



Registered
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ESFH NEWSLETTER

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www.esfh.org.uk

email: editor@esfh.org.uk

<https://www.facebook.com/esfh1>

August 2023

From the Chair – Andrea Hewitt



decided to replace our August magazine with this newsletter.

It may be smaller in content, but it's packed with information about ESFH and exciting forthcoming events!

Welcome to the first ever ESFH Newsletter. You may wonder why we have produced this newsletter, instead of your magazine?

When the Executive Committee became aware that Colleen, our Editor, had decided to step-down, we realised that it could take some time to find a replacement for her. To try to reduce her workload in the meantime, we

To date we still have no volunteer to take over, not only this key role, but others listed on page 2.

We urgently need your help to ensure that ESFH continues to be 'one of the best family history societies'.

- *Could you write a story, or anecdote, for publication?*
- *Can you share your knowledge and*

promote our Society at local events?

- *Why not consider volunteering at your local ESFH branch?*
- *Share your IT skills by facilitating online events, or advising members.*
- *Can you help us organise our 50th Anniversary to be celebrated in September 2024?*

Thanks to Colleen, Ian, and Tanya for this fabulous newsletter, and to all members already working so hard for ESFH.

If you think you can help, please apply, so we can all enjoy sharing family history together!

From the Treasurer – Tanya Sewell



The ESFH accounts for 2022-23 will be ready in the next few weeks but I wanted to inform members of some of the details. Our membership has sadly seen a drop in numbers over the past 2 years and although COVID-19 resulted in an increased membership to over 2,000 we are now seeing our numbers return to a pre-COVID-19 level of around 1,600 which is a loss of over 8% income. The expenses of the Society have also seen an increase especially regarding the production of our magazine, The Essex Family HISTORIAN.

Approximately 600 UK members pay an additional £8 fee for a hard copy of the magazine and 150 overseas members pay an additional £17. The cost to produce the magazine now exceeds the additional £8 UK members pay to receive a hard copy. The Executive Committee will be considering the impact on the Society finances over the coming months. We introduced the £3 entry charge to everyone attending a live meeting last November with the hope that the income would cover the expense of hall hire. Unfortunately, this has

not been successful and money taken on the door has not covered the costs incurred during the six months trial period. Difficult financial decisions will have to be made by the Executive Committee over the coming months as we try to sustain our costs to protect our Society thus ensuring our continuance into the next 50 years.

MILITARY DAY

Saturday, 16 September 2023
at Galleywood Heritage Centre
The Common, Galleywood, Chelmsford, CM2 8TR
Everyone welcome - Tickets available from
www.eventbrite.co.uk

Morning speaker 10.30am

Paul Nixon

Paul has been researching various aspects of the British Army for over 40 years with a particular interest in campaigns between 1854 and 1918. He has also authored a number of military blogs and websites.

"Tommy this an' Tommy that"
plus 1:1 sessions in the afternoon

Afternoon speaker 1.30pm

Mike Brown

Mike has written or collaborated on 24 books about the Second World War and his television credits include Time Team and Timewatch. He gives talks on WWII, evacuees and the lives of children in WWII and the Spanish Civil War.

The "Real Dad's Army"

Historic Military Vehicles

For further information about The Essex Society for Family History please visit
www.esfh.org.uk
or contact honsec@esfh.org.uk

We have experts on:

- * The Western Front Association
- * The Commonwealth War Graves
- * The Malayan Emergency
- * 44th East Essex Regiment
- * Essex Airfields
- * Help with Military Brick Walls and Medals
- * ESFH membership enquiries

There will also be a secondhand military book stall

Experts may be subject to change without notice

Come and meet *Adam Culling* who will be selling copies of his new book *"Essex's Military Heritage"*

10am – 3pm

FREE PARKING

Public car park on Galleywood Common, Margaretting Road - turn left just before the Galleywood Heritage Centre. You can then enter GHC by the side gate

PREBOOKED

Members £5
Visitors/Guests £6

ON THE DAY

Members £8
Visitors/Guests £9



Meet Adam Culling at our Military Day event.

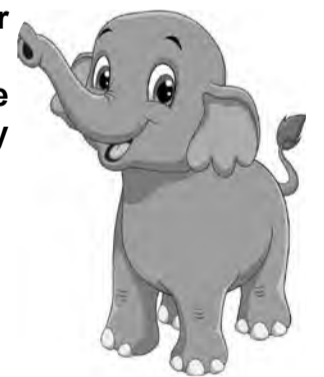
Read a review of his book on Page 5

Remember! Remember! 29th September!

Why?

It's the closing copy date for your articles, anecdotes, photos and comments for the December 2023 issue of your membership magazine – The Essex Family HISTORIAN.

Don't delay contact the Editor straight away!



Essex Society for Family History -

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

HAVE YOUR SAY

The Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held on **Saturday 21st October 2023 at 1.30pm** at The Galleywood Centre, The Common (off Margaretting Road) Galleywood Chelmsford CM2 8TR

It will also be held online and you will be notified by email before the event with details of the Zoom link to participate in the event.

Nominations for the Honorary Officers and Members of the Executive Committee, signed by two paid-up members of the Society, should be sent by email to the Secretary, Meryl Rawlings at honsec@esfh.org.uk to be received not less than 28 days before the date of the meeting.

Nomination forms are available from the Secretary or can be downloaded from the ESFH website under the Members Menu ⇒ Document Repository ⇒ Forms ⇒ Nomination for Officers & Executive Committee (esfh06)

Can you lend a hand at your Society?



MAGAZINE EDITOR

We are looking for a volunteer to act as Editor for our membership magazine, The Essex Family HISTORIAN. At present there are three editions a year which are available online and as a hardcopy.

Experience isn't essential as Colleen, the existing Editor will work alongside her replacement, with a view to the new person taking the role of Editor by mid-2024.

The family historian fulfilling the role needs to be IT confident, preferably with experience of MS Word, Excel and scanning etc. The role includes collation of articles, editing and proof-reading of content. Additionally, the new editor will liaise with members of the Executive Committee and attend bi-monthly meetings.

The new Editor will need to work in conjunction with our Production Manager, Ian Fulcher, to lay out each edition.

The role includes busy periods, typically just before each edition. However, there are many enjoyable aspects to this role including communicating with members and non-members, contacting authors and liaising with various organisations in the family history world, including the Essex Record Office.

To learn more about the role please contact Colleen at editor@esfh.org.uk or telephone 01245 429112 to have a chat.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED TO JOIN OUR SOCIAL MEDIA TEAM

Do you enjoy posting, tweeting or blogging? If so, the Society would love to hear from you.

We are looking for 2-3 people to join our Social Media Team. The ideal candidates will be those who have experience of posting on one or more social media platforms, such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok etc.

Fortunately ESFH is a very active Society so there is lots to post about. Guidance will be given, and there would be regular team meetings to discuss posts etc.

We are also looking for a content creator. So, if you are someone who has creative or quirky ideas for interesting posts that might increase public engagement around the topic of family history, we'd be pleased to hear from you.

Contact Toni Neobard:
tonifamilyhistory@gmail.com

VOLUNTEERS REQUIRED TO GET THEIR HANDS DIRTY (AND IN SOME CASES KNEES) TRANSCRIBING MONUMENTAL INSCRIPTIONS

ESFH need more volunteers to join our MI group to continue the important task of documenting the inscriptions found on Essex gravestones.

The information on headstones is vital for all family historians often giving details about the deceased that may not be found elsewhere. Volunteers are required for the field work of recording the headstones, the creation of documentation following up that work and the checking of the data against the field notes ultimately resulting in the MI Co-ordinator publishing the results. In some instances, we have photographed headstones and then transcribed the details.

You don't actually need to get your hands or knees dirty to help as, at present, we have plenty of data entry and checking work that can be done from the comfort of your home.

Make new friends and help your fellow family historians by taking part in this valuable work.

Find out how you can help by contacting Yvonne Tunstill or Mary Rix.

Yvonne Tunstill, Vice-President -
yt.monins@virgin.net

Mary Rix, Projects Co-ordinator -
mary@clapstile.co.uk

Paul Topley wins Essex Society for Family History Award 2023



'Never the Same Again?' Essex Labour Movement Activists in the 1984-85 Miners' Strike and After

Paul has contacted ESFH to say he is grateful to the Essex Society for Family History for its Award of £1000 to support his doctoral research at the University of Essex regarding the life stories of Essex labour movement activists, with reference to the miners' strike of 1984.

March 2024 marks the fortieth anniversary of the

1984-85 miners' strike, a convulsive year-long industrial conflict seen by many as a crucial moment in Britain's post war history. Even in Essex, a county without coalmines, this strike was important as the county has a long history of labour movement activism and has built traditions of solidarity with trade unionists taking industrial action.

He would like to hear from anyone involved in active support for the 1984-85 strike in Essex who wishes to talk about their experiences. He can be contacted via the following email: pt21105@essex.ac.uk

To read the background behind his research look out for his article in the ESFH December 2023 publication.

Shirley Harman

1937 to 2023

For some years I used to see Shirley almost every week at the ERO where she was 'Searching' and I was mailing out the orders for CDs. The Search Service that Shirley, together with Alan Hare and Joan Sextstone provided, was invaluable to many members and others who were unable to visit the Essex Record Office themselves. That this was so, was evidenced in emails and letters thanking them for their efforts in resolving problems that were otherwise unresolvable.



Ron Knight former ESFH Treasurer

Thank you for being there when I needed a good friend.

We shared some memorable moments and laughed at some of the impossible requests for help when we were part of the Research Team e.g. a 10 year search from America for a Thomas Thomas, in Wales, no parish given.

We replied that we needed more information as when we tried, we found that there were 10 Thomas Thomas's in the first quarter of the first year of search. The response was that Wales was a very small place.

Joan Sextstone Co-researcher

Shirley was involved handling the day-to-day research queries for a number of years and would sometimes tell me about the requests that were made - with people expecting that their tree would be researched by her! We enjoyed the main meetings in Galleywood Heritage Centre and would meet with plans for the day there, enjoying the talks and the bacon sandwiches. Shirley was a keen genealogist and through DNA made several discoveries that helped her own tree - discoveries that she would not have made through other means. She was also a member of the Great Baddow and Galleywood u3a's family history group and worked with me preparing exhibitions in Hylands House Chelmsford for the Open Estate Days.

She will be missed.

Linda Knock (ESFH 10154)

Shirley was a long-standing member of our research team joining the team in the days of Janette Scarborough. Looking back in the archive of The Essex Family HISTORIAN she is listed as leader of the research team in the June 2006 edition, a post she held until she retired, due to ill health earlier this year.

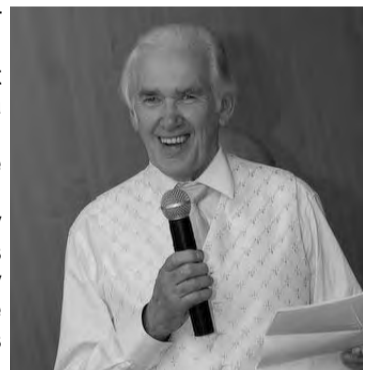
She was dedicated in carrying out her research duties, even during COVID-19, spending hours on her computer resolving queries sent in while she was in lockdown. I will miss her at the research room committee meetings.

Elizabeth Cox Research Centre Committee Chair

Christopher R Scrutton

27th July 1940 - 1st April 2023.

Chris was a volunteer at the ESFH research library when I first met him in 2008. He was a kind, quiet, unassuming man with a good sense of humour. He had researched his family tree back to the 1600's and had spent many happy hours at the Essex Record Office. As a volunteer he shared his knowledge by helping many other family historians with their research



Chris grew up on Wanstead Flats and then moved into central Leytonstone. Chris worked in insurance for many years then moved into auditing. In addition to loving football Chris loved local history and was a member of the Leytonstone Historical Society, the local history society for the Leyton and Leytonstone area of East London.

When Chris attended an evening out at the pub the Lord Rookwood, Leytonstone in 1959 he met Annette and they married in April 1966 at St. John's Church, Leytonstone. They moved to Brentwood where they lived for the next 50 years and were very happy.

Chris was an avid crossword puzzler and completed The Times newspaper crossword puzzle in a few minutes and had some of his own puzzles used by The Times. He was a real wordsmith.

Annette and Chris downsized in 2016 and moved to Chelmsford. Unfortunately, Annette became ill in 2020 and went into Broomfield Hospital, Chelmsford where she caught COVID-19 at the beginning of the pandemic and sadly passed away. Life was not the same for him after that. Chris's health deteriorated and sadly Chris passed away on the 1st of April 2023.

Chris and Annette leave behind 3 children, Ralph, Helen and Claire and 4 grandchildren Joe, Jasmine, Samuel and Ella who they loved very much. Chris will be sorely missed by friends and family alike.

I was glad to have met him and worked with him whilst fulfilling our ESFH volunteering roles. We became good friends and I will really miss him.

Terry J Bull (ESFH 6587)

Researching Halstead, Harwich and Manningtree?

<https://eurekpartnership.com>

See the latest booklet releases from The Eureka Partnership covering the Population Survey 1822 and 1827 for Halstead and the Harwich and Manningtree Wesleyan Methodist Circuits Baptism and Burials 1794-1838 and Baptisms, Marriages and Burials 1839-1865.

FORTHCOMING MEETINGS September to December 2023

Our talks and workshops may be subject to change so **please always check our website under the ESFH Events tab for the latest information.**

Look out for regular emails sent by ESFH to your inbox advertising upcoming events.
For the full address of venues check our website or the back cover of a membership magazine.

Date		UK Time	Title and Description	Speaker	Format of Talk & Venue
Sept 2nd	Sat	3.00pm	Discover Ireland's Vital Records In this session Chris will explore how to locate ancestors in Ireland using the civil registration records of births, marriages and deaths from 1845 and 1864 onwards, both online and offline. Chris will also look at the various church denominations in Ireland, how they were structured, and the types of records kept. He will also explore how to identify what has survived and what has not (and why), and to understand where Protestant and Catholic Ireland occasionally overlapped, with the role of the Church of Ireland as the state church.	Chris Paton	Online and at Harlow CM17 0AJ
Sept 2nd	Sat	2.30pm	Branch AGM followed by Don't Eat the Cabin Boy - A family story of detective work, bravery, shipwreck and service.	Toni Neobard - ESFH Committee	In Person at Westcliff SS0 7JX
Sept 4th	Mon	7.30pm	DNA Interest Group - Cracking A Case	Toni Neobard - ESFH Committee	Online
Sept 9th	Sat	2.30pm	Branch AGM followed by YouTube Presentations on Family History which David has found useful.	David Cooper - ESFH Committee	In Person at Colchester CO1 2FG
Sep 16th	Sat	10.30am to 3.30pm	Military Day 10.30am Tommy this, an' Tommy that' - A look at the component parts of the British Army, from the fencibles and militia, through to the regular army, Volunteer Force, Territorial Force and Special Reserve. Each had its part to play and Paul will explain what these roles were. 1.30pm The Real Dad's Army - Mapping the growth of the Local Defence Volunteers / Home Guard, and comparing this with the BBC television programme.	10.30am Paul Nixon 1.30pm Mike Brown	At Galleywood CM2 8TR
Sept 20th	Wed	7.30pm	Migration throughout the UK. Our ancestors sometimes moved great distances and this talk gives some practical advice about how to find these ancestors and why people moved around the country.	Debbie Bradley	Online
Oct 4th	Wed	8.00pm	History of Coggeshall Lace and the Families Involved - Sara has been researching into the making of Coggeshall tambour lace for a number of years with a view to writing a book on the subject. Sara comes from a farming family near Coggeshall and has lived in the town for 15 years. She has some examples of the lace handed down through her family. A former journalist, she is currently a textile artist, exhibiting her work nationally and internationally. Although a quiltmaker rather than a lacemaker, she is interested in all the textile crafts as well as in local history.	Sara Impey	Online
Oct 7th	Sat	2.30pm	Chalkwell Hall and its environs	Simon Deacon	In Person at Westcliff SS0 7JX
Oct 14th	Sat	2.30pm	Family History Help Session	ESFH Committee	In Person at Colchester CO1 2FG
Oct 18th	Wed	7.30pm	DNA Interest Group - Clustering	Trevor Rix - ESFH Committee	Zoom
Oct 21st	Sat	1.30pm	Society AGM		Online and at Galleywood CM2 8TR
Oct 21st	Sat	3.00pm	Manorial Records - The talk will detail information about the formation and organization of the manor and show the various manorial records which can be of great interest to family historians and which detail the everyday lives of our ancestors from the Medieval period through to the early twentieth century.	Ian Waller	Online and at Galleywood CM2 8TR
Nov 4th	Sat	2.30pm	Meet Henry VIII - Hampton Court impersonator offers a new slant on the life and times of Henry, including one of his wives, who was an Essex girl!	Tony Harris	In Person at Westcliff SS0 7JX
Nov 4th	Sat	2.30pm	Tracing a House History - Discover how to trace the history of your home and where your ancestors lived with leading house historian and author of 'Tracing Your House History'.	Gill Blanchard	Online and at Harlow CM17 0AJ
Nov 11th	Sat	2.30pm	Parish Register Transcribing - Come along and help with our Parish Register transcription project. We will be starting on the pre 1813 registers - parish to be announced.	Members	In Person at Colchester CO1 2FG
Nov 15th	Wed	7.00pm	Births, Marriages and Deaths in the late Medieval South Porch - Porches are a familiar and near ubiquitous part of the English medieval parish church. But why were they built and what were they for? This talk introduces three of their primary medieval functions – baptism, marriage and burial – and looks at the design and decoration of the buildings to understand how the architecture shaped people's experience of these important events.	Helen Lunnon	Online
Nov 16th	Thu	7.30pm	DNA Interest Group - Leeds Method - Read Dana Leeds method walk-through: https://www.danaleeds.com/dna-color-clustering-the-leeds-method-for-easily-visualizing-matches	Dana Leeds	Online
Dec 9th	Sat	2.30pm	Christmas Social	Members	In Person at Colchester CO1 2FG
Dec 9th	Sat	10.30am	Cribs, Cards and Christingles - The Origins of Christmas Traditions and Customs - A talk which explores how our colourful Christmas traditions and customs came into being and how they are celebrated. The presentation also includes some of the lesser-known folklore including Jesse Trees, Chrismons, and Wassailing.	Mark Lewis	Online

Appeal for Material

Phil Lines, a PHD student at The Open University contacted ESFH to say he is researching the interwar peace movement and conscientious objection in World War Two. He is keen to find interviews, oral recording, memoirs and letters relating to pacifists and conscientious objectors. If you know of such material, please contact him by emailing phillines53@gmail.com

Future Events

As a patron of VCH we are pleased to promote to members :-

Exploring Essex History in the 11th Century and Beyond

Saturday 23rd September 2023, 1.00 pm to 5.00 pm.

Galleywood Heritage Centre, Galleywood, The Common (off Margaretting Road), Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 8TR.

This forthcoming event celebrates the 120th anniversary of the publication of the Victoria County History of Essex (VCH) Volume I (1903). The beginning of the VCH Essex series contained several important essays on Essex history, including a multi-authored review of the county's natural history (in 13 articles) and, most famously, John Horace Round's influential text and analysis of the Essex Domesday, a major contribution to Domesday studies which is still consulted today. The VCH Trust is celebrating the volume's anniversary by presenting a set of talks which both reflect Round's Anglo-Norman interests and showcase some of the current work being undertaken by the VCH.

Programme:

1.00pm - Welcome

(1) Philip Morgan (translator and editor, Phillimore Domesday)

"Essex in Domesday Book"



Philip Morgan

(2) Neil Wiffen (Essex Record Office)

"Broomfield, Essex, and neighbourhood in 1086: A bluffer's guide to using Domesday Book for your parish history"



Neil Wiffen

3.30pm - Afternoon Tea and Cake

5.00pm - Close

(3) Philip Wise (Colchester & Ipswich Museums)

"1066 and All That: A hoard of 11th-century coins from Braintree, Essex"



Philip Wise

(4) Chris Thornton (VCH Essex) and Clacton VCH Group

"Harwich's overseas trade long before Brexit: Evidence from the Port Books in the reign of Elizabeth I"



Chris Thornton

Cost £15 incl. refreshments.

Pre-booking essential. Booking open from 1 July on EventBrite.com

https://VCH-Essex_Anniversary_Event.eventbrite.co.uk

For enquiries contact: c.c.thornton@btinternet.com

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Come and see ESFH at the Suffolk Family History Fair!



Saturday 14th October 2023

10.00 - 16.00

**Venue - The Hold 131 Fore Street
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Interesting sources beyond the internet

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Baxter Essex Burial Index 1813-1865

01245 346490
contactrita71@gmail.com

71 Vicarage Road, Old Moulsham
Chelmsford, Essex
CM2 9BT

Don't miss!

The Family History Show

2nd September 2023 10:00-1600

Kempton Park Racecourse

<https://the.familyhistoryshow.com>

The Oxfordshire FH Fair

7th October 2023 10:00-1600

The Cooper School

www.ofhs.uk

West Surrey FHS Fair

4th November 2023 10.00-1600

Woking Leisure Centre

<https://wsfhs.co.uk>

AS THE SOCIETY APPROACHES ITS 50TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2024

The world has changed dramatically, especially since COVID-19
by Trevor Rix, Founder Member of the Society

There have been many revolutions globally and in the family history world since I joined the ESFH as a founder member in 1974. These include: -

- * Computers
We are no longer restricted to recording our research on paper.
- * The Internet
We no longer have to travel to research.
- * Email Communication
Almost zero cost to communicate with people anywhere in the world.
- * Mobile Phones
We are no longer restricted to communications over physical cables. Small smartphones have greater capability than large computers of a few years ago. Mobile phones and apps are now the primary means of not-in-person interactions.
- * Databases
Vast quantities of information such as Ancestry, Findmypast, FamilySearch, FreeBMD. Interactive online family trees. DNA match lists and tools.
- * Websites
Contain millions of interactive sets of data available 24/7/365. YouTube has thousands of instructional family history and DNA videos. RootsTech and Legacy Family Tree Webinars etc provide thousands of talks/presentations/workshops.
- * Search Engines
Such as Google, Bing, etc.
- * Online Communications in Real Time
Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp etc. Live interactive video platforms such as Zoom, Skype. Live educational resources such as webinars, Facebook Live, YouTube Live.
- * Digital Distribution of Publications
Via email attachments, viewing and downloads from websites.
- * DNA Testing
Now as large a subject as family history itself.
- * Decrease In Costs
Family history used to be quite an expensive hobby as in travelling, accommodation, meals, purchasing birth, marriage and death certificates. Now it is cheap, comparing the huge quantities of information gleaned from subscription websites. Virtually no travelling. No wasted time.
- * Convenience
We now research pretty much from any location at any time to suit our lifestyles.
- * Increased Productivity
We can now accomplish research in seconds that used to take days.
- * Easy Assistance
It is now much easier and quicker for those with experience to help others by sharing screens. I have helped far more people during the last two and a half years than previously, both by one-to-one sessions and questions and answers in Zoom meetings.

During the evolution of each revolution, most of us had to learn new methods of researching our family history, or lose out and lag behind compared to the majority.

I live in Suffolk. The advent of products like Zoom, the online audio and web conferencing platform, has allowed my wife, Mary and I to contribute to the management of the Society that we could not do otherwise travelling to Chelmsford for meetings is not cost or time effective. Using Zoom we now have the ability to attend all ESFH meetings which is great. The same applies to those members in Essex who do not wish to or cannot travel to in-person meetings. The same applies to most out of county members and equally applies to all out of country members.

I have enjoyed far more social interaction since COVID-19 primarily via Zoom, Skype (software allowing users to be able to have spoken conversations over the internet) and emails. I have met people from all over the country and worldwide that I would not have met otherwise.

I have been researching my family history since the 1960s and DNA testing since 2007. I am now delighted to be able to share my experience with many members via Zoom and Skype. I can now easily teach beginners, and explain new techniques to those with some experience, from the comfort of my home, by sharing my screen to demonstrate and by viewing their screen to instruct and advise. Much easier and productive than face to face.

Since COVID-19, thanks to Zoom, far more people have attended ESFH meetings than was ever the case previously. In all cases far more people attended meetings on Zoom than in person.

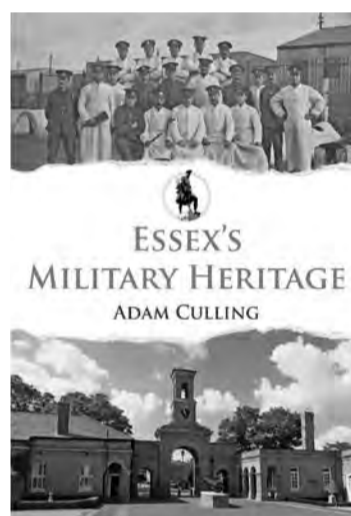
As we approach the 50th Anniversary of our Society in September 2024, more dramatic changes and progress in what we do are afoot. Artificial Intelligence, if implemented sensibly, could automate almost everything. Already Ancestry have started to assign paternal and maternal sides to our DNA match lists, with more refined assignments such as separating our four grandparent's lines coming soon. This will be just the tip of the iceberg as computing power, speeds and algorithms increase and improve exponentially. Us genealogists will of course need to continue to triple check everything that is presented to us, but that time consuming task should become much easier.

Exciting times are ahead!



Essex's Military Heritage by Adam Culling

Book review by Jessica Collie (ESFH 33446)



Recently released by Amberley Publishing, Adam Culling has produced a fascinating read that details Essex's military heritage. The publication is 95 pages long, with the majority of these including colourful pictures and also some black and white such as photos of soldiers from the Victorian era and the world wars. Although facing some struggles whilst researching and writing the book in 2020, Culling found more than enough material with Essex's rich military history, even going two times over his strict word limit in his first draft! However, these now succinct chapters against a clear white background and a clear font size makes it an easy and pleasant read.

No matter what period of history is your favourite, it is highly likely that at least one chapter will grab your attention and like me, spark interest in other periods of Essex's military history. This is because the book ranges from the invasion of the Roman force led by Julius Caesar in 55 BC, all the way to events post-second world war and leading up to present day. As well as those who have a connection to Essex and are interested in its military past, this book will also appeal to those who are interested in different periods of history which include but are not limited to the Romans, the Victorian era and both world wars. Although military history is not usually my topic of choice, as a keen history buff and having been born and raised in Essex, I was hooked by the numerous people and events that had a rich history in Essex, and which I previously knew little about.

Chapter one describes the invasion of the Romans into Britain, and the subsequent Roman invasions that occurred over the coming years including the conquering of Colchester, (then called Camulodunum), one of Britain's oldest towns. It also includes images of the surviving Roman wall and gateway, with the Balkeerne Gate in Colchester being the best preserved in the country.

Chapter four details the growth in military organisation growth in the Victorian era. One major factor that caused the recognition of the need for a more organised and trained army was the Crimean War of 1853-1856. There was also a surge of needs for small arms during this war and Culling describes the design and production of the Lee Enfield rifle as one of the most significant contributions from the Royal Small Arms Factory.

Chapter six chronicles how Essex was a 'hive of activity' during the First World War, where there was the recruitment and training of soldiers and the military camps. But it was not just British troops that lived in Essex during this time, as there were troops from many allied countries such as Australia, New Zealand and Canada that found shelter there.

I thoroughly recommend this book for an introduction to Essex's military past.

Available from www.amberley-books.com for £15.99. Tele: 01453 847800. Also available in Kindle kobo and iBook formats.

Meeting at South East Branch 1st July 2023

Mark Smith – Victoria Cross

Summarised by Tanya Sewell ESFH Treasurer and Toni Neobard (ESFH 32898)

A very interesting talk by Mark Smith, medal specialist from the Antiques Roadshow on the BBC was held at SE Branch on 1st July. There were approximately 70 people in the audience and everyone was listening intently. Mark began by reminding the audience that at 7.30 am, 107 years ago to the day men went over the top at the Somme. 9 Victoria Crosses (VCs) were awarded for actions that morning.

Mark explained Prince Albert and Queen Victoria's involvement in the creation of the VC medal including its design and that the medal would not be made of valuable metal but bronze because "it is not about its value, but what it represents". There have been 1355 VCs awarded plus another 3 that went to men who received the VC and Bar, the Bar indicating that they have won the VC twice. Mark showed one of the two he has in his collection which belonged to George Hinkley and is valued at £300,000.

Many jewellers refused to make the VC because it was to be made of bronze so the contract went to Hancocks & Co in 1855, a 5 year old business at the time, and they still make them today.

www.hancocks-london.com/about-us/victoria-cross/

Although it was reported in the press at the time that the VC was made from cannons captured during the battle of Sebastopol, this was untrue, the medals actually being made from a block of bronze. However, in 1907 this block ran out and Hancocks told the royal household who directed The Royal Arsenal in Woolwich to find two guns, captured in battle, that were made of bronze. Two Chinese cannons were found and the cascabel was cut off both guns to be used. One button had been completely used by 1943 leaving the second to produce future VCs.

The first awards were made to 62 recipients in Hyde Park on 26th June 1857 where a crowd of over 30,000 people attended to see Queen Victoria make the presentations. Mark told a funny tale of the first recipient receiving the award, Henry James Raby. Queen Victoria awarded the VC whilst on her horse and unfortunately the Queen's horse moved as she pinned the medal on to James' chest and he was stabbed by the spikes on the award and had to be carried from the parade injured. James Raby later quipped that he sustained more injury receiving the award than earning it!

Originally army recipients of the award had red ribbons and navy recipients had blue ribbons, however with the introduction of the airforce the ribbon became red for all branches of the military service. Under Queen Victoria the VC could only be awarded to men who survived their actions, but posthumous awards were made possible by decree of Edward VII in the 1900's.

Mark told many stories of men awarded the VC which were harrowing but showed the bravery of each and every one. The men mentioned were George Hinkley, Teignmouth Melvill, Nevill Coghill, Ben Roberts-Smith, Guy Gibson, William (Billy) McFadzean, James (Jimmy) Nicolson, Lionel Rees, Arthur Aaron and William Mariner. Mark also re-told the stories of the 3 recipients of the VC and Bar; Arthur Martin-Leek, Noel Chavasse and Charles Upham which were also humbling and heroic. You can read more about them online.

A number of people came and spoke to Mark during the break, and he kindly answered a several queries. One ESFH member brought in a Princess Mary's Christmas gift tin from WW1 to show him. Mark was astonished to find within it the original tinder lighter. He said that it was only the second he had seen in 40 years, and it was a real find.

It was a first class talk from an extremely knowledgeable and likeable man.



Essex Branch of the Western Front

Meet members at our Military Day on 16th September 2023

My name is Jim Kevany, and I am the Chairman of The Western Front Association (WFA), Essex Branch. The WFA was established in 1980 to maintain interest in the period 1914-1918, to perpetuate the memory, courage, and comradeship of those on all sides who served their countries in the First World War.

I assume that many members of the Essex Society for Family History have in the course of their research discovered that they had ancestors who fought or served in some manner in the First World War (1914-1918). Those members may wish to learn more of this conflict and how it affected the lives of their ancestors. Even those members who have yet to establish a direct ancestral link to this war my care to either extend or start their studies of this subject which affected a whole generation both on the battlefield and the Home Front.

The key roles of the Association are education and remembrance and there is a national branch network that helps carry out these roles. The Essex Branch has been in place since the 1980's and we hold monthly meetings providing a wide range of talks about various aspects of the First World War.

I believe that the WFA talks can supplement the research of the ESFH's members by providing some detail about the type of service, what life was like in the armed forces, what units did, where those units were serving and how they fitted into the grand scheme of the War.

Although the Association's title refers to The Western Front, namely France and Belgium, presentations cover all theatres of operation of what was a truly global war, on land, sea, and in the air. The Association also remembers the vital work that was carried out by those men and women who remained on the Home Front.

Of particular interest to the Essex Branch is the history of the major County units; the Essex Regiment (service on the Western Front, Gallipoli, and Palestine), and the Essex Yeomanry. Over the years the Branch has published books detailing the fallen from these units by Battalion.

We meet at two venues, one every other month: the Royal British Legion at Hornchurch, and the Village Hall at Hatfield Peverel, providing coverage to the north and south of the County. The meetings start at 8pm, there is access to a bar at both sites and we suggest that attendees make a voluntary entrance donation of £3.50.

Details of these talks for 2023 can be seen on the WFA's website at the following link <https://www.westernfrontassociation.com/branches/united-kingdom/essex/>

Attendance to meetings at both locations is very much open to those who are not members of the WFA, all are welcome.



The Branch provides a monthly e-newsletter giving details of the Branch activities and contains articles about remembering those who fell and other articles that may be of general interest. There is no charge for the Newsletter and if anyone, not just members, would like to receive it please email essexwfa@googlemail.com. Subscriptions can of course be cancelled at any time.

We also maintain a Facebook page which is regularly updated. This can be found under "The Western Front Association Essex Branch".

Membership of the WFA itself provides additional research information. Four magazines are issued each year containing a wide variety of articles. Membership allows access to an archive of trench-maps and Army Pension Records.

If you would like any further information on this war and how it impacted on your ancestors' lives, then do not hesitate in contacting us via essexwfa@googlemail.com.

STOP PRESS – St Peter & St Paul Church, Hockley 1823

Missing baptisms for the year 1823 on pages 34 and 35 from the digitised records have been tracked down by members Paul and Roger Stirland.

Day	Month	Year	Child	Father	Mother	Surname	Abode	Occupation	Notes
21	Apr	1823	Henry	Henry	Mary Anne	Watts	Hockley	Labourer	
04	May	1823	James	Israel	Mary	Howard	Hockley	Bargeman	
04	May	1823	Elizabeth	Israel	Mary	Howard	Hockley	Bargeman	
15	Jun	1823	Mary Anne	Richard	Jane	Wade	Hockley	Labourer	
10	Aug	1823	George Burgess	Robert	Mary	Wolfe	Hockley	Shopkeeper	
17	Aug	1823	Samuel	John	Sarah	Wallace	Hockley	Labourer	
31	Aug	1823	John	John	Phoebe	Baker	Hockley	Labourer	
07	Sep	1823	Lydia	George	Martha	Taylor	Hockley	Labourer	
07	Sep	1823	Mary Anne	Thomas	Sarah	Crow	Hawkwell	Labourer	
07	Sep	1823	William	John	Susanna	Stevens	Hockley	Labourer	
19	Oct	1823	Elizabeth	Edward	Catherine	Thorowgood	Hockley	Labourer	
19	Oct	1823	Anne Maria	Benjamin	Anne	Knightbridge	Hockley	Farmer	
16	Nov	1823	Sarah	Daniele	Sarah	Howard	Hockley	Bargeman	
30	Nov	1823	James		Mira	Smith	Hockley		base born
30	Nov	1823	Richard	Richard	Elizabeth	Quilter	Hockley	Waterman	
14	Dec	1823	Susanna	Aaron	Mary	Turner	Hockley	Labourer	