



# Essex Record Office e-bulletin July 2012

Welcome to the July edition of the ERO e-bulletin. In this edition:

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## News

### Essex Record Office Discovery Day announcement

We are very excited to announce that our keynote speaker at our ERO Discovery Day will be Dr Nick Barratt, a specialist archive researcher and television presenter. His extensive television credits include providing research for the BBC's popular series *Who Do You Think You Are?*

Saturday 8 September, 1.30pm-2.15pm, followed by questions  
Tickets are free and can be booked in advance by calling 01245 244620

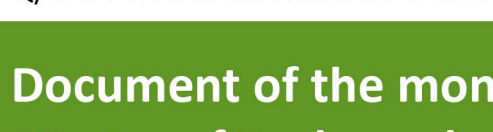
The Discovery Day also includes behind-the-scenes tours and an ERO Helpdesk. The Discovery Day is being run in conjunction with Heritage Open Days.

Click [here](#) to read more on our events page.



### New display: Poverty in later Stuart Essex

The new display which will be appearing in the Searchroom later this week explores ways of finding out about the lives of poor people in Essex at the end of the seventeenth century. The documents on display bring some fascinating stories to light, including accounts of run-ins between the general public and collectors of the unpopular hearth tax. The display has been guest-curated by Ruth Selman, who blogs for us about her research [here](#).



The display is a complement to our first conference of 2012, *The Hearth Tax in Essex*, which takes place on Saturday 14 July. The conference will explore these useful and fascinating records, and how they can be used for local history, house history and family history. See our events listings below for more information.

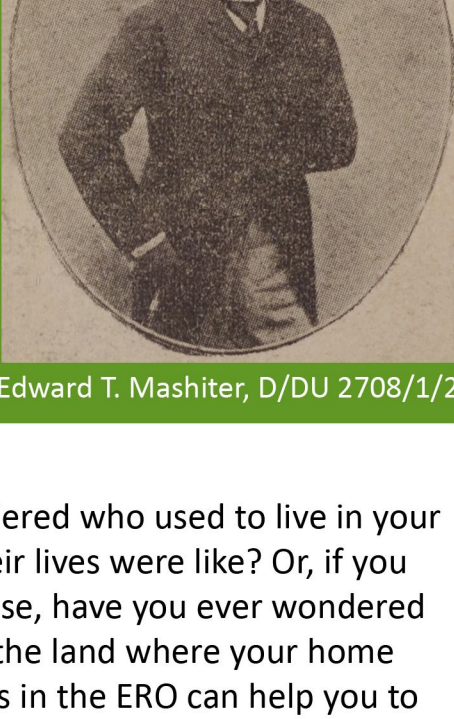
Tickets are £20 including buffet lunch and refreshments. Call 01621 856827 or email [c.c.thornton@btinternet.com](mailto:c.c.thornton@btinternet.com) to book.

Q/Rth 5 Hearth tax return for Thaxted, Michaelmas 1670

### Document of the month: Album of Edward Mashiter, Master of Foxhounds, D/DU 2708/1/2

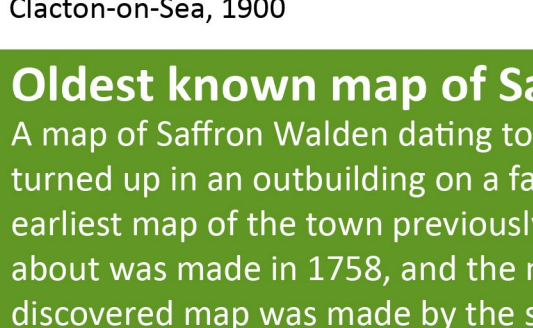
Recently bought online by the ERO, this album was kept by Edward T. Mashiter of Great Burstead (1842-1921). It is one of two surviving albums, one covering the years up to 1903, and this one the years 1908 to 1911. Mashiter was chairman of the brewers Ind, Coope and Co. Ltd of Romford, and master of the Essex Union Hunt, which is reflected in the newscuttings, photographs and other items contained in the albums.

The album will be on display in the Searchroom during July.



Edward T. Mashiter, D/DU 2708/1/2

### Who used to live in your house?

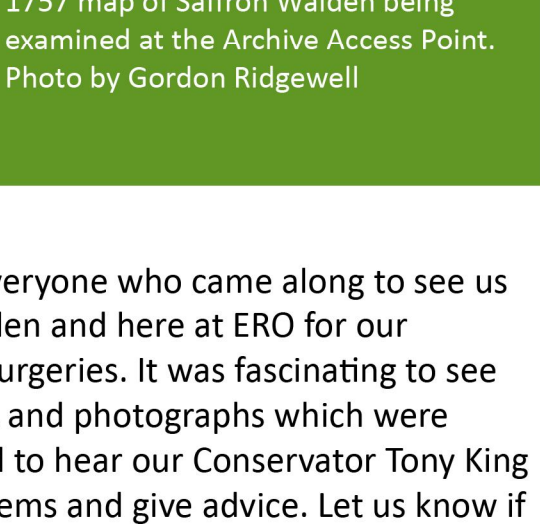


D/UCt Pb1/730 Plan of house, Clacton-on-Sea, 1900

Have you ever wondered who used to live in your house, and what their lives were like? Or, if you live in a modern house, have you ever wondered what used to be on the land where your home now stands? Records in the ERO can help you to answer these questions. Read our guide on getting started on tracing the history of your house in this month's online *EssexWorks* magazine [here](#).

### Oldest known map of Saffron Walden discovered

A map of Saffron Walden dating to 1757 has turned up in an outbuilding on a farm. The earliest map of the town previously known about was made in 1758, and the newly discovered map was made by the same man, Edward John Eyre. The map has clearly had a tough life, and is now understandably in very poor condition, but the outlines of streets and buildings are still remarkably clear. The map has been transferred to the ERO on permanent loan, where conservation work will be undertaken to stabilise the map.



1757 map of Saffron Walden being examined at the Archive Access Point. Photo by Gordon Ridgeway

Click [here](#) to read more.

### Conservation Surgeries



Collection of early photographs brought in by Bob Edwards

Thankyou to everyone who came along to see us at Saffron Walden and here at ERO for our Conservation Surgeries. It was fascinating to see the documents and photographs which were brought in, and to hear our Conservator Tony King diagnose problems and give advice. Let us know if you want to see more of this type of event!

### Nancy Edwards Place

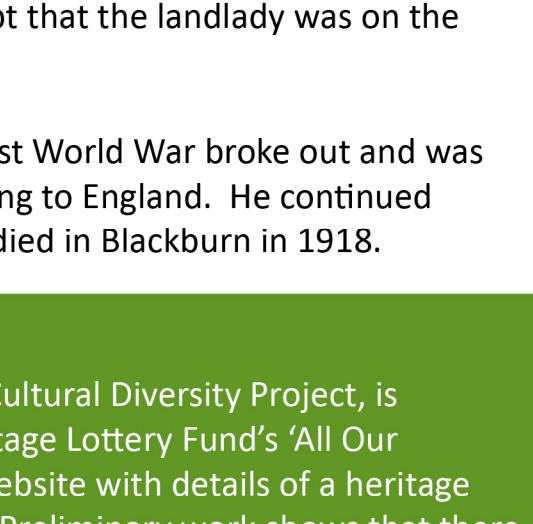
Longstanding users of the Record Office will no doubt remember Nancy Edwards, archivist at the Record Office for many years, who was killed in a road traffic accident in January 2009. They will be pleased to learn that the road of new houses being built on the St Cedd's School site in Maltese Road is to be called Nancy Edwards Place in her honour. Nancy lived in Maltese Road and campaigned to save Courtman House, a historically significant property in the road, from demolition.

### Real Live Giants in Essex: Part 2 – Frederick Kempster

As the Sparks Will Fly cultural celebration featuring giants Marina Mightier and Boreas Zephyr approaches its finale at Chelmsford's Hylands Park on 6 July, we delve into the archives for another real life story of giant proportions...

Frederick John Kempster (1889-1913) was born in Bayswater, London. After his father's death his mother could not support her three children and Frederick went into the Barnardo's home in Commercial Street, in the East End of London.

He was sent to Manitoba in Canada as a farm labourer in 1904 but at the age of 15 he was sent home with weak knees caused by a congenital weakness and lengthening of the internal lateral ligaments of the knee joints and growth on the upper end of the tibia. Frederick was turning into a giant. He continued to grow and reached a height of at least 7 feet 9 inches or 237 cm, with some reports making him 8 feet 4 inches tall. He learnt basket making at Barnardo's Boys Garden City at Woodford Bridge, Essex but soon after joined Astley & Co's American Circus at Chigwell, Essex and toured the country. When not on tour he lived with his sister at Landernere, near Thorpe-le-Soken, Essex where he was pictured shaking hands with the landlady of the King's Head, Landernere – nothing too remarkable in that except that the landlady was on the first floor!



T/Z 652/1 Frederick Kempster shaking hands with the landlady at the King's Arms, Landernere, 1911

Frederick was caught on tour in Berlin when the First World War broke out and was kept under house arrest for a month before returning to England. He continued touring in England but contracted pneumonia and died in Blackburn in 1918.

### Heritage trail

Essex Record Office, in partnership with the Essex Cultural Diversity Project, is proposing to submit a bid for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund's 'All Our Stories' programme. We hope to set up a mobile website with details of a heritage trail illustrating the culturally diverse past of Essex. Preliminary work shows that there is plenty of evidence of incomers to Essex from the Dutch and Huguenots fleeing Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to more recent arrivals such as Jewish children on the Kindertransport in the late 1930s and Ugandan Asian refugees in the 1970s. Our earliest reference to a member of the Black and Asian community in Essex is to the burial of 'a certayne darke mane' called Thomas Parker in Rayleigh in 1579.

We will need to recruit volunteers to do the research for this project so if you are interested in helping, please contact us to let us know. Training would be given for anyone not familiar with the records but all are welcome. We anticipate that the project will involve searching parish registers for baptisms, marriages and burials relating to members of diverse communities and looking for further information on the people and events concerned.

The bid will be submitted in mid July and therefore if you are able to help could you please let us know by the 13th July.

Email Sarah Dickie at [Sarah.Dickie@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Sarah.Dickie@essex.gov.uk) or Indi Sandhu at [Indi.Sandhu@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Indi.Sandhu@essex.gov.uk)

### Recent accessions

Recent accessions include a set of parish magazines for the rural parishes of Wickham Bishops and Langford, complete from the first issue in 1894 until 1921, with more scrappy coverage up to 1942 (Acc. A13398). Good runs of parish magazines are rarer than they ought to be, given the unique material that they contain. Try this from 1897: 'A motor car passed through Langford on Tuesday last ... going at a rate of about 15 miles an hour, rather alarming to young horses, we should think, as it was heralded by the blowing of a horn. We are told by those who have ridden in a motor car the sensation is delicious, so doubtless we shall all be going about in them soon'.

### Essex Journal

The latest issue of Essex Journal is now out. It contains articles on the Roman, Saxon and medieval crossing points of the River Stour, the story behind the saving of Epping Forest, a discussion on the Lock Hospital in Colchester as well as other news and book reviews. For further information or details of how to obtain a copy please contact Neil Wiffen on [neil.wiffen@essex.gov.uk](mailto:neil.wiffen@essex.gov.uk).

### Forthcoming events

Unless otherwise stated, all events must be booked in advance – please telephone **01245 244 620**. You can also now keep up with our upcoming events on the Events page on our blog.

#### Discover: Parish Registers (1538-present) – at Saffron Walden Archive Access Point

Parish registers contain information of great value to the family historian, but they may seem daunting if you have not used them before. This session will explain what you might expect to discover in parish registers and how to get the best from them.  
**Tuesday 10 July, 10.30am-12.00 noon**  
Tickets £10  
At the Saffron Walden Archive Access Point, Saffron Walden Library, King Street, Saffron Walden, CB10 1ES

#### Walk: Hadleigh – before the 2012 Olympics

A Norman church, castle ruins and estuary views painted by Constable. Learn about the town chosen as one of the 2012 Olympic venues.  
**Wednesday 11 July, 2.00pm-3.30pm**  
Tickets £5

#### The Hearth Tax in Essex

Hearth Tax returns form a unique record of seventeenth-century householders. This special one-day conference will show you how to use Hearth Tax records to research your family history, house history, and local history. Organised by the Friends of Historic Essex and the British Academy Hearth Tax Project (Roehampton University).  
**Saturday 14 July, 10.00am-3.15pm**  
Tickets £20 including buffet lunch and refreshments  
Book in advance on **01621 856 827**, or by emailing [c.c.thornton@btinternet.com](mailto:c.c.thornton@btinternet.com)

#### Searchroom Tour

This forty-five minute tour will show you how to get the very best from the ERO's Searchroom – it's ideal if you are just starting your research or perhaps want to go beyond using microfiche and microfilm. We will also offer some tips on how to use our online catalogue, Seax.  
**Saturday 18 August, 9.30am-10.15am**  
Free, advance booking essential

#### 'Beatrix Potter – Her art and inspiration'

An informal lecture by Dudley Dickie for the Essex History Group. All welcome.  
**Tuesday 4 September, 10.30am-11.30am**  
Free, small charge for tea and coffee

#### Discover: Your House History – at Saffron Walden Archive Access Point

This session will enable you to begin to discover the history of your house, or other buildings, using documents in the Record Office's collections.  
**Tuesday 4 September, 10.30am-12.00noon**  
£10, advance booking essential

#### ERO Discovery Day

In conjunction with Heritage Open Days. See behind-the-scenes on tours of the archives, and learn about how the ERO can help you with family, house or local history. Featuring a special keynote speech by media genealogist Nick Barratt.  
**Saturday 8 September, 10.00am-4.00pm**  
Free, tours and tickets for Nick Barratt's talk can be pre-booked on 01245 244620



#### Keep up with ERO

We welcome your comments on this e-bulletin and all other aspects of the ERO's service. If you have a comment or a suggestion about how we could improve, please e-mail us at [ero.enquiry@essex.gov.uk](mailto:ero.enquiry@essex.gov.uk).

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