

Issue No 2

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Colchester Recalled



September 1939: weary London children arriving in Essex for distribution to surrounding villages

TO BE AN EVACUEE

By J Norman

England, early September 1940. German forces had had overrun most of France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Norway by May of that year. The Battle of Britain had reached its height by late August and German forces stood poised at the channel ports ready to invade. Against this background and the death dealt out to civilians fleeing on the roads in Belgium and France, it was decided to evacuate as many of the children, some with mothers, far from the threatened invasion areas of England.

How then did an eleven year old see all this and to what effect? "You are going to be evacuated tomorrow", said mum, which didn't really mean much. And so tomorrow came, and about 2pm one small boy and mum set off on a bus to Hamilton Road School equipped with one case (not too big and with all possessions), toilet kit, including flannel, ration book, identity card, gas mask and a blanket.

A complete journey into the unknown best describes what follows. Goodbyes to mums for us and eventually we were off to North Station and the train. No idea where we were going, no one would tell us and to ask was almost like being the fifth column. About 4pm the train left Colchester bound for where, we did not know. Please remember by this time all road signs, station signs and anything with a place name had been removed to deter an enemy, never mind us. We worked it out that we went to Ipswich and then back towards the Midlands as it got dark, it was complete darkness, including the inside of the carriage, with no street lights, station lights or house lights. And so time went on, and at about 10pm we pulled into a station to be met, hardly greeted, by various adults, ushered into buses to a school, given food, what I cannot remember and sent to a classroom for the night. Still couldn't find out where we were, but we did have our blanket and that was our bed for the night.



Younger John as an evacuee with girl friend
and respirator



John Norman

After breakfast we spent an hour or two in the playground with strange aircraft flying about mainly with yellow/orange colouring. Consultations took place and it was decided these were Oxfords and Ansons from Training Command. Gradually our numbers were decreasing as we were once more put on buses to the housing areas of the town. At last the bus stopped and accompanied by the man in charge, one or two were taken to someone's front door. "Two for you Mrs Shooter" and there we were left. Two small boys in a strange house in a strange town with complete strangers for an unknown time. At last we found out where we were - it was Kettering.

Before I continue, a brief overall picture of the situation from research later. Many children from the Colchester area, some with mothers, were 'distributed' in this general area which included Wellingborough, Burton Latimer and Rushden. Some like us had been kept together as schools and it seems no accident that Grammar School boys and High School girls were billeted in the better areas of the town. It was also very sad that not long after this evacuation three young children from Colchester were killed in an air raid at Rushden.

And so we arrived, approx. seventy schoolboys of all ages plus 3 - 4 teachers to somehow be taught and kept under control. Our household consisted of Mum and Dad and one son of about our age. Understandably it didn't take us long to realise we weren't really wanted, but there was no choice. Two eleven, nearly twelve year olds in a house with no toys or things of our own which didn't help. It wasn't long before we got our jobs. These included getting in coal, washing up, stirring the porridge and cleaning the silver on Saturday mornings amongst others.

It is hard to imagine how two eleven year olds passed the time under these circumstances and memory has faded. However we had to go to school and as we occupied some kind of wooden hut complex at the bottom of the playground, we must have used someone's classrooms, so the arrangement was we went to school 1.30pm to 5.30pm or maybe 6pm only. This entailed a walk to school of about a mile and back at night and it wasn't long before the home journey at night was in the dark and blackout. What of the mornings? We did get quite a lot of homework or should I say morning work, one or two visits were arranged to places like the local newspaper but that left us with time on our hands, but there was a bonus. Very near was Wicksteed Park, a large place which in peacetime had many attractions and was a favourite place for Sunday School outings. All these were closed, but Mr Wicksteed designed and built play items such as swings, slides and roundabouts, these being permanent fixtures. It made a pleasant rendezvous with our fellow High School girls and I'll say no more.

As the weeks went by, more and more went home, the Rushden incident and the blitz on Coventry helping this. By about the end of November our numbers were so small it was decided to send us all home and our slow journey from Kettering via Cambridge to Colchester began.

Three months in hindsight is a very short time but for an eleven year old under the conditions prevailing was an experience not easily forgotten.

WERE YOU EVACUATED?

From September 1st 1939, 14,000 evacuees passed through Colchester in batches of 4,000 en route to small towns and villages in Essex.

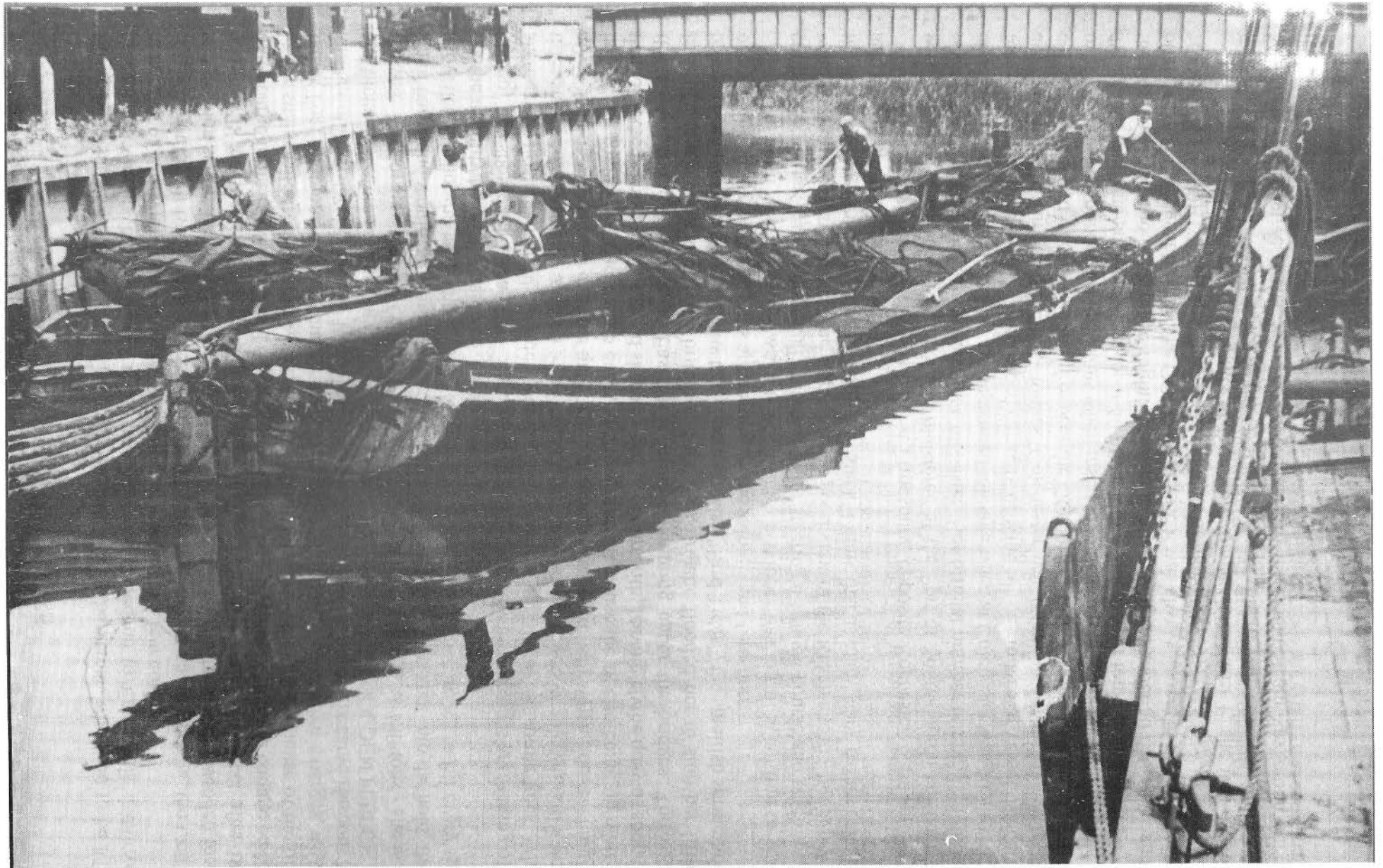
Exactly a year later over 13,000 children from Colchester. (60% of the Borough total). Were shipped by special trains to Kettering, Wellingborough, Stoke-on-Trent and Burton-on-Trent. An even more extensive exodus occurred from Clacton and Harwich. Were you involved?

COLCHESTER RECALLED is seeking to collect as many local memories of evacuation as possible. If you took in evacuees, were an evacuee or saw evacuees in 1939, 1940 or 1944 we would like to hear from you. Please telephone 01206 546775, leave your name and number on the answerphone and we will contact you. Or write to Andrew Phillips, Colchester Recalled, Colchester Institute, Sheepen Road, Colchester

DO YOU REMEMBER THE HURNARDS OF LEXDEN?

Samuel Hurnard JP was a local benefactor in Colchester and one time chairman of the Mazawattee Tea Company. They lived at Hill House in Lexden, now a County Council run home for the elderly.

The Rev John Wood of Stanway has recently published a book about Hannah, Samuel's daughter called 'Hannah Hurnard: The Official Biography', on sale price £6.99. We would welcome any memories.



The DAWN at Hythe Bridge bound for East Mills. The crew: L-R are, Charlie Jennings, unknown, Clarie Simmons and Buff Hedgecock.
(Photograph - Douglas West, Brightlingsea)

COLCHESTER BARGES

I have been shown issue No 1 of "Colchester Recalled" by a bargeman who used to be Mate on Francis and Gilders barge LADY HELEN which often traded up to East Mills. I enjoyed the memories of Bill Warner and thought you may be interested in a few notes.

Should Bill Eves surname be Eve? Several bargemen of that name were on the Colchester and Maldon sailing barges. The GOLDEN FLEECE is extant and lays under the wooded foreshore at Pin Mill on the River Orwell, Suffolk her hull is now in a state of neglect after being a housebarge for nearly fifty years. I expect she will soon be broken up. Outside a cottage on Maldon Hythe sits her old iron steering wheel, a reminder to Doreen the lady of the house of the time her father Tom Simmons was her young master. She used to go away on her father's barges, with Betty and her other sister, her mother Rosie and Flossie the dog. Tom Simmons became Harbour Master at Colchester before retiring. His younger brother Clarie was skipper of GOLDEN FLEECE during the war. I'm not sure that the GOLDEN FLEECE would carry as much as 130 tons - she is only a small barge and would be nearly sunk with 120 tons. When wheat was shot into the hold, the crew shovelled the sloping heap under the side decks, mast deck and cupboard aft to fill every space to get the quantity below the hatch covers as described - a very dusty job.

"Neep" tide should read Neap tide - a vessel becomes beneaped when the tides are "taking off" and she doesn't float again until the tides "come around again", building up to spring tides. When the tides start to increase they are said to be "making up" or putting in. A SW gale will kill a tide, and a NW gale makes it come over the quay. High barometric pressure will stop a tide reaching its full height and sometimes start to ebb early, and low pressure cause the tide to come up a bit higher than expected. This is what the old skippers had to put up with, leaving Hythe quay as soon as they floated and trying to get up to East Mills without jamming under the bridges. The BRITISH EMPIRE stuck under the Hythe bridge and the Fire Brigade flooded her to stop her lifting the bridge. Then pumped her out at low tide. There are also "Bird Tides", the smallish spring tides that occur in the spring when the gulls are nesting on the saltings and foreshore.

The term steering by the wake is confusing - a skipper has to sail according to wind and course. A compass can be constantly referred to for steering a straight course and when turning to windward up the busy Thames, the skipper had a good view of the Reach ahead - but depended on the warnings from the Mate standing atop the "stack. I think that as many stack barges caught afire, as were run down by steamboats.

The GOLDEN FLEECE was built at Frindsbury, opposite Rochester, Kent, in 1903. She was originally owned down channel and registered at the Port of Southampton but later sold to owners on the Colne and re-registered at Colchester. Her official number is 114572, International code signal flags J.V.L.B. and her net registered tonnage when at Colchester was 50, i.e. 100 cubic feet = 1 ton measurement. This replaced capacity of wine tuns as to size of vessel. Modern ships are now measured in cubic metres - tonnes. Colchester was infamous for its high river dues on cargoes inward and outward bound. I expect the GOLDEN FLEECE was 49 tons and "so many" over 100ths - but rounded up to 50 tons when inserted in the Mercantile Navy List. Vessels of 45 - 49 net tons paid one penny per ton - over 50 - 59 net tons 2 pence per ton. Several barges owned in the Port had the cargo holds made slightly smaller to attain a figure under 50 net tons! - and under 60 net tons in the bigger barges. The GOLDEN FLEECE was always known to the bargemen as the "GOLDEN NUGGET". Perhaps she once earned lots of money.....?

Enclosed is a copy of accounts of the sailing barge GOLD BELT, she was originally at Faversham, Kent and was launched as the ORION. She was sold to Wm. Green & Sons, Brantham Mills near Manningtree, Essex who were approached by the Orient Steam Navigation Co, to buy



1. *The EVA ANNIE, the last tiller steered barge, heavily laden.*

the name for their proposed new ship which was launched in 1935. The ORION is a housebarge at Conyer, Kent and near the end of her days having been built in 1892.

The complete cargo book and accounts exist for the sailing barge GOLD BELT ex ORION but are undated. The extracts are probably post second World War.

June -410 quarters of wheat - Royal Victoria Dock to East Mills, Colchester

July - 561 bales straw, Colchester to Ridham Dock, Kent (Paper Mill).

July - 400 quarters wheat ex ELK ISLAND PARK, Millwall Dock to Whitstable.

July - 1604 bags Diatomite, Pool of London to Colchester.

(The ELK ISLAND PARK was a wartime "standard" built ship whose first voyage was in July 1943. She was built in Canada and had a 9000 tons dead-weight. Diatomite - fossil diatoms were tertiary deposits of flinty material. In 1906 they were used in the manufacture of dynamite and paint!)

Keep up the good work,

Yours sincerely

Barry T Pearce. 47 Wantz Road, Maldon, Essex CM9 7DB

PS Owen Parry's Mill closed down in 1939. Two of his barges are still sailing as yachts - the VICTOR and the GRETA.

Many thanks to Barry for the photographs:

THE HYTHE

I thought, before I became too senile to remember such things, it might interest some of your older readers and possibly, even some of the young ones, if I were to recall the conditions of employment and the working lifestyle which maintained in the small port of Colchester at the Hythe in the early 1930s when I joined the embryonic firm of Frank Pertwee & Sons. I came down from Oxford with the intention of Schoolmastering but, finding a glut of teachers in the profession, the projected raising of the school age from 14 to 15 having come to nothing, my brother, who at the time was in loco-parentis, advised me to accept the offer of this job in the grain and animal food trade. I joined the firm in 1933. Our workforce comprised seven men, including ourselves, so we were of necessity, all things to all men: salesmen, book-keepers, workhands, occasional drivers (we actually had two 3 ton Ford trucks). In fact we had to turn our hands to anything that cropped up. It rapidly became apparent that I was no salesman, so it naturally fell to my lot to be in charge of producing and delivering anything that was sold.

This gave me the opportunity to learn to know the Hythe, the River Colne - it's characters, it's works and it's environs, in a way which I never would have done had I not been part and parcel of it for many years. In those days, the early thirties, there were very few, if any, propeller driven boats using the river at the Hythe. I believe about then that The Everard Shipping Co. put some motor barges, carrying 200 tons of coal into the gasworks, but otherwise it was the brown sailed wooden Thames barge that kept the river users supplied with grain and timber. Apart, possibly from the gas company, there was no means of mechanical hauling to unload or load. It was done entirely by manpower.

There were two gangs operating in the Port, a grain gang and a timber gang. Rather naturally, I came to know the former better than the latter, but I used to admire the skill and physical endurance of the timber gang. Eight to the gang, there would probably be four aboard, raising the lengths of timber from the hold to place sometimes two or three lengths on to the shoulders of the carrier who would wear leather shoulderpads. The carriers would then lope up planks from ship to shore, timing their run to the spring of the boards beneath their feet. The timbers they were carrying could be of considerable length, and would also have a whipping motion which had to be controlled. Finally, the carriers would complete their run into the wood yard on the quay.

The unloading of our grain was perhaps less spectacular, but no less demanding of strength and skill. Again, with eight men to the gang, there would be three in the hold: two men bushelling maize into a loose woven bran bag, held by a third man. The bag was then hoisted by a ship's pulley on to a stand at shoulder height resting on the hatch cover. The runners would then, as in the case of the timber gang, make their way on planks from ship to shore, the bag across their backs, and then in our case, run the length of the mill and drop it under a chain hoist which raised it to the top floor. Three bushels to the bag was the standard weight to be carried approximately 12 stone!

Both operations, timber and grain, could be complicated by the rise and fall of a tidal river so that sometimes one was running uphill and sometimes down. On occasion, when the gang was short, I made up the number, so I do know what I am talking about.

The reason we used hessian bags as opposed to the much more durable corn or rail sack was purely economic. A sack cost half a crown, a bran bag a few pence. Unfortunately bags would split easily unless deposited very gently and after completion of the unloading there was usually a good morning's work of clearing up to be done. It was part of my job to pay off the gang and, to the best of my memory, I paid them £24, £3 per man for one and a half days work - princely money for those days. In a good week they could have three boats - £9. Agricultural workers

would be green with envy, but of course, not all weeks were like that. Sailing boats were entirely dependent on the weather, particularly in the winter months and it was not uncommon for boats to be stormbound on their way from the Thames Estuary for a week or even a fortnight, and that meant no work in the port, To this day I can remember the names of some, at least, of the grain gang. Some of them may still be around. They were a tough breed - the Cacknell brothers, the Rooke brothers, "Lofty" and Finchy the foreman. The Rooke brothers' father was the Harbour Master of their day. Things tended to run in families and made for easy communication

Another feature of the quay which to anyone visiting the area today for the first time, must appear quite incredible, was that a rail track ran the length of it as far as the electricity station with hand-operated points to run trucks off into sidings at the gasworks, the electricity station and Parry's oil mill, which later became part of our property. This track came from the Hythe Station goods yard over a railway bridge upstream of the present road bridge and every morning a small shunting engine would bring whatever trucks were required, either for loading or unloading to the various concerns using the quay. This operation, depending on the number of trucks to be delivered, could occupy a large part of the morning, and, if you happened to be at the top end of the quay, as our premises then were, it would be mid-morning before your trucks would be placed for you so as to release the engine to get back to the railyard. The trucks would be left there all day to be dealt with and collected again from 4 o'clock onwards. Imagine that happening today with the volume of motor traffic that congests Hythe Hill and the quay almost all day long.



Parry's Oil Mill - Hythe Quay

The consignments of goods that we received by rail comprised such ingredients of animal feed stuffs as fish meal, alfalfa grass meal, dried milk powder, meat meal, cattle cubes and Sussex ground oats. These were lifted from the truck to our top floor by means of a chain hoist operating through a small gantry overhanging the road. In addition to the railway, an increasing amount of the carriage of our goods in the period before, and, I believe, during the war, was done by Edwards of Ardleigh whose premises now belong to Spearings. Edwards, who farmed a very large area of Ardleigh in the thirties, sent a number of lorries daily to Covent Garden and back-loaded for us from Spillers at Bermondsey, French's at Bow and many other London pick ups.

The carriage of grain, pulses and seeds was a different matter altogether. Bulk handling had not yet come to the farms and probably to only a few of the larger merchants. Wheat, barley, oats, beans and peas were invariably carted in sacks and had to be loaded and unloaded by carrying on the back. I believe today that the law states that no man shall be required to carry more than 1 cwt (8 stone or 112 lbs) but the standard weight for sacks then were as follows:

Wheat	18 stone	(252 lbs)
Barley	16 stone	(224 lbs)
Oats	12 stone	(168 lbs)
Beans	19 stone	(266 lbs)
Peas	16 Stone	(224 lbs)
Maize	17 stone	(238 lbs)

Clover seed which packed very closely went 20 stone (280 lbs).

We carried these weights day-in, day-out as a matter of course quite cheerfully as, I suppose, our predecessors had done for centuries. Fork lift trucks and the era of bulk pneumatic handling of grain may have been a twinkle in someone's eye but they were many years ahead for us. However I don't remember any back injuries or serious accidents; perhaps we were lucky. The most serious danger to look out for was a slip on wet leaves or a greasy floor which could well cause a hernia.

We owned a warehouse which stands almost opposite the new bridge, but at the time of which I am writing, it was some twenty yards downstream of the old bridge, and it was here that we undertook what was probably the most physically exacting piece of loading that I can remember. We had a contract to supply the Irish Government with a white wheat called "Wilhelmina", and for reasons best known to themselves, they insisted that it should be loaded 20 stone to the sack. Every day one or two rail trucks were placed for us on the track in the middle of the road and we would run each sack across the road, on our backs, dodging whatever traffic that might come by and then, because unless you are seven foot tall, there is no way you can throw a 20 stone sack off your shoulder into an upright position in a rail truck, whose floor is surprisingly high from the ground, we had to mount two steps of a box especially made for the purpose before getting rid of our burden. It was hard work but, in a way, I think we rather gloried in it.

Before bulk handling, space in a warehouse had to be utilised as economically as possible, so that careful stacking of materials was important. Meals and mashes, mostly in hundredweight or 12 stone bags, were usually stacked three high which could be done by a lift with the forearms and a boost with the knee, but the sacks of grain needed two men with a topping-stick and were rarely stacked more than two high. Rats were a terrible problem when grain was stored like this and caused enormous damage. I am certain that the advent of bulk handling must have decimated the rat population in this country.

I have mentioned the old and the new bridge at the Hythe. The old bridge is still there but, as far as I know, is little more than a site for a public lavatory. However, before the 1939/45 war, there was a regular traffic of barges up to Marriage's Mill at East Bridge. To accomplish this tricky

bit of navigation it was necessary for the barge to lay up short of the bridge until the rising tide was just sufficient to float her. The mast would already have been lowered to lay flat along the deck and the barge was then quanted (or poled) up the stretch of river between Hythe Bridge and East Bridge and the process reversed when she wished to put to sea again.

Francis & Gilders, the ship's owners and ship chandlers, who had a shop at the bottom of Hythe Hill, also had a yard just above the bridge on the right bank and, shortly after the war, the skipper of a barge which had been fitting out in this yard, mistimed his passage under the bridge and the barge was caught on a rising tide hard against the roof of the bridge. The result was inevitable. A fairly evenly matched battle ensued between the barge going down and the bridge going up. The barge was eventually sunk and the bridge ruptured and rendered unsafe together with the gas and electricity mains which the bridge carried. Such is the awesome power of unstoppable tidal water on the rise. It was then decided to abandon the old bridge and build the new one just downstream of the old one but at a better angle for the greatly increased flow of road traffic. I don't know exactly when the last barge went up to Marriages Mill, probably quite recently, the show piece barge lying off the Mill Hotel, but I'm quite sure I saw the last one go down under the old bridge.

Another aspect of the traffic on the river-which I suppose we shall never see again was the occasional use, before the war, of the towpath for its proper purpose, the towing upstream of a barge by a horse. I wonder if there are any photographs of such a scene? Another memorablesight was the journey upstream by barges laden with straw rising some six feet or so above the deck so that the helmsman could see nothing ahead of him and was guided solely by his mate; quite often a lad in his teens, who stood on top of the stack and gave hand signals!

Apart from these nostalgic glimpses of the-past, the Hythe Port can still be an interesting place to spend an hour or two and it can be beautiful, both by day and by night. An abiding memory which I have, of much more recent times, was an occasion when we were expecting a much larger vessel than the barges of which I have been writing. She had not arrived when expected on the morning tide but it was hoped that she would make the tide at midnight. My wife and I had been into Colchester that night and we were interested enough to stay on to see if my hopes were to be fulfilled. They were; she came gliding up under a full moon, almost dead on midnight on a glass-smooth surface accompanied by fifty or so swans. It was an unforgettable moment and one of many pleasures the river has given me.

Howard Wright

Patrick Denny in conversation with Bill Warner - Part II
will follow in the next edition

MEMORIES OF THE PLAYHOUSE CINEMA

I was working at Masons paper works, which was situated on what we then called The New By-Pass, when war broke out. I stayed there until 1941 when I got a job at the Playhouse Cinema in St Johns Street.

I did several jobs in the theatre including usherette, box office and chocolate girl. Four times a day I would have to take my tray of sweets and ice cream round the auditorium, but before I could sell anything I had to stand on the stage in front of the screen with a spot light on me, while what I was selling was being advertised on the screen behind me. I certainly found out what wolf whistles were, as in those days the cinema was always full of young men in the forces. Apart from the pubs and the occasional visit to the theatre, the pictures was the main source of entertainment.

I particularly remember a film being shown called Four Sons. It was about a Polish family with four sons, one of whom was a strong supporter of the Nazis and did a great deal of work for them, even though this caused his family a lot of problems. While the film was in Colchester the manager at the Playhouse invited any family who had four sons serving in the forces to come to the cinema for the evening free of charge. The mothers were invited on to the stage and were given a gift which I think was chocolates or flowers.

Another thing I remember about working at the Playhouse was doing fire watch. We all had to take turns to stay at the cinema overnight, there would always be two of us at a time and it would work out to be about once a week. We had a bunk and a blanket to sleep on. The first, few times it was a bit scary but after a while you just got used to doing it and we used to have a good laugh.

There were four other cinemas in the town at that time, they were The Empire, The Headgate, The Regal and The Hippodrome where in those days you could get a seat up in "The Gods" for 3d, and it really was up in the gods, it was right at the very top of the cinema. The Regal (now The Odeon), used to have a resident organist who used to entertain the audience during the intervals with a selection of favourites of the time, he could almost make that organ talk. I think his name was Tom Walker.

It was while I was working at the Playhouse that I got called up for war work. I was given a choice between joining the forces or doing munitions work in a factory. I chose munitions, and after eight weeks training I was working a lathe in a factory in Ipswich.

One day I was on my way home when this plane seemed to come from nowhere. It was so low that I could see the swastika on the side of it. The next moment there was this deafening bang and a bomb had been dropped on Chapel Street. As I was so near I went to see if there was anything I could do. When I got there they were trying to get this baby from under the rubble. I did what I could to help and the baby was handed to me. He had been saved by the fact that he was in his pram with the hood up. He was about 3 months old, and covered in thick dust. I took him home with me and my mother and I cleaned him up and improvised with a make shift nappy and some clean clothes. We fed him a bottle of cows milk diluted with water and when he was happier and settled I went back to find out what had happened to the rest of his family. His mother had been very badly injured but was alive. his father had been thrown through a window and escaped with fairly minor injuries, one brother had been at school and not involved but unfortunately another brother and his grandmother had been killed. The baby was eventually picked up by his father.

About two years ago, prompted by an article in the local paper, I decided to try and find the baby. To cut a long story short, I found the baby's older brother, (The one who had been at school during the bombing), who gave me the sad news that his brother had died of ill health at

the young age of 35. His mother is still alive at the age of 92, and living in a nursing home. Unfortunately due to a degree of dementia she doesn't remember much about it all. I am now a pensioner myself but even now if a plane flies over low I can still see that plane and hear the bang that killed six people, and badly injured many more.

Mrs. Ivy Connelly.

GOLDEN WEDDING

Mary and I were married in Colchester on the 20th December 1947, so this year will be our Golden Wedding Anniversary.

I first met Mary when I was doing some supply teaching at Welling County Secondary School in Kent prior to my going to Teacher Training College in 1946. Mary was teaching there too. It was an all boys school, but as many of the men teachers were still in the Forces, schools



Charles and Mary on their Wedding Day in 1947

were pleased to employ women teachers. We decided to get married in December 1947 as I had been offered the job of Head of Geography at Welling School when I completed my course in January 1948. Mary left to teach in a school at Penge, not far from Beckenham and continued to teach there until a few weeks before our son, Graham was born in February 1949 when she left teaching to look after our son and our second child Hazel, who was born in August 1950. Our lives were very happy and fulfilled.

We managed to rent a house in Bickley, Kent, whilst we saved to buy a house of our own. Every property in the Beckenham/Bickley area was too expensive for us. However on our visits to Mary's parents in Colchester, we learned of properties being built there, at a price we could just manage to afford. With our savings and a small legacy from an aunt of Mary's, we were able to purchase a house in Rudsdale Way, Lexden from £2300. We were fortunate to get an 85% mortgage from the council to buy the property in 1955. We moved there at Easter that year. I had to serve out my notice at Welling Boys School until the summer holidays and so travelled to Colchester in a second hand car - a Standard 9 pre-war model. This car served us well for seven years. Before buying the car, I had a Villiers two-stroke motor cycle on which I travelled to school each school day.

Our life in our new home at Rudsdale Way was exciting and fruitful since the garden was just a field with builder's rubble which had to be disposed of before we could lay out our garden by putting in paths and planting shrubs and flowers. Some years later, we decided to accommodate Mary's mother who needed care and help. Eventually, we purchased her house in Heath Road, Lexden and enlarged it considerably so that there was room for our family and an annexe for Mary's mother. By then, we had two further children, Stella, born in December 1958 and Teresa, born in September 1960.

Our lives were very happy, the two older children doing very well at school. I had started teaching at East Ward School in 1955 where I became Head of Geography. I transferred to the new Sir Charles Lucas Comprehensive School when it was built. This was a traumatic time for me, since Sir Charles Lucas was an amalgamation of two schools - East ward and Endsleigh which had been a private school. It took time for the staffs of the two schools and the pupils from two diverse areas of Colchester to work together to produce a viable new comprehensive school. From 1967 until I retired in 1978, the school had three headmasters and two deputy heads who took charge of the school until new headmasters were appointed.

Since my retirement from teaching, Mary and I have been very busy with our hobbies and the enjoyment of visiting our widespread family. Our son Graham, lives in Bridgham - halfway between Thetford and Diss. Our eldest daughter, Hazel lives at Bentley Heath, Solihull. Our daughter, Stella lives in Inverness, Scotland, and our daughter, Teresa, lives in Cleckheaton, West Yorkshire. Mary's hobby is family history research and mine is making violins and repairing musical instruments. We are members of U3A and Colchester Recalled. Mary is a member of the Womens' Institute, and I take part in the activities of the North Essex Far Eastern POW Association.

We look forward to celebrating our Golden Wedding Anniversary this year and many years to come.

Charles Reginald Jones
July 1997



Charles and Mary Jones today

*This year, Her Majesty The Queen celebrates her Golden Wedding Anniversary.
We would welcome letters and memories from people celebrating
their Golden Wedding Anniversary this year.*

WATER LANE, COLCHESTER

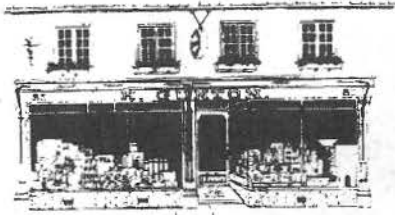
Have purchased your first issue of "Colchester Recalled" and am looking forward to Issue No 2. I came from Manchester to live in Colchester in 1947 and have been researching my wife's family history in Colchester for many years now. Her Great Grandfather Warner lived in Water Lane Cottage in Water Lane, Colchester, in the 1860s. Water Lane and all its houses and cottages disappeared when the Colne Bank Avenue was built in the early 1930s. Part of my research includes photos or postcards of the homes where my wife's people lived and up to now I have not come across a photo or postcard of that area. By the way, the Colchester street map by Bennetts still includes Water Lane even though it is now only marked by the public path over Sheepen Bridge and on up to Lexden Roman Dyke (or is it Norman?)

Good luck with "Colchester recalled".

Ray Reed.

H. GUNTON

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EDITORIAL

This is the second edition of COLCHESTER RECALLED. It is published by the Oral History Group of the same name, which was set up to record for future generations, memories of Colchester and the surrounding area. The Colchester Recalled Group holds monthly meetings on Thursday at Colchester Institute and you would be very welcome to join us. We would also like to receive your articles, photographs, letters, queries and comments for future editions. These should be sent to Jim Robinson or Margaret Thomas. Anyone wishing to subscribe to the magazine should get in touch for details.

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