

EDMONTON HUNDRED HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Founded in 1936 to promote and foster interest in local history in
Edmonton Enfield Potters Bar Southgate South Mimms Tottenham Wood Green Monken Hadley

E H H S
Exploring
Local
History

July and August 2023

Newsletter

Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday 26th July**
3pm at Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield, EN2 0AJ

Summer Social

with talk by Nick Dodson

An Underground Guide to Historical London

**a virtual tour by tube, stopping off to look at places
of historical interest.**

Members will remember Nick's excellent talk for our seasonal meeting last December. This one promises to be just as enjoyable and will be accompanied by refreshments.

Please note, doors open 3pm only. Please try not to come before 3pm as it is unlikely to be possible to admit members earlier. No coffees will be served on arrival. Guests are welcome at this meeting. Email enquiries to edmontonhundredevents@gmail.com or call/text 0734 1212 813.

Rachael Macdonald



*Trial trip on the underground railway, 1863
From Walford's "London Old and New"*

Then on **Tuesday 5th September** at **7.30pm** at **All Saints Church Hall, N9 9AT**

The Enfield Society's Edmonton & Eastern Enfield Group
will be holding a **joint meeting** with the **Edmonton Hundred Historical Society**

We have received the following:

Victoria Thompson, *Founding Director of Youth Made Place*, a Community Interest Company, will unveil a visionary project, where the captivating voices of Enfield's youth are poised to take centre stage. Victoria will share her vision to ignite curiosity, spark imagination, and foster a collective passion for preserving our borough's heritage as well as understanding how Enfield is experienced by the younger generations in the borough.

You will learn of Youth Made Place's approach to how young people can be given opportunities for co-designing, consultation, and engagement within the built environment. Don't miss this opportunity to be a part of an insightful conversation that celebrates our shared heritage and shapes a brighter future for generations to come.

It should be an interesting evening. Put it in your diaries now, as there will be no August newsletter.

Our own September talk will take place at **Jubilee Hall**
at **8pm** on **Wednesday 20 September** – speaker to be confirmed.

Rachael Macdonald

Diary Dates - talks and events arranged by other organisations

Wednesday 12th July. Special event 7.30pm walking tour and 8.30pm at Bluecoats Pub
Pride in Bruce Grove Celebration. New local art tour and memories of the High Road.
Full details on Haringey Council website <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/events/202306/pride-bruce-grove-walking-tour>
Hi Culture! project for Bruce Castle Museum and Archive

Thursday 20th July. 2.30pm. East Wing Gallery, Bruce Castle Museum, Tottenham, N17 8NU
Curator's Pick. The Art of John Bonny: Long Gone Landscapes of Tottenham
Annabel Gee. Free. **Book** via **Eventbrite**. *Bruce Castle Museum*

Sunday 23rd July. Walk. Meet 11am. Junction Philip Lane and Tottenham High Road.
The Hidden Histories of High Cross – Historical Walking Tour
Oona Kelly. Free. **Book** via **Eventbrite**. *Bruce Castle Museum*

Wednesday 26th July. 6.45 for 7pm. Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, Tottenham, N17 8NU
Old tales and new discoveries – exploring the history and landscape of Bruce Castle and its Park.
Walking tour with Deborah Hedgecock. Free. **Book** via **Eventbrite**. *Bruce Castle Museum*

Monday 31st July. Meet 12 noon. Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, Tottenham, N17 8NU
Pioneers, Protestors & Pamphleteers: In & Around Church Road, N17
Walking tour with Deborah Hedgecock. Free. **Book** via **Eventbrite**. *Bruce Castle Museum*

Friday 15th September. 7.30pm. Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane, Enfield, EN2 0AJ
London's Waterfront 1666 to 1800 and London's involvement in Slavery
John Schofield *Enfield Archaeological Society*

Correction

Our fire brigade correspondent has pointed out that the picture in the May issue of the newsletter and captioned Enfield Fire Brigade was in fact the Edmonton Fire Brigade.

Visit to Whitwebbs Museum of Transport - a report in pictures by Rachael Macdonald



1. 8 members visited Whitwebbs Museum of Transport in June guided by member Chris Whippe (left), a museum volunteer.



2. Whitwebbs Pumping Station, now the museum, formerly owned by Thames Water, built for the New River Company in 1898



3. Well interesting ! Its water supply used to top up the New River which once ran through the grounds of nearby Myddelton House



4. Chris among the fire engines, probably his favourite display – interesting information & anecdotes !



5. Model railway, housed in old railway carriage, several trains on 2 levels, lots of cars and a bus garage.

Domesday and Slavery in Edmonton and the Middlesex Hundreds

By Robert Musgrove

Much has been written about the fight to abolish slavery by William Wilberforce, Thomas Clarkson and others, their success in outlawing the slave trade in 1807 and finally the institution of slavery itself throughout the British Empire in 1833. But there is a piece of our history – perhaps less well-known, and admittedly a very long time ago, over a thousand years in fact – when slavery not only existed, but was fully supported by the then rulers of England, even maintained by brutality and severe sanctions. In fact, many of the slaves in 10th and 11th century England were native born and victims of slave traders operating from the ports, particularly Bristol. This is an aspect of history that was rarely dealt with in detail by late nineteenth and early 20th century historians who hailed the Anglo-Saxons as forerunners of the nation's greatness and castigated the Normans as savage conquerors, ignoring their efforts to abolish the slave trade and marginalise slavery itself.

Slavery was in fact deeply embedded in Anglo-Saxon society. Its causes were many and included captives taken during war and raids on neighbouring clans, law breakers, and even voluntary action to avoid starvation. In most parts of England, slaves were chattels of the lords on whose estates they worked. As invading Angles and Saxons swept across the country many native Britons were taken captive. Celtic, or 'Welisc' slaves might once have been termed as the 'foreigner', primarily due to their darker colouring compared to Saxons or Scandinavians, though how far the ethnic or religious affiliations between the Anglo-Saxon 'folk' or 'kin' engendered discriminatory attitudes towards slaves of different ethnic origins by the 11th century is unclear. Yet it was not only the Celts who were enslaved. The Anglo-Saxons were not at all averse to enslaving their own people and English captives were also taken overseas in large numbers, particularly to Ireland. Slaves ('*peowas*' in Old English) became an integral part of English society centuries before the Norman Conquest and the compilation of the Survey of 1086, or Domesday Book.

Domesday captured the institution of slavery in its later stages. It lists 28,000 slaves or '*servus*' in England, a smaller number than in 1066, but still the fourth largest group among the peasantry, and considerably higher if we take into account their complete omission from the northern counties of Durham and Northumberland. Given that slaves appear in considerable numbers in all other counties we might conclude that the returns of the northern circuit are incomplete. If the 'recorded' slaves only are counted in Domesday, they constituted approximately 2% of the population. The totals of other social groups are usually multiplied by four or five (the average size of families according to several contemporary sources) assuming the numbers represent heads of families rather than individuals. Recent research suggests that if slaves were also counted on the same basis they accounted for at least 10 -15% of the population of England and possibly more.



In the Edmonton Hundred there were a total of 14 slaves, four each in Edmonton and Tottenham, and six in Enfield. In the six Hundreds of Middlesex, only Hounslow (Isleworth), the smallest, had no slaves at all, Elthorne had 38, Ossulstone, the largest, had 16, Spelthorne 35 and Gore 5. The total for Middlesex is 108 including Edmonton's 14 slaves. If we take the median family group at around 4.5, then it is possible that there were up to 486 or so people in slave families throughout the Middlesex Hundreds, just under 100 in Edmonton, though this is more speculative than with free status peasants due to the uncertainty as to how many slaves were in reality able to marry and rear children under the social and economic conditions they experienced.

The three manors of Edmonton Hundred in Domesday account for 257 freemen, consisting of villagers or villeins, smallholders and cottagers, Frenchmen (2) and priest (1). The 14 slaves constitute a little over 5% of the local population. David Pam (1980) suggested that because the demesnes or personal lands of the lord were relatively small in all three manors, and required less

servile labour, this factor might explain the lower percentage of slaves in the Edmonton Hundred. Another reason for the smaller numbers might be accounted for if some of the 49 bordars in the Survey, feudal tenants (often called serfs) with a few acres of land and cottage in return for menial work, “may represent former slaves” who had previously been granted their freedom, but who were forced to labour as hard as in their previous unfree status ¹. The distinction between slaves and serfs has often been confused given their similar conditions. But serfs, though they were bound to the land they worked, could not legally be bought or sold as people.

The male slaves, like the bordars or cottars, most likely worked as agricultural labourers, predominantly ploughmen, though some could be found as millers, miners, foresters, some of the toughest jobs around. A fragment of a colloquy by Aelfric, a late 10th century Abbot of Eynsham, imagines the hardships faced by the enslaved ploughman, his lament being that “*There is not a winter so harsh that I dare not lurk at home for fear of my master. I must plough an acre or more, I must fill the stall of the oxen with hay and water and carry their dung outside, Oh the work is hard because I am not free.*”². Rural life was certainly harsh for all labouring classes. It required at least one ploughman and a ‘boy’ to manoeuvre the unwieldy 8 oxen plough of the era, possibly more in heavy soils. But with 26 recorded ploughs in Edmonton, 24 in Enfield, and 10 in Tottenham, and a total of 14 slaves between them, even increasing the numbers to include male family members, it has to be concluded that slaves would need to be joined by the free peasantry such as the cottars or bordars during the ploughing season. And as Aelfric eloquently imagines, the slave had little incentive other than the commands of his master to get him to work.

Female slaves had the tedious task of grinding corn, or working as serving maids, cooks, wet-nurses, dairy maids, weavers and seamstresses: again tasks also performed by free-born women of the lower social classes. A good many became concubines. But both sexes might be set to work on the extensive woodlands, collecting wood, feeding pigs and livestock, and milling the corn. The larger the woodland and pasture noted in the manors of the Middlesex Hundreds, the higher the number of slaves required, suggesting that their economic worth made their retention more important in these areas. While he was active, the slave quite possibly lived little worse than poorer ‘free’ peasants. But when he became old or physically unable to work, his lord would likely free



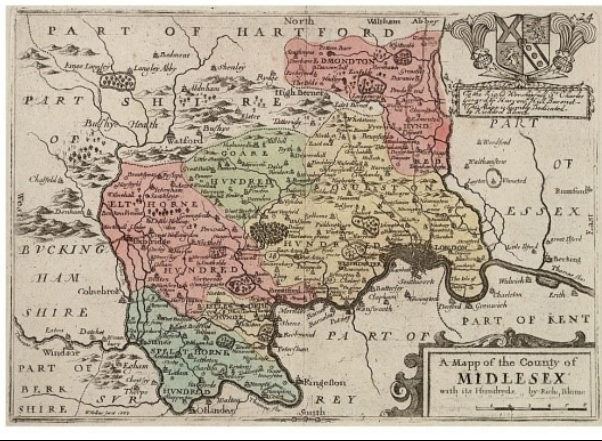
him, and without land of his own his prospects were extremely poor. The stronger slaves proved to be too useful to dispense with in this way. Ploughing, as noted above, was a communal effort (as depicted in the Luttrell Psalter

illustrated above), and though this may have gradually changed as the two-strip cultivation developed in Edmonton and elsewhere, the plough teams led, both by slaves and freemen, remained vital for the village’s survival. David Avery (1964), in an early Occasional Paper, suggested that few smallholders would possess the oxen necessary to make a full plough team, thus necessitating full cooperation within the entire Hundred. ³

Inevitably, the social distinctions between free and slave labour became more blurred as the 11th century advanced: and the tendency of many landowners to endow slaves who performed these tasks as ‘free ploughman’ grew considerably with time. The freed slave would likely swell the ranks of the lowly free peasant classes as small-holders or wage labourers, as noted above by David Pam. In the emerging feudal system all groups of the peasantry and yeoman classes owed some duty to their lord, whether it meant money rents, labour services or customary and seasonal obligations. Slavery was therefore losing its relevance long before it disappeared from English society. The Middlesex Hundreds seemingly experienced a similar decline of slavery to those in neighbouring Essex Hundreds where Domesday records the number of slaves falling by 25% between 1066 and 1086.

Economic crises in a primitive economic culture nevertheless helped prolong slavery as a viable institution for longer than it otherwise would have been. Sheer poverty in times of dearth (and there were many in subsistence economies) drove considerable numbers of peasants to sell themselves

or their children into slavery in a desperate effort to survive and receive food and shelter from the local lord. And, ironically, although their adoption of Frankish customs had rid them of some of their old Viking ways, particularly enslavement of captives, Norman domination after 1066 ironically added to the numbers of English slaves. Orderic Vitalis, The Ely monk and contemporary chronicler, wrote of the unparalleled brutality of the Norman Conquest and especially the genocidal treatment meted out during the ‘Harrying of the North’ to crush the rebellions of 1069. Many who fled the Norman onslaught, predominantly of Norse ancestry, had no choice but to sell themselves into slavery for food and safety⁴. Chroniclers contrasted the ruthlessness of the conquerors towards the English rebels with their seemingly apparent sympathy for their slaves! Middlesex avoided the worst excesses meted out to the Northern rebels, but the execution of Earl Waltheof in 1075, the husband of the Conqueror’s niece in Tottenham showed the ruthless determination of the Normans to crush all potential unrest.



Maps of Middlesex depicting the Hundreds at the time of Domesday

The English Church rarely condemned slavery outright during the late Saxon era, but did object more fiercely to slaves being sold abroad, for fear that they would end up in heathen hands. Growing religious disdain for slavery possibly accounts for the gesture of King Athelstan during his coronation at Kingston in A.D. 924. A surviving Gospel Book on which he swore his oath records the freeing of a slave by the king at the altar. As a Christian parishioner, in theory at least, the slave enjoyed certain rights unknown in other slave societies or times. For example, if he married without the permission of his lord the marriage should still stand, as no Christian would be denied access to the sacraments of the Church, regardless of status. It wasn’t unknown for a slave-woman to be married to a freeman, and some won their freedom in this way. A will of a lady, Wynflaed, from as early as A.D. 950, stated that her slave “*Wulfware is to be freed [and] is to serve whom she pleases and Aettryth also.*”⁵

Morris (2013), acknowledging the savagery of Norman armies towards the native English after 1066, nevertheless argues that traditionalist historians have deliberately played down the Anglo-Saxon responsibility in institutionalising the bondage of a whole class of people whilst overstating the Norman toleration of human slavery.⁶ The later Saxon kings were far from guiltless in meting out punishments to powerless slaves. A law of King Alfred declared that “*If a slave rapes a slave woman, he is to be castrated.*” This unsurprisingly didn’t extend to the many masters who slept with their female slaves or concubines. Likewise, King Cnut merely ordained that “*if a married man had sexual relations with his own slave-woman, the slave was forfeit.*” To whom we are not sure. King Athelstan, who symbolically freed a slave at his coronation, later decreed that slaves found stealing should be stoned to death if male (by other slaves of course) or burnt at the stake if female. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle interestingly records the future Saxon king, Harold, in 1052, raiding the Somerset coast, seizing “*whatever he pleased, in cattle, captives and property*”. That these draconian punishments and slave-gathering expeditions were seemingly abandoned by the time of Domesday conceivably points to the Norman rulers’ less sanguinary approach to slavery.

The disappearance of ‘legal’ slavery by the early 12th century, commented upon by William of Malmesbury (1095-1143), foremost historian of the age, was in some respects a remarkable social

transformation even though the decline had set in much earlier. He saw the Norman ascendancy as a major factor, commenting on the pressure from Archbishop Lanfranc, particularly his prompting of King William's intervention against the slave trade in his 1070 decree, stating: "*Let Christians not be sold outside of the land or to heathens.*" The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle also reports him leading his levies into Wales in 1081 (where slave traders made huge profits), and there he '*freed many hundreds of people*', all former slaves.⁷ William also made provision for freedom of former serfs, including equipping them with arms for protection.

The Norman Church opposed the slave trade, due in part to the likely impact on Christian captives, and certainly frowned upon slavery itself, though Domesday indicates a toleration towards the institution where it already existed on ecclesiastical estates. In Elthorne Hundred, west of Edmonton, the Abbot of Holy Trinity of Rome held Harmondsworth, a large estate of 30 hides which included six slaves. Within the Hundred of Spelthorne, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lanfranc (1070-1089), the leading Church reformer and vociferous opponent of the slave trade, nevertheless held the manor of Staines which recorded as many as twelve slaves. He also possessed the manor of Hayes in Elthorne Hundred with 2 slaves. Even so, slavery was increasingly unpopular with the Church and the ruling elites, numbers of slaves in these manors probably lower than they had been in 1066. Additionally, the disadvantages of owning the 'unfree' worker were becoming clearer as communal labour, previously noted above, became an essential part of the rural economy. Feudal serfdom appeared to be a better alternative, for the lord of the manor at any rate.

We can but speculate about the lives of the 14 slaves entered in the Domesday Book for the Edmonton Hundred. We have no names for them and can only estimate the size of their families and lifestyle. Likewise for the 6 slaves who worked on another of Geoffrey de Mandeville's manors in Middlesex, Northolt, in Elthorne Hundred. We have a very good idea what kind of roles they played and how hard they laboured, and can guess how they fared, as bonded or eventually free peasants, as they, their children or grandchildren would have eventually become. Their existence raises many pertinent questions about the status of the slave at the time of Domesday along with the nature of the changing social and political landscape. Some may have been treated better than we might imagine, or perhaps worse. But in the words of Aelfric, whatever their condition, they were not free.

Robert Musgrove

Footnotes

1. Pam, D.O.(1980) *The Hungry Years: The Struggle for Survival in Edmonton and Enfield before 1400*, Occasional Paper, New Series No.42, EHHS, p.12
2. Davies, Graham (1997) *The Word Order of Aelfric*, Edward Mellen Press
3. Avery, David (1964) *The Irregular common fields of Edmonton*, EHHS, Occasional Paper, New Series No.9, pp.8-9
4. Vitalis, O. (1853) *Ecclesiastical History of England & Normandy*, London: Bohn
5. Mitchell, B. (1995) *Old English and Anglo-Saxon Enfield*, Oxford, Blackwell, p.217
6. Morris, M. (2013) *Normans and Slavery, Breaking the Bonds*, History Today, Vol.63, March Issue 3
7. Douglas, D.C. & Greenway G.W. (eds). (1968) *English Historical Documents 1042-1189*, London, Eyre & Spottiswoode

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- Mitchell, B. (1995) *Old English and Anglo-Saxon England*, Oxford, Blackwell
- Moore, J.S. (1997) '*Quat homines*' *The Population of Domesday England: Anglo-Norman Studies*, Vol. 19.
- Morris, J. (ed), (1975) *Domesday Book: A survey of the Counties of England, 11: Middlesex*, Chichester, Phillimore & Co.
- Pam, D. O.(1980) *The Hungry Years: The Struggle for Survival in Edmonton and Enfield before 1400*, Occasional Paper, EHHS, No.42
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Letters and Emails

Burial Ground at the Winchmore Hill Meeting House

Following the visit to the Friends Meeting House in March, Stuart Delvin has written

I don't know how many of your readers know about the close association the pioneers of the giant Barclays Bank have with the Quakers who lived local to Winchmore Hill and which led to the Church Hill burial ground being their final resting place. I tried to provide a comprehensive account of the local family in my *Winchmore Hill People and Pictures* of 2011 (now out of print).

A group of four headstones is preserved near the Church Hill entrance. The oldest is that of David Barclay and reads *David Barclay of Cheapside. Son of Apologist. Bom 1682. Died 1769*. The Apologist was the name given to Robert Barclay of Ury in Scotland because he had written a major book, published in 1676, called *An Apology for the True Christian Divinity, at the same time is held forth and preached by the people called in scorn Quakers*.



Photo: Stuart Delvin

A second headstone reads *John Barclay (son of D. Barclay), Bom 1728. Died 1787*. He was known as John Barclay of Cambridge Heath, and was connected to the banking firm. A third tombstone nearby reads *Susannah Barclay (wife of Jn. Barclay). Bom 1739. Died 1805*. The fourth headstone reads *David Barclay. Son of D. Barclay. Bom 1729. Died 1809*. He was known as David Barclay of Walthamstow and Youngsbury, and was a partner in the Bank.

Barclay headstones 21st March 2023

The fourth headstone reads *David Barclay. Son of D. Barclay. Bom 1729. Died 1809*. He was known as David Barclay of Walthamstow and Youngsbury, and was a partner in the Bank.

Robert Barclay (1758 - 1816), as well as his son of the same name (1785-1853) is also buried in the grounds. So too is Robert Barclay of Bury Hill (1751-1830) who was the nephew of David Barclay of Cheapside. However, he did not come into the bank, but instead became the co-owner of the *Anchor Brewery* in Southwark, later to be known as Courage Brewery.

Stuart Delvin

One Hundred Years Ago

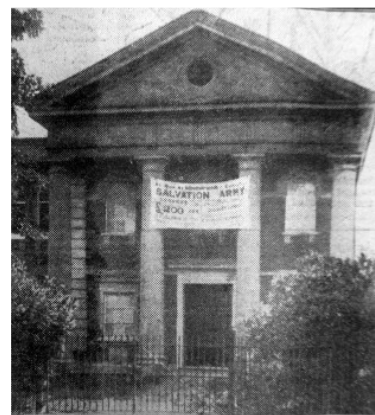
Independent Labour Party - Garden Fete and Sale

The lawn of Herewood House, Southbury Road on Saturday, was the scene of a successful garden fete and sale promoted in connection with the Enfield Independent Labour Party. The weather conditions being ideal, a large number of people took the opportunity of participating in the al fresco proceedings, which included the negotiation of an enjoyable musical programme and a political speech by Mr Fred Easton, on the subject of "Independent Labour Party Ideal". Mr J H. Jay presided.

Enfield Gazette 13th July 1923

Salvation Army's New Home

The Baker Street Chapel has just been acquired by the Salvation Army as a headquarters for the Enfield Detachment. The work of renovation is now proceeding, and as will be gleaned from the banner, £200 is still required to complete the purchase. Donations are invited and should be sent to Capt. Montgomery, Salvation Army Hall, Lancaster Road Enfield *Enfield Gazette 27th July 1923*



Graham Frost

Registered Charity No. 299073. Please send contributions to the newsletter to Kate Godfrey 69 Margaret Road, New Barnet. Website: edmontonhundred.org.uk. Twitter @Edmonton100. Email: info@edmontonhundred.org.uk.