



# RECTORY NEWS

FOR THE SUPPORTERS OF CARSHALTON OLD RECTORY

Editor: Sue Horne

January 2023 - Issue 44



## New Year, new beginning?

Public access to the Old Rectory has been prohibited since 2016. Before then, the house was part of the Ecology Centre, providing classroom space for visiting schools, offices and a place to store equipment. Access to the Ecology Centre grounds was, and still is, through the Old Rectory front garden. The house had a useful role - so why was the building designated as surplus to requirements?

Over the last seven years or so, the Council has pursued a more aggressive commercial strategy with regard to its property portfolio, including investment in various commercial buildings in Sutton and elsewhere and the rationalisation of the property it already owned. Among the people answerable for the success of this policy are the

Strategic Director of Resources, Richard Simpson; Chris Rhodes, Head of Asset Management and Mark Norrell, Assistant Director of Assets. Caught up in this new, thrusting commercialism is the historic Old Rectory and the other historic buildings around the ponds.

But should the listed Old Rectory be viewed in the same way as a shopping mall or an office block? Is the value and significance of historic architecture to be seen simply in terms of cash and cost? Our historic buildings, assets of a different kind, require a different mind-set, one that appreciates and values their distinctive contribution to the richness of the borough. They mean much more to us than profit and loss.







*the right shoulder blade causing a wound an inch broad and six inches deep, of which she then and there died.*

*Being asked who were present, they said No one except those two.*

*Being asked what became of the said William after the felony, they say, that being immediately followed by a cry he was captured and taken to Neugate.*

*The corpse was viewed on which appeared the wound and no other hurt. Afterwards at the delivery of Neugate before the Justices on Saturday before the Feast of St Andrew (30 Nov) 29 Edward I. (A.D. 1301) the said William caused himself to be appealed Ric' [sic] and put himself on a jury by whom he was condemned and hanged.*

*Four neighbours attached, viz:*

*John Page, by Thomas le Flemeng, Hugh de Wolcherchewawe.*

*Roger de Coumbe, by John de Bury, William le Lung.*

*Ralph le Coupere, by John de Alegate, Nicholas le Peyntour.*

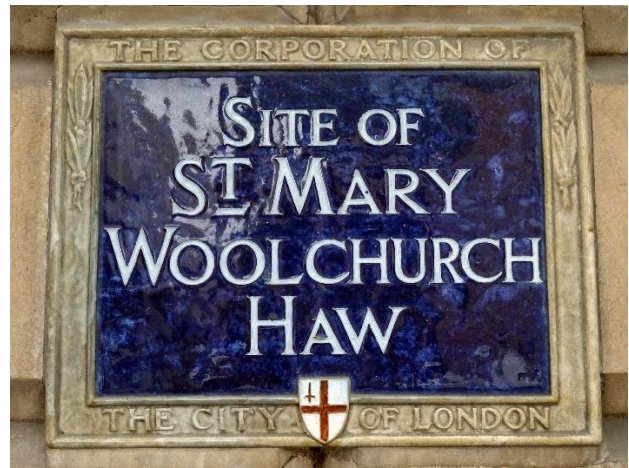
*Walter de Wanlok, by John de Lenegarstone and Richard de Londenstone'*

The coroner's report is a concise summary of a dreadful event and its aftermath. It provides a clear picture of how law enforcement was administered at a time when there was no standing police force and policing depended on the citizens themselves.

It was the duty of any person discovering a felony to raise the hue and cry and neighbours were expected to assist in the pursuit and capture of the offender - failure to do so would incur a heavy fine and any misuse of the hue and cry was also punishable. This method of policing communities was regularised by Edward I in the Statute of Winchester (1285). It wasn't until the early part of the 19th century that the various statutes relating to hue and cry

were repealed – hence Dickens' description of the hue and cry in *Oliver Twist*.

To be 'attached' meant that a person was required to attend court or, as in this case, the coroner's inquest. Each of the four 'attached' neighbours had two other people to stand surety to make sure they attended. The jurors from the nearby wards were not named (although in later entries there are lists of names). They would have been respectable men who could be relied on to find out what had happened; it would have been they who found the four neighbours who presumably saw or heard something.



Plaque on the Mansion House

St Mary Woolchurch Haw was one of the 86 parish churches destroyed by the Great Fire in 1666. In 1670, a Rebuilding Act was passed and a committee set up under the stewardship of Sir Christopher Wren to decide which would be rebuilt. Fifty-one were chosen, but St Mary Woolchurch Haw was not among them.

The Mansion House now stands on the site.

#### Sources:

**Calendar of Coroners Rolls of the City of London 1300-1378** edited by Reginald R Sharp/pub. 1913 by Richard Clay & Sons Ltd.

**London Medieval Murder Map**/Violence Research Centre/University of Cambridge  
<https://www.vrc.crim.cam.ac.uk/vrcresearch/london-medieval-murder-map>

**Oxford Reference**/  
<https://www.oxfordreference.com>

## You may remember.....

- That we were told in September last year that the fate of the Old Rectory was likely to be decided early in 2023 - once the Officers had received the consultant's recommendations and these had been discussed within the Council.
- CORA was to be consulted after these preliminaries had taken place. The Officers' recommendations would then be submitted in a report to the Strategy and Resources Committee for a decision.
- The first Strategy and Resources committee meeting of the New Year is scheduled for 20th February.
- So far we have not been contacted by the Council.
- Yet again, we have asked for an update and an opportunity to see the consultant's report.

## Membership Renewal



Our numbers may be modest but our members are steadfast. You've supported CORA through the lows and the occasional highs, the lack of headway and lockdowns. We cannot thank you enough for your continuing support for CORA.

January is when, once again, we ask you to keep the faith and join us for another year. You'll be hearing from Connie, our membership secretary shortly, and we hope you will continue to support us in safeguarding the Old Rectory.

### **KEEPING IN TOUCH**

We'd like to hear from you. Your comments and suggestions would be very welcome.

Email: [savetheoldrectory@gmail.com](mailto:savetheoldrectory@gmail.com)



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