

# Colchester Archaeological Group



**BULLETIN**  
**Vol. 55 2015**



*Front cover:*

*'Archaeology in Action' - The Group's field-work team excavating the precinct of  
St John's Abbey, summer 2015 (photo J. Oldham)*

**Production Note:**

This is the first annual Bulletin to have full colour throughout. In order to achieve this, it has been necessary to reformat the Bulletin, with the Group's reports on activities split between the first half and second half of the publication, and the featured articles in the middle.

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*Please apply in writing to the Honorary Secretary*

## **EDITORIAL**

*Anna Moore, Editor (pro tem)*

Another eclectic collection of articles make up this year's Bulletin. A geophysical survey at Fordham preceded the current excavations, and the results are published here. An opportunity to dig at Smallbridge Hall, long of interest to this Group due to its connection with the Tudor Hunting Lodge at Wormingford, arose last year and a shortened version of the report is included. Many years of research into the route of a Roman road through the Colne Valley has resulted in a comprehensive report. Articles of general interest include a bog body from Sweden and research into the origins of a bottle seal found during the excavations at Marks Hall, as well as short notes on items of interest found during the year. Thanks go to John Moore who has done all the donkey work with the layout and production of this year's Bulletin. As already mentioned, the layout has changed to allow full colour illustration throughout. I hope you agree that this is a great improvement.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

*Philip Cunningham*

View from the Quarter deck 2015:

After months of sailing round in circles, we finally put the helm over and started the new season of musters at Roman Circus Centre. Not an easy place to find. In the event everyone navigated their way aboard our new berth. It involved a lot of hard work and allows us to sail closer to the full time Archaeologists, the work of the Trust and the new Centre.

The year has not all been plain sailing and at the start of the season there was nearly a mutiny in the digger ranks as they endured several months with nothing on the horizon, until we finally landed at Fordham and St John's. Again this was the result of a lot of planning by the crew and perhaps a sign of things to come in terms of closer co-operation with Philip Crummy and Roman Circus Centre.

Looking back (with no more nautical metaphors) it has been another good year of events and activities. In April we did the Churches of Northwest Suffolk, the Weekend trip in May took in Lincoln, Durham, York, Binchester and a very wet Beamish. Mark took us round the town and we turned round our approach and this time watched the sun go down over Wormingford Cursus on the 22<sup>nd</sup> June. We partied at the Roman Circus Centre in July and took time to acknowledge and thank Pat Brown for her work with the group, on the committee and latterly on the publication of the bulletin. A few days later we did William Morris and Forty Hall in North London. We then published another excellent booklet on our work at Marks Hall, which you will need to buy to complete your set of the group's finest works (*see page 42*).

We funded one of the Roman Wall interpretation boards in Priory Street, which was finally unveiled in September by the Mayor.

It all adds up, but only happens due to the hard work of members and the committee who I would again like to thank on your behalf for all their time and effort. One of those is John Mallinson who retired from his position as Treasurer at the AGM. John first joined the committee in 1994, quickly moving up to Vice Chair the following year, then a term as Chair through to 2001. He then had a year's respite before another term as both Vice Chair and Chair before switching over to become our Treasurer. That's over 20 years' service completed on the committee, though we hope he will continue to help organize our fieldwork and most importantly, help produce the reports.

Take the time to read through the rest of the bulletin, both to discover what you may have missed and as a permanent reminder of the 'voyage' we have all been on (apologies - gone all nautical again).

## **COUNCIL FOR BRITISH ARCHAEOLOGY**

*Report by John Camp*

The CBA year can best be described as helping to do more with less.

The current economic climate brings threats to museums, archaeology services and statutory bodies in the archaeological sector. The Governments call for departments to plan for 25% or 40% cuts in their budgets will bring pain in the Dept. of Media & Culture which provides funding for museums. We are already hearing that three national museums may have to bring in admission charges, i.e. Natural History Museum, Science Museum and Imperial War Museum, Lambeth. Anyone who can remember the last time this happened may well recall that museums such as the Natural History Museum found that when they did charge for admission the sales in their shops and restaurants fell, negating the gains from such charges.

Museums are finding that their curatorial staff are being reduced and those remaining are not able to specialise in aspects of their collections resulting in poorer interpretation and reduced access for researchers and public alike. To help counter this, the CBA has established the Local Heritage Engagement Network to strengthen local advocacy, and develop connections with local stakeholders and interest groups such as schools, and local heritage groups, building a supportive campaigning network and connecting them to national organisations such as the CBA. The aim is for them to be empowered to influence local decisions on historic buildings and archaeology.

Cuts in budgets also threaten the system of archaeological protection. In Essex the council has established an arm's length consultancy, with staff previously employed in the Historic Buildings Section and this seems to be working well. Certainly, my own experiences of this new format in the Braintree District have been favourable. The CBA has advocated the need for organisations to work together and has supported "Heritage 2020" in England through the Heritage Alliance. Similar moves have taken place in Scotland & Wales. In the latter a recent publication has stated that archaeology and museums support the equivalent of 13,400 full time posts and contribute £1.1 billion to the Welsh economy. This is food for thought as surely these figures must be even higher in England?

Nationally the CBA has entered into co-operation with bodies such as the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and brought pressure on the Government which has meant that in July it announced it would at last ratify the 1954 Hague Convention to protect cultural property in the event of armed conflict, although when I pressed my MP he revealed there is no set date for this to happen! It is a pity it was not ratified at the time of the Second Gulf War when British armoured vehicles were based in an ancient Iraqi palace, although IS have done far more damage since! The CBA has also been pressing the Government to ratify the 2001 UNESCO Convention on the Protection of Underwater Cultural Heritage. This is particularly relevant during this period of World War I Centennial Commemorations as it covers wrecks, many from this period.

The CBA has also continued with its Community Archaeology and our own group has benefited from this when the public were invited to participate in our excavations at Marks Hall. This worked well giving people the opportunity to gain a better insight into archaeology and that participation can be fun. Our Group has also benefited from the Mick Aston Archaeology Fund receiving a grant towards the expenses of the St. John's Abbey excavations.

The Young Archaeologists Club has become one of five UK prize winners in Europe out of 263 nominees in 29 countries. The year has also seen the CBA celebrating the 25th Anniversary of its Festival of Archaeology which has given people the opportunity to visit excavations. The CBA has supported, along with 32 other organisations, the CPRE campaign "Landscapes for Everyone – Creating a Better Future" which highlights the importance of landscape as an asset to current and future generations and outlines

actions that the Government needs to take to safeguard the future of the countryside.

At the forthcoming AGM on 9 November, the Beatrice De Cardi Lecture will be given by Mike Parker Pearson, co-author of the latest CBA report "Stonehenge - Making Sense of a Prehistoric Mystery". It will be interesting to see in the light of discoveries at the nearby Vespasian's Camp, (the subject of a lecture to our Group last January by David Jacques of the University of Buckingham) what he has to say about the Mesolithic period.

The regional group, CBA East had a good year of events. These included a walk around Walberswick looking at 1940's defence lines and remains. Also in April there was a one day workshop held jointly with Historic England (the new name for the organisation regulating ancient monuments and historic buildings, which was previously part of English Heritage) on recording World War I remains. This was held at the Royal Gunpowder Mills at Waltham Abbey. The group is worth joining and is only £5 which includes a discount off the annual conference fee. Details can be found at [www.archaeologyUK.org/cbae](http://www.archaeologyUK.org/cbae).

The CBA's national bi-monthly magazine "British Archaeology" is well worth the annual subscription of £29. Alternatively, a subscription to the national CBA starts at £36 including the magazine and offers discounts on publications. Details can be found at [www.archaeologyUK.org](http://www.archaeologyUK.org). There is no doubt the CBA faces a challenging year ahead to combat cuts in Government funding both at national and local level. However, it has entered into a number of collaborative ventures and such tactics offer a way forward for archaeology and historic landscapes and buildings.

## **YOUNG ARCHAEOLOGISTS CLUB**

*Report by Barbara Butler*

The Colchester Branch of the Young Archaeologists Club has some keen members who are working on a bid for Heritage Lottery funding for some projects and trips in 2016. This will include a fun day in July 2016 organised by the young people at the Roman Circus Centre. Four of the volunteer leaders of the club are also members of Colchester Archaeological Group. The membership records and admin are now all installed at the Roman Circus Centre.

The young people thoroughly enjoyed their excavating experience in September, hosted by CAG in the grounds of the Officer's Club. Practical experience of excavating, finds identification, finds washing and soil analysis, the members have all added to their archaeological skills this year. We have also done experiments in electromagnetism, learned about Tudor food and made marzipan roses, played Tudor music alongside Colchester Waites and we've had a talk and practical experience in archery at Coggeshall Grange Barn. We've also studied the Siege of Colchester and made siege forts.

## **WINTER LECTURE PROGRAMME (PART 1)**

### **Homecomings: Archaeological Ethics and the return of Looted Antiquities**

David Gill, University Campus Suffolk

13th October 2014

*Report by Mary Coe*

David has been working for about 20 years on a project to locate and return looted items, to be found in museums in America, Europe and Japan who have them because they were for sale. David has been working with the police in Italy and Greece in order to identify stolen goods. Looting has taken place for many years and is now taking place at sites such as Palmyra, Syria. In 1990, by chance, an archive of photographs was found in Geneva which showed stolen items, both on receipt and when cleaned. This has been invaluable for identification purposes.

Bronze pieces from a Romano-British village at Icklingham were looted and sold to a collector in New York. The farmer who owned the land received no recompense. The Crosby Garrett Helmet was sold at auction. It was said to have been found in Cumbria but all context has been lost and there is no proof of the find spot. Whether or not the Elgin Marbles should be returned to Greece is a continuing debate. This situation is different in that we know where the marbles came from. David is concerned with items found since 1970 when many countries signed up to a UNESCO Convention regarding the sale of antiquities.

Italy has successfully retrieved pieces from North America, but less so from Europe. An exhibition called 'Nostroi' was held in Rome and then moved to Athens, displaying recovered items. Italy and Greece have been working together on retrieval. In the exhibition was a sculpture of two griffins tearing a deer which may have been a table base. It was looted from a probable villa site in south-east Italy and identified in the J. Paul Getty Museum through the photo archive. In the British Museum there are pieces from Iraq mostly collected by Leonard Woolley. The Benin Bronzes were brought back by the Benin Punitive Expedition, sent to avenge the killing of a British official. David raised the question of whether or not these and similar pieces should be returned. Syrian antiquities are on loan to a museum in America. Two statues were said to be from a Mithraeum in Tyre but were more likely to have been looted from Syria. Sculptures from Cambodia were auctioned in New York. These had no feet but at a Cambodian temple site there are bases with the feet.

Auctions of antiquities in New York reached a peak in 2010, with a value of nearly \$140m. The average figure is \$20-\$40m a year. About 85% of the items have no recorded archaeological context. Tiny fragments from a possible sanctuary site which was looted for many years were sold to raise money for the "Save the Elephant" appeal by the WWF.

The problem with retrieval is that many American museums believe that as they bought in good faith, they have a right to display the items. A Greek krater, bought for \$1m by the New York Museum of Art depicts a scene from Homer's Iliad. There were suspicions that it was stolen but it was difficult to prove. The breakthrough came following a raid on the Freeport in Geneva. Goods coming into a country can be sold at a Freeport and taken to another country without the formalities of customs. It was found that many items in museums belonged to Giacomo Medici. Photos of him standing next to his pieces were found and photos of the same pieces were found in Geneva giving the necessary proof. Through this means Italy has retrieved items from private collections and museums have agreed return when faced with the evidence.

Italy has retrieved about 200 items from America which represents about 1% of the photo archive. A number of pots by one artist were displayed in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. They are believed to have come from cemeteries in South Italy which tomb raiders had attacked with a digger. Another group in Berlin were possibly from one tomb

group. The Geneva photos were taken by polaroid camera and stopped in the 1980's.

The Getty Museum has a jug from Italy. A photo shows that it had been reconstructed from fragments. Investigations showed that pottery often left Italy by post in a number of packages, after being deliberately smashed. In a different scam, a fragment could be given to a museum, then over a number of years, adjoining pieces would be offered to the museum, at a price. This has a tax advantage for the seller in the American tax system. Also in the Getty Museum, there are pieces of wall paintings which have all come from one panel. They had been cut to fit into a suitcase. About 100 items have been identified as belonging to Italy but are still to be returned. Italy rewards cooperating museums by loaning them objects from properly recorded sites.

After his talk, David answered some questions. Stolen items are found in British museums but to a lesser degree than elsewhere. The Museums Association encourages knowledge of the history of any piece and a lack of money prevents many purchases. Giacomo Medici has been convicted but due to illness is not at present in prison. The curator of the Getty Museum was on trial, but it became protracted so the case was dropped. St Louis Museum of Arts acquired a mummy mask from a Swiss dealer. The Egyptian Government said it was stolen. The museum believed the excavator had sold it in Brussels from where it was sold to Croatia. The case was taken to court by the Government but theft could not be proved. The museum had taken the Government to court to stop the mask being confiscated but they dropped their case when the Government case was dropped.

### **An Introduction to Foreshore and Underwater Archaeology**

Sean O'Dell, Essex University

20th October 2014

*Report by Aline Black*

The main emphasis of this lecture was the difficulties and dangers in getting to underwater sites. Pressure on the body, particularly lungs, increases with depth. Even at 10 metre depth the pressure is double atmospheric. The amount of nitrogen in the blood increases with depth and can cause disorientation and sickness. Returning to the surface has to be done slowly, otherwise the diver gets 'the bends' when the nitrogen forms bubbles on the body which are painful and dangerous. The lecturer went on to describe what can be done to investigate at different depths and what might be found. At great depth, 200 metres or so, a pressurised submersible or a remote operation vehicle with no crew, surface controlled, has to be used. These are large scale projects, usually self-financed because they are very expensive. At this depth the visibility is usually very good but all that is there archaeologically are wrecks. These can be examined and may tell a story - the Titanic, the Bismark, the Lusitania for example.

At intermediate depths, 100 to 200 metres, the diver uses a mixture of gases for breathing. Wooden wrecks at these depths now have an accepted timetable for the decay seen, so helping to date them. Some shallower sites in coastal waters are where to find archaeology and use some of the techniques you could use on dry land. Underwater archaeology at this depth was more to do with position than stratigraphy. A lot of time is spent measuring with tapes, recording measurements on 'slates' (plastic sheets) using chinograph pencils. On small scale sites it is common practice to use fixed metal or wire grids laid over the surface from which to take measurements to locate the archaeology. Some coastal waters accessible to SCUBA divers are now starting to get protected status to prevent them being exploited.

The main problem in coastal waters and rivers is visibility. Off Scotland the visibility can be 25m to 30m but off the Essex coast it is very poor, and in rivers and estuaries 'It's often like working in a fog and all you can do is feel what's there'.



**Excavations of Early Bronze Age and Early Iron Age periods at Tell Tayinat, Hatay, Turkey**

Dr Fiona Haughey, Thames Learning Group

November 3rd 2014

*Notes by Jean Roberts*

Tell Tayinat lies on the south-west edge of the Anuq valley, on the east bank of the Orontes River in south-east Turkey. It is now a low-lying mound due to many years of deposits from the many rivers in the valley around its base. In the early Bronze and early Iron Age it was the site of ancient Kinalna, the capital of one of the Neo Hittite/Aramean city Kingdoms of Palistin (Patina). A temple was built on the mound in the 10th/9th Century BC, but was destroyed by fire in the 8th Century BC. Some excavations were carried out in the 1930s and the temple and palaces were found. These were re-excavated in 1999 and The University of Toronto carried out a survey in 2003, followed by excavations in 2004 and continuing until 2012.

Over the years, heavy basalt column bases were found, statues, mudbrick buildings, stone floors and stelae covered by hieroglyphs. There were also a full size standing lion, beautifully carved with a snarling mouth, one sitting on its haunches, a lioness and a Master of Animals, all from the early Iron Age. Bronze and ivory wall and furniture fittings, with gold and silver foil have been recovered. A cache of cuneiform tablets were uncovered, telling stories, lists of goods and the important Esarhaddon Succession Treaty, a treaty of the Governor of the land of Kullania, containing his exploits as well as a curse.

A large unique statue was found buried at the gateway into the city dating to the 9th/8th Century BC. This statue would have stood 12 ft tall, but only the top half, above the waist was well preserved and consisted of a bearded man, with curly hair and eyes made of black and white stones. He has two bracelets on each arm, decorated with lion's heads, a sheaf of wheat in one hand and a spear in the other. On his back is an inscription telling the accomplishments and campaigns of King Suppiluliuma.

Excavations are continuing subject to the ongoing conflict in Syria.

**Ming China Exhibition: Fifty Years that Changed China**

Luk Yu-ping

10th November 2014

*Report by Jean Roberts*

The Exhibition is running at the British Museum from 18th September to 5th January 2015 and has taken 5 years to plan and put together. Luk Yu-ping was a Project Curator but now works at the V & A Museum.

There are 5 sections to the Exhibition: Courts, Arts of War, Arts of Peace, Beliefs and Trade and Diplomacy, showing some objects we would expect to see, such as blue and white porcelain, lacquer furniture, cloisonné pots and Chinese scroll paintings, but there are also unexpected items from all around the known world, such as gold objects, silver, precious gems, paintings from other far eastern countries and an ancient copy of the Koran.

The Ming Dynasty stretched from 1368 to 1644 and was founded by Yuanzhang, the Yongle Emperor who reigned from 1368 to 1398. When he died there was a power struggle, leading to Civil War, but in 1403 there was a second founding and the capital was moved from Nanjing to Beijing, bringing the Emperor and the Court Officials together.

China had a large State Fleet, which travelled the known world to Africa and Europe trading goods, such as the precious blue and white porcelain, never seen before. This soon became an important part of house interiors and was very sought after, becoming the first global brand and a contact point between China and Europe. Until recently the

main archaeology in China has been directed to earlier periods, but the Emperors sent out their sons to found and control Regional Courts and here they were buried in elaborate tombs, some of which have been excavated and have revealed thousands of objects. One of the tombs revealed a complex crown, a robe, paintings and a game board and counters of GO, which we can see. Another one, the burial tomb of a Prince and his wife, contained 5,000 artefacts, including a gold Ewer, jade objects, gems and a blue and white porcelain dish on a silver stand, with a gold top.

International engagement with the wider world was achieved through warfare, trade, culture and exchanges.

The last object in the Exhibition is a painting by Andrea Mantegna (1431 -1506), of The Adoration of the Magi, showing a small blue and white Chinese porcelain dish, many years before the first Europeans reached China.

### **Industrial Archaeology in Essex: Past, Present ..... And Future?**

Tony Crosby, Chairman, Essex Industrial Archaeology Group

17th November 2014

*Report by Anna Moore*

The Essex Industrial Archaeology Group (EIAG) is now one year old and its founding Chairman introduced this presentation by saying that its activities are divided into three parts: Archaeology, History and Heritage.

Industrial Archaeology was first established as a discipline in its own right during the 1950s. In 1995 Essex County Council undertook a number of thematic surveys:

- to chart what exists
- to assess their significance
- current statutory designations
- prioritise for future management
- preserve through the planning process
- enhance the HER (Heritage Environment Record)

Regional Research Agendas were drawn up in 1997, 2000 and 2011 in answer to an urgent need to establish what was in existence. A number of achievements have been made, e.g. Bush Hall Farm Maltings, High Laver, has been sympathetically converted to housing; a survey of Grade 2 listed buildings has been undertaken; also surveys of Bishops Stortford, Dunmow and Braintree railways, plus Rayne Railway Station; the Jumbo water tower in Colchester has been upgraded to 2\* listing. Following surveys of industrial housing, a recommendation has been made to extend conservation areas, e.g. in Halstead to include the houses built for Courtauld workers; Marconi housing in Chelmsford has been added recently having been missed on the original survey.

The Essex Mills Group was formed by Essex County Council who owns seven historic mills in the county; it is, however, suffering from cutbacks and the care of mills is no longer seen as a priority. The European Route of Industrial Heritage (ERIH) was established to promote tourism and Essex has 11 sites listed on the route. Some sites are threatened with development, e.g. Riddleys Brewery, Marconi Wireless sites, Halstead Air Raid shelters.

EAIG has compiled a list of local groups looking after individual sites.

Future plans for EAIG include more research into railway lines, ports, the gas industry, rope making, power and explosives. English Heritage is starting a survey of the condition of Grade 2 listed buildings with volunteers and EAIG is hoping to be involved; test projects in Essex will be at Harlow and Clavering. Publications on the research projects are planned. EAIG would like to be involved in the preservation of industrial sites, e.g. the air raid shelters in Halstead built by Courtaulds for their factory employees, working in partnership with other groups, e.g. Essex County Council.

**Rendlesham Rediscovered**

Jude Plouviez, Suffolk CC Archaeological Service

24th November 2014

*Report by Ellie Mead*

Rendlesham has historically been identified as a potentially significant place because it is mentioned by Bede, writing in the 720's, as a *vicus regius*, a royal settlement, associated with an East Anglian king, Aethelwald and the baptism of the East Saxon Swithelm, in around 660. Suffolk Archaeological Service's work over the last few years has sought to find the evidence on (and in) the ground for this settlement. The latest archaeological exploration at Rendlesham has been a collaboration between metal detectorists, archaeologists and landowners.

The site at Naunton Hall had been investigated in the 1980s in association with the excavations by Martin Carver at Sutton Hoo. A Saxon settlement was confirmed at this time, but in the intervening years the site was subject to looting by 'night hawks': unauthorised metal detectorists. To counter this a systematic survey of the estate was undertaken by members of a local metal detecting group with finds being recorded to Portable Antiquities Scheme standards by the Archaeological Service. Magnetometry was also used prior to excavation in order to examine below plough-soil levels.

Finds distribution from detecting indicated several areas of Roman, two of which so far include a few late Iron Age pieces. A D-shaped enclosure ditch featured on the geophysics and excavation revealed some handmade Iron Age sherds together with 1st century Roman pottery. Another area produced a scattered horde of denarii deposited c 170 AD. In the central area a good range of Roman material has been found alongside Anglo Saxon and late Iron Age evidence. North of centre the Roman coin finds show signs of re-use: 10% are pierced and one has a series of punched holes. There is evidence here of the transition period between late Roman and Early Anglo-Saxon.

About 1/3 of the total metal detector finds are Anglo-Saxon in origin; they are located in the centre of the site and extend over 50 hectares. There would appear to be both burial and settlement sites in this area as indicated by dress accessories spanning the 5th to 9th centuries: in the earlier part of this period these may well have been buried with women as grave goods, whereas later on this ceased to be the case. The evidence of metalworking for a social elite is provided by scrap gold items, partially melted silver coins, unfinished copper-alloy objects and a lead model for casting part of a copper alloy sword fitting. Lower status items such as buckles, pins and bag catches also appear to have been produced on this site.

Evidence of trading is suggested by a find of six Byzantine low value copper coins dating to the late 6th or 7th century; this is the largest group from an Anglo-Saxon context in England. A great many coins have been found from this period, the earlier being Continental gold coinage (at a time when no coinage was being produced in this country) followed by the earliest English types. 165 silver pennies (*sceattas*) from the late 7th and 8th century were found scattered over the central area, as were earlier gold ones. The only English site with more Merovingian gold coins is the group from the purse in the Sutton Hoo ship burial. The Rendlesham site has yielded cut coins, a coin with a make-weight added, possible blanks and ingots: here is evidence that gold was circulating as currency rather than as a gift item and is also an indicator of a high status settlement. This is backed up by finds of gold and garnet jewellery, a sword fitting and a gilded copper alloy harness mount. All this points to Rendlesham being a major centre of luxury trade and manufacture.

Excavation began in October 2013, based on the aforementioned finds and also on magnetometry results, which latter showed two distinct areas: in the north more 'blobby' features and in the south more linear. Both these areas showed signs of agricultural damage below the current plough-soil, mainly due to sub-soiling, which can cause damage to features and also shift finds stratigraphically. In the northern area a

group of 3-5 plough-damaged cremation urns were found, together with burnt bone fragments, a piece of unburnt glass from a 5th century bowl and a burnt glass bead. Another of the 'blobby' features turned out to be an early Anglo-Saxon sunken featured building, containing a large piece of a small-long brooch, 5th/6th century pottery and some clay loomweights. A further trench revealed a second sunken featured building.

Conclusions from this evidence are starting to suggest a large area of settlement in the 5th to 7th centuries, with a cremation/burial area nearby. Coins and other finds of 8th century date would indicate that perhaps this then became an area for periodic markets where accidental losses were dropped onto the ground.

Excavation in the southern area across a linear feature revealed huge amounts of animal bone in a midden feature, and also a pair of ditches from the same period, possibly containing a wooden fence or palisade. Finds gave dating evidence for these features to the 7<sup>th</sup> or early 8<sup>th</sup> century. Early assessment of the bone shows that domesticated animals such as cattle, pigs and sheep were being supplemented by hunted animals: deer and hare, and some large bird bones may be those of hawks. Below the midden layer a Roman feature contained late Roman pottery. A final trench was dug in this area in Spring 2014. Metal detecting had produced two 8th century Anglo-Saxon silver coins but excavation found ditches containing late Saxon Thetford ware or later medieval wares.

In the broader context, Rendlesham in early Anglo-Saxon times, based on these findings, appears to have been a major productive site close to a royal residence, as may also have been the case at Coddenham. Ipswich at this time may have been a smaller centre, functioning as a 'gateway community' for foreign traders. From about 680 AD an increase in international trading and the production of English coinage meant that ports like Ipswich appear to have expanded at the expense of the economic function of rural estate centres such as Rendlesham.

Jude Plouviez was unfortunately unable to deliver her lecture herself due to laryngitis, but John Mallinson very kindly stepped into the breach. Jude was however able to answer questions from the floor. The archaeological work here is very much a work in progress and we look forward to future developments and conclusions.

### **The Bytham River System – a key routeway for early humans to visit the British Land Area**

Jim Rose, Visiting Research Fellow at the British Geological Survey  
1st Dec 2014

In a colourful and persuasive presentation, Jim Rose described his discovery 30 years ago of the sand and gravel of a buried valley at Castle Bytham, north of Stamford in Lincolnshire. Subsequent work by several investigators, notably the AHOB (Ancient Human Occupation of Britain) a 30-strong multi-disciplinary team, came to the revolutionary identification of human occupation at Pakefield 750,000 years ago, possibly even a million years at Happisburgh, far earlier than previously believed.

Jim described a river system then flowing into the North Sea including the Danish river, the Rhine, Thames and Somme, but also the River Bytham, rising in the West Midlands at Stratford-on Avon and flowing through East Anglia. The controversial identification of rich early human archaeology along much of its length including estuarial mud at Happisburgh as pre-, not inter-, glacial led to a complete rewriting of the glacial history of Britain. The Happisburgh discovery, widely reported with a major article in the Financial Times, included human and animal (bison, hippopotamus, lion, elephant, deer and other) remains, tools and butchered bone, all beneath glacial deposits.

The archaeology for all this was good, as was the identification of a Mediterranean climate from bones, plant, insect and carbonate precipitation techniques. The type of man, possibly Heidelbergensis, and dating were much less certain. The climate of Britain has varied greatly over the last million years, and it has been repopulated roughly every

100,000 years (our occupation of it only goes back about 12,000 years).

It is also not clear why no similar discoveries have been made in the Thames and Hampshire areas, apart from Boxgrove, near Chichester, which may be due to another river system. Nor have there been similar discoveries in Northern Europe. This is due to the severe icing there, with glacial movement eroding all vegetation, whereas Eastern English glaciers floated over the land without causing such damage.

Interesting studies of stream power for the palaeo-Thames, which glaciation diverted South, suggest heavy deposition in the Colchester area – close examination of Stanway spoil heaps was recommended.

'Homo Britannicus' written by Chris Stringer of AHOB (Allen Lane ISBN 0-713-99795-8) is a good read of this and associated topics.

### **Notes on Members Activities**

12<sup>th</sup> Jan 2015

#### **Cowlins 2013**

This is the Eastern-most field of Cowlins farm at Mount Bures. Cropmarks indicate a pair of parallel ditches with curved ends enclosing a number of oval or round pits. Denise Hardy spoke of the 2011 excavation of the Northern ditch of the monument when charcoal was found in the ditch with a carbon date of 3,570calBC. Further excavation in 2013 again came up with no evidence of burials or cremations on the site. There were many finds of flint tools including a Mesolithic flint piercing implement. Further excavation would hopefully reveal more.

#### **Possible Roman site at Fordham**

The discovery of Roman tiles in the fabric of Fordham Parish church has long suggested the presence of a substantial Roman building 'possibly a villa' somewhere in the vicinity. At the invitation of the Fordham Local History Society and with the permission of the Woodland Trust, David and Aline Black carried out a geophysical survey of a field in Fordham in 2014. In 1984 two Roman inhumation burials had been excavated in the area and a field walk in 2003 had recorded significant quantities of Roman pottery and brick.

Two techniques were used for this survey – magnetometry and electrical resistance measurement. These were explained in detail by David Black and are the subject of a full report in the Bulletin (*see page 14*).

#### **Goldingham Hall Bulmer**

Ashley Cooper's father discovered a Roman site on his farm at Gestingthorpe near Sudbury in 1947 since when he and his son have been gradually excavating a centre of Roman industry including bronze casting. Nearby at Goldingham Hall, Bulmer, as a result of deep ploughing Ashley Cooper has brought up dark soil areas and the remains of bread ovens, medieval pottery, oyster and whelk shells as well as animal bones.

A 1750's map of the Tudor Manor of Goldingham Hall shows the manor still standing situated not far from Belchamp Walter church. Finds from the Bronze Age, mid- to late-Saxon period and Middle Ages were discovered near the former site of the hall by the Stour Valley Archaeological Group, led by Carenza Lewis and supervised by Catherine Ranson from the Cambridge Archaeological Team. A six foot deep pit turned out to be an oven or water heating area. Fragments of millstone were also found indicating a milling area with bread ovens nearby. A padstone used for supporting a timber framed structure was also discovered.

The variety of work of the group made for a fascinating evening.

*Editor's Note: Winter Lecture Reports continue on page 34*

**GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY OF PART OF WOOLPITS FIELD, FORDHAM***David and Aline Black***Introduction and archaeological background**

At the invitation of the Fordham Local History Society, (hereafter **FLHS**) and with permission from The Woodland Trust, a geophysical survey was undertaken of an area 100m by 100m in the NE corner of the field centred on TL 930 277, the approximate location of an excavation in 1984 of two Roman inhumation burials (Essex Heritage Conservation Record 11951, 12596; Davies 1984).

More recently, in 2003, an archaeological fieldwalk by the FLHS recorded significant quantities of Roman pottery, brick and tile concentrated in the NE corner of the field. The field is not flat but slopes gently downhill towards the SE. The ground is very stony for Essex and, in addition to the quantities of Roman material mentioned above, contains a lot of flint nodules, some of them quite large, probably the result of glacial deposits. Fortunately flint, unlike brick and tile, is not magnetic.

In recent years the field has been down to pasture, grazed by cattle and sheep, but aerial photographs taken in previous years when the land was under cultivation revealed a number of linear cropmarks, mainly in the NE corner of the field. A more recent (1996) coloured aerial photograph by David Strachan (hereafter the **DS-AP**), showing these cropmarks can be found on the Essex County Council SEAX website, reference SMR number 12596.

**Appendix 1** is a copy of a Tithe Map of August 1827 of the fields around Fordham, which shows that, at that time, the current field was split into two, named 'Five Acre Woolpits' and 'Eleven Acre Woolpits'.

**Appendix 2** is a recent aerial photograph of the field looking NE. The area covered by the survey is in the top left corner of the field, nearest to the reservoir in the adjacent field.

**Method and results**

Two techniques were used for this survey – magnetometry and electrical resistance measurement. The magnetometer survey was carried out over the period June to August 2013 using a Geoscan FM18 Fluxgate Gradiometer. An E-W base line was established near the NE corner of the field, and grids 20m square running NS and EW were set out. Towards the end of the survey the grid size was reduced to 10m square in order best to fit the survey area to the shape of the field, whilst keeping well away from the substantial steel gate and fence that surrounds the field. Each grid was surveyed in a S to N direction along lines 1m apart, taking 4 readings per metre along each line.

**Fig1** shows the geophysical image from the magnetometry survey (hereafter the **magplot**).

**Fig3** is the same magplot annotated to identify the more significant features. The resistance survey, initially planned for Autumn 2013 but postponed because the ground was too dry and hard, was then delayed by the extremely wet Spring which left the ground too sodden. The survey was finally carried out in April 2014 with a TR Systems resistance meter using the same E-W base line and grid layout. Each grid was surveyed along lines 1m apart, taking 2 readings per metre along each line.

**Fig2** shows the geophysical image from the resistance survey (hereafter the **resplot**).

**Fig4** is the same resplot annotated to identify the more significant linear features.

**Fig5** is the resplot annotated to identify a group of broader features that do not appear on the magplot.

Fig 1

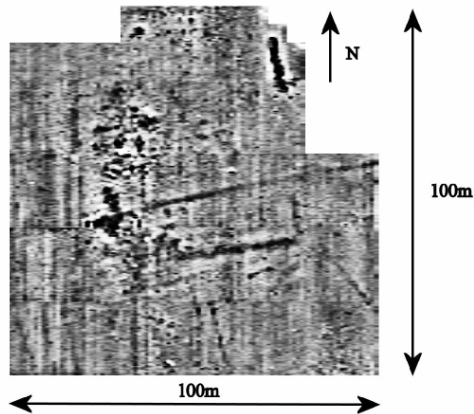


Fig 3



Fig 2

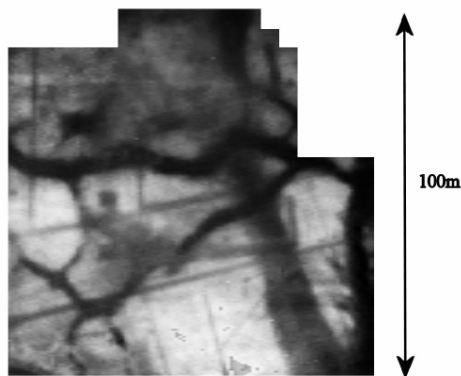


Fig 4

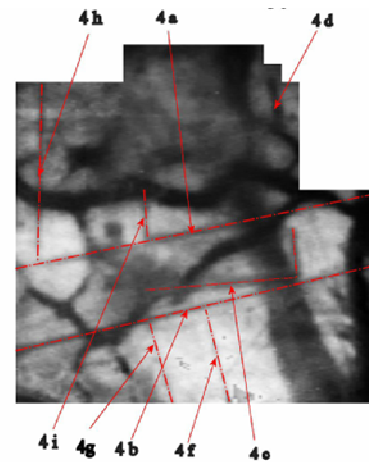
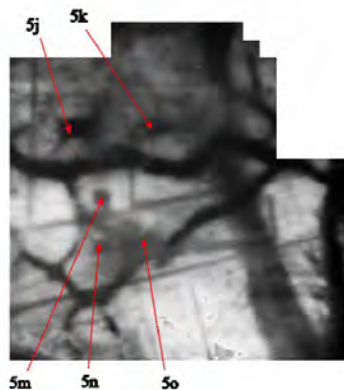


Fig 5



## Discussion

Throughout this report on the magplot **dark** represents a strong magnetic field; on a resplot **dark** represents low resistance. Using this convention physical features such as ditches and pits tend to appear as dark features on both types of plot. It is worth noting at the outset that most of the linear features on both the magplot and resplot are visible to some degree as cropmarks on the DS-AP referred to above.

The most striking features on the resplot, the strange dark irregular shapes, a bit like the roots of a tree in appearance, are almost certainly geological rather than archaeological in origin. (They can also be seen on the DS-AP referred to above.) They represent areas that have very low resistance, most probably caused by wet or saturated ground where the water is draining away down the field. (Remember that this

resistance survey was carried out not long after the wettest Spring on record.) The channels that this water is draining through may well be fractures in the ground that date back to the last ice age. Fortunately, these '**watermarks**', which are quite common in this part of Essex, do not completely obscure the archaeological features on the resplot.

There are two near parallel linear features on both the magplot and the resplot, running WSW to ENE, about 20m apart, that look like ditches marking the edges of a trackway or 'droveway'. On the magplot the upper of these two features (**3a**) is by far the more noticeable whilst the lower feature (**3b**) is hard to pick out. On the resplot both features show up well but, strangely, the lower feature (**4b**) is more distinct than the upper (**4a**). One or other of these ditches is probably the remains of the field boundary ditch between the two fields (Five Acre Woolpits & Eleven Acre Woolpits) shown on the 1837 Tithe map (see appendix 2). By comparing both plots to the DS-AP it seems likely that the lower feature **4b** is the better contender for the field boundary ditch, which has been deliberately filled in post 1837.

There is a large linear or 'L' shaped feature, about 35m on its longest edge, on both the magplot (**3c**) and the resplot (**4c**). Whilst this feature appears to be contained within the 'droveway' it is on a different alignment, which suggests that they were not in use at the same time.

In the top right hand corner of the magplot there is a broad linear feature (**3d**) which is strongly magnetic and is quite unlike any other feature in appearance. It looks like an elongated pit and the strongly magnetic appearance suggests that it has been subjected to burning. This feature appears much more faintly on the resplot (**4d**).

There are two faint narrow linear features on the resplot (**4f & 4g**) that look like smaller ditches and both appear to terminate at an angle of 90 degrees with the major ditch (**4b**). These two linear features are even fainter (**3f & 3g**) on the magplot. There are two similar linear features on the resplot (**4h and 4i**), that both terminate at the major ditch (**4a**) at an angle of approximately 80 degrees. Finally, there is a single linear feature (**3j**), only visible on the magplot, that terminates at an angle of approximately 60 degrees to the lower major ditch (**3b**). These five linear features (**h to j**) may be the remains of a series of ditched enclosures running on both sides of the 'droveway'. The most striking feature (**3e**) on the magplot, which does not appear at all on the resplot, is most probably caused by a scatter of magnetic material, such as brick and tile, on and near the surface of the ground. Whilst not definitive, areas of confused magnetic 'noise' such as this are not unusual on villa sites. Fortunately, this magnetic scatter does not confuse the the resistance meter and the resplot (see **Fig 5**) reveals the underlying archaeology much more clearly.

The roughly rectangular low resistance feature (**5j**) on the resplot is approximately 10m x 5m, whilst feature **5k** appears similar but smaller, at around 8m x 5m. There are two smaller roughly square features (**5m and 5n**), one each side of the upper major ditch (**4a**), and what appears as a more diffuse rectangular feature (**5o**) approximately 10m x 5m. This group of enigmatic features may simply be rubbish pits, albeit unusually large, but it is tempting to speculate that they may be Roman in origin.

## Conclusion

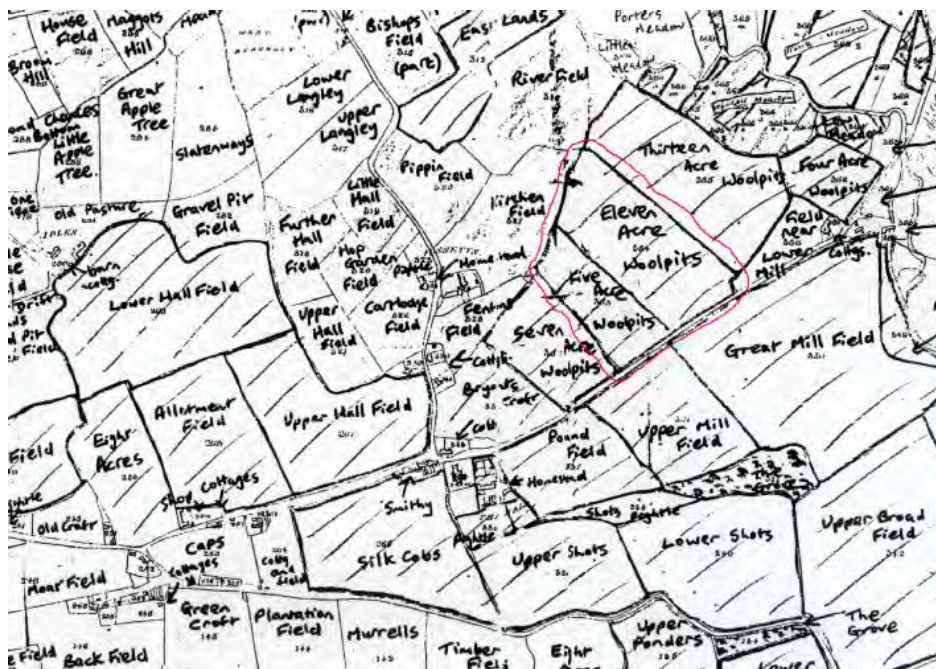
The discovery of Roman tiles in the fabric of Fordham parish church has long suggested the presence of a substantial Roman building, possibly a villa, somewhere in the vicinity. Whilst this survey has not discovered the site of a classic multi-room villa building, or indeed anything that is definitively Roman, it has located a number of linear features that suggest Roman ditched enclosures (but may be much later in origin), together with the outline of a more substantial rectilinear or 'L' shaped feature, and several unusually large pit like features.



## Acknowledgements

Our thanks are due to the FLHS for inviting us to carry out this survey; to the Woodland Trust for kindly granting us permission; and to the local farmer Robert Chamley who helps to maintain the field as open pasture by grazing his livestock on it (long horn cattle) - that seemed to find geophysics fascinating and thereby kept us entertained.

## Appendix 1



## Appendix 2



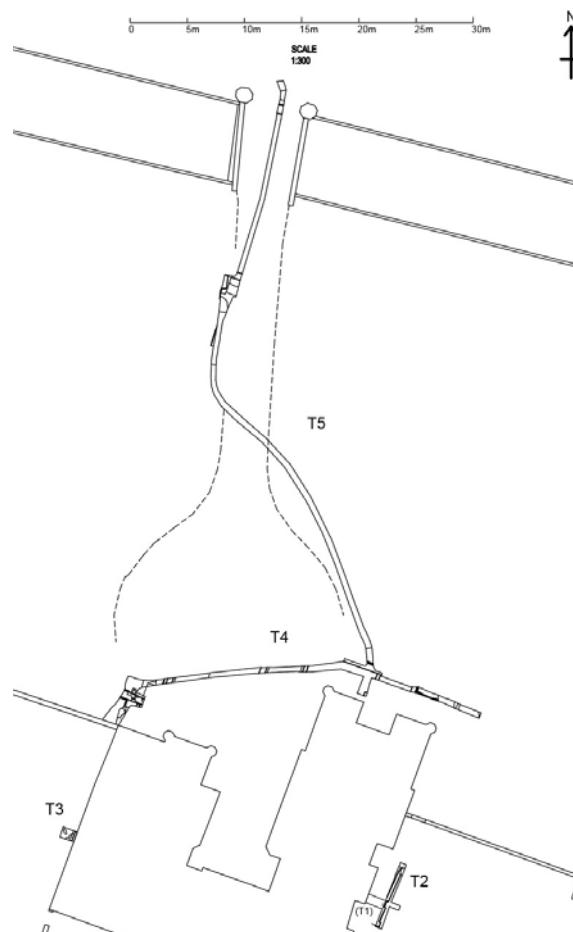
**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AT SMALLBRIDGE HALL, SUFFOLK, 2015***Felix Reeves Whymark***Site position, topography and geology**

Smallbridge Hall lies within the south-east corner of the parish of Bures St Mary on the boundary with the parishes of Nayland-with-Wissington to the immediate east and north-east and Wormingford to the south and south-east. The centre of the hall lies at TL 92933 33062. Broadly the site lies to the southernmost south-west point of Suffolk, just within the border with Essex which runs along the river Stour immediately to the south of the site.

Topographically the site lies on the north bank of a large bend of the river Stour. The ground level slopes gently down towards the river to the south, which flows past the site (and previously filled the moat). It is at the western edge of the 'Dedham Vale' in the centre of the Stour valley. The surface geological deposits consist of river terrace gravels to the centre and north of the site, and silty alluvial clay to the south around the Stour. River gravel was seen in previous excavation to the immediate east of the east chimney. The permeable and thus non water-retaining nature of the underlying geology makes the position less practical for a moat, which would have required a clay lining.

**Introduction and background to works**

Historical research on Smallbridge has been conducted by past and present owners as well as by local historian and historic buildings expert Leigh Alston, who has researched the medieval mill that stood nearby, the Hall and surrounding area. However, prior to summer 2014, no known archaeological work had been carried out. A test trench was excavated in June following interest from the owners, during below-ground structural investigation of the east chimney.



Plan of features showing position of trenches

Deeply stratified medieval and early post-medieval deposits were discovered, including part of a brick structure on a different alignment from the current Hall, with an associated floor and discrete features of a similar date. The trench highlighted the potential for similarly deeply stratified archaeological remains preserved beneath made ground layers elsewhere.

Groundworks involved replacement of drainage from the west and east sides of the hall to the septic tank outside the moat east of the Hall, as well as replacement of electrical cables between the farm buildings and the east wing of the Hall. Trench 2 and Trench 3 were monitored at the start of works in September, and all other monitoring was undertaken in October 2014.

### **Archaeological and historical background**

There is early evidence in the immediate area for a 'manor of Smalebrege/Smalebregg' in 1235 and 1310 and 'mill at Smalebridge' as early as 1090 and earlier (Alston, 1993, 8; 2014, pers. comm). Richard Waldegrave acquired the manor in the late 14th century, and was granted a license to crenellate in 1384. No records exist of a crenellated building on the site apart from an early modern engraving that the current owners hold a copy of, which shows a small area of crenellation on the west wall of the building. It is unknown if this represents artistic license or is accurate. It is likely that the fishponds visible to the south west of the site date from around this time.

The current Hall is thought to have been rebuilt around the mid 16th century, but must have been larger than the extant building, as 44 hearths are recorded here in 1674, over double the number in the present building. Some of these must have been represented by the north-south oriented line of buildings (shown on a 19th century map) flanking the northern approach to the east, which were demolished at this time, (now visible as rectangular cropmarks). It is suspected (Leigh Alston, pers. comm.) that these were a remnant of a complex of Medieval buildings flanking the northern approach, and that the current 16th century building is likely to have been originally larger, with wings extending to the east and west.

Prior works in the east garden (2014) evidenced deeply stratified (2.1m) deposits with 13th/14thC deposits at 1.2m below ground level, evidence of a Tudor or Late Medieval wall aligned north-east to south-west, and a floor associated with this projecting west, truncated by the footprint of the current Hall. Furthermore, underlying this were multiple thin habitation layers overlying a possible early London clay floor, and a buried medieval topsoil, itself underlain by large pits (undated). That the current hall sits to the east of centre within the moat itself points to the existence of prior buildings. Preliminary geophysics results in the west garden (Dennis) have suggested structures in this position extending to the west, (although research is ongoing). Trench 1 also suggested refacing work on the east chimney may have occurred in the mid 18th century, a time other alterations and repairs are thought to have been made around the Hall (Alston, pers. comm.). In the 19th century, a large model farm was built outside the moat to the north, flanking the northern approach to the west. Major restoration of the Hall in Elizabethan style occurred in 1874, and again in 1932, including the rebuilding of the east and west wings.



Wall plinth with glazed peg tile  
and upstanding mortar

### **Summary**

Monitoring works at Smallbridge Hall, Suffolk were carried out during replacement of drainage and electricity cables mainly to the north and east of the mid 16th century Hall. The earliest remains recorded were the flint and peg tile footings, clay floors and beam slot of a structure to the north of the current Hall. These dated to the 14th-15th century and were likely elements of a Hall 'complex', although the exact nature of the buildings could not be determined from the sections exposed. Later floors, layers and part of a brick structure suggested the structure was occupied into the late medieval and Tudor period, but whether the 16th century Hall replaced the structure could not be reliably determined. Demolition material from a brick structure overlying the building likely dated to the 16th-18th centuries.

The footings of another structure to the east were constructed of brick and peg tile and probably predated the current Hall. The west wing of the Hall was shown to have originally projected further to the north, abutting an earlier brick structure extending to the west, which likely represented the remains of an earlier Tudor or Late Medieval west range. Structures recorded to the north of here, south of the northern moat causeway were consistent with a Late Medieval or Tudor date and flanked many deeply stratified courtyard surfaces and built up layers to the west. The abutment and demolished arch of a brick bridge in line with the north side of the moat were preserved beneath the ramp of the causeway (which was filled in after the demolition of the bridge earlier in the modern period) and must have been of a similar date. These were very likely part of a gatehouse, the gateposts of which are seemingly preserved.

The full report can be read on website: [1drv.ms/1OPW2oQ](https://1drv.ms/1OPW2oQ)



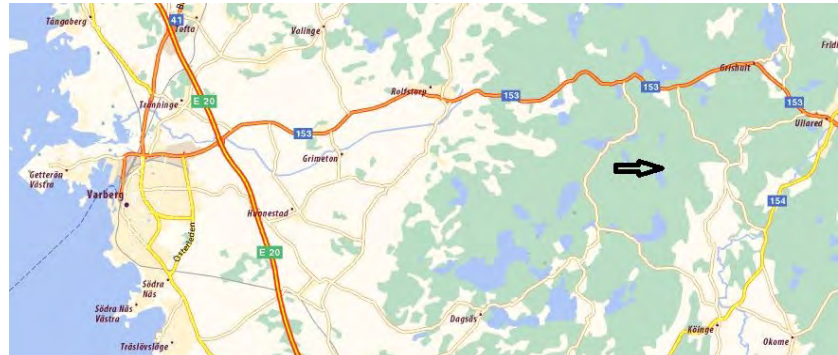
## BOCKSTEN MAN – MORE THAN JUST A BOG BODY

*John Moore*

One day, over six hundred years ago, a man was walking in a remote area north-west of the village of Svartra, which lies about 15 miles east of the town of Varberg. Varberg stands on the west coast of Sweden, just over 45 miles south of Gothenburg.



Map of part of the west coast of Sweden



Detailed map of the area in the rectangle (left), with the arrow marking the approximate location of Bocksten Man

The man was between 25 and 35 years old, right-handed, slim and just under 5 feet 9 inches (172 cm) in height. He had luxuriant curly hair and was reasonably well to do. He carried a fabric bag, a sheath and two knives. Who he was and where he was going we will never know, but he never arrived at his destination, for he was the victim of a savage – and fatal – attack. The assailant struck three blows, the first to the jaw, the second to the ear, and the third to the back of the head. This last blow would have killed him instantly. After death, three stakes were driven into his body, two of beech into his lower back and a more substantial one of oak through his chest (in an attempt to prevent his ghost from rising up and pursuing his murderer(s)). His body was then dumped into a shallow lake, which over time turned into an extensive bog.

Fast forward around six hundred years. A farm named 'Bocksten Farm' had been established in the area of the bog in the 1880s, from which time parts of the bog had been regularly drained for peat cutting. On 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1936, farmer Albert Johansson and his eleven year-old son Thure were harrowing peat when their machinery snagged on some cloth. On investigation, they found that the cloth enclosed a human head with reddish-brown hair. Convinced that he had discovered a recently-committed murder, Johansson reported his discovery to the local police, and on the next day a police constable and a doctor arrived to examine the body. They soon realised that the corpse was too old to be of criminal interest, so the find was passed on to Albert Sandkelf, the curator of the Varberg museum. He quickly assembled a group of experts, who measured and photographed the body before excavating it. The upper body of the man had passed through the harrow and was badly damaged, but the head and lower parts of the body were intact. Sandkelf contacted the Swedish Museum of National Antiquities in Stockholm and curator Gillis Olson and textile expert Agnes Geijer came to Varberg on 9<sup>th</sup> July to give Sandkelf advice on conservation. The unknown man acquired a name – 'Bocksten Man'.



The site of the discovery of Bocksten Man in 1936



Bocksten Man uncovered

'Bog bodies' are not uncommon, and it is estimated that over a thousand have been recovered and studied, although there are less than fifty remaining intact today. Their level of preservation varies considerably, but what they have in common is that they have been preserved in peat bogs. Unlike most ancient human remains, bog bodies generally retain their skin and internal organs, as peat bogs provide the conditions that enable natural mummification to occur: highly acidic water, low temperature, and a lack of oxygen. The skin is normally stained dark brown by tannins contained in the peat, but bones are generally not preserved, as the acidic water dissolves calcium phosphate, although the oldest preserved example of a bog body is the Mesolithic 'Koelbjerg Woman' from Denmark at around 8000BC (Fyns Oldtid Museum, Odense, Denmark), consisting only of a skull and part of the skeleton. A limited number of bogs have suitable conditions for the preservation of both bone and tissue, and most of these are located in the colder climates of Northern Europe. The majority of bog body discoveries have been in Scandinavia, Germany, Holland, Ireland and the United Kingdom. The oldest fleshed body is the early Bronze Age 'Cashel Man' from Ireland at around 2000BC (National Museum of Ireland, Dublin) and the most recent are corpses of Russian and German soldiers killed fighting on the Eastern Front during the First World War in the Masurian Lake District region of north-eastern Poland.

Probably the best known bog bodies, due to their state of preservation, are 'Tollund Man' (Silkeborg Museum, Denmark) and 'Grauballe Man' (Moesgaard Museum, Aarhus, Denmark).



'Tollund Man'  
(the head and neck are original)



The hand of 'Grauballe Man'  
(note the perfectly preserved finger-nails)

Apart from 'Cashel Man', which was discovered as recently as 2011, the other well-known bog body from the British Isles is 'Lindow Man' (The British Museum, London).



'Cashel Man' being excavated



'Lindow Man'

What then makes Bocksten Man so special? The answer is two-fold. Firstly his luxuriant hair, and secondly, most importantly, he has provided us with the most perfectly preserved set of medieval clothing to be found anywhere in Northern Europe.



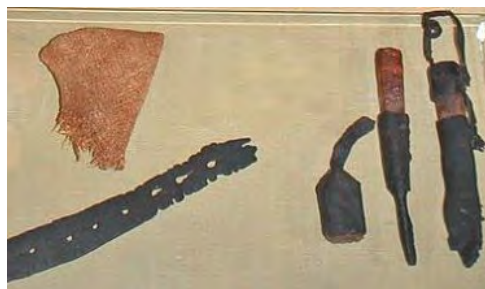


The full set of clothing

Analysis of the skeleton and teeth has revealed his estimated age and physical attributes, but it is the clothing that gives an indication of his status. This in turn has made it possible for researchers to hazard a guess at why he met his fate. He was dressed in a woollen cloak, cut with a circular opening for the neck, worn with a conical hood with a tail (known as a 'liripipe') 35 inches (90 cm) in length. Underneath he wore a yellow-brown knee-length tunic with a leather belt around his waist, from which hung a bag containing two knives, one in a sheath. He had a woven under-garment, and his woollen stockings were held up by leather straps. On his feet were front-laced leather shoes. All his clothing was of high quality, but it is the hood that holds the key. It is of a type known as 'gugel', which originated in Germany and by the C14th had become fashionable across Europe amongst people of a high social standing. It has therefore been suggested that Bocksten Man could have been either a tax collector or a recruiter for the army, both well-paid professions which engendered a good deal of hatred, enough apparently for the attack.



The leather shoes



The belt, the bag &amp; the knives



The 'gugel' hood

## CAG 55

Bocksten Man has pride of place in Varberg Museum, with a room of his own. It is, however, a very long way to travel just to see him, but if you consider that roughly 120 miles north of Varberg is the UNESCO World Heritage site of Tanum, with its extensive collection of some of the finest Bronze Age rock art in existence, then this is an archaeological expedition well worth undertaking.



Bocksten Man's luxuriant hair



Bocksten man reconstructed



### Acknowledgments

All Bocksten Man photographs are © Hallands Kulturhistoriska Museum, Varberg

### Sources and select bibliography

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<http://www.documentingreality.com/forum/f226/bocksten-man-148180/>

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Bodies in the Bog and the Archaeological Imagination, Karin Sanders, 2009



## TRAVEL IN THE COLNE VALLEY IN ROMAN TIMES

*Richard Vigouroux-Henday*

*Note: Roman numerals in brackets are for references noted at the end of the text, normal figures in brackets are the reference numbers for the Essex HER listing.*

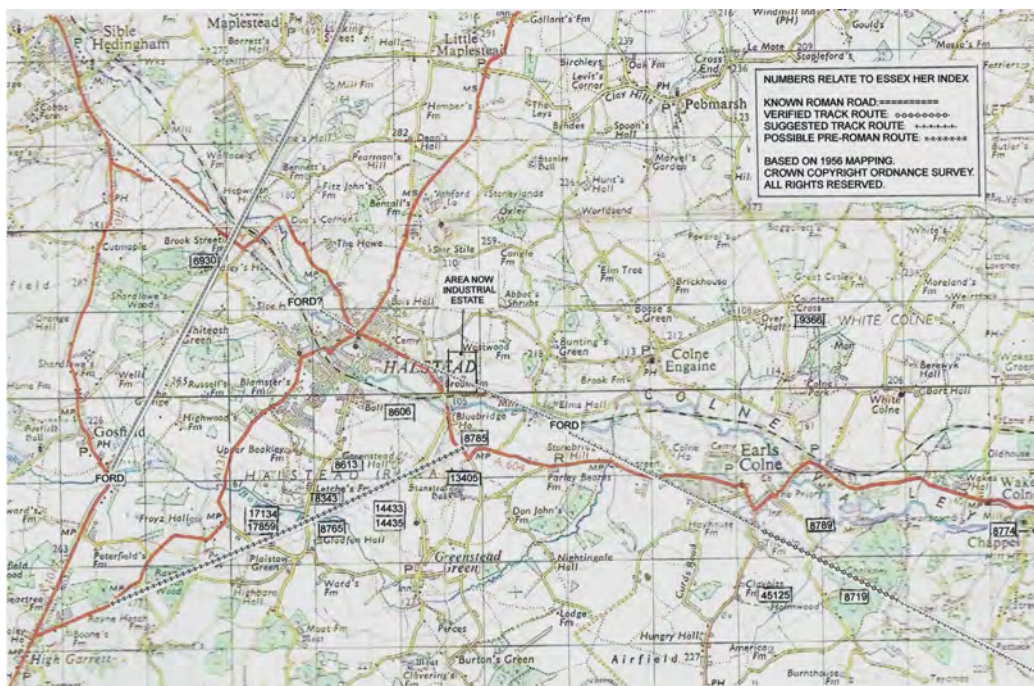
The debate over if and where a Roman road existed along the Colne Valley so as to form part of a direct link between Roman Colchester and the Roman settlement at Great Chesterford has been ongoing for nearly a century, largely initiated I think by local resident, Brigadier J de Horne-Vaizey, and suggestions have included, among others, a western route around Halstead, not that far off the railway alignment through the town.

Jack Lindsay, then Clerk to Halstead Town Council, also tackled this question 60 years ago (i) and in spite of much field research failed to find evidence to firmly establish that or any other route, or actually find the Roman building he felt sure had stood somewhere in the area known as Doe's Corner half a mile north of the town at what was assumed would have been an intersection of this anticipated road and the known Roman road from Chelmsford, Braintree, and on towards Ixworth.

One of these problems was solved, at least to some extent, ten years ago when I located the building on Brook Street Farm (6930) close to his target area, but standing on the western side of the River Colne. However I think there may well have been at least one other such building in this locality as suggested by Mr Lindsay's other find site debris and also by the way more recently discovered Roman sites appear linked, as we shall see.

This left open the question of the route of the envisaged road to Colchester which, in spite of a great deal of work by Mr Lindsay and a number of others, remains an enigma, and something I would now like to offer a suggestion upon, at least for it's route in the general Halstead area.

When the recent Wormingford-Abberton water transit scheme was being carried out I asked for a close watch on the cut near Eight Ash Green for signs of an agger as this would have been a right angled intersect with any Roman period road alignment heading up the valley, but nothing was noted suggesting that even that close to Colchester, any such route was more track than road.



Colne Valley Roman Road Map

Yet already we have so many substantial Roman buildings along the Colne Valley. Five verified sites have been added to the list in the past 20 years on top of confirmed dwellings at Halstead (8606) excavated by Mr J Pudney, and at Ridgwell (6975) as well as 'finds' described as Roman building remains at Chappel (8774) and Countess Cross (9366) earlier in the twentieth century, and strong evidence for a building near Colne Engaine church, all suggesting there must have been some well used interconnecting route serving them all.

The narrow sunken trackway straight through Chalkney Wood, (8719) has featured strongly in conjecture upon this matter, but less known is that when the normal woodland maintenance programme involved clearing the part of the wood on the more level ground beside the modern hoggin road which runs up into the wood from the car



Sunken trackway through Chalkney Wood

park area, this track was still obvious as a slight, although considerably wider, depression running across it.

Moreover the course of this track, both coming towards the wood from the Colchester direction, as well as out towards Earls Colne, is visible in the right conditions on abutting arable land, and, going on westward, it passes within 200m of a Roman building at Peaks Corner, (8789) a site where there are also good indications of what appear to be pre-Roman activity, which is in turn overlooked by another, (45125) both also my discoveries. This is the pattern which I think might well have been repeated at Brook Street, and that could explain Lindsay's finds.

I should point out that the ditch and bank encircling Chalkney Wood is usually considered Saxon in date and appears to overlay the track-way indications we are concerned with here.

The alignment now effectively confirmed

stretches from the vicinity of Swan Street to Earls Colne village, a distance of some 4km. This gives us a good basic directional guide and extended in a straight line further west it reaches a point potentially necessitating a river crossing. Remarkably, here a small but acute bend in the river is paved with stout wooden planks below water level although there are no track-ways leading to it.

This apparent 'ford' is on private land and the long time owner has no idea of what purpose it has. However it is appropriate to note that an HER entry (8717) reporting on the rebuilding in 1898 of the Blackwater River bridge on the A120 at Bradwell, on the line of Stane Street, states 'crossing found to be floored with oak planks'. If this was thought important enough to be recorded, it must surely have been unusual, and thus much earlier, even then.

Once across the river, as you will see from the map, any remaining signs of the route would have been lost in the construction of the now dismantled Colne Valley and Halstead Railway Company's line in the 1850's, and then comes a modern industrial estate, but overriding this and continuing our preceding direction takes us to the eastern end of a half mile stretch of straightish road coming east out of Halstead, and meets this, which is the present day A1124, immediately before the modern road turns

sharply SSE and drops away to the current crossing of the River Colne.

If we still follow on WNW we come first to the top of Halstead High Street, and then to another riverside location.

This area features several unusually sharp bends in the river making it similar in situation to the 'ford' I have already described, although of course no planks are to be seen here, it now leads into open meadow once traversed by the railway, but both the site of the present day footbridge, where the river bank has clearly been restored in the not-too-distant past, and for 100 metres or so upstream, there are points that might well have offered a crossing.

The point of mentioning this is that if it was indeed the site of a further 'ford' it would represent the missing link in what was undoubtedly an early and quite important well-used route going somewhere with a purpose, and then readily allow its continuation directly onward, past the Brook Street Farm Roman building above Doe's Corner, possibly using the line of a straight stretch of the present-day road, and crossing the Chelmsford-Ixworth road alignment here as it went, before heading into Sible Hedingham on a line that ties up with Jack Lindsay's research.

Here a change of direction is implied to take you on towards a hamlet known as Poole Street and to the previously mentioned Roman site outside Ridgwell, although it is worth observing that then, as today, such a route alignment heading in the opposite direction could well have linked up with the Braintree-Ixworth route with a common crossing of Bourne Brook at Gosfield.

Important to note is that such a route as I have described, Roman or otherwise, that did utilise two such 'fords' between Earls Colne and Brook Street would be both more direct and avoid a substantial amount of quite steep climb and descent, at least for Essex, in comparison with the modern day road.

In spite of what must have amounted to a considerable amount of activity in the area, as yet we have no real evidence of this or any other route as a 'proper' Roman road in this part of the valley and, having explained the route I see as potentially a viable one for any such through-way, it's now time to pose some questions.

Firstly, what is its date? Bearing in mind that we know iron age activity in north Essex could be quite well ordered as witnessed by the comprehensive field structure shown to lie below the Roman road approaching Braintree from Chelmsford (ii), my own inclination is to suggest that it might, at least in part, be based upon pre-Roman trackway(s) pressed into service when Colchester initially became the Roman centre for the country.

The immediate need for a basic troop and commerce transit route in the early days of the occupation could well have outweighed the delay that would have been involved in building this route to what we now think of as the Roman standard whilst withstanding a possibly combative reception from sections of the local populace.

Far more likely is rapid action and some very basic 'civil engineering' in order to be able to move men to defend their new positions when needed, and get countryside produce into town to feed both the garrison and the newly 'converted' local inhabitants, whilst ideas of subsequent upgrading to bring the 'road' to their normal standard of construction could well have been abandoned as London became the focal point for governing Britain.

This would go a long way to explaining why this route has remained so elusive, what we are looking for could well have been little more than a bit of widening and straightening here and there, and perhaps a new link or two added into what had already existed for several centuries as a normal transit passage from what are now the uplands on the northern Essex/Suffolk border, down towards the tidal reaches of the River Colne.

It may just be coincidental but this suggested route, if taken as a straight line back towards Colchester, ends at Cheshunt Field! Although more likely is a spur running off from Stane Street at Copford.

One slight difficulty with this whole premise is that it then leaves the Roman building south of Halstead excavated by Mr J. Pudney rather off the through route, but perhaps there is even an explanation for this.

It could be that it was a particularly large estate and/or that its owner was so important that he had a more prestigious situation for his residence. A further possibility is that the modern road uses what was the entry to this estate to cross the Colne river, although what appears in aerial photographs to suggest an Iron Age fort (8785) on the hill above may equally well also be an indication of some sort of river crossing already having been available at that point before the Romans arrived.

Finally, as an observation, the initial straight stretch of the present day Halstead road as it leaves the Ixworth Roman road at High Garret is heading straight for this hilltop site with a number of uninvestigated minor earthworks noted in fields quite close to it's line, (8343/8613/8765/14433/14435/17134/17859) as well as a further substantial enclosure (13405) noted as a cropmark near the fort feature. Make of that what you will!

So, after some fifteen years looking at this conundrum myself I put forward this suggestion, the only one so far supported by actual firm evidence on the ground over a substantial distance, in the hope that it will not take another 60 years to solve it! I look forward to comment in these pages.

Lastly, I would like to record my appreciation of the assistance of Howard Brooks in finalising this article.

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- i) The Discovery of Britain, Jack Lindsay, The Merlin Press. 1958.
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## SHORT NOTES

### Henry I Silver Penny from St John's Abbey, Colchester

*Dr Mark Curteis*



Found in the excavations on the St John's Abbey\* site in the summer of 2015 was this silver hammered penny of Henry I (1100-1135). The coin is a Quatrefoil with piles type, c.1111. The obverse shows a facing bust with legend HENRI REX.

The reverse depicts four semi-circles with alternating piles, each pile surmounted by an annulet along with the name of the moneyer and mint. The reverse has been double-struck, with traces of :O under the W, and the N of ON displaced to the position of the O. Correspondingly, the inscription has been reconstructed by Martin Allen as +hARGAW:ON[-][E?]F, and it may be reasonable to assume that the full mint signature was TEF for Thetford.

There is a small cut on the edge of the coin, this is deliberate and probably official. By the time of Henry I there were many poor quality and forged coins in circulation and many genuine coins were cut to see if they were plated counterfeits and there was a reluctance by the public to accept such damaged pieces. So in about 1107/8 an extraordinary decision was made to officially mutilate all new coins by snicking their edges, thus assuring that cut coins had to be accepted!

Hargaw is a new moneyer for Norman coinage, making this a rare and significant discovery.

*\*This project was made possible in part by a grant from the Council for British Archaeology's Mick Aston Archaeology Fund, which is supported by English Heritage.*

### Bone Plaque from Fordham

*Anna Moore*

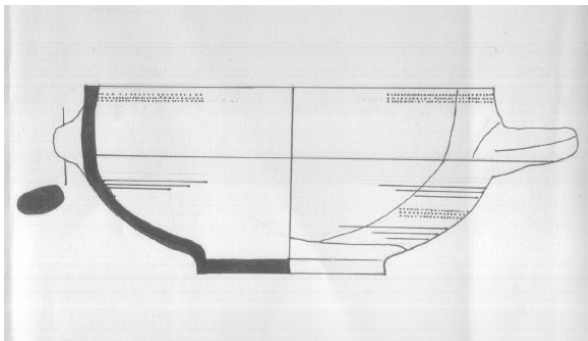


These fragments of an incised bone plaque were found in the summer of 2015 on the site of the Group's excavations at Fordham and have been dated to late Roman. The bone is between 2-3mm thick.

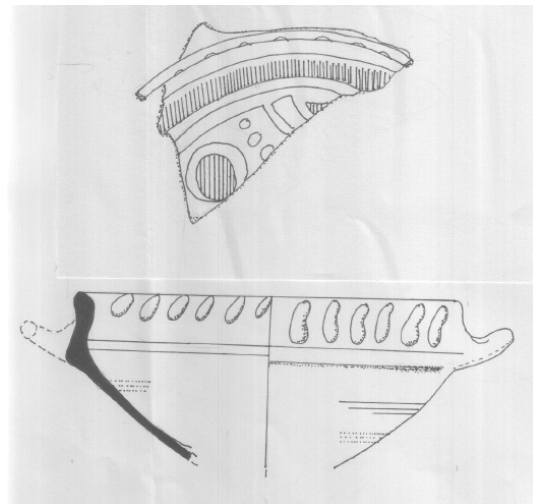
## Medieval Porringer from Hythe Hill

*Christine Piper*

Between Oct 2014 and May 2015 a private dig was undertaken in the garden of a property at the bottom of Hythe Hill. The house dates back to 1590 but there was a property on the site well before that. During the dig fragments of a 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century porringer were found next to a Tudor wall. A porringer is a shallow bowl with a pair of horizontal loop handles and a foot-ring base. There were enough pieces to reassemble the pot with only a small sherd from the base and one of the handles missing. Part of the base of the pot has evidence of mortar on it where it was lying up against the wall. The fabric is bright orange colour with a glossy clear lead glaze. Alongside the plain porringer there were also fragments of a decorated porringer. The decoration was carried out in trailed cream slip with frequent highlights of green glaze over certain areas of the design. The rim is decorated with oblique slip dashes on the inside and vertical slip dashes on the exterior. The inside of the bowl is decorated with alternate strips of cream and green with dots and lines. Both porringers are thought to be North Holland slipware and have a diameter of 140mm. They are glazed internally and externally.



Drawings by Jane Crone, scale 1:4



## ROMAN WALL INTERPRETATION BOARD

*Anna Moore*

Over the last few years, The Friends of Colchester Roman Wall has been installing a number of interpretation boards at strategic points in order to facilitate a self-guided walk around the monument. The Group has sponsored one of these boards and on 12<sup>th</sup> September 2015, it was unveiled by the Mayor of Colchester, Cllr Theresa Higgins.



Short speeches were made, including one by the Group's Mark Davies, who explained the reasoning behind the Group's choice of this particular board, which is in Priory Street. In 1965, the Group excavated and recorded the medieval bastion that once stood here, and the board now displays a photo of Group members in the trench.

*Photo: Chris Farndell*

## LOOKING FOR A GOOD HUSBAND

*John Mallinson*

The excavations at Marks Hall, Coggeshall between 2012 and 2014 have resulted in the recovery of a large number of varied finds. Many of these have been of limited archaeological value, having been recovered from layers associated with the demolition of the Hall in 1950, and its subsequent total destruction associated with landscaping in 1974.

Some of these finds have an intrinsic interest in their own right, and have prompted further investigation. Of particular interest are a number of glass bottle seals. Bottle seals are small glass roundels, embossed with some personal or identifying features, such as a family crest or personal monogram, applied to glass bottles (usually wine bottles) at the end of the manufacturing process in order to identify the bottle's owner. They were in common use on bottles during much of the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, when bottles were expensive, and were frequently recycled and refilled.

Two types of seal were recovered from Marks Hall. The most common (Fig 1) bore a crude representation of the crest of the Honywoods, the family who owned the Estate from 1605–1897. More surprisingly, three examples were found of a seal bearing, with slight modifications in style, the legend "Francis Husband Stockton 1723" (Fig 2). Who was Francis Husband? And how did his bottles come to be at Marks Hall? Further investigation could not be resisted.



Fig 1



Fig 2

To narrow the search, it was first necessary to try to identify which Stockton was being referred to. Stockton-on-Tees would naturally be favourite, but there are nine other Stocktons listed in the AA Road Atlas of Great Britain 2014, ranging across the length and breadth of Britain (though none of them near Coggeshall). An internet search soon revealed that whilst information was available on all of them (it is amazing how many places, no matter how small, have web sites boasting about their history, or lack of it), none gave any indication that they had been, or could have been involved in the wine trade, or bottle manufacture, or ever had citizens of the name of Husband.

Stockton-on-Tees, on the other hand, had all the necessary credentials:

".... in the late 17th century Stockton On Tees began to flourish. There had been a ship-building industry in Stockton since the 15th century and in the late 17th century and the 18th century the industry prospered. There was also a sail making industry and a rope making industry. Another industry in 18th century Stockton was brick making. The port of Stockton also flourished. However much of the trade was coastal. In those days it was much cheaper to transport goods by water than by road and so many goods were taken by ship along the coast of England from one port to another. Goods imported into Stockton included wine and raisins, coal, glass and household goods. Goods exported

included wool, butter, bacon and lead." <sup>1</sup>

So Stockton-on-Tees it would seem to be, but could we find any reference to Francis Husband?

Candidates were not long in presenting themselves. Stockton Reference Library supplied the following from Non-conformist records:

"Francis Husband born 19 July 1683 son of Christopher Husband and Elizabeth of Stockton. Francis Husband married Rachel 17 August 1713. They had 5 daughters and a son Francis; they were Quakers of Stockton." <sup>2</sup>

The Marriage to Rachel Richardson, of Great Ayton, and born in 1690, was independently confirmed by an on-line history of the Richardson family.<sup>3</sup> The Richardsons were clearly a prominent Quaker family in Great Ayton, and although the Francis Husband who married Rachel is cited as being from Guisborough, the dates of birth are the same. The records also mention that Francis had a brother John, who was a publican and merchant in Guisborough.

Quaker Ancestry further records the following<sup>2</sup>:

Bur. Rachel Husband	3 August 1714	Stockton
Birth Elizabeth Husband	9 June 1716	Stockton
Bur. Hannah Husband	18 Oct 1776	Norton
Birth Hannah Husband	25 Jan 1718	Stockton
Birth Francis Husband	21 Aug 1721	Stockton
Birth Catherine Husband	29 June 1723	Stockton
Bur. Francis Husband	14 June 1749	Yorkshire
Marr. Catherine Husband	16 Aug 1759	Durham

And Quaker BMD further confirms<sup>2</sup>:

Birth. Rachel dau. Of Francis & Rachel Husband of Stockton	3 June 1714
Birth Elizabeth	do. 9 April 1716
Birth Hannah	do. 25 Nov 1718
Birth Francis	son of do. 21 June 1721
Birth Catherine	dau of do. 29 April 1723
Birth Sarah	do. 29 June 1726

Bur. 10<sup>th</sup> month 12 day 1776 Hannah Husband a. 58 yr. dau of Francis Husband merchant and Rachel his wife, late of Stockton buried 10 month 16<sup>th</sup> day at Norton near Stockton.

Note the reference to Francis Husband as a merchant.

Elsewhere, in the Parish records for St Thomas, Stockton, we have the following births (father's name last):

"HUSBAND, Anne - Francis, 30 Oct 1724

HUSBAND, Christopher - Francis, junr, 3 May 1726"<sup>4</sup>

From the London Gazette, 1726<sup>5</sup>, we have:

"Whereas the acting Commissioners in a commission of Bankrupt: awarded against Francis Husband, of Stockton on Tease, in the County of Durham, chapman, have certified to the Right Honourable Peter Lord King, Baron of Ockham, Lord High Chancellour of Great Britain, that the said Francis Husband hath in all things conformed himself according to the Directions of the several Acts of Parliament made concerning Bankrupts: This is to give Notice, that his Certificate will be allowed and confirmed as the said Acts direct, unless Cause is shown to the contrary on or before 13<sup>th</sup> May next."

Finally we have, in an entry in the records of imports into Stockton<sup>6</sup>:

DATE	4 AUGUST 1724
ENTRY	No. 79
SHIP	ELIANOR
MASTER	Ra. BENTON



PORT	CROCKERY ( <i>clearly a line is missing here</i> )
MERCHANT	FRAN. HUSBAND
	32 COY. ORDINARY DEALS
	1 COY ½ HOGSHEAD STAVES
	50 SMALL SPARRS

There is no reason to believe that all these independent scraps of information refer to the same Francis Husband. Indeed the Parish Church birth entries are very unlikely to refer to the same man as the Quaker entries, so there must have been at least two Francis Husbands active at the relevant time. Which information refers to which Husband cannot be determined. Nor can we be sure that either is the Francis Husband whose name appears on our bottle seals.

Contact was also made with the National Glass Museum in Sunderland, in the hope that they may have been able to shed some light on where the bottles were made. Whilst they were very helpful and supplied much general information on 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> Century bottles (most of it based on Museum of London information) they were not able to point us towards any specifics regarding the manufacture of Francis Husband's bottles, other than that Tyneside had a thriving glass industry at the time.

### Summary

It is probable that the Francis Husband featuring on the Marks Hall bottle seals was a Stockton-on-Tees merchant. Born into a Quaker family in 1683, he married, in 1713, Rachel Richardson of Great Ayton. She was born 1690, also a Quaker, and by her he had five daughters and a son between 1714 and 1723. It is possible that he traded in a wide range of goods, importing and exporting to the continent. The Marks Hall wine bottles (containing Madeira wine?) could well have been shipped by sea from Stockton to London, or even a more local port such as Maldon or Colchester, where they could have been bought as a "job lot" by the Honywoods. There is no evidence of any personal contact between them and Francis.

It is possible that he was declared bankrupt in 1726, but I would prefer to attribute that particular mishap to the "other" Francis Husband mentioned in the Parish records. Let us suppose that our Francis led a long and prosperous life before dying in retirement in 1749 in the bosom of his wife's family at Great Ayton. It is however regrettably possible that he died in penury, having been grudgingly supported by his wife's family for over twenty years.

All conjecture, of course, but it makes a nice story. If anyone has any more information, or any suggestions where more may be found, please let me know.

### Acknowledgements

Thanks are particularly due to Michael Corner of Stockton Local History Group for tracking down much of the information presented here. Thanks also to Tim Dennis for suggestions of imaginative combinations of words designed to extract arcane information from the internet, and to Matthew Storey from the National Glass Museum for his information on bottles.

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2. Michael Corner, Stockton Local History Group, pers. Comm. 17.02.14
3. <http://greatayton.wdfiles.com/local--files/family-histories/The-Richardson-family.pdf>
4. [http://genuki.cs.ncl.ac.uk/Transcriptions/DUR/XSTO\\_F-H.html](http://genuki.cs.ncl.ac.uk/Transcriptions/DUR/XSTO_F-H.html) for 1637 - 1780
5. <http://www.london-gazette.co.uk/issues/6470/pages/4/page.pdf>
6. Michael Corner, Stockton Local History Group, pers. Comm. 18.03.14

*Editor's Note: For information regarding the Group's booklet about Markshall's history and the excavations that took place there, please see page 42.*

## **WINTER LECTURE PROGRAMME (PART 2)**

### **The Witch Craze in Essex, 1560-1660**

Christopher Thompson, Essex Local Historian

19th January 2015

*Report by Philip T Beeton*

Christopher Thompson came to address us on the persecution of so-called witches in the 16th and 17th centuries with special reference to Essex. The belief in witches - individuals with devilish powers to affect the world - was as common in Britain as elsewhere in Western Europe. There was a widespread belief in the Devil at this time and witches were believed to make a pact with him and use magic to further his evil plans. This was a profoundly superstitious era and with major religious upheavals in the form of the Reformation underway, scapegoats were often looked for in such difficult times.

Some churchmen were undoubtedly behind this new process especially after the publication of the *Malleus Maleficarum* in 1486. This book, written by two members of the Inquisition, with the Pope's encouragement, was to help "root out the abominations and enormities of witchcraft". The Biblical admonition from Exodus, "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" was never far from their thoughts. The persecution in England was less severe than on the Continent but may have resulted in up to 1000 executions. Victims were often single women or widows who lived alone and may have provided primitive medical services in their villages at some time. They may also have been the victim of grudges or score settling in very small communities. Many had pets known as 'familiars', which were thought of as agents of the Devil.

King James 1 was particularly exercised about witches, so much so that he wrote a book entitled *Daemonologie* condemning the practice. On becoming King he enacted a new and more stringent Witchcraft Act, which replaced one that Elizabeth 1 had passed in 1562. This new Act was designed for 'the better restraining and more severe punishing of acts of conjuration, witchcraft and dealing with evil and wicked spirits'.

The most significant increase in the activity against so-called witches occurred during the years of the Civil War in England when the name of Matthew Hopkins came to the fore. He was born around 1620 in Great Wenham, Suffolk, the son of a Puritan clergyman. He began his witch finding in 1644 after he had moved to Manningtree in Essex and overheard women discussing their meetings with the Devil. With his assistant Stearne he toured East Anglia allegedly commissioned by Parliament to seek out witches in an area strongly supportive of the parliamentary and Puritan cause. His most notorious case was that of 1645 when 5 witches from Manningtree were accused, examined and sent to Colchester castle (then the local gaol). Local magistrates also visited other villages to seek out more witches. As a result 30 women were sent for trial at Chelmsford, 17 were duly hanged there, 4 at Manningtree and 9 died while still in custody.

Matthew Hopkins died at Mistley in 1647 aged 26. With his passing the steam seemed to go out of the witch-hunting craze. Although prosecutions continued during the Commonwealth, with the restoration of the Monarchy and a more settled condition in the country the practice largely died out. The Witchcraft Act was repealed in 1736.

### **Vespasian's Camp: Cradle of Stonehenge?**

David Jacques, Senior Research Fellow in Archaeology, University of Buckingham

26th January 2014

Vespasian's Camp is the name given to an Iron Age hill fort overlooking the River Avon at Amesbury, about 1.5km west of Stonehenge. The area had long been ignored by archaeologists, because it had been assumed that landscaping in the 18th century had removed all trace of prehistoric archaeology. Work by the speaker and his team, begun

in 2005, has radically changed that view. In an area in the north east of the camp, known as Blick Mead, is a spring and pond which has remained untouched by landscaping, and has provided evidence of continuous human activity stretching back over 9000 years.

Until the discoveries at Blick Mead, intensive surveys of the Stonehenge area had identified a total of only 50 finds which could be dated to the Mesolithic period. These included the enigmatic "totem" posts discovered in the car park at Stonehenge, and it seemed inconceivable that these would have been erected without there having been some significant semi-permanent occupation close by. Blick Mead has proved to be that site. To date around 12,000 pieces of worked and burned flint have been unearthed, as well as over 500 pieces of bone dating from over 8,000 years ago.

The speaker gave a detailed account of the excavations that had taken place between 2005 and the present, and offered closely reasoned evidence dating at least semi-permanent occupation of the site from 7,500 BC onwards. He described how initial excavations had been hampered because the height of the water table prevented digging down more than about 0.5m. Once a pump was used, it was found that an early Neolithic horizon at about 0.6m had protected a layer of intense Mesolithic activity which yielded the finds described above. The typography of the flint finds, together with radio carbon dates from animal bones, confirmed continuous activity for 3,000 years.

Most pleasing, dates for specific finds correlated very closely with dates of the Mesolithic posts at Stonehenge. The speaker described the landscape of the area, and speculated that because of its topography, and because it would have been relatively free of trees, it would have been ideal for hunting aurochs and other cattle, and the posts could well have marked a significant point in the landscape towards which prey would have naturally have been driven. The presence of water – always a vital factor - at Blick Mead would have also been attractive for cattle. David also touched on finds at Coneybury Ridge, which show strong evidence of ritual feasting and other activities during the Mesolithic. He further drew attention to finds from within the earliest structures at Stonehenge, which actually significantly predated the structures themselves – an indication possibly that the Neolithic henge builders were recognising and celebrating their ancestors by depositing Mesolithic objects of significance to them. Two recent finds were of particular significance. The first was a small (20cm) tabular flint, which had been set vertically into the ground. Charcoal from beneath it gave a date in the late Mesolithic. The second was of evidence for an encampment or house, dating to at least 4,000 BC – the first tangible evidence for structures and more than temporary occupation at Blick Mead.

David finished with a polemic against the proposed Stonehenge tunnel. The cutting for this would lower the water table in the Blick Mead area, totally destroying any possibility of finding preserved wooden or other structures in the Mesolithic peat thereabouts. The environmental impact assessment for the proposed road had completely ignored 4,000 years of history, he said.

Further information and updates on the work can be found at website:  
[www.buckingham.ac.uk/research/hri/blickmead](http://www.buckingham.ac.uk/research/hri/blickmead)

### **Curating the Celts**

Dr. Julia Farley, Curator of European Iron Age Collections, British Museum  
 16<sup>th</sup> February 2015

*Report by Francis Nicholls*

Dr Farley began by outlining some of the early details of the forthcoming Celtic exhibition to be held at the British Museum, probably in September 2015. It would be the first exhibition of Celtic art in the UK for 40 years.

She posed the question 'who were the Celts?' Were they:-

- the ancient peoples referred to by ancient authors?
- the people who spoke ancient Celtic languages?
- medieval people who practised Celtic Christianity?
- or the people who speak modern Celtic languages in the Western fringes of Europe?

Whoever they are or were, the common thread is in Celtic art. The first Celtic art was in a new abstract style, using interwoven designs incorporating birds and wild beasts. Celtic art was often associated with items of personal adornment and showed incredible artistic and technical skill; the style occurred north of the Alps, from Ireland in the west to Romania in the east.

In Roman times, Celtic art was pushed to the fringes of the empire and almost died out. However, in Ireland, Scotland and western Britannia, the tradition continued in a new artistic way as though to deliberately distinguish itself from Roman decorative art.

With Celtic Christianity came the stone crosses and illuminated manuscripts.

After the medieval period, Celtic art fell out of fashion. The style was rediscovered in the C19th. in western Europe. People then were looking at new types of art based on historic designs. The 'Celtic Revival' meant that ancient designs were re-introduced.

Celtic art continues to have an impact in modern times, initially through the Arts and Crafts movement and later on through the designs of art nouveau.

### **Braintree Archaeology Excavations 1981-1985**

Keith Cullum

February 23rd 2015

*Report by Richard Todd*

This lecture was a description of some of the 160 coins and other small finds from excavations undertaken by the Brain Valley Archaeological Society in central Braintree prior to the construction of a new road. The site was behind the then Fountain Public House and its two main features were a ring ditch representing the robbed out foundations of a stone built house and a deep well. Overall there was evidence that over the centuries soil had moved down the sloping site so that while on the higher ground finds were located only eighteen inches below the surface lower down they were fifteen feet deep.

Many of the coins were found in relation to the ditch and well. A group of twenty-one were found between the bricks of a collapsed bread oven. The coins were mostly Roman but ranged from the reign of the Celtic King Dubnovellaunus 50-44 BC, of the Cantii tribe in Kent, to a George II halfpenny of 1734. We were shown photographs of a representative sample in chronological sequence.

The earliest so-called "Potin" coins were cast in strips and then broken into individual coins. They have been found over a wide area of south east England demonstrating the extent of communication and trade at that time. Then there were coins of Addedomarus and of Cunobelin of the Trinovantes with a variety of images and inscriptions, one later example showing Roman influence in its design. Two of the Cunobelin coins are unique.

There were many Claudian copper coins of low denomination, referred to as "Roman navvy money" together with local copies and forgeries. A shortage of silver and the effects of inflation at various times led to the production of numerous forgeries many of them extremely crude, perhaps because the forgers were illiterate. It seems that any image resembling a spiky crown was adequate.

Some coins, including one of Domitian, 87 AD, and another of Marcus Aurelius, 173 AD, can be dated precisely because the inscriptions detailed the year of their consulship and tribuneship respectively.

We were told incidentally about Septimus Severus who came to Britain along with his family and an army of 50,000 men to quell the Scots. He failed and retreated south but became ill and died at York. His sons, Caracalla and Geta are notorious for having quarrelled to such an extent that Caracalla murdered Geta.

There were specimens from Probus who improved the coinage and from Carausius, a naval commander who declared himself emperor of Britain and established mints in London and possibly Colchester. The Carausius coin has an image of a galley with oarsmen showing its prominent bow constructed to serve as a battering ram. From the fourth century there were coins of Constantine who, it has been said, condemned his second wife to death by boiling, and of his confusingly named family. Many of these are in such good condition that they can be dated either from their mint marks or, in some examples, from the number of Roman standards depicted on them.

After the Roman period the site seems to have fallen into disuse but above a covering layer of black soil a very small silver coin of Richard II, a silver penny of Elizabeth I dated 1560 from the mint mark, a low denomination coin of Charles I, who apparently would allow his portrait only on gold or silver coins, and some local tradesmen's tokens were found. A Charles II farthing of 1672 and a George II halfpenny of 1734 were found in the robbed out trench of the original Roman building, possibly lost by workmen quarrying for stone. Other finds included a small amount of pottery of no distinction, some horse skulls in the well, what seemed to have been bags of bone together with some lost or discarded knives in what had been a pond, indicative of a nearby butchery business, other metal objects including an adze and a candlestick, bone and metal pins, nail cleaners, a pair of tweezers, several brooches, both Celtic and Roman, some silvered and one with inset enamel, bracelets and necklaces and a separate intaglio with Greek and medical inscriptions suggesting that a Greek doctor had lived on the site. Finally a bone die or dice was found and photographed but it disappeared, presumably stolen, before it could be transferred to a safe place. The finds are in the care of Braintree Museum.

The speaker brought along a number of specimens of coins and small metal objects from his own collection all beautifully restored by himself. He explained that he did this using a microscope and dental probe avoiding the use of any corrosive agents.

## SUMMER EVENTS

### **Wednesday 15th April, Icklingham and Mildenhall**

*Report by Anna Moore (see Appendix 1 for images)*

About 25 members and guests went to Suffolk for an afternoon trip. We started off at the **Church of All Saints, Icklingham**. The village of Icklingham was originally two separate parishes and both churches remain. All Saints has been unused for over 100 years and is now maintained by the Churches Conservation Trust. Architecturally, this is unquestionably the more important building of the two, and is one of the finest examples of an unspoilt Suffolk Church, re-built in the C14th, although it is of Norman origin. Thatched roofs cover the nave, chancel, the independently-gabled South aisle and the South porch. The diagonally-buttressed tower rises in three stages to a plain parapet and, unusually, adjoins the aisle rather than the nave. Inside, there is one of only seven late C13th clasp-fronted parish chests in Suffolk, held together entirely with wooden pegs and tenons; an early C14th beautifully carved limestone font; an Elizabethan alms box on a wooden post by the main door. The nave has C15th backless benches (ouch). Some excellent medieval stained glass shows two half-figures (saints?), with canopies above. The chancel floor is the most notable feature, being made up entirely of medieval glazed tiles, their survival here being a great rarity. Dating from around 1325, and supplied by the Benedictine Abbey at Ely, they are either plain or line-impressed, varying in shape, colour and design to form a complex mosaic. Individual motifs include two birds facing each other, a lion's face and an earless man wearing a coronet.

After Icklingham Church, we visited the **Mildenhall Museum**, which received a £423,000 Lottery grant in 2012 so that it could be extended to house its great treasure – the Anglo-Saxon Lakenheath Warrior (aka The Horse Burial). The Museum also tells the full story of the discovery of the Mildenhall Treasure (and a very strange story it is) together with the history of the Town, the Fens and the Brecks. Finally we went to visit the **Church of St Mary**, the biggest church in Suffolk, almost 60m long and 20m wide, with a tower 40m high. The nave roof is possibly the finest in East Anglia, being decorated with 10 life-size robed and curly haired angels holding instruments of the passion, books or musical instruments. There are also some 60 smaller angels carved into the tie-beams and cornices. In the North Aisle there are extraordinary figures and beasts carved into the hammer-beams and the head of a Cromwellian soldier's pike is still embedded in one of the figures. In the South Aisle, there are six wingless angels carved into the hammer-beams. The carving here is less ornate than the north aisle, but 164 carvings of swans and antelopes (the emblems of Henry V) survive intact. The north porch and the tower both contain excellent examples of stone vaulting.

### **Friday 2nd May to Monday 5th May, weekend visit to the North-East**

*Report by Gill Shrimpton (see Appendix 2 for images)*

#### **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> May**

48 members left Colchester under the care of our driver, Richard. The first stop on the itinerary was at **Lincoln** (Lindum Colonia) for lunch and to see as much as we could. The lovely cathedral dates from the 11<sup>th</sup> century, as does the castle. Parts of the Roman wall can be seen and a fine arch/gateway. The town generally keeps its medieval street pattern and there are some fine old buildings. Some stone houses date from the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries and are amongst the oldest in the country. At the bottom of a (very!) steep hill is the museum which is free and covers the history of the area. Leaving Lincoln, we continued northwards, arriving finally at the Hotel Gibside in Whickham near Gateshead.

#### **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> May**

In the morning we travelled a short way to **Durham**. Established as a shrine and final resting place of St Cuthbert by the Saxons, it stands on a promontory overlooking a loop in the River Wear. Later a magnificent Norman cathedral was built on the same

spot and a castle nearby. Eventually in the 15<sup>th</sup> century it all became the seat of power for the Prince Bishops of Durham who ruled this part of the country. There are many fine Episcopal buildings in the city. Local archaeological finds are displayed in a building on the Palace Green. In the afternoon we had the option of staying in Durham, maybe to see the Oriental Museum or to travel the short distance to **Binchester Roman fort**. This is one of the largest forts in these parts. Originally in the 1<sup>st</sup> century it was timber-built and straddled Dere Street, defending the crossing of the River Wear. It was rebuilt in stone in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century. The first excavations took place in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Recent work has been carried out during the past 5 years and is continuing. It is a huge area and we were able to see a section of Dere Street, part of the commandant's lodging with an adjoining bath suite. This was well preserved and displayed. A few miles away is the village of **Escomb** where we visited the tiny Saxon church. This is very early and dates, perhaps, from the 6<sup>th</sup> century. It is built largely of stone taken from Binchester fort. It is possible to see some inscribed ones – albeit upside down! The chancel arch is almost certainly Roman, having been removed and rebuilt stone by stone.

### **Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> May**

We had a very wet start for our visit to nearby **Beamish**. Rather a shame as it is an open-air museum in a lovely setting. However, there are lots of buildings to visit and you can ride around the site on trams and historic buses! There is so much to see and too much to describe in any detail; the main sights being the pit village and colliery; the 1940s farm; the 1820s hall/farmhouse and the 1900s town and railway station with shops, inns and livery. It really was like stepping back in time – for me, anyway it brought back a few memories! The buildings had all been reassembled from other places in the region – a really excellent place to visit! Then on to **Finchale Priory**. This was originally built in the 12th century but with many later additions and alterations post-reformation. Some of the functions were indicated and some we just tried to work out. The sun finally came out and we could enjoy the beautiful setting beside the River Wear.

### **Monday 5<sup>th</sup> May**

We left the excellent Gibside Hotel and set off on our journey southwards. We soon passed the now familiar "Angel of the North" sculpture and made good time on our way to **York**. So much to see and do here; but obviously the Minster! It is dedicated to St Peter and the present gothic edifice was built between 1220-1472. Very impressive indeed, and it has an abundance of beautiful stained glass. It stands on the remains of the Roman basilica. This was discovered when work began to strengthen the tower. The undercroft is now an exhibition space showing York's history – Roman, Norman & Viking. Also in York you could see the Jorvik Viking exhibition and various other museums. The weather was warm and fine, so a good time to look at the walls and river. We could have spent more time there but we still had a long way to go to Colchester. We arrived back about 7pm having had a full and interesting 4 days for which we are grateful to Barbara for arranging it and to Mark for the points of interest as we travelled and the background on places visited. Not forgetting Richard, our driver, for his care for our comfort and safety.

### **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June, 'Walking History Quest'**

*Report by Anna Moore*

On Monday 8<sup>th</sup> June, a group of members and guests assembled in Castle Park to take part in a 'Walking History Quest' devised by Mark Davies. Teams of three to four were sent off around the town with sheets of questions, the answers to which were all clearly visible but some of which took a little searching out. Mark, in the meantime, sat on a bench in Castle Park before strolling slowly to the pub. About two hours later we all assembled to pool our results to find out that we had all done really well. Winners were a team from West Mersea, Sue and Ron Howlett and David Townend – well done them. A very entertaining evening and a chance to look closely at some of the buildings and monuments in the town that we would normally walk past without a second glance.

### **Monday 13th July, Summer Party**

*Report by Anna Moore*

Our Summer Party this year was held in Roman Circus House, the HQ of the Colchester Archaeological Trust. One of the reasons for using this venue was to familiarise members with the building which houses our library and is to be the home of our winter lecture programme for the foreseeable future. This proved to be a good plan as about fifty members and guests were able to appreciate the remains of the Roman Circus and the displays inside the building. The café in the big downstairs room was ideal for holding a party and anyone who had only seen the room when the Trust first moved in was duly amazed at the transformation - no more damp walls and peeling paint, it really is a very attractive space.

During the party, our Chairman took the opportunity to pay lengthy and deserved tribute to Pat Brown, who had decided to stand down from the committee after thirty years. Pat was the Group's secretary for about two decades as well as booking the Monday evening lectures, organising social events and latterly editing the Bulletin. She was presented with a large bouquet of flowers with the thanks and good wishes of the Group.

### **Friday 17th July, William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow and Forty Hall, Enfield**

*Report by Anna Moore*

The William Morris Gallery, Museum of the Year 2013, is the only public museum devoted to the English Arts and Crafts designer, craftsman and socialist William Morris, who had been born in Walthamstow. The gallery is in the former Water House, which is a substantial Grade II\* listed Georgian house built around 1744 with extensive grounds. It was Morris's home from 1848 to 1856, from the age of 8 to 22.

Forty Hall is a Grade I listed Manor House built in the late 1620s. It was built by Sir Nicholas Rainton, a wealthy London haberdasher, who was Lord Mayor of London from 1632 to 1633. His great-nephew, also named Nicholas, inherited the estate, and extended it northwards by buying and demolishing the neighbouring Elsyng Palace in 1656. This was a Tudor mansion and one of Queen Elizabeth I's favourites. She stayed there at least 4 times, including during her progress of 1561 when she had earlier stayed for 3 nights at Smallbridge Hall. Like the Hunting Lodge at Wormingford and Markshall, it became a lost building. After demolition in 1656, its precise location was unknown until Enfield Archaeological Society started excavating in the 1960s. They have made a number of further excavations, revealing more of the buildings footprint. We were given a guided tour of the current dig - for further details see 'Current Archaeology' Issue 307 (October 2015) page 7 and website: [www.enfarchsoc.org](http://www.enfarchsoc.org).



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**COLCHESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP  
COMMITTEE 2014-15**

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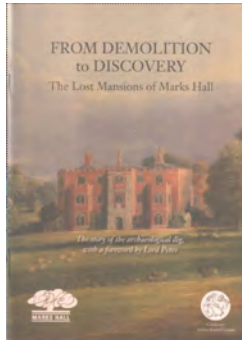
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Mrs D. Hardy, Mrs E. Mead, F. Nicholls, A. White

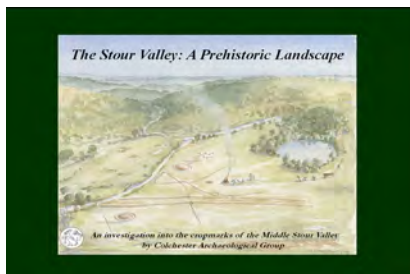
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## CAG PUBLICATIONS

CAG has three current publications, produced during the last few years and based on three major projects. They are all for sale, either at the Monday evening meetings or by e-mailing [sales@caguk.net](mailto:sales@caguk.net)



In 2011, the CAG field-work team set out to find the footprint of the lost Jacobean mansion of Marks Hall. They found not one, but three mansions on the site, not to mention five separate drainage systems. Read the full story here. £7 per copy + p&p.



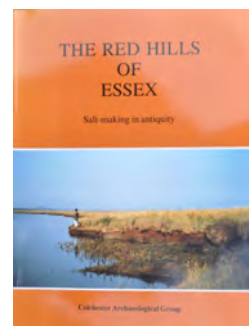
The valley of the River Stour, which separates Essex from Suffolk, is littered with cropmarks revealing prehistoric activity for at least four thousand years. A team from CAG has investigated the area between Bures and Wormingford and sets out its fascinating findings in this book. £5 per copy + p&p.



Rumours of a lost Tudor Hunting Lodge at Wormingford had been circulating for decades before CAG was invited to investigate its alleged site in 2007. As always, the excavations revealed a much more complicated history than previously thought. The story of the dig is told in this book. £2 per copy + p&p or £1 + p&p when bought with one of the above publications.

Also available:

The Red Hills of Essex; the definitive guide to these enigmatic and fast-disappearing sites that appear at frequent intervals around the coast, providing evidence of the salt-making industry of Iron Age and Roman Essex. This comprehensive book was produced by CAG in 1990 and remains the standard text on the subject. £5 per copy + p&p.



**The full set of four publications can be ordered for £15 + p&p**

Please also note that all available past Bulletins have been digitised and can be downloaded from the CAG website: [www.caguk.net](http://www.caguk.net)

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**Appendix 1**

Icklingham Church





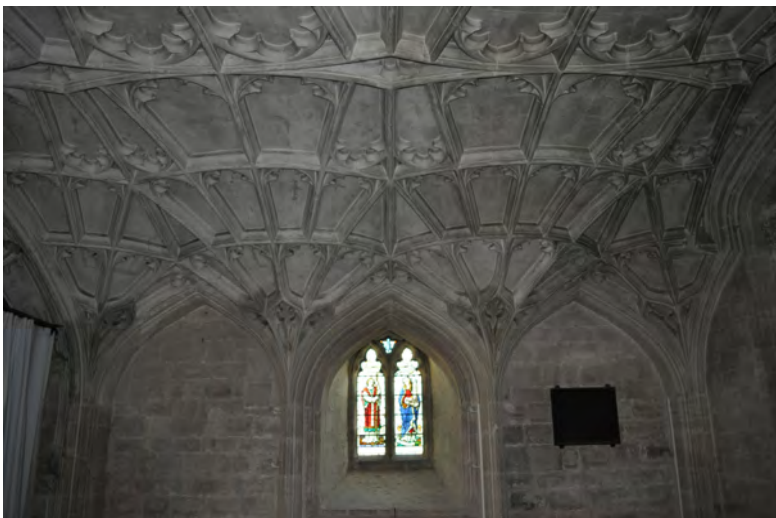
Mildenhall Treasure



Mildenhall Horse Burial



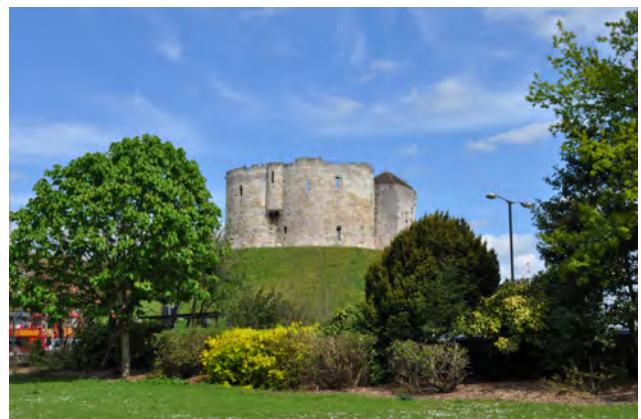
Mildenhall Church





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**Appendix 2**

Weekend trip to the north-east



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*Back cover:*

*'Archaeology in Action' - The Group's post-excavation team at Roman Circus House,  
working on the finds from St John's Abbey, summer 2015 (photo D. Harrison)*

