



NEWSLETTER

June 2022

Letter from the Editor

- **Hello everyone! Welcome to the June edition of the Newsletter.**
- Our Newsletter will now be one every two months.
- Our final talk of the Season was on The Romano-British pottery kilns at Bromley Hall Farm by Chris Lydamore - We will include a write-up in the next issue if the Newsletter.
- WEAG will be running our taster weekends at Copped Hall on 16-17, 23-24 & 30-31 of July. The cost is £60 for each weekend. Contact Ian Hunter at copperhalldigs@weag.org.uk
- **The WEAG Members digs** will take place alongside the taster weekends on the same three weekends. Please use the same email address to book. There is no fee but a suggested minimum donation of £2.50 per day. Opportunities to supervise & finds process on the other two weekends will be available to members.
- If people are willing, we will also re-start our finds processing at Copped Hall. This will take place on Sundays, please drop us an email if you are interested in taking part.
- We are also investigating the possibility of further fieldwork in cooperating with other groups (watch this space).
- The feature article in this edition is '**Miller Christy (pt 2) Harlow Temple**' the first excavation at Harlow Temple.
- Don't forget to check out a full list of books and DVDs.



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WEAG Member Profile

Would you like to be 'our profile on a member'? If so email us and we'll forward you the questions.

Stay In Touch

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WEAG CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Lecture Program

2022-23 Details of next year's lectures will
Be available on our website soon

Non-members are welcome to attend Lectures.
A voluntary contribution of £2 would be
appreciated from guests.

For Lecture Meetings shown as 'Zoom', the Zoom details for that meeting will be circulated to WEAG members a few days before the meeting.
Non-members are welcome to join in the Zoom meetings (for a £2 contribution).
Contact membership@weag.org.uk for more details.

What's on locally?

For information on museum and local historical societies visit.

<http://www.weag.org.uk/events/whats-on-locally/>

BOOK SALE

	RRP	Special Offer Price
The Romano-British Temple at Harlow	£ 7.00	£ 3.50
Exploration and Discovery in South West Essex	£ 7.00	£ 3.50
Archaeology – what it is and how to do it	£ 9.50	£ 8.50
Copped Hall Report 2003	£ 4.00	£ 2.50
Copped Hall Report 2004 / 5	£ 7.00	£ 2.50
Copped Hall – A Short History (Cassidy)	£ 2.50	£ 2.50
Annual Review 2008/2009	£ 0.50	£ 0.50
Annual Review 2009/2010	£ 0.50	£ 0.50
Annual Review 2010/2011	£ 0.50	£ 0.50
Annual Review 2011/2012	£ 0.50	£ 0.50
Wanstead Park – Revealed (DVD)	£ 3.00	£ 1.50
Wanstead Park – Living Park (DVD)	£ 3.00	£ 1.50
The Wanstead Archive (DVD)	£ 3.00	£ 1.50



Miller Christy (pt2) Excavations at Harlow Temple

By Lee Joyce

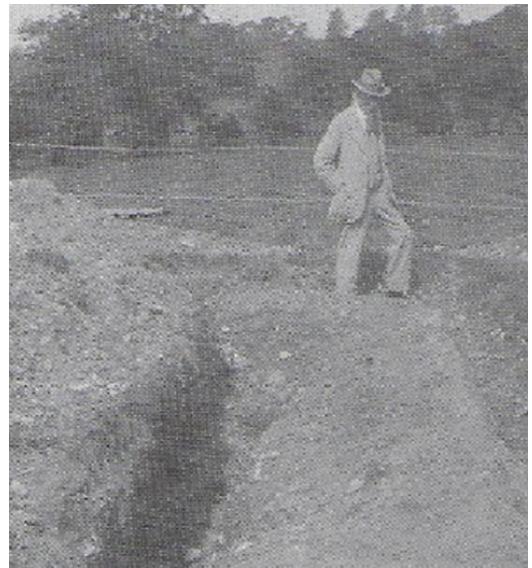
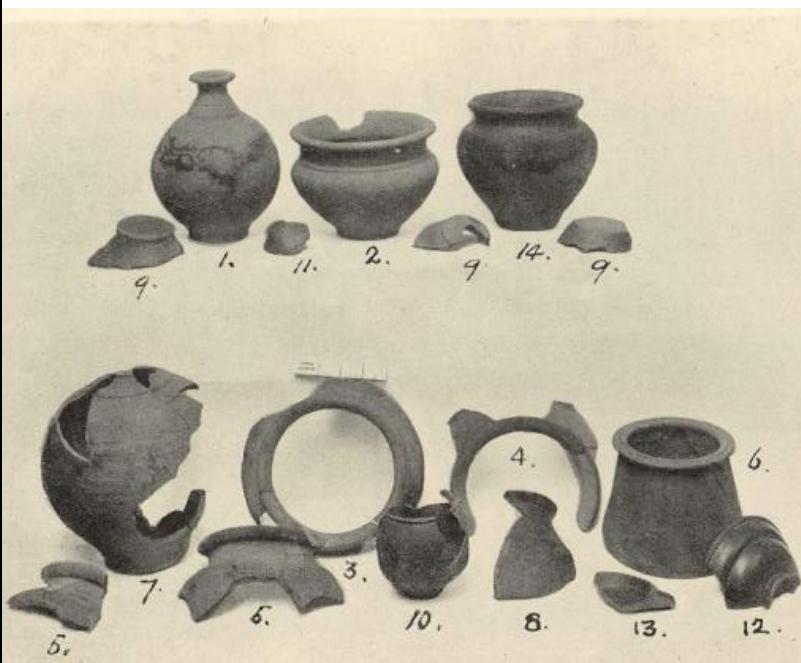
It is of course his pioneering work on Harlow's Romano-British Temple that will forever link Miller Christy to WEAG. As George and Clark point out the site was known to be of archaeological interest as early as 1764 and in 1821 John Barnard wrote to the Society of Antiquaries of London to inform them that a few years earlier workman had found sturdy walls he believed belonged to a "Roman Station". The site continued to be

discussed for the rest of the century. In 1921 a RCHM report stated that excavation was desirable and this may have been why Christy visited the site in 1926. Whatever the reason while he was there he spotted what appeared to be a large rubbish pit containing vast quantities of pottery. The site at this time being used for gravel extraction. The Land owners were contacted and workmen dug out the pit but for whatever reason no Roman finds were recovered.

On 13 August 1926, Christy and local antiquaries Mr. Glasscock and Mr. C. F. Hamilton again visited the spot. On this occasion, Christy "discovered, in another much-smaller sand-pit just being opened on the opposite side of the road, a similar, but smaller, Roman rubbish-pit, in which could be seen, especially near the

bottom, a considerable number of fragments of Roman pottery, interspersed throughout the soil". "The rubbish proved to be most extraordinarily rich in fragments of Roman pottery, the fragments representing, probably, not less than fifty different vessels". All this was published by A. G Wright, and the pottery sent to Colchester Museum. Many years later the pottery was returned to Harlow where the three complete vessels shown in the top row are displayed in the museum to this day. In 1927 sponsored by the Morant Club, Christy returned to the temple site and with the help of Rev J.L Fisher Vicar of Nettleswell, an accomplished historian/archaeologist in the old priestly tradition, they excavated the site and revealed it for the first time to be a temple rather than a military station. R.E.M Wheeler wrote "A 'Romano-Celtic' Temple near Harlow, Essex; and a note on the type" based on a single visit to Christy's excavation. Wheeler himself wrote "my own share in the enterprise was restricted to a single day's work for the purpose of investigating certain structural and other details" The Wheeler paper was described by Frere as "A brilliant and important paper." The imminent death of Mr Christy in 1928 must, be one of the reasons, along with the quality of his paper and later fame that for nearly a century (Sir) Mortimer has received all the credit.

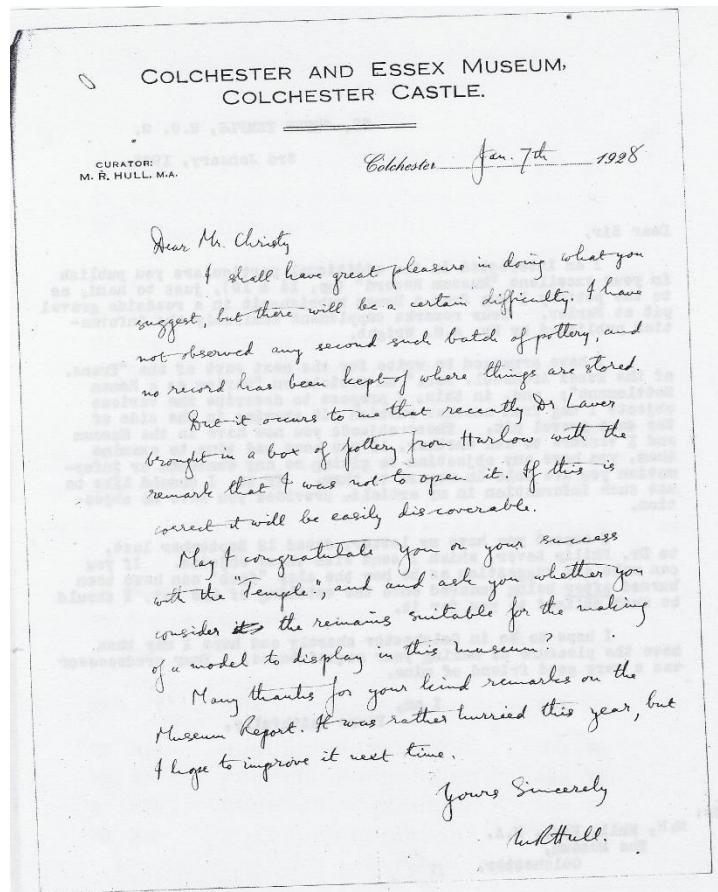
A very interesting collection of his letters exist in the "Temple Archive" at Harlow museum. Included in the archive are Christy's correspondence with many eminent archaeologists of the time including Dr P. Laver, S. Hazzelden-Warren, M.R. Hull & R.E.M. Wheeler*.



Miller Christy at Harlow Temple

They show the interwoven nature of the archaeology of the region at that time, the societies (Essex Arch society & the Morant Club), museums (Colchester & London) notable men of the cloth (Rev Fisher), land owners (Arkwright & Barnard) and archaeologists. Present are all the usual discussions on fund raising to finance the excavations, later discussions as to who is to publish what and where as well as everyday expenses. It is interesting to see that some of what is later published in reports originated in the letters sent by Christy almost word for word. We also get an insight into his failing health & his relationship with others, for instance F. W. Reader (with whom he had published the Mill Green report) and he seem to have had a falling out over the project. Reader is quit earnest in pointing out that he from the start he had stated he could invest neither time nor finances in the endeavour. In a letter from Rex Hull he says "May I congratulate you on your success at the "Temple", Note the Temple in quotation marks, he also asks if the temple remains would be suitable for the making of a model to display in the museum. The letters also show a familiarity between those involved almost all being former members of the Morant Club which had financed the excavations.

The reasons that the Morant club funded the excavations and not the Arch society is alluded to in



A letter to Christy from the great Colchester archaeologist Rex Hull. Note the word "Temple" in quotation marks.



The central "Cella" as exposed by Christy

In 1962 with the continued expansion of Harlow New Town, Shepard Frere Suggested that the newly formed WEAG (formed April 1958 by Dr Ernest Rudge) investigate the temple site and its environs. WEAG would continue

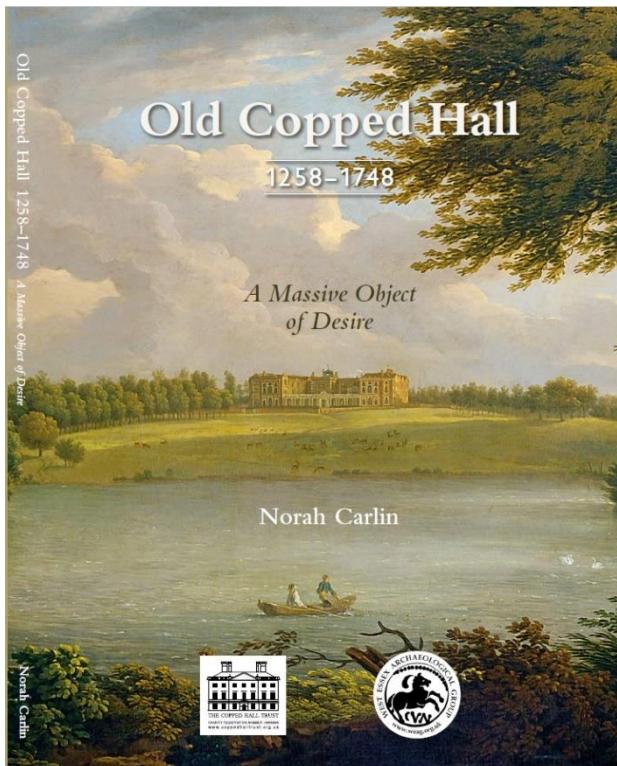
excavations on site until 1969 and in 1985 publish the final report. The reports of Wheeler and WEAG and the later excavations 1984-89 by Richard Bartlett (on behalf of Harlow Museum) all build on the ground-breaking discoveries of Christy and his pivotal role in this important site should be regarded as highly as any other.

*WEAG's Report is still available from the society (see above) and both the Richard Bartlett Archive and Wheelers report are freely available on the internet (see bibliography in pt 1).

one of his letters to Wheeler when he states that "please clearly understand that I am not working in any way in opposition to the Essex Archaeological Society: Quite the contrary. But the excavation committee of that society is composed mostly of people who are (so far as excavation work goes) feeble fumbling futile old women, without knowledge or experience of such work; and, if we wait till they see their way to understanding this bit of work, it will never be done"

Old Copped Hall 1258-1748

A new book about the history of the Old Copped Hall from 1258 to 1748 has been written by Norah Carlin has been published by WEAG, on behalf of the Copped Hall Trust Archaeological Project, in collaboration with the Copped Hall Trust.

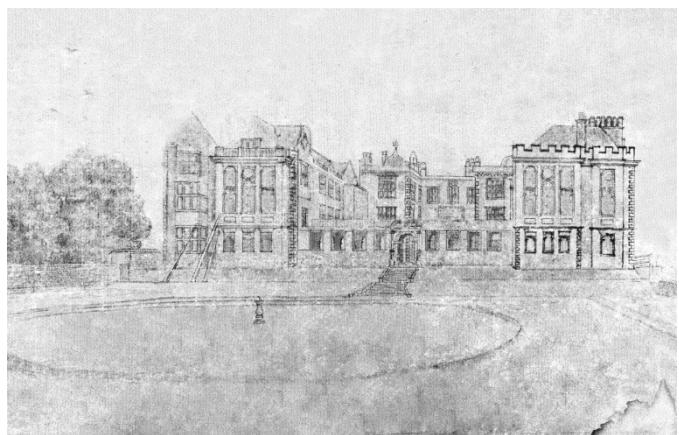


The front cover: *View of Copped Hall in Essex, from across the lake*, by George Lambert & Francis Hayman, 1746. Photo © Tate T07556

The book's author is Norah Carlin, a retired history lecturer and WEAG member. Norah's previously published works are highly regarded accounts of social change in England from the 17th onwards. The book grew out of the documentary research that WEAG undertook as part of the excavation of the site over the past 20 years. It goes a lot further and deeper than previous histories of the site. Norah has examined many documents (some in Latin) in national and regional record offices and archives. But while the book is a treat for professional researchers with its detailed sources and footnotes, it is no dry history. Norah has brought the building to life by describing its owners and their colourful lives, and she has brought together, for the first time, many delightful colour illustrations from national art galleries, museums and private collections. Amongst other things the book contains contemporary portraits of all but one of the owners of Old Copped Hall from King Henry VIII onwards (there seem to be no extant portraits of the "missing" owner!).

Norah discusses the evidence for several of the stories that have grown up about Old Copped Hall. For example, did King Henry VIII pace the gardens at Copped Hall waiting for confirmation of Anne Boleyn's execution, and was Shakespeare's "*A Midsummer Night's Dream*" first performed there? You will have to buy the book to find out what evidence Norah has found for and against these stories!

The book has 160 pages in paperback form, with 60 illustrations, three quarters in full colour. It has been created to exacting standards by professional designer/printers. For early purchasers (over the next few months) the selling price is £17.99, with a further charge of £5 for postage and packing if needed. A number of local collection points will be arranged for those who wish to collect in person. The book has been published by WEAG, on behalf of the Copped Hall Trust Archaeological Project, in collaboration with the Copped Hall Trust. Its publication is not a fund-raising exercise, and to make it widely accessible it is being priced "at cost"



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This is a limited edition, so "buy now while stocks last". It would make an excellent Christmas present.

To buy a copy, and for further information, email weagbook@outlook.com, and you will be sent details of collection or post and methods of payment.

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