

## Chairman's Report

Over 25 years ago, in 1985, the Hertfordshire Record Society was set up. The late Lionel Munby, already heavily involved in the Hertfordshire Association for Local History, was the inspiration behind the setting up of a publishing society with the aim of producing an annual volume of Hertfordshire Records. The Society has managed to fulfil this aim and has published 25 volumes in that time, ranging from the mediaeval period to the 21st century. The first volume was Anthony Palmer's *Tudor Churchwardens' Accounts* which gathered together the records of six Hertfordshire parishes into one volume and provided a really useful source for students of the Reformation. The second volume, edited by Lionel himself, compared the household accounts of two local aristocratic families in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, those of William, 2<sup>nd</sup> earl of Salisbury and those of Edward Radcliffe, 6<sup>th</sup> earl of Sussex. These two volumes set a high standard which has been subsequently followed.

Lionel launched an appeal for sponsors of the Society to get together money to set it up and this was successful, along with the establishment of an Executive Committee to plan and see through to publication the various offers from local and national historians who were keen to bring primary sources, mainly from HALS, to the attention of the general public. Annual subscriptions from members and generous grants from a number of charities have enabled the Society to continue to publish. The late Val High, acting as Treasurer, kept the Society solvent in its early years, and various archivists and local historians researched and edited the primary sources. The late Peter Walne, County Archivist, edited a volume with Audrey Deacon on Edward Cussans entitled *A Professional Hertfordshire Tramp*, Robin Harcourt Williams, the Archivist at Hatfield House, produced a large volume of *The Salisbury – Balfour Correspondence 1869-1892*, and our current archivist Sue Flood, a volume of *St Albans Wills 1471-1500*.

Professional historians such as Stephen Doree have edited fascinating volumes, producing both the *Early Churchwardens Accounts of Bishops Stortford 1451-1558* and *The Parish Tithing Book of Thomas Hassall of Amwell*. Others such as Mark Bailey and Steve Hindle have helped edit or have provided introductions or forewords to volumes. Other local archivists such as Judith Burg, Gillian Sheldrick and the former county archivist, Kate Thompson, have all edited volumes, as have active local historians and those who have served on the Committee such as David Dean, Jane Walker and Margaret Ashby. These have dealt with a variety of topics: Gillian's with the accounts of an 18<sup>th</sup> century tuner of musical instruments and teacher of music and drawing, Kate's with the letters and diaries of a First World War poet, and David's with the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century Quarter Sessions Rolls of St Albans. Jane's provided insights into the 18<sup>th</sup> century tithe accounts of the parish of Datchworth and Margaret's spanned the history of the Hellard Almshouses and other Stevenage charities from 1482 to 2005. The Society has benefitted greatly from the

expertise of so many hard working archivists and active researchers.

The Society is planning to publish a range of new volumes including Baroness Dimsdale's Receipt Book, 19<sup>th</sup> century Hertford Jail Records, Mediaeval Court Rolls for the Manor of Norton and 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century School Records for Weston. We have also had an offer to edit another mediaeval volume, the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century Feet of Fines for Hertfordshire. Also in recent years a number of innovations have taken place. Our website has been recently re-vamped and linked to other sites. Although membership numbers have fluctuated, we still manage to hold AGMs in interesting historical buildings within the county and stalwart members from London still manage to take the train out and walk to some of the more remote destinations. With a number of publications already planned and a healthy bank balance, the Society is in good shape.

Alan Thomson

## Forthcoming Volume:

### *Humphry Repton's Red Book of Panshanger, with an introduction by Dr Twigs Way*

In February 1799 Peter Leopold Francis Nassau Clavering-Cowper (1778-1837) succeeded his brother as 5<sup>th</sup> Earl Cowper. He decided that he would prefer to live at Panshanger rather than at Cole Green, and commissioned landscape gardener Humphry Repton to submit plans for 'improving' his three connecting estates of Tewin Water, Panshanger and Cole Green. Repton was also asked to draw up plans for a new house on the north side of the river Mimram. He visited Panshanger in June 1799 and subsequently produced 'red books' for both Tewin Water and Panshanger. Work started straightaway on the landscape improvements recommended by Repton: in the late summer and autumn of 1799 dozens of workmen were employed to dig out the valley below the house to create the Broadwater by damming the river Mimram. A massive programme of tree-planting on the valley sides, which was to continue for several decades, was also instigated at Repton's suggestion.

Much of Repton's designed landscape has now been destroyed but the Red Book for Panshanger provides evidence of his scheme, comprising both 'before' and 'after' watercolours of the estate. Panshanger Park was perhaps the finest and most important landscape designed by Repton in the county. Most of his surviving Red Books are in private ownership, so our publication of a facsimile of the Panshanger book will bring into the public domain a rare example of Repton's design skills. It will be of great interest not only to historians of Hertfordshire but also to garden and landscape historians everywhere. Dr Twigs Way will provide a scholarly introduction that puts both Repton's drawings and the gardens at Panshanger into their historical context. The volume, which will be approximately the same size as the original (A4 landscape), will contain full-colour facsimiles of Repton's designs.

### **AGM Venue: St Nicholas's church, Great Munden**

Munden is recorded in the Domesday Book as being in the manor of Eddeva the Fair, the Saxon wife of Earl Harold. A wooden Saxon church stood on the site. The church was rebuilt in 1120 with stone and flint on the same site: Norman work can be seen in the lancet window of the north wall of the chancel, the corbels on the chancel arch, and in the walled-up north door of the nave. In the Victorian restoration of 1863 a second Norman doorway was found, in the north wall of the chancel, but funds were not available to restore it, so it was plastered over. On the accession of Henry III the manor was granted to Gerard de Furnivall, a crusader knight who had been with Richard I at the siege of Acre. His son, Sir Gerard de Furnivall, is remembered today in the martlet that appears on the new weather vane on top of the tower: the martlet is a small bird and appears in the Furnivall arms.

The three-bay south aisle (46' by 11') was built by Cecily and Guy de Boys, who had married in 1350. They included the stone reredos in the east wall and the ogee arches in which they intended to place their remains. The reredos is a reminder that St Nicholas's is a perfect example of a medieval church. The tower was built by Sir John Say sometime between 1461 and his death in 1478. Its eight gargoyles were replaced in the 1990s as the 15<sup>th</sup> century originals had almost totally dissolved away. Replacements were found from the 14<sup>th</sup> century Bath chapter house: the carvings had lain in a stonemason's yard since its demolition in the 1920s. The tower stands on a foundation of Hertfordshire pudding stone and is surmounted by a traditional Hertfordshire short spike.

The simple but poetically carved choir stalls in the chancel were the gift of Robert King, rector 1510-1538, and are marked with his initials. The bells were cast in 1621 by John Oldfield of Hertford and still ring regularly. The tenor was recast in 1881, but preserves Oldfield's Latin inscription, along with the names of the 1621 churchwardens. A new treble was added in 1882.

The only piece of Victorian stained glass is *The Agony in the Garden*, donated by the widow of the Revd Dawson who died in March 1863 and who is buried outside this window. He is said to have worried himself to an early grave over the state of the church fabric, exhausted by the difficulty of raising funds for its restoration. His wife had an inheritance, but had not volunteered help in this matter. Following his death she was filled with remorse; she donated this window and found the funds to carry out an extensive restoration. The south aisle was largely rebuilt using some of the old stones. A new organ was installed at this time, being rebuilt with the pipes of an earlier organ.

During the restoration that was carried out in the 1990s, the organ was refurbished and raised to its present position, thus gaining access to the bell tower, which had been previously used as a vestry for the choir since 1870. The ringing chamber floor was raised to its present height, and the clock floor above which forms the ceiling was made from two oak beams in a cruciform pattern, inspired not by the base of the spike above them, but by the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, built by ships' carpenters during the crusades. The early 16<sup>th</sup> century porch was on the point of collapse by 1928, and was replaced by the present oak porch which enjoys an Arts & Crafts influence, and was erected in memory of the Revd Alfred George Langdon who had been rector since 1905.

**Howard Guard (owner of St Nicholas's)**

### **Review of Volume XXIII in the *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, 88, 2010**

This book aims to provide 'a selection of the original primary source manuscripts' relating to Hertfordshire during the early stages of the English Civil War. Some are taken from local archives, but most are from the collection of papers in the National Archives now called the SP28 or Commonwealth Exchequer papers. These were assembled in 1644 by the Committee for Taking the Accounts of the Kingdom, and therefore focus heavily upon the minutiae of collecting and disbursing money as part of the Parliamentary war effort. They also remain in an advanced state of disorganisation, and Thomson has done well to overcome these handicaps to demonstrate their value. Through a survey of the papers associated with Hertfordshire he offers an account of the English Civil War in that county, and the consequences it had for all levels of local society. He includes in the book detailed biographies of the key figures that feature in the sources, and an excellent introduction. This is, in many ways, the most valuable contribution: it outlines and then draws together the themes revealed in the sources, placing them in the context of wider contemporary experiences in England as well as subsequent historiography.

Two major themes emerge from the selection of sources offered. The first is the impact that the demands of war had upon the county. Many villages were required to pay taxes and accommodate passing troops: between 1643 and 1644, the village of Bushey was taxed £169, had horses and goods worth £55 confiscated, and was forced to lay out a further £674 to quarter passing troops [nos. 82, 118, 122]. Taxation reached down far deeper than it ever had before, while the lists of sequestered property indicate both the diversity of contemporary material culture and the thoroughness of the officials appointed to tax it. The second theme is the variety of responses offered to Parliament throughout this period, ranging from whole-hearted support to outright opposition. For instance, two documents show how Cornelius Burges, the Puritan vicar of the town of Watford, helped to fund the equipping of a volunteer troop raised by the town [nos. 9, 12]. The latter contains an endorsement by Werner Pin for 'tartyi pound fowertenn schillins', hinting at the private deals counties contracted with foreign arms dealers to outfit and equip such local volunteers. By contrast, other men and women offered only grudging acquiescence, or even open resistance. The county committee authorised to administer the war effort was divided amongst itself, caught between localist sentiment and the wider demands of Parliament and the Eastern Association. There were also tensions between local elites and the men of lower social status, who came increasingly to dominate the government of the county. Thomson stresses the degree of agency that all could exercise: in May 1645, William Priestley and Dr. John King were ordered to London to follow up on their earlier petition about the 'grevious oppression' of the county by Parliament's forces [no. 47].

The book therefore supports the conclusions of single-county studies such as Anne Hughes for Warwickshire, while adding more detail and further nuance to Clive Holmes's study of Hertfordshire's role in the Eastern Association. The production quality of the book is, on the whole, of an acceptable standard, with the exception of occasional infelicities in spelling: on page 15, the word 'igniting' is first misspelled 'ignting' and then 'iginiting' on the very next line. A more serious issue is

the question of intended audience. Given the nature of the sources, mostly pay warrants and accounts, it is hard to see this being of interest to the layman. At the same time, the fact that this is a collection of sources arranged by theme, rather than a comprehensive calendar or set of transcriptions, reduces its value for detailed historical research. Although many individual documents provide excellent examples for the historian of the English Civil War, they exist in isolation, their context supplied only by Thomson's analysis. They are also drawn only from narrow sections of the SP28 papers; for instance, had Thomson cast his net slightly wider he would have found two further pay warrants signed by Burges in 1642 that confirm his close relationship with the Watford troop [TNA, SP28/1A fos. 78, 84]. However, given the sheer amount of uncalendared material that exists it would be churlish to insist upon this point. Overall, the book is of considerable interest and utility, but mainly to the extent that it exposes new and untapped sources and uses them to confirm existing historiography, rather than as a springboard for further analysis.

Aaron Graham, New College, Oxford

### **Review of Volume XXIII to be published in *Arquebusier*, journal of The Pike and Shot Society**

This latest publication from the Hertfordshire Record Society is, let me say from the outset, a MUST for anyone interested in the Civil War in England. After an Introduction and an entry on 'General Editorial Method', the book is laid out in three sections: Fighting the War, Raising the Money, and The Effect of the War, followed by a very useful series of short biographies of some forty-eight of the County worthies mentioned in the documents (many others are given brief coverage in the various footnotes). Where the book differs from similarly titled works of Civil War county histories is that there is no attempt here to present an history of the events in the County instead, in keeping with the Record Society's aims, Dr Thomson has transcribed a vast number of original documents from and concerning the County in the years of the First Civil War.

The main source of the many documents transcribed in this work is The National Archives (TNA) at Kew, although these are ably augmented by documents from elsewhere, mainly from the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies (HALS) at County Hall in Hertford. The overall package excellently fulfils the aim of showing how the First Civil War affected the County at almost every level.

There are documents here that will come as a great surprise to many, if not most, historians of the military aspects of war since they effectively demolish a number of long-held convictions and prejudices. In particular I would draw attention to documents [13] and [14] concerning the clothing of a County's Volunteer Regiments and [12] which concerns one of the County's volunteer troops of horse. All three documents present evidence of the equipping and uniforming of County troops to a level which has usually been denied as happening. Seeing this information one is forced to wonder to what extent these sorts of document survive for other counties and have simply not been looked for in the mass of paper that is SP28 in The National Archives.

Elsewhere the section entitled 'Raising the Money' shows, in a way, lacking in so many books, just how deeply the Counties were affected by the constant call for

finance for the Armies. In Hertfordshire, taxes were needed for the County forces but also for the Army of the Eastern Association under the Earl of Manchester, the main field Army under the earl of Essex and even, in 1644, for the Scots Army. These taxes impacted heavily on the County and although some individuals undoubtedly profited from the War, particularly those who managed to obtain lucrative contracts to supply the military, many suffered heavily from the demands – although Hertfordshire was generally lucky in having little or no Royalist activity within its borders. All of this demand for monies leads well into the last part of the book where the war's effects are amply demonstrated and whilst many claims for the military's seizures and quartering seem to have been paid out, even this money had to come from taxation again.

The only previous work to study the English Civil War in Hertfordshire was Kingston's 1894 *Hertfordshire During the Great Civil War...*, which takes the more traditional narrative form. This new publication from the Hertfordshire Record Society is an excellent work to set alongside Kingston's but in its own right is a superb view of the 'nitty-gritty' of an English County coping with the tumults and demands of Great Civil War.

It is to be hoped that similar publications might emerge from other Counties to give us comparative information but, in the interim, whatever your aspect of interest in the Civil War this book demands a place upon your bookshelf. Doubly so given its *extremely* modest price in these days when general interest paperbacks can cost almost as much.

Stephen Ede-Borrett

### **Review of Volume XXIV *Journal of Benjamin Woodcock and Children Of The Labouring Poor: The working lives of children in nineteenth-century Hertfordshire* by Eileen Wallace (Herts University Press, 2010, 256pp, ISBN 978-1-905313-49-5, £14) from the [British Association for Local History website](#)**

These books are superb examples of how local historians can increase the sum of human knowledge by the excellent use of local sources. Although they refer to Hertfordshire, both can be used as springboards for historians in other parts of the country to carry out similar research, thus adding to the greater picture of how the poor were cared for and employed in the nineteenth century. *The Diary of Benjamin Woodcock, Master of Barnet Workhouse* is the 24<sup>th</sup> publication by the Hertfordshire Record Society and is beautifully-produced, with some interesting and informative pictures. Its editor, Gillian Gear, points out that the diary was inspected by the Board of Guardians so was written with some circumspection; nevertheless it gives a vivid description of daily life in the workhouse.

It covers the period from the start of the new workhouse, built under the 1834 Poor Law Act, until its completion in 1837, the transfer of the inmates from the old building and the establishment of a settled routine. There are also several appendices covering the accounts, the register of admissions and discharges, details of people involved such as tradesmen and visitors, the register of paupers placed in service and rules for the labour master. The diary places some emphasis on its generosity—such as the entry for February 1837 when a woman was given one pint of brandy a week as she could not keep anything in her stomach; unfortunately she died

only a month later. An interesting fact is the great age of some of the inmates at death. The book is a rare opportunity for poor law historians to reach a better understanding of the running of an early workhouse in a way not possible in the more formal publications, such as those of the Poor Law Commissioners.

*Children of the Labouring Poor* by contrast uses several sources and covers a wider area, though all are concerned with how children were used and exploited in the nineteenth century. In her excellent first chapter Eileen Wallace brings together and connects the very different types of work done by children. This is followed by a graphic account of those employments: agriculture, straw plait, the silk industry, papermaking, brickmaking and chimney-sweeping. Her choice of illustrations greatly helps in revealing the lives these children lived. Sources such as school logbooks, diaries, and workhouse records (such as Benjamin Woodcock's diary) reveal the enormous difference between the children of the wealthy, who had a childhood of enjoyment, comfort and learning, and those who had none of those things and had to work from a very young age to support themselves or their families. Both books use local sources to their maximum and should inspire local historians in other parts of the country to do likewise.

**Shirley Wittering**

### **Barnet Museum**

*HRS members may not be aware of the current situation facing the Museum, which is itself a member of the Society. The following is taken from information given at [www.barnetmuseum.co.uk](http://www.barnetmuseum.co.uk):*

We would like to thank the more than 4,000 people who have already signed our petitions - written and online - and who have made very generous contributions to Barnet and District Local History Society. We have been very encouraged by your support.

Since writing here about our surprise at Barnet Council's remarkable lack of understanding of the wide range of work that the Barnet Museum undertakes, we have to report that there is no obvious sign that we have managed to change their views. Following the Cabinet meeting on Monday 14 February which supported the proposal to remove all funding from the Museum, Cllr. Rams was quoted in Barnet Press 18 February 2011 as saying, "While I do propose removing funding for Church Farmhouse Museum and Barnet Museum, I am prepared to keep looking in the next three months for a future arrangement that has to be at a zero cost to the council. We will help museums make business plans and offer alternative locations for them." He apparently wants us, a registered charity and a provider of a community service, to pay a commercial rent or he will sell the building.

The Museum has a vast collection that has taken more than 80 years to accumulate but it is far more than just a place to visit and enjoy. It provides an outreach service to schools, societies and researchers, undertakes local history research, and publishes a wide range of publications from substantial books to occasional papers, newsletters and bulletins. The Society has a programme of monthly lectures at Church House Barnet and volunteers go out to lecture to other groups.

The Barnet & District Local History Society, whose volunteers run the Museum, is resolved that its unique collection, begun in 1927 by the then Barnet Record Society and largely donated by the people of

Barnet Town will stay in Wood Street, in the building that has been in community use since 1938. The newly formed Borough of Barnet inherited the Museum in 1965 and with it the moral obligations taken on by the Barnet Urban District Council.

The volunteers who run the Museum are working hard to ensure the Museum's survival on its present site. With the help of our supporters we believe we can finance the running costs of the building. Paying a commercial rent would change the whole basis of the Forward Plan, a draft of which we have already supplied to the Borough. We have complied with the likely loss of our funding and grant. We have asked for a capital asset transfer of the building to the Barnet & District Local History Society at no cost and would be happy to relieve the Borough of any further responsibility for the building. We are already, and want to remain, a prime example of what Cameron's 'Big Society' can do.

### **\*\*\* An Historical Atlas of Hertfordshire \*\*\***

Members will be pleased to learn that the long-awaited *Historical Atlas of Hertfordshire*, edited by David Short, published by Hertfordshire Publications (imprint of UH Press), is now available to purchase. This description is taken from the publicity leaflet for the *Atlas*:

With over 80 maps and accompanying articles, the *Historical Atlas of Hertfordshire* contains an immense amount of research which will be invaluable to all those with an interest in the history of this important English county. ... [It] guides the reader through geology, geography and topography, administrative organisation, buildings, transport and communication, demography, settlement, agriculture, industry and trade, landscape, religion, welfare, war and civil unrest.

Lacking any simple topographical uniformity, Hertfordshire's natural features have in turn influenced the development of the county's landscape, settlements and industries. The diversity and particularity of Hertfordshire held to explain the wide range of topics presented in this atlas, but the breadth of the book is also due to the variety of interests held by its contributors. Few county historical atlases can boast ... information on, for example, ice-houses, dovecotes, medieval and Tudor graffiti, local volunteers for military service, or 18th- and 19th-century transportations and executions.

Hertfordshire has had an essentially agrarian economy for much of its history, but has nonetheless benefitted from the development of a number of important industries. From the later 18th century forwards it boasted significant involvement in paper-making, silk throwing, brewing and malting, and – more distinctively – the straw plait industry. The 20th century witnessed the rise of printing, pharmaceuticals, a film industry and the extraction of aggregates. All these areas of activity are explored in detail as is the long history of settlement in the county, from the Palaeolithic period to the garden cities and new towns. [...]

Printed in full colour, and with a fold-out parish map, the *Historical Atlas* is an essential tool for the local historian and anyone with an interest in [the] county. ISBN 978-0-9542189-6-6; 224pp; paperback. £25 (+p&p UK £2.75, Europe £5.00, rest of world £8.00) Contact: Gill Cook, Information Hertfordshire, University of Hertfordshire Press, College Lane, Hatfield, AL10 9AB, UK. tel: 01707 284654 e-mail: UHPress@herts.ac.uk [www.herts.ac.uk/UHPress](http://www.herts.ac.uk/UHPress)