



LEIGHWAY

The newsletter of the Leigh Society
An eye to the future with an ear to the past in the heart of Leigh

GOODBYE TO ALL THAT

Well 2001 was certainly the Society's 'annus horribilis'. But we have weathered the storm.

The Heritage Centre has had a facelift and officially reopened on 24 November.

Once again we have plenty of things planned for the new year to raise funds both for the Society and Plumbs Cottage.

With this newsletter is a reminder that subscriptions are due, again no increase in price this year. The Society is totally dependent on subscriptions from members so please renew your membership promptly.

This is the first edition of Leighway which has been sent by e-mail to those members who have this facility. If you wish to be added to the e-mail circulation please send me an e-mail at carole.pavitt@btopenworld.com.

The newsletter continues to receive more and more articles from members of the Society which is excellent so keep the articles coming.

Here's to 2002.



THE CHAIRMAN'S NEW YEAR MESSAGE

Looking back, it has been an eventful year – the main event being perhaps, the fire. Your committee were soon on the job and insurance and rebuilding issues were speedily settled. By the end of October all was complete including external and internal repairs and repainting throughout – plus a new carpet.

There is of course a silver lining to all these goings on in that we will soon have a much improved and attractive centre. A lot of interest has been received including a sum of £2000 from Leigh Town Council. This offset the lack of sales as the Centre was closed all summer. Many thanks to all concerned.

We now look forward to a bumper year at the Centre and our new programme. As you know we shall still be pushing on with fund raising for Plumbs Cottage which project is largely in the hands of our Editor, Carole Pavitt – we shall need lots of help though in raising the necessary monies.

It now remains for me, on behalf of the staff and committee to wish you a very happy and prosperous new year and to thank you for your continued support.

Frank Bentley

2002 DIARY

13 March	800 years of Hadleigh Castle – Rosemary Arscott
24 April – AGM	Up and Down the Thames – John Porter
15 May	The Salvation Army came to Leigh – Gordon Parkhill
14 May	Greenwich coach – £8
18 May	Quiz
June	Leigh Folk Festival
September	Leigh Regatta
7-10 October	Trip to Bruges
16 October	Tibbits and Tales of Essex Inns – Mavis Sipple
13 November	A collection of Street Signs – Neil Smith
December	Comicals
December	Society Christmas Lunch

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

No change in subscriptions again this year so being a member of the Society is a real bargain.

Included within Leighway is a reminder slip. Please complete this and return it to the Membership Secretary as quickly as possible with your membership fee of £5 and you will receive your membership card with the April edition of Leighway. All the details for this years programmed events are contained in our 2002 diary above and of course we will let you know from time to time when other events are planned.

Why not join a friend – just send us the details and subscription and we will do the rest.

FUND RAISING

It is increasingly difficult to think of new ways to raise funds, everyone loves a quiz and the race night was such a success last year we hope to repeat it but it would be nice to do something different.

What about something in the summer?

Please let us have your ideas. Either e-mail or write to Carole at the usual address or via the Heritage Centre.

CHARACTERS OF OLD LEIGH

'PIP THOMPSON'

Pip or Diddy as he was known in the family was actually Ebenezer Henry Thompson born in 1864 in Leigh.

Pip served his country in the Boer War and came back to Leigh to a hero's welcome. There were crowds of people and the Town band to welcome him and his daughter Annie could remember being carried on her Uncle's shoulders to see what was going on.

Later Pip served on a minesweeper in the First World War.

When at home in Leigh Pip smoked fish in a 'smoke hole' in the corner of the yard backing on to the railway at 53 High Street. He smoked sprats and herrings by threading them through the mouth onto rods. He also smoked cod's roe. He did a good trade, particularly with commuters coming past from the station. On one occasion a lady complained at his prices stating that she could get cod's roe cheaper in the Broadway. Pip politely told her to 'what not off' up to the Broadway then and not come back.

Pip also sold ice cream which he made in a lean-to in the yard. He had a hand freezer which was a cylinder packed with ice and possibly rock salt with a handle. The custard was in a V shaped dispenser at the top. He turned the handle like mad while pouring a thin film of custard on to the cylinder and went on turning until ice cream formed. Then he pressed a scraper so that the ice cream dropped into a long thin metal container. When this was full it went into a tub packed round with ice ready for sale.

It was all go in the summertime when everything turned around the ice cream. The ice man delivered every day, probably more than once. All the apparatus was cleaned, scrubbed and scalded everyday. The custard was made of full cream milk, farm eggs, sugar and pure vanilla essence and cornflour.

Pip's father, John, was a baker originally from Rayleigh, but the family story is that he did not have much business sense. Had he, Garons could well have been Thompsons instead.

Pip married to Charlotte Bolton whose father worked in Leigh Pottery and two of her sisters, Nell and Polly kept a drapers shop in the Broadway.

Pip and Charlotte had 7 children - all girls.



Pip and his daughters. Back row: Annie, Pip and Millicent
Next Row: Charlotte and Ethel, Centre: Charlotte Annie 'Nan'
Bottom row: Jessie, Doris and Marjorie
Photo and all information supplied by Kate Slatter, Pip's granddaughter, to whom much thanks

A CINDER PATH RAMBLE

Peter Whitlam asks us to share in his enjoyment of the varied flora on an October ramble along the Cinder Path.

"Even in early October it is surprising to find that inside the railings of the railway, along the cinder path between Old Leigh Station (Leigh Sailing Club) and Chalkwell Station there is a riot of colour. On the seaward side there is also considerable vegetation although the plants are not very colourful, with the brown feathery heads of the reeds being most noticeable.

On a walk in September along the path I identified some 50 different species and I am sure that an expert would find many more. Particularly pleasing were the patches of Common Toadflax with their yellow flowers like small snapdragons, which of course they are.



Common Toadflax

Although fifty is a rather small base, a comparison with the averages of the main species in this area is of interest. Not unexpectedly a group like the Goosefoots, natural in sea marshes, are four times the normal at 8%, whilst extraordinarily the Daisy family is over-represented at 30% instead of the usual 10%. There is probably some explanation for this. Partly it can be explained by the marsh plants of the family such as Golden Samphire, Sea Mayweed and Sea Wormwood. The Rose, Pea and Carrot families which are other common groups are present in their usual numbers but the Pink family is completely missing. I wonder why? Perhaps I missed them.

There are of course few trees but there are several apple and some elder and at the Leigh end a lot of privet, which has grown to a considerable height.

Among other flowers there is a nice patch of Spiny Rest Harrow near Chalkwell, and at the other end a number of different poppies, probably garden escapes. Opposite the Bembridge, close by the railings, there are, for many yards, flowerless Horsetails, quite unusual.

If one made a review in the Spring, there would of course be many different flowers to be seen. I must do that."

THE GARDEN FOR THE BLIND



The Garden for the Blind in the Library Gardens was opened in 1958 by the then Mayor, Alderman Mussett. To his far left in the light suit is the Rev Sutcliffe, Methodist Minister at Leigh between 1956 and 1961 and the father of member Norman Sutcliffe

SOUTHEND AIRPORT

Southend Airport opened in January 1946. Until then it had been used by the air ministry for a unit of the R.A.F Reserve. It was about this time that Jack Jones first arrived there in his Puss Moth aircraft.

Reginald John Jones joined the Royal Navy at sixteen. While serving on HMS Ardent, he watched the Fleet Air Arm exercising over the Mediterranean and decided that flying was for him. He bought himself out of the Navy and applied to the RAF but was turned down. He applied again and was accepted. During the War he piloted a variety of aircraft with exceptional skill and determination. As soon as he was released from the R.A.F. Squadron Leader Jack began to earn a living flying holiday makers on joy rides in Heme Bay.

Life was a struggle for Jack and his wife. For a while they lived in a Nissen hut on the airport but it wasn't too long before Channel Airways was born. The early aircraft were Bristol Freighters, a ten-seater Dove, a DC4, Vikings and Dakotas.



Scheduled flights went to the Channel Islands daily, carrying passengers and freight, usually flowers and tomatoes. Gradually business picked up. This was in the sixties, the time when everyone went on 'package holidays'. Flights left the airport in a constant stream throughout the day and night. Thousands of holiday makers went through the airport gates.

The purchase of Channel Airways first Golden Viscount was a great event. The air hostesses were issued with green cloaks with 'golden' linings, thousands of postcards were printed. People came from all over the country to be taken on a tour to look inside this fabulous aircraft. In 1967 Jack bought his first jet aircraft.

Channel Airways was by no means the only company flying from Southend in the sixties. Tradair was there, soon to be bought up by Channel Airways. British United Air Ferries flew their Bristol Freighters and also the much acclaimed Carvair - a DC4 Skymaster specially modified to carry five cars and twenty-two passengers. According to their advertisements, flights left the airport promptly up to twelve times a day to Calais, Ostend and Rotterdam. A flight to Calais lasted half an hour and cost just under four pounds. Sadly from being the main source of employment in the town and the second highest airport in total aircraft movement in the country (Heathrow was first) the airport declined, the runways being too short to take the huge new jets.

Mavis Sipple

JOHN COOK, DOCTOR OF LEIGH

Many members will know of 'Cook's Place' in the Old Town, but who was Cook and how grand was he to have his property known by his name?

There had been a Dr Cook in Leigh since 1700 when at the age of 22 John Cook, apothecary and surgeon set up his practice, living in what became known as Cook's Place.

His eldest son John was born in 1704 at Leigh and at the age of 8 was sent to Latin School in Bathgate, Lothian, Scotland and then to school in Edinburgh. He returned to Leigh in 1724 and entered St Thomas' Hospital the following year. After he had completed his medical training he set up a practice in Burnham but returned to Leigh in 1726 to get married.

Sadly his wife and daughter died in 1729.

Dr John also worked as a coal merchant in Leigh but his medical practice led him to become a medical author writing voluminous works which were presented to the Royal College of Physicians in Edinburgh and The Royal Society.

In 1732 he was awarded an MD by St Andrew's University.

John married for the second time in Leigh in 1732 to Elizabeth Bradley, the daughter of Lemuel Bradley, Steward to the Archbishop of Canterbury and owner of Burnt Oak Farm.

John and Elizabeth had at least 15 children many of whom died young but his sons George and Lemuel became doctors and his son John was the Vicar of Fenstanton cum Hilton in Cambridgeshire.

His house in Old Leigh was destroyed in the early 20th century. It is there that it is said John entertained John Wesley on his visits to Leigh.

In his diary Wesley records a description of the house where he stayed in Leigh and this is said to tally with the description of Cook's Place.

Dr John Cook died in 1777 but the family continued in Leigh with his son Lemuel taking over as doctor.

Like many men of science of the time John had an interest in things spiritual and supernatural and is said to have believed in visitations and friendly visits from spirits.

Benton describes Cook's Place in the late 1860s as being several centuries old and one of the tallest houses in the village. The ground floor was considerably lower than the road and possessed an ancient oak staircase and large old fashioned fireplaces.

The house was situated on the south side of the railway, to which it lost some of its garden, near the 'middle pump' (Strand Wharf) In later years it became the Cosy Café next door to the Customs House.



LEIGHWAY THE NEXT EDITION

Items for the April edition of Leighway should be with Carole by 10 March and can be sent to her by e-mail, snail mail or via the Heritage Centre. We have a short lead in time so get writing.

FORESHORE WADERS

The greatest joy of living in Leigh is the sight of the wide estuary with its everchanging sky, seascape and mudflats. Nearly every morning for over 30 years I have walked along the shore and we now make it a daily ritual to start the day with a walk along the Cinder Path between Old Leigh and the Crowstone at Chalkwell.

Winter time is especially interesting as over-wintering seabirds are abundant. The best time to see them is when the tide leaves the shore and hungry waders crowd along the water's edge to probe and search for food in the uncovering foreshore.

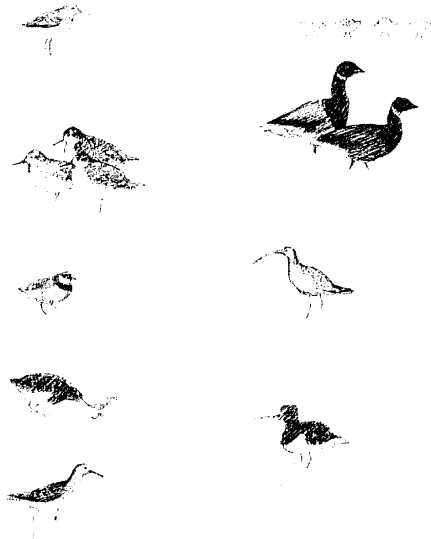
The most numerous of our small winter waders is the Dunlin which is usually the first to arrive along the shore. It is grey-brown with a longish black bill turned down at its tip. Its flight in large flocks can be very impressive as they all twist and turn to disappear briefly after flashing their white undersides.

The much larger Knot is similar to the Dunlin in its spectacular flight patterns. Knots usually feed bunched in large groups a few hundred yards from the shore.

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We particularly look forward to the arrival of the Sanderling. It is a pretty little wader and runs along the water's edge like a wind-up toy. We see them at Chalkwell foraging in the shingle for small crustaceans. The Sanderling's whitish colour merges with the breaking waves and small groups are often unnoticed.

The Ringed Plover is a very attractive little bird, with a prominent black collar; usually seen as a solitary standing bird among other probing waders. Turnstones are very numerous inshore waders and come in very close to the Bembridge where they turnover small stones with their bills in search of food. Turnstones are very well camouflaged with blackish backs and head, white breast and orange legs. When in flight they show a striking white 'W' on the backs of their wings. They have a distinctive clicking call.



In total contrast to the Turnstones the nervous Redshank is easily disturbed when trying to feed inshore. It is brown speckled with long red legs, straight bill and loud alarm call: and has a distinct nodding head action.

Our largest wader is the Curlew which has a long down-curved bill. Curlews generally stay further out from the shore, their beautiful haunting calls can often be heard across the mudflats together with the piping calls of the Oyster Catchers – often continuing through the night.

Oyster Catchers have bold black and white markings, orange bill and red legs and thrive on the inshore cockles.

The real highlight of bird watching in the estuary is the return, usually in September, of the dark bellied Brent Geese from northern Siberia. They arrive in very large flocks amounting to thousands, including noisy family groups of five or more. The young birds have white bars on their wings, the white neck flash comes later.

They are vegetarians and feed initially on our local eel grass – or zostera. Family groups can often be seen close inshore, particularly when the eel grass beds have been reduced off shore.

For success in bird watching you will need a pair of lightweight binoculars, pocket bird book and a warm coat!

A special treat for those with binoculars is the sight of the seals which hang out at low tide on the north facing side of the south bank of the Ray mouth. Look for the dark blobs that move!

The list of sea birds feeding on the estuary is very long – the numerous types of gulls for instance, provide interest for the walker all year long. Bird watching is fascinating and all for free!

Patricia Chrisp



I WONDER AS I WANDER

For those members who like to ramble it is very pleasing to see rights of way opening up for their use. The Salvation Army have recently opened up Fitzwilliam Road for pedestrian access, this links Chapel Lane to Sea View Terrace. Hadleigh Castle is now about 15 minutes walk from Chapel Lane.

THE CHRISTMAS COMICALS

Thanks to everyone involved in the Comicals. It was a rip roaring success again this year and we managed to raise over £400 towards the restoration of Plumbs Cottage.

I hope now with two successes under our belts that the Comicals is firmly established in the Society's calendar and the life of the Old Town and we look forward next year to even more of you taking part. So once again thanks to all who took part and to all the wonderful helpers who cooked Christmas puddings, organised the raffle and helped behind the scenes.



CHARTWORK FOR ALL

By John Porter

I have always considered that the greatest single cause of maritime disasters is the Boat Show. It never even rains there, and hurricanes hardly ever happen. Lured by beautiful girls draped over the foredeck, the unwary rush headlong in search of this idyllic existence, the reality of which is still eluding the rest of us. Such a one was Jim. Urged by his wife and a teenage son, he forsook his golf and became the proud possessor of a narrow gutted motor launch upon which some market gardener had built a shed. Undeterred by early strandings and a breakdown or two, he approached the coming summer holidays with enthusiasm.

"This Medway River", John, he said, "seems to be a great place for our holiday." Thinking of the tranquil reaches above Maidstone, I hastily agreed and gave a few tips on lock work. I didn't see Jim again that year, and only later heard the story from a friend

Jim took his sailing directions from Bill, the crane driver at the Leigh Building Supply wharf at Leigh. "Yes, the Medway's down the river a bit from here, and over on the right hand side."

So, with high hopes, the expedition set off, at the top of a spring ebb, rocketted down past the Pier, and started looking for the Medway. It seemed a long way down the river before they came to this branch on the right, but up they went in great spirits, even if Sheerness did only seem to be a few cottages on the starboard bank, and the river got quite a bit narrower. "I don't know how they managed to get those big battleships up here" said Jim as they ran aground yet again. "It must have silted up a lot since then." Well pleased with their achievement though, they anchored for he night in the channel. In the morning off they set once more. "Dad," said Stewart, "didn't we pass a white farmhouse like that yesterday on the other bank?" "I expect so," came the confident reply, "it's the usual Kentish farmhouse, ~ there must be hundreds of them." "Dad, that brickworks with the tall chimney, didn't we pass one yesterday on the left hand side?" Severe thought produced the answer that, as the boat had been set off in the direction it was heading when the anchor was raised, the last hour had been spent in heading back downstream. This slight error of navigation was soon corrected, however, and finally in the evening Queenborough was reached, a good berth found by tying up to the railings by the "Old House at Home", and a great time was had by all in that fair city, even finding out why battleships no longer come through the Swale. Fortunately the lines and cleats were strong enough to take the weight when they all woke up in the early hours suspended over a heap of old bicycles and bedsteads. Surviving this, they rattled their way up the Medway to a berth at Hoo, where they met my friend, and couldn't wait to tell him the story. "Just a minute," he said "I'll get the chart and see just where you've been." Jim gazed at the venerable chart in amazement

"Where did you get this?" he cried. What do you mean? ---- I bought it." "Well, it says on the bottom - ADMIRALTY - isn't it all SECRET!" I believe he finished up captain of the golf club!

IMPROVEMENTS AT THE CONDUIT



Norman Sutcliffe who so carefully tends the Conduit in the Old Town advises us that the tree which has dominated the Conduit area has been removed.

This was necessary as since it was planted in Heritage Year it had grown considerably and was causing structural damage to its surrounding and to the gutters and roofs.

Removal of the tree has made the area much lighter and more attractive and will enable the plants to flourish and enhance this part of the Old Town which provides a focus of interest for visitors.

Many thanks to Alan Crystall for his discussions with the Borough Council and to the Council for the expert and tidy manner in which the tree was removed with no damage to the Conduit itself.

THE TITHE MAP

One of the most popular buys in the Heritage Centre is the 1847 Tithe Map of Leigh. But what exactly does the Tithe Map tell us about the town and its people?

Tithes, or the payment of one tenth of all the produce of the land, to the church had been a legal obligation since the 8th century and originally these tithes had been paid in kind. So the church had received the tenth sheaf of corn or the tenth pig or tenth pail of milk, for example.

Over the centuries this tithe collection created a great deal of resentment until in 1836 the Tithe Commutation Act was passed whereby tithes were converted into rent charge payments based on the then prevailing price of grain.

A Commissioner and assistant commissioners were appointed and between 1836 and 1852 the Tithe Commission brought about a major redistribution of property.

The Commissioners appointed surveyors to make large scale maps and schedules.

Although the maps are not drawn to scale they are very often the earliest surviving maps of a parish.

The accompanying tithe apportionment lists all the landowners and tenants and their fields together with the use of each field.

Thus we know that in 1847 Plumbs Cottage was owned and occupied by William Morris.

By then looking at the 1851 census we can find that William Morris was a fisherman born in Leigh with a wife and two sons. From the parish registers we can find out that his wife was Ann Little also of Leigh and they were married on the 23 August 1823 at St Clement's Church.

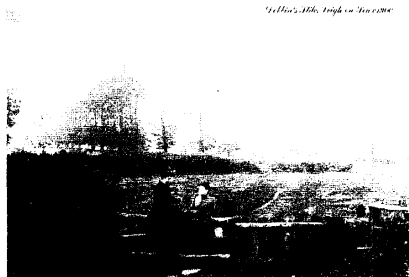
So the Tithe Map can be a very useful aid to family history research.

DOBBIN'S WELL

Dobbin's Well was an Old Leigh landmark in Torquay Drive. Apparently it was a wonderful spring and in 1863/64 saved the town from a terrible drought at the time when the pump on the Strand went wrong.

The story recounted by Canon King was that someone who had had 'one over the top' had thrown the carcass of a pig down the well, but the Canon believed the horrible taste was due to a leakage of the tide getting into the water.

He also had concerns about a memorable spot at the entrance to Dobbin's Field in the corner of which the farmer stacked his manure. The drainage from the heap, when frozen, provided a notorious slide called 'The Juicy'. This was close to where the Wesleyan Church is in Elm Road.



Dobbin's Stile at the entrance to Dobbin's Field about 1900.

PLANNING

Over the last few months the Committee has considered a number of planning applications in the Conservation Areas including the following:

Junipers – amendments to originally submitted scheme - no objections

7 Leigh Hill – single storey rear extension, first floor balcony – no objection in principle but we objected to the design of the balcony supports and detail above the windows

Bank House, Leigh Hill – installation of a burglar alarm – no objection subject to it being the same colour as the external walls

35 Victoria Road – removal of patio doors, replacement sash windows – no objection

Customs House revisions to earlier scheme – reiterate previous views regarding the railings and the rooflights

The Government has recently issued a consultation paper on reforming the planning system. The consultation will be a lengthy process and many of the changes they propose will require legislation – so don't hold your breaths at the moment.

THE RISE OF CLIFFTOWN

In 1854 with the completion of the development of the Tilbury line to Southend you could walk from Southend Station (now Southend Central) along a track called High Street because it took the high ground between Prittlewell and the hamlet of Southend on to the cliff top where you could view the old pier and the Shrubbery. Walking along the cliffs you would have come to the cornfields of Shorefields the site of Clifftown.

On 3 October 1859 the first stone of the Clifftown Estate was laid on land leased from Squire Stratton and 124 houses were built.

The houses were built of white brick with freestone dressings and were constructed in terraces laid out on the summit of the cliff. They were of various sizes surrounded by spaces with trees and shrubs.

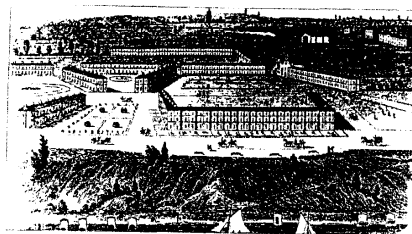
The properties were rented by local people and City merchants with one of the first occupiers being Ellis Kerry the station master at Southend. In 1863 his next door neighbour was Robert Absalom a fisherman, the uncle of the later operator of Absalom's bathing machines.

The Kelly's Directory of 1866 suggested that more houses were to be built 'a great inducement' being held out to the occupants by the Tilbury and Southend Railway Company of season tickets at the low price of £10 first class and £7 second class.

By 1856 the rental for houses in Cambridge Terrace was £60 pa and the ground rent £5. In Nelson Terrace 8 houses were built with shop accommodation.

In 1861 the Illustrated London Gazette said that 'the Cliff Town estate still helps to supply a want which the overworked middle classes of London experience'

Clifftown is now a Conservation Area



Clifftown about 1970

JERSEY QUEST

Does anyone know if there was a traditional pattern for Leigh that the fishermen's wives used when knitting jerseys for their husbands. If anyone knows can they let Carole know via the Heritage Centre.

CHARACTERS OF OLD LEIGH

Although there are many characters of Old Leigh, inevitably we will come to the end of the most well known ones.

Many of our members are connected to the old Leigh families and we would like you to share your memories of grandparents, parents, aunts and uncles with us. This month's character Pip Thompson is a good example where we knew about him but were delighted to receive even more information from the family direct. I am sure you all agree that the characters section is one of our favourites so if you can add to our collection please get in touch with Carole through the usual channels.



A TUDOR CONNECTION TO ESSEX

We know the Tudors had many connections to Essex, not least the Boleyn family. But to get her place on the throne of England alongside Henry VIII Ann had displaced Henry's first wife, Catherine of Aragon.

Henry and Catherine had had one daughter, Mary, later to become infamous as Bloody Mary, and she too had her connections to Essex.

After Henry's death the throne passed to his only legitimate son, Edward VI and Mary and her sister Elizabeth were next in line respectively if Edward had no children. Mary, however was different from her half brother and sister in that she maintained the Old Faith. Mary was a Catholic and as such had the support of the Holy Roman Emperor and indeed still a large amount of followers in England.

Edward was a weakly boy under the influence of his Uncle and other powerful men but he was also a staunch Protestant, he had known no other faith. Mary was therefore a problem and of course as it turned out upon gaining the throne revived the old religion. But in 1550 she was a danger to young Edward and indeed in danger herself and her diplomatic connections with the continent led to a decision that Mary should leave England for her own safety.

Mary moved to her estate in Woodham Walter, the best placed of her residences for reaching the coast undetected being only 2 miles from Maldon.

The Emperor sent ships to cruise the Essex coastline as if looking for pirates and another ship with a light draught up the Blackwater to Maldon posing as a merchant selling grain to Mary's household. The intention was that she would be smuggled on board and by the time she was missed she would be long gone on her way to Brussels.

Everything was in place and the merchant ship arrived at Maldon on 2 July, but Mary had changed her mind. A letter was written imploring her to make haste as the time and the tide were right and the ships were waiting to escort her across the Channel.

There was no time to waste as the war ships would be spotted off Harwich and the news would quickly get back to London.

Dubois the leader of the expedition met Mary's secretary at Woodham Walter, but while waiting for an audience he also met Mary's controller, Rochester, who told him that Edward's death was imminent, information he had gained through astrological predictions. If he had also passed this information on to Mary, no wonder she did not want to leave England.

When Dubois finally met Mary she was cool, calm and collected and indicated that she had changed her mind even though she had begun preparations to leave. Mary kept wavering and indicated later that she would be ready to go the following Friday but then a message arrived to say that the plans had been discovered and the villagers wished to arrest Dubois ship as they suspected a connection with the warship currently off Stansgate.

Mary lost her nerve completely and an alternative plan was considered. Mary would return to her estate at Beaulieu and a second attempt to escape would be planned.

For five days the ships waited on the Essex coast held up by a

storm. They were not challenged although their whereabouts were known by the King's Council in London and precautions were taken to make sure Mary never left England.

So Mary stayed and became Queen on Edward's death, restoring the Old Faith and making many martyrs for the Protestant faith.

One of these was Dr Sandys, Vice Chancellor of Cambridge who had preached for the Duke of Northumberland when he came to Cambridge in support of the claim to the throne of Lady Jane Grey instead of Mary. The coup failed and Northumberland was arrested and Sandys was forced to leave his position and imprisoned. After weeks in the Marshalsea prison he was freed but was not allowed to leave the country without a licence. But with friends an escape was planned. Sandys left by night and hiding out with friends in London on the way made his way to Essex where his wife was. Sandys was guided to an honest farmer near the sea and was then set on board one of James Mower's ships. Mower dwelt at Milton shore. While Sandys was at Milton Mower brought him forty or fifty mariners to whom he preached and who swore then to protect him. On the 6th of May they sailed for Antwerp.

On Mary's death in 1558 Sandys returned to England and became successively, Bishop of Worcester, Bishop of London and Archbishop of York.

We know there was a Moyer family of sailors at Leigh, could this be the same family of James Mower given the lack of consistent spelling of the period and pronunciation?

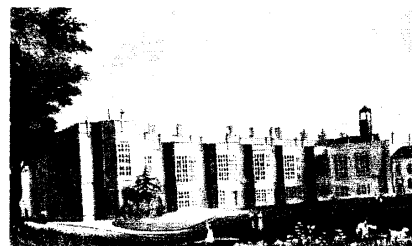
What makes this an intriguing question is the memorial in St Clements to James Moyer, merchant who died on 9 May 1661 aged 44, could this be a descendant of the James Mower who helped save Dr Sandys.

The Moyer family were mariners and this later James' name appears on the brass plate as a Brother of Trinity House in the Church. Sir Samuel Moyer founded a 'free school for instructing children in the principles of the Christian Religion' in Leigh at the foot of Church Hill. He died in 1716.

Sources: Bloody Mary by Carolly Erikson and Foxe's Book of Martyrs

Note: Beaulieu is in fact New Hall, Boreham which still stands to this day as a school. King John is the first King known to have stayed there, Queen Philippa the wife of Edward III was entertained there after her victory over the Scots. Margaret of Anjou the wife of Henry VI came there and Edward IV held court there in 1480. Henry VIII bought the mansion from Anne Boleyn's father and built a new brick mansion. It was to become one of his favourite summer residences and it was he that renamed it Beaulieu. Mary spent many years there as a young woman and obviously returned later in life. In later years the estate was owned by Oliver Cromwell and it passed to General Monck and was visited often by Charles I and his brother James II.

Today the school is still New Hall but much of the land has been sold and is now being developed with very large pseudo Georgian executive houses and is known as Beaulieu!!!!



New Hall

GRANNY'S KITCHEN

The Granny's Kitchen display in the Heritage Centre is a major attraction and draws the visitor in to reminisce about its layout and contents.

Here our intrepid local author, Mavis Sipple, shares with us her memories of the time when Granny's kitchen was in fact Mum's.



Looking at Granny's kitchen in the Heritage Centre certainly brings back memories. The big black stove was the centre of our life in the little house off Rectory Grove. The only heating, the only means of cooking. It needed constant attention. Every morning it had to be raked out and the hot ashes taken to the garden and spread on the soil. It needed filling up several times a day with wood, coal or coke or coal blocks, bought at the oil shop in Glendale Gardens. Every Saturday the great monster had to be blacklead with a special curved brush and lots of Zebra blacklead. The silvery bits at the front would be rubbed down with an emery cloth. For this attention it gave constant heat throughout the house. Not exactly central heating though. Often in the winter the bedroom windows would be iced up on the inside, but there would always be a kettle steaming away on top of the stove and usually a stew or loaf or cake wafting its delicious smell out of the oven.

Life was very hard in those days. Monday, come rain or shine was washing day. Done in the big butler sink. Wrung out by hand and then put through the mangle with its two huge wooden rollers then hung out to dry on a line the length of the garden, saved from trailing on the ground by a long clothes prop. Monday dinner was always cold meat left over from the Sunday roast, mashed potatoes and whatever vegetable was available and cheap. Tinned peas, carrots or cabbage being strong favourites. This meal was always eaten to the music of workers' playtime on the wireless. The programme came from factories in all different parts of the country. Tuesday would find Mother at the kitchen table doing the ironing. Two irons were used for this job. While one heated up on the front of the stove the other would be used for the ironing. It was part of the ritual to take the iron from the stove using a flat kind of oven glove, upturn the iron and spit on it. If it sizzled it was hot enough to use. The sheets were hung over the big metal fireguard to air. There was of course no airing cupboard in those days. In fact there was no hot water. Just one cold tap in the scullery. Water for washing and washing up would be boiled in kettles and carried to the sink in the scullery. If you were lucky there would be a kind of lean to outside the back door. This made going to the outside 'lav' a little less daunting on a cold winter's evening. The outside loo had a wooden door with three little clover leaf holes carved out of the top panel and a big metal latch. Inside was a painted wooden seat, a high rusty cistern with a chain and shaped handle. Behind the door was a nail from which hung from a string, carefully cut squares of newspaper.

Winter evenings were spent sitting around the stove (not too close or

you got mottled legs) listening to the wireless. ITMA, Old Mother Riley, Monday Night At Eight, Valentine Dial. "This is your story teller the man in Black." Usually there was a rag rug in the making. The whole family took part in this. Any old clothes would be cut into strips about eight inches long. This was folded in half then pulled through a piece of sacking using a metal hook with a wooden handle. There was no pattern or plan to this, just random colours, mostly black or grey. One of these rugs would be placed by every door to keep out the draughts. Another would be in front of the fire. Many a time it would catch light when a spark flew out of the grate. It was easily stamped out. From time to time these dust harbourers would be thrown over the clothes line to have the dust beaten out of them.

As many people remark when they stand in front of Granny's Kitchen. Nearly every item there from the stone hot-water-bottle to the bar of Sunlight soap brings back memories of the good old days??

BUNDOCKS THE BOAT BUILDERS

Everyone who has a copy of *Old Leigh - A Pictorial History* knows the name Bundock. The compiler of the book being the Rev Bundock, the Vicar of St Margaret's Church, Leigh.

The Rev Bundock was the Great Grandson of the 'first' Leigh Bundock, Thomas.

Thomas was born in 1793 in Mundon near Maldon where his family were farmers. In 1805 Thomas was apprenticed to the firm of Harrison and Williamson, boat builders of Maldon and following his apprenticeship he set out to walk to Leigh with his tools and baggage. The story goes that as he was walking along what is now Elm Road he met a young girl, Ann Franklin Dennis and asked her the way to Leigh. She is said to have replied 'Follow your nose' which he did and ended up marrying the girl in 1815.

The Bundock boat building yard was to the east of Bell Wharf on a site which was later to be the railway goods siding. In the early days they built the smaller type fishing vessel progressing to bawleys in the later 19th century.

Thomas' son John followed on in the family business and he in turn was followed by his four sons, Thomas, Frank, Walter and Edward who were all well known fishermen and yachtsmen.

From about 1880 the yard moved to the south side of the High Street and worked almost entirely on local fishing and pleasure boats and barges.

On one of the visits of King George V's yacht *Britannia* to Southend Yachting Week her main halyard block was broken in rough weather and was sent to Bundock's yard to be repaired for racing the next day.

Interestingly the name of Bundock was not new to Leigh when Thomas arrived in about 1810. There is a plaque in St Clement's Church commemorating Leigh's association with Trinity House and amongst the Elder Brethren listed are John Bundocke died 1601 and John Bundocke died 1641 his son.

Together with another John Bundock who died in 1660 they are all buried at St Clement's.

There does not however, appear to be any connection between the two Bundock families.

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The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the committee or officers of the Society

We rather hope you will keep your Leighway but if not please recycle it



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