

LIMEBROOK MALDON U3A HISTORY GROUP

SEEN (BUT NOT SEEN) MALDON

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ALL SAINTS CHURCH MALDON HIGH STREET



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ALL SAINTS CHURCH

MALDON HIGH STREET

- The church is thought to date back to Saxon times
- There is no exact date but it existed in 1180, when Beeleigh Abbey was founded
- The oldest surviving feature is the unique triangular tower, dating back over 850 years
- The church is built of flint and stone
- It is regarded as one of the most interesting churches in Essex, having an equilaterally triangular tower which is quite unique. The tower is surmounted by a hexagonal spire and pinnacles at the angles and is late Norman or Transition
- The two parishes of All Saints and St Peter's were merged in 1244 but services were held in both churches until the 17th Century

ALL SAINTS CHURCH MALDON HIGH STREET

- The church has a rich collection of memorials to famous people and events in the town
- The church includes the Reredos (5 paintings surrounded by Gothic marble) and the Washington Window
- The Washington Window was given to All Saints' Church by the citizens of Malden, Massachusetts, U.S.A. in memory of the life of the Revd. Laurence Washington
- He was the former rector of Purleigh
- And great great grandfather of George Washington, the first President of the United States of America

ALL SAINTS CHURCH MALDON HIGH STREET

- But that's not the mystery topic for today!

SO WHAT'S NOTABLE ABOUT THE CHURCH?

- Not many people will have noticed this
- There are six statues in the niches of the outside walls
- These statues commemorate six notable men in some way associated with the history of Maldon
- One faces west and the other five face south
- The sculptor was Nathaniel Hitch (Ware, Hertfordshire 1845 - 1938)

SO WHO WAS NATHANIEL HITCH?

- As a young man, he became an apprentice sculptor journeyman
- After studying at the Borough Polytechnic and experience working alongside architectural sculptors, he developed a career carving altarpieces, church furniture and other decorative features for churches
- His career spanned the years 1871 to 1935
- He considered himself primarily as an architectural sculptor, but he was also a mason, sculptor, sculptor's modeller and church decorator
- His works included several cathedrals (Canterbury, Lincoln, Truro amongst others), Westminster Abbey, and our own All Saints Church

THE SIX STATUES



<http://statues.vanderkrogt.net>

THE FIRST STATUE – MELLITUS (Mellitvs)



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- First Bishop of London in the Saxon period
- The third Archbishop of Canterbury
- A member of the Gregorian mission sent to England to convert the Anglo-Saxons from their native paganism to Christianity. He arrived in 601
- He returned to Italy in 610 to attend a council of bishops, and returned to England bearing papal letters to some of the missionaries
- He was the first to bring the Gospel to heathen Essex but was driven from his diocese in 616 by one of his patrons, and his other patron died, so he had to take refuge in Gaul
- Appointed Archbishop of Canterbury in 619. During his tenure, he was alleged to have miraculously saved the cathedral, and much of the town of Canterbury, from a fire
- After his death in 624, he was revered as a saint

THE SECOND STATUE – CEDD



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- c. 620 – 664
- Anglo-Saxon monk from Lindisfarne
- Bishop of the East Saxons in 653
- As his Cathedral was at Othona, near Bradwell, he would be a familiar figure in 7th century Maldon
- He was an evangelist of the Middle Angles and East Saxons
- He was also a significant participant of the Synod of Whitby, a meeting which resolved important differences within the Church in England
- He is venerated in the Catholic Church, Anglicanism, and the Eastern Orthodox Church
- Most of what we know comes from the writings of Bede

THE THIRD STATUE – BYRHTNOTH



THE THIRD STATUE – BYRHTNOTH

- Ealdorman of Essex
- Died 10 August 991 at the Battle of Maldon
- His name is composed of Old English beorht (bright) and noth (courage)
- The statue represents him as a Christian warrior
- After his burial, his remains, along with six other Saxon 'benefactors of Ely Church' have been moved and reburied three times
- Byrhtnoth and others were all exhumed from their burial places in the old Saxon Abbey Church, and in the mid-1150s the remains were reinterred in the 'Northern Part' of the new Norman Church, which by then had become Ely Cathedral
- Byrhtnoth's bones suggested that he stood at 6 feet 9 inches!
- He is the subject of an ancient poem and many will be familiar with his more familiar statue, looking out to sea

THE WELL-KNOWN STATUE



THE FOURTH STATUE – MANTELL



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- Robert de Mantell
- Lord of the manor of Little Maldon and Sheriff of Essex (he was Sheriff under Henry II from 1170 to 1181)
- Founder of Beeleigh Abbey in 1180
- The Abbey was founded for Canons of the Premonstratensian Order who migrated from Pardon on the western border of Essex, now part of Harlow New Town
- It was established on land granted to the canons by Mantell
- He generously granted them land in Maldon, Totham and Goldhanger, the churches of St. Peter and All Saints, Maldon, and St. Lawrence in Dengie and half the church of St. Margaret, Bures
- His statue represents him as a typical Norman squire with the legal deed of gift in one hand and a model of the abbey in the other

THE FIFTH STATUE – D'ARCY



THE FIFTH STATUE – D'ARCY

- Sir Robert Darcy
- Essex c. 1391 - Malden 1448/9
- MP for the Borough of Maldon in the reign of Henry VI, also MP for the Essex constituency
- The south aisle of the church is known as the D'Arcy Aisle
- The D'Arcy Chapel was probably built by his generosity and is where members of his family were buried
- The Darcys were connected with the north of England, and it was there that Robert began his career as a lawyer
- He had a long career of public service, starting as Controller of Customs and Subsidies in Newcastle (1401-1402)
- He is thought to have been the grandson of Henry Darcy, a London vintner and mayor of the City in 1337, who held the manor of Great Yeldham, Essex; and the son of Thomas Darcy, a spendthrift who before 1366 had sold all the family property
- Darcy's first wife may have been a local heiress, although his introduction to the area had possibly come about through his friend Robert Manfield, keeper of the writs and rolls of the common pleas, as Manfield was warden of the hospital of St. Giles
- He died on 3 Sept. 1448 and was buried in a marble tomb in All Saints Church

THE SIXTH STATUE – PLUME (Plvme)



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- Dr Thomas Plume
- Maldon 1630 -1704
- He was an English churchman and philanthropist
- And founder of a school which still stands today, the Plume School
- The Plume family settled at Great Yeldham in Essex
- Thomas was baptised in All Saints' Church on 18 August 1630
- Plume was educated at Chelmsford and Christ's College Cambridge. He became a Bachelor of Arts and a Doctor of Divinity
- In 1658 he was appointed Vicar of East Greenwich, then in 1662, Rector of Merston (Sussex), and in 1665 Rector of Little Easton However he held the Greenwich role for some 46 years, until his death
- From 1679 until his death, unmarried, on 20 November 1704, he was Archdeacon of Rochester. He was buried at Longfield, Kent

THE SIXTH STATUE – PLUME (Plvme)

- Even though he lived in Greenwich most of his life, Plume left his collection of over 8,000 books and pamphlets, printed between 1487 and his death, to his home town of Maldon
- The library was to be "for the use of the minister and clergy of the neighbouring parishes who generally make this town their place of residence on account of the unwholesomeness of the air in the vicinity of their churches"
- Plume left specific instruction for the use of the library: "any Gentleman or Scholar who desires, may go into it, and make use of any book there or borrow it, in case he leaves a vadimonium [a pledge or surety] with the Keeper for the restoring thereof fair and uncorrupted within a short time"
- In 1704 Thomas Plume founded the chair of Plumian Professor of Astronomy and Experimental Philosophy at the University of Cambridge in order to "erect an Observatory and to maintain a studious and learned Professor of Astronomy and Experimental Philosophy, and to buy him and his successors utensils and instruments quadrants telescopes etc"

THE SIXTH STATUE – PLUME (Plvme)

- Plume School can trace its routes back to the mid-sixteenth century via the Maldon Grammar School, founded in 1608
- The grammar school was established by Ralph Breeder, an alderman of the corporation, who left £300 “for the maintenance of a schoolmaster to teach a grammar school within the town”
- The school bears the name of Thomas Plume who bequeathed his library to the town of Maldon and money for a schoolmaster and librarian to look after the collection
- The Plume School in its modern form was established as a comprehensive in 1970 and merged with the Maldon County Secondary School located at the current site

THE END

- How many people have noticed these statues on the church?
- And could recognise the six famous people depicted?
- ANY QUESTIONS OR ANYTHING YOU WANT TO RAISE?