



Course details

Course title

History: Reverend Duke and the Amesbury Oliver

Course code

Q00021055

Course date

Start: 21/01/25

End: 21/01/25

Number of classes

1 sessions

Timetable

Tue 21st Jan, 10:00 to 11:30

Branch

Chelmsford

Tutor

Guest Speaker

Fee range

Free to £6.30

How you'll learn

You'll join a small group of fellow learners for classes at the venue indicated. Some materials may be provided in our virtual learning environment.

Got it!

In venue

Venue

Christchurch United Reform Church (Chelm
164 New London Road
Chelmsford
CM2 0AW

Level of study

Beginners

Course overview

In the 1950s the author's father, Norman Maggs, was investigating his family history in the files held at the old Public Record Office in Chancery Lane. By chance he came across evidence of a secret four-day enquiry that had taken place at the Amesbury Union Workhouse in 1844. The master had been accused of the manslaughter of one of the inmates, a crippled fifteen-year-old boy. The revelations were sensational and yet no word of the charges, the enquiry, or the outcome were ever publicised. After his father's death, the author broadened the enquiries and wrote the book from which this talk is extracted.

Course description

Edward Duke was an Oxbridge educated cleric, landowner, magistrate, author, and antiquarian who became an ex officio guardian of the Amesbury Union Workhouse in 1836. In 1840 he published a bizarre astronomical theory of the origins of Stonehenge, Avebury and Silbury Hill, but his major activities revolved around his work as a magistrate and his guardianship of the workhouse. At the Quarter Sessions he disputed with his brother magistrates on practically every issue, and as soon as he became a workhouse guardian—along with 26 other local dignitaries—he began disputing with them also. His complaints varied from objections to the number of clean stockings provided to the paupers, to accusing the workhouse master of manslaughter, which charge was contained in a letter he wrote to the Home Secretary. The revelations arising from the subsequent enquiry were sensational, both as to Duke's accusations and the testimony of the many witnesses called, but no word of the enquiry and the extraordinary outcome ever became public knowledge. Peter Maggs has examined and transcribed hundreds of original documents in the archives, and for the first time relates the true story of Edward Duke and the Amesbury Oliver.

What financial support is available?

We don't want anything to stand in your way when it comes to bringing Adult learning within reach so if you need anything to support you to achieve your goals then speak to one of our education experts during your enrolment journey. Most of our courses are government funded but if you don't qualify or need alternative financial help to access them then let us know.

What other support is available?

All of our digital content, teaching and learning activities and assessments are designed to be accessible so if you need any additional support you can discuss this with the education experts during your enrolment journey and we will do all we can to make sure you have optimal access.

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