, after different companies had been sent as working parties to different villages in the area) marched from Camp 107 to Camp 124 near Sailly Laurette, on the River Somme.

The entry for 29th December 1916 read: *'Camp 124 Working party of 150 OR [other ranks] required to be detached at ETINEHAM (Corps Hd Qrs [Head Quarters]) for work on roads and cleaning village. D Coy [Company] made up to required strength finds party. Total strength of Battn (battalion) in Camp is 90 OR (excluding Transport and Qr Mr (Quarter-Master). This includes Bn Hd Qrs party (less Bombers, ½ L [Lewis] Gunners, ½ Signallers) 2 Coy Hd Qrs and 20 sick. For duty 1 Private retained in Camp for football team Casualties To FA (Field Ambulance) 7 OR'. On 30th December 1916: 'Camp 124 No men for duty. Casualties: to England for commission 2 OR'. The entry for 31st December 1916 read: 'Camp 124. As above. Casualties: NIL'.*

Using a certain amount of imagination, one can see where the idea of the 'seven other ranks' came from. It is as though someone had mis-read the war diary, and made up the 'fact' that seven other ranks (presumably including Watson) were killed by shellfire. On the contrary, the war diary recorded only that seven other ranks were sent to the Field Ambulance, possibly having been wounded, on 29th December; one of them could have been Henry Watson. The casualties might well have been caused by shellfire that day; if Henry Watson was included, it is possible that he died of his wounds on December 31st at the Field Ambulance, or at a Casualty Clearing Station nearby. However, there is no justification for stating this as fact from the evidence in the war diary.

John Burrows, in his history of 2/Essex Regiment ^[1] does not mention shellfire or anything like it; he obviously paraphrased part of the war diary, but unfortunately forgot to add the date that the battalion went to Sailly Laurette, and said nothing about casualties on December 31st or any of the immediately preceding two days. It is therefore impossible to tell from the evidence to hand whether Henry Watson was killed on December 31st or whether he died of wounds on that date having been wounded previously, possibly with up to six other soldiers of the battalion. The CWGC data records him as having been buried at Hem Farm Military Cemetery, Hem-Monacu, France. The CWGC now includes Graves Registration Reports (GRR) with their registers on the website. The GRR for Henry Watson's entry differs from the Register in two regards. First, Watson is listed with the initials E. H. rather than simply H. Second, his date of death is recorded as 11.12.16, ie December 11th, not 31st, 1916.

I referred this contradiction to the CWGC, who replied: *"Having consulted the Commission's archival documentation, with the exception of the Graves Registration Report that you had mentioned, Private Watson's date of death is given elsewhere*



COMMONWEALTH WAR GRAVE FOR
PRIVATE H. WATSON

in our records as 31st December 1916, and also his forename as Henry. I must explain that the documents shown on our website are working documents of the time. Any further confirmation of the information since these documents were created means the current Casualty Details we hold may differ from some of the original details provided on these”.

At least that made it clear that the current published data on Henry Watson's death can be taken as accurate, or as accurate as can be established with the information available. The fact that he was killed, or died of wounds, in December 1916, and the information that he enlisted, or was conscripted, in March 1916, means that Henry Watson had spent very little time on active service. Assuming that he must have been in basic infantry training for, possibly, three months, with an additional acclimatisation period in France, he was unlikely to have been posted to a front line (regular) battalion like 2/

Essex Regiment until sometime in the middle of the year, probably after the opening weeks of the Somme battle (2/Essex had taken heavy casualties on 1st July, losing 137 men killed). By any measure Watson had spent only a short time in the front line before he was killed, and he was almost certainly a victim of a chance shell or machine gun bullet, or even a sniper.

However, there were still those gaps in Watson's record that I had been unable to find: his birth record and the fact that he was irritatingly missing from the 1891 census. At this point I knew when I was beaten, and so I contacted an experienced and reliable census researcher to whom I have resorted several times in the past. ^[2]

When I received the answer, it was not at all what I expected, and I comforted myself with the thought that I would never have solved the problem myself. My experience has proved, however, that my researcher, who has co-authored a book about the history of the census process, usually finds the answers to these extremely abstruse enigmas.

So, what was the answer? For some now totally unaccountable reason this Watson family was in the habit of changing its surname from time to time. The birth of Henry Watson had indeed been registered, but in the name of Henry Waite. According to the birth certificate, he was born on 19th July 1879, in North Benfleet; his father was recorded as John Waite, a farm labourer, and his mother as Alice Waite, née Young. Using the names John Waite and Alice Young I soon found their marriage in FreeBMD registered in the December quarter 1878 in Billericay district.

Now everything fitted Henry Watson apart from the surname. Once again using the 'Waite' surname, finding the members of the family in the 1891 census was more or

less routine, and indeed they are there, at this time living in the parish of Chadwell St Mary, Orsett, very close to Tilbury. John Waite was an agricultural labourer, his wife was Alice, his eldest child was Henry, then came Herbert; Herbert had already appeared with the Watson family on the 1881 census (see above), and by now there were three other children. Henry was recorded as twelve years old, born North Benfleet. The family had obviously moved around the district as the other children had been born at Basildon and Chadwell St Mary. For some reason the Watson/Waite family had not been able to decide on a surname possibly for some twenty years.

Although John and Alice should have been calling themselves and their children 'Waite', and it appears that they did so for Henry's birth registration, in less than two years they chose to be called Watson. Despite the evidence of his birth certificate Henry in turn clearly chose to be called Watson. It was by that name that he was known for the majority of his adult life, and certainly the name under which he served in the Army.

There was one last thing that I wanted to do, and that was to find his name on a war memorial. This should have been easy, but it was not. There was no mention of him on the Benfleet, Tilbury or Grays memorials, places where he might have been expected to be known. In fact, it turned out to be quite the opposite. The website Benfleet Community Archive (www.benfleethistory.org.uk) ruled him out of commemoration in Benfleet because he was one of those who, "although born, resided or had links with Benfleet, their connection with the area did not fit the criteria for adding their names on the War Memorial in Essex Way".

Eventually I decided to look more closely at the map of the area in which Henry Watson lived, and I suddenly realised that I had surprisingly overlooked Thundersley itself as a possibility, despite the fact that he had lived there for some years. And in the very attractive St Peter's church there is a Great War memorial which includes the name: H Watson.

As an afterthought, and as he was an employee of the Great Eastern Railway, I checked the impressive war memorial at Liverpool Street Station. There is the name of an H.WATSON on this memorial, but whether it is the Henry Watson whom I had been researching, or another man with a similar name, I have no idea, but in the circumstances, I like to think that it is the man in whose name this article was written.



THE GREAT WAR MEMORIAL IN ST. PETER'S CHURCH THUNDERSLEY

Notes

¹ Lifelines Research

² Essex Units In The War 1914-1919 Vol 2 2nd Bn The Essex Regt, John Wm Burrows FSA

Convalescent Homes in Walton-on-the Naze

By Alan Hillier (ESFH 33922)

In England years ago a convalescent home was a short-stay institution, often in the countryside, designed for patients recovering from illness or injury enabling them to recuperate in a healthy environment with good food and fresh air before returning to their normal lives. In addition to being in the countryside these homes, because of the health benefits of sea air, were situated in the seaside resorts of Essex, including Southend-on-Sea, Clacton-on-Sea, Frinton-on-Sea and Walton-on-the-Naze.

These homes served various sectors of the population, including working-class patients and wounded soldiers, with facilities ranging from converted houses to purpose-built buildings. Many of the homes had connection with London organisations and prominent business men of the day. Maybe your ancestors recuperated in one of the following Walton-on-the-Naze homes and returned as a holidaymaker later in their life!

Here are details of a few of the convalescent homes in Walton which were located in The Naze area overlooking the coast.

EARLSWOOD HOME Hall Lane

The above was established as the holiday home for the Royal Earlswood Asylum, Redhill Surrey in 1904. It was later known as the Earlswood Asylum Seaside Home and later still as Walton Hall. Groups of between 20 and 30 patients stayed for periods of up to two weeks. It also included patients from the Royal Earlswood Group of Hospitals located in Charlwood(Surrey) and Horsham(Sussex). The building was sold in 1987 and became a residential home for the elderly, Earlswood Lodge. Around the year 2006 it was replaced by an apartment development.

The following are extracts from local newspapers regarding Earlswood Home

2 MARCH 1914

Wanted housemaid at small home for mentally defective wages start £14 full board uniform washing etc all found.

Apply Matron Earlswood House Walton

3 JUNE 1914 A MAN WHO ATE HIS HAT

At an inquest at Walton on the Naze on Tuesday the death of James George Alexander aged about 40 who had been an inmate at Earlswood asylum for 30 years was said to be due to gastric catarrh caused by his eating the lining of his hat.

7 FEB 1952

Domestic required £4.7S.0D per 48 hour week less 29/- if resident.

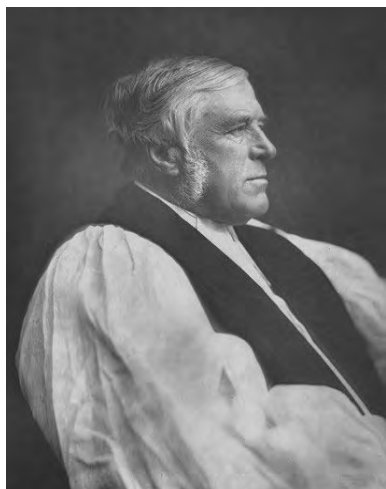
Protective clothing health service conditions. For employment in institution at holiday Walton apply Matron Royal Earlswood Institution Redhill Surrey

8 JULY 1966

Earlswood 5 Naze Park Road

Domestic wages £8.12s.4d less £3.0s.8d if resident.

Ward orderly female resident pleasant quarters wages £9.0s.4d per 40 hour week less £3.8s.0d board & lodgings

CLAUGHTON CONVALESCENT HOME Suffolk Street

BISHOP THOMAS LEIGH CLAUGHTON
SOURCE: NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

In 1885 the Walton Convalescent Home was established at Rose Villa Suffolk Street, Walton by the St Albans Diocesan Nursing Institution. In 1891 there were 3 patients. In 1896 it moved to 2 houses overlooking the sea front, 45-47 The Parade and was eventually renamed Claughton Home. This building was named after Thomas Legh Claughton (1808-1892), Bishop of St Albans who died on 25th July 1892 in Danbury Palace, Danbury, Essex.

The building was improved c1900 to c1908, to designs by Frederick Chancellor & Son, the prolific English architect and the first mayor of Chelmsford. The improvements by Chancellor included the adjacent Gunfleet House, formerly The Seaside Educational Home for Little Girls. It was closed as a convalescent home after WWI and the original Regency buildings on The Parade with shallow segmental bays have since

been replaced by private residential flats. It is still known as Gunfleet House.

MABEL GREVILLE CONVALESCENT HOME Naze Park Road

Mr Philip Brannon architect brought his family to Walton for their health and was so impressed by the area that he built a large house on The Naze in 1882 and he called it Highcliff Mansion. He later proposed to Sir John H Johnson of St Osyth Priory, who owned the freehold of the Hall Estate on the picturesque promontory, that the properties with sea frontages should be laid out to build a new town. After a protracted length of time Sir John granted the building area for 999 years to Mr Brannon. There followed a newspaper report in October 1881 of a ceremony, attended by dignitaries of the town, when there was the Laying of the Corner Stone of the first villa in Walton Naze Park. By 1890 Philip Brannon had died and his house over the next few years was used as a rest home for the Work Girl's Protection Society of London, training

agency for domestic service, a private college and finally in 1922 it became the Mabel Greville Convalescence Home. In 1937 the matron at the home was Miss E Copson. It then became a children's home up to 1939 when it was used to isolate children with infectious diseases and by late November that year another house was then hired at The Parade Walton, as it was full with children with cases of scabies and impetigo. Apparently, it closed in 1939 and was demolished in 1984.

HOME OF REST High Street (now 69-71 High Street)

Established in a converted house in 1883 by the Field Lane Mission or Institution it was used to provide holidays for poor invalids. During the summer months it gave invalids who could not afford it the opportunity to recuperate in the health-giving sea air. The red brick house was originally known as Artillery Place and was one of the first houses in the High Street. At the rear was an uninterrupted view across the Marshes. After the home was closed in the early 1900s it was occupied by William Fox (Furniture Dealer) and then W Nicholls (Optician) and his brother W Nicholls (Jeweller).

POPLARS HOSPITALS CONVALESCENT HOME Naze Park Road

The property was built in 1908-9 at a cost of £25,000 by The Poplar Hospital for Accidents as a convalescent home for men injured at the East India Docks, London. It was funded in part by a donation of 500 guineas by Sir Donald Currie (1825-1909), a shipping magnate, entrepreneur and politician. At a meeting at Marlborough House, London in 1909, chaired by King Edward, £50 was allocated to Poplars in Walton when money was distributed to good causes.



POPLARS CONVALESCENT HOME
SOURCE: AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

The building has a distinctive central gable and 2 projecting pavilion-like wings that takes advantage of the view and traps the sun. There were 16 beds in 1939 and 26 in 1965 by which time it was managed by Essex County Council (ECC). The ECC acquired the Poplars Convalescent Home as a home for the elderly in 1949. It is now known as the Poplars Residential Home.

SINGHOLM Naze Park Road

About 1907 land was acquired for a large home known as Singholm, later known as the Singholm Workers Holiday Home. It was named in recognition of the major benefactor, Paris E Singer, son of Isaac Merritt Singer founder of the Singer Sewing Machine Company.



SINGHOLM

SOURCE: AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

Between 1918-1938 approximately 200 women stayed each year with friends and relatives, accommodated on payment of £1 per week.

In 1953 the Christian Field Lane Institution and Foundation from Vine Hill, Clerkenwell, London amalgamated with the Home Workers Aid Association and took over Singholm converting it into a residential home for 43 elderly people with Mr and Mrs Surman as wardens for 25 years followed by Denis and Sue Bradshaw.

It was extended in 1975 and is now a privately owned residential home called De La Mere.

SAMUEL LEWIS HOME The Naze

This home opened in 1910 at The Naze and was completed at a cost of over £20,000. It stood in 3 acres and over the years the London management committee included the likes of Leopold de Rothschild and Cecil Sebag-Montefiore. During the first eight months the Home accommodated four hundred and sixteen patients.

In 1911 there were 56 residents funded by bequest from Jewish philanthropist Samuel Lewis and was administered by the Jewish Board of Guardians. Samuel Lewis was a financier and died in 1910 leaving 20 million pounds. Accommodation had increased to 86 by 1939.

It was the victim of a bomb in May 1943 which demolished the north wing of the home.

By 1961 there were approximately 1500 patients but the home closed in 1976. The buildings were demolished in the early 1980s.



SAMUEL LEWIS HOME

SOURCE: AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

A Roving Ag Lab – Golding Bridge

By Brian Bridge (ESFH 9013)

Golding Bridge was born on 6th February 1786 and baptised at the church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul, Grays Thurrock on 23rd April in the same year. In later years he appears variously as ‘Golding’ and ‘Golden’ – both the same if you are an Essex man unable to write his own name. Golding is a somewhat unusual name but by no means unique – eighteen Goldings were recorded in Essex in the 1841 census, with another five just over the border in Sudbury. The best-known bearer of the name in an earlier generation was Golding Constable, father of the artist John Constable.

The currently known Bridge family tree begins from 1730 in Tillingham. Where the Bridge forbears were earlier is a matter for speculation: Newmarket or the area around Woolpit and Onehouse in Suffolk have been suggested, but there is insufficient evidence to draw a conclusion. Once the family got started in Tillingham, nearly all of their growing number stayed until well on into the nineteenth century. Golding’s father Joseph Skippon Bridge was a rare exception. Born in Tillingham, at the age of 18 he was already in Grays Thurrock when he married Anne King of that district. But Tillingham and the Dengie Peninsula were still in the Bridge blood. Golding’s older brother David, born in Grays Thurrock in 1783, was married in Bradwell-on-Sea by 1806 and lived in Bradwell for the rest of his life.



A SOLDIER OF THE WEST ESSEX
MILITIA

IMAGE COURTESY OF THE
NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM
LONDON

Golding must have inherited his father’s propensity for travel. In 1807 at the age of 22 he was balloted for militia service in Great Stambridge in the Rochford Hundred. This perhaps indicates that he had been living and working there for some time. He was duly enlisted in the West Essex Militia in January 1808. Then, no doubt after a period of basic training, he began five years of wider travel. Sixty-three comrades in arms from parishes in the Rochford division of Essex are listed in a return dated October 1810 (Essex Record Office Q/FAC 3/82). Only nine men were serving after having been balloted in person, 35 were substitutes for balloted men, and 19 were volunteers. There are some crossings out and annotations, mainly for men who volunteered for the regular army.

The movements of the regiment in this period are recorded in the Digest of Service of the West Essex Militia (The National Archives WO68 257). Nearly all these movements are recorded as orders for the regiment to march. Perhaps the officers were riding on

their horses, but other ranks would have made these considerable journeys on foot. The only exception was the move from Norman Cross to Nottinghamshire, where the regiment travelled in waggons.

18 December 1807	Gosport
February 1808	Silverhill
19 May 1808	Bexhill
5 October 1808	Gosport
25 November 1808	Stockbridge and Romsey
June 1809	Plymouth
12 April 1810	Dartmoor Prison
June 1810	Plymouth
June 1810	Pendennis Castle
20 May 1811	Maker Heights
10 June 1811	Chelmsford
19 August 1811	Norman Cross Prison
3 May 1812	Nottingham
9 May 1812	Newark upon Trent
31 May 1812	Nottingham
9 June 1812	Mansfield
26 October 1812	Leicester

from Digest of Service of the West Essex Militia

As can be seen, Golding made quite a tour of England. Beginning at numerous places on the coast of Southern England where Napoleon might be expected to invade, he was later engaged in guarding French prisoners of war at Dartmoor and Norman Cross. Both prisons were built to house French prisoners. Dartmoor Prison was brand new when Golding was there, having received its first prisoners in 1809. Norman Cross prison had been opened in 1797. It was demolished soon after the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

After seven months at Norman Cross, Golding saw service in the 'disturbed districts' of Nottinghamshire, where Luddite riots had broken out. The short period when he was in Mansfield became a turning point in Golding's life. How much involvement he had in dealing with Luddite riots we may never know. He had other preoccupations. The regiment had been despatched from Nottingham to Mansfield on 9th June 1812. Golding's marriage to Hannah Sansom is recorded in the church registers of Saint

Peter and Saint Paul, Mansfield as taking place on 28th July 1812. The age of the bride is stated as 20, though her baptism in October 1793 suggests that she could have been scarcely 19. She already had an illegitimate son John, born in 1810. Both Golding and Hannah are described as being 'of this parish'!

Golding's service in the militia was about to come to an end. He served his five years without deserting (not uncommon at the time) but also without enlisting in the regular army despite the inducements of the recruiters. Where were he and his new bride to go on his discharge? Golding may have had no surviving relatives in Grays Thurrock and no recent connections in Stambridge. Bridge relatives including his brother David were settled in Tillingham and Bradwell. Possibly influenced by this, he chose Tillingham. It must have been an arduous journey especially for Hannah, who was already expecting their first child. John, Hannah's son by an earlier relationship, remained in Mansfield.

Tillingham must have felt like a foreign country for Hannah, coming from a busy market town in the Midlands to live in a remote Essex village. For Golding there was the problem of finding work after five years away from agricultural employment. This problem was soon to be made worse, as thousands of men were released from the regular army and the militia into the jobs market when the Napoleonic wars ended in 1815. Worse still, agriculture in Britain and much of the Northern Hemisphere was severely affected by the 'year without a summer' of 1816. Nevertheless, Golding and his growing family seem to have managed without help from the local Overseers of the Poor until 1819, when he started receiving a weekly allowance. After that the family became a regular charge on the ratepayers.

A fresh crisis was to face the young family in 1820. By that time there were four children to be fed and clothed. Golding was convicted at the April Quarter Sessions and sentenced to six months imprisonment for stealing three pecks (27 kilograms) of wheat, the property of Robert Willis Esq, at Tillingham (Chelmsford Chronicle 21 April 1820 page 4; TNA HO27/19 page 140). Where, if at all, did he serve his sentence? Many of the convicted felons were sent to serve their sentence at the Chelmsford House of Correction. Exceptionally, Golding's sentence as reported in the Chelmsford Chronicle specifies only six months' imprisonment but does not say where. The Essex Calendar of Prisoners (Essex Record Office Q/SMc 2) shows all the others sentenced at the 1820 Easter Assizes arriving at the House of Correction on the same day – but not Golding. Nor does his name appear on the listings of other Essex prisons.

Sooner or later, Golding was back in Tillingham. The family continued growing. By 1825 there were six children. Golding left home. Was Hannah glad to see him go? But the Parish Officers of Tillingham wanted him back to support his wife and family. An advertisement was placed in several newspapers in Essex and surrounding counties offering £5 reward for his apprehension and return. Thanks to this advertisement we have a description of Golding at 40 years of age. There are some resemblances to members of the Bridge family now living!

ABSCONDED—FIVE POUNDS REWARD

WHEREAS GOLDEN BRIDGE has lately absconded and left his Wife and Family chargeable to the Parish of Tillingham.—The above Reward is hereby offered to any person who will apprehend the aforesaid Golden Bridge, and deliver, or cause to be delivered, the same to the Parish Officers of Tillingham.

Golden Bridge is about 40 years of age, five feet eight inches high, ruddy complexion, sandy whiskers, and hair rather inclining thereto ; has a drawling speech, and somewhat stooping gait. He was in the habit of wearing a velveteen jacket, red waistcoat, and cord breeches. He was formerly drawn and served in the Militia for the above Parish.

JOHN OSBORNE, jun. Vestry Clerk.
Tillingham, Nov. 27, 1825.

(Essex & Herts Mercury, 29 November 1825 page 1)

The Tillingham Parish pay-out book records a payment of £5 to one George Taylor of Kent in 1826. The entry is without further detail but can be identified with this reward by its being the only single payment of £5 in that year. The payment was made at Maldon. Perhaps it was there that Golding was handed over. We do not know where he was found, whether in Kent or elsewhere.

Why did Golding leave home? He could have been looking for work wherever he could find it, as both he and his father had done in earlier years. Or perhaps he was missing some of his old comrades in the militia. Maybe he was just a born wanderer.

The family's life in Tillingham ended in 1828. The Overseers of the Poor decided to send Golding to the workhouse – whether for his health or as a punishment is unclear. But now at last Golding's legal right of settlement in Tillingham came into question. In 1825 the Overseers believed that he served in the militia on behalf of the Tillingham parish. Surely Golding knew all along that he had been balloted in Great Stambridge, not in Tillingham. Now was a convenient time for the truth to come out. A removal order was issued by the Essex Quarter Sessions on 8th November 1828. The court decided that '... Golding Bridge and his wife named Hannah and their children namely Elizabeth aged fifteen years, Hannah aged thirteen years, William aged twelve years, Mary aged nine years, John aged seven years, James aged three years and a girl unnamed aged about twelve weeks did lately come to inhabit in the said parish of Tillingham not having gained a legal settlement there'. (The 'girl unnamed' was Susannah, baptised in Tillingham parish church on 2nd November 1828). Having considered the case and examined Golding Bridge upon oath, the court adjudged their lawful settlement to be in the parish of Rochford. The Tillingham Overseers were

required to deliver them to the Rochford Churchwardens and Overseers, who were in turn required to receive and provide for them. (Essex Record Office Q/SBb 494/60).

The journey can hardly have been a comfortable experience for Hannah and the children. But the move to Rochford seems to have worked out relatively well in the long run. The family settled in a cottage at Rochford Common, near the gates of Gusted Hall on the borders of Hawkwell.

Golding lived on for another ten years. He died on 16th February 1839 and was buried in the churchyard of St. Andrew's Rochford on 25th February. Hannah and at least five of the children were still living in the area at the time of the 1841 census. The 1851 census shows William, John and James still in the area with growing families. Some of Golding's descendants are still living in South East Essex today.

By way of postscript: Golding's death in 1839 just scraped into the new system of civil registration which had begun in 1837. From the death certificate we learn a little more than would have been possible in earlier years. The cause of death was recorded as pleurisy. The Registrar who signed the certificate was John Grabham, a local surgeon. The informant in attendance at the death was the 19-year-old Richard Hodges, John Grabham's nephew and pupil. Richard Hodges went on later in life to become a distinguished London surgeon (London Evening Standard, 2nd December 1895 page 3). Perhaps Golding's last illness and death contributed in a small way to his medical education.

☆ ☆ ☆

Family History at Chelmsford Library

By Denise Somers (ESFH 30932)

Chelmsford Library has a 'Starting Your Family History Tree Group' every second Saturday of the month from 10 am to 12 noon. The sessions enable attendees to research their family history, share their research hints and tips and gives access to free library resources, such as Ancestry, Findmypast, Newspaper archives, Your Family Tree, Essex Record Office, and Who's Who Biographies. Places need to be booked by email at chelmsford.library@essex.gov.uk or in person at the library.

Other libraries such as Hockley, Frinton, Holland, Rayleigh and Wickford run Ancestry One-to-One sessions or sessions for beginners.

During our anniversary year the ESHF had a stand during one of their sessions in the Chelmsford Library. These sessions provide a great introduction for those just starting out and we were able to explain how the ESHF could help them continue on their journey of discovery. We were also able to give support to drop-in visitors to the library.

On Saturday, 10th January 2026 the ESHF Events and Publicity team will be running another stand at Chelmsford library between 10 am to 12 noon, so if you are in the area do call in and see us.

All the Genealogy Gen on Shalford

By Royston Jones (ESFH 20182)

Tucked away from the main routes, between Braintree and Wethersfield, is a gem of a village that was once the heart of a small but thriving Victorian rural industry. Shalford (not to be confused with a village of the same name in Surrey), with its neighbouring hamlets of Jasper's Green and Church's End, derives its name from a shallow ford across the River Pant, a river which changes its name to the Blackwater four miles downstream in Braintree. There is some evidence of Celtic and Roman habitation and the parish church of St. Andrew has Saxon foundations. The local manor was given to Queen Matilda by William I and, centuries later, to Anne of Cleves by Henry VIII. The central village road, The Street, passes St. Andrew's and then the George Inn, both largely fourteenth century buildings.

As ever for Essex, an index and summary transcriptions of parish registers are on the Ancestry subscription site and the full registers, from as early as 1559, can be viewed by subscription to the Essex Record Office (ERO) Essex Archives Online. A search of the ERO online catalogue for the village comes up with no fewer than 1787 other items: most of these need a visit to Chelmsford to see but a few, including a wonderful 1603 map of Shalford and Wethersfield, can be viewed digitally.



ST ANDREW'S CHURCH SHALFORD

PHOTO: COURTESY OF AUTHOR

Non-conformity was rife in neighbouring Wethersfield. Patrick Brontë held his first curacy there and was virtually run out of the village when he fell in love with the daughter of a local farmer who was a strong Independent. Such dissension was also felt in Shalford. In 1815 a barn behind a house now known as Garretts was used by dissenters, with a minister visiting from Braintree. In 1854 a small chapel was built between Jasper's Green and Shalford Green. The subscription site www.findmypast.co.uk holds transcriptions of more than 220 will beneficiaries from Shalford between 1675 and 1858 some of which can be followed up in the ERO catalogue. The ESHF genealogy database has details of baptisms, 1813-1851 and burials 1559-1997.

The Genealogist (www.thegenealogist.co.uk) another subscription site has a colour copy of the 1846 Shalford Tithe Map, complete with originals and transcriptions of the Tithe Index and entries of individual names and holdings. The name Marriot stands out as the chief landowner but others include Leggerton and the interesting name Jeggo.

White's Directory of 1863 details on www.ancestry.co.uk provides a comprehensive mid-Victorian account of the village. The manor, based in Abbot's Hall, was in the hands of the Marriott family who, as shown on the Tithe Map, owned most of the land. Abbot's Hall, a grade II listed building is currently the headquarters of the Essex Wildlife Trust.

The population in 1861 was 760 spread across 2,407 acres of undulating but fertile soil. Fifteen farmers were listed in White's Directory and there was a tannery, remembered now in the name Tan House Farm. As well as the George Inn there were three beer-houses, the Fox, the Victoria and the Swan, and a maltster to keep the residents happy. The parish clerk, aptly named John Bell, was also a schoolmaster. A National School was opened in the village in 1874 and there were several dame schools. The National School became a Board School and then, after 1903, an Essex County Council School: records of the board and managers' meetings are available in the Essex Record Office.



IMAGE COURTESY OF SHALFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

In 1861 there were seven thatchers residing in Shalford and, in fact, the majority of thatchers in mid-century East Anglia had been born in the village. With such a tradition it is unsurprising that almost all females above the age of about nine were engaged in the homely but arduous task of straw-plaiting. Luton, was of course, the centre of plaiting but Shalford was one of a small group of villages just north of Braintree also to engage in this industry. In 1851 one small corner of the village, Park End, had 43 residents in 12 cottages, all the working men were agricultural labourers and most of the women, straw plaiters.



A STRAW PLAITING SCHOOL

The plaited straw was taken by local agents and sold to Luton hat-makers. Several local villages had straw-plaiting schools where young girls could learn the rudiments of reading but, more importantly, the skills of plaiting. The family historian with straw-plaiters in their tree can find some excellent information and displays at Braintree Museum as well as online resources from their website. Above the rood screen in St. Andrew's Church is a



IMAGE COURTESY OF SHALFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

fine example of straw plaiting from the village.

Of the 760 names on the 1861 census for Shalford, several stand out. Among the more widespread names across the country, Willis was very common in Shalford. There was a number of Smee families, all inter-related, as well as Gunns, Sorrells and Candles. But the most popular name in the village, including its derivatives Thurgood and Thursgood, was Thorogood. There were some sixty in Shalford in 1861; there are now fewer than 300 people of that name in the whole United Kingdom!

Following the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 the parishes in this part of Essex, including Shalford, formed the Braintree Poor Law Union in December 1835. Shalford had one representative on the board but Wethersfield had two and Braintree and Bocking eight between them. The new workhouse was built in 1837 but in its very early days there was a riot when 80 men refused to work unless they were given extra bread and beer. Ten of them, including some young boys, were given fourteen days' hard labour in Chelmsford Gaol as a result. Some admission and discharge records, including Shalford residents, can be found at the Essex Record Office.



IMAGE COURTESY OF SHALFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Anyone researching their family in this part of Essex will find the Shalford Local History Association very helpful. As well as regular meetings it maintains an archive of documents, photographs and articles about the village including copies of now out of print local histories. Contact details are: historyshalford@gmail.com

There is also a whole range of historic photos showing the village on

<https://shalfordessex.org.uk/images-of-community-activities-at-shalford-essex/>

If Only I Could Have Asked.....

By Royston Jones (ESFH 20182)

Great Aunt Mary about Jim's time on the Western Front; or Grannie Smith about her life in service as a teenager; or Cousin Joe about his apprenticeship with West Ham in the thirties. But they all passed away the year before I started 'doing' family history.' I'm sure we have all had regrets like that. My mother-in-law gave us hints about 'money in chancery' but she had gone before we followed it up. If only we knew.

One person we did talk to was Auntie Phoebe. It was of course very lucky she lived to be 103! She gave us so much information, not just facts but her interpretations and feelings of events. It was history in the raw. Sadly she too has gone now, happy with her centenary card from the late Queen.

Not even Trump can bring back the deceased, although no doubt he would like to and claim a Nobel Prize. But there is one thing we can do to make sure the same fate does not befall our descendants and that is to write down or record OUR personal history now for them. Believe me, in ten or thirty or maybe a hundred years' time they will thank us for it.

It's not too difficult to do: just write down the sorts of things you would like to have known about Great Aunt Mary. You may of course have completed one of those 'Grandparents' Books' when your grandchildren were born, but it probably needs updating. Think carefully about your early life: where you were born and what life was like in your childhood. For me it included food rationing (no Mars Bars until 1955!) and a very cold winter in 1947. I can remember the bomb damage in London, trolley buses from Chadwell Heath, the distant hooting of Cunard ships as they left the London Docks and, of course, the wonderful noise of steam trains on the London to Norwich Express.

And then there was school: in my first class we still used slates to write on. Unbelievable! At 11 there was the dreaded 11+: one's future prospects decided in a 60 minute test. Outside the smog got worse and worse as coal fires steamed away into the atmosphere and climate change was an unknown phrase. Going to the toilet meant going down the garden to an outhouse, sitting on a plank and using a copy of the Daily Sketch for the necessary. Then there are the stories about first jobs and first loves and so it goes on. All this seems, and is, a lifetime away to us and unless we let our grandchildren and their children know they will never understand what life was like in the good (?) old days.

So, before it's too late, write down your story. It will be unique: there is only one of you. And you will make history.

Catch Up on Presentations

Some past presentations are available on our website in the Archive of Recordings:-

Members>Login>Activities> News and Events>Recordings

Reframing Roots®: Inherited Mindsets in Family History

By Celia Heritage

Celia is a professionally qualified genealogist and also a full member of the Association of Genealogists and Researchers Archive (AGRA). I am delighted to say that she will be giving a presentation to ESFH members on January 20th 2026 so be sure to make a note in your diary and register for the Zoom event. - Editor

When most of us begin tracing our family history, our focus is on names, dates, and the thrill of discovery. We want to know who our ancestors were, where they lived, what they did. Over time, though, many of us come to realise that genealogy offers something deeper than facts. It tells us stories. It connects us to people who shaped us, even if we never knew them. And sometimes, it reveals patterns that are more than coincidence.

It was the realisation that family history is as much about emotional inheritance as genetic inheritance that led me to develop what I now call Reframing Roots®. It's a way of looking at the past not just as an historical record, but as a lens through which we can better understand ourselves today.

We all inherit much more than eye colour or the shape of our nose. Our families pass down ideas, values, and coping mechanisms, often unconsciously. Some of these become sources of strength; others quietly limit us. Consider a family where resilience in hard times was prized above all else. On the surface, that's admirable. But it can also create a mindset where expressing vulnerability feels like weakness. Generations later, descendants may still find it difficult to ask for help or admit to struggling - even when life would be easier if they did.

Or imagine a family that endured great loss with children dying young, livelihoods destroyed by war or economic hardship. One way to cope with that grief might have been to avoid speaking of the past altogether. Inherited through the generations, that silence can turn into a habit of bottling up emotions or avoiding difficult conversations.

These aren't conscious choices we make. They are mindsets we inherit, as surely as we inherit traditions, recipes or surnames.



CELIA HERITAGE
IMAGE COPYRIGHT OF AUTHOR

My Own Journey

For many years, my professional life was firmly rooted in family history. I worked with countless clients, taught courses, and wrote books about genealogy research subjects. But alongside that professional expertise, my personal life took some unexpected and difficult turns.

A diagnosis of a genetic condition, years of chronic pain, and a period where my happy contented life was dramatically and very suddenly overturned left me searching for more than facts and records. I needed understanding. I needed insight into why I thought and reacted the way I did.

A long way down my healing road and at a time when I thought I had left family history behind me as a career having retrained as a therapist, the penny dropped. I began to recognise not only my own inherited physical traits but also inherited emotional ones; beliefs and responses that had been passed down through generations. This was the moment when I realised that my journey had brought me full circle and far from leaving family history behind it was to become a powerful part of my work as a therapist as I began to combine the skills of both worlds. Out of this fusion came Reframing Roots®.

Reframing Roots® explores family stories, historical context, and inherited beliefs to shed light on how the past continues to shape us today. It's not about pathologising ancestors or judging them, but about understanding the forces that shaped them and identifying how these may be affecting us today.

Take sibling rivalry as an example. A child growing up in a large Victorian family, where resources were stretched and parental attention scarce, might have learnt to compete fiercely for notice. That mindset can echo down generations, creating subtle tensions between siblings today, even when resources are plentiful.

By reframing such patterns to see them not as personal failings, but as inherited strategies, we create space for compassion. We begin to see why we think, feel, or react as we do. And in doing so, we often loosen the grip of those patterns.



As family historians, we already know that researching our ancestry is about more than filling in charts. We are storytellers, detectives, and keepers of memory. Adding the layer of inherited mindsets deepens our practice. It allows us to ask questions such as:

- * What behaviours or attitudes seem to repeat across the generations?

- * How might historical events e.g. wars, migration, loss, poverty have shaped the emotional DNA of a family?

- * Are there strengths, as well as struggles, that we can honour as part of our inheritance?

These questions bring family history alive in a different way. They connect the past to our present experience and can even guide us in shaping a more intentional future.

One client I worked with had always felt immense pressure to succeed, coupled with a constant fear of failure. Through genealogical research, she discovered that her grandfather had been orphaned young and forced to take on responsibility for his siblings before he was even an adult. His survival depended on relentless hard work and perfectionism.

That mindset of “work hard or risk everything” was passed on through his children, and then to her. Realising this didn’t magically remove her anxiety, but it did reframe it in a way which helped her. Instead of feeling that something was “wrong” with her, she saw her drive as a family survival mechanism. That insight alone was profoundly liberating.



IMAGE COPYRIGHT OF AUTHOR

We live in an age where science is increasingly interested in the transmission of trauma and resilience across generations. Epigenetics, for example, studies how experiences such as famine or war can leave a biological imprint on descendants. While the science is still developing, family historians have always known that the echoes of the past resound in the present.

Reframing Roots® doesn’t claim to answer everything, but it provides a framework for exploring those echoes. It invites us to balance the facts and dates of genealogy with the inner landscapes of the families we study.

And perhaps most importantly: what strengths are part of your inheritance? For just as pain and silence can echo through generations, so too can resilience, creativity, humour, and love.

Reframing Roots® is not about being trapped by the past. It is about recognising that the past lives in us, and by understanding it, we can move forward with greater compassion for our ancestors, our families and ourselves.

As I prepare to give my talk for this Society, I invite you to think about your own family history through this lens. What mindsets might you have inherited? Where do you see echoes of the past in your own thoughts, habits, or emotions?

I look forward to hearing your own experiences after my talk on Tuesday 20th January 2026 and if you would like to find out more then sign up for my newsletter at <https://www.mindpebble.co.uk/newsletter>

Essex 1925, a Sentimental Journey continues....

By Dawn Tibble (ESFH 33361)

The 59th annual prize meeting for the Essex County Rifle Association was held at the government ranges in Colchester. The Lord Lieutenant's Contest for Essex Territorials (service rifle) saw 10 shots at 600 yards. Lieutenant J B Upton of the Essex Yeomanry came first. Sgt -Dr, E E Lee of the 6th Essex came second. There were eight other contestants. The full article can be found in the *Essex Chronicle Friday 12 June 1925*.

Ethel Emily Simpson aged ten, daughter of PC Simpson, in Walton-on-the-Naze, died after getting into trouble swimming by the breakwater after school. Her brave friend Miss Matt Sore, aged thirteen, attempted to save her by pulling her onto her back. After a few minutes Ethel fell off and was again in trouble. A group of women sat watching but did not call for help according to a witness. Frank Jones, an electrical wireman from Saville Street, saw the whole thing unfolding from the hill and ran down to help. He managed to pull Matt out of the water but couldn't see Miss Ethel. James J Fincham, coastguard, found the body by the Old Cliff coastguard station. Ethel's funeral was attended by the Brownies, Guides, Boys Brigade and the school she attended. The whole community were clearly affected by this sad loss. *Essex Chronicle 12 June 1925*.

In Frinton, a happier ending after Arthur Wellington was saved from drowning by fifteen-year-old Richard H Emslie. Mr Wellington rewarded Richard with a gold watch and chain. Richard learnt to swim at the Colchester Boys Grammar School. It shows the importance of teaching children to swim. *Essex Chronicle Friday 12 June 1925*.

In my last column in the August 2025 edition, I wrote about the new A127 Southend Arterial Road opening by the Prince Regent. A month after this event there were many criticisms in the council meeting. The vicar of Dibley came to mind when reading this. Cllr Bockett, at Southend Town Council meeting, stated that the Ministry of Transport proposed the contribution of one hundred thousand pounds towards the cost of the arterial road should be paid within a month or offered to lend the money at 4.5% interest over five years. Councillor Tattersall said the council had agreed 100k for 100ft of road but only got 25ft which was a death trap. Councillor Hockey said it should be widened as it attracted 'boy racers'. Alderman Martin said widening wouldn't work, what they needed to do was stop 'the mad brained scorchers'. Alderman Brightwell contributed saying he thought a moderately wide road is better than a very wide road, Councillor Young, worried, said he didn't want it to go out that the road is a death trap, rather the existing danger is careless and indifferent driving. *Essex Chronicle 11 December 1925*.

Dog licenses, until 1987 mandatory in England showed that the dog population of Great Britain was 2,488,623. 114,200 dog licenses were held in Essex in 1925.

The Essex dialect was not understood by Judge Marchant at Braintree County Court. After several attempts to understand the evidence given by a rural Essex farmhand he exclaimed, 'Oh this Essex dialect, it might be good English but I cannot understand a word you are saying'. To a lady witness who kept looking around the room instead of looking at him he remarked, 'This is not Belshazzar's Palace and you will not find any writing on the walls. They are in your head and you have to find them there'.

Essex Newsman Jan 31 1925.

On Saturday Dr J Harrison, coroner, held an inquest upon Richard Cyril Gripps, 23, single, labourer, Warwick Road Clacton, who died on Friday following injuries received in a sandpit at Little Holland, where he was employed. Deceased was screening sand in the bottom of the pit and Alfred Carrington who was working in the pit eight yards away, heard him call out 'Alf'. Turning round he saw deceased partly buried by a fall of sand. A number of men at once set to clear the sand and the deceased was rescued. He was removed to Clacton Hospital, but on arrival he was found to have expired. For more on the story see *Essex Newsman Jan 25 1925*.

The late MP for Maldon Mr Valentine Crittal, criticises the Essex Education Committee by saying 'the handicap we in Essex have to suffer in that we are the most uneducated people in Great Britain, probably because we have the worse education committee'. *Essex Chronicle Oct 30 1925.*

The King and Queen visited Barking Creek to see the opening of the new power station. Hundreds turned out for the occasion.

Chelmsford Chronicle 22 May 1925.

Mr Marshall Johnson, timber merchant and Wharfinger, Pitsea, had his car completely wrecked when it was hit by a train at a level crossing. Mr Johnson was thrown across the engine on to the upline. He escaped with a few cuts and bruises. (I guess Christmas came early for him).

Chelmsford Chronicle 22 May 1925.

Flags were the topic of the month of December 1925. Four men and a woman were arrested and charged with conduct likely to cause a breach of the peace. It was stated that one member of the group carried a red flag and shouted "Up with the Rebels!". Harold Horner (18), George Edward Maker (50), his wife, Albert John Owen (26), Thomas Newman (38) all from Leytonstone.

Chelmsford Chronicle 4 December 1925

The Essex Regiment celebrated the decision by the Essex Standing Joint Committee to offer two of the old militia flags of the Essex Regiment to the Memorial church at Warley and the others to the Cathedral. The colours, over a hundred years old, were hanging in the ballroom of Shire Hall. The Emblems are consecrated and as such the dancing room is no place for them.

Essex Newsman 5 December 1925.

For Tom Bengé his time as the landlord of the George and Dragon, Kelvedon, ended when his wife, in his absence, sold alcohol to four patrons during restricted hours. Tom was having a bad day because he was working on a coasting vessel and shipwrecked in a gale at Calais.

Essex Newsman 5 December 1925.

About 150 war orphans were invited to a party at the Carlisle Institute by the Romford branch of the British Legion. The Legion's secretary Mr J. H. Chapman organised the day. The children were given crackers and entertained by the Roysterers Pantomime Group who acted 'Babes in the Wood'. Tea was served by the ladies committee. The piano was played by Mr Herbert King in front of Lady Dynevor, who attended in place of her husband, Charles Rhys MP. She handed each child a gift from under the tree. Mr C. W Webb acted as Father Christmas. Lady Dynevor was given a bouquet of flowers by little Joan Gowers on behalf of the orphans.

Essex Chronicle 25 December 1925.



Note from the Editor

Donation of Books Received with Thanks

The following collection of books were kindly donated by Fred Feather (ESFH 27366) to the ESFH Library at the Essex Record Office before the AGM on Saturday 18th October 2025.

They contain a large number of names, including some from our county's history.

1. A Journal of the Plague Year 1665 by Daniel Defoe (Folio Edition).
2. The Newgate Calendar or 'Malefactors Register' MCMXXXIII.
3. The New Newgate Calendar 1960 Folio Edition.
4. Chronicles of the Damned by Malcolm Cheney 1992 (Crimes and punishments of the condemned felons of Newgate Gaol).
5. Prisons and Punishments of London 1992 by Richard Byrne.
6. The Hangman's Record Volume 1 1868 - 1899 by Steve Fielding.

They will hopefully assist those researchers seeking information on forebears associated with crime.

If you wish to refer to any of the above please check their availability with the librarians first by emailing jill.gooding@esfh.org.uk or carole.bartlett@esfh.org.uk

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Conducted both online and at Galleywood Heritage Centre
on Saturday 18th October 2025

Present Lord Petre, President; Andrea Hewitt, Chair; Toni Neobard, Vice Chair; Meryl Rawlings, Secretary; Tanya Sewell, Treasurer; Executive Committee members and members online (21) and at Galleywood Heritage Centre (22).

1. Welcome: The Chair welcomed all those present.
2. Apologies for Absence were received from Ann Church, Gill Peregrine, Jeff Porter, Janice Sharp, Chris Stringer, Denise Somers and Lesley Wood.
3. Minutes of the AGM held on 19th October 2024: these were approved by both a vote in the hall and online and signed as a correct record.
4. Matters Arising from the Minutes: None.
5. President and Vice Presidents: The Chair announced that it had been agreed by the Executive Committee as follows: President, Lord Petre; Vice Presidents, Ann Church and Ann Turner.
6. Chairman's Annual Report on behalf of the Trustees: Andrea Hewitt gave the report, a full copy of which will be in the December 2025 issue of *THE HISTORIAN* and on the Society's website.
7. Financial report by the Treasurer: Tanya Sewell said that the Annual Accounts to 31st March 2025 had been approved by the Executive Committee and signed by the Chairman and our Examiner and these are available on the Society's website.

Tanya then formally proposed adoption of the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2025 this was approved by a vote in the hall and online.

Tanya Sewell then proposed that Chelmer Company Services, who has acted as our Examiner for the past few years, continue as our Examiner, this was agreed by a vote in the hall and online.

The Chairman then handed over to Lord Petre for the election of Officers and the Executive Committee.

8. Election of Officers/Holding Trustees: Andrea Hewitt, Chair; Toni Neobard, Vice Chair; Tanya Sewell, Treasurer have been nominated and were elected en bloc and Meryl Rawlings who has been nominated as Secretary, was elected.
9. Election of Executive Committee

The following had been nominated and were elected en bloc: Colleen Devenish, Jeff Porter, Paul Stirland and Chris Stringer.

The following would serve as ex-officio members of the Executive Committee: Mandie Adams, Elizabeth Cox and Gill Peregrine.

10. Any Other Business

Andrea expressed her gratitude to the following long-standing members of the Society for their dedicated service: Yvonne Tunstill (former Vice President and Monumental Inscriptions Coordinator), Heather Feather (former Vice President and Chair of South-East Essex Branch), Pauline Adlem (former Chair of North-East Essex Branch) and John Young (former Chair and Vice Chair of the Society) who together with Denise Somers, are standing down from the Executive. Flowers were presented to Heather, and a bottle of wine was given to John as tokens of appreciation. Unfortunately, Yvonne, Pauline and Denise were unable to attend the meeting.

Andrea Hewitt then declared the meeting formally closed at 2.30 p.m.

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Chairman's Annual Report on behalf of the Trustees

This year has presented significant challenges for our Society. Last September, as I think most of you will be already aware, we experienced a cyber-attack on our website. We responded swiftly and comprehensively. We immediately notified the Information Commissioners Office (ICO) and consulted with Thin Thread our cyber security support providers. We established an IT Security Group, bringing in new volunteers with specialist expertise. The first priority was to secure our website by transferring it to a highly secure hosting platform which effectively eliminated the threat.



Earlier this year we had streamlined our operations by merging the IT working group and IT security groups into a unified IT committee, which has been remarkably productive. Their first major initiative was the commissioning of a completely new website that would provide enhanced security features and modern functionality for our members. After thorough research we selected Beachshore - the trusted provider for our Family History Federation and many other family history societies, to develop this new website. Catherine Bentley, a new IT communications member and of course Paul Stirland our Web manager, together with many other members, have been instrumental in this project. Whilst we don't yet have a confirmed launch date, we're prioritizing a smooth transition to minimise disruption during the upcoming membership renewal period, and of course our current website remains fully operational for all of your research needs in the meantime.

We are very grateful to John Young, who stepped down as Data Controller after many years of exemplary service. He passes the role to Jeff Porter and John continues his valuable work on the IT committee. He has also notably expanded our Transcribed Records Archives Collection for Essex, (TRACE)



database with over 42,000 new records this year, including marriages, baptisms and monumental inscriptions. These will soon also be available through FindmyPast, generating important revenue for our Society. Well done, John!

AGM 2025 ANDREA HEWITT, THE CHAIR, WITH FROM LEFT RIGHT JOHN YOUNG, HEATHER FEATHER AND OUR PRESIDENT THE LORD PETRE K.C.V.O.

Earlier this year we discovered that an American web company had published unauthorized recordings of our educational Zoom meetings. Despite multiple direct requests and a formal 'cease and desist notice', the company initially failed to respond to us. However, working collaboratively with other affected UK family history societies, we successfully secured the removal of all of our content. This experience has led us to implement enhanced Zoom security procedures and spearhead an initiative to our Federation to establish an early warning system to promote best practices for online meetings for us all.

We have also been active in many public events again this year. Last November we attended the Galleywood Heritage Centre Remembrance event, where we advised visitors, and will be there again on Sunday 16th November, so please put this date in your diaries, as we'd love to see you there!

Sadly In January Jean-Marc Bazzoni, who was our Hon Secretary and Editor of our magazine, had to resign from both of these roles. He continues to be a member, and hopes to volunteer with us again in the future. We were delighted when our previous Editor Colleen and our previous Hon Secretary Meryl agreed to return to their former roles.

Also in January we took part in a virtual family history event hosted by East Surrey FHS, these events are very useful as they give us the opportunity to be able to help each other and share ideas with many other societies.

In April we attended the Suffolk Family History Show in Ipswich. We met with several of our members who came to tell us how much they were enjoying the DNA for Beginners online course. Our DNA 'guru' and Vice Chair Toni Neobard had set this up, and it had been very well supported for many months. Happily, Toni was present

to hear these compliments, and we had a productive day talking to all of our visitors. The DNA course is now finished but still available online on our website.

Toni had been working closely with BBC Essex on a fascinating series of interviews. In March she joined presenter Akylah Rodriguez in the studio to discuss her Jamaican heritage and the insights that her DNA testing might bring. Toni returned in June to reveal her findings and discuss Akylah's DNA results, having also researched her family through Jamaican records available in the UK. She uncovered remarkable connections - including links to slavery and slave ownership, African and East Indian ancestry, and even Sephardic Jewish roots-all of which were born out by the DNA results.

The success of these programmes has led to two of the producers also taking DNA tests. Toni was back in the studio in September to reveal some astonishing discoveries for one of them, and will return again, probably in November to share the findings for the other. These interviews have not only demonstrated the power of combining DNA with traditional research, but also provided excellent publicity for our Society, by showcasing what we do to a wider audience across Essex.

In June we took part in an online meeting organised by 'Lost Cousins'. Toni and Tanya gave an exceptionally professional presentation to a large audience, where they highlighted our website services for members. Many attending were already our members, but admitted they didn't realise what they had been missing! - 62 people either joined or re-joined our society following this presentation which was amazing!

We had another very successful day in July when we attended the Essex Archaeology & History Show at Cressing Temple Barns near Braintree. Over 1000 people attended the event and most of us were busy advising visitors all day. We definitely plan to return to their next event.

Our Family Fun Day in August at Galleywood Heritage Centre was poorly attended. However those who came said they really enjoyed the event. As a result of this the Events Team have decided to participate in more established large events in future.

We continue to meet with the Essex Record Office management on a regular basis, and we now already have additional advertising banners on their ground floor. We are discussing the digitisation of 2 sets of records for our unique database at our next meeting later this month. I have also asked all of our ERO volunteers to give us feedback on how we can improve our service for visitors to our research area there and their comments will be considered shortly and actioned as soon as possible.

We have also been in discussion with our branches to see how we can encourage more visitors to come to their meetings. This is taking into consideration venue prices, and the relatively low number of attendees at some locations. The branches have agreed to take action to attract more visitors. Since all speakers and hall hire is paid for from central funds, it was agreed that branches would only need finances for refreshments and any money they held over £60 was transferred to Head Office in April 2025.

Our Annual Student Award of £500 was given to Julie Miller, who sadly can't be here today. Julie has won this award before but I'm sure you'll agree that her case study on two 18th century Essex Quaker women farmers is very worthy of another award. She will present her case study at a date to be arranged, and a copy of it will be added to our website.

We continue to support the Victoria County History Society and have made a donation of £750 to them this year. We joined them in Southend earlier in the year at the launch of one of their latest mini books Southend, Victorian Town & Resort, by Ken Crowe. We purchased a copy of this book which you can find in our library.

It has been a very eventful year but thanks to the incredible amount of effort put in by so many members to support our activities, and indeed each other, to achieve what we have done this year, is fantastic!

I can't thank you all individually, but I am so proud to be the Chairman of our Society today and say thank you to you all.

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Treasurer's Report for AGM October 2025

I am pleased to present the Treasurer's Report for the financial year ending 31st March 2025.

Overview

The Society remains in a stable financial position, and we have continued to manage our income and expenditure carefully throughout the year. Our primary sources of income have been membership subscriptions, royalties, donations, investment income, bank interest and any event-related revenue. Our membership numbers have dropped by 75 from 1725 in December 2023 to 1650 in December 2024.

The trustees have reviewed and approved the annual accounts, which are now presented to members for adoption.

Income

Total income for the year was £28,794, which represents a decrease of £1,732 which is approximately 6% compared to the previous year. This change is mainly due to:

- * A drop in membership numbers.
- * A reduction in donations, interest and royalties

Expenditure

Total expenditure was £37,104 which was higher than last year's figure of £25,385. Major expenses included:

- * Website hosting and IT services: £10,175 – now includes payments for Cyber Security and new website costs.

- * Magazine production and distribution: £10,449 – In comparison to last year's figure which was £7,656 where the August 2023 edition was a newsletter and not a magazine.
- * Hall hire and meeting costs: £4,940
- * 50th Anniversary celebrations (Roadshows and events) £3,213
- * Depreciation costs £1,570 – these have been amended to bring them into line as under depreciated in previous years

We introduced a small attendance fee for members at live meetings (£1 per member and £3 per visitor), starting from 1st November 2024, to help offset increasing venue costs.

Balance

The net loss for the year was **-£8,310**.

At the end of the financial year, the Society's investment value dropped by £3,269 to £66,897. The Society held a total balance in its bank accounts of £54,328. This provides us with a healthy reserve and enables us to plan future activities and investments with confidence.

Looking Ahead

While our financial position is sound, we continue to monitor costs carefully and explore ways to sustain income. As ever, we are grateful to all our members and volunteers whose support helps us operate efficiently and effectively.

I now formally present the accounts for your approval and am happy to answer any questions.

Please can I ask the members to approve the Annual Accounts for the year ending 2025.

Please can I also have your agreement to employing the examiner services of Chelmer Company services for the forthcoming year.

Tanya Sewell Treasurer

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More Records added to Genealogy Database

Members>Login>Research>Database & Search
Aids>Genealogy Database

When was the last time you checked this member resource? Use your membership effectively and take a browse NOW at the staggering number of transcriptions recently released covering baptisms, marriage, burials, monumental inscriptions and war memorials.

Three Spinsters of Great Baddow

By Lesley Wood (ESFH 31344)

Whilst on a photography 'shoot' a couple of years ago my attention was taken by this rather elaborate Rococo style, memorial tablet, mounted on the south wall of St Mary's Church, Great Baddow.



In MEMORY

Of Mrs AMY & Mrs MARGARET GWYN Maiden sisters
And of Mrs ANN HESTER ANTRIM Spinster beloved by them as a sister

This monument was erected, in the year of our Lord 1753
Having lived eighteen years undivided in a virtuous retirement
they lie buried together, under a grave stone near the pulpit

Alas! how fleeting is human happiness

The death of Mrs AMY GWYN the 19 June 1750, in the 55 year of her age
first impaired it.

The death of Mrs MARGARET GWYN 21 March 1752, in the 53 year of her
age totally destroyed it.

The death of Mrs ANN HESTER ANTRIM on the 23 July 1752, in the 47 year
of her age numbered her with her departed friends.

Their bodies are now sown in the dust in a state of separation from their souls,
but we hope by the almighty power of God in Christ our Saviour they will be
reunited to them at the last day that both may be glorified together

The Revd. Mr. GEO: ITCHENER, Vicar of this parish & Mr. THOs. DENHAM
Citizn. of London ordered this to be completed, agreeable to the Will of the last
deceased.

It was erected in 1753 and commemorates the lives of three spinsters of the parish who were the greatest of friends and who lived together for 18 years in 'Undivided virtuous retirement' before passing away within 2 years of one another. They were maiden sisters Amy and Margaret Gwyn and their spinster friend Ann Hester Antrim.

In the opinion of the experts the memorial tablet is made in the style of Sir Henry Cheere who in 1743 was appointed 'Carver' to Westminster Abbey and in 1760 was knighted and created a baronet. However, there is no evidence to confirm that Henry carved the memorial tablet. The Vicar of St Mary's Church said that he had no idea who these ladies were or how they could have afforded such an expensive memorial!

I felt compelled to find out more and see if I could uncover the secrets of the past. Fortunately, the memorial tablet provides the dates of death and age at death of each person commemorated. So, I fired up my computer, logged into my Ancestry account and started to search for more evidence.

I started with Amy Gwyn whom we are told died on 19th June 1750 in her 55th year. I searched for her in the 'Birth, Marriage & Death, including Parish' record set. This produced several results including a burial entry in the register of St Mary the Virgin,

Gt Baddow, Essex on 22nd June 1750. This is only a transcript, but a link is provided to Essex Archives Online where I could either order a full-size image of the entry for £5 or simply note the reference D/P 65/1/2 which would enable me to go straight to the correct parish register next time I was at the Essex Record Office (ERO) using their free Essex Archives Online database. Before I went on, I noted on the right-hand side of the Ancestry page a 'suggested record' for Amy Gwyn of Gt Baddow in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury Wills. The probate date was 9th July 1750, and her residence was confirmed as being Great Baddow. I saved a digital copy of the will to my computer rather than print it, as it would be easier to enlarge and make out the rather scrawly handwriting.

I then went on to search for Margaret Gwyn's burial record. Sure enough, I found her burial entry in the same parish register dated 25th March 1752 and a reference ERO D/P 65/1/2 to refer to later. Once again there was a suggested record, relating to the will of Margaret Gwyn with a probate date of 28th March 1752 and confirming her residence as Great Baddow, Essex.

It transpired that both Amy and Margaret made their wills on 15th June 1750, each sister bequeathing all their 'goods, chattels and personal estate' to the other sister, unless she pre-deceased them, in which case leaving everything to their friend Ann Hester Antrim. This included all their ready money and their 'Old & New South Sea Annuity stock'.

Amy Gwyn died shortly after her will was written, and she was buried in St Mary's (near the pulpit) on 22nd June 1750. Her will was proved on 9th July by her sister Margaret who inherited her entire estate including, of course, her South Sea Annuity Stock.

It is assumed that Margaret Gwyn and Ann Antrim continued to reside together in Great Baddow until Margaret passed away just two years later in 1752. Margaret's will was proved by Ann Antrim on 28th March 1752. Ann inherited Margaret's entire estate including her South Sea Annuity Stock.

After the South Sea Bubble burst in 1720, the British government restructured the South Sea Company and converted half of its shareholdings into government-backed annuities. These annuities paid a fixed income of 4% annually after 1727.

In 1733, another conversion took place, creating the "New" South Sea Annuities. By the 1750s, these annuities were considered secure investments, backed by the state, and were equivalent to modern-day government bonds or gilts.

Another Ancestry search revealed that Ann Hester Antrim made her last will and testament just over two months later, on 5th June 1752, but by this time, she was living in Boreham, Essex. Ann died shortly after making the will and was buried on 30th July 1752 in St Mary's Church in the same grave as her dear deceased friends.

To ensure that her wishes and various bequests were carried out, Ann appointed the Reverend George Itchner of St Mary's and her cousin Thomas Denham to be joint

executors. The will was proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury on 30th July 1752.

In her will Ann stated that she had £1,400 of Old South Sea Annuity stock and £1,000 of New South Sea Annuity Stock. The face value of these assets amounts to some £336,000 in today's money.

The executors were given £200 (equivalent to £28,000 today) of old South Seas Annuity stock to be used to pay for a monument to be erected in Great Baddow Church, to the memory of Ann's two dear and affectionate friends, Mrs Amy and Mrs Margaret Gwyn and herself. The monument was to be planted as near to their remains as possible and was to mention the eighteen happy years they have lived together and likewise the length of time they survived each other.

Ann Antrim's will is rich in genealogical material, she mentions her aunt Barbara Chart of Sherborn, Dorset, and her Uncle Thomas Denham (the father of her executor). Several other Denham cousins are mentioned, Richard, Catherine and Mary.

Piecing together the clues found in the will I am reasonably confident that I have found Ann Hester Antrim's baptismal record dated 12th November 1705, in Sherborne, Dorset. It states she was born on 5th November 1705 and was the daughter of Samuel and Katherine Antrim (sometimes spelt Antrum). This accords exactly with her age at death mentioned on the memorial tablet.

The Gwyn sisters have proved more difficult to trace, there being no clues about their parentage or place of birth in any of the documents seen so far. However, two possible baptismal records have come to light on Ancestry, in the parish of Thorncombe, Dorset. The first being for Amy Gwyn born on 9th March 1691 and baptised on 25th March 1695, eldest daughter of Francis Gwyn Esq. and the other being for Margaret Gwyn born on 17th January 1701, and baptised on 28th January 1701, youngest daughter of Francis Gwyn Esq. So clearly, they are sisters and the dates match quite well.

Francis Gwyn of Llanmsanor, Glamorganshire was a Welsh politician who sat in the House of Commons at various times between 1673 and 1727. He held seats at Chippenham, Christchurch and Totness to name but a few. His wife Margaret Prideaux was the granddaughter of Edmund Prideaux, a very wealthy individual, who purchased Forde Abbey in Dorset in 1649 and became Attorney General to the Lord Protector (Oliver Cromwell).

Margaret Prideaux's father, also Edmund, inherited Forde Abbey in 1659. He was MP for Taunton in 1681 and was accused of being a supporter of Monmouth's Rebellion in 1685. However, he was later pardoned after paying a bribe to Judge Jefferies. He returned to live at Forde until his death in 1702. There being no surviving male heirs his daughter Margaret inherited his estate which, in accordance with the law at that time, automatically passed to her husband. Hence Francis Gwyn became the owner of Forde.

The Essex Society For Family History Award

2024-25

Congratulations to Julie Miller from all at ESFH

Dissertation Title: Feet Forward – Using Essex Quakers Mary Farmer and Mary Fulbig's writings as case studies to understand what they tell us about 18th Century Quaker Women's lives and how women used the Quaker network to travel in the Ministry in Britain and Europe 1680 - 1760

Estimated date of completion/submission: January 2027.

Supporting Statement

I am a mature student and took the decision to return to education in 2018 after a cancer diagnosis. Having spent 2 years completing a Masters in History studying Saffron Walden Quaker John Farmer I was the grateful recipient of the ESFH 2020 Award and hopefully I have justified your belief in me as I received a distinction grade for my MA and gave a talk at Essex Record Office in February 2020 on the outputs of my research which some of your members attended. I was then also fortunate to receive a second award in 2021 at the start of my PhD and gave a talk to your Society at the Galleywood Heritage Centre in the summer of 2022 when I was presented with a third award.

For my Masters I worked at the Essex Record Office researching a Quaker manuscript journal written by a Saffron Walden man called John Farmer, who had recorded his early life and journeys to give Quaker testimony in Britain and pre-revolutionary America from the 1690s to 1714. Whilst COVID stopped me undertaking the visit to America I had originally planned, your award enabled me to obtain documents, travel to archives, purchase rare textbooks and even purchase original seventeenth and eighteenth-century books on Quaker history to help my research.

For my PhD I have been working on the two other notebooks and some letters which are part of the Farmer family collection. One is a notebook belonging to John Farmer's disabled step-daughter Mary Fulbig where she recorded visiting preachers to the Saffron Walden Quaker meetings and commented on events in the town such as the deaths of key members of the Quaker community in entries from 1732 to 1762. The second is a small hand-written account by the now widowed Mary Farmer of her journey in the company of six Essex Quaker women in the Ministry to Holland and Friedrichstadt, Germany in 1725. There are also lots of additional documents including letters from John to his wife from Durham and America, permission slips for travel, and a copy of his will, dated 1724 in Germantown Pennsylvania. The Farmer family are particularly well represented in the records, not just because of John's activities but also because of Mary's own family, her wide travels and reputation as a prophetess. Her vast family of Wyatt siblings were of the wealthy middling sort, brewers, weavers and maltsters, but also involved in running the Quaker meetings, preaching and record keeping. Subsequent research has also found the family

recorded at the Albert Sloman Library Special Collection of Colchester Quaker Archives, and I am also working with collections held at the Friends Library in Euston, London.

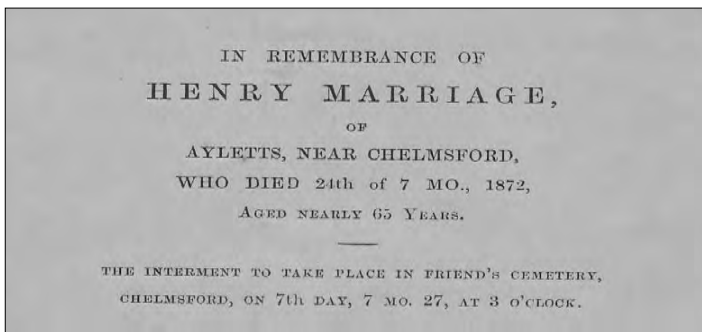
I am now in my fifth year of a self-funded PhD and have transcribed the books written by both Mary Farmer and Mary Fulbig, and my research is looking into the role of women in the Essex Quaker community and beyond. I am looking at how this particular Quaker community and extended family worked; how families pulling together enabled members to take long trips away from home to spread Quaker testimony and how the women as well as the men were also able to function as preachers at a time when Quakerism was retreating from public displays of religious fervour into the Quietist, restrained forms of religious observance for which they are more widely known. By the 1720s women were supposed to have returned to their drawing rooms, and yet Mary Farmer was trudging the roads of Northern Europe with a women's mission, literally turning their 'Feet Forward' to each new town on their itinerary. Mary Farmer in particular had a wide circle of Friends with whom she travelled in Britain and Europe, and her network builds on the work of Essex Quaker notables such as Benjamin Furly, Stephen Crisp and John Kendall, all of Colchester and their links to Amsterdam, Rotterdam and the German non-conformist enclave of Friedrichstadt, where Mary visited in 1725. Whilst many Essex Quaker men, and a few women are remembered, such as Elizabeth Kendall and Sarah Lay of Colchester, Mary Farmer and her daughter Mary Fulbig have been forgotten by history, and I want to redress this balance.

The Essex Society for Family History Awards have made an enormous difference to my studies. I am self-funded so all the ESFH awards have allowed me the opportunity to spend time on research in the Quaker Library in London and the Gibson Library at Saffron Walden and copying the documents from the Friedrichstadt and Amsterdam archives which I need to take away for translation from the original Dutch.

My thanks goes to the members of The Essex Society for Family History for their continued support.

Julie Miller MA, BA Hons

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DEATH OF A MEMBER OF THE MARRIAGE FAMILY - A PROMINENT CHELMSFORD QUAKER FAMILY.
SOURCE EDITOR'S COLLECTION

The English Ancestry of Thomas Hanchett: Puritan Settler of Connecticut and its supplement Medieval Hanchetts and Two Puritans to America

By Leland J Hanchett, Jr and Martin K Hanchett

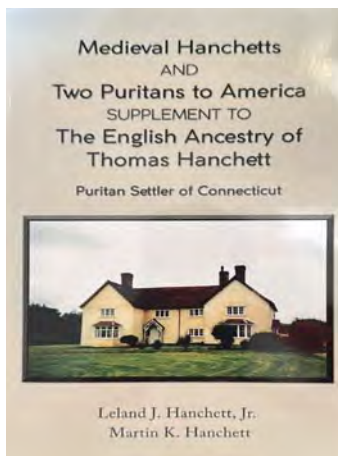
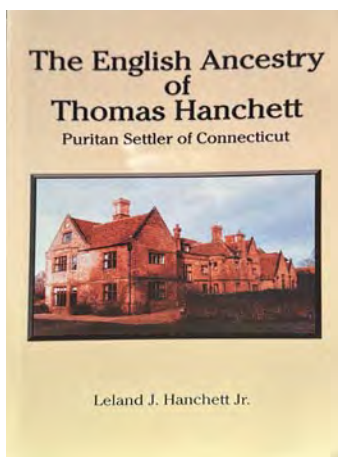
Two books reviewed by Fiona Harvey (ESFH 33535)

The ESFH library were donated five books regarding the family history of the Hanchett family. The books are now located in our Research Centre at the Essex Record office. For details of the other titles or to contact Martin K Hanchett please email our editor at editor@esfh.org.uk

The two publications under review in my following article were written ten years apart and form the complete result of over 100 years of family history research by the Hanchett family, based in the USA, UK and Australia.

The authors are descendants of Thomas Hanchett who was one of the first settlers to America in the early 17th century and was originally undertaken by an American descendant Junius Hanchett who, in around 1924, employed a firm to research the archives and records in the UK to try and identify where Thomas Hanchett originated from. The main book, 'The English Ancestry of Thomas Hanchett: Puritan Settler of Connecticut' was formed from the combined resources of the original pre-internet/digital research as well as some digitised records and was self-published in 2015.

The supplement was produced ten years later and included more modern resources, including improved digital materials in The National Archives (TNA) as well as DNA test results. It was an inevitable consequence of this labour of love for generations of the Hanchett family to publish what must have been an incredible personal archive. There are frequent references in the main book to copies of ancient Wills and even a family tree created by one ancestor in 1689. There are not many of us who can claim to have such a rich collection of family history, handed down through the generations. I cannot blame them for putting it all together for posterity. They even mention in the supplement that since there was no one in the immediate family who was interested in



carrying on the research, they have put together what they know for whoever may, in the future, be interested in finding out.

Clearly, the Hanchetts were not an ordinary family, owning land and involved in the Church and politics of the time. They seem to hail from a place in Suffolk named 'Haningeheht', mentioned in the Domesday book, from which they have established their name is likely to have derived, and there were many occasions which had notable mentions, even going back as far as United Kingdom's Peasants Revolt (1381) (Chapter 4: Domesday to the Peasants Revolt) where their ancestor was beheaded, and there are details of records of letters to Royalty. The family was wealthy and held positions of authority throughout the centuries, including becoming lawyers, an MP and attending Cambridge University. As a result of their positions of power as landowners, politicians and leaders in the church, they were able to trace their family line through official records. This carried over to America, as they were influential in the Puritan religion.

These two books are a very personal history however I don't think you necessarily have to be a Hanchett to find them interesting, not least for their details of pre-internet sources. I feel that anyone who is looking to find out about early connections to the USA might find useful references such as *The Complete Book of Emigrants*, by Peter Wilson Coldham or the documents in TNA listed that have obscure references which I would never have thought to look for. One example of this was in Chapter 6: The Hanchetts of Great Burstead and Billericay where they were able to look up the name of their ancestor who was listed in *The Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain* under 'Wages of Skinners for 1489' and again in the later 1508 edition.

The second book, *Medieval Hanchetts and Two Puritans to America*, brings us up to date with some additional context for some of the chapters in the original book and as a supplement I thought it brought to life some of the stories that were told. However, I did feel that there were a lot of facts and not many details to bring the ancestors to life, lots of references to descendants and what they had been left in their Wills as you may expect but I felt it was more listings than any stories of ancestry. I did feel that the first book and in some cases the Supplement needed editing as the story lines did not flow so I found myself having to refer back to earlier chapters and even searching for more information myself about some of their references.

For Essex family historians there were chapters relating specifically to Essex in the main book. Namely, Chapter 5: The Hanchetts of Bedfordshire; Letchworth, Hertfordshire; Braughing, Hertfordshire and Great Pardon, Essex; Chapter 6: The Hanchetts of Great Burstead and Billericay; Chapter 8: The Hanchetts of Clavering and Chapter 9: The Hanchett Family of Arkesden, Essex. For anyone looking for relatives or connections, there are prints of maps, photos of churches (as they are today) and some unpublished works, including a manuscript of R.A Ledgard C.B.E. which are held in the Essex Record Office. Most of these chapters list the descendants rather than any social history of these places at the time.

Where there were coherent stories about family members, I enjoyed reading these but I did feel these publications could benefit from further research into the conditions of the time which could have helped bring some of the people to life.

2025 Marks 80 Years Since

By Colleen Devenish (ESFH 6279)

The HISTORIAN can't allow 2025 to end without acknowledging that Thursday 8th May 2025 marked 80 years since Victory in Europe (VE Day) and the end to the war in Europe. Friday 15th August 2025 marked 80 years since Victory over Japan (VJ Day) which ended the Second World War.

Many thousands of Armed Forces personnel were still engaged in fighting in the Far East following VE Day. Victory over Japan would come at a heavy price.

These five Goldhanger men served in the Far East and returned home:-

Bill Appleton Essex Regiment, served in the 14th Army in Burma

Charles Jordan Royal Berks Regt. served in the 14th Army in Burma

Frederick Southgate RN, served on the aircraft carrier HMS Begum, initially supporting American fleets crossing the Pacific, then in 1944 was part of the East Indies and British Pacific Fleet, searching for Japanese submarines. His ship was attacked by several Japanese Kamikaze suicide planes and was hit by one. 80 of the crew were killed.

Peter White Fleet Air Arm, in Japan in 1945 and witnessed the two atomic blasts.

Jack Willis Essex Regiment, a POW in Japan for 4 years



LT ERIC JOHN 'ROBIN' KEMPSON

But one who did not return was

Eric Kempson

1945 The Times -

Obituary - On Active Service, 16 February 1942 at sea near Sumatra, Eric John Kempson, Lieut. R.N.V.R., aged 25, the second son of Mr & Mrs Eric Kempson, Corner Cottage, Goldhanger, Essex

Robin was the son of teacher Eric William Edward Kempson and Beatrice Hamilton Ashwell and the younger brother of Rachel Kempson (1910-2003) who married Sir Michael Redgrave and was the mother of actresses Vanessa, Corin and Lynn Redgrave.

The story of Goldhanger's involvement in WWII is recorded at <http://www.churchside1.plus.com/Goldhanger-past/WW2.htm>

We Will Remember Them

Victory At Last

ESSEX CHRONICLE *Souvenir Edition*
No. 9418 BRISB, MAY 1945, 1947 THREE HALFPENCE

AND ALL OF YOU DESERVED IT!

MAY 8

The County Town has a splendid war record of heroism, hard work and sacrifice

Here is Pictured rejoicing in Tindal Square on Tuesday VE Day

LONG LIVE ESSEX



THE DEAR HOMELAND

"Without Victory there is no Survival!"
—The Church in the House of Commons May 1945



St. Peter's Church, which stood through the darkest years, and through victory, grateful to be in Essex country again, by the way of 1945 to 1946. It is the Church of the Most Great Tindal.



One of the Women who MADE 'Victory' — Miss B. B. B. B. — Chairman, 12 Women's.



A VICTORY STREET-PARTY FOR THE RESIDENTS OF FORESIGHT ROAD AND SPEEDWELL ROAD
COLCHESTER

Some did not celebrate until 1946



OUR OWN JOHN YOUNG (ESFH 6399) IS THE
LITTLE BOY IN THE FRONT ROW WITH THE PEAK
CAP AT THE PARK ROYAL VICTORY DAY JUNE
8TH 1946



IMAGES FROM AUTHOR'S COLLECTION

Never Give Up!

By Simon Last (ESFH 10925)

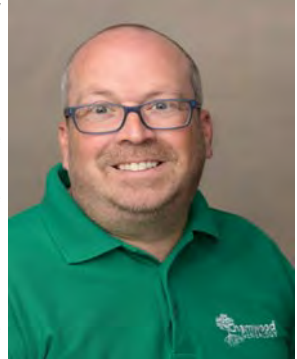
At the Essex Society for Family History (ESFH) Discovery Day on Saturday 17th May 2025 I was invited to host a military research table – as part of that display I had several old soldier photographs on display.

During the afternoon, a lovely lady came up to chat to me looking at the old photographs on my stand and telling me that she had never seen a photograph of her relative Francis Keatley Holton who was sadly killed during World War 1 on 27th October 1917 aged only 20.

I asked her if she had searched the old newspapers online which she had not, so I asked her to give me some details about Francis and contact information and I would see if I could find anything for her.

The following week I had a look in the old newspapers and could find nothing for Francis unfortunately, but on further research of his life I discovered that he had attended St Edward's School in Oxford as a young man.

I then looked up the school online and could see that a project had been undertaken in 2014 to remember all pupils and teachers killed during World War I. So I contacted them enquiring about Francis's time as a pupil at the school.



FRANCIS'S GRAVE AT LA PLUS
DOUVE FARM CEMETERY IN
BELGIUM

The school replied by email the same day and attached a photograph of Francis from when he attended the school with some additional information.

I then contacted the lady I had spoken to and sent her a copy of the photograph of Francis, who upon receipt of my letter rang me to say how amazed and grateful she was that I had found something and how glad she was that she had spoken to me at the ESFH Discovery Day.

Like I said to her - never give up, as you never know what is out there somewhere and might turn up!

Charnwood Genealogy –
www.chnwood-genealogy.com

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

Angela's Web Finds

By Angela Parr-Burman (ESFH 32016)

Notebooks – 100 checklists to help family historians – templates, toolkits (£30-£226), blogs and tips.

<https://www.familytreenotebooks.com>

Society of Genealogists – Courses, talks, walks, court records, apprenticeships, parish records and Poor Law info plus support. Membership standard £85 p.a., Gold £150 p.a. or £15 monthly.

<https://www.sog.org.uk>

Genealogy Tip of the Day – daily tips, shared info, discussion group.

<https://genealogytipoftheday.com>

Manchester & Lancashire Family History Society – one of the largest family history societies in Britain with over 3.7 million unique records. Free Drop-In Helpdesk in Manchester Central Library 10.30-3.30 Mon to Fri. Also custodians of the Catholic Family History Society. Cost £15 per annum, volunteers wanted.

<https://mlfhs.uk>

Yorkshire Archaeological & Historical Society – for everyone interested in Yorkshire's past. Full membership £45 pa with Yorkshire Archaeological Journal or £23 without. Info on medieval studies, family and industrial history.

<https://www.yas.org.uk/>

For anyone interested in 1810 London, John Lockie, a descriptive London Street Directory in 1810 - M is a fascinating website describing streets in detail. (Thanks to member Mike Furlong for this gem.)

<https://londonwiki.co.uk/Lockie1810/lockie1810M.shtml>

Ancestor Seekers Salt Lake City Research Trips – organises and runs research trips to Salt Lake City. Idea for a holiday?

<https://www.ancestorseekers.com>

New York Family History – This is an index to biographical information appearing in thousands of books, monographs, and journals related to various aspects of New York State history. Membership US\$58 for 6 months or US\$89 pa.

<https://www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org/>

Society of Australian Genealogists – annual subs A\$95 single, A\$145 couple plus joining fee of A\$20. Donations welcome. Many resources both Australian and international, parish records, Webinars, biographies.

<https://sag.org.au>

Museums of History NSW – formed in 2022, collections of records, museums, historic houses in New South Wales, Australia. Links to First Nation.

<https://www.mhns.wa>

Grave Tales – tales of early settlement, unsolved murders, love lost, mystery, heroes and tragedy in all areas of Australia. Seems to be a bookshop but also has ebooks for sale.

<https://gravetales.com.au>

For something a little different: – My True Ancestry - how to uncover your ancient ancestry via your DNA results. All data is anonymized.

<https://mytrueancestry.com>

Most of us have ancestors with military records and there are many sites providing information. I would particularly welcome more suggestions but here are a few to be going on with:-

Naval History.Net – Information from 1815 to 1982, ships and seas, log books, whaling, casualty lists. Covers UK and US.

<https://www.naval-history.net>

Imperial War Museum London – Info on IWM site visits e.g. Duxford, Manchester plus family history resources such as tracing Prisoners of War. Donations welcome.

<https://www.iwm.org.uk>

The National Museum Royal Navy – Videos, information on Royal Navy heritage and visiting dockyards such as Hartlepool. Online collection of records available from 2026. Donations welcome.

<https://www.nmrn.org.uk>

Thank you to member Peter Alefounder for his valuable suggestions as follows:-

Medieval Genealogy Resources – This provides many resources, of particular interest being the listings of Patent Rolls, Close Rolls and Fine Rolls which are three distinct series of Chancery records in England. These extracts are published, with many available on the internet, mainly via the Internet Archive and the Hathi Trust, but are awkward to search there as results appear in a haphazard order. On this site, links are provided in chronological order. Also to be found are county resources, history of Parliament and peerage information.

<https://sites.google.com/site/cochoit/medieval-genealogy-resources>

Anglo-American Legal Tradition – 11 million images of documents held at the National Archives (UK) licensed to and sponsored by the University of Houston. Of particular interest are the four legal systems from the time of King Richard I to Queen Victoria including the courts of Common Pleas and King's Bench. There are modern indexes to some of these. Various tutorials and help are available. Donations welcome.

<http://aalt.law.uh.edu>

Rural History – group to help you question and make sense of your local area. Links to varied subjects such as history of shepherding, village ponds and postboxes.

<https://www.ruralhistoria.com>

Scotland's People - various Scottish records:- legal, migration, census, tax, Church records, civil registers, maps. Pay per page/image.

<https://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk>

Did Your Surname Originate in Essex?

By Jeff Porter (ESFH 33285)

If your surname is Smith, Brown or Porter, your origins could be from anywhere in Britain. But if your surname is Pavelin, Cottis/Cottiss/Cottee or Ridgewell, the odds are that your family roots run deep into Essex soil. The question is: how can we tell the difference?

When family historians look beyond parish registers, surnames can offer useful clues for guiding research. For instance, identifying that the Lindsell family line originated in Essex rather than Surrey helps researchers focus their efforts more productively.

Over many years, ESHF members have registered more than 7,000 surname interests, of which over 5,000 are listed with an Essex connection. This represents potentially hundreds of research challenges and 'brick walls' blocking further discoveries.

The Essex Surnames initiative aims to help ESHF members overcome these research challenges by creating a comprehensive database of verified Essex-originated surnames. Working from ESHF's Members' Surname Interests (MSI) register, the initiative has initially identified over 100 MSI entries that show strong evidence of Essex origins and warrant detailed investigation.

There are surname research limitations for common occupational and patronymic surname types (Smith, Johnson, Williams, Baker, Miller). These surname types developed independently in communities across medieval Britain wherever smiths worked, millers ground grain, or families adopted patronymic naming patterns. While ESHF members may have thoroughly documented Essex ancestors bearing these names, proving that the surname itself originated in Essex (rather than representing one of hundreds of separate formations nationwide) is typically impossible with available evidence.

However Locational Surnames offer the strongest research prospects. Names like Ridgewell (from the Essex village), Lindsell (from the Essex parish), or Bures (from the Essex-Suffolk border village) can often be traced to specific origins through medieval records, Domesday Book entries, and systematic mapping of historical occurrences.

Additionally, certain distinctive Occupational or Descriptive Surnames may provide definitive insights. For example, surnames such as Cottis, which may denote "cottage dweller," necessitate alternative research methods but can occasionally be linked to specific regional backgrounds.

Essex Surnames: 8-Step Research Process

Step 1: Statistical Analysis - Count surname occurrences in Essex versus the entire UK using 1881 census data to calculate the '*Banwell Index*'. High values indicate potential Essex origins.

Step 2: Member Surname Interest (MSI) Check - Compare ESFH Members' Surname Interests Register with high Banwell Index surnames and prioritize surnames that matter most to our members.

Step 3: Variant Identification - Use 4 phonetic systems to group spelling variations (like Ridgewell/Redgewell/Ridgwell) ensuring comprehensive analysis.

Step 4: Academic Verification - Cross-reference findings with authoritative surname dictionaries, particularly Harry Parkin's *'The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Family Names in Great Britain'* (2016).

Step 5: Historical Comparison - Test Essex concentration using 1841 census data. Higher historical concentration supports Essex origin theory.

Step 6: Parish Register Search - Systematically examine Essex parish registers from 1500s onward, recording locations and dates for migration mapping.

Step 7: Migration Mapping - Create visual maps showing surname movement across Essex parishes over 300+ years, revealing settlement patterns.

Step 8: Medieval Documentation - Search Essex Record Office's medieval records (court rolls, tax assessments, manor records) for earliest documented appearances, with volunteer assistance.

Categories:

Surnames progress from 'Possible Essex Origin/Category 3/high *Banwell Index*) to 'Likely Essex Origin/Category 2/historical confirmation' to 'Highly Probable Essex Origin/Category 1/medieval evidence'.

This approach builds evidence and sources step by step, from statistics back through time to medieval origins, which will support ESFH members in their research efforts.

The new ESFH website will integrate Essex Surnames results with ESFH MSI Register information. Members will be able to access surname origin findings, view migration maps, download research suggestions, and connect with others researching the same surnames.

What is the Banwell Index?

The *Banwell Index* is a comparison tool which identifies a surname's relative frequency compared to frequency within the UK.

Here's how it works:

- * If the value is 1.0, the surname appears in Essex at the same rate as the rest of Britain.
- * If the value is 10.0, it's ten times more common in Essex.
- * If the value is 48.8 (like Ridgewell), it's forty-eight times more common in Essex.

High values strongly suggest the surname originated in Essex.

The Ridgewell Story: An Example

Several ESFH members have registered interest in researching the Ridgewell surname and its variations. Their investigations perfectly demonstrate how Essex Surnames can break through research brick walls.

Ridgewell Surname Profile

Surname Overview

Ridgewell (and its variants) is a *locative/habitational* surname associated with the village of Ridgewell, Essex. Documentary sources suggest medieval usage from 1245. Phonetic analysis shows a compact variant set comprising of Ridgewell (primary), with Ridgwell, Redgwell and Redgewell as close variants. Statistical analysis of these surnames indicates a strong concentration in Essex. Academic surname research states that these surnames variants originate in the village of Ridgewell, Essex. Based on the research so far, Ridgewell has been assigned as Category 2 (Likely) surname and included in the Essex Surnames Project.

Etymology & Earliest References

Derived from Ridgewell in Essex, this habitational surname dates to medieval forms like Rideuella (1245), Rodewell (1245), and Redeswell (1274/1281). Modern versions are recorded in Essex from 1599.

The Ridgewell surname is listed in both the *Oxford Dictionary of Family Names in Britain and Ireland*, p266, *Harry Parkin, Oxford University Press* (2016) and in the *Oxford Dictionary of English Surnames*, p378, *Reaney & Wilson, Oxford University Press* (2005 edition). Both these academic works attribute Ridgewell variants to Essex.

Phonetic Analysis & Spelling Variants

Phonetic analysis utilised four principal phonetic systems. The following lists their respective codes and areas of application.

The key surname variants shared across the 4 phonetic systems is shown in the table below.

Variant	Soundex	NYSIIS	Double Metaphone	Phonetic Change
Ridgewell	R324	RADGWAL	RTKL/RTJL	Modern form, place-name origin
Redgewell	R324	RADGWAL	RTKL/RTJL	Vowel change
Redgwell	R324	RAGAWAL	RTKL/RTJL	Vowel deletion
Ridgwel	R324	RADASWA	RTSW/RTSF	Shortened form

Essex Surnames calculated the *Banwell Index* to test and confirm statistical support for the surname originating in Essex. The 1881 Census *Banwell Index* is 30.7 whilst the 1841 Census is 48.8 supporting the hypothesis that the surname and its variants are 'Likely' to have originated in Essex.

Surname Variants Migration Patterns (1500–1900)

Current research indicates that the parishes of Great Totham, Feering, Coggeshall, Kelvedon are early locations for the Ridgewell surname. There appears to be migration to Suffolk (Sudbury, Ipswich), London (Hackney) and Hertfordshire (Bishop's Stortford) according to FreeREG parish transcripts up to 1899.

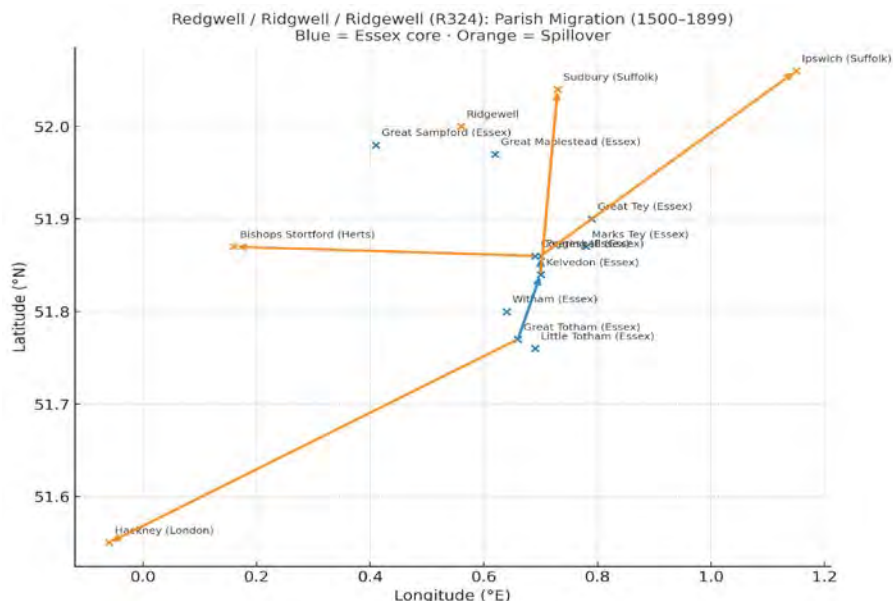


FIGURE 2. MIGRATION MAP

Early Surname Records

In Feet of Fines for Essex (1281) a Thomas de Redeswell is recorded which is possibly the first recorded spelling of the family name.

The Toppesfield Parish register has the following entries:

1599: John Redgewell, christened on April 9th 1599... at Toppesfield

1635: Anne Regewell, christened on August 23rd 1635... at Toppesfield

ESFH Members' Surname Interest (MSI) Register

The Essex Society for Family History (ESFH) Members' Interest Register has several members who are researching Ridgewell and its variants.

ESFH Database

The ESFH Database contains over 800 records for Ridgewell and its variants and is a valuable tool for any Essex family history research and surname studies.

Y-DNA

We are unaware of any Y-DNA groups or testers researching this surname.

Surname Studies

Currently, there are no known surname Studies for this surname registered with the Guild of One Name Studies or by other surname researchers.

FIRST TEN SURNAMES - ALL FROM YOUR REGISTER

Essex Surnames - 1st 10 surnames selected directly from member research interests:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1. Ridgewell / Redgewell / Ridgwell / Redgwell | 6. Campen |
| 2. Dowsett / Dowset | 7. Chatters |
| 3. Angier | 8. Cottis / Cottiss / Cottee |
| 4. Ardley | 9. Layzell / Lazell / Lazzell |
| 5. Bures / Bowers | 10. Lindsell / Linsell |

These surnames have been selected because multiple ESFH members has registered them as surname interests, and they have a high Banwell Index.

How Can You Join In?

Essex Surnames welcomes ESFH member participation. With your help we can create a practical tool to help ESFH members solve real research problems.

If you would like to contribute, please contact: jeffporter@esfh.org.uk

☆ ☆ ☆

Winners! Winners! Winners!

Lost Cousins Prize Draw

Congratulations to Lynn Bracey (ESFH 33884)

Winner of the Ancestry DNA kit following the Lost Cousins presentation on 9th June 2025

Also

Congratulations to Tony and Pauline (ESFH 5494) Hollingsworth who won the Apple Pie competition at the Family Fun History Day on 16th August 2025

The Harden-Harding Surname

By Anthea (Kalajzich) Fawcett from Geraldton in Western Australia

My much-loved grandmother Mary Lilian Harden, was christened in 1863, the daughter of James Harden and Emily Jane Barkla of Kapunda, South Australia.

According to family hearsay, her father James was said to have been a baker and confectioner from Saffron Walden in Essex. It's also believed he'd been a bell ringer in the church there and had arrived in Australia in 1852.



JAMES HARDEN
1822 - 1894



EMILY JANE HARDEN NÉE BARKLA 1837-1875
WITH DAUGHTER EMILY

The search begins

As early as 1931 my uncle, Wilf Fawcett, looked for his mother's Harden family in Saffron Walden. Wilf found a lady named Harding and it was thought that over time Harden may have changed to Harding.

When I visited Essex some sixty-eight years later, I too searched for Hardens in Saffron Walden but found nothing.

Then, as I recorded my data, I scanned and enlarged a photo of the Harden headstone in the Kapunda Cemetery in South Australia. It read:

James Harden died January 13th 1894

aged 71 years and 8 months

He fell asleep

I couldn't help feeling such an exact date was likely to be correct, making James Harden's birth in about May of 1822. Whatever the facts, I was in Essex and I was interested to pay a visit to Saffron Walden. My arrival on a lovely English summer evening was greeted by the glorious sound of church bells. What a welcome!

With little else to go on I set our Hardens aside until I thought to check St. Catherine's Index for James Harden's first marriage to Mary Catherine, just in case they'd married in England. Sure enough, in the December quarter of 1854, James and Mary Catherine were married at Saffron Walden. (Not all of our family story was correct.)

I sent for a copy of their marriage certificate and wasn't disappointed.

James and Mary Catherine Smith married by license on November 9th 1854. Mary Catherine was twenty-one, the daughter of John Smith, a carpenter. James Harden was thirty two, a bachelor and baker, the son of James Harden, a labourer. The groom was living at Helions Bumpstead at the time. In addition, James and Mary Harden had signed their marriage certificate in the presence of George, Ellen and Charlotte Smith, and with these names I managed to locate the Smith family living in Saffron Walden.

This was vital information, particularly if I could find James or some of his family on the 1851 Census for Helions Bumpstead.

The 1851 Census of Helions Bumpstead

Thankfully these villages were small and by 1851 I discovered fifteen Hardens listed on the Haverhill Census, all living in the Helions Bumpstead area. There was James Harden Senior and his wife Amelia, together with their sons, Thomas, John and Stephen and their young families, making three Harden households in all. However, our James was not there on the night of the census.

Church records of the village show that James Harden Senior married Millie Halls at Helions Bumpstead on January 1st 1811. When their children were baptised in the years between 1813 and 1828, including our James on June 3rd 1822, Millie's name was given as Millicent Harden. Then in 1831 as baby William Harden was baptised his parents were shown to be James and "Amelia" Harden. I thought Millie had died.

Then I discovered Millicent and Amelia, Millie, Emily and Mildred are just variations of the same name. Millie's own mother had also been christened Millie. She was Millie Cornell.

Amelia Harden died on May 14th 1852 aged sixty-two. James Senior was seventy five when he passed away January 20th 1866.

Our Harden name

Using the census records I painstakingly assembled the Harden families during the 19th century. Changes to their surname were easy to see.

As a new curate or vicar arrived, so the spelling changed.

Between 1813 and 1828 it was Hearden. For the next thirty years - between 1835 and 1865 - it was Harden. Then from 1867 until well into the 1900s it became Harding.

Our James left for Australia during the 1850s when the name was Harden. (In 1855 not 1852 as previously believed.) Meanwhile in Essex the name changed to Harding.

With much of the population not fully literate, together with differing accents, it's easy to see how changes occur. At least in Essex the Hardings and the Hardens have descended from the same line.

(Up until the early 20th century the Hardings of Helions married into the Green, Kiddy, Chapman, Mynott, Smith, Tilbrook, Hughes, Norman, Bacon, Farrow, and Bayles families, along with many others.)

DNA Results

If I needed further proof, it arrived recently with my DNA results where both Harden and Harding are recorded on my list of most common surnames.

Names can and do change!

The Hardens of South Australia

It appears that others in the Harden family came to South Australia at about this time as I found a Thomas Harden - possibly James's elder brother born in 1813 - recorded in my Aunt Daisy's birthday book. There was also another James Harden born in about 1854 who died at Kapunda in 1919. Unfortunately, I couldn't find anything further about him.

Our James Harden had lost his first wife Mary and daughter Amelia in 1858, then a second daughter, Amelia Elizabeth had died. His mother's name was obviously very significant to him.

James Harden, or J.H. as he was known, late of Kapunda, died on January 13th 1894.

The *Adelaide Advertiser* published arrangements for the funeral:

"The friends of the late Mr. James Harden are informed that his remains will be removed from the residence of his son-in-law, Mr. James Graves, Portlandward tomorrow (Tuesday) at 6.50 a.m."

☆ ☆ ☆

Researchers

Did you know you can also search on our Poor Law Index to find those vital Essex Record Office references?

When was the last time you checked this member resource?

Broomfield in World War Two

By Catherine Pearson and Neil Wiffen

Booklet Review by Colleen Editor

This booklet is in the People and Stone Series – for other booklets in the series please see the next page.

The authors of this booklet have connections with Broomfield, which is located to the north of the City of Chelmsford. I also have many connections to the village so it was a natural choice for me to want to review this A4 size lavish looking 42-page booklet. With colour photographs of maps, reproduction of paintings by Rosemary Rutherford, good quality images of primary and newspaper articles plus numerous other illustrations this is a must for family historians connected to the village, WWII students and social historians.

The 7 chapters, (with 245 references at the back of the publication) cover: -

Chapter 1 – Evacuees of Broomfield. Here we learn of the evacuees who came from Tottenham Devonshire Hill School in North London and the workings of the Billeting Officer, Dorothea Marriage (1888-1978) of Broomfield Mill.

Chapter 2 – Defence of Broomfield. It covers, amongst other matters, local defence volunteers and the Home Guard, Civil Defence, Conscientious Objectors and how searchlights were established on the outskirts of Broomfield.

Chapter 3 – Farming in Broomfield in the Wartime. This chapter on farming was particularly interesting having a great coloured map of all the farms in the area in the centre pages followed on the next page by a photograph of the USAAF photo taken in 1944 capturing the village. References to farms and farmers were detailed with a comparison chart of eight of the farms during WWI and WWII.

Chapter 4 – Village Life includes details on rationing, the Women's Institute, local council activities and the arrival of the US Servicemen in Broomfield and how they were interested in the Land Girls on Mr Teager's farm!

The last few chapters recount wartime incidents including air raids and dog fights. The front inside cover has a reproduction of Reverend Rutherford's first-hand account of the 14th May 1943 bombing when a 500kg bomb detonated in the churchyard of St Mary the Virgin, the parish church.

Finally, there is the story regarding the origins of the Broomfield Sanatorium which is the birth place of the major hospital we see today.

Fittingly the last page tells the story of those that made the ultimate sacrifice and reminds us that seven men, who never returned to the village, have no known graves. Surnames of the World WarII dead include Ashby, Burt, Chapman, Garwood, Kipling x3, Leet x2, Ridley, Rudling, Seabrook, Toon, Torrie, Weston and Walton.

I found much of the text full of in-depth local history and military facts. Unlike some village histories there were many names of individuals included in the anecdotes. There were photographs of people and artifacts that have not been published before. Particularly fascinating was the table of a selection of people from the 1939 Register showing Civil Defence duties being undertaken in September 1939!

Further details see:

<https://stmarybroomfield.org/people-stone-publications/>

People and Stone booklets

A series of beautifully illustrated full colour A4 booklets depicting aspects of the fabric and history of St Mary with St Leonard's Church, Broomfield, Essex.

All proceeds go to the Project Rutherford Fund

	People and Stone 1 – 'and the bishop expressed his approval' - A brief architectural history of Broomfield Church to Chancellor's restoration of 1868-71. The architectural history from the time of the Norman conquest to its Victorian restoration. (currently out of print)	
	People and Stone 2 – Church People – Stories in Monuments – A review of the monuments in the church – what the monuments are made of, the derivation of the stone and the lives of the people they commemorate.	£7.50 quantity
	People and Stone 3 – Church Materials – a Deep History in Walls – Aspects of the use of cobbles in the walls of Essex and how they reflect local geology using Broomfield church as a particularly rich example. Revised to include additional information from the tower restoration works.	£10 quantity
	People and Stone 4 – Gold and Garnets: the Broomfield and Prittlewell Princely Burials – Account of the Saxon princely burial at Broomfield discovered in late 19 th century gravel digging and a comparison with a similar burial at Prittlewell excavated in 2003.	£8 quantity
	People and Stone 5 – Rosemary Rutherford: life and works of an extraordinary artist – An account of Rosemary's life and family and the various aspects of her artistic works: war art, the fresco, stained glass and painting in the context of her contemporaries.	£10 quantity
	People and Stone 6 – Stained Glass and Rosemary Rutherford – Explores the history and techniques of stained glass making and features Rosemary's stained glass in St Mary's, Broomfield, shows the development of her style and compares her work with that of contemporary artists.	£10 quantity
	People & Stone 7 – Broomfield in World War Two – Captures the experiences of people living in Broomfield during the war years, from hosting evacuees from London, to the effects on farming and of military camps and bombing. Touchingly personal yet historically rigorous.	£10 quantity

People and Stone booklets.

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More from the Eureka Partnership for Essex Researchers

By Colleen Editor

I am so pleased to be informing readers of the recent issues from this select band of researchers that should not be missed. Such great value in so many ways.

Essex Dissenting Congregations

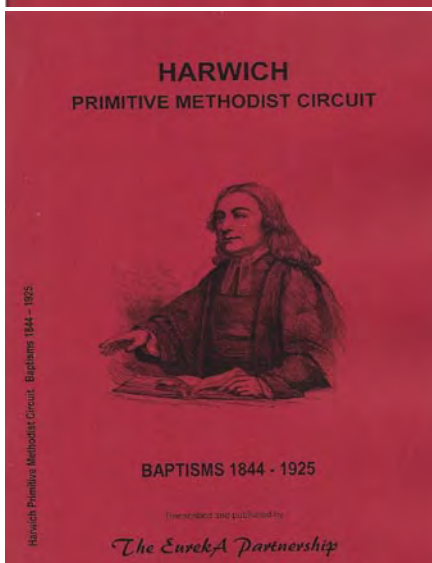
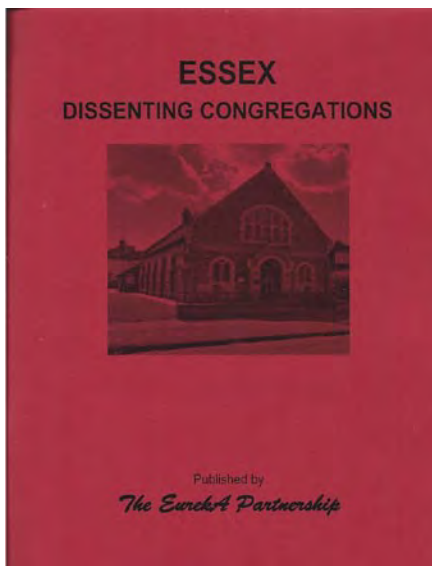
The purpose of this book is to locate as many non-conformist congregations in the old County of Essex as possible, and to try and give an idea of what records may be available for them. The author, Angela Hillier, has listed all the Church of England parishes and towns in Essex and whether they had a chapel. The book has been compiled from the following sources: -

- The 1829 Return of Dissenting Congregations in Essex
- Lewis's 1835 Topographical Dictionary of England in 4 volumes.
- Non-Conformist Registers pre 1837 in The National Archives -ref RG4
- 1851 Ecclesiastical Census
- Records held at the Essex Record Office

Some of the sources she has used may be incorrect or incomplete but they do give an idea if there was a congregation in the location at a point in time which may be of use if there are no records of a family in the Church of England registers.

Harwich Primitive Methodist Circuit

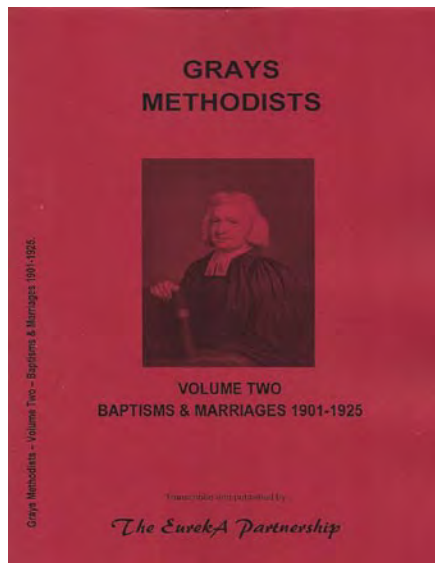
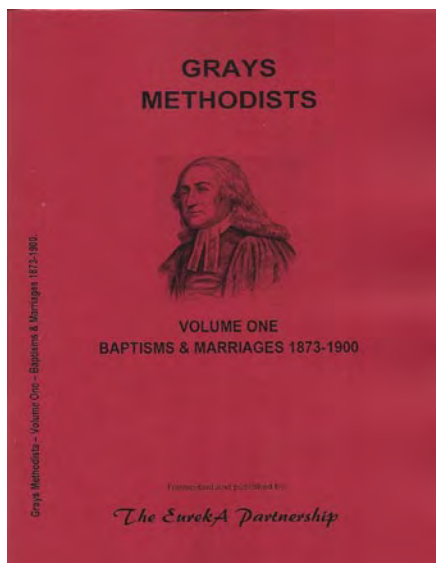
A transcription of the baptismal registers deposited by the circuit authorities and now held at the Essex Record Office at Chelmsford. The circuit registers record baptisms of individuals resident in the Harwich area including residents of



Bradfield, Dovercourt, East Bergholt, Great Oakley, Harwich, Mistley, Stones Green and Wix.

Grays Methodists – Volume One Baptisms and Marriages 1873-1900

A transcription of the baptismal and marriage registers deposited by the authorities of the Wesleyan chapels at Little Thurrock, West Tilbury and London Road, Grays



together with the United Free Methodist Chapel at Grays, held at the Essex Record Office at Chelmsford.

Grays Methodists - Volume Two - Baptisms and Marriages 1901-1925.

A transcription of the baptismal and marriage registers deposited by the authorities of the Wesleyan chapels at Little Thurrock, West Tilbury and London Road, Grays together with the United Free Methodist Chapel at Grays, held at the Essex Record Office at Chelmsford.

The above four booklets are available at the ESFH Research Library at the Essex Record Office.

In addition to Essex transcriptions, they cover other counties of England with over 500 offerings including .PDF downloadable files from their online book shop. Don't delay. Enhance your research today by checking their website for the transcriptions of other counties and unusual and lesser-known material including .PDF downloads of Southwark Police Court Petty Sessions - Bastardy Cases 1844-1858 and Wandsworth Division Petty Sessions Bastardy Cases 1844-1857.

<https://eurekapartnership.com>

A Sixteenth Century Dunmow Family and their Tenth Century Ancestors

By Simon Mynott (ESFH 33237)

Firstly, the sub-title ‘Tenth Century Ancestors’ needs to be put into context. In Essex, historical records give us some tenth century personal names but little or nothing about their sons/grandsons. However, for high-ranking families in Wales and Ireland, family links across the generations are on record even that long ago. The narrative below shows how the ancestry of the Jenour family in Gt. Dunmow can be traced back, step by step, to early medieval Wales and then to Ireland in the tenth century.

Decades of research on Essex families, using basic sources such as parish registers and wills, enabled me to identify a number of my ancestors living in England in the 16th century. One of these, John Tiffin, proved particularly interesting. In a property transaction of 1598⁽ⁱ⁾ conducted jointly with his uncle William Tiffin, John was described to my surprise as a Gentleman. William Tiffin was Lord of the Manor of Wakes Hall at Wakes Colne, Essex. His career had been as a lawyer in London and he was a Fellow of the Middle Temple. He became wealthy, and invested in various properties. His land-owning status then meant he was able to marry into another land-owning family called Jenour, and I think it was William’s connection which enabled John Tiffin, my ancestor to marry Mary, daughter of Andrew Jenour of Great Dunmow, Essex. A memorial inscription in Wakes Colne Church sets out the various Tiffin and Jenour relationships.

Andrew Jenour inherited, from his father Richard (who died 1543) three Essex properties:

- The Manor of Bigods at Gt. Dunmow, covering more than 1000 acres, which was where Andrew and his family seemed to have lived
- The Manor of Lacheley Hall in Lindsell, with 400 acres, bought by Richard in 1543⁽ⁱⁱ⁾. This is very near Bigods and a footpath runs from one to the other.
- Howbridge Hall at Witham with 330 acres. The present Hall dates from about 1580 so it could have been built for Andrew, who lived until 1620.

Andrew’s father Richard and grandfather John were both trained as lawyers in London. It was John who acquired Bigods Manor in 1529⁽ⁱⁱⁱ⁾ but he also had a house (with a garden) in the parish of St. Bride’s in London, as mentioned in John’s will made in 1541. John had served as Protonotary or Chief Clerk^(iv) at the Court of Common Pleas which sat in Westminster Hall.

Landed gentry such as the Jenours often sought and obtained a coat of arms as a status symbol. During the 16th and 17th centuries, county-by-county surveys of families entitled to bear arms were undertaken on behalf of the College of Arms in London. The resulting ‘Visitation Reports’ were published and are a valuable source

because they give a pedigree of each eligible family visited. For the Jenours the 1558 Visitation of Essex recorded that: -

- Andrew Jenour had married the daughter and heir of Thomas Smyth of Campden, Gloucestershire
- Thomas Smyth had married Elizabeth daughter of Eustace Fitzherbert
- Eustace's father Henry Fitzherbert had married Cecylie Molineux.

Cecylie's father was John Molineux; he is known from an Inquisition post Mortem^(v) of 1467 to have been the son of Robert Molineux. According to the *'Baronetage of England'* Robert in turn was a son of Richard Molineux of Sefton, Lancashire. The *'History of the County of Lancaster'*, Vol III, names Richard's wife as Ellen de Urswick, and says that Richard died in 1397. In my search for Ellen's father, I discovered that he was an MP, Sir Robert Urswick, as documented in *'The History of Parliament, the House of Commons, 1386 – 1421'* which contains biographies of MPs.

The 13th and 14th centuries

It proved more difficult to identify the family background of Robert Urswick's wife, who is listed in *'The History of Parliament'* as Ellen widow of Sir John Dalton. However, the *'Visitation of Yorkshire' for 1563 / 64'* says she was the daughter of Sir Henry Husee. The Husees were a Sussex family. Evidence in the *'Victoria County History'* (VCH) for Sussex, Vol. IV, and in an article in *'The Genealogist'*^(vi), show Husee links with the Bohun family in the 14th century. Sir Henry Husee, Ellen's father, had married Elizabeth de Bohun (daughter of Sir John de Bohun). This couple are recorded in a Foot of Fine dated 1347^(vii). The Bohuns were another Sussex family, with properties around Midhurst. Sir John de Bohun's father James, born in February 1280 / 81, had married Joan de Braose, daughter of Sir William 2nd Lord Brewes.

The Braose family held the castle of Bramber, Sussex, built by their ancestor William about 1073^(viii), but they also held castles in Wales. In the early 13th century, the dominant Welsh leader was Llywelyn, 'The Great', who was concerned to minimise turbulence along the border between Wales and England, and arranged marriages of his daughters accordingly. So, Margaret, daughter of Llywelyn married John de Braose in 1219, according to John Burke's *'General & Heraldic Dictionary of Peerages'*. John de Braose was the grandfather of William, 2nd Lord Brewes.

Wales and Ireland

Welsh princes are well documented in the *'Dictionary of Welsh Biography'*. Llywelyn's grandfather was Owain ap Gruffudd who in 1137 became Ruler of Gwynedd in North Wales, Owain's father Gruffurdap Cynan had achieved control of Gwynedd after a 25-year struggle.

Cynan ab Iago, father of Gruffudd, had spent a long period in Dublin, taking refuge there after his own father was murdered in 1039. Norsemen were in control of Dublin early in the 11th century and Cynan was married there to Ragnhildr (or Ragnail), daughter of a Norseman, Olaf. This Olaf was the son of Sihtric, nick-named 'Silkbeard'

who died in 1042, is noted for starting the construction of Christ Church Cathedral in Dublin; he also founded a mint which produced silver pennies bearing his name.

Sihtric was the son of a previous Olaf (nick-named 'Cuaran'), by an Irish wife Gormflaith, according to Clare Downham's book on Viking Kings. F. J. Byrne's *'Irish Kings and High Kings'* lists Gormflaith as the daughter of Murchad mac Bran Fionn, King of Leinster 966-72; Bran Fionn had been King from 943 to 947.

Subject to the Caveat below, there is therefore a complicated but complete chain, comprising 22 generations, which links Andrew Jenour (died 1620 in Essex) back to Bran Fionn who died in Ireland in 947.

The author of this article is a 12th generation descendant of Andrew Jenour, via Essex families such as Tiffin, Algate and Bartholomew. The author also believes he is a descendant of two Kings of Leinster, who lived over 1000 years ago, as described above - if the link outlined in the Caveat is correct.

CAVEAT - re: Ellen daughter of Sir Henry Husee in the mid-14th century: who was her mother?

I am aware of two sources that give different answers as to the identity of Ellen's mother. This caveat explains which of them I have chosen to rely on, and why.

In 2018 I found a website listing Ellen as born in 1342; it quoted Elizabeth née Bohun as her mother, and gave Elizabeth's date of death as 1359 (following which Henry married a second time). That website contained extensive details about the original sources on which the evidence about Ellen was based. This version of events differs from the *'Genealogist'* article of 1912, referenced in my footnote^(vi), the author of the *'Genealogist'* article believed that Elizabeth née Bohun died without issue, and that Ellen was the child of Sir Henry's second wife.

In the course of compiling this article I went back to recheck the website that I consulted in 2018, hoping to find specific evidence for Ellen as the daughter of Elizabeth née Bohun. Unfortunately, the site I used in 2018 is no longer accessible.

I now have chosen to rely on the more modern of these two pieces of research (2018 rather than 1912). The chronology in the 2018 website helps to convince me that Ellen was indeed the daughter of Elizabeth née Bohun, especially when put alongside two 14th century pieces of evidence: -

- A Lancastrian document of 1372 lists Ellen as married to Sir Robert Urswick. The reference for this document is Dods - MSS cxlix fol. 97b, 92b
- But Sir Robert was Ellen's second husband; her first was Sir John Dalton - see the *'Visitation of Yorkshire' 1563/64* p. 86 and the *'History of the County of Lancaster'* Vol. VII pp.267 – 73.

Since Ellen was in her second marriage in 1372 it is inconceivable that Ellen was born later than 1359, i.e. she must have been the daughter of Elizabeth née Bohun, who died in 1359.

I am therefore satisfied that Elizabeth née Bohun has a secure place in the chain of relationships set out in my article, as the mother of Ellen Husee.

Note from the Editor.

Simon has produced a Generation by Generation list in Chronological order to accompany this article. For a copy please email: editor@esfh.org.uk

References to specific documents

- (i) "Feet of Fines for Essex", Vol. 6, ed. F. G. Emmison
- (ii) and (iii) "History and Antiquities of Essex", P. Morant, 1768
- (iii) "Monumental Brasses of Essex" by W. Lack, H. M. Stuchfield & P. Whittemore
- (iv) Inquisition post Mortem C 140/19/17, 7 Edw. IV, 7 Aug. 1467
- (v) G. Watson 'The Bohuns of Midhurst' in "The Genealogist" n.s. Vol. 28, 1912, using the Addendum on p. 173
- (vi) Foot of Fine, 21 Edw. III, November 1347, Cal. Fine R. v 458
- (vii) English Heritage Handbook

General Sources - supplementary to those already quoted in the body of my article

J. Burke "Landed Gentry"
 G. E. Cokayne "Complete Peerage"
 Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
 D. Richardson "Magna Carta Ancestry"
 F. M. Stenton "Anglo-Saxon England"
 VCH Essex Vol. 10
 Wikipedia, Wikitree and their sources

☆ ☆ ☆

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 Baxter Essex Burial Index 1813-1865

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The Colne Oyster Fishery

By Angela Hillier (ESFH 28397)

The Fishery was granted to the Borough of Colchester in 1189 though bits of it were granted to others at various times which caused a lot of disputes. There was an Act of Parliament in 1757 which seems to have sorted out the problems of ownership and set up this Fishery. There is a set of books from 1758-1870 from which I have extracted the following list for 1810. I have added the letters given after the names in the second list to the names in the first list and added the names of those not on the first list at the end. The people mostly seem to come from the parishes of Brightlingsea, East Donyland and Wivenhoe if I have interpreted the B, E.D. and W next to the names correctly.

Ref D/B 5 Ef1/4 Colne Oyster Fishery book 1810-1840.

15 August 1810

Colne Fishery within the jurisdiction of the Borough of Colchester in the County of Essex. The Customary Court and Court of Conservancy for the said Fishery which was formerly called an Admiralty Court and held by prescription at a place called the Block House in East Mersea in the said County of Essex within the Jurisdiction of the Mayor and commonalty of Colchester according to the Custom of the said Borough there time out of mind used and approved and by the virtue of diverse Charters letters Patent and verdict confirmed and now held at the Moot Hall in Colchester aforesaid on Wednesday the 15th day of August in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and ten Before William SMITH esquire Mayor of the said Borough in pursuance of An Act of Parliament made and passed in the 31st year of the Reign of His late Majesty King George the 2nd Intituled 'An Act for regulating governing preserving and improving the Oyster Fishery in the River Colne and waters thereunto belonging'. At which Court was also present Aldermen Thomas HEDGE, William PHILLIPS and Francis Tillet ABELL Esquires.

At this Court came Thomas JEFFERIES the Water Sergeant or Bailiff and returned a List of persons hereafter named Licenced Dredgermen whom he had summoned to serve as Jurymen – pursuant to a precept to him directed for that purpose viz :-

Samuel DAVIS	?	William SANFORD	W	William GOODING	?
Joseph SADLER	W	Daniel COLE	E	John GRIGGS	B
*Peter B.ANDREWS	B	John FIELDGATE	B	Jos RICHARDSON	B
John DENTON	W	John EVERETT jnr	E	Chris DUNNAGE	B
Robert OAKLEY	W	John EVERETT snr	E	John ELLIS jnr	B
John WALFORD	E	*John B. EVERETT	B	James IVES	B
John HILLS	?	James FIELDGATE	B	John JOLLEY	B
Samuel FROST	B	John FLEMING	B	Benjamin SANFORD	W
Thomas BRUCE	B	William FLEMING	B	Benjamin STACEY	W

John LAMBERT	B	Thomas ALLEN	E	Thomas MASON	W
John NOBLE	B	Simon LAWRENCE	E	John UNDERWOOD	B
Ambrose DEATH	B	Thomas BROWN	E	George LAWRENCE	W
John ELLIS snr	?	Robert CATOR	E	William RUDLAND	B
Samuel MARTIN	B	Uriah MARSHALL	E	William COLE snr	W
William MILLS	W	Marsh NOBLE	B	Samuel ABBOTT	W
Edward HOWELL snr	?	Joseph TRANHAM	B	John PEGGS	B
Edward HOWELL jnr	W	John DRAKE snr	B	John LINNETT	E
John COLLEER	W	Robert HARVEY	W	Robert PRESNEY	E
Abraham HAM snr	W	John HARLOW	W	Joseph COLE jnr	E
Abraham HAM jnr	W	Thomas HARLOW	W	Jos FARRINGTON	B
James SIMONS jnr	E	Nathaniel ROGERS	E	John FRANKS	E
John SMITH (poor)	E	Adam GLENDENING	?	James WELLER	B
John HOWARD	E	John PAIN	B	John WELHAM	B
Richard MINTER	B	William MASKELL	B	Clement STOW	B
John JONES	W	William TAYLOR	?	Abraham MARTIN	B
John WOOLVERT	B	Thomas TAYLOR	B	William JOLLEY	B
Sam KINGSBURY	B	John DRAKE jnr	B	John BUNN	B
John BRAGG	?	Nath FROST (poor)	F	John DOBBITER	B
William HEATH	W	Thomas TAYLOR	W	Mathw TABOR	B
William PARISH	W	*William S. BANKS	E	Thomas COOK	E
John MILLS (poor)	W	Frederick NICHOLSON	?	Robert FARROW	E
John ROOT	B	John BLYTH	W	William COPSEY	B
Joseph BARNES	B	Will RICHARDSON	B	Joseph EVERETT	E
Willm FARRINGTON	B	John HORN	W	John CLARKE	E
John KENT	W	William HARLOW	W	Abrm LUFKIN snr	B
William COLE	W	Thos SAUNDERS	B	Robert CHIDDOCK	B
Michael EVERETT	E	John BARBER	B	Abraham LUFKIN jnr	B
Samuel WOOLVERT	B	Joseph WILLETT	?	John SHEPHERD	B
John STAMMERS	B	James SIMONS	E	Thos PENNOCK	B
John ANNIS	B	John BACON	?	James LETCH	B
Taber CHEEK	E	Thomas RUFFLES	B	William FRANCIS	E
William ALDRIDGE	E	*Jos UNDERWOOD	B	John TURFF	E
Samuel MILLS	E	James DYER jnr	W		

*some names are too long to fit into a column, those with an * are shown below. I have in some cases shortened the Christian names eg William to Will to make them fit.

Peter Burridge ANDREWS

William Shakeshaft BANKS

John Burgass EVERETT

Joseph UNDERWOOD jnr

Out of whom these several persons were Impannelled and Sworn :-

William SANFORD Foreman	William RICHARDSON
Joseph WILLETT	Benjamin SANFORD
John STAMMERS	Thomas HARLOW
William JOLLEY	Robert HARVEY
John NOBLE	John EVERETT
Uriah MARSHALL	James SIMONS
John UNDERWOOD	

Also at this Court Thomas JEFFERIES is appointed and continued Water Sergeant or Bailiff and is to be paid 15 guineas for his Year's Salary to commence this day.

Also at this Court Joseph UNDERWOOD and Joseph WILLETT are continued assistants to the Water Bailiff at the Salary of 5 guineas a year to commence this day.

And the said Thomas JEFFERIES, Joseph UNDERWOOD and Joseph WILLETT are allowed to work 4 Dredges each.

Also at this Court the following persons were Licenced to Dredge and take Oysters in the River Colne and Waters thereto belonging and to use 4 Dredges each for and during the present Oyster Season [this was usually from the end of July to the following Easter] and as long as there shall be a London, Dutch or other Foreign Market for sizeable Oysters unless the Fishery shall be sooner shut up by Order of the Jury with the consent of the Mayor and justices of the said Borough.

William DAVIS	B	Widow ALDRIDGE	E	Widow SADLER	W
William GOODWIN	B	Widow TRANHAM	B	Joseph KIBBLE	E
Widow WORDLEY	B	Widow JOLLEY	B	Samuel ROOT	B
Widow RUDLAND	B	Widow WEAVER	E	William BLYTH	W
Widow ELLIS	B	Sarah BILTON Wo	W	Ambrose EVERETT	E
Widow MARTIN	B	Sarah TABOR Wo	B	Eliz SEBBORN Wo	W
Widow BRAGG	B	Robert HOWARD	E	John SIGGARS (2yrs)	W
Widow CHAMPION	B	William BLYTH	W		
Widow CHEEK	E	Widow WALFORD	E		

Licences granted since the 15th August

John CLARKE	E	Jas GOODWIN (2yrs)	B
John BARNES	B	Thomas HAM (2 yrs)	W
Henry MANN	S	Joseph COLE jnr	?

Constables, Crimes and Calamities Harwich Borough Police 1836-1857

written by Martin Stallion

Summarised by the Editor, Colleen

From time to time, I like to remind readers about the books of Martin Stallion who lives in Braintree, Essex and who has been writing about police history for over 40 years. He has been a member of the Police History Society since it was formed in 1985 and, in 2022, he received its Annual Award for his significant contribution to police history. (www.policehistorysociety.com)

For family historians with serving police officers in their family history Essex is so lucky to have the writings of this local author. In addition, we are also fortunate to have a museum devoted to police history in the form of the Essex Police Museum which is located in Chelmsford.

(www.essex.police.uk/museum)

Martin's recent publication, re the title above, is all about the police of Harwich in the mid-19th century. Evidently Harwich was one of four Essex boroughs required in 1836 to form a police force, as the old parish constable system was considered ineffective to deal with rising crime and growing public disorder. The author uses original research from contemporary documents, mainly from the Harwich Guildhall and Essex Record Office, to reveal how the force was managed, the lives of the men who served in it and the crimes and events they dealt with, until it was merged with the Essex Constabulary in 1857.

The book consists of 4 main chapters including chapter 3 entitled 'The men so sworn: the members of the force', which will be of considerable interest to family researchers.

Appendices include a lengthy extract from a scarce occurrence book of 1849-52 and a complete list of all 50 men known to have served as constables.

Policing a busy port like Harwich had its challenges as, in addition to the pick pockets, drunks, thugs and vagrants, they had to deal with an outbreak of cholera, smuggling and men looting shipwrecks.

This book has 88 pages with illustrations and is an A4 size paperback costing £12.00. It is available at the Harwich Museum, Red Lion Books in Colchester or direct from the author: telephone 01376 551819 or email martinstallion1@gmail.com



HARWICH GUILDHALL

New Tools for Old Roots

News and Developments in DNA and AI for the Family Historian

By the ESFH DNA Pro Team

Toni Neobard (ESFH 32898) Trevor Rix (ESFH 126)
Mary Rix (ESFH 27126) and Jeff Porter (ESFH 33285)

The world of DNA in family history research continues to move fast. Every few months new tools or versions appear that have the potential to improve our research process and sometimes open doors we never imagined. For those of us who have been building trees for years, it can feel overwhelming to keep up. But the latest developments are worth exploring, and many of them are surprisingly simple to use. In this section of 'New Tools for Old Roots' we review some of the most important.

Clustering at Ancestry

One of the most exciting updates at Ancestry is the way they now group DNA matches into clusters. The new Matches by Cluster feature gathers together matches who are related both to you and to each other and presents them in coloured blocks that represent different family lines. For researchers this can be very helpful: a green cluster might point to one grandparent's line in Braintree, while a blue cluster shows links to another family line in Colchester.

This is a new tool for AncestryDNA and is only available to ProTools subscribers. The current version is in 'Beta test'. It is currently very restricted in the range and selection of matches it will display as cluster, compared to more mature clustering tools, at MyHeritage, GedMatch, Genetic Affairs or DNAGedcom. However, AncestryDNA plan to provide more filters and controls once the 'Beta Test' has completed.

Ancestry's New Handwriting Transcription

Another welcome addition is Ancestry's ability to transcribe handwritten documents that you upload to your family tree. For many of us, reading our ancestors' old handwriting is a challenge, think of scratchy parish registers or a spidery 19th-century will. Now, when you upload a letter, diary entry, or other handwritten document to a person's profile, you may see a new 'Transcribe' button. With a click, Ancestry's system will produce a typed version of the text, making it easier to read, copy, or search.

Currently, this transcription feature is available to users with at least a Worldwide (or All Access) UK membership, equivalent to US World Explorer/World Deluxe. Results are generally accurate for modern handwriting but may struggle with older or complex scripts. Nevertheless, it can save significant time and offers a helpful starting point for working with historical records.

Ancestry Ancestral Origins Update Coming soon

Ancestry has announced a major update to its Ancestral Origins feature in the coming months. They are adding more detailed regions, particularly in Europe, and changes may also affect those with African American, Central and South American, North African, or Middle Eastern heritage. All AncestryDNA users will have their DNA re-analyzed, which could adjust regional breakdowns and percentages. The expanded reference panel, now over 185,000 samples, will allow for finer distinctions, such as pinpointing specific areas within Ireland rather than the 1 Irish region currently.

MyHeritage stops DNA Uploads

Until recently, you could upload DNA results from other testing companies, such as Ancestry or 23andMe. That option has now been stopped, and new uploads are no longer supported.

If you already uploaded and paid to unlock your kit(s), you can breathe easy: your DNA Kits remain in place, and you can continue to use your matches and the tools as before. Nothing has been taken away from existing users.

For newcomers, they will need to purchase a MyHeritage DNA kit. The kit will give you access to your Matches and Ethnicity Estimate without any additional cost. However, access to MyHeritage's Advanced DNA Features, will require a MyHeritage subscription (Premium or PremiumPlus, Complete or Omni). These features include a Chromosome Browser, AutoClusters™, and Theory of Family Relativity™. This change means that new testers need to factor in not only the price of the kit itself but also the cost of a subscription if they want to access these features.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Genealogy

AI tools are rapidly enhancing family history research. To stay updated, listen to 'The Family History AI Show', podcast hosted by Steve Little and Mark Thompson, which explores how AI assists genealogists. Recent episodes cover topics like ChatGPT-5 new features 'Study Mode'. This feature allows the AI to adapt to your way of working, learning from your notes, research style, or the sources you provide. Even more exciting, it can act as an 'agent,' meaning it can take on tasks like summarising wills or suggesting possible surname variants with very little prompting.

Another practical use of ChatGPT-5 is that it can generate more consistently Gedcom files from simple spreadsheets. ChatGPT-5 has been used to convert Excel lists of DNA matches and BMD entries into Gedcom files which have been imported into Family Tree Maker, RootsMagic, and Family Historian 7. Using AI to generate Gedcoms require a reasonable knowledge of how to 'prompt' and provide 'context' to support ChatGPT-5 to map fields to GEDCOM filetags, but the payback is that it saves you hours of manual typing.

DNA in the News – Sisters re-united

A recent story from the UK press reminds us why all these tools matter. Two sisters, Trish Caller and June Thompson, were reunited with their half-sister Geraldine Ratcliffe after more than 70 years apart. Their mother, forced to give Geraldine up for adoption in Ireland in 1948, had since passed away, but a DNA test taken by a granddaughter provided the link that brought the family back together. Geraldine called the reunion 'a complete miracle'.

This story highlights the personal impact of DNA testing. Beyond the technical tools and data, the purpose is to link families, record their history, and in some cases, resolve past divisions.

Looking Forward

These technological advances represent just the beginning of how AI and improved DNA tools continue to transform genealogy research. While the pace of change can feel overwhelming, the tools are becoming more intuitive and accessible. Whether you're deciphering Victorian handwriting, understanding complex DNA matches, or researching military history, these new capabilities offer unprecedented opportunities to unlock your family's past.

TIP: Start small, experiment with one tool at a time, and remember that technology should enhance, not replace, traditional genealogical methods.



Researching the surname Pugh?

Then you might like to know about the research of this Essex volunteer with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. Historian Geoff Pugh of Maldon has tracked down every hero Pugh who died in WWI and WWII.

He has discovered many poignant stories from all over the world. "There were sailors, soldiers, and airmen. Each of them sacrificed so much. A few of them 'stick out' – there was one guy who had been fighting at the front in Europe and had returned home to Liverpool on leave. He has a one-year-old son. The family were at home when it was hit by a German bomb and they died".

Other research finds include "The name of the Pugh who died nearest to VE Day was George Sydney Pugh. He was born on March 29, 1914, and died on May 1, 1945, just seven days before VE Day. He is buried at Kiel War Cemetery in Germany, and he served in 23rd Hussars Royal Armoured Corps".

If you would like to contact Geoff please email editor@esfh.org.uk

The Cavell Family of Waldringfield Suffolk and Felstead Essex

By Alyson Videlo (ESFH 33849)

About 2 years ago I was preparing for a talk to be given to our local history group on the history of my local parish church, All Saints Waldringfield, Suffolk. There is a list of the names of the rectors on the wall of the church and I decided I wanted to research all the appointees to find out if any of them had local links.



I soon came across the Reverend William Cavell, who in addition to being rector of Waldringfield All Saints in 1697 was appointed rector of All Saints Hemley in 1698. Some years later, in 1710, he was appointed rector of St Mary's Newbourne, Suffolk and the surviving church registers date from around his appointment.

Born in Felstead Essex, according to the 'Clergy of the Church of England' database. he studied at Queens' College Cambridge and was ordained in London in 1678/79. In the seventeenth century it became a very fashionable college for the gentry and the aristocracy, especially for those with more Puritan leanings. William matriculated in 1674 as a 'sizar' student which implies he was a poor student and that he was receiving financial help from the college in exchange for taking on menial domestic chores.

I tried to find out more about William and how he had arrived at Waldringfield. I used online sites and archives to search for wills and other documents mentioning the Cavell family from Felstead and the surrounding area. As can often be the case when one narrows one's focus, other lines of enquiry soon appeared. I contacted a lady in Australia (a descendent of William) who had some incorrect information in her

tree, having not realised that Rev William had married a widow. I had special local information which could fill some of the gaps and with her help and a couple of others, I was able to access more original documents. I also had a help from a colleague who is extremely practised in reading old documents.

William may have obtained some property from his first wife Mary Goodall who had previously married Robert Bacon of Grundisburgh Suffolk, sometime between 1675 and 1679. This was assumed from the Court Rolls of Hemley as she is mentioned being 'admitted to land'* from her father Richard Goodall of Hemley. She married William at Brightwell, Suffolk in 1686 and they went on to have two sons, Richard and William. This marriage has eluded many researchers, but our group have some very local records including court rolls and local births, marriages and deaths. (Some Suffolk birth, marriage and death records are now online with www.ancestry.co.uk).

In 1689 Mary died and the court rolls also show that William Cavell, the youngest son of Reverend William Cavell, was admitted to land Maria Bacon had been admitted to in 1679. Their elder son Richard went into the church. Maybe this marriage is what brought the Reverend William to this area of Suffolk. Being a rector, he would have been entitled to the Tithes from Glebe Land rather than just a stipend like a vicar or curate and he would probably have been able to afford to purchase other land around the area to add to that obtained through marriage.

He seems to have officiated at the burial of his mother Mary née Maldon, originally from Mundon in Essex in 1700 as she was the first registered burial in Hemley. She

presumably went to live with him in Hemley sometime after her husband John, died. William also seems to have officiated at the marriage of his younger brother Nathaniel as it is the second marriage register entry in 1699. Nathaniel was then living in Hemley when he married Sarah Clarke, a widow of East Bergholt.



On looking back further the Will of John Cavell of Felstead, Essex who died in 1685 leaving his house and chattels to his wife Mary and everything else to son William as long as he pays his brothers Nathaniel and John £20, otherwise they inherit the property. It would appear that William was intent on the church, so he left his youngest brother John to inherit the estate. Both William and Nathaniel seem to have ended up in Suffolk.

John Cavell Sr had married Mary Maldon of Mundon, at Maldon in 1657. He was then described as a yeoman and his father was noted as another William, also a yeoman, deceased. This William had been the husband of Brigitt Steele née Everede. They had married at Fairstead, Essex

in 1619 and she was recorded as a widow. There was much confusion over Briggitt's surname as it was shown as it appears to have variously transcribed as Erdede or Eiderde. With some help from the Essex and Suffolk Surnames Facebook Group, I realised it had been mis-transcribed from Everede. There are a number of other Everede's in the area. Her first husband was shown as Raphe/Ralf Steele who died in 1611 in Great Leighs (the neighbouring parish) leaving her with 4 children. In his Will he mentions his wife Bridget ('Britchet'!) and children: William, Ralph, Sarah, and 'Britchet'. He makes his wife his executrix, but that if she remarries, her husband has to enter a bond with William Ellis and John Everard to ensure the husband doesn't take the children's inheritance.

William Sr of Great Leighs died in 1625 and left a Will (ref Marriages at Curry Rivel, 1642 to 1812) in which he mentions his son John and his daughters Mary and Ann who were all minors. He also leaves his wife Bridgett and John Everede as Executors.

Looking further back in 1576, 'Briget' the daughter of Robert Evered was baptised in Black Notley. This could be her. The letter V is a challenge to read in this kind of handwriting - V, U, and even N can all look alike. That might be what is visible with the 1602 marriage however, I have not yet been able to identify anything more about Robert Evered. I haven't found proof of William's parents, but I think there is much more information to be found amongst Essex archives!

Our Reverend William Cavell was married 3 times. They were all buried at Hemley where his oldest son the Reverend Richard Cavell was also buried in 1726. I found William's will dated 1719, in which he leaves his son Reverend Richard Cavell the sum of £5, and to his other sons Humphrey and John he leaves all his personal lands and belongings that had not already been left to his son William by his mother.

Grave of William Cavell

There is a tablet on the East wall of our parish church, formerly in the Chancel –

*Rev Here lieth interred the body of / the Revd
Mr William Cavell / sometime Rector of this
Parish / who departed this life July Ye 20th /
1719, aged 64 / also the body of Abigail his
/ 2nd wife who died Sept Ye 9th / 1713 aged
49 / and also the body of Martha / his third
wife daughter of / John Wright Est / sometime
a Burgess of Parliament for the / burrough of
Ipswich, who died / Jan Ye 26th 1717 aged
61.*



GRAVE OF WILLIAM CAVELL

There for now, I end the story of the Suffolk and Essex Cavell families.

ALL IMAGES ARE COURTESY OF THE AUTHOR

References:

National Archives, Findmypast, Ancestry, Essex Archives Online, Suffolk Record Office
 Wills of William Cavell d 1625 & 1719, Richard Cavell d 1726, John Cavell d1685
 Transcribed BMD's Waldringfield, Hemley and Newbourne, by Waldringfield History Group
<https://theclergydatabase.org.uk/>
<https://www.warhistoryonline.com/>

Note from the Editor

*Court rolls and the term 'admitted to property'.

Admit to property is a term used on manorial court documents such as court rolls and the court book where a new tenant is officially granted possession of copyhold land. It was an official document to record changes in the tenancy when a property was sold or passed down through inheritance.

☆ ☆ ☆

Note from the Editor

Earlier this year The Genealogist (www.thegenealogist.co.uk) released a New Historic Book Collection

This is a searchable collection of historic books with nearly 200,000 names. I found over 200 people with the surname Devenish who I did not know about.

'This release brings a wealth of social and occupational context to our users' family trees, enabling researchers to uncover not just names and dates, but the real-life stories of their ancestors', says Mark Bayley, Head of Online Content at The Genealogist. 'We're empowering our subscribers to step into their ancestors' daily lives – whether it's identifying the factory where your great-grandfather worked or discovering that a relative was noted in Who's Who over a century ago'.

Notable titles in the collection include:

- * The Incorporated Accountants' Year Book 1936
- * Leading Insurance Men of the British Empire
- * Who's Who 1897, 1923 & 1928
- * Universal Directory of Railway Officials 1929 & 1943–1944
- * The Railway Diary and Officials' Directory 1920
- * Auctioneers and Estate Agents Year Book 1929–1930
- * Directory for Surveyors, Auctioneers & Land and Estate Agents 1929
- * The Royal Aero Club of the UK Year Book 1924–1926
- * Yorkshire County Cricket Club 1936 & 1940
- * The Company of Clockmakers, Register of Apprentices 1631–1931
- * The British Launderers' Year Book 1939–40
- * The Watch and Clock Makers of Northumberland and Durham 1449–1801
- * A Handbook and Directory of Old Scottish Clockmakers 1540–1850



*Season's Greetings & a Happy New Year
from the Executive Committee*



Summaries of a Selection of Presentations given between June 2025 and October 2025

For details of the Branch Committee members please refer to
www.esfh.org.uk

Catch Up on Presentations

Some past presentations are available on our website in the Archive of Recordings:-

Members>Login>Activities> News and Events>Recordings

South East Essex Branch Meeting

June 2025

No Empty Vassalls

A talk by Carole Mulroney (ESFH 33571)

Summarised by Heather Feather (ESFH 366)

Carole's talk began in the Ratcliff area of Stepney, in the late 17th century when it was an area of slums. The Vassall family came to England from Perigord in France. This part of London became an area for shipwrights. John Vassall supplied ships to fight the Spanish Armada 1588. He moved to Cockethurst Farm in Eastwood by 1604. There he upset villagers by polluting the local brook having built a privy-house above it. He died from the plague in 1625, then his son Samuel succeeded him and became a Member of Parliament. He and his brother William acquired 1/10th of Massachusetts in America. He lived in Plymouth Colony then moved to Barbados. William's grandson John built a magnificent mansion in Boston, a later headquarters for George Washington and the poet Longfellow also lived there.

Another relative, Elizabeth, born in 1771 married at 15, the wealthy Sir Godfrey Webster, but whilst travelling in Europe she met Lord Holland and became pregnant. After a divorce she married Lord Holland and became a society hostess. They became friendly with the Emperor Napoleon 1st, who left gifts in his will. This included one of the socks he was wearing when he died in 1821!

Henry Vassall was a famous 19th century sportsman. After hearing of successes and failures of other members of that family we came to John Vassall (1924-1996) who was infamous and imprisoned for 10 years in 1962 after spying for the Soviet Union with our naval information.

Carole also described other branches of her family, one of which went back to the time of the 14th century King Edward 2nd and included his infamous favourite Hugh Le Dispenser.

Carole made an hour easy listening. The Society has already published her story in the Essex Family Historian in December 2020, the cover of which shows a picture of the Vassall House in Boston.

North East Essex Branch Meeting

September 2025

Summarised by Gill Peregrine (ESFH 5204)

As we have no August meeting I can only report on our AGM. This we held on Saturday 13th September.

We had 15 members who attended in the hall and 6 on Zoom. The meeting went very smoothly. The committee were re-elected, including myself, as Chair. We were very happy to welcome Peter Chisnall (ESFH 33694) to join us on the committee. It is always good to have a fresh face and ideas.

After the AGM we watched the film Costume Cavalcade made by the members 40 years ago. It was interesting to see the clothing and when the cast list went on the screen to see names from the past.

The film instigated a lot of memories of past meetings and members.

For details of the Branch Committee members please refer to www.esfh.org.uk

South-East Branch Meeting

October 2025

It's DNA, All the Way by Mandie Adams (ESFH 31875)

Summarised by Heather Feather (ESFH 366)

Although Mandie started her Family History 40 years ago, she abandoned the search for her paternal grandparents because of too many "brick walls". She returned to it in 2018 using DNA results when using the Dana Leeds method. This enabled her to identify both paternal grandparents. The method used built "quick and dirty" family trees. The Leeds chart relies on DNA and shared matches.

Mandie described how these methods would help with enhancing listeners' family trees further into the past. By using the more distant DNA cousins from the match list you can verify great grandparents, potentially going back several generations.

She described a twist in her tale whereby her adoptive cousin took a DNA test and discovered that they were biologically related. There are so many uses for Genetic Genealogy, finding biological parents and grandparents, solving cold cases in the world of crime, finding heirs through "heir hunting" and lastly helping "foundlings" to identify both parents and other relatives.

Hopefully this talk will encourage more members, and their relatives, to have a DNA test or to listen to the many recordings of DNA surgeries by Vice Chair Toni Neobard which are available on the society website.

North East Essex Branch Meeting

October 2025

Getting the most from the UK Censuses

A Talk by Toni Neobard (ESFH 32898)

Summarised by Christine Chatfield (ESFH 10794)

The October meeting took place on 11th October 2025 as a combined meeting, both in the room and online, with Toni Neobard speaking about 'Getting the most from the UK Censuses'. Unfortunately the internet connection was unstable in Colchester and parts of the talk were missed by members in the room. Apologies are sent for the delay in starting.

Toni started by explaining what the censuses were intended for, and how to use them for Family History. She explained that these commenced in 1801, and were then taken every 10 years. The first 4, 1801 to 1831, were mainly for statistical purposes and are of very little use to genealogists. Information on these can be found free from the Brigham Young University on <https://byu.edu/home>. Most working documents were destroyed afterwards. From 1841 the country was split into Enumeration Districts of between 25-200 houses, to enable the enumerators to collect the information in one day. Blank forms were issued to each household, to be completed by the householder with details of those home at midnight on census night. The forms were sometimes completed by children or neighbours if the householders were illiterate. This could lead to errors such as not always telling the truth, misheard accents and the heads of large families not remembering when/where each child was born etc. Other errors could occur when the enumerator transferred the information to his book.

Toni also gave us information about the dates of the censuses in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and explained that some of them had been lost in fires, pulped afterwards etc. She explained the information asked for on the censuses also changed over time with much more varied details required on the later censuses. From 1911 the census shows the actual forms completed by the householders. Finally Toni gave us lots of tips on finding people on the censuses, and the use of wildcards.

This was only a brief summary of what was a very interesting talk, and I would recommend it to members. There was so much useful information, I'm sure everyone can learn something from it.

Essex Jurors Book for 1838 Epping and Epping Upland

By Angela Hillier (ESFH 28397)

The following list of men is taken from a book dated 1838 giving the names of those who were eligible for jury service for trials held at the County Court. The book covers the whole county and is listed alphabetically by hundred, then parish, then surname. At this time the age of eligibility was between 21 and 60 with various land, tax and rental payments also taken into account. Generally speaking it was the better off in the Parish who qualified but what they did for a living did not matter, so you may find a Gentleman or a labourer in the lists. Essex Record Office Reference Q/RJ 2/1

The Waltham Half-Hundred lies in the south-west of Essex beside the River Lea. It includes the ancient parishes of Chingford, Epping, Nazeing and Waltham Holy Cross and also the Roydon hamlet in the Roydon parish, the remainder of which lies in the Harlow Hundred.

The columns in the original document are as follows:- Parish or Township: Christian & Surname: Title, Quality, Calling or Business: Nature of Qualification. I have simplified the columns for this article.

EPPING in the Waltham Half-Hundred

ABBATT Richard	schoolmaster	Poor Rate
ABREY John	corn factor	Copyhold
ADEANE Frederick	draper	Copyhold
BARHAM Thomas	innkeeper	Poor Rate
BENNET Joseph	blacksmith	Poor Rate
BROWN James	farmer	Poor Rate
BROWN John	gardener	Copyhold
CONYERS Henry John	Esquire	Freehold
CHAMPNESS Thomas	auctioneer	Freehold
CHAMPNESS Edmund	coal dealer	Copyhold
CHAMPNESS William	draper	Copyhold
CHAPLIN Thomas	millar	Poor Rate
COELL Thomas	malster	Freehold
CLARKE Henry	publican	Poor Rate
EDWARDS Samuel	farmer	Copyhold
ENGLISH James	gardener	Copyhold
FRANKLIN Joseph	breeches maker	Copyhold
FAIRCHILD Richard	publican	Poor Rate
FAIRCHILD William	pork butcher	Copyhold
GRIFFIN William	shoemaker	Copyhold

EPPING in the Waltham Half-Hundred Continued.....

GRIFFITHS Frederick	stationer	Copyhold
HAMMOND James	publican	Poor Rate
HARVEY Robert	brickmaker	Copyhold
HASLAM William	linen draper	Poor Rate
HAWKES Abel	Gentleman	Copyhold
HILLS John	farmer	Poor Rate
HILLS Thomas	farmer	Poor Rate
KIRKBY Joseph	farmer	Poor Rate
LATHAM Samuel	Gentleman	Copyhold
LAWRENCE James	carpenter	Copyhold
MANTELL George	draper	Copyhold
MARRABLE Charles	bricklayer	Copyhold
PHIPPS William	harnessmaker	Copyhold
PAYNE Isaac	Gentleman	Copyhold
PALMER Joseph	publican	Copyhold
PALMER John	grocer	Copyhold
PARKER Thomas	butcher	Poor Rate
REID Daniel	Gentleman	Copyhold
ROBERTS Edward	farmer	Poor Rate
ROWLANDS Thomas	druggist	Poor Rate
SLATER Gabriel	Gentleman	Copyhold
STOKES Richard	innkeeper	Copyhold
THURLOW John	farmer	Poor Rate
TWEED George	innkeeper	Poor Rate
TUBMAN Joseph Lucas	butcher	Poor Rate
WOOLTON James	draper	Poor Rate

EPPING UPLAND in the Waltham Half-Hundred

ADAMS George	farmer	Freehold
BROWN Thomas	shopkeeper	Copyhold
FARROW Richard	farmer	Poor Rate
FITCH James	farmer	Poor Rate
MOSELEY John	farmer	Poor Rate
MANSFIELD William	farmer	Freehold
PERRY William	farmer	Poor Rate
RUMBALL John	farmer	Poor Rate
SCRUBY James	farmer	Poor Rate

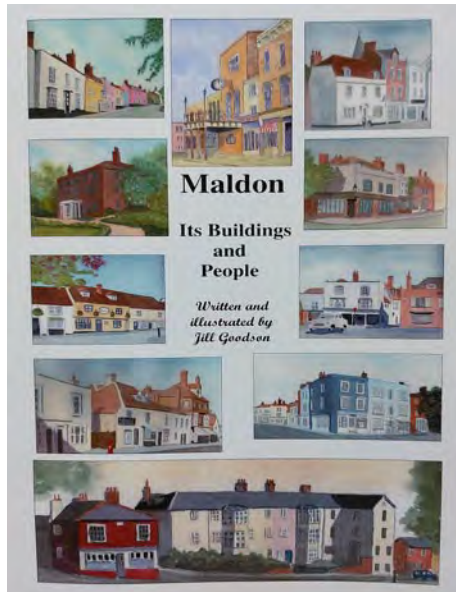
Maldon Its Buildings and People

by Jill Goodson

Book Review by Denise Somers (ESFH 30932)

This book has been written and illustrated by Jill Goodson. It would make a great coffee table book or gift as the book is so beautifully illustrated with photographs and watercolours. The book is a treasure trove for family historians if your ancestors lived in Maldon.

The book covers Maldon and surrounding areas, but concentrates on the High Street and Market Hill. There are 5 chapters beginning with Maldon in the 12th to 15th Century. The final chapter covers buildings in other roads. Jill takes you on a journey down the High Street and discusses each building where she has evidence of the people who lived there and the businesses that were trading. The book also covers the churches, Moot Hall, the Carmelite Friary, Beeleigh Abbey, Beeleigh Mill, The Hythe and the Maldon Crystal Salt Company.



Examples for family history researchers include Ansell & Sons butchers shop run by the Raymond family. There has been a butcher's shop on this site since 1790s. The original old shop known as Crackbones, after John Crackbone, has now been demolished. The Raymond family has lived in Maldon for over 200 years. The family has researched their family and their website has a list of every butcher back to 1796 and a photograph of the shop in 1928. Readers may recall the article Crackbones, Ansell & Sons and the Raymond Family by Lynne Raymond in the December 2023 edition of this magazine.

At 46 High Street, Chantry House was a chemist shop until it was demolished. From 1855 until 1906 it was George Crick the chemist and druggist. This gentleman was also a Borough Petroleum Inspector, an Explosive Inspector and later a dentist. He was known for one of his cough remedies called 'Acid Balsam'.

One interesting property was Hill House on Market Hill. John Sadd was a local rich timber merchant and commissioned the building of the house in the early 19th century. The grounds also had a gatehouse, a coach house and Cromwell House. In the early 20th century Henrietta Sadd was living here and she founded a home of rest in the grounds. She also owned another rest home in Wantz Road. These

homes were mainly for the poor who could not afford a holiday. It was also used for the convalescing of women employees of Bryant and May. They worked in the East of London match works factory. Maybe one of your ancestors came here for convalescence. The timber business of the Sadd family is no longer owned by this family or in the area. John Sadd traded from as early as 1729 and were once the 2nd largest employers in Maldon. Unfortunately for family history researchers the eldest son in every generation was called John.

At least 35 family names of people who lived or had businesses in Maldon are covered in this book. If your family lived here it will give you a great insight to not only the area they lived in but who their neighbours were, where they shopped and where they may have worked.

This book was independently published in 2014 and reprinted in 2018. There is not an ISBN for this book. It is available in some local independent bookshops. There is one copy available for loan in Chelmsford Library and I only sourced it through the authors name and not the title.

Note from the Editor

Readers might also like to know that Jill Goodson wrote and illustrated books about Danbury and Little Baddow. Volume Two is available at the Little Baddow History Centre see <https://littlebaddowhistorycentre.org.uk>



Contributors Please Note

All members are welcome to submit material for publication in the membership magazine. When or whether it is published is the sole responsibility of the Editor. Non members may have material published at the discretion of the Editor.

Articles should be no longer than 1500 words unless by prior agreement with the Editor. Articles should be sent by email and if accompanied by graphical images the compliance with copyright terms and conditions of the image is the responsibility of the author. Members are required to provide their ESFH membership number on all correspondence. The article should be sent in Microsoft WORD® or similar format and created in Arial font point size 9, headings should be in point size 12. If images are included in the article they should also be sent as separate .jpg files. Material sent formatted for a page of A4 size will appear differently when presented in A5, which is the size of our pages. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Editor, editor@esfh.org.uk.

Bolding of web addresses in this issue enables readers of the electronic issue to click on the hyperlink and be taken directly to the relevant website. Some hyperlinked addresses may change over time. If a web address does not function please let the Editor know by emailing editor@esfh.org.uk. Thank you.

The Grandfather I Did Know

By Mike Fogg (ESFH 33307)

In the August 2025 edition of this magazine I wrote about the grandfather that I did not know, this time I'm focusing on the grandfather I did know and two of his antecedents. My paternal grandfather Albert Fogg, pictured, was born on 3rd May 1899 in Derby. He died in 1980. The family were from Belper, Derbyshire and Albert was baptised there in July 1899. For many years the family lived in Peartree Street and then Strutt Street in Derby.



ALBERT FOGG

From Grandad Fogg I learned that his father had died when he was 13. George Fogg, my great grandfather (1864–1912), worked in various positions for the Midland Railway. In 1882 he was a porter at Butterley and whilst in that role at Long Eaton the local paper reports that he was assaulted after work one day. George died in February 1912. Before his death, he was an underframe fitter on the Midland Railway and grandfather told me that his dad had, 'Wiped his face with a rag at work to take away the sweat and that the rag was infected with rat droppings. The infection ate away half of his face. Therefore, grandad only remembered his father with 'half of his face eaten away'.

What grandad didn't know was that his great grandfather Henry Fogg also died in an accident on the Midland Railway. Henry was born in Bakewell, Derbyshire in 1814, his father being the Sunday School Superintendent for many years. Convicted locally of stealing in 1833, Henry moved to Derby and met and married Ann Millington, having a son George (1840–1877) baptised in March 1840. Buried on May 11th 1840, Henry's burial record is annotated 'Killed at the Railway'. The Derby Mercury (6th May) reports that Henry was working on the construction of the Midland Railway Station when, "An iron block fell from a considerable height on the poor man's head during the time he was at work. He was taken to the Infirmary having a fracture of the skull, accompanied with a large wound from which a considerable quantity of brain escaped. The man is still alive, but no hopes are entertained of his recovery." An inquest was held; a verdict of accidental death was recorded and a deodand* of 2/- was awarded on the pulley block. There is no mention of compensation for wife Ann!

Grandad told me how he met my grandmother Doris Saul. In the 1920s Reginald Street Swimming Baths in Derby was converted to a roller-skating rink each winter. Standing on the balcony above the rink with his mates they noticed a new girl skating below. Each of them put a penny into a kitty and grandad, as the one to skate with the new girl first, got the 6d kitty. Mercenary rather than romantic perhaps?

It surprised me to learn that, at the age of 15 in 1914, grandfather won first prize in the Sunday School at St Thomas' Church in Derby. The prize was a book of Common Prayer. I believe that as a railway worker Albert was in a reserved occupation in WWI.

At the time of the 1921 census Albert was an unemployed sheet metal worker. The record says he was 'late of Rolls-Royce'. Grandad said Rolls-Royce were known as 'Rush 'em and rest 'em', as they 'set people on after the motor show to fulfil orders' and laid them off again once the orders were completed.

The Municipal Sports Ground in Derby was completed in 1922 and, being unemployed, Albert was required to work on its construction. His job was pushing trolleys loaded with sacks of cement along a narrow railway track into the site. The problem was that there was no control at places where different tracks joined, leading to confusion and argument. Albert suggested to the foreman that they needed someone to control the points, and the foreman gave the job to him and so, whilst his mates toiled pushing the heavy trolleys of cement up and down, Albert sat on a chair and worked the lever that controlled the points. He was crafty with an eye for an opportunity.

There was a move to Peterborough in the late 1920s to find work, my father was born there, and then back to Derby by 1935 when my uncle was born.

My own mum and dad married in 1950 and for the first four years shared my grandparents' house. My mother was not an admirer of this grandfather either! I was told he frequently came home drunk waking everyone up and then there was the infamous tea tray incident. Mum, dad and my grandparents were on holiday at the seaside and mum had hired a tray with teapot, cups et al. Grandfather offered to take the tray back, lifting it high over his shoulder on the palm of his hand and pretending to be a waiter. Of course, everything came crashing down, broken. Mum always held this against him because she lost her ten-shilling deposit. And that was when ten bob was worth ten bob!

I only got to know grandad well after he retired, when he overtly made the mistake of sitting back and doing nothing. Consequently, he soon could not walk well or far, though there was the notable incident of him sprinting across the pub car park from our car in 1977! Grandma organised Trent Bus holidays for them. One was to Dover and included a trip to the First World War battlefields. On his return home he told me that they had been "All round France". Nothing I could say would convince him that he had only seen a small part of France!

I liked my grandad; he was a character and in his last years one of his greatest pleasures was looking through the Derby Evening Telegraph to see who had died and celebrating the fact that he was still here and people he knew had died before him. He had a heart attack on a Trent Bus holiday to Devon in 1980, was brought back to Derby by train with the help of the Red Cross and died at home a few weeks later. Grandma Doris lived until 1983.

**A deodand in English common law is an object or instrument forfeited because it has caused a person's death*

Society Information

For full information about the Society, please visit our website -
www.esfh.org.uk

Join us for our regular meetings and workshops. Some are online and others at branches. All branch meetings are open to all members and to the public. We require an entrance donation of £1 from members and £3.00 from non-members.

You will be notified by email of all events or you can visit the Events section of our website under the Activities Tab.

If you need help with your research, please contact Gill Peregrine **gpesfh@gmail.com** for one to-one sessions held at our Research Centre at the Essex Record Office. You will need an Archive Card to visit the centre.

See **<https://www.essexrecordoffice.co.uk/research/visit-the-searchroom/>**

Membership Rates

Annual membership of the Society runs from 1st April until 31st March. For rates see table below or our website.

Membership Category	Fee Payable (Paper Magazine)	Fee Payable (Electronic Magazine)
Single member living in UK	£22.00	£10.00
Single Member living outside UK	£35.00	£10.00

Further benefits of membership include:-

- A Research Centre at the Essex Record Office open on a regular basis with volunteers on duty.
- Access to Family History and DNA experts. DNA (GEDmatch) kit numbers can be added to our database to connect with other matches.
- Regular Magazine and Updates
- Online Meetings and Workshops
- Surname Interests - All members are able to update and advertise their own Surname Interests online
- Concessionary Subscription Rates for **www.findmypast.co.uk**
- Interactive Parish Map
- Access, anytime, to recorded presentations
- Unique Essex Transcriptions
- Access to publications from other family history societies

Society Information

Payment of Membership

You can join ESFH via our website or through the Parish Chest website (www.parishchest.com)

Payment on Line

If joining or renewing your membership online using PayPal you do not require a PayPal account and can pay with your credit or debit card. Under the New Membership or Renewal tab when presented with the 'Pay With PayPal' screen choose the bottom option 'Pay with Debit or Credit Card'. On the next page, after you have been asked to enter your email address, click 'Continue to Pay' where you will then be asked for your full card details to complete the payment.

Payment by cheque

New members wishing to pay their membership fees by cheque should send an email, or write, to our membership secretary detailed below enabling her to send them a membership application form. A payment by cheque must be in GBP payable at a UK bank, in favour of the 'Essex Society for Family History' and crossed.

If renewing by cheque please send your payment to the Membership Secretary

Membership applications and queries should be sent by post to the ESFH Membership Secretary Miss Ann Turner 1 Robin Close Great Bentley Colchester CO7 8QH or by email to memsec@esfh.org.uk

Research Centre, Services and CDs by post

Our Research Centre is based at the Essex Record Office Wharf Road Chelmsford CM2 6YT and is open to both members of the Society and non-members from 1.00pm - 4.00pm on Tuesday and 10.00am - 1.00pm on Thursday where you will find volunteers on duty. You will need an Archive Card to visit the centre. See Essex Record Office <https://www.essexrecordoffice.co.uk/research/visit-the-searchroom/>

We offer a service to search indexes and datasets held in our Research Centre. For details and costs of our holding please see our website under the Research tab/ Enquiries and Services/Research and Courier Services. These products are available to order under the SHOP tab where you will also find CD's for sale and payment details for all orders.

For all enquiries regarding our Search Services please email searches@esfh.org.uk

Society Information

President: The Lord Petre KCVO

Patron: Rt Rev Dr Guli Francis-Dehqani

Vice Presidents 2025/2026

Ann Turner

Ann Church

**The Trustees and Executive Officers of the Society
(who hold bi-monthly meetings) –**

Chair:	Andrea Hewitt	Email: chair@esfh.org.uk
Vice Chair:	Toni Neobard	Email: vicechair@esfh.org.uk
Secretary:	Meryl Rawlings	Email: honsec@esfh.org.uk
Treasurer:	Tanya Sewell	Email: hontreasurer@esfh.org.uk

Executive Officers including those with Additional Roles

Colleen Devenish Editor	editor@esfh.org.uk
Jeff Porter Data Controller and Chair IT Committee	datacontroller@esfh.org.uk
Meryl Rawlings Programme Co-ordinator	programme@esfh.org.uk
Paul Stirland Web Manager	webmanager@esfh.org.uk
Christine Stringer	chris.stringer@esfh.org.uk
Gill Peregrine Research Centre Volunteers Co-ordinator	gill.peregrine@esfh.org.uk
Elizabeth Cox Research Centre Committee Chair	searches@esfh.org.uk

Members with Additional Roles

Carole Bartlett Librarian	carole.bartlett@esfh.org.uk
David Cooper Proof Reader	
Ian Fulcher Production Manager	ian.fulcher@esfh.org.uk
Jill Gooding Librarian	jill.gooding@esfh.org.uk
Ron Knight Proof Reader	
John Young Transcription Co-ordinator	john.young@esfh.org.uk

The following Branch Chairs or their Representatives have been elected by their branch members and serve as ex-officio members of the Executive Committee

Gill Peregrine Chair North-East Essex Branch
Eric Judd Chair South-East Essex Branch
Mandie Adams Representative South-East Essex Branch
Elizabeth Cox Chair West Essex Branch

Family Fun History Day August 2025



THANKS TO MERYL, PETER AND SUSAN FOR THE ABOVE PHOTOGRAPHS

Where We Meet

North East Essex Branch

Venue: Oyster Room
Hythe Community Centre
1 Ventura Drive Colchester CO1 2FG

Meetings: see website for details



South East Essex Branch

Venue: Avenue Baptist Church Hall
Milton Road Westcliff on Sea SS0 7JX

Meetings: see website for details

West Essex Branch

Venue: St Johns Arts & Recreation
Centre Market Street
Harlow CM17 0AJ

Meetings: see website for details



Headquarters

Venue: Galleywood Heritage Centre
Margaretting Road
Chelmsford CM2 8TR

Meetings: see website for details

www.esfh.org.uk