

ELSENHAM VILLAGE HISTORY SOCIETY
MINUTES OF MEETING 7th September 2016

MEMORIAL HALL ELSENHAM

Those Present:

Ray Franklin Chairman	Paul Salvidge Temp Hon. Sec.	Heather Salvidge
Dave Verlander	Gordon Fulton	Ruth Fulton
Anne Player	Patricia Holyomes	Teri Williams
Mark Johnson	Valerie Austin	Tony Eatson
Gloria Eatson	Graham Morland	Kevin Wood
Jean Beeston	Ian Beeston	Colin Smith
Brian Tulley	Janet Tulley	Vic Dowsett
Jean Platt	Tim Snow	Avril Braidwood
Campbell Dunn	Lynda Dunn	

Apologies:

Mike Rea	Chris Bush	Diane Bush
Keith Merrifield	Pam Merrifield	Christine Hall
Ian Jackson	Moyra Jackson	

1. The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed those present and Dr Herbert Eiden, our guest speaker for the evening.

We welcome Mark Johnson as a new member of the Society.

2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting 08th June 2016**

The minutes were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

3. **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

4. Guest Speaker Dr Herbert Eiden

The Chairman introduced Dr Herbert Eiden from the Institute of Historical Research at the University of London School of Advanced Study. His talk was entitled The Peasants Revolt in Essex; serfs you were and serfs you will remain!

Dr Eiden gave a fascinating and very well researched account of the dramatic events of June 1381 when Essex peasants led a widespread revolt against the feudal restrictions which bound them to the land and their Lords. The immediate cause was a Poll Tax levied on everyone regardless of their means, the third such tax in fairly quick succession. In the background there were a number of other factors that exacerbated the situation including the huge drop in population caused by the Black Death, the increase in the peasant's market power and mobility, England's poor performance in the Hundred Years War and the radicalisation of the many members of the lower clergy who had no job and no income.

Dr Eiden went through the dramatic events of the month or so that followed the attack on the Tax Commissioners in Brentwood on 30 May. The leaders of the revolt around Essex were literate and successful tradesmen and there were some signs that they had carefully planned the uprising. One of the high points came when they seized and executed the Archbishop of Canterbury, Simon of Sudbury who was also the Treasurer. But the powers that be around the young King Richard II rallied, put down the revolt and in turn hunted down and executed the rebels. There was no evidence that anyone from Elsenham had rebelled in contrast to Molehill green, Takeley and especially Thaxted.

5. Open Forum and Any Other Business

5.1 Broom Farm

The Secretary reported that we have now published our new book Broom Farm – Elsenham. Thanks go to Jean Beeston who did the research and wrote the text. The book tells the story of the farm from its earliest mention in the Domesday Book up to 1965 when it was destroyed by fire. It also includes a brief history of the Markwell family who farmed there for many years. Copies were available to buy at the meeting at £3 each.

5.2 Guided Tour of Clavering

For a limited period while raising money for urgent church repairs, the Clavering History Group are offering a combined afternoon tour of the village centre houses and / or church and / or castle lasting one or two hours depending how much detail is required.

The tour will be followed by a tea at one of the historic houses, Piercewebbs by courtesy of Judith William-Powlett. The charge is yet to be determined but if anyone is interested let the Secretary know and he will arrange.

5.3 Mortuary Chapel

The Chairman gave an account of the latest developments on plans to develop the Mortuary Chapel with the possible support of the Heritage Lottery Fund

6. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 9th November when Moyra Jackson and Avril Braidwood will present their talk on the Elsenham Women's Institute

ENDS