

May 2013

# The Hadleigh Society

## TESCO

We are disappointed that Tesco hasn't included Hadleigh in their list of places to withdraw from. Given the increasing weakness of their case this seems surprising, but then, we're continually surprised by their persistence. We still have no date for Babergh to consider the 2012 application but in the meantime several prominent people have been giving it their own consideration.

Professor Hallsworth has given an expert view on the retail case and most recently Mr Paul Stinchcombe QC has given a legal opinion on the overall case. In this he concludes that the local plan is no longer valid as Morrison's has removed the need for a new store. In this new situation the National Planning Policy Framework requires that in their decision taking Babergh must consider the protection and optimum use of heritage assets. The Council must consider what is "the optimum viable use" of the application site in heritage terms and weigh that in the balance against the harm occasioned by the proposals. They must also consider whether there are opportunities for new development on the application site, within the Conservation Area and within the setting of heritage assets, which could better, and viably, enhance or reveal their significance than the application proposals.

We hope that Professor Hallsworth and Mr Stinchcombe will both be available to speak on our behalf to the Council Planning Committee. You can find Mr Stinchcombe's full opinion on the Hands off Hadleigh website at

[http://www.hands-off-hadleigh.co.uk/Stinchcombe\\_QC\\_Tesco\\_Hadleigh.pdf](http://www.hands-off-hadleigh.co.uk/Stinchcombe_QC_Tesco_Hadleigh.pdf)

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## THE BOROUGH OF HADLEIGH 1618 TO 1686

*Joint exploration by C. Cook and WAB Jones, copied from Mr Jones notebook - much of it is verbatim but with some editing to facilitate reading.*

The following article was written by Mr WAB Jones who, for many years, was the Headmaster at Hadleigh Boys School in Bridge Street. He was one of the three people responsible for the original cataloguing of the Hadleigh archives and for keeping the documents in Hadleigh. He wrote the book 'Hadleigh through the Ages'.<sup>1</sup>

Mr Jones talked to many groups about Hadleigh's history and wrote out his talks almost word for word in notebooks. Some of these notebooks have recently been donated to the Town Archive by the family of the late Cyril Cook who was Honorary Archivist. They have been transcribed in the article below largely as Mr Jones wrote them but with a few cuts and adjustments to aid fluency. Of course we must be aware aspects of our knowledge of Hadleigh's history have developed with the recent and on-going research of Sue Andrews and Margaret Woods. Nevertheless most of this story remains the same and makes interesting reading. Jan Byrne.

In my last talk I mentioned that kings never gave charters to towns out of goodwill and generosity; the citizens had to pay for them – cash down!

In 1618 the Chief Inhabitants of Hadleigh thought the time was ripe to try for a *Charter of Incorporation* and they invited subscriptions. Eight people gave £20 each, 51 more gave between 5s and £5, the Hadleigh shoemakers gave a joint subscription; a total of £205. 15s. 9d was raised (craftsmen's wages e.g. builder/carpenter were 1s a day).

The charter was issued on 22 December 1618. Thirty shillings was paid for express delivery and the charter arrived in Hadleigh on 24 December.

Under the terms of the Charter<sup>2</sup>, the first Mayor was John Gaell who had headed the subscription list. Appointed with him were seven Alderman and 16 Capital or Chief Burgesses i.e. ordinary councillors. It was rather like a limited company with a Board of 8 and 16

shareholders. The rest of the town were customers.

Future vacancies were to be filled by co-option; the citizens had no voice whatsoever in these appointments. Over time Hadleigh had 69 Mayors but only 19 surnames are listed – the ruling families kept a closed tight circle!

The Corporation met for the first time on 30 December 1618 in the Guildhall and first sent William Fowler, the caretaker, to fetch a gallon of wine. They then arranged for suitable pomp and circumstance for such an important group of people! For example they had already had special stools made by John Lucas the town carpenter, for them to sit on in church; everyone else had to stand. They decided these stools were not quite good enough, so sent them back with orders to improve them.

Other orders were issued

- two silver maces to be purchased to be carried before the Mayor;

- the Council Chamber to be glazed, painted and hung with canvas;
- two floor mats and a table to be bought;
- a pair of gloves to be provided for a special preacher on Sundays;
- two brass maces and livery for the two town sergeants to be purchased.

The Corporation met again on 15 February 1619 and decided the Aldermen should wear black puke gowns and the Capital Burgesses either black or brown-blue. They were to wear their gowns to the Mayor's house on days when the Corporation met and then to precede him as they processed to the Guildhall. At Easter and Whitsun, Michaelmas and Christmas they would lead the Mayor in procession to St Mary's Church.

Regulations were drawn up for the citizens e.g.

- Foreigners, i.e. not townspeople, were forbidden to sell any goods in Hadleigh except on market days;
- meat could only be sold on market days in the Shambles;
- house-holders must not let pigs loose in the streets, nor pile logs or dunghills outside their front doors;
- no more roofs were to be thatched (Bury, Eye, Beccles, Bungay recently had fires);
- brick chimneys to be built;

- cromes (fire hooks/rakes) in the Church tower and ladders along the Deanery wall.

### *Government by the Corporation*

The Corporation seemed to have governed the town well.

They set a bar across the end of Duke Street and gates across Hadleigh Bridge; they were locked every night.

They built Pest houses on the Green for plague victims and maintained town properties like the Guildhall. Something that has puzzled us is the quantity of nails they bought e.g. in 1660 they bought 17,000 three-penny nails at 22s a thousand; in 1677 they paid for 20,000 three-penny nails costing 14s 4d a thousand; another year they bought 22,000.

If people fell dead in other people's houses, the Corporation paid for them to be taken home.

There was a town surgeon who was given £1 for removing boys' kidney stones; afterwards each boy was given a new night-gown.

When there were poor harvests, they bought up corn early, stored it in the Guildhall cellar then sold it to Hadleigh folk at reduced prices.

Hadleigh owned woods at Polstead and Semer, so they had as many as 80 cartloads of wood for fuel each year delivered to the Alms-houses free and sold to the poor at a low cost or given free. In 1624 they bought 1¾ yards of fustian to make a truss for John Cryche and also gave him a shilling for himself.

The anti-smoking campaign of today began with a book written by King James I himself - *A Counterblast to Tobacco*. A messenger was paid to bring a copy from London; when it came, they ordered two more!

The Corporation also seemed to have ensured a supply of fresh water for the town with town springs at Hadleigh Heath and Semer regularly being fenced, ditched and scoured out. There were also streams of water in the town (these have now dried up or been enclosed in sewers). A brook ran from Bradfield down to the river, another down Angel Street, High Street, Bridge Street to the river and another down George Street and Duke Street towards Toppesfield Bridge.

The disposal of human waste has always been a problem. People had been stopped from piling dung hills outside their front doors so eight 'do-it-yourself' enthusiasts built loos for themselves above the watercourse outside their houses to drop their waste into. This was very convenient for them but their downstream neighbours were less pleased. The offenders all had to appear before the Hadleigh Law Court and were ordered to take their constructions down - under the supervision of one of the town Aldermen.

There were two Law Courts - a Magistrate's Court and a Recorder's Court; there were also two Chief Constables. Every year these Chief Constables appointed half a dozen unpaid Petty Constables who kept watch and ward for twelve months. Every able-bodied man had to serve in turn; they

were usually picked from a different row of houses each year.

Punishments for offenders included hanging (bodies being buried in the strip between the churchyard path and Hadleigh Hall), a prison which was beside the Guildhall and allowed 2d of food a day to each prisoner, a cage pillory, a whipping post and stocks in the market place.

It cost 6s to hang a person; this was equal to 39 days cost in prison. There were also a good many floggings with the accused walking at a cart's tail across the town while being flogged on bare shoulders so blood was drawn. Some started at the prison, others at the bar at Toppesfield Bridge; they were flogged all the way to Hadleigh Bridge. If you lived in Benton Street it would be from your house to Hadleigh Bridge; so if you were a law-breaker from Benton Street it would have been a good idea to live at the High Street end! Flogging was carried out by the Petty Constables. In Ipswich they were paid for it - 2d for a man, 4d for a woman, 6d for a Welshman or stranger. At the end of their year of office the Petty Constables, in front of the magistrates, had to swear an oath that they had flogged all the rogues who deserved it.

Examples of offences included

1. William Turner attacked and wounded John Lucas so that his life was despaired of, and uttered divers (various) indecencies to two Capital Burgesses who tried to stop him - fined 12d.

2. Two men beat up constables in Pound Lane and Duck (Duke) Street – fined 3s 4d.
3. Three men who took half a sack of wool, value 6d, were flogged from the prison to Hadleigh Bridge.
4. John Hawkins subtracted 2lbs of wool, value 10d; he was flogged from Benton Street to Bridge Street.
5. There were many cases of illicit tavern keeping and beer brewing.
6. Richard Haye and John Whitmarsh, labourers, at 4pm on a December night in 1622 ran through the town shouting ‘Constables on duty come down and open your front door’ and banged on every door; their punishment is not recorded!
7. For being drunk and disorderly the punishment was 6 hours in the stocks on market day with a paper describing the offence pinned to the offender’s chest. There were many drinking offences e.g. John Garrad kept a common Tipling House selling beer and maintaining divers suspects who sleep in the day and wake at night to drink, game and do other unlawful things. Their sentences are not recorded.

You will have noticed the punishment was more severe for stealing 6d worth of wool than for nearly killing a constable!

Meeting the cost of hanging – A tenant paid his year’s rent to the Mayor. So the Mayor passed it over to the Town Clerk,

with a little note attached – less 6s 6d paid for the execution of Margaret Shelford. That slip of paper has been kept for 350 years!

### *How they lost the Charter*

King Charles II was restored in 1660 after the death of Cromwell; those members of the Corporation who refused to swear allegiance to the king were removed and replaced.

In the 1680s two great political parties began to crystallise out. At first they were called Petitioners and Abhorrrers, not names likely to catch on. One side called the other *almost* the worst insult they could think of – *Whigs* which in those days meant Wild Scotsmen. So the Whigs retaliated by calling their opponents the very worst insult they could devise – *Tories* which meant Wild Irishmen.

Now the King and his ministers began to carry out a certain policy which involved replacing the heads of the army, navy, university colleges, civil service etc with men who could enforce it. The chartered corporations were however immovable. Charles was stymied because he could not change them.

After a time he was advised by Judge Jeffreys – a vicious cruel man but the most brilliant lawyer of the day. The two of them watched all the doings of all the corporations in England and, whenever they found a petty or technical breach of the law, they cancelled that Corporation’s charter. Then when a town asked for it back, the King gave

them a new charter which stipulated that only people approved by the King could hold office in it.

On 10 January 1686 a party of young men who called themselves 'the loyal inhabitants' of Hadleigh wrote to the Attorney General alleging illegal actions and great oppression by the Hadleigh Corporation. They petitioned for a writ of Quo Warranto<sup>3</sup> against them and made it clear that they would apply for the charter to be revoked.

The Corporation panicked; they called a general meeting of the Inhabitants on 16 April and decided to make a voluntary surrender of the Hadleigh Charter. Judge Jeffreys accepted it at Bury Assizes. So Hadleigh lost its Mayor and the Market Feoffment Trustees again ruled the town with the Dean as

chairman – just as they had before 1618. But they had been too hasty. A revolution was brewing, the King (now James II) would soon flee abroad – but before he went he tried to gain favour by restoring all the town charters that had been confiscated – Hadleigh was not on the list. The town asked Whitehall for re-instatement of its charter but the answer was 'No'. The King only restored the charters which had been confiscated; Hadleigh's had not been confiscated. They were told '*You surrendered it voluntarily so you're not entitled to have it back again*'.

So we lost our Mayor and did not have another until the Local Government Act of 1974.

(Editing by Margaret Woods)

## References

1. Jones W.A.B. (1977) '*Hadleigh through the Ages*'. EA Magazine: Ipswich.
2. Hadleigh Charter reference HA 084/A/01
3. Quo Warranto = 'Ancient common law writ that was issued out of chancery on behalf of the king against anyone who claimed or usurped any office, franchise or liberty, to inquire by what authority he asserted such a right, in order that the legitimacy of the assertion might be determined. Source [www.answers.com/topic/quo-warranto](http://www.answers.com/topic/quo-warranto)

## NOTICE OF THE 31<sup>ST</sup> AGM, 2013

The 31<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of The Hadleigh Society is to be held in Hadleigh Old Town Hall on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> August 2013 at 8 p.m. and all members are invited to attend

### AGENDA

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|--|---|
| 1. Apologies for absence               | 6. Society Representation on Other Bodies |
| 2. Minutes of the 30 <sup>th</sup> AGM | 7. Chair's Review                         |
| 3. Treasurer's Report                  | 8. Election of Officers and Executive     |
| 4. History Group Report                | Committee Members (nominations to         |
| 5. Planning Report                     | Secretary in advance, please)             |

### Cheese and wine to be served with other refreshments

The 2012 AGM Minutes and 2013 nomination form can be found on our website at [http://www.hadsoc.org.uk/hadsoc/AGM/agn\\_2012.htm](http://www.hadsoc.org.uk/hadsoc/AGM/agn_2012.htm). Copies will be available at the Meeting, together with the Annual Accounts.

## THE HISTORY OF POLSTEAD – FROM A TALK BY BILL WIGGLESWORTH, 16 MAY 2012

'Nothing good ever came out of Polstead except the cherries' was the popular quote used by Bill Wigglesworth, Local History Recorder for Polstead, to open his recent talk. However, we soon learned that there is indeed much more to Polstead than just cherries!

Polstead consists of five hamlets: Polstead Green, Polstead Heath, Hadleigh Heath, Bower House Tye and White Street Green. Its population today is about 850. The name Polstead means 'settlement by the pool'. Polstead pond never dries out as it is constantly fed by underground springs. The soil type is a mixture of gravel and clay (perfect for cherries!) and the area has been settled for many centuries. There is evidence of Iron Age and Roman settlements. The Anglo-Saxon village developed around the green, and consisted of mainly smallholdings. There was a large wooden Saxon church, possibly a 'minster'.

The present St. Mary's Church is a medieval structure and contains some very early brickwork, dating from about

1130. On the edge of the churchyard are the remains of the Gospel Oak. St. Cedd preached under the tree in the year 653, and the village holds a commemorative Gospel Oak Service every year.

During the nineteenth century, Polstead became the scene for a well-documented murder. Maria Marten was going to elope with William Corder, the son of a wealthy farmer. However, the two fell out, Maria was murdered and buried in Red Barn. Corder was eventually caught and hanged. This 'Victorian melodrama' somewhat surprisingly still fascinates people today. That century also saw a time of agricultural depression when some of the villagers emigrated to New Zealand. Today there are only three agricultural labourers working in the village.

Polstead has always been a very popular place in which to live - two of its country parsons stayed for 45 years each! Today there are 27 miles of footpaths to enjoy within the parish, and of course the cherries!

### RIVER TRIP, 10<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2013

A reminder that we have booked the sailing barge Victor for a cruise from Ipswich up the Orwell to Harwich and return on Saturday 10th August 2013. It leaves Ipswich at 10a.m. arrives back at 4p.m. A licensed bar plus tea and coffee will be available. The barge will be under sail if the weather is suitable.

Price £30 per head (there might be a small reduction if the barge is fully booked).The barge is limited to 40 people. Deposit is £10 per head. Bookings to Chris Drake, 17 Lister Road, 01473 822098, treasurer@hadsoc.org.uk.



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

**Programme of Events 2013**

Wed 15th May	Development of St Edmundsbury Cathedral	Sarah Friswell
Mon 17th June	Poor relief in Hadleigh	Professor Marjorie McIntosh
Sat 10th Aug	Orwell river trip	
Wed 14th Aug	AGM	
Mon 14th Oct	John Winthrop	Dr Nick Sign
Mon 9th Dec	Hadleigh during the Great War	The History Group

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