

## THE HADLEIGH SOCIETY

Registered with  
THE CIVIC TRUST

### Honorary Secretary

106 High Street  
Hadleigh  
IPSWICH  
Suffolk IP7 5EL

**Telephone**  
01473 822192

**Email**  
[secretary@hadsoc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@hadsoc.org.uk)

*All views expressed are those  
of the contributors and are  
not necessarily those of the  
Hadleigh Society*

### Programme of Events 2008

Mon 14 Jan	Wolves Wood	RSPB
Wed 5 Mar	From the Quill to the Ballpoint	Michael Woods
Mon 19 May	Making of the Suffolk Landscapes	Dr Edward Martin
Wed 18 Jun	AGM	
Mon 11 Aug	Medical Matters in Hadleigh	Millie Goulbourn, Margaret Jeffrey, Sue Andrews
Wed 15 Oct	Market Stalls and Almshouses	Sue Andrews
Mon 1 Dec	The Hadleigh Dean's Diary	

*Meetings are held in Hadleigh Old Town Hall, 8pm,  
unless otherwise notified. Entry is free for members, £2  
for non-members.*

### Other Contacts

Chairman	John Bloomfield	<a href="mailto:chair@hadsoc.org.uk">chair@hadsoc.org.uk</a>	01473 822063
Membership	Rosemary Schade	<a href="mailto:membership@hadsoc.org.uk">membership@hadsoc.org.uk</a>	01473 824009
Newsletter delivery	Jim Betteridge	<a href="mailto:newsletter@hadsoc.org.uk">newsletter@hadsoc.org.uk</a>	01473 823991
Website & Editor	Graham Panton	<a href="mailto:webmaster@hadsoc.org.uk">webmaster@hadsoc.org.uk</a>	01473 823503

The **Hadleigh Society** website has past newsletters and other information at  
<http://www.hadsoc.org.uk/>

February  
2008

The Hadleigh Society

## FINDING OUT ABOUT LIFE IN MEDIEVAL HADLEIGH

Many readers will be aware that, in the late 10<sup>th</sup> century, the manor of Hadleigh came into the possession of the Priory of the Church of Christ of Canterbury – bequeathed by Earl Godwin; this possession continued for several hundred years. In medieval times the Prior of the Church of Christ of Canterbury was lord of the manor of Hadleigh or, to be more precise, the Prior and the Convent [i.e. the community of monks] were the lords; they in turn held their Hadleigh demesne from the ultimate landlord – the King. The Prior and Convent of the Church of Christ of Canterbury were also designated the chief lords of Hadleigh and as such were responsible for jurisdiction within the whole town <sup>1</sup> and not just within their own manor.

The documents relating to the medieval manor of Hadleigh are consequently lodged in Canterbury Cathedral Archives. These documents were written in Latin on parchment, the skin of goats or sheep and many have survived the intervening six or seven hundred years. Some are in a surprisingly good and legible condition, others are in a fragile state, faded and even damaged, making translation more difficult; a few are completely illegible. Under the auspices of Hadleigh Archive a long term project <sup>2</sup> has commenced to translate as many of those Canterbury/Hadleigh documents as possible. To date around 50 have been translated but many more have still to be tackled. There are four main types of original document from medieval Hadleigh – court rolls; accounts; charters/deeds; and extents/rentals/surveys. A great deal of information bringing 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> century Hadleigh to life can be gleaned from them.

Finding out about life in medieval Hadleigh	1
King Alfred, the Cakes and the Raven Banner	5
Next Meeting – From the Quill to the Ballpoint	6
Map of Hadleigh, 1836 - Erratum	6
Noel Turner Award	6
Executive Committee, 2007-8.	6

At the start of the record of any court is a formal heading. The headings on Hadleigh court rolls provide the name of the town followed by the date of the court; the latter is presented in relation to a feast/festival in a particular regnal year, for example:

*'Hadleghe – Court [or View of Frankpledge] held there on Thursday next after the feast of the Translation of the Blessed Thomas the Martyr in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the reign of King Edward'.*

This date would work out as the Thursday after the 7<sup>th</sup> of July in the year 1276.

Next the 'essoins' are listed. These are apologies for absence or apologies from an individual for not having his or her legal case ready for presentation at that particular court. An essoin could be delivered in writing but, in every Hadleigh roll so far studied, the essoin is given by a proxy, for example:

*'Vincent the Fuller essoins against Nicholas, son of Payne of the Hill, on a plea of trespass  
- by Adam his son 2<sup>nd</sup> time' 3*  
*'Elias Snow against John Wyoth on a plea of debt - by Robert Wodestoke 1<sup>st</sup> time' 4*

The number of times someone made an essoin was recorded at the end of the statement, that is the '2<sup>nd</sup> time' and '1<sup>st</sup> time' in the two given examples. After three consecutive essoins, a person would be put 'at the mercy' of the lord and amerced or fined. Attendance at the next court could be enforced by threat or actual dispossession of his/her goods or, if thought more serious, by threat of, or actual, arrest.

After these introductory formalities comes the real business of the court. Since there were two types of court typically held in English manors and indeed in Hadleigh, it would seem helpful to mention each in turn. The lord or, more usually, his steward presided; unfortunately no mention of this is made in the Hadleigh rolls.

The first, a manor court or court baron, was usually held every 3 weeks and its main function was to uphold the customs and practices of the manor. It dealt, for example, with issues relating to new tenants, changes of tenancy, inheritance, failure to pay rent and /or perform the required labour services – this last item means the tenant had neglected his/her ploughing, harrowing, sowing, reaping, threshing, carting etc for the lord. A manor court also 'tried' cases of default in a tenant's compulsory attendance at court and instances of debt, trespass and stray animals came to its attention; additionally it endeavoured to resolve disputes between individuals and it could give [for a fee] permission for a customary tenant's daughter to marry.

**Friends of Saint Mary's Church**

# **Hadleigh in 1836**

## **The Streets and its People**

***by the Hadleigh Society  
History Group***

**Friday 29<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

**7.30pm**

**at**

**Saint Mary's Church  
Hadleigh**

**Donations welcome**

## NEXT MEETING – FROM THE QUILL TO THE BALLPOINT

Michael Woods will recount the story of the development of writing implements and materials, based on his personal collection. Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March at 8pm in Hadleigh Town Hall as usual. Free to members of the Society; for others there is a charge of £2.

## MAP OF HADLEIGH, 1836 - ERRATUM

If you have one of the Maps of Hadleigh sold at the recent Hadleigh Society meeting you might like to note that on page 1, paragraph 4 the last line should read

... Chapel (then located in what is now called 48 George Street) and the Baptist Chapel ....

The maps (with correct introductory text) are now available at The Idler in High Street and at Hadleigh Bookshop in Market Place, price £20.

## NOEL TURNER AWARD

Nominations are invited from any member of the Hadleigh Society for an award to be made in recognition of 'Outstanding improvements to, or conservation of, Hadleigh's buildings or environment'.



In deciding to make an award the Society's Executive Committee and any expert they may wish to consult will be considering how sympathetic the work is with its surroundings and how well it integrates with them. They will expect all work to display a high quality of workmanship and to be an example of good practice.

Nominations should include details of the improvement made or of work carried out and should be sent to the Hon. Secretary.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, 2007-8.

Chair:	John Bloomfield	Members:
Vice Chair:	Graham Panton	Sue Angland
Secretary:	Jan Byrne	Daphne Jarvis
Treasurer:	Chris Drake.	Margaret Woods
Membership Secretary:	Rosemary Schade (non-voting)	
Newsletter Distributor:	Jim Betteridge. (non voting)	

Since there has been a specific request from a Hadleigh Society member for information on court rolls, let's consider, by way of example, a few of the things learned from the Hadleigh court rolls – at least from those so far translated.

Court rolls contain a written record of the proceedings of one or more courts. In the case of Hadleigh several courts have sometimes been included in one roll. The parchment was rolled into a roll for easier handling and storage – hence the name 'court roll'. One very interesting entry in the court roll of 1276<sup>4</sup> relates to Hadleigh's medieval wool industry – *'John Garleberd received a certain piece of land next to the mill pool' [owned by Canterbury] ... '10 feet in length, to wash his dyed woollens and to draw water'*. For this piece of land, which was held by him and his heirs *'at the will of the lord'*, John had to make an annual payment of *'6d at the feast of St Andrew the Apostle'*.

Court leet was the second type of court, commonly held every six months. None of the Hadleigh court rolls so far translated uses the term 'leet' but they appear to have managed leet issues in a court entitled 'view of frankpledge'. This alternative title was fully justified because one of the major responsibilities of the leet was law and order, in particular ensuring the effective working of the frankpledge system. This required all males over the age of twelve to be in a tithing [a group of ten] with shared responsibility for each other's behaviour and payment of amercedments or fines – clearly a major part of the strategy to maintain law and order. In Hadleigh the manor court and the view of frankpledge sometimes occurred on the same day, at other times they were held separately.

Quite an illuminating variety of offences are recorded in Hadleigh views of frankpledge and readers will remember these courts were administering justice on behalf of the whole town of Hadleigh.

Let's take the court roll of July 1276<sup>4</sup> as an example; the following entries were amongst the 91 items of business recorded on that occasion.

- Robert of Wodestoke *'drew blood from John, the lord's swineherd'*, that means Robert assaulted John and blood was drawn; for this Robert was amerced 6d.
- William the Dyer committed two offences – *'he made an unlawful footpath across the Tyefield without the lord's permission'* and also *'he tipped his dyer's effluent into the lord's ditch next to the Tyefield to the nuisance of the lord'*. He was amerced 12d for each offence, a not insignificant sum of money in 1276.

- The ale tasters William Hert, Simon Cach and Richard, son of Thomas failed ‘*to do their duty*’, that is to taste the ale and so assess its quality and strength. For an unspecified reason they were pardoned rather than amerced.
- Margaret at the Bridge ‘*justly raised a hue and cry on Richard Sherman*’; his offence was not recorded but the amercement was 6d. Margaret had obviously witnessed some wrongdoing on the part of Richard in a public place and loudly cried out – as was required by law. All folks present were then legally obliged to pursue and/or arrest the miscreant. ‘Justly’ indicates the court considered Margaret’s accusation against Richard to be valid.
- John Scot dumped a midden on the king’s highway, this was understandably noted as a great annoyance to the lord and the neighbours; he was perhaps lucky his amercement was only 4d.
- William Geffrey was amerced 6d ‘*for making a ditch 3 feet long and 2 feet wide at Benton, to the nuisance of his neighbours*’.
- Fifteen male and female brewers had ‘*brewed and sold against the ale assize*’; their amercements varied between 3d and 12d – according to how much ale they brewed and sold. Dulcie Rokes and Matilda Scot each paid 12d; John Ridgard has found that the levy of such a fine would indicate the brewer concerned was likely to be the keeper of an inn rather than an alehouse. Nicholas, the master of scholars [alerting us to the existence of a grammar school in Hadleigh in 1276] brewed beer but this was ‘*condoned*’, no reason was given.
- Ten bakers ‘*baked and sold against the bread assize*’, their penalty was either 4d or 6d, presumably depending on the amount of bread baked and sold.

Be assured Hadleigh was not a hotbed of illicit brewing and baking, it is generally agreed that amercement for ‘breaking the assize’ was in fact a form of official licencing.<sup>5</sup>

This tiny glimpse of just two of its many documents certainly creates an impression of medieval Hadleigh being a lively and bustling town with clear endeavours being made on the part of Canterbury in relation to social order – hopefully to the benefit of the majority of inhabitants, perhaps some of whom were the direct ancestors of a few of our Hadleigh Society members!

#### References & Note

1. Translation of the Hadleigh Extent of 1306 – Canterbury Cathedral Archives – CCA-DCe-Register B.
- 2 This translation project has been funded by grants from Hadleigh Archive, Hadleigh WEA, Hadleigh Charity Shop, Mr Grutchfield’s locality budget and the East of England Museums, Libraries, Archives Council.
- 3 Translation of Hadleigh Court Roll 1295 – Canterbury Cathedral Archives reference: CCA-U15/16/4
- 4 Translation of Hadleigh Court Roll 1276 – Canterbury Cathedral Archives reference: CCA-U15/16/2
- 5 John Ridgard is a national authority on medieval East Anglia; lectures by him October – December 2005 at Ipswich Record Office.

## **KING ALFRED, THE CAKES AND THE RAVEN BANNER as presented by Dr. Sam Newton in May 2007**

Renowned historian Dr. Sam Newton once again enthralled a packed audience when he visited the Society to talk about King Alfred. Although Alfred is usually remembered for his ‘burning of the cakes’, he was in fact a powerful warrior and a good and caring king. The name, Alfred, means ‘elf wisdom’, a fitting name as he realised the importance of education for his people and introduced a literacy programme throughout the country.

After losing several battles with the Danes, Alfred refused to surrender and in 878 took refuge on the Isle of Athelney in Somerset, where he built a temporary fort. The ‘island’ was surrounded by very great swampy and impassable marshes. These defensive measures helped finally to repel the Danish advances. That year Alfred rallied his men and defeated the Danes led by Guthrum, whose name means ‘battle dragon’. Guthrum had arrived in England with the summer army of 874. The

Anglo Saxon Chronicle for the year of 878 describes the capture of the raven banner, the war-flag carried by the Danes. During the fighting, Alfred is supposed to have taken shelter in a farmhouse where he was asked to look after some loaves in the oven, and to turn them to prevent them from burning. This parable represents his kingdom which, having been ‘singed’ by the Danes, was not lost for good.

The Danes made peace with Alfred, and Guthrum was baptised near Athelney with 30 other members of the Danish army. Guthrum was given the area to the east of the present-day A5 road to rule.

Many relics have been found at Athelney and Sam finished his talk with a picture of a gold and enamel trinket, which was shaped like a bookmark and pointer. Indeed, this item could be described as a 9<sup>th</sup> century version of a computer mouse!