



HISTORY NOTEBOOK 55

# ESSEX POLICE *and* FAMILY HISTORY

BY FRED FEATHER

A **useful service** which a museum may offer is to supply details of the records of those serving that organisation, that is, subject to the laws of the land. The Essex Police Museum is fortunate, in that, when the museum was re-formed in 1990, many records came into its possession. Chief of these were two registers, detailing the careers of everyone joining the former Essex County Constabulary from its formation in 1840. With an eye to conservation these were deposited with the Essex Record Office (J/P 2-1 and J/P 2-2). But, before they went, the Giggins Index was created, named after ex-Sergeant Dick Giggins, whose father and grandfather had served before him. From these everyone who served can be identified and other documents used to supplement them. Sometimes Service Records have survived with fascinating detail of postings, promotions, discipline matters, medical matter and family details. Other documents in the museum files can add more. Details of many of the members of the former Colchester Police (1836-1947) and the smaller forces such as Harwich (1836-1857), Saffron Walden (1836-1857) Maldon (1836-1889) are known. A nearly complete set of personal records of members of the former Southend on Sea Constabulary (1914-1969) is held, whilst the Bayliss Index identifies officers from several forces who were found in the censuses of the 19th century. As a taster of the sort of information about an officer and his career we can present:

## SAMUEL HAWTREE



**Hawtree was born** about 1835, either in the St. Stephens parish of the City of St. Albans or in the adjacent parish of Aldenham. He was a pupil at Richard Pratt's school at Boyds Hill near Elstree. In the 1841 census he was aged 6 living with his parents, Thomas, a carrier and Hannah, at Folly, Aldenham. He worked for a time for his grandfather, who had the Crown Public House on Holywell Hill, St. Albans. He then signed up for a 7 year apprenticeship with the East India Merchant Service and is said to have visited most parts of the world. His stories include the time when he was nearly eaten by crocodiles and endured a hurricane in the Bay of Bengal. He suffered from scurvy caused by poisonous gases from a cargo of guano and was involved in a brush with pirates in the Malay Seas. The Indian Mutiny of 1857 saw the dissolution of the Honourable East India Company, to coincide with the end of his engagement. In 1856 he joined the Metropolitan Police and in the March Quarter of that year was married to Mary Anne Turner in the Marylebone District of London. He was reported stationed at Bermondsey (1858), Bow Street (1859) and engaged in Detective work. The 1861 census shows him as 27 years old with Mary A, aged 32 and born in Westbury, Wilts, Annie 3 born in Bermondsey and Caroline H. 1 born in Kensington.

ESSEX CONSTABULARY  
1864-1895

On 22nd April 1864 he transferred into the Essex Constabulary as Constable 191 and, according to the Essex Family Historian by 1869 he was Sergeant at Rayleigh. In the 1871 census he is shown as living at 7, North Street, Rochford. He was 37, his wife Mary was 41, Annie E. was 12, but Caroline was not mentioned. In 1873 he was promoted Superintendent of the Rochford Division and his family moved to Southend, where a new police station was being built in Alexandra Street. Prior to that, it had been in Hamlet Road. In the 1881 census he was aged 46, Mary A. was 51, Annie 22 and Caroline 21. In 1886 Mary died, in the December Quarter. Less than two years later he married Martha Amelia Garrett in the Braintree District during the March Quarter. In the 1891 census he is 56, his wife Martha was 41, shown as born in Witham, and in the house was a niece Jessie Garrett aged 4 also born in Witham.



ROCHFORD DIVISION, APRIL 1875

RETIREMENT 1895-1918

In 1895 Samuel retired to Ivy Lodge, London Road, Southend. Including his time in London this concluded some 39 years service, unusual in a time when 25 years secured a pension. The event and presentations to him were fully reported in the Southend Standard. Among the notable events of his career were the investigations into the attempted murder by McGuire of the Rector of Sutton's wife Mrs Pamela Bredin at Sutton Rectory in 1892 and the unpleasantness surrounding the death of Sergeant George Galley in Southend's unhealthy police station in that same year. These were followed by the murder of Eliza Hunt at Rochford in 1893, and the infamous murder by Canham Read of Florence Dennis in 1894.

**WILFUL MURDER**

**WANTED**

For the Murder of Florence Dennis at Southend-on-Sea, 24th June, 1894.

**JAMES CANHAM READ**

Cashier, Royal Albert Docks, London.

|   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| Age 35. Height 5ft 7in.<br>Build Slender.<br>Moustache slight. Brown.<br>Small blue whiskers.<br>Eyes Brown and prominent.<br>Complexion. Pale.<br>Two Upper Front Teeth<br>slightly missing.<br>One missing the other. |  | DEBENT,<br>Dark Brown Beard Full Hair,<br>Light Black Comb and Vest,<br>Light Grey Avignon,<br>Walks Quickly,<br>Is of very smart and<br>Gentlemanly appearance. |
|---|---|--|

Has a Gold Watch engraved inside case "Presented to Mr. James Canham Read by his fellow Clerks, Royal Albert Docks, London."

**WARRANT ISSUED.**

Information to be sent to  
SUPT. HAWTREE, Southend-on-Sea.

Hawtree was ably supported at Southend by the egregious Detective Sergeant Marden, for whom see The Rise and Fall of Alfred Marden – Essex Police History Notebook Number 4 by Martyn Lockwood. Hawtree had also played a prominent part in the Southend part of the successful investigation into the "Lefroy" murder which occurred on a Brighton bound train in 1881. The Southend Telegraph reported his part in the incident of the "brawling" Reverend A. Waller in the Trinity Church vestry. (27th March 1892).

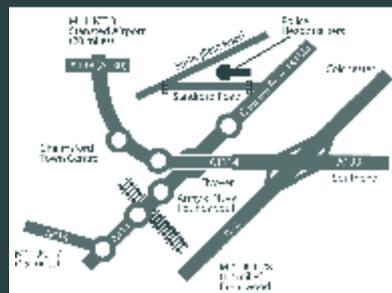
After his retirement he was said to have gone on a trip to America and Canada. By 1901 Mr and Mrs Hawtree had moved to 1, Edinburgh Villas, Chester Road, Southend and they had a son William Victor, aged 4 born in Southend. Hawtree was involved in philanthropic work, taking an interest in the N.S.P.C.C. and N.S.P.C.A., also the opening of the Hawtree Holiday Home for the Blind in collaboration with Mr Shakespeare Smith. Samuel was a warm supporter of the Southend Trinity Reformed Church (London Road close by Victoria Circus) in the time of Bishop Gregg. In the 1911 census he was at Caulfield Road, Shoebury aged 76 with William Victor a scholar aged 14 and sister in law and housekeeper Mary Ann Garrett aged 53 born at Witham. His wife was 60 and visiting her brother at Blue Post House, Witham. She died in the June quarter of 1917 in the Rochford District. Hawtree died at Waterloo Road, Shoebury in the first few days of 1918. The file held by the Museum contains a copy of his will. His death and career was recorded in both the Southend Standard and Southend Telegraph in some detail although his actual place of burial is not yet established. His will suggested that he wished to be buried beside his first wife, described as Marianne, at "Prittlewell Cemetery", which is taken to suggest the churchyard of St. Mary's on Prittlewell Hill. The poor condition of the monumental inscriptions on the stones there have not helped to identify his grave. He named his daughters Annie Elizabeth Mainprize and Caroline Hannah Hawtree (a nurse and Music Teacher) his son Albert Victor and grandsons Theodore Thomas and George Samuel Mainprize as beneficiaries. It is clear that at the time he made his will in 1912 he was expecting benefit from the will of a Celeste Spencer Murihead Orme. He requested that no ladies attend his funeral. This file is a cornucopia for a family historian.

Among interesting documents which are held by the museum are a series of Discipline Registers from a century ago, the Essex Constabulary magazine, "The Truncheon" which was succeeded by the "Essex Police Magazine" and the newspaper "The Law." Essex police forces, like all other forces went through phases of paper destruction. Sometimes it was because of shortage of paper in wartime, with the need to re-use it, sometimes it was the notorious "10 year policy" when paperwork was destroyed in accordance with the thinking of that time. Much has survived, either in the museum, which also has a substantial library of photographs, or more valuable and vulnerable documents, which have been placed with the Essex Record Office.

The museum is unlikely to be able to help with enquiries about road traffic collisions which occurred many years ago and are remembered in family legend. There are sometimes disappointments for enquirers who have found their relative or forebear in a census or other documents and report that "he was an Essex Policeman." The records were not designed to make relatives happy and very short careers could have ended with a few words such as "Want of sobriety," "Covered in vermin" or on one glorious occasion "Watering the Superintendent's beer." Constable Verlander was present at the early death of Inspector Bauser at Latchingdon, and shortly (pardon) afterwards dismissed because he was measured and found to be half an inch shorter than the minimum height he achieved at attestation. As early as 1855 a man was dismissed for "consorting with Mormons." The Church of Latter Day Saints, fine genealogists, traced him to Utah for us, where he died early next century, still associating! Yes, there is plenty for family historians in a police museum collection.

# MUSEUM

ESSEX POLICE



## What we offer

Essex Police Museum is an informal and friendly place to find out about the police and what they do.

### OPENING TIMES

Wednesdays, 1 - 4:30pm  
1st Saturday of each month, 10:30am - 3pm

### GROUP VISITS

Adult and children's groups are welcome to book daytime or evening visits. Please contact the curator for details. Group visits are free but donations are gratefully accepted.

### SCHOOLS SERVICE

School visits are free. We provide an education service linked to the requirements of the National Curriculum and QCA Schemes of Work. We offer sessions for groups of 30 children; other activities can be arranged to accommodate larger groups. Please contact the curator or see our website for further information.

## Where to Find Us

### DIRECTIONS

Bus no. 47, 54 or 56 from the bus station in the town centre (opposite the train station).

### PARKING

Parking is available on Saturdays only. We recommend you park at the public car parks in Wharf Road or at Riverside Ice and Leisure (Victoria Road) on Wednesdays.

### CONTACT US

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