

## **Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre**

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Chatham manorial documents

Rochester upon Medway Studies Centre

Civic Centre  
Strood  
Rochester ME2 4AW

Reference no: CBA/MNR/A, N

-- APR 1991

Rochester Upon Medway City Archives

RECORDS OF THE COURTS LEET AND BARON OF THE MANOR  
AND HUNDRED OF CHATHAM 1756 - 1891 [c.1910]

✓ MDR  
DLP  
4/91.

CBA/MNR/A/1-2	Transferred from the Guildhall Museum, Rochester August 1989
CBA/MNR/N/1, 4-5	Transferred from Rochester-Upon-Medway City Council Intermediate Record Stores 1990
CBA/MNR/N/2-3	Deposited on permanent loan by the Town Clerk of Chatham at Kent Archives Office, County Hall, Maidstone 24 November, 1967 Transferred 1990 (Previously numbered U1339/M/1-2)

-- APR 1991

## Introduction

The Manor of Chatham was constituted by the Lord of the Manor and his officers, the Constable (High Constable from 1825), who was elected by the Jurors, the Borsholders (or "Borough Elders") of the districts of the Manor known as Boroughs), Aleconner, Reeve and Poundkeeper, who were appointed by the Constable annually. They met at the Mitre Inn, Globe Inn and Chatham Workhouse variously.

The Officers maintained law and order, inspected weights and measures, punished offenders for minor nuisances, read Royal proclamations, took receipt of rents from manorial tenants and organised public occasions. The records relate chiefly to the activity of the Court Leet, the Court Baron being nominal.

The Manor had been prominent in the agitation for Chatham to be incorporated as a Municipal Corporation, which was achieved in 1890. The Manor stood down in 1891 to hand over their symbolic and other duties to the Mayor, Aldermen and other elected Citizens of Chatham, thus paving the way for an entirely democratic local administration. The Lord of the Manor has continued as a nominal institution. (In the adjacent Borough, Gillingham's Manor continued in being until the end of the first decade of the 20th Century, when Gillingham Borough Council was established.)

It would seem that the regalia and records of the Manor were lodged with Chatham Borough Council in about 1891, although the Town Clerk seems to have transferred the records, of which this collection comprises the major part, to Chatham Borough Library in New Road, Chatham in about 1910 (CBA/MNR/N/5/6-7), after which their precise movements are uncertain.

Various artifacts associated with the Manor may be viewed at the Guildhall Museum, High Street, Rochester by arrangement with the Curator (Tel. 0634 848717). These items comprise two High Constable's tipstaves, one High Constable's processional stave, the chain of office of the High Constable (Court Leet Chain) and a photograph of George Winch wearing the Court Leet Chain.

## Bibliography

Chatham: The Story of a Dockyard Town and the Birthplace of the British Navy by James Presnail 1976

CBA/MNR/A

Minute Books [1756] 1774 - 1888

/1 Inc. at front lists of Lords and Ladies of the [1756]  
Manor from Godwin, Earl of Kent in Edward the 1774-1866  
Confessor's reign to John and Alexander Spratt  
in 1832 and High Constables 1756 - 1869  
Inc Order of Proceedings pasted in at the front.  
An inscription at the front of the volume states  
that these minutes are "extracted from Old Records  
by W[illia]m Marsh 1811" to which has been added  
"and continued to 1866"

(1 vol, c.120pp)

/2 Inc at front lists of Lords and Ladies of the Oct 1866-  
Manor as (1) but continuing to M.D. Best Esq. 1888  
in 1849 and High Constables as (1) but continuing  
to 1889  
(1 vol, c.70pp used)

CBA/MNR/N

Accounts 1866 - 1890

/1 Treasurer's cash book containing records of 1866-1890  
members' subscriptions and their social  
activities and naming the Stewards and Foremen  
in places  
(1 vol, c.40pp)

/2 Rentals 1790 - 1856

Rental, list of reliefs, and cognate documents 1790, 1791  
[mutilated] 1 roll of 6 membranes

(1) Rental, all premises having a number, rents  
ld. to £21.5s., arranged by boroughs:

North Borough 12 premises, reference to West  
Court Street in Brompton, Brookside, Market,  
Smithfield, Smithfield Bank, premises near  
Church and Queen's Head

Middle Borough 53 premises, references to  
Market, High Street, Corkwell Farm and several  
Public houses;

East Borough 101 premises, references to  
Smithfield, Smithfield Bank, The Brook, King  
Street, Cross Street, Bullfinches Street, Cage  
Lane, New Road, Slicketts Hill and several  
public houses

CBA/MNR/N

Rentals 1790 - 1856 Contd.

/2

Contd.

Out Bounds in East Borough 63 premises, references to Heavyside Lane, Manor and Farm called Suttington, lands at Capstone and near [S]Harstead Farm, Pheasant Farm, Luton, Stone Cross House Farm at East Luton, other lands at East and West Luton, 1790

(2) List of reliefs, each with number, 14 names, 1d. to 3s., 1790

(3) List of names headed "Double Numbers" [index to tenants in rental with more than one holding, 1790]

(4) Taxes allowed out of quit rents at rate of 4s. in £1 [16s., 3 names and numbers], 1790

(5) Copy orders from William and Edward Twopenny, Stewards of the Manor, to William Drawbridge, Beadle or Reeve, to collect the rents and reliefs, 1791  
[previously numbered U1339/M1]

/3

Rental, list of reliefs and cognate documents as in N2 rental and list of reliefs, 1792, copy orders to Francis Barrow, Beadle, to collect rents and reliefs, 1793. 1 roll of 6 membranes [previously numbered U1339/M2]

1792, 1793

/4

Rental for year ending Michaelmas (29 Sep) 1856 Inc. at rear warrant from George Ackworth, Steward, to William Morgan to act as Reeve [See N/5 for removed enclosures] 1 vol. c.60pp

1856

/5/1

Loose items mostly removed from N/4 comprising Stamped circular letter from George Winch (on behalf of George R. Bannister), of Chatham, Solicitor to Messrs. Holmes & Style of Maidstone requesting payment of 6 years gavel or quit rent [found with local government records] Nov. 1886

/5/2

Reply, covering payment of the above

11 Dec. 1886

/5/3-4

Rough notes on agenda c.1888 - c.1890

/5/ 5

Draft letter from Foreman to jurors requesting their attendance at the Mitre Hotel to decide on the future of the High Constable's Chain of Office

22 Apr 1891



-- APR 1991

CBA/MNR/N

Rentals 1790 - 1856 Contd.

/5/6-7

Stencil TS lists of Manorial records deposited  
at Chatham Library

c.1910

/5/8

Notes on the records

[?] n.d.  
c.1900

Medway Area Archivist

February 1991

and Donald Gibson, Kent

Archives Office 1967

12477/2  
FEB 1994

Rochester-upon-Medway City Archives

CBA/MNR/A

ADDITIONAL RECORDS OF THE COURTS LEET AND BARON  
OF THE MANOR AND HUNDRED OF CHATHAM c.1860's - c.1880's

Transferred from Chatham Library[?], Arts & Libraries Dept., K.C.C. 18  
March 1993 (DE.280)

[Original library catalogue no. KD50/347.9 LEE]

[C.A.D. Fashion; photography; France; Frenchmen; Suez Canal;  
Engineering; Egypt]



## Introduction

This photograph album may have been compiled by the manor of Chatham in its last decades of existence prior to standing down in favour of Chatham Borough Council in 1880. Alternatively it may have been compiled on the occasion of the Manor's standing down as a souvenir of the last High Constables. The history of the album is uncertain but it may have been passed down through Chatham Borough Council.

N.B. many identifications are putative.

- /3

Photograph album containing studio portraits of High Constables of the Manor of Chatham.

1 vol./22 portraits (as follows)

c.1860's -  
c.1880's
- 3/1

Head and shoulders portrait of William Willis, by Jacques Moll of Chatham, c.1864
- 3/2

Full length view of Robert Collins Burfield, sitting at a table and facing camera, by Alfred Honey, 22 Military Road, Chatham, c.1865
- 3/3

Three-quarter length portrait of Walter Smith, sitting with top hat in his lap and facing camera, by Edward Banes, 96 Eastgate, Rochester/ 3 High Street, Brompton, c.1866
- 3/4

Three-quarter length view of Humphrey Joseph Hare, sitting in studio setting by Graham Glen, 1 Cary Parade, Torquay, Devon. Inscribed on rear. c.1867
- 3/5

Three-quarter length view of John Dunford by Jacques Moll as above. C.1860's
- 3/6

Head and shoulders portrait of George Winch by Alfred Honey as above. c.1869
- 3/7

Head and shoulders portrait of Charles Lott by Jacques Moll as above, c.1860's
- 3/8

Three quarter view of Charles Isaacs[?] by Alfred Honey as above, c.1860's
- 3/9

Head and shoulders portrait of William Browne Spencelayh by Jacques Moll of Chatham c.1871. Spencelayh is wearing a Freemasons' badge on his tie/cravatte.
- 3/10

Half length view of Humphrey Wood wearing chain of office and sitting at desk holding quill, by Cuckney & Co., 108A Eastgate, Rochester, c.1874
- 3/11

Half length view of alfred Thomas Randall wearing chain of office and holding tipstave, by Alfred Honey as above, c.1875
- 3/12

Half-length view of Thomas Simmons wearing chain of office by Jacques Moll, 8 Watts' Place, Chatham, c.1876

- 3/13 Head and shoulders portrait of Adam Stigant[?] by Alfred Honey 114 High Street, Chatham/High Street, Rochester/High Street, New Brompton, c.1877
- 3/14 Head and shoulders portrait of George Henry Delacour[?] wearing chain of office, by Jacques Moll, 25 High Street, Chatham, c.1878
- 3/15 Half length view of Adolphus Frederick William Stephens[?] wearing chain of office, by Jacques Moll, Chatham c.1879
- 3/16 Head and shoulders portrait of Anthony John Knowlden wearing chain of office by Alfred Honey, 22 Military Road, Chatham c.1882
- 3/17 Half length view of William Phillips[?] wearing chain of office by Alfred Honey as above, c.1883
- 3/18/1-2 Half length views of Henry George Gifkins[?] wearing chain of office, by Alfred Honey, Military Road, Chatham/High Street, New Brompton c.1886
- 3/19 Head and shoulders portrait of George Church wearing chain of office by A. Honey, 114 High Street, Chatham/High Street, New Brompton, c.1887
- 3/20 Three quarter view of George Winch[?] in attire of Stipendiary Magistrate[?] by William Gillard of Gloucester c.1890
- 3/21 Half-length portrait of Ferdinand de Lesseps by Elliot & Fry, 55 & 56 Baker Street, London W. Inscribed. c.1890

City Archivist.

November 1993