

December
2016

The Hadleigh Society

THIS NEWSLETTER

Over the years there have been a few changes to our newsletter. We have to admit that they now come out less frequently for which we could make a variety of excuses. Looking back 25 years ago they were produced on a typewriter so we can't claim it's harder to produce these days!

You may be aware that many newsletters from that time and earlier are available on our website. However, you may not be in the habit of browsing these so we thought it would be interesting to repeat an article written in 1993 by the late Cyril Cook, who with W A B Jones was responsible for recovering the Hadleigh Archives.

We also bring to you some new and original material. Ray Whitehand, who spoke to us a couple of years ago and is now on our Executive Committee, shares some of his recent research into workhouses and the like.

This new piece is considerably longer than we would have published in the old days, made possible with our reduced reliance on printing and the consequent saving in costs. We hope you find it interesting.

Season's Greetings to all our members from the Hadleigh Society Committee. We hope to see you on the 6th.

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OUR CHRISTMAS MEETING

On Tuesday 6th December we welcome back William Tyler who entertained us last year with tales of poachers and smugglers. This year he brings a clearly festive theme: “From Yule to Morecambe and Wise” and you can expect our usual mince pies and mulled wine to enhance the occasion. If you can display the accompanying poster, please do.

The Hadleigh Society

From Yule
to
Morecambe
and Wise



William
Tyler



A History of
the English Christmas

8^{pm} Tuesday 6th December 2016
in Hadleigh Old Town Hall (side entrance)
Call 823503 for more information

Visitors £3
Members Free

THE HADLEIGH TOWN ARCHIVES

Cyril Cook recalled the background and looked to the future.

At one of the sessions of a local history course held in 1955 at the old Hadleigh Secondary School in Station Road a student mentioned the existence of some old documents kept in the Town Hall. Permission was sought and granted to look at these and some of the more important records were selected and studied. The conditions under which they were being stored at the Town Hall were unsatisfactory to say the least and I could not but feel very concerned. There were several books and documents of considerable historical value and the condition of some, of both parchment and paper records had sadly deteriorated over the centuries, the oldest document being a bond of 1389. It seemed obvious that these records could not continue to be stored in the Town Hall without suffering further damage. The assistance of some of the Hadleigh Urban District councillors was sought and Mr. Peter Boulton, in particular, proved to be very sympathetic and helpful.

The council set up a Muniments Committee to which Mr W.A.B. Jones and I were co-opted. From the very outset the Hadleigh Urban District Council agreed to assume the responsibility for the future care of all these old Hadleigh records. Mr. Jones and I took all these documents into the offices of the council in Toppesfield Hall where we were allocated some rooms on the top floor. Here we proceeded to examine and catalogue all the hundreds of different records. The council also agreed to meet the cost of repairing some of the documents that were in very poor condition.

In due course the council provided a specially constructed very-fine fireproof strong room of ample proportions with ceiling and walls of concrete 18" thick. Adequate shelving was installed and all the boxes of records could now be stored under very satisfactory conditions. When Mr Harold Grimwade died his daughters asked both Mr. Jones and myself to look through all his papers and select those which were of interest and importance to the town. Mr Grimwade, a well-known local solicitor, had been, in his time, clerk to many of the Hadleigh charities and we discovered several very interesting records. The most exciting of these were the original "Orders, Constitutions, Decrees, laws and ordinances" of 1619, when the town received its charter of incorporation as a borough. Subsequently many other documents and artefacts have been presented to us.

Unfortunately the reform of local government in 1974 brought about the demise of the Urban District Council. The new Babergh District Council became the occupier of Toppesfield Hall. All was not lost however at that time since the newly formed Hadleigh Town Council was given accommodation in Toppesfield Hall and Mr Jones and I were able to continue undisturbed with our work as honorary joint archivists. These pleasant circumstances were doomed not to last. Within a few years Babergh District Council sold Toppesfield Hall, having moved into the new offices in Corks Lane.

The Town Council was provided with accommodation in a house in Bridge Street, formerly the home of the manager of the Hadleigh Gas Works. A small room, once the scullery, became the new home for the archives, now stored in four large and expensive safes acquired for us by Babergh District Council. These safes are of very good quality and well suited for the storage

of our records. The County Archivist was most impressed by them when she came to view our archives.

The Bridge Street accommodation was never really satisfactory for the needs of the Town Council and when eventually the Council was able to become the trustees of the Hadleigh Market Feoffment the way became clear for it to move into the Guildhall. This move has improved the accommodation for the Town Council's activities but has unfortunately created 'a difficulty for work with the archives. However, this was only ever likely to be a temporary setback and the time is very soon approaching when conditions will be very much better. There will be a far greater area for working with the archives and students will be able to enjoy much better facilities.

Over the years we have been able to secure the repair of some of our 16th century documents and to have others put on microfilm. Sadly these things are expensive but the Town Council has been as generous as one could reasonably expect it to be in these difficult times. Fresh material continues to arrive for eventual inclusion in the archives. Because of this fact the Town Council has agreed to purchase another safe. Very soon now the reconstruction of the ground floor of the east wing of the Guildhall will be complete and the archives will be housed in accommodation even better than at Toppesfield Hall. My concern for the welfare of the town's valuable historic records is no less great now than in 1955. These records undoubtedly suffered from poor storage facilities over the centuries but there has been no deterioration in their condition during these last four decades. If I ever were given cause to have any doubts about this I should certainly make it immediately well known.

Today then we have the Town Council working from the Guildhall were the government of the town in one way or another started in 1438 and continued with only a break during the last hundred years. The town records are back where they started now after some undue restlessness since 1955- I trust the future of both the Guildhall and its archives are now as secure as mortal man can make them.

HADLEIGH'S POOR HOUSE CONUNDRUM

By Ray Whitehand

While compiling a history of the Hadleigh parish workhouse, I became conscious of a variety of identities used to describe the premises where the poor were housed in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. Descriptions included: hospital, gaol, bridewell, house of correction, parish workhouse and town house.

Was this range of identities down to the vagaries of the incumbent or recorder? Perhaps the organisation evolved through the years, or could this have been a multifunctional establishment, like Christ Hospital, Ipswich, which included a bridewell, hospital, workhouse and school all in the same complex?

This presented me with a conundrum to solve before I could conclude my workhouse research.

Definition and Origins of the various terms used!

My first target was to establish the intended function of each establishment. The extremes are clear: the gaol was intended for the criminal element, and the townhouse would have simply been a place of residence for the elderly or infirm. But once you move within these two extremes the picture is much less clear. What was the difference between the bridewell and house of correction or – and more significant to my research - the difference between the house of correction and the parish workhouse? Clarity was needed – if possible.

Historically bridewells date back to the Bridewell Prison and Hospital, London which was established in 1553. Its primary purpose was the punishment of the disorderly poor and the housing of homeless children in the City of London. Located on the banks of the Fleet River in the city, it claimed to be the first house of correction in the country and a major charitable institution (reflecting the early modern definition of a "hospital").

In medieval England a hospital was a charitable institution to house and maintain the needy. The practice of hospitality was seen as a virtue by the early Christians. In early Christian times a hospitalis was a place where strangers and pilgrims were received and cared for. At that time, it was more a place of hospitality rather than of medical treatment.

Houses of Correction were officially introduced by Act of Parliament in 1576, when it was decreed two such premises should be provided for in each county. Quarter session records show that Suffolk used the ancient denomination of a

'hundred' as an area of administration, with most hundreds operating two houses of correction to cover its parishesⁱ.

The origin of the term 'workhouse' is less straightforward. Early poor law legislation does not use the word Workhouse - only by inference, as in the 1576 Act which describes 'setting the poor on work by provided stocks of materials such as wool, hemp, and flax, and premises hired in which to employ the able-bodied poor.' According to the Oxford Dictionary the term workhouse was first used in 1652. However, Hadleigh used the actual term in 1589 in market ffeoffment records, and by the end of the century it was quite commonplace in the chief inhabitants accounts.

Linking the poor to a particular type of establishment is difficult. To show what a complex issue this is, in 'Poor Relief in Ipswich', John Webb identifies seven groups of poor: the able-bodied industrious, aged and sick, children, indolent, insane, rogues and vagabonds, and travellers. The vagrants and idlers were committed to the workhouse, with the segregation of the possible recalcitrant in the house of correction.

Officially

- The 1564 Act employed parish vestries to find places of habitation for '*roaming beggars*'
- The 1576 Act instructed Justices of the Peace to set up two Houses of Correction "*for setting on worcke and punishinge those who refused to carry out work 'given' them by the collectors and governors of the Poore, and also rogues and vagabonds found roaming the streets.*"
- The 1576 Act also empowered parishes to hire premises in which to employ the able-bodied poor. (by definition - workhouses!)
- A quarter session entry of 1684 claims: '*and houses of correction for the punishment of stubborne and incorragable persons*'.

One potentially significant factor is the differing forms of administration of the two types of premises. The quarter session record referred to above clearly demonstrate the house of correction was administered by the ancient hundred denomination, whereas the parish workhouse was run by individual vestries.

When the Hadleigh house of correction was in need of repair in 1648, a levy was charged to six parishes in Babergh hundred to the south of the town. However when a second charge was needed 16 years later the area was expanded to include 18 parishes to the north of Hadleigh in the Cosford hundred.

This clearly confirms the houses of correction covered a number of parishes, a contrast to the parish workhouse which at this period of time, was defined by Act of Parliament to be run independently by individual parish vestries. Only in 1723/4 did Knatchballs Act encourage parishes to unite to form joint workhouses.

Quarter Session records themselves contain many of the identities and combinations as mentioned in the opening paragraph of this writing, potentially adding to the possibility of a multi-organisation building. The Christ Hospital at Ipswich would have been the perfect example of such a multifunction organisation. Here a former priory had been redeveloped as a single establishment which included a bridewell, hospital, and school. This is clearly evident in a plan and sketch of the layout of Christ Hospital in 1746 by Joshua Kirby.

Equally, evidence exists of separate properties being used for a workhouse and a house of correction. At Woodbridge evidence shows the workhouse to the west of Theatre Street, whereas a plaque sited on the front wall of a property a further 100 yards up on the east side of the street claims: 'House of Correction'.

The Hadleigh Story:

In the 1570s, in response to the early poor law acts which encouraged parishes to provide materials and properties for the employment and housing of the able poor, Hadleigh introduced the house of correction in 1577, workhouse 1589 and hospital by 1592.

When the townspeople of Hadleigh bought the Guild Hall in 1574 it was put to immediate use to house and govern '*such children as thought good to be appointed to be put to work*. At the same time, *it was agreed to hire a fit man and wife to govern the children, and live in the town house*. It should be remembered that in this period the Guild Hall and Market Hall were separate buildings.

The following year, '*idle rogues masterless persons, vagrants and beggars were put to work, and if in default or other disorder were to be corrected*. Inmates were to be provided with spinning equipment.

In December 1577 the headboroughs & inhabitants of the town of Hadleigh agreed and concluded '*that for the restreynt of the idle and evil disposed persons and rogues in the towne, some convenient house be found and an honest man & his wife be chose who shall have the oversight and governance of all the idle rogues & masterless vagrants and beggars in the towne and put them to work*. (a workhouse?) with any who refuse to work or commit any other disturbance be duly corrected. It was then agreed to elect Pease and his wife as governors of the place of correction which

should be his house. (house of correction). This would imply those chief inhabitants were intent on running both a house of correction & parish workhouse simultaneously.

As mentioned, in December 1589 the term 'Workhowse' was used in a subscribers' agreementⁱⁱ. Abstracts from the ffeoffment accounts tell us that up to 30 inmates could be housed in the original premises in the 1590s. We learn a lot about these individuals and families in M J Macintosh's studyⁱⁱⁱ. Interestingly 11 of 70 named inmates evidently came from outside of the town. Frustratingly these parishes are not identified. Also, the fact that a large percentage of male inmates were aged 25-40 could signify these were offenders rather than unfortunate able poor, two elements which point to a house of correction element.

John Allen contracts:

Towards the end of the century a set of contracts and inventories drawn up between Governor John Allen and the town's chief inhabitants [between 1596 and 1618] provide a variety of identities for the establishment. In 1595/96 he agrees to take children '*left in hospital*'. In 1598/99 he is contracted at the '*house of correction*', though the next year he is back at '*the workhouse*'. This mixture of terminology could be explained if it was a multifunction establishment.

The lack of ecclesiastical records for Hadleigh in the 17th century limits the opportunity for significant analysis at this period of time, though there is a trickle of workhouse references. On 24th January 1625 Sir George Waldegrave contributed £6 for the use of the workhouse at Hadleigh via the hand of Mr Phillipp ffoorth with 14d from Christopher Merrington.^{iv}

Collectors accounts

Collector's accounts provide a more complete picture for this study. These records were taken annually at Michaelmas, though only presented to the relevant authority the following January. The accounts provide a regular and nearly complete listing allowing a valuable detailed analysis of the information.

As the entries follow the same order and layout each year it is relatively straightforward to follow any particular property from one year to the next^v. Firstly most of the collectors each serve a two year period.

The fact that the governor's wages remain constant throughout the period clarifies the organisation/s is/are at least in some way part of the one establishment.

There is no doubling up in the listings between property identities, or governor's names, which, if present, could be seen as evidence of separate properties.

Of the six named governors or masters between 1640 and 1678. Robert Bendall is listed at 'the house of correction' from 1640-1644. His successor Richard Rayner is also listed at 'the house of correction', but in 1653 William Fidget received £2 for a 6 month period at 'the workhouse'. Later Robert Whale gets two years wages at 'the workhouse' after which he is paid as 'governor of the hospital'. John Smyth then has two terms at 'the hospital' before William Fidgett (junior) takes over as 'keeper of house of correction'.^{vi}

This apparent mixture of function used by successive collectors suggests to me that they are all part of the same establishment and run by a single management.

Quarter Session accounts

Moving on to Quarter Session records, two sittings in 1648 and 1662 are of most interest to this paper. The 1648 entry names six parishes in Babergh hundred who were collectively charged a levy to cover costs of repair work needed at Hadleigh House of Correction (which lay in the Cosford hundred).^{vii}

The second entry, dated 16th January 1662, refers to a petition presented by governor William Fidgett, to two Justices of the Peace, the result being an order was made for £15 to be levied collectively not only on the aforementioned Babergh parishes but also the 16 [named] parishes which make up the Cosford half hundred. The levy to be paid to the keeper of Hadleigh House of Correction, which was then to serve the hundred of Cosford ^{viii}.

These tell us that at least the House of Correction 'department' was funded by a number of parishes, and not necessarily in the same hundred. This contrasts with the parish workhouse element, which according to the 1596 act of parliament was managed independently by a parish vestry.

To add another dimension to the conundrum, in 1647 the Bury Quarter Session recorded most of those same Babergh parishes mentioned in the 1648 and 1662 reports were in arrears for charges levied on them towards repairs to Lavenham House of Correction, [*which is in Babergh hundred*]. This implies parishes were held responsible for upkeep of more than one house of correction – in different hundred districts.

Interestingly, a session held in July 1676, adds further to the Hadleigh house of correction story. A debate centres on the suitability of Hadleigh's house of correction to serve for the Cosford Hundred. It was claimed the Hadleigh establishment was inconvenient for the purpose, being on the hundred boundary, instead suggesting one should be created at Bildeston^{ix}. Interestingly the 1684 entry names the Hadleigh house of correction as being the only one for Cosford

Hundred, while Bildeston was named as one of three houses of correction for the Babergh Hundred.

In summary

Regarding the Hadleigh situation:

With the aim of this paper to clarify the earlier question regarding the use of the Hadleigh Guild Hall / Market Hall complex for poor relief in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, my conclusions are that in all probability Hadleigh adapted a 'one stop' multifunctional establishment early on for the care, maintenance and education of its own poor, as well as for the correction of the petty criminal element in the neighbourhood. Initially only parts of the Guild Hall were used, but subsequently, possibly after the Market Hall was linked up, more of the complex was used. An inventory of 1782 identify 22 rooms in the complex being used for the workhouse^x

The fact that Hadleigh introduced the house of correction in 1577, the workhouse in 1589 and the hospital by 1592 provides evidence of early usage of each type of poor house. The lack of regular references to an entity cannot be used as evidence of a particular conclusion. Without categorical evidence, the vagaries of document survival let alone what gets recorded by clerks over the years, prevents firm conclusions. However, I feel the existence of the contents of three totally different types of records: John Allen's contracts, the collectors accounts and quarter session records collectively present a compelling case for the likelihood that 'forward thinking' Hadleigh followed the example of Ipswich in operating a multifunction establishment at the Guild Hall / Market Hall complex.

However questions still remain - what parishes came under the umbrella of the Hadleigh complex? How were the different entities managed: jointly or individually? How was the building laid out? And so it goes on.

Notes:

ⁱ [Oct 1684] the houses of correction .. within this division that is to say one at St Edmunds Bury for the poor within the hundred of Thingoe, one at Mildenhall for ... Lackford, one and Cowling and another at Clare for ... Risbridge one at Lavenham, one at Bildeston, and another at Sudbury for Babergh, and one at Hadleigh for the hundred of Cosford **Quarter sessions 1683-1695 SRO(I) B105/2/11. f16v & 17r.**

ⁱⁱ 30 Dec 1589. Agreement by subscribers that a workhouse' and such stipend for the mayntenance of those that shall be committed thither... **004/A/01 p.197**

ⁱⁱⁱ Mackintosh p63 note2.

^{iv} **004/F/01, Accounts for town of Hadleigh 1625 – 1736 p.3**

v Collectors format

Date	Collector	Governor -location	Wages
1640	Thomas Gates	Robert Bendall for years	wages at house of correction £4.0.0

HA22/E/06

^{vi} **Collectors accounts 1640-1678. HA:022/E/06 – HA23/E/02 [see run of entries in appendix two]**

^{vii} 17 April 1648. An order for the house of correcion at Hadleigh. wheras the stocke and necessarie belonging to Hadleigh House of Correction is decayed This court doth order that fifteen pounds be rated upon the inhabitants of Nayland, Stoake, Buers[sic] Poulstead Assington & Wissington **Quarter session 1639-1654, B105/2/1. f112r**

^{viii} Jan 1662; Ref to William Fidget's petition examined by two Justice of the Peace, which resulted in £15 being required to repair / replace stock. The money to be raised by a collective charge levied on: Hadleigh, Thorpe Morieux, Brettenham, Kettlebaston, Hitcham, Wattisfield, Bildeston, Chelsworth, Nedging, Nawton, Semer, Whatfield, Elmsett, Lindsey, Kersey & Layham in Cosford [no Aldham]. Plus Nayland, Bures, Assington, Stoke, Polstead & Wissington in Babergh. The levy to be paid to the keeper of Hadleigh House of Correction. This was to serve the hundred of Cosford. **Quarter Sessions Order book 1658 – 65, SRO(I) B105/2/5. f80v 81r**

^{ix} Oct 1676; The House of Correction at Hadleigh judged 'illconvenient for the said hundred – as it stands on the edge of the corporation of Hadleigh. Who make use of it without contributing to the stock for setting poor to work. Instead Bildeston workhouse is suggested as being 'everywhere better' it stands in the middle of the hundred plus the townspeople of Bildeston offered to provide a suitable property for use as a workhouse with a free 25 year lease attached. The court duly ordered to accept the Bildeston offer – it also ordered John Harrison to be its master. The present master of Hadleigh house of correction to deliver al such bedding, wheels, reels, locks, clogs, and other goods together with an inventory. The former order raising £40 for Hadleigh house of correction to be redirected to the Bildeston one. **Quarter Session 1676-83 order book. B105/2/10 f5v & 6r**

^x **Robert Tyler contract and inventory 1782 SRO(B) K2/4/1**

THE HADLEIGH SOCIETY

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

Programme of Events 2016/17

Tue 6 Dec	From Yule to Morecambe and Wise	William Tyler
Tue 7 Feb 2017	The Angel Roofs of East Anglia	Michael Rimmer
Wed 22 Mar	The History of Suffolk Gravestones	Robert Halliday
Tue 2 May	Simon of Sudbury	Roger Green
Tue 13 Jun	AGM	
Wed 16 Aug	The Liberty of St Eltheldreda	Bob Merrett
Tues 17 Oct	Eastern Angles, Style & Origins	Ivan Cutting
Wed 6 Dec	'Cakes, Ale & Partying'	Kate Jewell

Meetings are held in Hadleigh Old Town Hall, 8pm, unless otherwise notified. Entry is free for members, £3 for non-members.

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