

Ongar Millennium History Society Newsletter

November 2017

Welcome to the OMHS November newsletter.

On the 20th September we held our Annual General Meeting at Ongar Library. At the meeting Michael Leach stood down from the role of President of the society, but will continue to be involved with the society in the role of Patron. We thank Michael from his guidance and leadership over many years and are pleased that Michael will continue to play a role in the society going forward.

Felicite Barnes was elected to the position of President. Jenny Main also stood down as Vice Chair, but will continue to serve on the committee and edit the Newsletter. The remaining members of the committee were re-elected to their previous roles.

We have a number of vacancies for positions on the committee and would welcome anyone who would like to come forward to fill any of the vacancies, or just join the committee as a general committee member.



Christmas Social



We will be holding our Christmas Social at the United Reform Church on Tuesday 19th December at 1.00 PM. There will be a Fish and Chips or Chicken and Chips lunch and the archive will be open to view. This is open to members only and we are pleased to be able to offer the event and lunch free of charge.

Please RSVP to Lorna Vaux to book your place and choice of meal via email lornavaux5@gmail.com or telephone 07943 812444 by Friday 15th December. Please arrive at URC Hall at 1.00 to eat at 1.15 pm.

Tuesday 19th December 1.00 PM

Jenny Main, Editor

Committee members

Chair	Vacancy	Newsletter	Jenny Main
Treasurer	Kathleen Jenkins	Venues Sec.	Vacant
Secretary	Sandra Dear	Membership+Speaker Sec.	Lorna Vaux
Archive	Vacancy	Committee Member	Lawrence Mendoza
Patron	Michael Leach	President	Felicite Barnes

Greensted Hall - another possible Repton site in Essex?

Essex Record Office possesses three copies of Nathaniel Salmon's *History of Essex*, issued in parts between 1740 and 1741. One of these has been bound with numerous additional manuscript notes, compiled by the antiquary Craven Ord (1756-1832) who inherited, through his wife, the house and estate of Greensted Hall near Ongar in 1798.

A number of drawings, watercolours and engravings are amongst these additions. One, a sketch of a doorway at South Weald church is undated but signed IAR. Another, a highly detailed watercolour of the church door at Willingale Doe is also undated, but identifies this artist as I A Repton. This can only be John Adey Repton, son of Humphrey, who briefly worked for the architect John Nash before joining his father in 1800 to assist with the architectural side of the landscape designer's work.

This raises the question of how did two of John Adey's sketches come into the possession of Craven Ord, and whether there might have been a client relationship between the two? Both men had strong antiquarian interests. Ord visited numerous churches in search of monumental brasses which he copied using a messy process involving printer's ink, damp paper and copious quantities of rags. John Adey was also a visitor of old churches, but his interests were architectural and making accurate drawings of Gothic details and mouldings. It was John Nash's failure to acknowledge John Adey's contributions to his Gothic revival designs that led to the latter's resignation.

Greensted Hall is a timber framed house of late seventeenth century construction, originally a four-square two storey building, with a porch on the east side, but all much altered and enlarged in the second half of the nineteenth century. Little is known about its grounds, though Chapman and Andre's map of 1777 shows an avenue, about a mile in length, connecting the house to Ongar. This never appears to have been metalled so it was probably principally ornamental, though doubtless could have been used by carriages in dry weather. This impressive avenue (which survived till its destruction by Dutch elm disease in the 1970s) never seems to have been matched in scale and grandeur by the gardens which lay to the north of the hall and were very modest in scale.

There are two possible explanations for the link between Ord and John Adey. The first is that Ord had asked the Reptons to make some suggestions for improvements to the house and its surrounding landscape, though if anything was done it was almost certainly swept away by the extensive alterations of the later nineteenth century. The second possibility is that the link between the two men was purely antiquarian, that they had been church visiting together and that John Adey presented Ord with a couple of his sketches (one of which was a properly worked-up studio image). The latter explanation is probably more likely, but the first possibility is offered in the hope that more evidence may come to light.

Sources:

Budworth, P, 1876 *Memorials of the Parishes of Greensted Budworth. Chipping Ongar & High Laver*

Powell. R (ed) 1956 *Victoria County History of Essex*, volume iv

Salmon, N, 1740-1 *History of Essex* (grangerized copy in ERO)

Michael Leach

From Genoa to Chipping Ongar

Beside the altar in St.Martin's church we read:

Hic Jacet Jana d. Oliveri Cromwelli, Hinchbrochiensis e fedibus Huntindoniensium Equitis.....

Here lies Jane, the daughter of Sir Oliver Cromwell, Knight of the Bath from the home of Hinchinbrooke near Huntingdon, the wife of Tobias Pallavicini esq from the family of that well known name in the district of Cambridge. Having reached almost forty-three years of age, and having completed her career and her life, she left her mortal remains in this dust on 24th March 1637 AD

And

Here lyeth the body of/that truly noble and/religious gentleman/HORATIO PALLAVACINI/esquire who departed /this life on the sixth/ daye of May in the yeare/of our Lord God 1648/being of the age of 6/and 30 yeares

To walk along the 'Strada Nuova' in Genoa is to see a really magnificent sight with the street lined with palaces of Gold and great splendour, no wonder it is known as the 'Rue des Rois'

For it is here that our story starts. Tobias Pallavicino was born here in Genoa in the early 16th century He married Battina (possibly Baptina) Spinola and had a large and prosperous family.

Along with his brother Agostino and his sons the family controlled the papal monopoly of alum an ingredient essential to making dye and widely used in the flourishing cloth trade both in Holland and England. This monopoly brought them huge wealth.

The brothers placed themselves in London, Rome and Antwerp from where they oversaw the family business and made connections all over Europe.

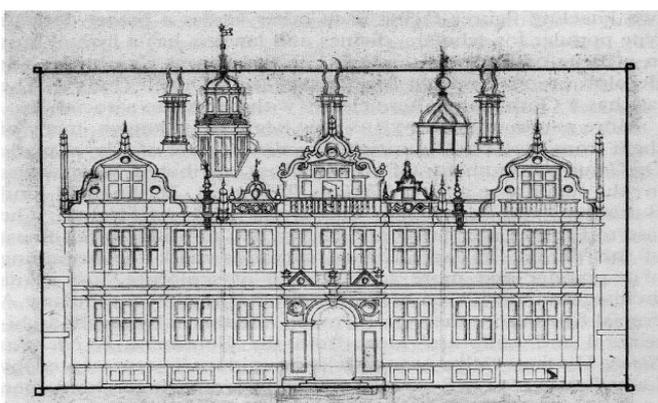
Tobias became one of the richest merchants, bankers and aristocrats of 16th century Europe. The Pallavicini palace is a sight to behold and well worth a visit.

Tobias' second son Horatio spent much time working with his brothers, as a diplomat in Europe, and particularly in Antwerp where he spent much of his time and eventually married Anne Hooftman a Dutch lady, and came to London.

When he came to London Horatio lived in the Parish of St. Dunstan's Tower Ward. Later he moved to Cambridgeshire.

It is not possible to be sure when Horatio settled in Babraham, near Cambridge but he was Knighted in 1586 by Queen Elizabeth at Westminster for his great service to her and it was probably soon afterwards that he bought Babraham manor.

In 1576 the Babraham Estate in Cambridge was owned by Robert Taylor. He named his house Babraham Place and this he sold to Sir Horatio in 1589. Horatio remodelled the house to the design of John Thorpe, to whom we will be ever grateful for leaving his plans, so that we are able to see what the house looked like.



A beautiful house still stands on the site next to St. Peter's church but it is not the original manor house of Horatio Pallavicini's family.

Horatio and Anna had two sons and a daughter from their marriage, Henry, Tobias and Baptina. All three children were baptised in the church of St. Peter's which lies adjacent to the original Babraham Place. When you stand in the churchyard it is easy to imagine the family walking with their children across the grounds to the church to be baptised, Henry in 1590, Toby in 1593 and Baptina in 1594. For this is where they were all baptised and lived.

Horatio died in 1600.

Within a year of his death his widow Anna married Sir Oliver Cromwell of Hichinbrooke in Huntingdonshire. He too was a wealthy man and had a large family.

They married their children one to the other in the following way

Henry Pallavicini to Catherine Cromwell in 1606

Toby Pallavicini to Jane Cromwell in 1606

Baptina Pallavicini to Sir Henry Cromwell 1608/10

The children were all very young when they married. Sir Oliver lived in 'a hospitable and splendid manner' but unwisely spent much of his money entertaining James 1 for which he gained a Knighthood. These marriages helped to swell his dwindling fortune for a short time.

Sir Horatio having died in 1600 left his still considerable fortune and estates to Henry his eldest son who died young in 1615 so that on his death, Toby his brother inherited a fortune in money and lands.

From his father Tobias also inherited the lands and manors of Cranbrook, Valentines Wyefields and Rayhouse, all at Great Ilford. These had originally been purchased from Sir Robert Dudley, the Earl of Leicester.

Sadly, like his father Sir Horatio before him Tobias 'squandered his property with as great indifference as his father had procured it by rapacity and sacrilege' and had to sell his Great Ilford manors in 1624 to pay his debts.

By 1632 his debts had further increased and he sold the manor at Babraham to the Benets. The Benet family name occurs frequently in the history of Ongar and it seems likely that the two families knew each other well.

Thomas Bennet Alderman of London purchased the Manor of Babraham and his two sons Thomas and Richard lived there until their death. The Benet family dominated all aspects of Parish life in Babraham.

After their death the Babraham Manor was purchased by ...Mitchell from Alexander Benet who retired to Ongar in Essex 'whither he carried the family pictures'.

Jane and Toby must have continued to live at Babraham Hall until it was sold in 1632. Their children were baptised at St. Peter's church, Anne being the exception as her name appears in the Huntingdon parish registers.

Horatio 1611
Tobias 1612
Henry 1615
Anne 1614 Huntingdon
Elizabeth 1618
Susanna (unknown)
James 1620

Eventually, due to his great debts, in 1637 Toby found himself in the Fleet Prison 'from whence we know not if he returned'. Jane was now 42 and her children's ages ranged from 16 to 26 years of age.

Exactly when Jane brought her family to live in Chipping Ongar is difficult to know but it was shortly after her husband was placed in the Fleet prison, for her two daughters Anne and Susanna were both married to Ongar gentlemen, Anne to Robert Younge in 1639 and Susanna to Edward Sedgwick in 1640.

Susanna had a sizeable family with possibly eight children, having married Edward in London. We know this from the Will of Horatio and the Will's of these two gentlemen, and the early Parish Registers.

A document of 1641 from the National Archives lists Robert Young, Edward Sedgwick and his father William Sedgwick as owning several acres of land in Ongar and Horatio Pallavacini living in Ongar and (buried in St. Martin's) as owning goods of considerable value.

According to the Parish Registers Anne and Robert Younge were both buried in St. Martin's church, Anne in 1661 and Robert in 1662, but these graves seem to be lost in the mists of time !! It would be wonderful to know what words were placed upon their gravestones but sadly we never will.

Thus, we now know why there are members of this illustrious Pallavacini family buried in Chipping Ongar church.

Gemma O'Donnell

Acknowledgments: Thanks to Kathy Wenborne and Keith Snow and others who have helped in researching

Greensted rectors of the mid seventeenth century

The list of rectors in the last journal is certainly of interest, not least as it encourages questions about where these men came from, and how they survived in the uncertain times of Bishop Laud's Arminian purges, the puritan reversals of the Civil War and the interregnum, and then the return to orthodoxy after the restoration of Charles II in 1660. This article will look at what is known about the careers of just three of these men.

Firstly, **Andrew Harwood** who was born in Odiham, Hants, went to Eton on a scholarship, then to King's College, Cambridge. Surprisingly he appears to have been elected a fellow of the college before his graduation as BA in 1620, and he remained a fellow there until 1635. He was awarded the degree of Bachelor of Divinity in 1630, and his first living (which he may have held concurrently with his college fellowship, not an unusual practice) was in Tring, Herts. He was rector of Greensted from 1641 till his resignation in 1647, and then a single record identifies him as the minister of St Alphage's in the City of London in 1650. Nothing else is known about his career in the Interregnum,

but by 1660 he was vicar of Asholt in Somerset, and private chaplain to the earl of Montgomery. He died in 1662, probably before he would have been obliged to conform with the Act of Uniformity which led to so many clergy being expelled from their livings on grounds of conscience.

Secondly, **Thomas Punter** was born about 1614 in Royston, Herts, son of a gentleman of the same name. He went to Hertford School, then on to Caius College, Cambridge, where he graduated BA in 1636 and MA in 1639. He was ordained priest in 1639 and appointed as curate to the north Essex parishes of Heydon and Hadstock. In 1644 he was accused by his parishioners of being 'a common alehouse haunter, who refused to take the covenant, was negligent in keeping the Parliamentary fasts, observed illegal innovations, promised a parishioner a sermon at his wedding ...' His further misdemeanors were deemed 'unfit for publication' by his Victorian biographer, almost certainly because they were of a sexual nature! In spite of all this, he was appointed to Greensted in 1646, though his living was sequestered at some point, possibly when his reputation caught up with him. In spite of this, he became vicar of Linton in Cambridgeshire in 1656, a living which he held till his death in 1684. Like many of the clergy who were thrown out of their livings in the puritan Interregnum, he was restored to the Greensted rectory at the Restoration in 1660. Punter was clearly a controversial character, but perhaps one should not take the 1644 charges brought by his parishioners too seriously. Their grievances were probably liturgical, rather than moral, and most complaints about clergymen at this time threw in the accusation of them being an 'alehouse haunter'. Beer, of course, was the only safe drink, and taverns were the normal - indeed the only - place for everyday social intercourse in towns and villages. The other misdemeanours were probably thrown in to add weight to the parishioners' concerns about his laxity as a puritan minister.

Thirdly, **Nathan(iel) Lacy** was the only local man, one of the sons of Avery Lacy of Chipping Ongar, born in 1626. He too was a Cambridge graduate (BA in 1646, MA in 1650) and appears to have acted as curate in Greensted, perhaps after the living was sequestered from Punter. Lacy was appointed as rector in 1649 and a year later was described by his Greensted parishioners as 'a constant preacher, and well approved of'. At the Restoration, his appointment was not recognized and the living was returned to Punter. Lacy, however, was retained as curate, presumably because Punter was by that time occupying a Cambridgeshire vicarage. As bishops had been abolished during the Interregnum, Lacy required formal ordination at Lincoln in 1662 before he could be re-appointed to the Greensted rectory. He then remained there till his death in 1700, adding the parish of Lambourne to his responsibilities in 1670.

Lacy has been claimed as the first minister of the non-conformist congregation in Ongar, but this is almost certainly an incorrect assumption based on the presence of his name on a copyhold lease for part of the site occupied by the non-conformist chapel in the High Street. It is clear from the lease that his portion excluded the chapel. In addition he is described on the lease as 'clericus', a term unlikely to be applied to a non-conformist minister.

Nothing else is known about these three men. Harward, we may assume, was puritan enough to be appointed to a London parish in 1650, and never had to face the challenge of subscribing to the Act of Uniformity in 1662. Numerous Essex clergy, whose consciences prevented them from doing so, faced real hardship when thrown out of their livings in the autumn of that year.

Punter was clearly a survivor, able to obtain another living in the puritan atmosphere of the 1640s in spite of being expelled from his previous living on grounds of liturgical and moral laxity. He was sufficiently puritan to obtain the Cambridgeshire living in 1665, and conformist enough to retain it in 1662.

Lacy managed a similar *volte face*, as well as being permitted to look after Greensted as curate for two years after the Restoration in spite of his lack of episcopal ordination. One can only imagine that he was popular in the parish (indeed, he was reported to be 'well approved of' in 1650). In

addition the chaos caused by the sequestrations of 1660, and the significant loss of clergy through the enforcement of the Act of Uniformity in 1662, must have resulted in a serious lack of priests to fill vacant livings.

Michael Leach

Sources:

Crisp, F A (ed), 1886 *The Parish Registers of Ongar*, printed privately

Davids, T W, 1863 *Annals of Evangelical Nonconformity in Essex*, London

Matthews, A G, 1988 *Calamy Revised*, Oxford

Smith, H, 1934 *Ecclesiastical History of Essex*, Colchester

Visit to Bletchley Park

We visited Bletchley Park as one of our OMHS days out. It was a very good day with so much to see. We marvelled at the genius and determination of Alan Turing and his co-workers in breaking the German codes and building the Turing bomb. Colossus the world's first electronic computer built using thermionic valves was also developed at Bletchley. It's hard to imagine the foresight that gave birth to such machines.

There was also a free guided tour that revealed interesting details that we might otherwise have missed. At its peak there were 9,000 people working at Bletchley Park most of whom were billeted in the surrounding communities. Despite this enormous number of people living in the local community, almost unbelievably secrecy was maintained. Apparently one of the rumours circulating in the community was that Bletchley Park was a home for the mentally ill. This was perhaps given some credence by the rather eccentric behaviour of some of the highly intelligent people who worked there. Alan Turing himself added to this by cycling around the local community wearing his gas mask for the not very obvious but logical reason that he suffered from hay fever. One of the other senior code breakers had a habit of wandering around in his pyjamas so, its perhaps not so surprising that locals though it was a hospital. Apparently local mothers would say to their children that if you are naughty you will be sent up to Bletchley.

An interesting example of the degree to which secrecy was taken is a story that many years later a husband and wife sitting at the breakfast table and opening invitations to a Bletchley reunion only then realised that they had both worked at Bletchley many years earlier. They had never mentioned it to each other.

I learned a lot on the day and most interestingly I had not known what finally persuaded the Americans to enter the first world war. The interception of the secret memorandum that was sent from Germany to Mexico suggesting invasion of America and deciphered by British Military Intelligence so incensed the Americans that it brought them into the war.

It was also Interesting that the Officer who originally identified Bletchley Park as a suitably remote site to move the code breakers to just prior to the 2nd Word War had to use his own money to start the purchase because of the bureaucratic red tape delays within the ministry.

I have been to Bletchley before but I was still caught out looking for the Spitfire that I could hear doing acrobatics in the sky. It took me a while last time to work out it was a load speaker in a tree that I could hear, so I can't believe I fell for it a second time.

A second visit was well worthwhile and I intend to take advantage of the fact that we can re-use the tickets for the next 12 months.

Nigel Main

Report on wrought iron gates from Ongar's old town hall examined on 27 Oct 2017

Background

Ongar town hall was probably built about 1800 and projected into the High Street just north of the lane leading to St Martin's church. The ground floor was used for the market, the upper floor served as meeting rooms and, for a time, housed the King's Trust school. By the end of the nineteenth century, it was regarded as an obstruction to traffic, and was sold to Thomas Cowee in December 1896 for £250. He undertook to demolish the building by the end of March 1897.

In 1953 it was noted that some ironwork from the old town hall was at the back of Snelling's ironmonger shop. This is almost certainly what is now against a wall behind a house in George Yard.

Photographic evidence

A photograph of the old town hall printed in volume 4 of the Essex Victoria County History was taken just before demolition. This shows that the building had two separate south-facing doorways, each with a semicircular head, and each closed by a close-fitting iron gate identical to those now in the George Yard garden, with the tops of the spear-headed railings arranged to fit the arched door opening. These were doubtless purpose-made to fit, probably by a local blacksmith.

Present condition

The gates have been outside for many years and no trace of paint remains on them. They are substantially constructed with a wrought iron frame and cross bar. Each has two pintle brackets, and each frame is filled with closely spaced spear-headed railings. The right hand gate still has its original latch and appears to be in good complete condition, with only superficial rust. Though the bottom rail of the left hand gate is buried in the earth and could not be seen, this gate also seems to be robust. The only obvious significant damage to it is the loss of the upper part of its vertical frame on one side, and part of one spear-headed railing.

Comment

Apart from superficial rust the right hand gate appears to be in good condition, and could be re-used after grit blasting and painting, though it would require a substantial pier to support its considerable weight. Repair of the left hand gate would be feasible, but would require the skills of a suitable craftsman blacksmith. Being the last remnant of the old town hall, it would be ideal if a use for them could be found in Ongar. If this is not possible, they should be measured and photographed, and offered to Epping Forest district museum, or disposed of through the architectural salvage network as a matching pair.

Michael Leach

Future Events

16th February 2018 - Talk by Martyn Lockwood on the Budworth Hall at the Budworth Hall 7.30 for 8.00 pm. Free to members and £6.00 to non-members.

Further events will be announced in future newsletters and on the website as they arise. Have you looked at our website? The site is regularly updated with future events so this is where you will hear the news first. The address is <http://www.omhs.org.uk/> or just search OMHS

Newsletter Contributions

We need your help with articles for the newsletter. If you have anything that you would like to contribute no matter how small or large, please submit to the editor or through the website before the end of January 2018 to be in time for inclusion in the next edition of the newsletter