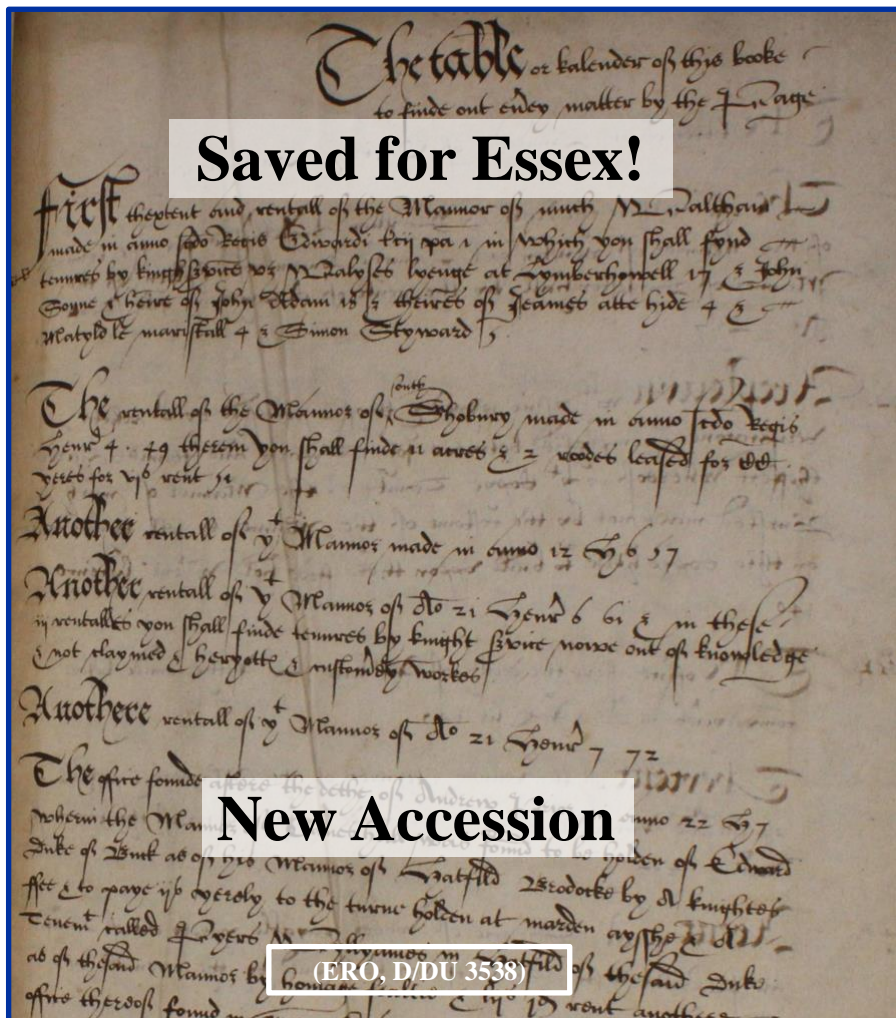


The

Friends of Historic Essex

Newsletter

Spring 2024



70 years of supporting the
Essex Record Office

Do we have your email address?

We are all aware of the escalating price of postage these days. If we have your email address we can send the Friends Newsletter and AGM papers to you electronically, saving both money and trees. If you currently receive these by post but are happy to switch to email, please contact us on friendsofhistoricessex@hotmail.co.uk.

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70 years of supporting the Essex Record Office

From the Chairman

Welcome to the Spring 2024 edition of the FHE newsletter. I am writing this piece in mid-June, and hoping that when it arrives it might bring you all some temporary relief from the coverage of the General Election 2024 campaign or, depending on your interest in football, the UEFA Euro 2024 competition.

As I have often had to report in the Newsletter, our attempts to acquire historical records for the archive have met with variable success. Nonetheless, when another part of the library of the late Christopher Foyle of Beeleigh Abbey came up for auction, the Friends committee and ERO staff were able to put together, at short notice, a consortium of funders including FHE, The Friends of the National Libraries, The Essex Society for Archaeology and History, and private individuals, to bid. There was an excellent result with the acquisition of four lots including a survey of the Rich estates, completed under Robert Rich, the 3rd Baron and first Earl of Warwick (c.1610). A fuller report about that important success follows later in this newsletter.*

As reported in the last issue, the FHE committee has agreed to support the ERO's proposed new Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) project "Open the Box: connecting communities through archives", which focusses on outreach and engagement, particularly in the Tendring area. I am glad to report that the Round 1 submission was successful (total HLF grant £60,700). There is now a development phase, for which the FHE committee were most pleased to contribute a further grant of £1,700 covering a shortfall in funding and thus ensuring the project could go forward. Our previously agreed major grant of £7,800 will fall due in the delivery phase.

FHE committee members have also continued to support the ERO events programme. At a fascinating and well-attended talk by Peter Walker on 'Chapman and André's map of Essex' at the ERO on 27 May, sales of books and reproduction maps raised £355. This is a wonderful addition to our funds, and we thank Peter for his continuing help. As you may recall, there were no University of Essex student placements in 2023, so following a request from the University and the ERO, FHE has agreed

to two for 2024. The students and their topics this year are: Rielly Kitchener (Frating Hall Farm Community) and David Perkins (Rayleigh and Hadleigh settlement papers); we hope to meet them and hear more about their research at this year's FHE AGM.

There is currently so much new activity, projects, applications, events and much more besides at the ERO, that there is insufficient space here to report on everything, but Martin Astell will give his usual full report at the AGM. Some of the developments that may be of interest to our readers are as follows. The ERO has successfully completed a mid-term review of its status as an Accredited Archive Service, for which we offer our congratulations. It has also teamed up with Museumshops.uk to make its publications available to purchase online for the first time: the link can be found at: <https://museumshops.uk/shop/essex-record-office/>. A new listening bench (following on from an initial project some years ago for which FHE contributed some funding) has been installed outside the front entrance to the ERO building, which will feature a range of recordings from the Essex Sound and Video Archive.

Finally, at the AGM this year there will be some changes to the Friends committee, as Janice Gooch (Hon. Membership Secretary), Sean O'Dell and Julie Miller retire, and I thank them for all their hard work on the charity's behalf. After a decade as Chairman, I will also be stepping down. I have immensely enjoyed chairing and representing the Friends, and it has been a real privilege to be part of the charity's important work supporting the Essex Record Office. In my view the Record Office remains at the heart of all that is best about the county's heritage sector, and I am hopeful that FHE will continue to play its part in ensuring the ERO continues to receive the support, funding and accolades that it deserves.

Chris Thornton

* It may be of interest to readers that Beeleigh abbey itself, is now on the market for 5.45 million pounds! Thankfully we don't have to raise that!

New Document Purchases

Supported by FHE Grants

Records formerly in the collections of the Foyle family of Beeleigh Abbey, reference D/DU 3538/1-6

Over the past year several sales have been managed by an auctioneer in Gloucestershire of property formerly owned by the late Christopher Foyle of Beeleigh Abbey near Maldon.

ERO bid unsuccessfully on two items in the sale of 27th September last year, and were determined to achieve some success in the follow-up sale held on 31st January. The Friends of Historic Essex's help was instrumental in ERO being triumphantly successful in securing all five of the lots on which bids were placed!

For one lot comprising late medieval title deeds, the Record Office is most grateful to two local donors in the Dengie area who – through approaches made on behalf of the Friends – very kindly committed funds that entirely covered the costs.

For the remaining four lots, the Friends have invaluable contributed a very sizeable proportion of the costs, including all of the costs for D/DU 3538/6, for which staff and readers alike will be very grateful as their usage and interest becomes apparent:

- Lot 1 – seven medieval deeds of Essex dated circa 1280 – 1437, contribution £596 (30% overall cost); catalogue reference D/DU 3538/2/1-7
- Lot 2 – ten medieval deeds of Essex dated 1456 – 1546, contribution £484 (30% overall cost); catalogue reference D/DU 3538/3/1-10
- Lot 16 – rental of Earl of Warwick's estates dated circa 1610, contribution £1392 (20% cost); catalogue reference D/DU 3538/1
- Lot 46 – manor of East Bergholt records, including rent roll of 1753, dated 18th and 19th centuries, contribution £868 (100% cost); catalogue reference D/DU 3538/6

We are additionally fortunate that the auctioneers had commissioned Christopher Whittick, archivist at Arundel Castle and formerly of East Sussex Record Office, to provide detailed descriptions of the medieval deeds. These are being incorporated into a catalogue which will be ready for usage by Friends and readers in the summer, once conservation work to mount deeds with seals has been completed.

The most important item among these is the rental of Essex estates of Robert Rich, 3rd Baron Rich and 1st Earl of Warwick (third creation), comprising 'Lot 16' in the sale, and a more detailed review of this item by Ken Crowe appears in this newsletter.

The Essex Record Office is also grateful to the Friends of the National Libraries, without which the very considerable outlay required in the current market to be able to make successful competitive purchases. However, match funding is required for the National Libraries, and there is no question that without the Friends of Historic Essex's financial and practical help we would not have been able to make these successful bids, which are the most important purchases made by the Essex Record Office for a very long time. Many of the records will be on display at the Friends of Historic Essex's Annual General Meeting on 13 July 2024 at ERO.

Postcards purchased at auction in Berkshire, catalogue reference D/DU 3531/1-126

This is an interesting collection of predominantly pre-first World War material comprising 126 postcards varying through street scenes, views and villages across Essex. The areas represented are very widespread but all within the original boundaries of the county, and include Brentwood, Colchester, Dovercourt, Frinton-on-Sea, Goodmayes, Harwich, Hornchurch, Ingatestone, Leigh-on-Sea, Rayleigh, Rochford, Shenfield, Shoeburyness, Southend-on-Sea, St-Osyth, Walton-on-Naze, Wanstead and Woodford. The original auction description highlighted the presence of an image of the New Zealand convalescent camp in Hornchurch, a fascinating first world war camp from 1916 to 1919, now listed as D/DU 3531/50. All 126 postcards have been catalogued by project archivist Lara Kirkland (see p.17), and descriptions appear on Essex Archives Online, although thumbnail images are not yet available.

Whilst the Essex Record Office does not often seek to acquire by purchase single or small numbers of postcards, a large collection such as this contains many rare images, and indeed the Record Office received recommendation of their historic interest via a former service manager. We were successful at Loddon Auctions on 29th November last year with £250 hammer plus £71 premium and postage, for which we are most grateful to the Friends of Historic Essex in supporting the full costs.

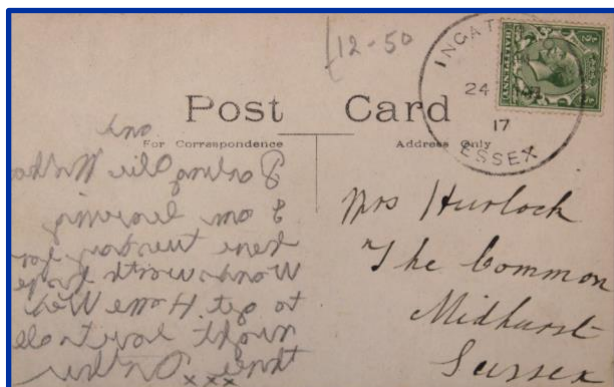
Court book of the Manor of Orsett, catalogue reference D/DU 3503/1

On 30th September last year ERO was successful at an auction held at Bateman's in Stamford, Lincolnshire, in acquiring an important manorial court book for £600 hammer plus £174 premium and postage.

Almost all of the surviving records of the manor of Orsett were received at ERO from the Whitmore family many decades ago, but this particular book was an exception, having passed out of the family's control some time between 1897 and 1977. However, the existence of this late 1640s court book was known from a microfilm as well as from the Manorial Documents Register, which cryptically referred to it as at an 'Unknown Location', so this was an unmissable opportunity for it to come up for sale. For a fuller account of the contents of this volume, see Chris Thornton's report later on in the newsletter.

As ever, I would just like to give my thanks for all the support the Record Office receives from the Friends and all our donors.

Richard Anderson, Archives and Collections Lead, ERO



A message in mirror writing, on one of the postcards recently purchased by the Friends. (D/DU 3531/56)

Saved for Essex

A Survey of the lands of Robert Rich, 3rd Baron Rich (1559-1619)

This bound manuscript volume, from the library of the late Christopher Foyle, was purchased at auction on 31 January 2024.

THE BACKGROUND

Robert Rich was the grandson of Richard Rich (1496-1567) 1st Baron Rich, who was the first Chancellor of the Court of Augmentations, the body established to administer the lands and property of the dissolved religious houses. In 1544, when Richard Rich resigned from the Court of Augmentations, he had acquired over twenty manors, to which he had added another six by 1547. All of these had been owned by the dissolved houses. With the purchase of further manors, including Rochford Hall, Rich had become the greatest landowner in the county at that time. While he established his family seat at Leighs (Leez) Priory, his property empire was concentrated in southeast Essex, particularly the Rochford Hundred and Honour of Rayleigh.

THE VOLUME

The volume is made up of almost 500 numbered pages and is written in a number (at least three) neat secretary hands, in both English and Latin. Bound in leather boards, with an index at the front, it measures 471 mm high by 320 mm wide. It appears to have been very tightly rebound at some time, making it impossible to read some of the text adjacent to the spine. On the inside front board are two 'ex-libris' bookplates. The earlier is an armorial bookplate of Charles Montagu, Earl of Manchester, Viscount Mandeville and Baron Mandeville of Kimbolton, the volume being in the library at Kimbolton Castle. Anne, daughter of Robert Rich (2nd Earl of

Warwick) married Edward Montagu, 2nd Earl of Manchester, in 1626. The later bookplate is from the library of W.A. Foyle of Beeleigh Abbey.

The manuscript was completed in the early 17th century; the latest entry appears to be dated 1610, which provides a *terminus post quem*. It was probably completed before the death of the 3rd Baron Rich, in 1619.

THE SURVEY

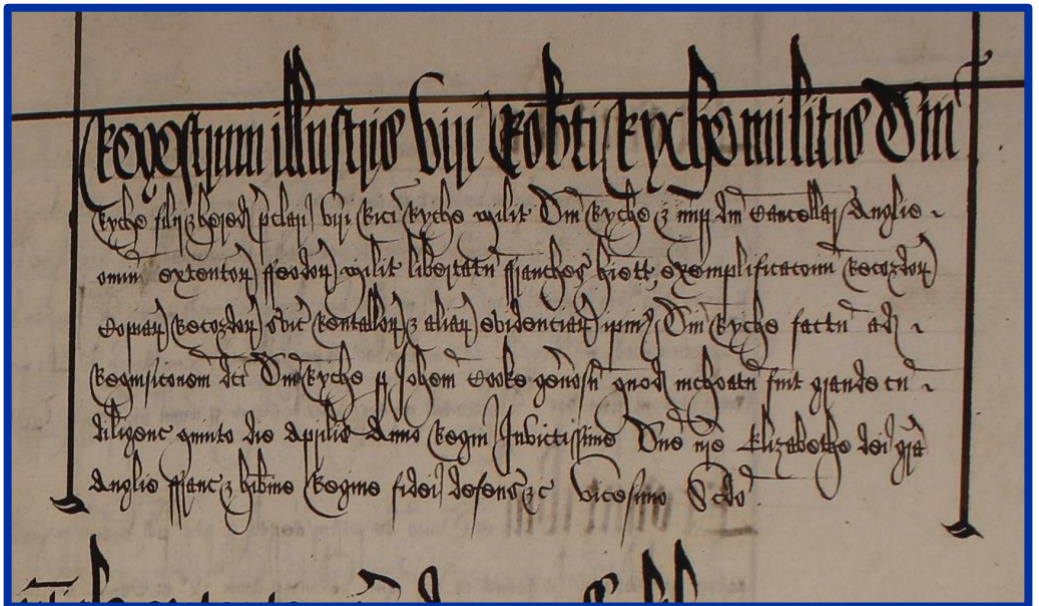
The Survey is headed *Regestrum illustris viri Rob[er]ti Ryche militis ...* and then ‘of all the extents, knights fees, liberties, franchises,rents and other evidences of the same lord Ryche made at the request of the said Lord Ryche by John Cooke...beginning on April 5 of the 22 year of the reign of Elizabeth (1580, in the year before he acceded to the title).



**A venerable researcher taking a sneak-peek at a venerable tome.
FHE Vice Chair, Ken Crowe, examines the Robert Rich survey
recently purchased for the Record Office.**

The survey begins with *thextent and rental of the manor of Much Waltham made in anno secundo Edwardi III in which you shall find termes by knight s[er]vice*, etc. The survey accounts for the entire property holdings of Robert Rich within the county of Essex, including Great Waltham, Broomfield (Patching Hall and Wood Hall), Leighs (Leez), Braintree in the centre of the county; manors in the Dengie peninsular, including Southminster and Tillingham and towards the west, Northweald Bassett, Lambourne, Theydon Bois and Ongar, Magdalen Laver and Hatfield Broad Oak. The Rich manors and interests were concentrated, however, in the southeast, in the Rochford Hundred; the honour of Rayleigh had been granted by Edward VI and confirmed by Philip and Mary: all rights, privileges, lands, manors including advowsons liberties, franchises, profits, lordships, patronage, messuages, etc.

The purpose of the survey was not only to provide a complete list of all the properties, rights and income (from rents, profits of court, etc) held by Rich but also to detail the evidence underpinning the family's ownership. The majority of the manors acquired by Richard Rich were the properties of the now dissolved religious houses, which he was 'granted' by Letters Patent. He also acquired some by purchase, such as Rochford Hall, in order to consolidate his holdings in that area. His son, Robert and then his grand-



son, another Robert (first Earl of Warwick) inherited these properties and all this evidence, including the terms of relevant wills are carefully detailed.

There are some fascinating details throughout the survey. Including income from rents are listed those from ‘kedells’ (fishtraps) on the foreshore at Shoebury [fos. 53 ff.]; an account relating to Rochford mentions ‘where the demesne house shalbe buylded as is appointed or staked oute’ [fos. 232-3]. There are some details of named tenants relating to particular properties, free and customary, with rents payable.

THE SURVEY IN CONTEXT

So, how does this volume sit among other surviving Warwick/Rich archives held by the Essex Record Office and other repositories?

This volume is a rare survivor of documents relating to the Rich/Warwick estates. Lists of the family’s holdings survive from other periods, such as BM Harley 3959, a ‘recovery’ of the lands of Charles, Earl of Warwick (the last of the male line) which was produced to enable property to be sold to pay off debts; a terrier or rental (ERO, D/DU 514/29/21), of Robert Rich, dated 1577, giving the clear annual value of the ‘manors, lordships, lands, tenements and hereditaments...’. At a more detailed level are surveys and rentals of individual manors taken in particular years (and probably on a regular basis, but few have survived) such as those for Milton Hall (1591; ERO, D/DSc M2) and Prittlewell Priory (1600; ERO, D/DSc M10). A substantial archive of Warwick accounts is held at Alnwick Castle, among the archives of the Northumberland estates. These include a 1622 rental of the Honour of Rayleigh and other estate accounts and rentals of the Essex estates of Earls of Warwick covering the period 39 Eliz I to 1674.

This is a fascinating manuscript, providing a detailed account of the whole of the Warwick estates in Essex that will be of great interest to historians of the county in the early modern period, especially when used in conjunction with other surviving archives relating to the Rich/Warwick family.

Ken Crowe

Court Book of the Manor of Orsett, 1646-1654

This court book (D/DU 3503/1) was recently acquired by the Essex Record Office supported by funds from the Friends of Historic Essex. Nearly 40 years ago, in 1985, a photocopy of this volume had been purchased by the Essex Record Office (catalogued as ERO, T/B 483/1), but it is very pleasing that the original is now permanently housed at the archive. The court book is now available to view at the ERO searchroom, catalogued ERO, D/DU 3503/1. It contains a record of courts held 1 April 1646, 19 May 1646, 20 April 1647, 22 February 1648, 24 June 1648, 15 May 1649, 16 April 1650, 4 June 1650, 21 December 1650, 26 December 1651, 20 April 1652, 16 May 1654 and 26 December 1654 [title missing]. The volume is made of paper, but with its original parchment cover, and is foliated with entries on the recto side only. The courts are recorded in Latin, 1646–1650, but then English from 1651, as was typical in the Commonwealth period.

The manor had belonged to the bishops of London in the Middle Ages, but passed to the crown in the reign of Elizabeth I, and was later sold. The lord of the manor at the time of the court book was John Hatt, gent., whose name appears in the heading of the first court on folio 1. Hatt had acquired the manor in the late 1630s or early 1640s and held it until his death in 1658. According to Morant he was buried in Orsett church with a monument. He was succeeded by a son called Richard and a grandson called Piggot. The latter only having daughters, Orsett Hall had passed through marriage into the Letchmere family by the early 18th century (P. Morant, *The History and Antiquities of Essex*, Vol. I, 1768, pp. 222–3).

In the main the court book records the working of the Court Baron, mainly comprising surrenders and transfers of customary landholding. It will therefore be a helpful source for people trying to trace their ancestors in Orsett or the history of individual properties. In addition, the first few courts also included the Court Leet, indicating that the Lords of Orsett had been granted the View of Frankpledge and delegated public



**Extract from sheet 22 of Chapman & André's 1777 Map of Essex,
showing Orsett Fen and village.**

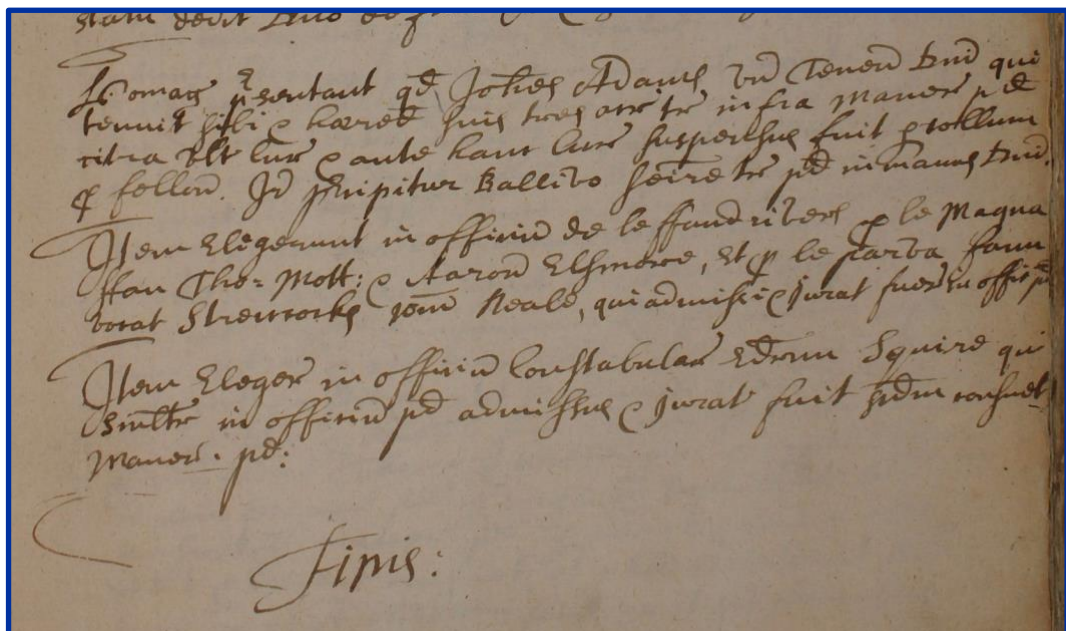
court powers probably earlier in the Middle Ages. However, there are very few entries and the Courts Leet do not appear to have met during the Commonwealth period. Perhaps they never recommenced, but other court records would have to be consulted to confirm that suggestion. Beyond the record of land transfers, the court book contains a few brief entries that provide some colour about the economic lives of the tenants, including presentments for offences such as cutting down trees on a customary holding without licence and failing to maintain hedges and ditches. In the case of illegal timber felling the result was an order to the bailiff to seize the customary holding to the use of the lord, as the timber would have been the lord's capital asset rather than belonging to the tenant.

Perhaps the most interesting entry in the courts for 1646 and 1647 was the election of three 'Fandriers' (drivers of the fen or common). In 1646 these were Ralph Unten and Thomas Neale for the Great Fen, followed in

1647 by Thomas Mott and Aaron Elsmore. Meanwhile Richard Daniel was elected for Strancocks Fen in 1646, followed by [?] Neale in 1647 when it was also described as the Small Fen. The change indicates that the manorial officials were elected for a single year, perhaps because the post was burdensome and unpopular. Such court elected officials were found on many Essex manors, typically to manage and regulate the use of commons on a manor where each tenant might have a 'stint' (an allowance of so many grazing animals). The commons might also be only grazed between certain dates, and the officials would be tasked with 'driving' the commons. Orsett Fen was a major landscape feature, the marshes at Orsett being recorded as Orset(t)efanne in 1402 and Orset(t)evanne in 1483 (P.H. Reaney, *The Place Names of Essex*, 1935, p.166). No doubt the depiction of Orsett Fen on Chapman and André's famous county map of Essex (1777) still more or less reflected the area over which these earlier 17th-century officials exercised their responsibilities.

Chris Thornton (with thanks to ERO Archivist Ruth Costello)

Extract from D/DU 3503/1 with mentions of Thomas Mott and Aaron Elsmore



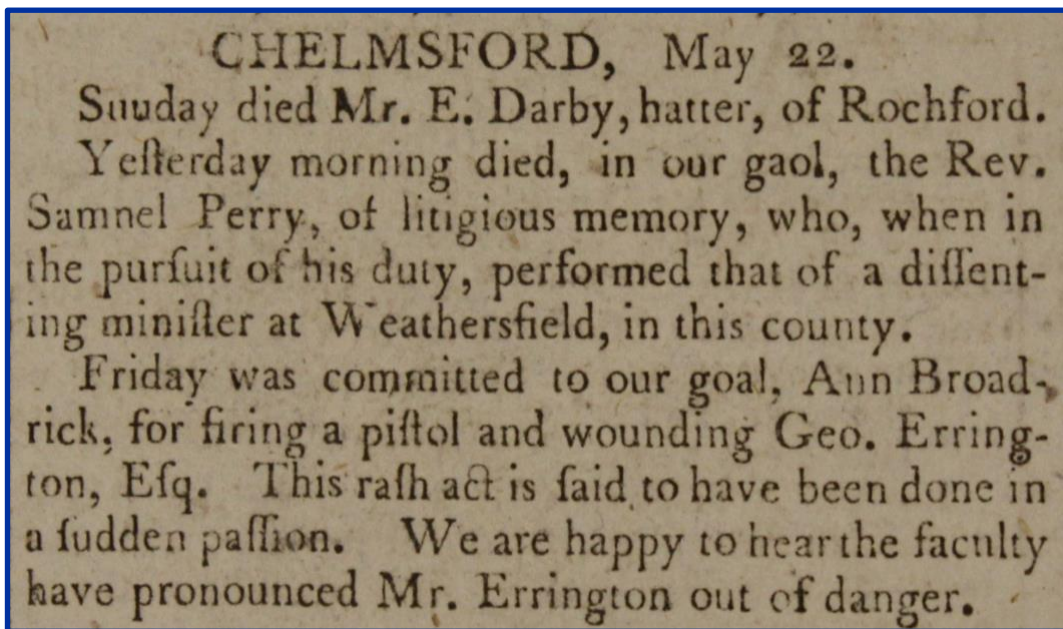
The Rev. Samuel Perry

‘of litigious memory’

The *Ipswich Journal* of 23 May 1795 noted the death of Mr Perry ‘of litigious memory’, in Chelmsford gaol. The report noted, with a rather ambiguous sting in its tail, that he had, ‘when in pursuit of his duty, performed that of a dissenting minister’ in Wethersfield. This account would seem to merit investigation.

The first port of call, of course, was the Essex Record Office online catalogue for Samuel Perry which had a single entry, D/DU 593/20, described as ‘Case for counsel’s opinion concerning a copyhold cottage & 2½ acres of land called Saffron Garden at Wethersfield.’ This was definitely a promising start and the necessary background was quickly found in British Newspapers online. This showed that Perry was no stranger to the Chelmsford Assizes.

How could this short entry in the *Ipswich Journal* not cause further research? (25/05/1795, p.2, c.3)



CHELMSFORD, May 22.
Sunday died Mr. E. Darby, hatter, of Rochford.
Yesterday morning died, in our gaol, the Rev. Samuel Perry, of litigious memory, who, when in the pursuit of his duty, performed that of a dissenting minister at Weathersfield, in this county.
Friday was committed to our goal, Ann Broadrick, for firing a pistol and wounding Geo. Errington, Esq. This rash act is said to have been done in a sudden passion. We are happy to hear the faculty have pronounced Mr. Errington out of danger.

What appears to be his first encounter is found when the *Ipswich Journal* of 5 August 1776 reported Perry's suit as a plaintiff at the same Assizes. The case concerned an encounter with a tax collector and the Wethersfield constable who had both entered his property to distrain goods for taxes that he claimed to have already paid, or that he was not liable for. The verdict was given in favour of the plaintiff, 'to the great satisfaction of the court'.

The next report is found in *The World* of 15 March 1790. Along with a co-defendant, Perry had been indicted for what was described as 'an unnatural attempt'. Some years ago, research by the late Derek Norman in the assize records at The National Archives revealed that this charge was the 'intent to commit the abominable and most horrid detestable and sodomitical crime, amongst Christians not to be named, called buggery', which explains why *The World* was being extremely circumspect in its report. At this date, sodomy was still a capital offence, but intent to commit it was not. Both men seem to have been acquitted, though there is some ambiguity about this as the assize records showed Perry was brought out of prison to have his sentence reviewed at the summer session in 1794. However it seems likely that this incarceration was related to an entirely different offence, perhaps arising from the forgery and libel charges of October 1793 (see below), at which time he must have been at liberty.

The newspaper record is quiet until the *Ipswich Journal* of 9 March 1793 reported Perry as a defendant at Chelmsford Assizes, charged with 'maliciously arresting and sending to gaol William Spooner, a poor labourer, under the pretence that he owed Perry rent'. Perry had obtained 'ejectments' (what we would call eviction orders) arising from his claim that Spooner's cottage, and its neighbour, were his property. Witnesses questioned this, and also reported that Perry had 'conducted himself with great oppression towards the two poor cottagers'. The judge agreed with both assertions, and told Perry's counsel to 'come to terms of accommodation'. It was agreed to pay Spooner the very substantial sum of £200 damages and costs, and his neighbour Mr Levitt (who had not been imprisoned) £10. Perry was also 'nonsuited' in the ejectment orders and ordered to pay the associated costs.

After such a heavy financial penalty, and a clear legal rebuff, one might think that Perry would have been wise to abandon his cause, but he was back in court in July 1793 with a further attempt to claim Spooner's cottage. The *Ipswich Journal* reported triumphantly that 'his cause was dismissed with the merits it deserved', but Perry was in the news again in October 1793 when he faced two separate charges in the Quarter Sessions of writing and publishing libels against two (unnamed) gentlemen, as well as a separate charge of forgery. No further details of these were reported, but it is likely that the forgery charge was sent up to the Assizes.

It is at this point that the ERO manuscript becomes relevant. It shows that Perry was determined to pursue his claim to the cottages at whatever cost – this amounted to two guineas for the legal opinion, but doubtless much more for the court fees, and what was due to his attorney for preparing the brief. This provides an abstract of title, commencing in 1729 and gleaned from the court roll, as well as details of Perry's actions to date, in order to obtain an opinion on the case from a Lincoln's Inn barrister. His conclusion, dated 6 March 1794, was that 'there is not sufficient Ground for him to expect Success in prosecuting his Claim ...'. The reason given was that, though he had been admitted to the copyhold of Saffron Garden, the court roll did not include the two cottages whose tenants had been granted rent free accommodation by their rightful owner.

Readers will not be surprised to learn that Perry was not deterred by an adverse legal opinion, and that he made a further attempt to claim the cottages at Chelmsford Assizes later that month. This was probably particularly unwise, as he was already facing an indictment for forging several documents relating to these properties. These charges were heard at the Assizes in August, and Perry was sentenced to 12 months imprisonment, as well 'standing in the pillory at Braintree' for one hour on market day. This form of punishment was steadily falling into disuse but was not legally abolished until 1837.

Even with Perry safely in gaol, his problems were not over. In March 1795 the grand jury at the Assizes were deciding on the merits of a further indictment concerning the fraudulent alteration of the lease of a piece of land in Wethersfield. The defendants were Perry and the publican of the Red Lion, and this case appears to be quite separate from the Saffron

Garden land. It was claimed that the words ‘ten years’ on a lease document had been altered to ‘thirty years’, and this was supported by the responsible attorney who noted that only the initial ‘t’ was in his handwriting, and that the rest of the word had been rewritten over an erasure. The documents were seized for use at the next Assizes, but the forgery never came to trial as the 65 year-old Perry died in gaol two months later.

In spite of what might be called his notoriety, Perry was clearly very popular amongst his chapel congregation who visited him in prison with food, and saw him as the subject of character assassination. After his death, one member wrote ‘I never knew or heard of a man whose actions were so misconstrued as his were. If he maintained his authority in his family, he was proud. If he was strict in his religious principles, and singular in his life and conversation, he was concise. If he contended for his right and property, he was covetous’.

One surprising feature of this case is how widely it was reported in newspapers across the country, often in almost exactly the same words, as if there was a central agency sending out copy to the provincial papers. At least the *Chester Chronicle* was more charitable than its Essex and Suffolk stablemates. When its 29 May 1795 edition reported Perry’s death, it identified him (not entirely accurately!) as ‘a poor curate confined for debt’.

Michael Leach

I am very grateful to Neil Wiffen for drawing my attention the death report in the *Ipswich Journal*, and to the Wethersfield History Group for generously allowing access to the research of their late member, Derek Norman.

**70 years of supporting the
Essex Record Office**

New member of ERO staff

Hello, I'm Lara, and I began working at ERO in September 2023. Last summer, I completed my qualification in Archives and Records Management at the University of Liverpool and ERO is my first post as a qualified archivist. As part of the course, I had a two-week placement at the British School in Athens cataloguing the papers of an archaeologist who worked closely with the school.

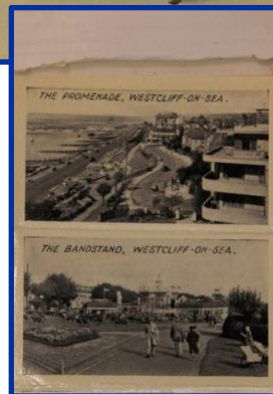
Prior to my qualification I was a volunteer working on the Horton Chapel Heritage Project in Epsom, (which you can find out more information about here: <https://thehortonepsom.org/the-horton-chapel-project/>). I was primarily researching the history of Epsom's unique 'cluster' of psychiatric hospitals and gained some archival experience cataloguing some of these records.

Since working at ERO I have engaged with a wide variety of records, including 18th century deeds, family and estate records, personal papers and maps and plans. More recently, I catalogued a collection of early 20th century postcards of different areas in Essex (D/DU 3531) which were kindly donated by the Friends of Historic Essex.

My undergraduate degree was in classics, so I am interested in all kinds of history. It has been great to learn so much about Essex's history so far and I am keen to continue expanding my knowledge.

Lara Kirkland

An example of a 1950s postcard from Westcliff that features a flap (you can just see an edge of it to the right-hand side of the donkeys) which, when opened, contains several smaller photos of the area. (D/DU 3531/115)



Easlea's Essex Roses

Gardening books which belonged to my grandparents include a detailed plant catalogue *Easlea's Essex Grown Roses Autumn 1931-Spring 1932*, from Walter Easlea & Sons Ltd of Leigh-on-Sea and Hockley. The catalogue claims that "Eastwood Roses are sent to all parts of the world" and "North, South, East or West, Easlea's roses grow the best". I decided to find out more.

Walter Easlea established his rose nursery on land which had been part of Picketts Farm in Eastwood, and he named it Danecroft Rose Nursery. It is shown on the 25-inch Ordnance Survey map 1922, sheet 82.16. The nursery is listed in *Kelly's directories* from 1911 to 1931. Walter and his sons, George and Maurice, both directors of the business, lived in nearby properties in Main Road (also known as Picketts Road, now Eastwood Road North), Eastwood. There are building plans relating to their bungalows in ERO (D/BC 1/4/13/36,109).

Walter Easlea & Sons were rose specialists and the 1931-32 catalogue lists a huge number and variety of Essex grown roses, which appear to have been very popular with gardeners. In 1911 Easlea supplied roses to The Shrubbery Gardens opposite Royal Terrace in Southend (D/DGs A70). A full-page advertisement in J.N. Hart's *Rose Growing*, 1929 states "we have been privileged to supply to the Royal Botanical Gardens Kew some of our recent novelties such as Amami, W.A. Bilney, Aphrodite, Thelma etc". An advert in the Palace Theatre, Westcliff programme in May 1932, was aimed at local customers: "Easlea's Roses. All British and Best ... Call and see plants in bloom at our Hockley Rose Nursery". The rose grounds (40 acres) at Vicarage Farm in Hockley were described as "new" in the 1931-32 catalogue.

My grandmother was a keen gardener and received a number of awards from South Benfleet Horticultural Society in the early 1930s. She was awarded 4th prize for roses exhibited at the Vicarage Gardens, South Benfleet on 2nd July 1932. Perhaps the roses were purchased from Walter Easlea!

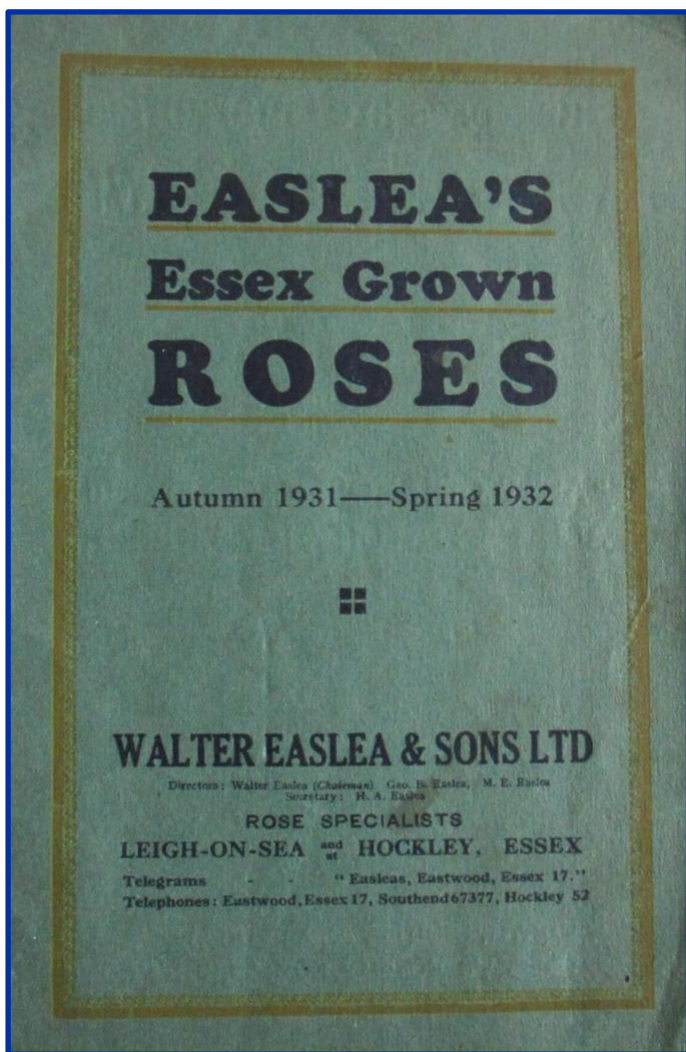
By the time of the 1938 revision of the 25-inch Ordnance Survey map, the rose nursery in Eastwood had disappeared and the area had been

developed for housing (street names included Danescroft Drive and Danesleigh Gardens). Walter Easlea & Son Ltd nurserymen were still listed at a property called Danecroft in *Kelly's* 1938, but their roses were presumably grown on the land in Hockley.

Walter Easlea's father, also Walter, had worked as a gardener for a rose-breeder in Waltham Cross, and it was there that Walter jun. developed his hybridisation skills. He was on the Council of the National Rose Society and contributed to H.H. Thomas' *The Rose Book* published in 1913. Easlea's rose business was wound up in 1939 on the outbreak of WW2. Walter died in 1945, aged 85 (information from an article in *The Rose Times* vol.1 June 2018).

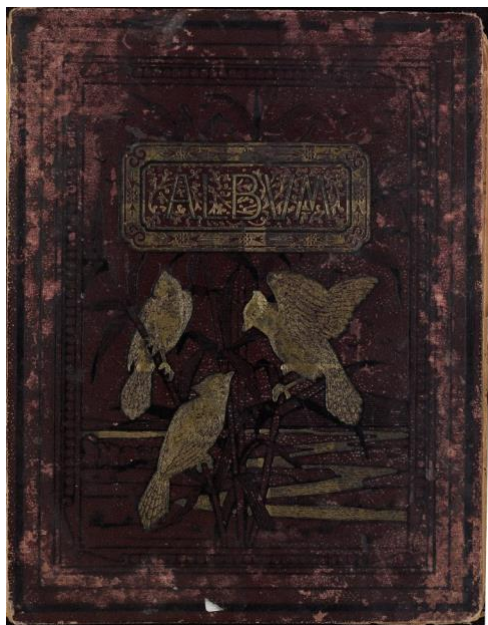
'Easlea's Golden Rambler' rose, which Walter bred in 1932, and his 'Thelma' rose, bred in 1927, are still available today, underlining the quality and popularity of his Essex roses.

Jenny Butler



On the trail of a Victorian Snapper

Last year, I started some research at the ERO on the Harwich Borough Police which existed from 1836 until 1857, when it merged with Essex County Constabulary. A member of the searchroom staff, drew my attention to the album of mid-Victorian photographs of Harwich (ERO, A13438, D/DU 2721/1), bought for the ERO by the Friends in 2012, as he thought it might contain a photograph of a Harwich police officer.



The album was produced from the store and, being shown it at the Searchroom enquiry desk, I cautiously looked through it. Half-way through there was a street scene with two men in top hats and frock coats. A magnifier was handed to me and I could then see that these were definitely police officers – the frock coats had the distinctive closed collar and double row of buttons of police uniforms for that time (overleaf). My whoop of delight caused an unaccustomed stir in the quiet sanctuary of the searchroom and was a topic of conversation among the staff for the rest of the week. A collage of

several dozen Harwich portraits included an even better image of a police officer, with the shape of the borough coat of arms clearly visible on his coat collar (p.22).

The first page of the album had an inscription of a name and address: *P G [something], Dovercourt Hall Lane, Hall Lane*. My best guess at the *something* was Denney and in a break from peering at Watch Committee records, I decided to find out who PG Denney was, in the hope that he or she would turn out to be the photographer. A quick search on FreeBMD for the Tendring district from 1840 onwards brought up several Denneys, so it was certainly a local surname but there was only one PG: Philip George, born 1904. Clearly, he wasn't the



photographer but had he lived at Dovercourt Hall and could the album have been created by an ancestor?

Further research produced the simplified family tree illustrated on p.22. The 1911 Census gave me Philip's parents: Thomas John and A M Denney, together with two other sons and a daughter, all at least 10 years older than PG (only the father's full name was recorded on the census form). Philip was clearly the son of a second marriage, as AM was shown as having been married for 15 years but with only one child from the marriage.

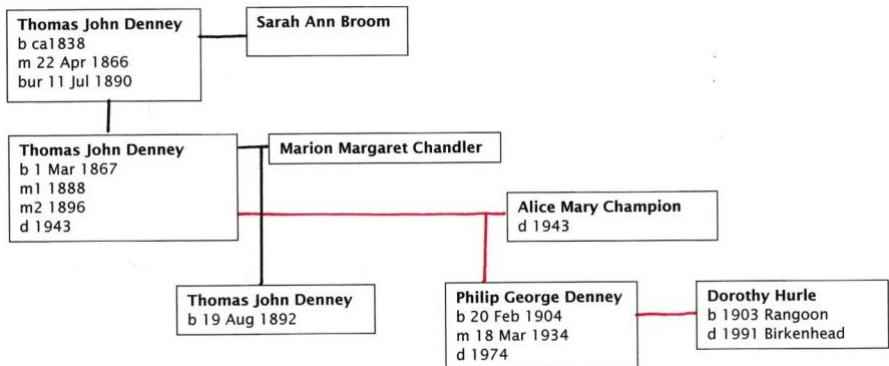
More records searched. Thomas John Denney was born 1867, father also Thomas John, mother Sarah Ann, and he married Marion Margaret Chandler at Tendring in 1888 and Alice Mary Champion at Camberwell in 1896. Some side research on PG's half-brother, also called Thomas John, found his mother's name: Marion Margaret, so I'm on the right track.

PG's grandfather was the third, or rather the first, Thomas John, born 1839, married to Sarah Ann Broom in 1866 and died 1890. Back to PG. He married Dorothy Hurlle in 1934 at Elham in Kent. The 1939 Register has an entry for The Garage, Fronks Road, Harwich:

Philip G Denney, born 20.02.1904. Motor engineer and garage proprietor. Harwich AFS [Auxiliary Fire Service] full-time officer

Wife Dorothy, born 31.08.1903. Unpaid domestic duties. Harwich AFS full-time telephonist.

Philip died in 1974 at Colchester, so my final check was on the Harwich electoral register for 1970: the residents of Dovercourt Hall were Phillip [*sic*] George and Dorothy Denney. Another whoop of delight: fortunately I was the only customer in the Searchroom that time.



PG's grandparents would have been of the right age to have taken the photographs, but, of course, I have no direct evidence for this suggestion. Philip may just have bought the album at a church jumble sale but I have at least added something to its provenance and I have two rare images of Harwich Borough Police officers to include in my projected book.

Martin Stallion

In recent months ERO has worked with Dr Senter, of the Essex VCH and author of *Harwich, Dovercourt and Parkeston in the 19th Century*, to use the knowledge accumulated during his researches to identify, where possible, the individual views that were captured by our 19th century photographer. Look out for the improved catalogue and associated digital images being made available on Essex Archives Online.



ERO leaver

ERO Manager Martin Astell wishing Archive Assistant Emma Moore good luck on her leaving, 20th December 2023. Emma joined ERO in February 2019 taking part in all the roles from the duplicate certificate service, document production, Searchroom duty and running the search service. It was in this latter job that Emma was able to put her palaeographic skills to good use. ERO wishes Emma all the best in her new job and look forward to catching up with her in due course.



Book Review

Richard Morris, OBE, *Sir William Addison Kt, JP, DL, FSA* (1905-1992) *Author, Historian, Jurist and Verderer of Epping Forest: An Essex Worthy* (Loughton and District Historical Society, 2023)
ISBN 978-1-905269-38-9. pp 99, £7.50 paperback, available from the Society at Forest Villa, Staples Road, Loughton IG10 1HP.

For me, Sir William Addison's name has always been synonymous with Epping Forest, but Richard Morris shows that Addison was knowledgeable in many fields, and participated fully in his adopted county. Each chapter deals more or less chronologically with a different aspect of Sir William's life, including his upbringing in the Forest of Bowland, Yorkshire, which inspired his love of the countryside, and his

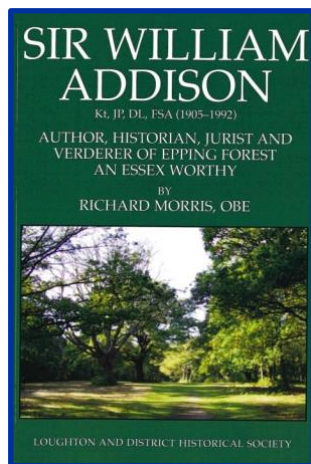
move to Loughton in 1936, where he and his wife bought a bookshop. In ‘Author and Historian 1947-1955’ Richard Morris shows that Addison soon became a popular speaker and a prolific writer, not only on Epping Forest and other parts of Essex, but on social history in general, with books such as *English Spas*, 1951.

In the chapter dealing with Sir William Addison as ‘Justice of the Peace 1949-1976’, we learn of his work on the Epping Bench, his interest in the local community, particularly in youth offending, and his active membership of the Magistrates’ Association. The chapters ‘Verderer of Epping Forest 1957-1984’ and ‘Portrait of Epping Forest’ have helpful detail on the background to the role of Verderer, and discuss issues such as grazing rights, woodland management, and motorway development, some of the problems which Addison encountered. Richard Morris, a Verderer himself for many years, adds comments and brings some of these matters more up-to-date. He also includes a considerable amount of material from Addison’s original manuscript, omitted when *Portrait of Epping Forest* was published in 1977.

Finally Addison’s involvement in many local history bodies in Essex and his huge contribution to Essex local history is discussed. He was Chairman of VCH Essex from 1964 to 1989, and was, of course, Chairman of the Friends of Historic Essex 1960-1963.

Richard Morris has included some previously unpublished material of Addison’s, including a chapter about the coast from the incomplete manuscript of *Essex Remembered*, on which Addison was working in the late 1980s. There is a transcript of a 1948 BBC radio broadcast when Addison talked about the beauty of the Essex marshes, and details of a recording in ERO’s Sound Archive of Addison giving readings about Epping Forest in 1967. This biography has made me regret that I never heard Sir William Addison giving one of his many lectures.

Jenny Butler



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