RAF Ranks
FOR YOUR INFORMATION

PUBLICATION DEADLINES
Copy should reach the Editor not later than
Sunday 30th April 2017
for the next edition of the Journal.

MEMBERS’ SURNAME INTERESTS
For a list of Surname Interests please refer to the Society Website.

For more information on other Society services and details of Branch Officers please refer to the Society Website.

SOCIETY WEB SITE
www.esfh.org.uk

CONTRIBUTORS PLEASE NOTE

Contributors are requested to limit their articles to 2000 words, other than by prior agreement with the Editor. Contributions should be sent in Microsoft Word format or plain text files (Microsoft Notepad) Graphics/photos preferably as JPEG files. Alternatively written or typed articles with photographs can be sent directly to the Editor at the address below. Photographs will be returned.
Contributors should make every effort to trace and acknowledge ownership of all copyright material and secure permissions. The Editor needs to be aware of any problems with contributors acquiring copyright.
With regard to the Branch Reports each lecture/event reported should not exceed 500 words and be received by the Editor if practical within 21 days of the Branch Event. Again these should be sent in Microsoft Word format or plain text files. The material will be posted to our WEB site.
Contributors should include their ESFH membership number. The use of material is at the discretion of the Editorial team and may be used in any print and electronic media relevant to ESFH.
For any queries about the above please do not hesitate to email the Editor or post to “Ladybrook” Main Road, Woodham Ferrers, Essex CM3 8RW.
Hello Readers

I would like to thank all those members who have helped me in my new role. It continues to be a learning curve. I would also like to extend a thank you to all the contributors to this edition – and welcome those whose work is in print for the first time. No matter if you have a short or long tale regarding family history it is great to share it with other members as often new light can be shed from outside sources. If you are hesitant as to your story/anecdote being of interest to our members just email me via the Contacts page of our web site (www.esfh.org.uk) and we can discuss.

Your Executive Committee continues to give their energy and time in helping members and the public. Paul Stirland, a long standing volunteer of the committee, is changing part of his role and in future will be more involved in the development of our web site. Over the next few months he needs to relinquish his librarian responsibilities so the Society needs another volunteer to take charge of our library at the Research Centre in Chelmsford. It takes a few hours per week to keep the books and magazines in check and just think what fun it could be to sit in our Research Centre surrounded by all that family history material! If you can help us or know of someone who can please email John Young our Chairman via the Contacts page of our web site.

As Editor one of my objectives is to attend our branch meetings so I can talk to as many members as possible regarding what they want to see in the Historian. Last September I was able to ask some members their opinions when Eric Jude organised a coach trip to the National Archives at Kew and I joined them. On arrival our day started with a lecture from a member of the Church of Latter Day Saints regarding their family search site (www.familysearch.org) and its future development. The speaker stressed that only a small percentage of their material is on the Internet and so here is the same old adage - you cannot find all your family history information on line and need to seek out other sources. I understand from Meryl Rawlings, our Society secretary, that another trip to the National Archives has been organised for Tuesday 4th April 2017 so for those of you who missed out visiting UK’s foremost archive centre there is another chance to go. You can find further details under ESFH News on our web site.

Happy Researching!

Colleen Devenish
County
Calendar

A quick reference guide to Branch Meetings during the next quarter

MARCH
4th  Formation of Forensic Science at Scotland Yard by Robert Milne SOUTHEND

4th  Weavers, Higglers and moze makers – occupations in the 18th & 19th century by Michael Holland HARLOW

11th Land Tax Assessments by Eric Probert COLCHESTER

18th The Cloud by Charlie Mead CHELMSFORD (AM)

18th History of spoken English by Charles Haylock CHELMSFORD (PM)

APRIL
1st  Maps for Family Historians by Charlie Mead SOUTHEND

1st Lawrence of Arabia - His Life by Maggie Radcliffe HARLOW

8th  They Won’t Hang Me – will they? The trial of an Essex Swing Rioter by Michael Holland COLCHESTER

22nd Refugees and Migration during WW2 by Carol Harris CHELMSFORD (AM)

22nd Entertainment in wartime Britain by Mike Brown CHELMSFORD (PM)

MAY
6th  The Brushmakers Society by Ken Doughty SOUTHEND

6th  tba HARLOW

13th Maps for Family Historians by Charlie Mead COLCHESTER

20th Ian Boreham Investigates by Ian Boreham CHELMSFORD (AM)

20th Early Railway Workers by David Turner CHELMSFORD (PM)

JUNE
3rd  The City Livery Companies by David Williams SOUTHEND

3rd  tba HARLOW

10th The Origin and Development of Surnames by Derek Palgrave COLCHESTER

17th The archive of the Port of London Authority by London Museum archivist CHELMSFORD (AM)

17th  tba CHELMSFORD (PM)

JULY
1st  “Bring and Tell” – a Members Meeting SOUTHEND

1st  tba HARLOW

8th  Genealogists Question Time COLCHESTER

15th Turnpike Roads and Toll-houses by Patrick Taylor CHELMSFORD (AM)

15th Researching your Ancestors 1939-1945 by Rob Parker CHELMSFORD (PM)

Please consult the Society Website for the latest information on Branch programmes
One. The photograph.

I was very interested in Murray Brazier’s article ‘Memories are made of this’ in the Essex Family Historian March/April 2016, No. 158, where he describes Chelmsford High Street and Moulsham Street as they were in his prewar childhood.

I wrote in the September 2005 issue (No. 117) on the subject of my great-grandfather and my mother’s remark that he was responsible for the plasterwork of the Regent Cinema, Chelmsford, opened on 7 August 1916. Sadly, I have still not managed to prove his involvement, but his skilled work can still be seen at his former home and business at 42 Moulsham Street (now a pawnbroker’s). His initials GTB (for George Theophilus Bedingfield) and the date 1903 are in cartouches on the front, and the passage leading to the back yard bears, on the threshold, inset metal lettering: GT/Bedingfield/PLASTERER/1903.

Murray kindly visited Great-Granddad’s premises and took pictures for me, which sparked off this article.

A charming photograph has come down to me from the year 1910. It shows four generations of my family in the back yard under a twining creeper; a few fallen leaves indicate that it was taken in the autumn. Baby Lawrence Gowers (born 17 August), wearing his christening gown and lying in the arms of his mother, has a slightly puzzled look. My grandmother Hilda Gowers (née Bedingfield) has had her hair done for the occasion and has put on a dark skirt and her best white blouse, with enormously puffed sleeves and a ruched neckline. On her right is my little great-great-grandmother Sarah Ann Bedingfield (née Sharman) sporting the same elaborate lace tucker that she wore at Hilda’s wedding to Herbert (Bert) Gowers on 12 September 1909. Standing at the back of the group, moustachioed great-grandfather has a gleaming white collar, a watch-chain.
looped across his waistcoat, hands in his pockets, legs firmly planted and a fixed, inscrutable gaze.

Two. Sarah Ann Sharman née Ramsey 1836-1912

Sarah Ann Sharman was born in Ipswich, daughter of John Sharman, shoemaker, and Sarah Sharman née Ramsey (the surname often appears as Sherman, and sometimes as Shearman). Her ages at marriage and in censuses give a birth year of 1836. Her childhood must have been spent in quite poor circumstances; her mother had to work as a laundress or charwoman, and Sarah herself was a dressmaker at the age of 14. However, she must have received an education of some sort, as she was able to sign her name.

Sarah Ann married George Bedingfield at the Register Office, Ipswich, on 2 November 1856. This is the only marriage known to me in the family before 1935 which took place in a register office. The Bedingfields were Nonconformists, while the Sharman family seem to have been adherents of the Church of England; perhaps the register office was an attempt to reconcile religious differences. In later life both her Sharman parents lived with their son-in-law George Bedingfield, who had a flourishing plaster business in Princes Street, Ipswich. Sarah Ann’s mother is said to have fallen with a bucket of water and to have been bedridden for twelve years before dying in 1906, aged nearly 100. Caring for her mother would have meant a good deal of extra work for Sarah Ann, who was 70 at the time of her mother’s death. Sadly, the task of looking after two very elderly people, one of them bedridden, must have proved too much for her, for her father died in the Ipswich Union Workhouse.

Despite her age and (presumably) poor state of health, Sarah Ann often gamely visited her family in Chelmsford, travelling by train from Ipswich to Chelmsford. I am told by family members that she would be seen approaching across the ‘rec.’ (recreation ground), a little old lady all in black.(If anyone can tell me where the ‘rec.’ was in the early 1900s, I’d be grateful.)

On 10 May 1912 Sarah Ann Bedingfield died at 110 Princes Street, Ipswich, aged 73; the cause of death was given as (1) chronic bronchitis [sic] years and (2) cardiac failure.

Three. George Theophilus Bedingfield 1865-1923

In the 1881 census for 17 Alma Terrace, Beck Street, Ipswich St Margaret, Sarah Ann’s parents John and Sarah Sharman have an unmarried ‘relation’ living with them. George Bedingfield (‘Theophilus’ is omitted), aged 15, a plasterer and scagliola worker, born in Ipswich, was their grandson, who was learning his trade with his father. An intelligent lad, GTB had been born at 29 East Street, Ipswich on 16 April 1865 and educated at Christ’s Hospital School. The first evidence found for his education was Bartholomew’s The Student’s Atlas, with the inscription: Prize presented to George Bedingfield by the Trustees of Christ’s Hospital Day School, Ipswich. The atlas has no date, but Alsace and Lorraine are shown as being German; they were seized from France in 1870, so the date of publication must be after this but before the end of Christ’s Hospital as an independent school in about 1882. Subsequent research showed that the application for his admission had been accepted in December 1873. He was 8 years old and was one of five children, though little Rosa was to die two years
later.
On 31 July 1887 GTB, 22, bachelor, plasterer, of 74 Woodhouse Street, son of George Bedingfield, plasterer, married Mary Barber Lee, 25, spinster, of 54 Rope Walk, daughter of George Lee, carpenter. The ceremony took place in the parish church of St Clement’s, Ipswich, and the witnesses were George and Emma Lee, the bride’s father (or her brother) and sister. The couple’s first child, my grandmother Hilda Mary Bedingfield, was born just under three months later on 26 October 1887. Her address at birth was that of her maternal grandparents, George and Sarah Lee, so the young couple were presumably living with them until they had accommodation of their own, or else Mary had gone to her mother’s home to have the baby. At some point between 1895 and 1899 George Theophilus moved to Chelmsford to open his own shop there; his obituaryiii states that this was in 1899. His daughter Cissie (Cecilia Mary Elizabeth Bedingfield, later Calway, born in 1891) said that at one time he employed 23 men.
Kelly’s Directories of Chelmsford show George as a fibrous plaster merchant in Wolsey Road, New Writtle Street in 1899 and at 42 Moulsham Street in 1906. In 1910 he was a modeller & plasterer & plasterer’s merchant, and boasted Chelmsford’s ‘Telephone No. 60’!
The 1911 census, taken on 2 April, shows George Theophilus and his family still living at 42 Moulsham Street.iv From this census we discover that the house has 7 rooms (including the kitchen, but excluding bathroom, toilet, scullery and corridors). There had been five children born alive (my grandmother Hilda being the eldest) but two had died. Hilda having married and left home, her sister Cissie had taken on the job of ‘plasterer’s clerk’, while the surviving son, George Henry, aged 15, was clerk to an auctioneer.
GTB was not an easy man to work for. He was very strict with his three children,
although Mollie Hagedorn née Gowers wrote of her grandfather: 'He was a little man with a large moustache which he waxed, and he had a bad temper, but I think his bark was worse than his bite.' According to Joan Roberts, Cissie’s daughter, the three children were not allowed to sit at table for meals, until one day he said to Hilda, ‘I don’t want to see your stomach sticking out over the table any more,’ and she was permitted to sit down. If they sat with their elbows on the table, he would make them put them in a dish! (Wish I could do that with my grandchildren.)

Despite the strictness and uncertain temper of my great-grandfather Bedingfield, he had a sense of fun too. One Christmas he made a construction which consisted of an apple suspended above a lighted candle, the aim being to bite the apple without setting the moustaches alight! His son-in-law Bert Gowers got his clothes covered in candlewax and Mary Bedingfield had to get it off with an iron and blotting-paper. I have a picture of George, taken in a Belgian photographic studio; he and his two male companions, all lavishly moustachioed, are attired in sou’wester and oilskins, and are daringly standing in an improbably small rowing-boat – one of the studio’s ‘props’! (GTB is on the right.)

**Four. Hilda Mary Bedingfield**

1887-1951

George Theophilus converted to Roman Catholicism while working on an unidentified convent, because he was impressed by the nuns, and caused the whole family to convert with him.\(^v\)

Hilda, born on 26 October 1877, was originally baptised in the parish church of St Clement, Ipswich, but the younger children’s baptisms have not been found, nor the Catholic baptisms of any of them, although according to the records of the Church of the Immaculate Conception in Chelmsford, their parents were baptised there in 1900. A Simple Prayer Book (London, Catholic Truth Society 1897) inscribed ‘Hilda Bedingfield’ is dated 27th Oct 99 and contains holy pictures, including one on which is written ‘H Bedingfield June 14th 1900 Pray for me’. Hilda and her sister and brother were confirmed with their parents on 27 June 1905 at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, London Road, Chelmsford.\(^vi\)

Nothing is known about Hilda’s education. She must have attended school in Ipswich, but there were no admission registers available at the Suffolk Record Office for the most likely ones. Hilda was obliged to work for her father, who was very strict on accounting, and she would get into trouble if she made a mistake. GTB owned a pony and cart for use in his business; the pony was called Ginny and Hilda had to feed her, which she hated. On 12 September 1909 Hilda Mary Bedingfield married Herbert Henry Gowers at the Church of the Immaculate Conception. (Although Hilda and her immediate family were Roman Catholics, the rest of her relatives were not, neither was Bert or any of his family; this may...
have caused some consternation, but not a mass boycott, as the large wedding group photograph contains most of the people one would have expected to be there.) Bert’s age was 22, his profession Solicitor’s Clerk, his address 17 Mildmay Road, Chelmsford (the home of his father Albert Gowers, builder and contractor). Hilda was aged 21 and her address, as we know, was 42 Moulsham Street, (the home and business of her father, George Theophilus Bedingfield, master plasterer). Bert suffered from malaria, contracted as a baby in India, and was told that only six months in Egypt would save him. So they moved to Clacton-on-Sea, and he lived to be 78.

Lawrence George Albert Gowers was the first of Hilda’s three children; steady and somewhat dull, destined to be a banker, he never gave his mother a moment’s anxiety. This was in contrast to his mercurial, irrepressible younger brother Arthur Vincent, ‘Vin’ to his family and ‘Gus’ to his friends. Hilda was a worrier (a family trait). My mother told many stories of the scrapes Vin would get into (for example, moving a potted plant from outside the Geisha restaurant in Clacton to stand outside the Police Station. Such a harmless prank – but my grandmother dreaded the official knock on the door!). Vin took nothing seriously until war broke out. In October 1943 he was ordered to lead his squadron in a low-level attack on a vessel in Cherbourg Harbour which was carrying materials for the German war effort. He was killed, with one other squadron member, in this hopeless, suicidal venture; another was taken prisoner. Hilda never really recovered from the loss of her son, and died of cardiac failure in 1951 at the age of 63. My mother, Mary Louise (Mollie), was the youngest of Hilda’s three offspring.

**Five. Lawrence George Albert Gowers 1910-1995**

Lawrence, the bemused baby in the Moulsham Street photograph, ticked all the right boxes. He attended Colchester Royal Grammar School from the age of 10 and did very well, passing the Cambridge School Certificate with exemption from matriculation (which would have enabled him to apply for university entrance). He left school at 17 in 1928 and went into the Westminster Bank at Chelmsford.
At that time, according to my mother, it was very difficult to get into banking, ‘but his father was a life-long customer, and knew people in the bank through travel to work on the Clacton to Chelmsford train’(!) From Chelmsford he was transferred to Newport, Isle of Wight; my mother said that clerks were sent where the banks chose, and there was a policy of not keeping them too long in one branch. Hilda was upset at this, but she and Bert did visit Lawrence on the island for holidays. Four years in Colchester followed; he was then, to his evident disappointment, sent to Jersey. ‘When he had passed his French exams, hoping to reach his ambition to work in France, he was sent to Jersey!’ commented Mollie, saying that he ‘never had any luck!’ Lawrence progressed up the banking ladder, becoming Deputy Branch Manager at Hitchin, then Manager at Letchworth, both in Hertfordshire. He had married Winifred Lewis at Tendring Register Office, Harwich, on 3 October 1935 and they had one daughter. On retirement, he and Winnie went to live in Bournemouth, then in Dorset, now in Hampshire. He died in 1995. I count myself extremely lucky to have this beautiful photograph, and to have been able to find out so much about the ‘four generations’.

**Sylvia M. Barnard (ESFH 2339)**

**References**

i. Scagliola: ‘a coloured plaster, made of pure gypsum, in imitation of marble (It.)’ Nuttall’s Standard Dictionary, 1926
ii. Minutes of the Trustees 1858-1870, Suffolk Record Office, Ipswich, J429/1
iii. Essex Herald 6 March 1923
iv. RG14PN10051 RG78PN529 RD194 SD2 ED6 SN77
v. Orally from Mollie, Hilda’s daughter
vi. Letter from Fr. Brian O’Higgins

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**Piracy**

The following instance of Shore Piracy lately occurred on the Essex Coast - the Dutch ship “Vrow Johanna,” Captain Hendrick de Vries, laden with corn and on her voyage from Emden to London, being in great danger of foundering, in a heavy gale of wind, off the Gunfleet Sand, the Captain, Mate and men, took to their boat, to save their lives, and left her with all their property, behind; but could not prevail upon the cabin-boy to accompany them, who was in bed, nearly frozen to death. The wind shifting, the vessel drove ashore near Bradwell Marshes, without sustaining any material damage. On the instant, however, she was boarded by more than thirty of the Marsh-men, who drank out all the liquor, and then rifled her of every article they could find, not leaving a morsel of food on board; and one of them was brutal enough to threaten to beat the poor cabin-boy’s brains out with a bludgeon, because he would not get up to let him have the sheets from under him. One of the ringleaders has been lately apprehended and sent to our Gaol by Rev. H.B. Dudley and from the vigilant pursuit that is made of the others there is great reason to believe that the principal of these inhuman desperados will soon be brought to justice.

**Chelmsford Chronicle 17th March 1803**

*Editor* Morning Post 11th March 1803 - the ringleader was named John Lister and he was sent to Chelmsford Gaol.
THE ESSEX TANKARD

I recently came into possession of an old pewter and oak, coopered tankard, which carries a shield shaped plaque engraved “2nd Tanden Prize, Essex Agricultural Show 1888, Grey Friar”. I make tankards in pewter and English hardwoods and collect unusual ones. This was generally in a poor state, black with corrosion and obviously over 120 years of neglect. In spite of the theory that cleaning up old things reduces the value, I decided to return it to its original condition.

Duly restored, the tankard was recently christened in my local, probably 128 years after it first carried ale. This and the refurbishing revealed several interesting aspects, which indicate that the maker didn’t regularly make or use tankards. First and foremost, it doesn’t hold a pint! The maker was either not aware or was not concerned that regulations setting this standard were set in 1824. Secondly a fixing screw was placed just where the lip of a right-handed person would make contact to drink. The position could easily have been rotated say 45 degrees, eliminating this annoying feature. The next and most interesting feature lies in the engraving “2nd Tanden Prize”, which puzzled me. In an exchange of emails with John Young and Paul Stirland, it was suggested it might be a spelling error. Paul had access to the Essex Herald for Tuesday July 3rd 1888, which carries a fascinating and detailed report of the Show held on June 23rd and 24th of June in Cranbrook Park, Ilford. In the Horses section, class 35 was for “the best appointed tandem”. That is two working horses lined up one behind the other. The second prize was presented to a Mr O B Hanbury of Weald Hall Essex for his two horses, Thrush & Blackbird. Having read the full report thoroughly, I agree that it was, most likely, an error and should have read “Tandem”. There are absolutely no other references which could be related. So, perhaps the engraver couldn’t spell, perhaps it was a straightforward mistake or perhaps the local accent had an influence, but presumably it remained unnoticed by all, including the Ilford Prize donors, and the Judges, the latter having an awesome reputation for attention to detail.

Apart from giving us an interesting insight into the people involved, the Herald lists an awful lot of people, as organisers, some of their characters and expertise, (the detail involved such as arranging special trains and organising the Station Master and his team), as exhibitors and or prize-winners, their occupations and interests, (includes cats,
dogs, pigeons etc). Further however, as anyone conducting historical research knows, the answer to one question always prompts at least two others! In the case of this tankard, what was the connection with Grey Friar (that is singular not Grey Friars). There is absolutely no mention of it in the only report we have of the event, the Essex Herald, and that is very detailed and unlikely to miss any major aspect of the show and its supporters. A more exciting question on the other hand is - Does the 1st Tandem Prize tankard still exist? It went to Mr R T S Lucas of Bristol for his horses Elegance & Denmark and does it also carry the same error? Well that question is being put to the members of Bristol Family History society. We await in anticipation, but not holding our breath! Although that’s a very, very long shot, it was very much against the odds that the 2nd Tandem Prize tankard survived, let alone came into the hands of a tankard enthusiast and engineer and thence to the notice of EFHS!

Alan B Dandy

P.S. Avid researchers, I’m a member of Birmingham FHS, and my wife is a member of Northants FHS & North Meols FHS (Lancs).
It never ceases to fascinate me how “fate” takes a hand and some people end up living in a country which is not their birth country. One of our members who attends the Southend-on-Sea meetings is such a lady. Readers may recall that in our November 2016 edition on page 73 there appeared a colour plate of a selection of paper knives with little explanation in the Picture Gallery. In this edition I wanted to give you the background to page 73.

In 1958 Evelyne Raphael, a young French secretarial student, arrived on the doorstep of a couple in Westcliff-on-Sea Essex and stayed with them for a few weeks in an endeavour to improve her English. Fate took a hand and two years later she returned to Westcliff and was wooed by a young English man whom she had met during that first visit to Essex. In 1962 they got married in Southend registry office and three days later had a religious wedding in Paris on 1st April 1962. Fifty four years later they are still living in the Southend area and Evelyne spends much of her time photographing heraldry in Essex churches. One of her other hobbies is collecting letter openers and now she has a fascinating collection.

At one of our Southend meetings she told me how she began to collect letter openers, details of their history and how she came to appear on the BBC Antiques Roadshow in May 2016. Below is a photo of the first one she bought in Israel in 1966.

"I started using it as a very practical desk tool and then decided to buy another one for daily use because I am an avid letter-writer and I kept the Israeli one “safe” in case I lost it. I soon realised that letter openers come in all shapes and sizes and all different materials from metal (brass, copper, bronze, silver, pewter, s/steel) and wood (teak, ebony, mahogany, pine, oak, yew, Brazilian) to ivory, horn, mother of pearl, malachite, onyx, lapis-lazuli, glass, bone, plastic, Bakelite, papier mâché even slate! They can be shaped like a horse’s hoof, a jaguar (car), a fish or any animal you can think of. Some are engraved with advertising mottos, some have a magnifying glass incorporated in the handle, or a penknife, a tape measure or a bottle opener, in fact anything practical and handy that can be carried in a handbag or used on a desk and I soon became a Colperpapirophile: a collector of letter openers.

What are letter openers and who used them? In medieval times only royalty and the nobility were literate, only they
wrote letters. To make it clear: a “letter” was a piece of parchment written with a quill (hence the need for a penknife at the end of a letter opener to sharpen the quill when required), the letter was then sealed with wax and therefore a “letter opener” was needed to remove the wax and open the letter. A knife would have done the job as easily but a knife was sharp and could cause a cut that might be infected and result in the death of the individual because there were no antibiotics in those days. The simple answer was to create a knife that was not sharp enough to injure anyone and the letter opener was born. Then, ordinary people were taught to read and books were produced in great numbers, some books later on had uncut pages and it was at that time that the letter opener came into its own and became popular and widely used. Books with uncut pages were still produced in France until the late 1940’s early 1950’s - I remember my mother buying them. From a practical desk tool the letter opener became an object of art and beauty and the best jewellers competed to produce valuable objets d’art.”

Seeing that the BBC Antiques Roadshow was coming to Essex Evelyne wrote to the producers and was invited to attend the show at Audley End, Essex (one of England’s finest country houses) - to be filmed with her collection. There had never been a collection of letter openers on the show so the producers were keen to see her treasures. I will let Evelyne tell you what happened that day.

“26th May 2016, three days before my 77th birthday!

I was sent a free pass to go to the front of the queue and be seen straight away at 9.30am. Hilary Kay, the miscellaneous expert, came to see me. She is lovely and bubbly and put me at ease straight away, I brought about 50 letter openers with me but she only had a few minutes to spend with me and did not have time to look at them all, she only picked one of Queen Victoria’s 50th Jubilee 1887, it is a Page turner, not a letter opener:

Then she picked a silver one with a perpetual calendar, very unusual:
And a mystery one that I wanted identified to discover its origin and its meaning.

![Mystery item](image1)

Also a small “saw” with an ivory handle and an engraved silver blade:

![Saw](image2)

After Hilary Kay had chosen the items they would be filming I was taken to a waiting room and left to have a cup of tea and biscuits with the other attendees. Fiona Bruce, the main presenter of the Roadshow, came in to have a cup of tea, she agreed, very kindly, to let me take a photograph of her. (I can’t stop clicking!)

After a while a person came to let me know that I would be filmed at 11.00am. In the meantime she made me sign a consent form to say that I agreed to be filmed and that they take NO responsibility for my goods! Then I was required to have make-up applied. I told them I do not wear make-up but they insisted and told me that for the sake of not “shining” during the filming I had to have at least a little powder on my face, OK I let them do it.

Mid-morning filming started with 5 of my letter openers placed on two small cushions on top of a tall wooden platform. I stood opposite Hilary surrounded by a semicircle of spectators. Hilary discussed the letter openers. The photographer placed his camera nearer the letter openers for close-ups, he also did a close-up of Hilary and I was asked to point to my first letter opener, the one from Israel, and they made a close-up of that too. When she looked at the" mysterious" one I really wanted to find about I found out that it was NOT a lady sitting on the chair but a Greek gentleman! Although the whole thing lasted one hour, I was told that IF they show it on their programme it will last only 3 minutes! Such are the joys of TV.

After the filming I joined my husband, Philip, at midday, I had not seen him since 9.30am that morning. To make the day even more memorable we went to Saffron Walden for lunch in a hotel, an early birthday celebration. I had a smashing day. One to talk to my granddaughters about.

Evelyn Raphael (ESFH 10848)
GILL BLANCHARD

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DO YOU RECOGNISE THE LADY IN THIS PHOTOGRAPH?

The editor has received a request from Kathy Jones to see if any of our members may recognise photos amongst her ancestor’s family photos that they can’t identify. So I thought I’d look into it.

The family believe the mystery lady was living at 21 Woodfield Gardens, Leigh-on-Sea in 1925, and they think she was living with a lady called Vera Maria Morozoff (1893-1933) who was a governess. Vera Maria married James Thomas Ignatius Harris at Rochford Essex in the third quarter of 1929 when she gave her address as 87 Oakleigh Park Drive, also in Leigh.

The larger photo was taken in Belgium (I think around 1910) when it appears that Vera’s family moved there from Willesden, London about 1904. There is no trace of Vera or her other family members in the 1911 census, although they appear in the 1901 UK census. Kathy tracked down the “Foreigners in Belgium” records (National Archives of Belgium recorded over two million individual files on foreigners, from 1839, when the ‘Sûreté publique’ (Public Safety Office) was charged with the control of all foreigners on Belgian territory). This showed Vera Maria and her sister Pauline Mozoroff were both working as governesses, and that they left Belgium in 1925.

The smaller head and shoulders portrait gives no clue as to when, or where it was taken however I think it could be the same lady, or a relative of hers, as they seem to have similar features.

Vera Maria and James Harris give birth to a daughter Mary, in Maldon, in 1931, but sadly Vera died in 1933 aged only 40 years, and James died in 1944, when Mary was 11 years old. Kathy would like to solve this mystery for her elderly relative Mary.

If you have any feedback for Kathy please contact her directly at Email: KathleenpJones @live.co.uk

ANDREA HEWITT (ESFH 6398)
My serendipity moment started at an Essex Family History meeting at Galleywood, near Chelmsford in 2015 at a talk on Using Roots Magic given by Charlie Mead. During the talk Charlie made reference to some of his family who had lived or worked in East London, in places like West Ham etc. He also made a reference to an uncle being associated with Forest Gate. Forest Gate is where Eileen (my wife) and I were born and spent our childhood during and after the Second World War.

After the meeting I spoke to Charlie and asked him what he knew about Forest Gate. He told us he had an uncle that lived in Forest Gate during the late 1920s and he lived at number 43, Station Road. As Station Road is quite a long road I did not know the location of 43 - my wife Eileen lived at 8 Station Road and being an even number it was on the other side to 43.

Once a month we go (along with residents of Forest Gate) to a meeting held at Durning Hall, Forest Gate. It is a club where the older residents of Forest Gate meet up with friends, have a cup of tea, and chat about past times. The club has been going since 1998, and is run by a long standing resident of Forest Gate, Carol Johnson. Carol has a great knowledge of Forest Gate and I asked her where number 43 Station Road was located, and she said “it is about a quarter mile down on the left hand side”. She also told us that in the very early 1920s the house had been barbers shop as well as a family home. We decided to go and find it and take a photo to give to Charlie. When we found it I recognised it as one of my best primary school friend's house, Ken Crisp, and he still lives there. Charlie was delighted with the photograph and so from a talk about computer software on a Saturday afternoon in 2015 we found a common link to a street in Forest Gate over one hundred years ago. What a small world it is in family history!

For all family historians who had ancestors who lived in Forest Gate especially in the area known as “the village” (just off Forest Lane, Parliament Place, near where the Splendid cinema stood) they would be welcome at our meetings held at Durning Hall, Earlham Grove, London E7 9AB on the third Wednesday of every month from 12pm. Carol Johnson would also be there for a chat; she has a large library of postcards, photographs and history documents on Forest Gate.

A real stalwart of the club is Mable. She has a fantastic memory, if ever I wanted a member for my quiz team it would be Mable! She was born in Forest Gate, the third born of a family of nine children, and now is the only one left alive. In one of the first air raids of the Second World War the family were bombed out and they had to move to a different part of Forest Gate. In 1942 Mable joined the ATS (Auxiliary Territorial Service) and after training in Leicestershire, was moved down to Ashford in Kent as one of approximately twenty people in the hush hush, logistical staff for “Operation Overlord” for the D-Day landings. She was then posted down to Bicester for the rest of the war and was demobbed in 1946.

PETER GUY (ESFH 11100)
People born in Maldon between approx 1860 and 1945 were often subject to having brown discoloured teeth that were resistant to decay. This was eventually discovered to be caused by an excess of Fluoride in the water, peculiar to Maldon. Prior to the mid 1800’s water was obtained from springs, such as the one that fed the Cromwell Pump, and also shallow wells. As the population increased, deep wells and boreholes were introduced, the two main sites being in Spital Road and Wantz Road. These were dug and bored over 250 ft deep, through the London clay which was 170 feet thick, into the chalk below. Between the clay and the chalk were the Thanet sands which were peculiar to this part of Essex, centred on Maldon, and contained high Fluoride levels in excess of 5.0 milligrams/litre. They extended under the Southend area and up to Mountnessing, but with lower levels of Fluoride, between 2 and 3 mg/l.

In 1922 the Government commissioned a two year investigation into Maldon School children to try and explain why the phenomenon was restricted to Maldon. From 1933, the borehole water was increasingly diluted with treated river water from the Southend Waterworks Company at Langford, until in the mid 1980’s the boreholes were permanently shut down. When it was established that Fluoride, consumed when young and the teeth were forming, produced decay resistant teeth, Fluoride toothpaste, and tablets were introduced, and Fluoride was also added to water supplies in parts of the country.

When a dentist in Mountnessing, prescribed Fluoride tablets for a small boy, he subsequently developed brown teeth. This was as a result of the tablets adding to
the Fluoride in the Mountnessing Borehole water that at 2.6mg/l was below the level of discolouration. This phenomenon mentioned in Dentistry reference books became known world wide.

David N Williams (ESFH 6029)

A Local Villain Revives Memories

You kindly printed my article on Page 36 of Issue 3 in 2016 of the Historian. Unfortunately some of the photographs were incorrectly labelled.
At the top of the page is the Old Blacksmith’s house and to the right the Fox and Hounds pub demolished in the 1980’s. The middle photo is the White Hart pub demolished in 1900 with the 400 year old cottages opposite which are still there and lived in.

Pat Lucas (ESFH 10602)
This is a view of the splendid memorial to Thomas Cammock (1540-1602) to be seen in All Saints with St Peter Church in Maldon High Street. Thomas is accredited with financing the water supply to the pump still seen in Cromwell Hill Maldon.

If you have a surname with variants of Cammock ie Cammack, Camac etc the Guild of One-Name Studies does have a reference to this surname see www.one-name.org

Grade 11 listed pump in Cromwell Hill

Ancestors in Maldon? their teeth could have looked like this!
Postcard of Abbey Mill Coggeshall dated 1906. Addressed to Mr Claude Turner Whyton House Victoria Avenue Prittlewell Southend-on-Sea
Below Postcard of Burnham-on-Crouch Sea Wall looking East dated 1906. Addressed to Mr Harry Mitchell c/o Mrs Rolfe Oddfellows Arms Springfield Road Chelmsford
This article is about new sources of information we may find to help us with our genealogical investigations. The title is not a spelling mistake, as the family we will follow in this story is called Ware! In a previous article I wrote about an Ellen Ware, wife of John Austin, in the Epping area. We will follow her ancestry later, but first cover what was a new source of information for me.

Church and Council
When my late father and I were researching this branch of our tree, at the end of the previous century, the later Theydon Garnon registers were still at the church. John died in 1914 and Ellen in 1917, so we were hunting for their burials, and various family events from the 19th century. We contacted the incumbent and arranged a visit – on a drizzly and cold day if I remember right – in return for the customary donation. This wasn’t the font of all knowledge, but provided some scribbled notes and useful information, such as Dad’s grandfather Albert’s marriage, which we hadn’t found at Epping St John’s as family folklore had said.

The above procedure was in contrast to the year 2000 visit to the offices of Epping Town Council (that is the civil parish, not the larger District) to ask about the cemetery records. Expecting to have to persuade the bureaucracy to search – possibly at a price per person – for the details of a few closer relatives we hadn’t found in the churchyards, we were surprised when the ledgers were freely brought into a room for us. The instructions were to “take as long as you need, and let us know when you’re done.” I think we were even offered a cup of tea!

Anticipating just a list of names and dates we actually discovered much more detail, including grave numbers and who was responsible for the plots. Very useful for some common family names as the plot numbers could tie an entry to a specific family, unlike the death indexes which can’t distinguish between people with a shared name and similar age. Owner details also showed changes over the years, and identified some descendants and addresses which had been unsure or unknown before. And yes, we did find John and Ellen.

Where were Wares?
Ellen’s father William Ware, who followed in his father’s trade as a shoemaker, was not from Epping, but from the north-west of the county, having been baptised in February 1798 at Newport, one of five sons of a John and Ann. John died of dysentery in mid 1839, aged 69, and the 1841 census recorded that the widow was not from Essex. She lived to 86, so the 1851 return – when she was a pauper – would give her birthplace, which was recorded as “Hangley, Berks.” No such place exists, but could it mean somewhere in that county, near to Henley? A search of the IGI, and confirmation from Berkshire Records Office, found an Anne Buckett baptised in December 1770 at Remenham – on the opposite bank of the Thames to the Oxfordshire town suggested above. This
was good enough proof for me. There is a likely marriage for Anne’s parents a few months earlier, but in Digswell, Hertfordshire, so who said that ordinary people didn’t move around much until the late 19th century? But why and when did (some of) the Ware family move to the Epping area?

Lunacy and Licences
John and Ann’s last child, Barnard Buck Ware, was baptised in 1811 at Epping All Saints, with the date of birth given but not the place or current residence. Other than William’s family, with his local bride Maria Newman, all the other Ware family events are back in Newport. In 1830 the vicar compiled his own census of residents. This showed John as a pauper shoemaker with Ann. So had they actually lived in Epping for any time, or were they just temporarily 22 miles down the London to Cambridge road in 1811? Going back one more generation from John we have another John Ware, who was buried at Newport in May 1790. The register records “Drowned himself in Mr Wyndham’s Park. Verdict: lunacy.” The widowed Mary (née Buck, hence the grandson’s middle name) married the Lord’s widowed footman a year and a day after the funeral. That marriage lasted four years, and after a similar period Mary married her final husband. Our John and Mary had probably married 10 miles west of Newport at Barkway, Herts, so was there a connection between the Buck and Bucket families in the late 18th century?

Good Manors
The suicide of John Ware (snr) was too early for local newspapers, and details of any inquest – or changes it induced – would possibly be in the records of the local manor. The Court and Minute books for Newport Pond give details of when land changed ownership, and the rent books give occupiers. In 1772 John Ware took possession of a messuage (dwelling-house without buildings and land) and paid rent in 75 and 77. Those records end in 1781, but the national Land Tax lasted from 1780 to 1832, and the annual lists for Uttlesford Hundred show the proprietor (and also the occupier) of one piece of land changing from John (snr) to his widow, to her new husband then, in 1792, to John (jnr.) Significantly this is then held by someone else from 1810. A second property (not occupied by the family) follows a similar pattern but is kept by Mary then her third husband – again until 1810. A third item is occupied by a son-in-law then his widow until the same date.

But what of any inquest? There is a gap around the date, and in 1793 the records just state that John Ware had died and the freehold transferred to only son John. Also that the widow Mary’s new husband possessed “a messuage adjoining the Three Tuns by the water lane.” A 1786
map showed Ware occupying a plot by that road. Such records were very useful, and confirmed Mary’s multiple marriages and the daughters’ husbands. A last piece of evidence for “when did things change for the family in Newport” was an 1802 bequest to another son-in-law, which land remained in the family until the 25th Jun 1810 court. I’ve not found Mary’s death, or that of her third husband, but could this have been in 1810 – and would this mean son John had to sell or move on?

Essex Workhouses
Our final source of inspiration comes indirectly from the above heading. That was the name of a lecture at the ESFH Chelmsford meeting in March 2007 by John Drury, author of a recent book with the same title. The talk was very interesting, and Essex Libraries had the book in stock and it made fascinating reading. When I got to a section giving an example of the Minute books of the Poor Law Guardians you can imagine my surprise when the name William Ware jumped out. The full entry, dated 18 Jan 1839, was seen at the Essex Records Office:

“The clerk was ordered to write to the Parish Officers of Newport in Essex to apprise them that the sum of 4 shillings and 4 loaves had been allowed to William Ware a pauper of their parish of Newport and residing in Epping for the support of himself and family afflicted with smallpox and to beg to know whether they would sanction such allowance or would prefer that the family should be sent home to Newport.”

William must have been short of work and in poor health in the late 1830s. If the Epping Guardians were trying to say “please take this sick family away from us” it didn’t work. At this period back in Newport the “Chrishall Charity for poor widows and widowers” granted an allowance of 1 or 2 shillings variously to a John, a widow, a Mrs and an Ann Ware. If the trustees had discretion to include the married poor this would explain the assistance for John, and the earlier widow could have been the wife of one of William’s brothers. Ann’s distributions continued to her death, as the 1851 census had indicated.

Conclusions
It’s clear from these records that something happened in 1810 Newport, and that John and Anne were in Epping the following year. Our William married there in 1819, but two decades later was still the responsibility of his childhood parish. By the 1820s John and Anne’s other children were certainly in Newport and in 1830 the parents were again resident there. Unfortunately I’ve not found any records for the 1810s to say how long they were in Epping or when they went back to Newport. The sources I found in my Ware story – other than the usual parish records, civil registration and census returns – could also apply to your ancestors. Fresh inspiration can come from unexpected places.

MICHAEL BROTHERS (ESFH 6137)

Notes
2 Epping Town cemetery opened in April 1911. A fee is now charged for searches.
3 Rev’d. Edward Gould Monk, vicar of St Mary’s 1828-50 ERO ref T/B581/1
4 Percy Charles Wyndham was the Lord of the Manor at that time. In the previous few years he had closed the public paths and built the new road to the west of the Shortgrove Estate (from Historic England
Surname - BARNETT – from Hackney to Loughton in the 1840’s

On the film of the Epping Union Guardians Minutes ref G/EM 3 Essex Record Office between pages 129 and 130 were filmed a Removal Order and an Examination as follows:

Removal Order for Jane BARNETT age 17, single woman, from Hackney Workhouse to the parish of Loughton, Essex.

Examination of William BARNETT aged 37 years residing at Mr GIBBERN’s, Lower Clapton in the parish of Hackney, gardener, touching the settlement of Jane BARNETT aged seventeen years his lawful daughter now in the Workhouse of the Hackney Union, single woman.

Who upon his oath saith that Jane BARNETT is his lawful daughter and that she has never done any act to gain a settlement in her own right, and that she is now ill and unable to travel and has become chargeable to the parish of Hackney and is now in the Workhouse of the Hackney Union.

That this Examinant has never done any Act to gain a settlement in his own right.

That he is the lawful son of Thomas and Sarah BARNETT now residing at Layton, Essex, and that his said father is a legally settled parishioner of the parish of Loughton in the County of Essex, and that his said father and mother are now receiving 4/- per week relief from the said parish of Loughton, and have done so for about four years while living all the time at Layton aforesaid.

The X Mark of William BARNETT

Taken and sworn the 6th day of October 1840 before me at the Police Court in Worship St, Shoreditch within the Metropolitan Police District.

Signed W. GROVER

Editor– Many thanks to Angela Hillier for spotting this and sending it to the journal
These were the words that Susannah Johnson called out to her son Thomas after he had hit her with a poker..... Thomas Johnson was baptised on the 3rd July 1836 at All Saints Fordham. He was the third child of Solomon Lonsdale Johnson and Susannah Curtis. His brother and sister Henry and Mary were much older being born in 1821 and 1819 respectively.

Not much is known about his life up until January of 1875 except that in the 1861 census he is a “Millers Carter” and 1871 is an “Ag Lab” as was his father. On 19th January 1875 he had been admitted to the Lexden and Winstree Union Workhouse in a state of insanity said later to be caused by an “Infatuation with the opposite sex.” It seems that this diagnosis was accepted by all concerned and he was discharged by Mr Lever the house surgeon after he had calmed down and was allowed to leave after 19 days. This was at the request of his mother and friends. It was known that Thomas suffered from “Melancholia” and had done so for some time.

Then in the March of that year, the District Medical Officer Mr E J Wort, said he had told the Overseer Mr O Bull, that he had warned him of the fact that Thomas might commit murder if not properly looked after. (These remarks caused a spat between the two men with several letters to the local paper). Mr Bull also said that he thought that Solomon and Susannah were in jeopardy and notified Thomas’s brother Henry in Colchester that Thomas was in his charge and not to let him visit his parents. Henry seems to have thought nothing of the warning and let his brother return to the house on the Friday evening.

The next day the 20th March, his mother went to wake him at about seven o’clock and Thomas was heard to shout for her to get out or he will kill her. Susannah ran downstairs to her neighbour Mrs Mills (the property was a shared tenement) in a state of great agitation. It was then that Thomas came down and attacked his father who was outside near the ash pit with a shovel about the head. Solomon received terrible wounds and died in the pit.

He then shouted at the neighbour Mrs Mills “You can run but I’ll kill you.” She locked herself and her grandchildren in the house but Thomas came after them and hit the door and broke a window with a poker. Thomas then went after his mother who was near the well and hit her about head and shoulders. She called out to him “Oh Tommy you’ll kill me.” In the meantime Mrs Mills had pushed her granddaughter out of a window and sent her to get help from the village which was over a mile away.

Thomas then started toward the village. When Mrs Mills thought it was safe she came to help the old woman who was sitting in the house covered in blood and in a very bad state and asking “Where is my dear old man, is he alright. Oh why
won’t he come to me?’ Mills told her he would be with them presently. She couldn’t tell her he was dead. The child had summoned help and two men from the village Jonathan Sparkes and Jubal Partridge (the village blacksmith) came across Thomas and asked him what had he done. Thomas threatened them shouting that he was God Almighty and to let him pass, in the ensuing struggle the poker was bent and Thomas was secured.

Thomas was taken to Three Horse Shoes Inn, the proprietor Mr O Bull was also the overseer of the Lexden Union workhouse where Thomas was then taken by Constable Richardson. The Surgeon Mr E J Woris was called for and when he checked the bodies he found the Johnson’s quite dead and was told that Susannah had died two hours after the attack.

The inquest was held at the Three Horse Shoes, Fordham and the conclusion was that Thomas had murdered his parents. This in Victorian England captured the imagination of the press and was widely reported in The Times, Chelmsford Chronicle, Essex Standard and others. Solomon and Susannah were buried together on 26th March, Good Friday 1875 in All Saints, Fordham. The Rector Rev. T L Lingham made a note at the bottom of the page in the parish burial records, which said “Husband and wife buried in the same grave. They were both killed at the same time 20th March by their son Thomas Johnson a maniac with a poker and a shovel.”

At the committal proceedings the constable was asked how Thomas was after his arrest, he said that the accused was quite calm and that he’d asked him if he knew what he had done to which Thomas had calmly replied “Yes, I have killed my mother and father, it’s a bad business.” Thomas also said to the court that he’d wanted to go and see Esther Bull and that his parents did not want him to. (Was she the “Infatuation with the opposite sex”?) Thomas became more and more agitated in the court, shouting that he was God Almighty and became more and more incoherent. He was described as short, stocky and wild looking with black unruly hair and a swarthy appearance. The Magistrates verdict was “Wilful murder while in a state of mental aberration”. Thomas was remanded to Chelmsford prison to await sentencing at the next Assize where he was judged to be Insane and sentenced to life in a secure mental hospital, in this case Broadmoor where according to the archivist he was a model prisoner working with horses on the hospital farm.

Thomas died of “Inflammation of the brain” on the 29th October 1911 aged 62 years.* He is buried in an unmarked grave in the hospital grounds.

In 2016 I found that some documents relating to Broadmoor patients were in the Berkshire Record Office. I was hoping there may have been a photograph but sadly not. There are though several documents which throw light on what happened to Thomas after incarceration.

On his admittance schedule he was admitted on the 24th March 1875, a 28 yr old, (this is incorrect he was 39 yrs old) farm labourer from Fordham Essex. He was 5ft 5ins tall and weighed 10st
81bs, of good bodily health but he was also “Insane and Dangerous to others.” He could read and write and was given the Number 835. The cost charged to the parish was 14s.

There are several letters from various relations over the years enquiring of the “Poor unfortunate man’s health” and asking if they could visit to which the superintendent replied “Any day but not Sunday - and about his health” Good but insane.”

One was from Thomas Henry Johnson whom I assume was his brother Henry’s son and a “Wheelwright and Undertaker of 1 South St. Colchester and in 1910 one from William Johnson (son of Thomas Henry?) who also asked of Thomas’s health only to be told that he was poorly and still insane and in the Infirmary.

Thomas Johnson died on Sunday 29th October 1910 at 5.58 am in the presence of Dr West of “Inflammation of the brain aged 62yrs.* He is buried in an unmarked grave in the hospital grounds. His possessions were... 5 Books, letters and cards, 2 pen & pencil holders, 1 pen, 1 pencil. All in “A wooden box” *(Thomas was baptised at All Saints Fordham 3rd July 1836 son, of Solomon and Susannah Johnson, and was therefore 74 years old).

ANDREW HELM (ESFH 6134)

Editor

Thomas Johnson was the nephew of Andrew Helm’s 3x great grandfather.

There appears to have been three police constables serving at the time of the murder

Constable 49 Charles Richardson 1868-1892

Constable 186 Peter Richardson 1837-1877

Constable 25 George Richardson 1874-1904 (later Sergeant)
The Ghastly Miller of Billericay

From The Essex Review 1895 Page 197

Thomas Wood was born on 30th November 1719 at a cottage near the windmill on Bell Hill, Billericay. His health was not good and at the age of 13 he contracted small-pox. His diet became intemperate; he ate fat meat three times a day and drank much alcohol. At Michaelmas 1758 he was granted a 21 year lease on the 16th century windmill to the east of Bell Hill, by Lord Petre. At 40 he became very fat and in 1763, at the age of 44 he became sick. He was advised by the Reverend John Powley, Rector of Saint Lawrence and nearby Nevendon, to address his diet. From this time Wood ate only porridge of sea biscuit and skimmed milk. It was also suggested that he carried flour in his pockets, which he would mix with water to make a meal of a dumpling. His health improved. Unfortunately he partook of the common superstition then held against being weighed, so that accuracy was impossible, but it was conjectured that he lost ten, or perhaps eleven stone in weight. He became strong enough to lift two sacks of flour at one time. By 1765 he had built a second windmill to the west of the other and between them the road to Wickford.

He was of a masterful disposition, a successful beekeeper, tamed birds in his garden and a noted floriculturist. He always wore a nosegay in his buttonhole, as seen in Ogborne’s sketch.

The account, dated 22nd August 1771, from which much of this information is abstracted, is signed by Paul D’Aranda, vicar of Great Burstead, Smith Turner, churchwarden, Reverend John Powley and Robert Chaplyn, apothecary to Mr Wood. Dr Benjamin Pugh of Chelmsford, caused “his cure” to be reported to the College of Physicians and a paper was published by Sir George Baker on the subject. Wood died on 21st May 1783, leaving his property to his son Thomas, the immense sum of £800 to his daughter Elizabeth and £30 a year to his wife. He was buried in Great Burstead churchyard. It is conjecture that his description as “ghastly” came from his girth and flour covered appearance.

The Philosophy of Living by Herbert Mayo F.R.D. 1838 and the Daily Telegraph in April 1894.

Fred Feather (ESFH 366)
While visiting St. Andrew’s church yard, Shoeburyness, looking for my husband’s relatives, we came across a gravestone, part of which read “Also of JOHN WILLIAM OUTTEN, PN, Who was drowned in Sydney Harbour, 5th January 1909 aged 22 years. Not lost but gone before.”

In Loving Memory of
ELIZA OUTTEN
Died 23 June 1910 aged.... years
Also of JOSEPH OUTTEN
Died 4th January 1911 in his 70th year

Also of JOHN WILLIAM OUTTEN, PN
Who was drowned in Sydney Harbour
5th January 1909 aged 22 years
Not lost but gone before

Also of SARAH ANN OUTTEN
Who entered into rest
4th May 1953
In her 79th year
Into the sunshine of God’s Love

We were intrigued as to why he came to drown in Sydney Harbour and as he shared an Outten ancestor with ESFH member Gwen Rawlingson, off we went to ask if she knew anything about it. Amazingly she produced a newspaper cutting that Joseph Outten was in the Navy and his ship was in Sydney Harbour, Australia. Some of the sailors decided to go ashore in two boats, one towed by the other. While on their way another boat cut between the two boats and one capsized, drowning the sailors. Many acts of heroism were performed as the men tried to help each other in the water.

On our retirement we made a trip to Australia to see relatives and friends and asked our friend in Sydney if he could take us to Rookwood Cemetery, where they were buried. It is a large cemetery and there used to be a railway running there to take the coffin and mourners but was closed in 1948 as motor transport became more common. A memorial to the 15 sailors was erected in the cemetery by officers, sailors and others. Their names are engraved on three sides of the monument.

Joseph is also down as John.

YVONNE GRIMES (ESFH 1283)

The Memorial in Rookwood Cemetery

“Drowning Heroes help one Another at Sydney”

The above headline was just one of many detailing the tragic collision between HMS Encounter and the collier Dunmore in Sydney Harbour on 5th January 1909, reported extensively in the Australian and English press.
Evidently, according to an Australian newspaper article at the time, about sixty of all ranks were on the pinnace* of the “Encounter” which was being towed by a naval steam launch. When nearing Macquaries Point the collier “Dunmore” was seen approaching Woolloomooloo Bay from North Sydney. The launch towing the pinnace cleared the “Dunmore’s” bows. There were loud cries of “cut the tow line” however the men in the pinnace saw the danger too late. The pinnace was completely turned over by the collision.

One report states that: “A notable feature of the accident was the way the men helped each other in the water, and the many acts of heroism performed. Four boats from warships with diving apparatus were dispatched. The water police dragged the harbour outside the range of the divers. Each corpse as it was recovered was wrapped in the Union Jack and placed under an awning on the “Encounter’s” deck, afterwards being removed to an improvised morgue on the Garden Island, were sentries with arms kept guard. The last body was found at 6.30 in the afternoon”

Not long after the accident the bodies were conveyed with impressive ceremony to the station for interment at the Rookwood Necropolis.

Editor - Who was responsible? Here are a few follow up newspaper reports:

**London Daily News 22nd January 1909 re Reuters**

The marine court has found that the sinking of the pinnace from the cruiser HM *Encounter* by a collier in Sydney Harbour on the 5th instant was caused by **Bryant**, the coxswain of the launch, which was towing the pinnace, improperly crossing the *Dunmore*’s bows, and by **Hansen** the captain of the *Dunmore*, not keeping a proper-look-out. **Hansen** is asked to show cause why his certificate should not be suspended or cancelled.

**Lancashire Evening Post
6th April 1909
Coxswain Acquitted**

through Reuter’s Agency Sydney

Coxswain **Bryant** has been acquitted of the charge of manslaughter arising out of the disaster in Sydney Harbour on January 5th when HMS’s pinnace was run down by the steamer, *Dunmore*, 15 men being drowned.

**Diss Express 12th February 1909**

Captain **Hansen** of the collier *Dunmore* which sank a pinnace of the British cruiser *Encounter* in Sydney Harbour, causing the death of fifteen bluejackets, has had his certificate suspended for a year

*a pinnace is a warship’s double-banked (usually eight-oared) boat now usually driven by steam or petrol –definition from the Concise Oxford dictionary.*
Below are the inscriptions from the memorial at Rookwood

**H.M.S. ENCOUNTER MONUMENT**
ROOKWOOD CEMETERY NEW SOUTH WALES

**IN MEMORIAM**

TO FIFTEEN MEN
OF THE ROYAL NAVY
SERVING IN H.M.S. ENCOUNTER
WHO WERE DROWNED
IN SYDNEY HARBOUR
ON 5TH JANUARY 1909
THEIR NAMES AND RATINGS
ARE RECORDED ON THE
OTHER THREE SIDES
OF THIS MONUMENT
WHICH HAS BEEN ERECTED
BY THEIR OFFICERS
AND SHIP’S COMPANY
ASSISTED BY THE OFFICERS
AND MEN OF OTHERS OF H.M.SHIPs
ON THE AUSTRALIAN STATION
& MANY SYMPATHETIC FRIENDS
AMONG THE GENERAL PUBLIC
OF THIS STATE.

**Panel one**

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<tr>
<td>Frank Searle</td>
<td>Stoker (First class)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frank Gregory</td>
<td>Plumber’s mate</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Cunningham</td>
<td>Stoker (First class)</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Archibald David Balcomb</td>
<td>Ordinary Seaman</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Herbert H. Rumberstone</td>
<td>Stoker (First class)</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Names and ratings as engraved.*

**Editor** For all those eagled eyed members – yes I know - the back cover of this edition has the same map that appeared in Historian No.159 July 2016 edition on Page 76
**Some Heroes Survive**

My interest in German-Jewish soldiers began some 40 years ago, at a hotel near the battlefield of Verdun in eastern France. We were lucky to get a room in Dun-sur-Meuse, a crowded village by a riverside. When we opened the bedroom curtains, we saw that outside, from the end of the hotel garden, to the horizon, stretched a Great War cemetery. But, the memorials were all black, not the pristine white of the Commonwealth War Graves that we associated with such places. Of course, it was a German cemetery! Wait a minute! They are mostly not crosses but Stars of David. I had never previously considered how many of the veterans of the Great War (on all sides) were Jewish. A blinding, cathartic, moment.

Last year a Southend member Evelyne Raphael sent me some pictures she had taken at a talk, by Marcelle Baum about the life of her grandfather. I published the pictures in Hංඌඍඈඋංนอกจาก Numbers 3 of 2016, on Page 25. They were of two German medals from the Great War and materials from a Nazi concentration camp. This is their story.

**Fritz Waldmann 1886-1950**

Fritz was born in Lower Silesia, at a town then known as Loslau in Prussia, part of the German Empire. In 1945 it became part of Poland as Wodzislaw Slaski. He later moved to the capital of Upper Silesia, Breslau, which in 1945 became Wroclaw in Poland. His family attended the synagogue in Breslau, where they had a shop. Fritz earned a nickname “The Kaiser’s Bootmaker” which suggests that he may have been an upmarket shoe-smith! To show the background of this part of Eastern Europe, and the difficulty of family research (particularly Jewish) Breslau had at times been in Poland, Bohemia, Hungary, the Austrian Empire, Prussia and the German Empire!

It is clear that by 1906 Fritz had become a soldier. The Baum family have many photographs of his early life and they include one dated that year, in a splendid parade uniform. Until the death of our society’s famous military expert Bob Marrion, just a year ago, a telephone call and visit to the Enchanted Island (Canvey) would have identified the branch of service of his regiment. Alas, powerful knowledge was lost to all. I have made telephone calls to his knowledgeable associate Major
Digby Smith (a.k.a. Otto von Pivka) and Bob’s co-author Brigadier Charles Grant. At present I assume the 1906 picture to be the uniform of a Silesian Infantry Regiment. The 1917 picture is of Infantry Regiment 22 (1st Upper Silesian Regiment “Keith” – A Scottish Prussian General).

**Close up of Fritz Waldmann 1917**

I do not know if his service was continuous but there are several photographs of him in uniform during the Great War. He was wounded in the left shoulder and this may have earned him the Combatants Cross previously illustrated in colour. After the 1918 Armistice he married Rosa in 1919, his daughter Heny Stefi (Marcelle’s mother) was born at Kattowitz in 1920 but they left there in 1922, as the Jews were moved on. Fritz left the army and went into business in Breslau. Ten years later the Nazi Party came to power and life became much more difficult (understatement) for Jews. Marcelle told me a family anecdote; Fritz owned a Mercedes van, which he broke up to prevent it falling into Nazi ownership. Hindenburg’s death in August 1934 all but terminated this national conservative interpretation of the war and his protection of Jewish war veterans. They were dismissed from public service and excluded from German citizenship. Veteran status subsequently conferred no protection on German Jews in the Holocaust. A source records that one soldier, badly wounded at Verdun, committed suicide in Berlin en-route to a concentration camp. Yet, bizarrely, the city authorities in Hamburg (and in several other towns and cities) continued to maintain the German-Jewish section of the war cemetery throughout the Second World War.

**Imprisonment**

Marcelle told me that her grandfather was in prison in the infamous Buchenwald concentration camp for a year in 1938. Again in 1942 Fritz was in another camp at Terezin. He survived and in 1945 was released and came to live in England, in Leigh on Sea, where he died in 1950 and was buried in East London. Heny Waldmann (she kept her maiden name) served in the A.T.S.

In the two pictures on the next page, in the upper Fritz stands on the far left with fellow soldiers, his collar has two narrow bands, and he has a neck ribbon, whereas in the close up in 1917 he has a broad band and a breast medal ribbon. In the lower he is wounded with the 1917 broad band but no medal ribbon. He is on the right of a mixed group of wounded soldiers and sailors.

**Comments by Major D.G. Smith R.A.O.C. (Ret.)** - The picture of him in full dress; if he is in Infanterie-Regiment
Keith 1. Oberschlessches Nr 22, he would have yellow shoulder straps with red ‘22’ and red cuffs. The regiment was in the 12th Division, VI Corps. The two small collar buttons make him a Gefreiter (Lance-Corporal); they would have been brass, with the Prussian eagle badge on them. Here, he is in his most junior rank.

In the close-up portrait on the previous page, the Feldbluse 1915 has one collar braid; grey shoulder straps, white piping, red ‘22’. I cannot comment intelligently on his Iron Cross.

In the group of wounded around the table, he is on the left with two braids on the collar and with side buttons. Also a better hat of a senior sergeant. This, I think, is him in his most senior rank.

In the group of standing wounded, he is at the right hand side wearing the 1915 Feldbluse, with two braids around the collar, which shows that he is now a sergeant. He also has a peak to his cap, which shows that he is an Non commissioned Officer. I cannot see a button on the side of the collar.

Fred Feather (ESFH366)
ARE YOU FREE? Events for your diary March – June 2017

The Society of Genealogy (SOG) run a series of talks, courses, visits and walks throughout the year. You do not have to be a member to attend. Please see their website for further information.
www.sog.org.uk/book-courses/events-courses

The Society of Heraldry and Genealogical Studies are running a day course on heraldry. on Saturday 4 March 2017
It is suitable for absolute beginners and those who have some experience.
Registration at 10.15am and the course runs from 10.30 – 4.30pm. Lunch included.
Please see their website for costs and further information www.ihgs.ac.uk/course-heraldry-2017-03-04

Maldon Essex Winter Talks
Douglas Kent is a chartered building surveyor and Technical and Research Director for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB) – the UK’s largest, oldest and most technically expert charity fighting to save old buildings from damage, decay and demolition, Douglas will talk about the SPAB’s approach to building conservation and his own SPAB inspired award-winning renovation (project at 25-27 Church Street, Saffron Walden)
This talk will take place at the Friends Meeting House, Butt Lane, Maldon CM9 7HD. Doors open at 7pm for a 7.30pm start.

Essex Society for Archaeology and History
Saturday 11th March 2017 at 2.00pm

Morant Lecture – Illustrated talk by Ben Cowell on some Essex Country Houses and their Owners.
Venue: Church House, Newport
Cost including refreshments is £5.00 for members and for non-members £6.00

Leicestershire & Rutland Family History Society are holding their Annual General Meeting and Free Open Day
Sunday 12 March 2017 10 - 4.30pm
Leicestershire County Cricket Club, County Grounds, Grace Road, Leicester LE2 8AD
Please see their website for further details on speakers and what else is available www.lrfhs.org.uk/agm2017.html

Fenland Family History Society
Annual Family History Day
18 March 2017 10 – 4pm
St Augustines Church House, Wisbech PE13 3DL
www.fenlandfhs.org.uk

Who Do You Think You Are? Live (WDYTYA)
The NEC Birmingham 6-8 April 2017
Please see their website if you want to book tickets www.whodoyouthinkyouare.com

Association of Family History Societies of Wales are holding a Family and Local History Fair at the National Library of Wales Aberystwyth Ceredigion SY23 3BY
13 May 2017 10 – 4.30pm
Free admission

Successes and Failures on The Somme 1916 & 1918
Sunday to Thursday 14-18 May 2017
£479 per person, B & B accommodation
This coach trip picks up in Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire,
Lincolnshire and the M1/M25 corridor. Please see their website for the itinerary and hotel details
www.carolstravel.co.uk/somme.html

Shropshire FHS Family History Fair 2017
Saturday 3 June 2017 10 – 4pm
The Shirehall, Shrewsbury
Admission £3.00 pay at the door. Free parking
Please see their website for further information
www.sfhs.org.uk/events/shropshire-fhs-open-day-fair-2017

Chesterfield and District Family History Society
Family/Local History, Heritage and Craft Fair
Saturday 3 June 2017
Proact Football Stadium, 1866 Sheffield Road, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 8NZ
Please see their website for further information
www.cadfhs.org.uk

Wiltshire Family History Society
Family History Day at STEAM – Museum of Great Western Railway Swindon
Saturday 10 June 2017 10 to 3pm. Free entry
Please see their website for further information on which societies and organisations will be attending and directions to get there.
www.wiltshirefhs.co.uk

Yorkshire Family History Society
Yorkshire Family History Fair
Saturday 24 June 2017 10am to 4.30pm
The Knavesmire Exhibition Centre, The Racecourse, York YO23 1EX
Admission Adults £4.80 Children under 14 free
Buy your tickets online
www.yorkshirefamilyhistoryfair.com

East Anglian Group
Family History Fair
Saturday 24 June 2017 at St Ives Cambridgeshire
Always check on our website esfh.org.uk under ESFH News for the latest information

Buckinghamshire Family History Society Open Day
Saturday 29th July 2017, 10am to 4pm
The Grange School, Wendover Way, Aylesbury, HP21 7NH.
Research facilities including our names database (over five million entries), Parish Register, People, and Places libraries. Parish Register transcripts and other research aids will be on sale. Expert advice; guest societies from around the country; local heritage groups; suppliers of data CDs, maps, software, archival materials and much more.
Admission is free, with free parking at the venue.
Further information, including a full list of organisations attending, can be found at www.bucksfhs.org.uk

Pauline Adlem (ESFH 6098)

NEW SOUTH WALES AND EARLY AUSTRALIAN RESEARCH
Research in Australia by Experienced Researcher

Tony Jackson
23 Berallier Drive, Camden.
NSW 2570. AUSTRALIA
Email: tjgenealogist@gmail.com
TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir . . .

Successive Successions - or How Strange is That?

One page of our walking log shows that my wife and I walked from Roxwell, to Fortescue Farm Bridge at Good Easter, then downriver, crossing a footbridge over the stream leading from a chalybeate spring to the River Can, and on to Great Newarks, a moated farmhouse on the River Can. We then walked to Newland Hall and back to Roxwell. The next page of our log shows that, a few walks later, we did the same walk in the opposite direction.

A couple of weeks later I was searching on SEAX, and I found the entry of Elizabeth Stokes the daughter of Abraham Stokes and Dorothy Booty, baptised on 28 May 1769. The facing page gives an entry of Abraham Stokes buried 19 February 1770 age 68, maybe part of the same Stokes family. Abraham’s entry appears immediately above the burial of John Stevens on 1 April 1770 age 83.

A couple of days later Historian No.3 of 2016 arrived, and reference is made on page 21 to John Stevens’ burial at Good Easter. John was found in the river at Newarks, Good Easter. The next page of the Historian, page 22 contains an article on Chalybeate Springs.

Successive pages of our walking log, successive pages of Good Easter parish register, successive pages of Historian! How strange is that?

Neville R Hammond (ESFH 8650)

Looking for Information

John Shelley (ESFH 6458) Essex National Burial Index writes:

“I've just come across the following entry whilst checking for the National Burial Index project;

James Dennis alias Diana; buried 13 June 1756; Rainham; St Helen and St Giles ref Essex Record Office D/P 202/1/3

Does anyone have any further information?”

If so please email: johnshelley522@btinternet.com
Ancestry - National Probate Calendar

I have discovered a presentation error in Ancestry which must affect thousands of entries but which Ancestry will not correct as ‘the records are not written by them. We cannot edit the records that we receive’. I therefore feel that members should be warned of this.

Ancestry originally published the years 1858-1966 and these entries show the residence of the deceased and, where the place of death is different, this seems to be always shown. So the heading of their indexes ‘Death Place’ is accurate.

Fairly recently they added the years 1973-1995 but the entries only show the residence of the deceased and not the place of death if this differs. But! this place is shown under the Death Place heading in their index.

I only discovered this when I looked at my mother’s death and saw it shown as Loughton Essex whereas I know this happened in hospital in London E11. Subsequently I found a death which occurred in Cornwall according to the P.R.O. index but appears on the Ancestry site as in one of the Home Counties. Of course if members are dealing with a close relative or have a certificate they will pick up this error but many will be like me, who, having come up against brick walls with direct ancestors, have traced more remote connections where it is not worth buying certificates so have just entered the Quarter when death happened and the Registration District. I have therefore found the National Probate Calendar useful in getting the precise date of death but the “place” as shown by Ancestry is useless. With the ageing population, many more people die in hospital, which may well not be in the town where they live and others may spend their last days with their children or even die on holiday. So I think that members should be told to ignore Death Place in the latest issue as it could well be incorrect. The Registration District is more accurate.

PHIL DEGEN (ESFH 3082)

Chalybeate water

In connection with your article re Chalybeate water and Hockley Spa, working as a Scientist for Essex Water Company in 1977, I was approached to carry out analysis on the Hockley Spa water as the owners had the idea of bottling it as a natural mineral water and selling to China. Unfortunately this did not materialise. Interestingly the water was extremely hard, with a high concentration of Calcium Sulphate indicating it originated from fissures in the London Clay, as opposed to the stratas below which were soft.

DAVID N WILLIAMS (ESFH 6029)

Editor

David,

Thank you for your comments regarding the article in Issue Three 2016 entitled Chalybeate or Ferruginous Water
Dr. Viv Newman, one of our regular speakers with Mr. Bill Fulton of the Western Front Association at the WW1 Exhibition at Galleywood November 2016. The Western Front Association has the objective of educating the public in the history of World War 1.
See [www.westernfrontassociation.com](http://www.westernfrontassociation.com)

Photo by Susan Wilson

Alistair Hodgson from the De Havilland Museum with Chairman John Young. Items shown in the picture from left to right are:
- an outer rib from a mosquito wing flap
- an inner rib from a mosquito wing flap
- a sample of Irish linen as used to cover wooden surfaces on Mosquitos and on certain deHavilland post-war jets i.e. the Vampire and the Venom
- a wooden replica of a 6 pounder shell and cartridge used in the “Molins” gun fitted to a small number of Mosquito FB.Mk6 aircraft known as the “TseTse” (after the fly!) and used successfully against U-boats in the Bay of Biscay

Photo by Susan Wilson
Britannia by Ian Kirkpatrick in the National Archives foyer September 2016
Photo by Susan Wilson
They show David Cole, mariner from Wivenhoe born 1824 and his wife, Sarah Ellen Cole nee Harten born 1828.

Both are buried in St. Mary’s Church Wivenhoe.

A lady reader has offered to pass on these A3 size photos/copy of photos to any interested party who should contact the following:-
Email address: ladybocking2014@gmail.com
As another year comes to an end, I reflect on the continued growth in data available on line. Wherever we look, we find new data becoming available. On the ‘Members Only’ area of our own website, our Genealogical Database is steadily growing, thanks to our hardworking volunteers. This year, we have added the full transcriptions to our former Memorial Inscriptions Index. Our Burial Register transcriptions are now virtually complete thanks to the efforts of John Shelley and his team. Now we are pressing on with Baptisms and Marriages. If you have ancestors in Essex, I hope you are finding this resource useful. If you would like to help us by doing some transcription work, please contact me via the Society website.

But we must never forget that transcriptions should always be regarded as a finding aid and, wherever possible, should be checked against the original. We are fortunate in Essex to have on line access to the entire collection of Parish Registers held by the Essex Record Office. Excellent digital images are available via the ERO’s SEAX website, free to use at the ERO. Elsewhere, there is a charge for access but unless you live close to Chelmsford, the savings in travel costs will quickly make its use at home financially attractive. Indeed it will be, for many, the only practical way to see the registers. And don’t forget, subscribing to SEAX provides much needed income for the Record Office to enable the continued provision of an excellent service.

Of course, there are many more records at the ERO than just the Parish Registers. Family history should be more than simply collecting dates. Maps, trade directories, apprenticeship records, electoral register and workhouse records are just some of the sources that are available to enable you to find out more about where and how your ancestors lived. Some of these are being digitised but there is still much more in the Record Office than you can see on line.

If you can get to Chelmsford, please try to visit the ERO and investigate. If you are elsewhere there will a Record Office or Archive near you that may have records of your lines outside Essex. In these times of austerity limiting Local Government spending, Record Offices need all the support we can give them. We are trying to work more closely with the ERO for our mutual promotion so watch out for new initiatives in the coming months.

A unique feature of the ERO is our own Research Centre, staffed, on Wednesday mornings and Thursday afternoons, by volunteers from our Society. Come along and use our library including an extensive collection of Essex Pedigrees.

Recently we have started to offer ‘One to One’ sessions to anybody who needs help with their research. If you are a beginner or an experience researcher who has hit a brick wall, you may find it helpful to come and share your problem with another member. A fresh look at a puzzle can often suggest a direction that may not have occurred to you. There is no charge, you simply need to book an appointment by e-mailing Gill at: gpesfh@gmail.com. The sessions will take place in our Research Centre on a day and time to be arranged. Good luck with your research!

JOHN YOUNG (ESFH 6399)
Talks & Walks at Galleywood Heritage Centre 2017

It is now two years since the Essex Society For Family History started its Chelmsford group meetings at the centre which arrangement continues to see benefits to both organisations, particularly in the attendance of events.

In 2017 further exhibitions are planned, the first on Saturday 3rd June being a local & family history one. On Sunday 19th November a further WW1 exhibition “ Remembering 1917” is to be held thanks to the kind sponsorship of Galleywood Parish council. Admission to both exhibitions will be free and more details will be available nearer the time.

Tuesday afternoon talks planned this year include:-

14th March  " Two Scandalous Essex Ladies “ by Margaret Mills
28th March  " Galleywood Racecourse" by David Dunford
25th April  " Hall Street, Sandford Mill & Galleywood - Chelmsford’s water supply” by Tim Wander
16th May  “ Artefacts through the Ages” by Gordon Bailey
23rd May  “ History of Essex Police” by Martyn Lockwood
4th July  “ Prehistoric & Roman Galleywood” by Christine & Les Whybro
12th September  “ Turmoil & Tears” Dr Viv Newman
17th October  “ The Great War in the Air “ by Ken Wisdom

All talks are in the main hall and begin at 1.30pm, cost is £3 per person. Refreshments available from the tearoom.

Walks and Talks on the Common led by Christine & Les Whybro are available from April till September. There is a charge of £5 per head which includes tea and cake, for details contact Philip Walters on pwheritage59@gmail.com or 01245 473191. There will also be a number of “Wells & Windmills” walks and “Racecourse” walks all on Tuesdays at 1.30pm which must be booked in advance via Philip. Dates planned so far are 11th April & 6th June - Wells and Windmills and 9th May & 20th June Racecourse walk

Details of all events are in the Essex Chronicle most weeks under the Galleywood section of Community News and on the centre’s website. A monthly e-mail newsletter can be requested from the e-mail address below.

Various Fund raising activities are also organised by the trustees to assist with both running costs and projects. The Centre’s Main Hall, Heritage room, the Common room and large Marquee in the grounds are also available for hire and a number of activities are offered by the various hirers. For more details contact 01245 357700, Galleywood Heritage Centre, Margaretting Road, Galleywood, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 8TR.

mail@galleywoodheritagecentre.org.uk

or visit www.galleywoodheritagecentre.org.uk

SUSAN WILSON (ESFH 11031)
Volunteer at Galleywood Heritage Centre
Researching Adoption
Subtitled an “Essential Guide to tracing birth relatives and ancestors”, Karen Bali, a professional genealogist specialising in adoption cases, probate and tracing living relatives (see www.people-search.co.uk) is the author of this book first published in 2015. So it is a manual of the resources and methods to discover a person’s natural or biological ancestry and is directed towards 20th century adoptions.
The author explores the relevant records and also examines the legal, social and emotional aspects of adoption. Initially adoption is defined and the history of adoption is described touching on orphanages, charities, migrants and foundlings and legislation. By means of examples and case studies, Karen Bali considers how to discover an adoption before examining the records and resources available to identify natural or birth parents. These include the Adopted Children’s Register, Church Records, the Child Migrant’s Trust and those of charities like Barnardo’s, the Salvation Army as well as independent and local authority homes. The final chapter deals with access to birth records, the Adoption Contact Register, tracing birth relatives and the sensitive issue of making an approach. Throughout the book full information is given on accessing records and organisations and there are suggestions for further reading.
An inexpensive (£4.95) 48 page paperback this is an invaluable and practical aid for the basics of tracing origins for adoptees, adopters and their relatives.

Dating Old Photographs 1840-1950
The aim of this book, written by Richard Pols, author and photographic history expert, is to familiarise readers with dating clues to seek out in photographs of people. This is achieved by considering five characteristics of the photographs, namely 1) the production process and the picture format including transparencies,
2) the presentation or mount, 3) the photographer - if professional, 4) the setting or background and 5) the subject including dress and grooming. For each the author highlights the variations which may be encountered and provides pointers to the probable date range, particularly in respect of both women’s and men’s clothing. Richard Pols also cites a number of websites that will be useful and includes 40 captioned photographs as examples and a bibliography.

An inexpensive (£7.50) concise but useful 96 page reference guide which should assist family historians to identify “anonymous” pictured people.

The next two books are from Amberley Publishing, The Hill, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 4EP Tel: 01453 847800
Email: info@amberley-books.com
Web: www.amberley-books.com

Southend in 50 Buildings

The town dates from the 17th century with predominantly 19th and 20th century streets but the area actually includes six ancient parishes of Essex. Local historian and writer of fiction and poems, Ian Yearsley, documents the Borough’s most interesting buildings from the 7th century to the present day and so tells the story of Southend’s historic rise to fame. Featured are parish churches, manor houses, public houses, residences, agricultural buildings, places of entertainment and office blocks. Each is accompanied by a historic description. The story commences with the Church of St Mary Prittlewell and concludes with the student accommodation for the University of Essex off Queens Road, Southend dubbed - the “Lego” building. Along the way, Southchurch Hall, The Crooked Billet public house in Leigh, Cockethurst Farmhouse, Eastwood, The Royal Hotel, Fishermen’s cottages, Prittlewell, Horseshoe Barracks, Shoebury, the Pier, The Palace Theatre, Westcliff, Southend Hospital and Southend Airport are amongst the 50 buildings featured. There is also an appendix which lists in chronological order Southend’s oldest buildings and the book includes maps showing the location of the featured buildings.

This 96 page book, illustrated with colour photographs, is an interesting read. It will appeal to anyone with a family, social or local history interest in Southend, especially the parishes of Prittlewell (including Westcliff and Chalkwell), Southchurch, Leigh, Eastwood, South Shoebury and North Shoebury. Available at £14.99.
Rayleigh History Tour

In this 96 page paperback local residents and historians, Mike and Sharon Davies guide us through the streets of this ancient Essex market town visiting 47 places showing how they have changed over time. These historical places range from the Weir, the Paul Pry Public House, the WI Hall - formerly the Chapel of the Peculiar People, the Regal Cinema, Saddler’s Restaurant and the Windmill to hidden gems such as Barringtons, the Heritage Notice Board, Macs Garage and the Dutch Cottage. For each place there is at least one illustration – many in colour and the authors have used old postcards and photographs to depict historical buildings as they were in the 20th century especially if they have been demolished. The book includes a map showing the location of the places and a summarised history of the town.

A delightful, inexpensive (only £6.99) and convenient pocket sized book presenting an illustrated history of Rayleigh that you can discover for yourselves.

St John in the Wilderness

This is the story, based on fact, of the friendship between the family of the author, Alan Titterington, and the famous Brontë family of North Yorkshire. Alan found from his family history research that his great-great-grandfather John Titterington was friendly with Branwell Brontë, brother of the famous sisters, and that Bramwell recorded many events in his diaries. So the author regales us with stories of life changing and ultimately challenging events in both families ranging from illegitimate births, children’s deaths, robberies, bar-room brawls, disownership by the father, and financial disasters. The cast not only includes John Titterington and the Brontës but also other members of the Titterington family, pub landlords, mill workers, buyers and Hell-Fire Club members as we follow adventures from the year 1848 when John Titterington moved from operating a mill in Halifax to the busy streets of York. Obviously I must not reveal all in a review but with one of the thirty chapters entitled “Two funerals, a wedding and Eli’s (John’s father) Will Reading” you get the sense. John ultimately fell from grace after being incarcerated in a debtor’s prison cell.

If you have an interest in 19th century Yorkshire or are a fan of the Brontë sisters you will find this paperback an enjoyable and intriguing read. Costing £9.90 it is available from Austin Macauley Publishers Ltd, CGC-33-01, 25 Canada Square, Canary Wharf London E14 5LQ Tel: 02070388212, Email: mail@austinmacauley.com Web: www.austinmacauley.com
The British Almshouse

Subtitled “new perspectives on philanthropy circa 1400-1914” this illustrated 407 page paperback is edited by Nigel Goose, Helen Caffrey and Anne Langley and published by the Family and Community Historical Research Society (FACHRS). It comprises a series of articles (chapters) by Members of FACHRS presenting new information on how almshouses supported the elderly in communities.

In part one the three editors discuss the development of almshouses and their location, the form, function and meaning of the buildings plus a description of life in the almshouse. Part Two is devoted to places and examines almshouses in Wales and Scotland as well as in London – Mile End and Whitechapel - and the English counties of Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Derbyshire, Hampshire, Surrey and Warwickshire. Of particular interest is the comparison of the support in workhouses and almshouses in the 19th century. The chapters in Part Three are themed so that we learn about almshouse rules, regulations and scandals; an almshouse master; the social status, possessions, clothing, gardens and material benefits of residents; a Clergy Widow’s almshouse, miners and Catholic almshouses in London.

Each chapter concludes with a useful summary and the text is reinforced by copious notes. There is also a comprehensive bibliography and extensive subject index. The text is augmented by 78 illustrations of which 14 are in colour, plus maps and tables.

This meticulously researched book will appeal to historians interested in early social housing and family historians whose ancestors resided in almshouses. Available from FACHRS Publications, 255 Willington Rd, Kirton End, Boston PE20 1NW Tel: 01205 723040, Email: treasurer@fachrs.com, Web: www.fachrs.com at a cost of £12 plus £4 p&p to UK addresses.

The History of Southend

This 148 page paperback, lavishly illustrated with 164 black and white photographs, was published by Phillimore in 2010. It is written by Ian Yearsley, local historian, author and resident of Southend for over 35 years. Here is the story of the history of the town, encompassing the parishes of Prittlewell, Southchurch, Leigh, Eastwood and North and South Shoebury, over the centuries. The history is presented in chronological order so we read about the development of Prittlewell and its “South End” with its manors of Priors, Earls and Chalkwell Halls. The coming of the railway triggered an expansion so we learn of the new
services and infrastructure which served the area. The Town Council was established in 1892 and we are regaled with developments in transport, health, recreation, houses of worship, entertainment, other public services and businesses, not to mention the famous pier. The Great War and the 2nd World War and the intervening years feature too. The penultimate chapter deals with the heydays of the 1930s to the 1960s and accompanying major changes depicting the town’s evolution as a seaside resort, commuter town and regional shopping centre. The final chapter covers the last quarter of the 20th century with its residential developments, business trends, tourism and entertainment.

A comprehensive, yet readable, illustrated account of Southend’s history which will appeal to readers with ancestors from the Southend area and those inquisitive about local history. Available from The History Press, The Mill, Brimscombe Port, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 2QG Tel: 01453 732565 Email: lgrant@thehistorypress.co.uk, Web: www.thehistorypress.co.uk

The following seven books are produced by Pen & Sword Books Ltd, 47 Church St, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 2AS Tel: 01226 734222 Email: enquiries@pen-and-sword.co.uk Web: www.pen-and-sword.co.uk

**Historical Research using British Newspapers**

Historian and writer, Denise Bates, is the author of this 181 page illustrated paperback which is a general guide to using old newspapers, written from her extensive practical experience of using this medium as a source for history. The author commences the book with a brief history of British Newspapers and their content over three centuries before considering factors and issues such as errors, bias and censorship affecting research. She then offers advice on preparation prior to research and suggests which newspapers to use initially and innovative methods for finding source material in on-line newspapers including ‘fuzzy’ searching and the use of ‘wildcards’. For those who wish to embark on analytical studies of the information found there are several chapters of advice on statistics, sampling, averaging and the use of databases and spreadsheets. The book concludes with a discussion on illustrations, a study in slander reinforcing points made earlier in the book and nine case studies portraying the different uses of newspaper research. The text is punctuated throughout with example extracts from newspapers and appendices deal with accessing newspapers online, useful websites, conversion of money and weights & measures plus how to publicise the results of research.

At a cost off £12.99 this book is an invaluable reference work for historians who wish to unearth new family, social, economic and political historical information and seek
advice on how to analyse and interpret.

Poison Panic
In the 1840s, Essex was seen as the location where women roamed the county’s lanes seeking out their next victim for poisoning by arsenic which was easy to buy. The subtitle of “arsenic deaths in 1840s Essex” aptly summarises the contents. The author, Helen Barrell, is currently a librarian at the University of Birmingham but also a family historian with, appropriately, Essex ancestors. The story concerns three ordinary women who stood trial, accused of murdering husbands, sons or brothers. The author initially sets the scene on the use of arsenic as a poison and its detection before launching into the tale of deaths, supposedly at the hands of Sarah Chesham in the Clavering area of Essex on the Hertfordshire and Cambridgeshire borders. The action then moves to the villages of the Tendring hundred in NE Essex adjacent to Suffolk where, in Wix, Mary May was allegedly working her wicked ways on relatives for burial club money. Hannah Southgate’s alleged victims came from nearby Tendring and Wix and after being held in Springfield Gaol she was tried and successfully defended by an eminent barrister, William Ballantine. In the final chapters Helen Barrell considers whether the three women actually were murderers or just the victims of circumstances. Contemporary newspapers, census returns, parish registers, wills, Home Office documents and the Old Bailey proceedings are the main sources of the author’s research and there are comprehensive references to the text and a useful bibliography.

At £14.99 this 197 page easily read book with 40 black and white illustrations will appeal to readers interested in gaining an insight into the lives of women accused of murder in the mid 19th century. Moreover the index is peppered with personal names for the family historian to peruse.

Tumult & Tears
The author of this book is Dr Vivien Newman of Chelmsford who has given interesting talks to the Society on Women in the Great War.

The book is subtitled “The story of the Great War through the lives of its women poets”. Several hundred women wrote thousands of poems on multiple themes for various reasons and this book is the result of nearly 20 years study of the subject. It is an anthology of the verses of 92 of these poets including war workers, parents, serving daughters, grieving mothers, sweethearts and wives.
However not only are we presented with the poems depicting the reality of war but also in the second part of the book mini biographies of the women themselves and their publishers. These biographies include social and educational background, age, war service and sometimes post war experiences. The poems ranging from a few lines to a page or so are arranged in chapters, each with a conclusion, by five basic themes; – the role of women in wartime, religion, the countryside, uniformed serving women plus grief and mourning. Alexandra Grantham whose son, Hugo of the Essex Regiment, died in Gallipoli gave rise to “Sonnet IV”, “Sonnet XXXI” and “To My Soldier Son”.

You will learn of heart-breaking farewells, knitting, food preparation and manufacturing of weapons, how some thought Christianity failed to provide solace, how death, destruction and despair lurked on all fronts, of sacrifice and grief and lives irrevocably changed. This 208 page book provides fascinating reading and an alternative view of women’s wartime lives, including personal intimate details, whether they were civilians or serving in uniform. The cost is £12.99.

**The Great War Illustrated. The Home Front**

The third book in a series that portrays life on the home front in Britain, France and Germany during each year of the Great War. This volume, comprising over 250 captioned black and white photographs covers the year 1916 which was the year of the Somme, Jutland and Verdun. David Bilton, a prolific author and expert on the Great War, defines “The Home Front” as the experience of the civilian population, interacting with the military in a country affected by war. Following a general introduction and an overall view of the war in 1916 in which recruitment, enlistment and conscientious objectors, food price increases and other statistics are quoted. The book is arranged in chapters by eight themes. These are Recruiting and Departure, Armament Production and Home Defence, Raids and U-boats, Propaganda, Prisoners and Occupation, Casualties, Wartime Life and Christmas of which Wartime Life is the most extensive. You will view the effects of shortages of food and other supplies, conscription, women in industrial production, anxiety about servicemen at the front, rising casualties and much more. Within Casualties you will, for instance, find diverse events with pictures of the East Ham funeral procession for Jack Cornell VC, the Navy boy who died aged 16, alongside a picture of a Taube monoplane displayed as a memorial in the German town of Gotha and a service in Japan to honour a Japanese Navy commander who perished in the Battle of Jutland. The book concludes with a 10 page timeline for 1916, a bibliography and an index. This 154 page paperback, costing £14.99, is a graphic record which will appeal to all historians who will be left with a lasting visual impression of this conflict.
Tracing Your Servant Ancestors

Published in 2014, Michelle Higgs, a social historian and contributor to popular family history magazines, is the author of this 178 page paperback illustrated in black and white. Most of us had ancestors in service especially in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and this book gives an overview of the role and places of work of servants and highlights the printed records, original documents and online sources available to trace their lives. It is arranged in four parts with Part 1 describing the history of domestic service, workplaces, who became servants and how they found work. Part 2 considers a servant’s life including working conditions, wages, sustenance, accommodation and clothing plus healthcare and old age. Part 3 examines the roles of 14 categories of each of male and female servants both indoor and outdoor from the Butler to Footman and Stableboy to Gamekeeper and from Housekeeper to Maid of all work and Nursery maid. Part 4 concentrates on general and more specific sources such as household accounts, trade unions, servants’ registry offices and household management manuals. The text of the book is punctuated with revealing case studies and is complete with an extensive bibliography, useful contacts, places where servant’s quarters can be seen and an index.

A comprehensive and invaluable reference guide priced at £12.99, useful to beginners and more experienced in genealogy alike, to trace the lives and careers of servants and visualise their everyday working lives from reading household manuals, diaries and autobiographies.

Eyewitness on the Somme 1916

The Somme is one of the most well-known yet contentious battles of the Great War, in which one million men were wounded or killed, notable for the impact of air power and the first use of the tank. In this illustrated 237 page hardback, Mathew Richardson, military historian and writer, has drawn on the personal accounts in letters, diaries and memoirs of ordinary British, Commonwealth, French and German soldiers and junior officers at the front. In six chapters he paints a picture of the reality of the fighting across the Somme battlefield in this offensive from the first disastrous day of attack on 1 July 1916, through the summer to the final operation of the Battle of the Ancre in the November. Over 100 original black and white photographs complement the text, 16 colour plates depict artefacts recovered from the battlefield which evoke the ferocity of the battle,
extensive notes accompany the text and there is a useful bibliography and index. Readers with ancestors who fought on the Somme or with an interest in military history will find this book a rewarding read. You will gain an insight into how hardships were endured and all facets of combat in this five month struggle. The recommended retail price is £25.

**Divorced, Beheaded, Sold**
This 191 page paperback is subtitled “Ending of an English Marriage, 1500 -1847”. It is the story of marital separation and as the author states the best way to find out why couples ended their marriage by simple abandonment, divorce, legal separation or wife sales is to examine their lives. The author and historian Maria Nicolaou has drawn especially on legal documents such as those in the Court of Arches and Court of Requests plus private papers, newspapers and pamphlets. Thus to enter the homes, hearts and minds of men and women who defied society to end unhappy marriages. The large number of personal names in the index is testimony to the stories of the many colourful characters whose lives Maria reveals. We learn of the violent and sadistic Captain Holcroft Blood who simultaneously held three army commissions and, in 1686, bribed the judiciary and declared himself bankrupt to avoid paying alimony to his wife, Elizabeth. Featured too is the Parliamentary divorce petition by Sir Patrick Blake in 1778 on account of his wife, Annabella having an affair with her MP lover in an Essex pub. Wife sales took place in public places such as markets or taverns and some wives even arranged their own sales but not all were that successful. Thomas Nash of Bristol attempted to auction his wife in 1823 but despite extolling her virtues and declaring her free of vice was forced to accept a bid of only 6 pence. The text is annotated with references, there are 11 cartoons, an appendix featuring the divorces of King Henry VIII and a bibliography.

This is a readable and informative account of how couples, some scandalous, found ways of escaping from disastrous marriages in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. It can be purchased at a cost of £12.99

**My Ancestor was a Coalminer**
In 2014, The Society of Genealogists Enterprises Ltd published the third edition of this guide to sources by David Tonks, former librarian from the North East of England, whose ancestors were miners. The author commences with a brief history of coal mining through the industrial revolution and two world wars to privatisation. Then David Tonks examines what distinguishes the miner from the man in the street in terms of housing, movement, family size, diet, in-breeding and death. The work of the miner is examined in detail including the impact of unions and strikes together with
the dangers faced and disasters. Questions such as “How was leisure time spent?”, “Church or Chapel?” and “Was he a Bevin Boy?” are answered when mining communities and family life are considered. Considering documented evidence, the Elemore Colliery Disaster of 1886 is used as an example before the remainder of the book is devoted to sources in the National collections and in the various coalfields across the British Isles from Scotland to Kent. The final chapter examines printed and digital sources including classical and modern literature, websites and mailing lists and there is an extensive bibliography, glossary of terms and notes to the text. Throughout examples are given and useful web sites quoted.

Coalmining was a major employer up to 50 years ago so there is a strong possibility that we all have ancestors who were miners in diverse trades. A 180 page paperback with 41 black and white illustrations, this is a comprehensive reference guide available at £9.99 from the Society of Genealogists Enterprises Ltd, 14 Charterhouse Buildings, Goswell Road, London EC1M 7BA Tel; 0207 702 5483, Email: sales@sog.org.uk, Web: www.sog.org.uk/books-courses.

Printed Maps of Essex from 1576

An 88 page A4 sized paperback with, as you would expect, illustrations in colour written by long time Essex resident and map enthusiast, Peter Walker, (www.oldessexmaps.co.uk) published by the Friends of Historic Essex. This is a guide to the collection of the printed maps in the Essex Record Office (ERO) including the Ordnance Survey (OS) maps on the scale of one inch to the mile and smaller. Initially the author briefly describes the lives of the seven surveyors who produced maps before the first OS maps in 1810 and Charles and John Greenwood afterwards. He then summaries the process of surveying. There follows a listing of the maps with the name of the surveyor, scale, date and the ERO catalogue reference plus a brief description. The list is arranged by place with the majority of the maps being county wide and listed first, followed by 7 maps of Colchester, 11 maps for Southend-on-Sea, 14 maps of Epping Forest, 16 maps of other towns and localities and 41 maps of London. In addition there are 71 maps of the coast and rivers including the Thames and it’s estuary, the North Sea and Harwich. The final part of the listing concerns the various series of one inch and half inch OS maps. There are a further 37 helpfulcolour illustrations of either complete or parts of maps.
It was a revelation to me just how many maps there are providing useful tools for those researching family and local history in Essex and this guide is a useful finding aid. Available from the Friends of Historic Essex c/o Essex Record Office (ERO), Wharf Rd, Chelmsford CM2 6YT Tel: 0333 013 2500

Email: friendsofhistoricessex@hotmail.co.uk
Web: www.essexinfo.net/friends-of-historic-essex.

The cost is £15 (£ sterling cheques only payable to “The Friends of Historic Essex”) inclusive of p&p to UK addresses or £12.50 if collected in person from the ERO.

Eric Probert (ESFH 386)

The following two book reviews are by other members of the Society:

Ilford Through Time by Michael Foley

This publication is just one of a series covering not only Essex, but the whole United Kingdom from Aberdeen in the north to Bude in the south west. All titles follow a similar format, mostly past and present images of a location with a paragraph or two of explanatory text on each page. Some of the titles in the series are well worth seeking out. Unfortunately the volume on Ilford is not one of them. The selection of photographs is largely uninspiring with many of the “then and now” images taken from different viewpoints making comparison difficult. The famous Ilford amateur football team gets a mention in the introduction, but sadly doesn’t merit a single photograph. The annual Essex cricket festival at Valentines Park does not even get a mention. Whilst many of the older images are of a quality one may reasonable expect of their time, far too many of the modern photographs are poorly composed and executed. Ilford has a rich history and deserves better. This publication is not one I’d be tempted to buy unless heavily discounted from a remainedered book outlet.

Amberley Publishing 2016 ISBN 978 1 4456 5979 4
Illustrated in colour and sepia tints, 96 pages. £14.99, also available as an e-book.

Charlie Mead (ESFH 9831)

The Spyglass File

You may not have heard of the new genre of the Genealogical Crime Mystery, but please read on. The Spyglass File is written by Nathan Dylan Goodwin, author of many local history books on the Hastings area, and a very knowledgeable genealogist. This novel features Morton Farrier, a professional Forensic Genealogist trying to trace the history of Elsie Finch, in the midst of the Battle of Britain. Morton
has hit his own ‘brick wall’ in the hunt for his own elusive biological father, but feels compelled to take on this latest case. Elsie Finch, marries at the beginning of World War 2, only to find that her husband is reported ‘missing in action’ at Dunkirk. Finding it impossible to wait for news of her husband, and wishing to ‘do her bit’ Elsie enlists in the Women’s Auxiliary Air Force. Having German grandparents she speaks German fluently and is enlisted as a Sergeant at a Kent RAF base. Elsie lodges with her mother-in-law who lives nearby, and becomes inadvertently embroiled in ‘The Spyglass File’. When Morton Farrier investigates Elsie’s past he appears to be the first person to be able to uncover the scandal of the Spyglass File, placing himself in danger from others who intend to keep its secrets buried, at any cost. Those with an interest in the experiences of R.A.F. pilots during WW2, and the lives of the Women’s Auxiliary Air Force personnel, in particular, will enjoy this book. The author tells the story of Morton’s investigation into Elsie’s past in a very informative and well researched way, which will be a great read for genealogists, and lovers of crime fiction. Further historical information and a bibliography are also included. I have read all five of Nathan’s novels and look forward to reading many more. Available via Amazon online (paperback £7.99 or ebook £3.49)

ANDREA HEWITT (ESFH 6398)

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Contact **Michael:** 01708 735810  www.slides2disk.co.uk
Most people who were given the opportunity of a free upgrade to Windows 10 have done so, or decided not to. If you haven’t, your computer won’t die but there will be fewer and fewer updates to keep your computer secure, young and sprightly, so it will gradually get more and more aged and slow and open to attack from viruses and hackers. Also, any new software that is developed will probably not run on your computer. So sooner or later, you will need to upgrade to Windows 10. Andrew took us through some important things that every user of Windows 10 should be aware of, pointing out that these were his personal views.

Every version of Windows has had, and will continue to have, settings that need tweaking. Some default settings leave your equipment open to electronic access by potential hackers, such as a secret key logger that records everything you type, and compromises your secrecy. Privacy and Security are areas that most people have concerns about, so we looked at some of the items and how to change them.

Open “Settings”, using the cog like symbol, or “left click” on the icon on the bottom left of your screen.

**Privacy & Security** - General - Microsoft want to record and analyse how you write so the default setting is ON. Turn to OFF.

**Location** – intended to provide you with relevant information about things like maps and weather when you are out and about. Of course, if you are using a desktop PC at home, this is irrelevant and everything can be turned OFF, but on a laptop or tablet, a better option might be to leave “Location” on and then scroll down and switch OFF all the apps underneath, apart from the ones you know you will use.

**Camera & Microphone** – think about what you will want to use. Skype for example, would be useless without access to this.

**Accounts Info, Contact, Calendar, Messaging and Radios** are all enabled by default which allow access to any personal information on your computer by several different apps. Change this to OFF for specific apps, but think carefully about leaving things like Mail & Calendar enabled which quite legitimately use information you have supplied.

**Feedback & Diagnostics** analyses data from your computer and the way you use it. Microsoft hopes to be able to identify and fix problems, or tailor Windows to suit people’s needs. Assuming you don’t want Microsoft hassling you with endless feedback requests, select NEVER under feedback frequency. To limit how much information about your computer use that Microsoft can monitor, choose BASIC from Diagnostic and Usage Data. However, Microsoft has admitted that it will automatically collect some diagnostic data about your PC whatever the setting.

Next, is an original part of Windows 10 that was gradually modified, and then removed in the Anniversary Update, except that the removal didn’t take effect on some computers – no one has yet been able to say why – so this item may or may not appear on your computer. If it does, you can turn it OFF. If it doesn’t, no problem, it’s already been covered and dealt by the update.
Wi-Fi on the Network and Internet has an entry “Wi-Fi Sense”. The Windows 10 default for this is ON. Microsoft wants to make it easy for Windows 10 users to connect to their friends Wi-Fi networks, so it shares an encrypted version of your private wireless security key with other Windows 10 users in your contacts list, letting them connect automatically. You can’t choose which contacts in your list you want to share with – it’s all or nothing at the moment – which means that people you don’t really know terribly well could end up with access to your Wi-Fi, which isn’t safe. Set the switch to OFF.

One nasty little habit that Microsoft still has is to try and re-impose its default settings when it next downloads an update to your computer. Sometimes it succeeds, and sometimes it doesn’t, so if you get your computer working the way you want it, and then after an update it’s not, check the settings again. They are easy to change. There are several programs around that purport to prevent Microsoft re-imposing its default settings, but so far, none of them have lasted terribly long in the market. It’s an ongoing battle.

This precis was from a talk given to the Galleywood group by Andrew Britter.

Barbara Harpin (ESFH 9612)

Serendipity Again

Vampires Welcome!

While listening to a very interesting talk at a recent Galleywood meeting on the history of De Havilland at Hatfield, I was reminded of a remarkable incident that occurred a few years ago. It was a lovely summer’s afternoon and I had just enjoyed an excellent lunch with some old friends. We were relaxing in the garden and discussing family history. They are also members of our Society.

Pete’s wife was showing me her family photo album. Her father was an Officer in the Fleet Air Arm and one of the pictures was of her, as a child, at a squadron Open Day. One of the photos showed Marylyn sitting in the cockpit of a De Havilland Vampire. As an old schoolboy plane spotter, I instantly recognised it and was delighted to see an aircraft that I remember fondly.

A few minutes later, we heard the whine of a jet engine. I looked up and there above me was the distinctive silhouette of a Vampire! I had not seen one flying for fifty years or more and I haven’t seen one since. How spooky can that be?

John Young (ESFH 6399)
Chairman

Forest Keeper Found Dead in Ditch

In Historian No. 160 Issue 3 of 2016 page 60 The “Forest Keeper...” piece quoted from the Eastern Mercury attributed Sergeant Major Silwood with the DSO (Distinguished Service Order). For the record, only officers could be appointed to the DSO, not Non-Commissioned Officers like Silwood. Silwood was mentioned in Lord Roberts’ despatches of 31 March 1900 and 4 September 1901, but I can find no reference to Silwood having been awarded a DSO.

John Sly (ESFH 10655)

ESFH 9612

Chairman

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John Sly (ESFH 10655)
When I attended Eric Probert’s lecture on Adoption at the December meeting at Galleywood, I thought I would share with you my experience of being adopted.

Ernest Walter Rushmer (1909-1990) married Mary Lillian Brand (1913-1989) at Saffron Walden Parish Church on 3 August 1936. He was the manager of the confectionery department of Saffron Walden Co-operative Society. Molly assisted her aunt, Emily Sarah Rushforth, at the café where Dorringtons now is in Cross Street, Saffron Walden. She would look out over Gold Street and ogle my father who lived at Dolphin House in Gold Street.

During the war they had two evacuees living with them, Ronnie and Mary Greensword from Tottenham. Mary would have liked to stay in Saffron Walden but she went back to her parents and came every year for a summer holiday until she married.

They hosted a little Dutch boy who came for a holiday. His parents wrote thanking Molly and Ernie for building him up – food had been so short in the Netherlands during the war.

All this time they had wanted a baby of their own but it was not to be. So they went to see Alderman Custerson in Saffron Walden and he took them to the south of the county where they chose me! They literally chose me from a room full of small children. Apparently I was so appealing, sitting up in my cot with fair curly hair. Molly was well known for buying things “on appro” and then taking them back and Ernie said that she must make sure that she really wanted this baby and not another, as she would not be able to bring it back having had it “on appro”.

My mother told me all this when I was four or five one day when she was drying me after a bath. She told me how much I had been wanted and that if anyone said anything unpleasant about me being adopted I was to say “I was chosen – you just came!”

When I was older, my mother explained that my real mother had been a married woman whose husband was due back from the war so the baby she was expecting by another man would have to be put in a children’s home. Apparently, they had met her when they went to court for the adoption to be made legal. My mother explained that the time from when they had taken me home until the Court Order had been the longest and worst of her life. Every time there was a knock at the door, she thought they were coming to take me back to my birth mother.
The Court Order was made at Saffron Walden Juvenile Court when I was ten months old. The court fee was 11 shillings. With the Court Order is a notice explaining that whilst the adoption placed Molly and Ernie in the same position to the adopted child, as real parents bear towards their own children. But there was one important difference – in order to leave any property to an adopted child, the adoptive parents must leave it to the child by will. I recollected that my father was very upset that he had to name me “Janice my adopted daughter” in his will.

At that time a copy of the Adoption Order was filed at Somerset House, London and it was then possible to obtain an extract from the Adopted Children Register which could be used instead of my birth certificate. In fact I had a short birth certificate showing my adopted name.

When I was in my twenties my family and I were watching a film on television where the heroes went to Cliftonville*, Kent for a holiday after the Second World War was over. My parents said that they too had gone there and I asked if I had enjoyed it. “We didn’t have you then” they said and that was when I realised that I was about five months old when I came to Saffron Walden.

The family all accepted me and treated me as though I was Molly and Ernie’s natural child.

I have never hidden the fact that I am adopted but I did not talk about it much whilst my parents were still alive. So when I reached the age of 60, I decided to get my original birth certificate. I applied to the General Register Office and had to go to Witham, to get the certificate and to be counselled, as I was adopted before 1975 and my mother had been guaranteed anonymity. I recounted my story and said I was quite content to be adopted and that I consider my family to be the Rushmers and Brands. It’s their family history that I have been pursing for some 25 years now.

I know that my birth mother remained in Essex and died in the early 1990s. I am so grateful that Molly and Ernie chose me and gave me such a happy childhood. If they had not, would I have stayed in the children’s home or been adopted by another couple?

What I can never know is what is nature and what is nurture.

Janice Sharpe (ESFH5841)

* see Cliftonville postcard on Page 65

B’Limey road accident

On the 12th inst. as Robert Tye, labourer, in the employ of Mr. P. Smith, of Alton Park, was driving his master’s wagon laden with limes round the Plough corner, Little Clacton, the vehicle was accidentally upset in the ditch, and Tye being precipitated between it and the bank was covered with limes, from which he was extricated with difficulty, and conveyed home in a precarious state.

20th June 1856
Readers might be interested to know that in 1921, convalescing after a nervous breakdown, the writer T S Eliot and his wife stayed at the Albermarle Hotel in Cliftonville. (No longer there) Every day he went to the Nayland Rock Promenade Shelter to work on his poem The Waste Land. In 2009 the shelter became a Grade 11 listed monument for the following reasons “As a good example of a late-Victorian/Edwardian seaside structure and for special literary association as the likely location where T S Eliot composed part of The Waste Land”

https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1393490
FROM MARGATE TO CHELMSFORD IN 1958

56 Westfield Rd.
Westbrook
Margate.

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Valentine's
CARD
FOR ADDRESS ONLY

To Frank, Vera, & Rosemary,

As you see we have arrived on our holidays, had a lovely journey here, going through Surrey it was great, done it in 4½ hrs got here about 3½. The car went great without a hitch.

Love, love & love.

Mrs F. Palmer
22 Coral Lane
Chelmsford

Essex.
Adoption in Essex and Wales
by Eric Probert

Eric gave a very interesting and informative talk on Adoption and advised us that in the three decades following the 2nd World War, over half a million women had a child adopted most of which were unmarried mothers. In 1947 there were 17,000 adoptions but by 1967 this number had fallen to 10,000 and in 2011 there had been a further reduction to 5,000.

Before 1927 Adoptions were usually informal and researchers will need to look into the records of the various institutions (children’s homes, county records etc). Eric recommended the Children’s Homes website by Peter Higginbotham www.childrenshomes.org.uk which provides information on the many varied institutions that became homes for thousands of children in Britain. For researching after 1927 Eric recommended that you start by looking at: www.adoptionsearchreunion.org.uk/search/adoptionrecords/

This website is intended to be the first port of call for anyone thinking about searching for or making contact with birth and adopted relatives or researching an adoption that took place in the UK. Here you can:
-Search for the location of adoption records
-Look for agencies that offer support services in your area
-Learn about your right to make or refuse contact
-Find out about recent changes to the legislation
-Read about searching for and making contact with birth relatives

-Use the Pointers for Practice for professionals working with adopted people, adopted parents and birth relatives

Another source mentioned was the Adopted Children’s Register - List of Adoption Orders since 1927. Maintained by the GRO and only available to the public in London on microfiche at The British Library and City of Westminster Archives Centre. Includes Adoptive Name, Year of Adoption, Year of Birth (1949 – 2013 only), Entry & Volume Number.

Eric also informed us that:
- In 1975 Adopted Persons were given the right to discover their birth origins
- From 2002 Birth parents were allowed to view their case notes
- From Nov 2014 adopted adults, their children, grandchildren and other relatives can trace their birth ancestors using specialised adoption agencies for adoptions prior to 2005. But consent of the adopted person is required before contact or sharing of information.

A full copy of Eric’s PowerPoint presentation, which includes a list of recommended books and details of local Children’s Homes can be found on https://sites.google.com/site/ericdprobert. Click on Family History, select talks and then Adoption in England and Wales.

At the end of the talk three of our members mentioned their own experiences with researching Adoption. Thank you Eric for an excellent and enjoyable talk.

Meryl Rawlings (ESFH 6639)
SAMUEL COURTAULD & Co.
DRESS CODE

It is always a pleasure to us to see our workpeople, especially our comely young women, dressed NEAT and TIDY; nor should we, as has been already declared in a notice that has been put up at Bocking Mills, wish to interfere with the fashion of their dress, so long as their dress does not interfere with their work, or the work of those near them in our employ.

The present ugly fashion of HOOPS, or CRINOLINE, as it is called, is, however, quite unfitted for the work of our Factories. Among the Power Looms it is almost impossible, and highly dangerous: among the Winding and Drawing Engines it greatly impedes the free passage of Overseers, Wasters &c., and it is inconvenient to all. At the Mills it is equally inconvenient, and still more mischievous, by bringing the dress against the Spindles, while also it sometimes becomes shockingly indecent when the young people are standing upon the Sliders.

FOR ALL THESE REASONS
We now request all our Hands, at all our Factories, to leave HOOPS and CRINOLINE at home when they come to the factories to work; and to come dressed in a manner suitable for their work, and with as much BECOMING NEATNESS as they can.

LICKING BOBBINS
When a Bobbin is finished off, it has become a common practice to touch the end with the tongue to smooth it down. But out of this practice has arrived another practice, both nasty and mischievous, of licking the Bobbins all over to make them weigh heavier. And to put an end at once, and altogether, to this nasty and mischievous practice of licking Bobbins, we now make it

A RULE
Not to touch the Bobbins with the tongue at all: and Overseers are hereby authorised to enforce this rule by Forfeits.

October 9th 1860

GEORGE COURTAULD (ESFH 10478)
In about 2003 my husband and I received a page from an old Bible from a relative of my husband, listing names and dates of family members. This got us interested in family history. We found out about a meeting of the Essex Society for Family History at Christ Church, Chelmsford and decided to pay a visit. At the beginning of the afternoon meeting, Janette Scarborough, the monumental inscriptions co-ordinator, was asking for old scrubbing brushes, even if they only had a small amount of bristles. What a strange request. A training session for recording the inscriptions on the gravestones in the cemetery opposite was set up by Janette and several members attended. I was very interested and wanted to start immediately. I was told by Janette I would need to work with a trained person. I was assigned an expert and a churchyard.

Firstly a map has to be drawn, roughly to scale using an OS map if possible, showing the position of gravestones within that area, all being given a number. This number corresponds with a sheet of paper where the inscription is to be written. A start was made with the newer gravestones, easy I thought. The kerbs came next. A hands and knees job if overgrown, but that was OK. I got the general idea from these how the inscriptions may be running: ‘In memory of’, ‘In loving memory of’, followed by the name, date of death and age. Still not too bad for reading, although some were a little tricky to read when perhaps the lead lettering had fallen out. Then I was in for a shock – the old stones!! Oh there is no inscription on this stone said I. The expert came along and read the whole of the inscription, including a verse. How did you do that I said? This is where our ‘light box’ comes in handy. It was devised by our chairman when the society was first formed in 1974. The version today is a cardboard tube from the inner of a carpet roll for those wearing glasses, or from the inner of a large paper roll for the rest of us. One end is cut to a slant which is the end used against the stone. This enables the light to be adjusted according to the direction of the sun.

Following on from this churchyard I acquired a ‘team’ and from there I never looked back. I’ve lost count of how many graveyards we have recorded. Unfortunately over the years the team dwindled for various reasons.

I had joined another team of expert recorders to gain more knowledge. This was excellent as some stones take a lot of deciphering, and two heads are better than one. Trying at a different time of day can help with the light being different. We were having lunch in the church porch one day when the sun came round. We couldn’t believe our eyes when every word was legible on a stone that looked very difficult beforehand, so lunch was held up for a short while.
The cardboard tube also comes in handy for battling against brambles. Stick it on your arm and away you go. This didn’t work for me on one occasion when trying to access a couple of gravestones in a ditch, I slipped and fell backwards. What could I grab – nothing!! My team of course thought it was highly amusing but did decide to help me out!! I was valuable to read the older stones!

It started a conversation one day when wondering what I was doing with an ‘elephant’s trunk’?!! I was sitting straddling an old gravestone, not realising a couple of people sitting in the pub next door were thinking I had gone mad? It got the better of them so when they finished their meal they just had to come and ask, and then of course have a try. People are amazed as to what they can see. It doesn’t work for all people as it is a skill you achieve with time.

It really can start a conversation which can lead to any area. We have helped people walking around trying to find a particular gravestone. We have been given information regarding certain gravestones, their relationship with the interred and perhaps a history of the church or interesting people or memorials. The list goes on. High mantel top tombs can pose a challenge. This is where two people are handy, one each side. Usually it was easier to read if on top of the stone, but safety has to be considered.

Another problem is the ledger stones surrounded by metal railings. You just have to get inside. In one churchyard my colleague and I took two stools and some old clothes; one stool each side and the clothes over the metal spikes – ouch!! Once inside many years of vegetation lay, including the proverbial ivy runners. We realised we should have taken buckets as the soil would have been excellent for the garden. On another occasion, although the ledger stones were clear, they were difficult to read from a distance, so to the tune of ‘the stripper’ duly hummed by the team, one member took several layers off, and squeezed between two pieces of railings that were slightly bent.

In Rettendon churchyard when arriving with spades, buckets, scrubbing brushes, stools etc., we were viewed very suspiciously by the men in black. This was at the height of the tree dwellers to stop the chopping down of trees for the new A130. Needless to say it caused conversations and then an explanation as to what we were up to.

Oh yes those scrubbing brushes! Today we don’t use the hard bristled ones. We try hard not to brush the stone as this can leave a mark. Not a good thing to see, brushed marks whereas the rest of the stone is naturally weathered. Lichen is a nuisance, but at the same time beautiful. Generally we see only the white and orange, but at one churchyard there was a plethora of leafy types and we were asked by the incumbent not to remove them. I have to say we didn’t want to as they were so beautiful. Whilst we take our job very seriously and make every effort to get the information, there has to be a time where we say ‘no’. A
sharpened lolly stick is used to remove as little of the lichen when necessary.

I have loved my challenges over the years but the knees and body are telling me to slow up a bit. A new generation is needed and this is where YOU come in. Please contact Ray Poole, the Monumental Inscriptions Co-ordinator via the Contacts page of the Society website www.esfh.org.uk to find out more information.

And finally I’m sure you are aware of the following poem:

Do not stand at my grave and weep, I am not there; I do not sleep
I am a thousand winds that blow, I am the diamond glints on snow
I am the sun on ripened grain, I am the gentle autumn rain
When you awaken in the morning’s hush, I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circling flight, I am the soft star that shines at night
Do not stand at my grave and cry, I am not there, I did not die.

But this is my version:

Do not stand by this grave and weep / I am not dead, I’m just asleep
I’ve worked so hard to read these stones / and now I must rest these weary bones
Do not stand by this grave and weep / it is your assistance that I seek
A while of your time and even a mate / to complete this project before it’s too late
Do not stand by this grave and weep / the information we aim to keep
Your ancestors may have had a stone / check our index, you won’t need a loan
Do stand by this grave and think / a stone I know was here
The words I read and made a link / and now it’s disappeared
Do not stand by and let this pass / Contact Ray, but make it fast

YVONNE TUNSTILL (ESFH 3595)
Eric Probert’s Useful Web Sites

Essex & Suffolk Surnames
http://essexandsuffolksurnames.co.uk/
These web pages are maintained by Helen Barrell a local historian and writer. There is much interesting information including a number of limited transcriptions of Essex parish registers, wills, marriage licences and other documents plus a useful blog.

Missing England, Wales and Scotland Census Returns, 1841-1871
http://tinyurl.com/EDP-missingcensus
Thanks to Peter Calver’s Lost Cousins Newsletter we are advised of a listing on FindMyPast of the parishes and hamlets whose populations have not been included in the returns. The major exclusion for Essex is the 1851 complete Dunmow Registration District.

Guides to Sources on Medical Practitioners
http://tinyurl.com/EDP-WellcomeLib
Was your ancestor a Medic? Free downloadable guides to the biographies and sources for doctors, physicians, surgeons, apothecaries, healthcare personnel and patients in the Wellcome Library, London. In addition you can search or browse the Medical Officer of Health Reports for London from 1848 to 1972.

FindMyPast Video Library
http://www.findmypast.co.uk/video-library
Several topics which have been the subject of Webinars and Tutorials including Military records, British newspapers, Breaking down brick walls, Search tips and the 1939 Register.

Edwardian Postcards
http://tinyurl.com/EDP-postcards
Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter has advised of a Lancaster University Edwardian Postcard Project of a database of 1000 postcards sent between 1901 and 1920 together with images of back & front, transcriptions and historical information on the sender and recipient where available. The database is searchable by year, location and names. Provides an interesting snapshot of Edwardian life and times.

Yorkshire BMDs, 1832-1921
http://tinyurl.com/EDP-YorksBMDs
From Peter Calver’s Lost Cousins Newsletter we are alerted to indexes of nearly 400,000 names from announcements in the Halifax Guardian. You may find it is worth downloading the PDF file to search your surname interests.

National Media Museum
www.nationalmediamuseum.org.uk/collection
Was your ancestor employed in photography, film or television? If so, then visit these pages and search the collections of 3.5 million items relating to the history and development of these media.
The Family History Guide
www.thefhguide.com/
Free access to learning resources of these US based pages including videos, webinars and brochures from the basics of family history and computing to more advanced topics such as obituaries and DNA.

Finding Memorial Inscriptions in England
https://findthatmi.wordpress.com/
Colin Ashworth has an ongoing project compiling a listing with links to transcriptions and indexes of memorials in English churchyards. The listing is arranged alphabetically by parish and county.

History of the Catholic Children’s Society
www.cathchild.org.uk/our-services/history/
Review the major events from 1850 to the present day for this Society which was responsible for the adoption of thousands of children.

Early Irish Marriage Index
www.irishancestors.ie/?page_id=1926
Eastman’s Genealogy Newsletter informs us of this pre-1864 index of Irish marriages compiled by The Irish Genealogical Research Society which now has over 80,000 marriages of nearly 177,000 names including that of the groom and bride and sometimes their parents. The result is a full transcription including the source reference.

Aspects of Family History Research
https://herefordshiregenealogy.com/
Although she concentrates on research in the county of my earliest known direct ancestor, Herefordshire, Clare O’Grady dispenses useful general advice on these pages. Recent features include Using Gazettes for Official Records, Using Catholic Parish Registers Online, Using English Prisoner Registers, Using UK Historical Directories and Researching Great War Air Services Personnel.

Epping Forest District Local History
www.efdhistory.org.uk/
Do you have an interest in the places around Epping Forest including Abridge, Buckhurst Hill, Chigwell, Epping, Fyfield, Loughton, Nazeing, North Weald, Ongar, Sheering, Theydon Bois and Waltham Abbey? If so then visit these pages for historical information, resources and pictures.

Index to War Diaries of the Gt War
http://tinyurl.com/EDP-GtWarDiaries
A free downloadable index of over 270 pages plus a further 32 Pages of sample diaries is available from the Naval & Military Press. The index is arranged by Division but is searchable by unit and includes the TNA WO class record source /EDP-GtWarDiarieshttp://tinyurl.com reference.

Soho History
www.themuseumofsoho.org.uk/#1
Did your ancestor live or frequent the Soho district of London renowned for food, booze, music and vice? If so then visit this virtual museum where history comes to life. You will learn about the Windmill Theatre, the homeless, Casanova, violin making and much more.

Advanced Google Search Tips
http://tinyurl.com/EDPGoogleSearch
Not specifically related to family history but nevertheless 31 useful strategies for us to try out.
Digitised Newspaper Collection Search
www.elephind.com/
From Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter is news of this free search engine, Elephind, which searches only across the content of nearly 3 million newspapers comprising close on 3,000 titles on names and places. There is a simple search or advanced search of 162 million items or articles in which you can refine the search to a range of years and countries but only collections from Australia, Mexico, New Zealand, Singapore and the USA are currently included. Nevertheless a search on “Probert” for the period 1800-1850 in Australia produced 120 entries and the image of the entry can be viewed.

Automatically Colourise Black & White photos
http://demos.algorithmia.com/colorize-photos/
Do you want to enhance those monochrome images? Take advantage of a free service available from Algorithmia as notified in Eastman’s Genealogy Newsletter. All you need do is upload the photo to a shared photo website that does not require a username and password for access such as Dropbox, Google Photos or Flicker and then enter the URL of the web site and enjoy the results.

Silver End Heritage Society
http://www.silverendheritagesociety.co.uk/
Have you an interest in this Essex village near Witham which was established as a model village by the industrialist Francis Henry Crittall? If so then visit these pages where you will find a history, stories of residents, a gallery of photographs and a list of books about the village.

List of Church of Ireland Parish Registers
http://tinyurl.com/EDP-IrelandPRs
An alphabetical listing by parish or chapel, compiled by the Representative Church Body Library in Dublin of the surviving Church of Ireland baptism, marriage and burial registers. The information includes dates and location, Diocese and County together with details of any copies, transcripts and on-line indexes.

Comics
http://downthetubes.net/
If, like me, you were an avid reader of comics such as The Eagle in your early years like the 1950s you may find visiting this site an amusing diversion! Searchable, it is all you need to know about comics – news, features, reviews, events and links.

British Histories and Reference Guides
http://tinyurl.com/EDP-FMPRefGuides
Within FindMyPast are histories and reference guides with over 65 searchable titles on genealogy, heraldry, palaeography etc. From these you will be able set your ancestors lives and times within the prevailing social and economic background.

Halstead Postcards
http://tinyurl.com/EDP-Halstead
At these Historypin pages you can view 20 plus historic postcards of scenes from the 1900s from the Essex Record Office collection and compare them with the present day views. Explore other places too using Historypin.

City of London Pictures – Collage, The London Picture Map
http://collage.cityoflondon.gov.uk/
See London as our ancestors saw it. Visit this database of over 250,000 pictures of London scenes from the collections at the London Metropolitan Archives and the Guildhall Art Gallery. You can either search on places or other keywords or browse by subject.

ERIC PROBERT (ESFH 386)
SEPTEMBER AFTERNOON - Poison and Powder by Michelle Bullivant

Following the A.G.M. we heard a fascinating account of the use of cosmetics through the ages from Michelle Bullivant, who is a professional Local Historian and Landscape Archaeologist.

Contrary to what some of the gentleman present may have believed, we all use cosmetics. They include items such as shampoo, deodorant, shaving soap and hair dye. Archaeological evidence for their use goes back to at least 4000 B.C. Cosmetics were used to give a healthy appearance, such as hiding a pale face, or to make hair look shiny. For the Egyptians, eye makeup was a daily requirement for men, women and children. They were aware of the health risks of many of the ingredients such as lead that they used in cosmetics, but they also knew that lead was a fly deterrent, and so helped avoid eye infections. They also believed that eye make-up could ward off evil spirits, which was why everyone used it, even children. Even the poorest Egyptian graves contained at least one palette of make-up to be taken into the after-life.

The poisonous ingredients of cosmetics have been a constant feature from the time of the Egyptians, right up almost to the 21st century. Kohl eye pencils, one of the oldest forms of make-up, have always contained lead, but lead was only banned from use in cosmetics in 2001. The list of ingredients ranged from the slightly unpleasant to the downright gruesome. Who fancies using red ochre mixed with gum resin, eyeshadow made from crushed beetle wings, black oxide for eyebrows, white lead to whiten the skin, fake eyebrows made from oxen hair, pumice stone to clean the teeth or sheep fat mixed with blood as nail polish? The only ingredient that did not seem to be injurious to health in some way was the use of crushed mulberries as rouge. The Romans believed in the health-giving properties of mud baths mixed with crocodile dung. White lead would often cause hair loss, so people had wigs, for which lard was used as glue, which attracted lice. In 16th century Italy a cosmetic made of powdered arsenic liquid was sold to women to apply to their cheeks, but when the death toll...
reached 700 dead husbands, the government stepped in and hanged the maker. The first department store to openly sell make-up was Selfridges in 1909. Previously it had been hidden under counters. A major change occurred in 1934, when Coco Chanel was pictured on a yacht in a bikini, and set a trend for both sexes for suntans rather than pale skin, which has lasted until today. Fashions in make-up come and go, with well-defined eyebrows being a current trend, but it seems that nothing is new. We do not expect now to suffer health problems from the use of cosmetics, but stricter laws on ingredients were only introduced in 2010, so who knows what we all might have used in the past?

Alyson Herbert (ESFH 7383)

OCTOBER MORNING - Heraldry Can be Fun Illustrated Talk by Derek Palgrave

Derek commenced his light hearted look at Heraldry with examples of Arms ranging from Suffolk County Council, Sir Edward Heath, to those of the British Virgin Islands. These all illustrate the use of various symbols, colours, geometric designs, recognisable allusions and conventions which are all components in Heraldry. He then described the process of applying for a grant of Heraldic or Armorial Bearings, in England from the College of Arms and in Scotland by the Lord Lyon. Applications are welcomed from individuals and corporations who have standing in the local community - there are of course costs involved. Derek made several submissions to the College of Arms some of which were rejected but eventually was asked for his ideas on what was to be incorporated in the design of his arms. His motto of “Semper Contendere” was accepted and the final design was agreed containing four lions and a cross. He then had to choose a crest, a badge and a flag and at the end of this process a formal Grant was made. After that he was also able to use these designs on fun items such as a coffee pot, neck tie, paperweight glasses and so on. Extra symbols could be added to denote family members such as wife and children.

For our own research Derek suggests checking in local churches where our ancestors are buried to see if there are any monuments which may incorporate coats of arms. The website of the College of Arms is :- http://www.college-of-arms.gov.uk/ and there are a number of useful Heraldic Reference Works that can be consulted such as Burke’s General Armory, Fairburns Book of Crests and Slaters Illustrated Book of Heraldry to name but a few.

Susan Wilson (ESFH 11031)

OCTOBER AFTERNOON - John Boyd Textiles Weavers of Horse Hair Fabrics by John Minors

John opened his talk detailing how he had a working back ground with the Essex firm of Courtaulds. As a young man he had been employed at their factory in Halstead. He then went on to detail the history of John Boyd Textiles based in Castle Cary near Wincanton Somerset UK.
A Scottish travelling textile merchant, John Boyd, settled in Castle Cary as the place had a history of fabric and rope manufacturing. He saw an opportunity in the textile market for horsehair fabric and started weaving it in his cottage in the early 1830’s. By 1837 he had established himself as a producer of hard wearing versatile hair cloth. His product was used in seating, interlining clothes, making brushes, blinds, even the wigs of judges had horsehair in them. By 1851 John Boyd employed thirty women, nine men, and thirty four children and was a model employer.
The Education Act of 1870 set the framework for schooling of all children between the ages of five and twelve years old in England and Wales. This loss of child labour resulted in Mr Boyd inventing a mechanical picker in 1872 which teased one hair from a tail - a job which had formerly been carried out by children. The mechanical picker was just one piece of equipment he patented and commercial success followed enabling him to form a limited company in 1887. He died shortly after in 1890.
By the outbreak of the First World War John Boyd Textiles had 124 operating looms however the demand for horse products, and the supply of horsehair, had started to decrease. By 1947 only 30 looms at the factory were utilised.
John then told us that John Boyd Textiles Ltd is one of the last surviving horsehair weavers in the world (there is another company in France) and they still use the original looms and techniques of 125 years ago. Today the horse hair is imported from China. In Mongolia they have thousands of horses and the hair is taken from live horses. They dock the tail of the horse and as white it can be bleached any colour with a conditioner added.
Their products are used on furniture like chairs, sofas, and mattresses for beds. Organisations involved in replacing historical artefacts like the National Trust buy their fabrics to refurbish antiques. Unique products have a high price ticket. The company has an elite customer base including prestigious hotels like The Intercontinental Hotel in Park Lane, London where the bar stools are covered with their fabrics. You can find further information on the company at www.johnboydtextiles.co.uk

NOVEMBER AFTERNOON – De Havilland Aircraft Museum by Alistair Hodgson
Alistair Hodgson’s lecture on the De Havilland Aircraft Museum was divided into two sessions.
In the first session he spoke about the history of Salisbury Hall, Shenley near Hatfield which today is the home of the museum. After the very early history of the building he proceeded to tell us about the owners from the 1930’s onwards, including Sir Herbert Nigel Gresley (1876-1941) steam locomotive engineer, responsible for some of the most famous steam trains in Britain. The next owner was Geoffrey De Havilland (1882-1965) the British aviation pioneer and aircraft engineer.
In 1920 Geoffrey De Havilland formed the de Havilland Aircraft Company at Stag Lane Aerodrome, Edgware, where he and his company designed and built a large number of aircraft, including the Moth family. In 1933 the company moved to Hatfield Aerodrome, in Hertfordshire. Aviation first came to Salisbury Hall in October 1939 when the De Havilland Mosquito design team moved in. During the lecture Alistair gave the listeners a description of the different models of Mosquitos including their design, manufacture, and performance. During the second half of his lecture Alistair told us about the current restoration projects at the museum including the DH112 Sea Venom, Dragon Rapide etc. He stressed that their museum is one of a handful in the country where visitors are allowed to touch historical artefacts. The museum organises events where former airmen are reunited with aircraft they flew or maintained. Although not open during the winter months I know that I will be checking www.dehavillandmuseum.co.uk to find out the opening dates for 2017.

COLLEEN DEVENISH (ESFH 6279)

DECEMBER MORNING - Adoption in Essex and Wales by Eric Probert

Eric gave us a very interesting and informative talk on Adoption which is more fully detailed in an article on Page 67.

MERYL RAWLINGS (ESFH 6639)

DECEMBER AFTERNOON - It’s Beginning to Look Like Christmas by Eve Regelous

Eve retired from her career as an Events Organiser in 2015. She gave us an amusing talk reminding us of the Christmas traditions. As we all know, the Christmas cards etc. appear in the shops in September and fortunately we are not subjected to Christmas music whilst we shop until December. She gave us some statistics – Amazon sell 67,000 versions of Christmas songs! Henry VIII was probably the first person in this country to eat turkey. In 1526 six turkeys were brought from America and sold for 2 pence each. In 2015 10 million turkeys were sold. 87% of us think that Christmas would not be Christmas without turkey. The Queen’s Speech is another important part of Christmas for most people. The first Christmas broadcast was given by George V in 1932. She remarked on how much people spend on Christmas presents. The origins of many Christmas traditions were described. Guess who turned up at the end of the talk? – Father Christmas of course.

JANICE SHARPE (ESFH 5481)
SEPTEMBER TALK - A.G.M. & Workshop Afternoon
We started the afternoon with our A.G.M. The Chairman, Pauline Adlem, and the Treasurer, Paul Stirland, presented their annual reports. Next came the election of the branch committee. As Pauline had completed the maximum 5 years allowed under the constitution for Chairmen, she had to step down. Roger Thompson was elected as the new Chairman for the branch. Pauline was elected as a committee member and everyone was re-elected.
The committee for 2016/17 is as follows:- Chairman Mr Roger Thompson; Secretary Mrs Gill Peregrine; Treasurer Mr Paul Stirland; Registrar Mrs Juliette Malcolm; Librarian Mr Roger Stirland; Committee Members Mr David Eniffer, Mrs Pauline Adlem & Mrs Chris Chatfield.
After the A.G.M. we continued with our branch project of transcribing Parish Registers.

PAUL STIRLAND (ESFH 3633)

OCTOBER TALK - Colchester from the Eye of the Picture Postcard by Jess Jepchott
Jess produced some great pictures of postcards of Colchester through the ages. Postcards used to be very popular as they were the e-mails of the 1900’s. The post was so efficient that you could send a postcard within the town in the morning and get a reply later that day. It was interesting to see the development of the town through pictures from 1902 through to the 1980’s.
There is an interesting web site that Jess told us about, camulos.com which has many things about Colchester, including the postcards. This was a very interesting and informative talk.

NOVEMBER TALK - A demonstration of the 1939 Register by Ian Boreham
Ian gave us a very interesting tour of the 1939 register. He began by discussing the reasons for the register i.e. the need for ID and ration books during the war. We looked up a few people discussing the transcription problems, also the additions since the war as it was used by the National Heath.
Then something that some of our members had not investigated was the maps and other information if you scroll to the bottom of the page.
While we had a cup of tea some of the members were able to look for their family. This proved to be a very useful and interesting talk.

DECEMBER TALK - Christmas Social
This month Paul, Roger and David had devised a quiz each. Paul’s was familiar
logos, mainly from family history, without their words, much trickier than we thought. We all recognised them but had a problem identifying them. Roger had used a list of Christmas songs but only the initial letters of the titles. David had found short biographies of Essex people but of course no names. Each of these caused a great deal of fun and laughter. We then had a couple of talks from two of the members. Pauline told us about her love of Bridge. This is her other hobby, it sounds interesting, if a little complicated. Gill talked about the Drama in which she has been involved for most of her life and showing us some photos of productions.

We then tucked into the food which the members had brought, a great variety and something for everyone. This ended another lovely social afternoon.

GILL PEREGRINE (ESFH 5204)

HARLOW West Essex
Postcode: CM17 0AJ

St. John's Arts and Recreation Centre, Market Street, Old Harlow. Meetings are on a Saturday and start at 2.45 p.m. Doors open at 2.00 p.m.

NOVEMBER TALK – “Fact or Fiction?”

Today members of the Harlow Branch of the Essex Society for Family History entertained their companions with stories about their own researches into families. The overall theme was “Fact or Fiction”?

Beginners to researching their family history are usually told to ask older, but still living family members to talk about their memories. We learn a lot in this way, but how much of it is true?

Today five members told their stories. We ranged from the discovery of a family Bible which filled the finder with excitement. This was replaced by disappointment when no family records were found in it. Excitement took over again when he learned that such records were often to be found between the two testaments which turned out to be the case, only to be transformed into disappointment once more when they were found to be records of another family altogether.

Another member had always been told they had Welsh blood, so traced back to all her great grandparents and found that, although there were ancestors from Wales, there were more from England.

A third member had no knowledge of her father’s antecedents. Research led her to a Frank who was said to be very caring of his sister Susan. It was difficult to trace this sister, but eventually she turned out to be Frank’s aunt, not his sister after all even though she was born later than him.

Another member had heard reports of someone called Milly or Millicent but all attempts to trace her failed until almost by accident she was found to have been Amelia, not Millicent at all.

The last member talked of her mother’s somewhat eccentric father and the unusual formation of his nuclear family, with step children, his own children and unofficial

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foster children. It all made for an interesting afternoon. Other groups might like to try this format some time

DECEMBER TALK - Prominent Families in the History of Harlow before the New Town by Stan Newens

At our December meeting the speaker was Stan Newens, a long time local resident, who was once the constituency Member of Parliament. Stan is an author and historian and his talk was about 7 prominent families who had contributed to the history of the area between the 16th and 20th centuries. The families were the Althams, the Arkwrights, the Goulds, the Flowers, the Perry Watlingtons, the Gilbeys and the Collins families. There was also a Montague Burgoyne, a connection by marriage who did a lot to help the local population. Many of these names are remembered in the place names of areas of the modern town. Most of these families had humble beginnings but prospered through business or their inventions at the start of the industrial revolution, to become wealthy landowners. Some represented the area in Parliament. Most of the large houses they built have disappeared now, but the stables of Mark Hall are now Harlow Museum, Parndon Hall stands in the hospital grounds and Moot House can be found in The Stow. Most families were connected with farming at some time but some were clerics in the Church, others were involved with the cloth industry, gin distilling, beekeeping, Hymn writing and music, or in the sale and care of the cycles and early cars that took over from coaches. Stan has a wide knowledge of his subject and, as he said, could have expounded for hours, but his time was limited. At the end of the talk there was a screen show of portraits of many of the people mentioned. In the adjoining room was a display of relevant objects brought in by a living descendant whose family had once owned a sweet shop in Old Harlow. It was a fascinating talk.

TERRY SOTHCOTT (ESFH 11130)

SAFFRON WALDEN **North West Essex**

Meetings are held in Saffron Walden Baptist Church Hall (Audley Road entrance) High Street, on the second Thursday, at 8.00 p.m.

OCTOBER TALK – Evaluation of contents of Branch Library

For our October meeting seven members gathered to review the contents of the Branch library which had not, for various reasons, been opened for some time. Most of the reference matter had been donated by members, particularly Stan and Joan Sutherland who were the original librarians and who also kept the catalogue up-to-date. However, much has been superseded by the Internet. Old magazines, pamphlets and booklets, some more than 35 years old, proved to be taking up valuable space and, having not been referred to in many years, were duly disposed of. Additionally numerous boxes of microfiche as well as CDs were catalogued for future removal since their content is available online. The Branch Secretary will prepare a new list.
of items that have been retained. He will also liaise with the appropriate groups to ensure redundant material is re-cycled.

**NOVEMBER TALK – Saffron Walden Hearth Tax by John Read**

At the November meeting John Read, a past Chairman, gave a fascinating talk on the Hearth Tax and the Hearth Tax Project supervised by Roehampton University. For several years John was involved in transcribing the records for Essex and thereafter those of London and Middlesex. The Essex entries alone were some 29,000 and were, of course, mostly in Latin. Working in pairs the transcribers prepared separate parish transcriptions which the other cross-checked – the result being checked again by Roehampton. The Essex Volume has been published and there is a copy at the Essex Record Office. The whole Project is to publish the surviving records for every county in England. There is a website, www.hearthtax.org.uk, giving details of the current position and which has much of the Essex County information on line.

The Hearth Tax was introduced to cover the shortfall between the Government’s income from Customs and Excise Duties and its expenditure, which it never achieved. It was levied from 1662 – 1689 and the records list some 500,000 dwellings in England. The rate was one shilling per hearth, payable twice a year. There were exceptions for houses with rentals of less than twenty shillings per year and those households in receipt of poor relief. It was not generally popular – one Roger Boulton of Waltham Holy Cross felt particularly aggrieved. The collectors record him as “keeping us out of the house and saith he will kill the Constable if he come in the house.” Copies of each County’s returns were sent to the Exchequer in London and those that survive are at The National Archives, Kew under ref. E179.

**Martin Foreman (ESFH 6472)**

**DECEMBER TALK – Social Evening**

The social evening in December was enlivened by one of Stan Sutherland’s devilish quizzes which entertained us all.

**September Talk – Spitalfields by David Williams**

London from the top of a bus is OK for your average tourist with a tick list. If you
try doing Spitalfields that way you miss so much. It has to be viewed at ground level and there couldn’t be a better guide than David Williams to show you round. So let’s be off.

The Old Artillery Ground. Established in 1537 during the reign of Henry VIII. Known as ‘The Fraternity or Guild of Artillery of Longbows, Crossbows and Handguns’ - also coming under the title of ‘The Fraternity of St George’. Used as a practice ground by soldiers. In 1658 they relocated to Bunhill Fields, where they have remained ever since. Fort Street, Gun Street, Artillery Passage and Artillery Lane recall its former use on its original site. Victorian Night Shelter Crispin Street. Established in the 1860s by the Catholic Sisters of Mercy as a shelter to accommodate 100 men and 20 women of ‘good character’. Many had been living rough up to that time. The sisters also wished to highlight the effects of prostitution throughout London. Prostitution was seen as a crime but nothing was being done about it. Their intervention went some way towards bringing the numbers down, many of whom were girls under 14. It faced closure in 2013 and may well have been demolished since. Brick Lane. That long stretch of road running from just north of Aldgate East Underground Station to Arnold Circus (originally extending as far as Columbia Road Market, if we had a map of 1917). A rich mix of cultures made this particular part of the East End into what we see today, a vibrant community that thrives on diversity. Boatloads of immigrants arrived in this country over the next 400 years. Destination: London. From there, many went to Brick Lane. 15,000 Huguenots weavers exiled from France during the 16th-17th centuries; Jewish settlers from Eastern Europe in the 19th century (a high percentage being in the rag trade), and in the 1950s, Bangladeshis (most from the poorer parts of Sylhet). People arrive, stay awhile and move on. There’s always space in Brick Lane for those who want to set up shop! In many ways, Brick Lane shares similarities with its close neighbour, Spitalfields Market, in the range of products and services it provides.

Fournier Street Named after George Fournier. Fournier is a Huguenot name so one assumes his family were silk weavers. Anna Maria Garthwaite (1690-1763). This highly talented designer created numerous patterns for brocades and damasks that were used by silk weavers, who were among her main clients. (Nearly a thousand examples of her work are held at the Victoria and Albert Museum.) She lived in one of the houses in Fournier Street, being ideally placed right at the heart of the silk weaving industry. The house was practically brand new when she bought it. The house stands at the junction of Wilkes Street and Princelet Street, which is hardly a stone’s throw from Spitalfields Market. The Old Nichol. If you lived in the Old Nichol, say 100 years ago, crime was part of everyday life. Husbands threatened wives, neighbours menaced neighbours. It happened so regularly that the police must have given up when yet another report came in. ‘Not there, not the Old Nichol again!’

According to one writer, of those who were living in Old Nichol Street there were, at one time, 64 people who had been imprisoned for various offences. Many would
have done time again and again and probably didn’t mind being behind bars - the Old Nichol was a sewer by comparison. The folks living there were dirt poor and forgotten about, so it is no wonder many turned to crime. They had grown up with it. To live a normal life was not something they understood. Read Arthur Morrison’s book, *The Child of the Jago*, if you want to discover more about the Old Nichol. But be prepared! It’s not easy reading.

This is merely a taster of what Spitalfields has to offer.

**OCTOBER TALK - The Effects of the Great War upon Southend’s Children**

*by Andrew Emney*

Our speaker, who comes from Southend, spent 17 years teaching at a school in Barkingside. He used that background for the research he undertook and this became the subject of his talk, *The Effects of the Great War upon Southend’s Children*.

The cheering crowds, at the start of the war, and the enthusiasm that came from it, would soon disappear once it was realised the war would continue beyond Christmas, as most thought it would. Children shared those anxieties which would affect them in ways they weren’t able to express. This was where schools like those in Southend did a fine job in raising the spirits of its boys and girls by introducing a number of schemes outside of the time spent in the classroom.

Scouting and Guiding

The movement was there to provide youngsters with a host of practical skills, ones they could use in their everyday lives and through the adulthood. Being active with others of their own age helped create stability at a time when their lives were so unsettled; 1000s joined soon after they first went to school.

Drilling practice was another activity boys were involved in, which again was usually organised by schools. Boys/scouts would file into groups, sing a chorus or two of a popular song, swear allegiance to King and Country and this was followed by 3 rousing cheers. Southend High School for Boys arranged cadets groups where training was given in ambulance driving; one assumes in preparation for enlisting should the war continue. Growing potatoes plus a variety of other veg was another duty children were involved in. Several schools even had their own allotment. Fund raising proved extremely successful with schools. Boys and girls collected thousands of pounds over a given period. Keeping children occupied during hostilities whilst providing a sense of responsibility was key to the success of many of these projects.

Southend saw an increase in crime during those years and most of it was carried out by boys between the ages of 13 and 14. Theft from shops; housebreaking happened continuously (the Chaplin film where our man uses a chisel to gain access to properties probably gave kids the same idea for their break-ins) – cinema being extremely popular during the war years; there were several cases of arson, plus a host of other misdemeanours boys got up to, simply for the fun of it or because they were goaded into it. Punishment was usually ‘going before the Beak’. “If ever you come before me again …!” For a more serious offence (housebreaking etc.) punishments ranged from a birching (6 of the best), to time spent at a reform school or on a reform ship – often a very unpleasant experience. The ringleader of a gang or boys was
usually the one who was sent away.

One final point worth making: Few working class families had any savings. Funds had to come from somewhere otherwise there’d be no food on the table. It was often down to the eldest son to find work. But many were still at school. So what to do if they did find work? Schools like those in Southend helped where they could by allowing children time off it was needed. That’s something we don’t often hear about.

Thank you Andrew for providing such a stimulating talk. I’m sure everyone who came got as much from it as I did.

I’d like to end with the following extract. Writing in August 1914, Miss Agnes Baden-Powell, founder of the Girl Guides, gave instructions to every member of the movement to use all their skills to support the families of those who were away serving their country. She ended by saying: ‘Many of us will not be called into the fighting line but let us put forth all our strength to help others to be resolute and hopeful, confident that good will come.’

NOVEMBER TALK - An Afternoon at the Pictures by David Simpson

A goodly gathering of fans were here to see the David Simpson movie, An Afternoon at the Pictures. No ‘Bonfire of the Vanities’ this, just a chance to recall those cinemas that weren’t on the bill last time. We looked at cinemas like Shoebury’s Palace Theatre, the Plaza, Southchurch, Westcliff’s Kings Cinema, Hamlet Court Road, the Mascot and the Metropole/Cannon, also in Westcliff (both situated on the London Road), and three in Leigh, the Corona, the Empire and the Coliseum. Thousands came to these cinemas over the years. Southend had seen a rapid increase in the number of people living in the Borough by the 1920s and this continued through to the next decade when places like Westcliff and Leigh came to be known as commuter towns. The ‘20s and the ‘30s were the boom-times for cinema with the coming of the ‘talkies’ in 1927 boosting the numbers even further. This explains why more cinemas were being rebuilt by the 1930s – they wanted to attract more custom by offering the kind of luxuries that weren’t there before. The age of the picture palace had arrived and punters were flocking to the movies by then. Television had the greatest impact on the industry and once many cinemas were closed, they never reopened.

For those interested in timelines, the Coliseum survived the longest, having functioned as a cinema for 84 years before finally closing in 1997 when it was turned into shops and flats. As David commented later, ‘They should have made the building into a multi-purpose arts centre, which would have been so much better than this.’ Such views apply to practically every one of these former movie houses. So what happened after those other cinemas finally closed their doors? Uses range from a NAAFI canteen and dance hall for troops during WW2, a couple of bingo halls, a series of flats and retail units, an arts centre, a bowling alley, a snooker hall, a soup kitchen, a supermarket, a garage, a centre for indoor golf, and finally a Christian Church. It’s not all doom and gloom, thankfully. Cinemas like Southend’s Odeon Multiplex and Westcliff’s Palace Theatre are part of the trend away from widescreen
television, which so many of us now have in our homes. It’s the whole experience of being in a cinema, an experience which is heightened when you see a great film. Be amongst them. Atmosphere comes free!

Congratulations to Kirk Douglas, one of the few of actors of the golden age of Hollywood who are still with us. Kirk celebrated his 100th birthday in December 2016. He made 90 films during his long career. Congratulations to Olivia de Havilland who was also 100 in 2016.

DECEMBER TALK - An A-Z of Christmas by Eric Probert

Festive jollities were in the air when Eric Probert brought along his bag of goodies, An A to Z of Christmas. Here’s a sample. A is for Advent, the coming or arrival of the Christ child: the period immediately before the festival of the Nativity, including the four Sundays up to Christmas Eve. Time of the advent calendar that comes in the shape of cards with windows that opened to reveal Christian symbols. C is for Christmas Cards. Commissioned by Henry Cole in 1843, the same year Dickens’ Christmas Carol was published. A thousand were made. By then we already had the Penny Post which made it easier to send mail by post. The response from the public was slow. However, once they were being manufactured on a commercial basis, by a number of companies, at competitive prices, the public were soon sending cards to family and friends as part of the Christmas festivities. According to a survey taken in 2005, the Royal Mail delivered an astonishing 744 million cards. We must easily have passed that figure by now. F is for Father Christmas, that jovial figure clothed in a red costume and white flowing beard who seems to be in every high street, shopping mall, store, cinema (1937 photo taken at the Gaumont, Southend, during a children’s matinee), and supermarket where he willingly hands out presents to eager kiddies. Shame the suit’s a deliberate ploy by a well-known drinks manufacturer. Even the colour has copyright status! M is for Mistletoe. Represents love, luck and friendship but it also has a darker side. Mistletoe is a semi-parasite, living partly off of a host tree (apple, hawthorn, lime, willow) into which it sinks its specialised roots, and partly off food produced by its own chlorophyll. It doesn’t kill its host - no point having to look elsewhere when the living is easy. Mistletoe auctions have proven to be the best way for growers to sell their produce. Wholesale they can fetch between £30 to £40 per bunch, twice the amount in 2015. P is for presents, the giving and receiving of gifts shared between family and friends. ‘Yeah, OK, got, it but why does mine always have to be socks!’ R is for robin. For many of us this spirited little bird is Christmas. He’s everywhere, on cards, stamps, posters, mugs, plates, china – and why shouldn’t he be when he’s Britain’s best-loved bird. So don’t forget to put something out for him (dried mealworms are a favourite). Other birds might get a look-in look too, that’s if he hasn’t shooed them off already. Mr Red Breast is extremely territorial and scared of no one. He needs to be. Harsh winters kill thousands of robins every year. Thanks Eric for the dip into the treasure trove of what’s good about Christmas.

MARTIN HAYDN ROBERTS (ESFH 3860)
Hadleigh