



Graveyard:	
Topic:	Missing Hargrave Church Memorials
Date of Record:	March 2026
Author:	Nicholas Newman
Notes:	Article covering the work of Haydon Whitehead who collected graveyard memorial inscriptions in the 1920's, many of which no longer exist on site.

Hargrave Church - Lost Memorial Inscriptions

Leslie Hugh Haydon Whitehead – Record Searcher and Genealogist.

Not many will have heard of this gentleman, but it is through his hobby, some would say obsession, that we have access to information regarding many of those residents who lived and died in West Suffolk villages up to and including the early part of the 20th century. He worked as a teacher in Long Melford, living for many years at the family home, 4 Westgate Terrace, Westgate Street. However, he was also one of a band of enthusiasts who in their free time, visited local West Suffolk churches and diligently compiled transcripts from the parish registers covering christenings, marriages and burials.

Not only is that a worthy achievement, but he also used his visits to record the memorial inscriptions in the graveyards of those churches and within the church interiors. Local family history researchers can greatly benefit from this work and we are fortunate that of the many parishes he is known to have visited, Hargrave was included.

Thus whilst the information schedules covering christenings, marriages and burials are now available commercially from various online sources, the memorial inscription records transcribed by Whitehead can be considered virtually unique. This is because over time some of the physical gravestones, plaques and edging or kerb stones have severely deteriorated through the action the weather and/or the surface growth of lichen, moss and ivy. This erosion can be made worse where the wrong type of porous stone is used under overhanging trees and is unable to dry thoroughly for large parts of the year.

In addition some memorials have been totally removed, perhaps due to instability or permanent damage. This can be due to natural settlement over time, flooding or following active undermining by rabbits and badgers. It can also be the case that those managing graveyards have rationalised layouts removing individual stones that are considered unstable, or where their wholesale removal is a management decision to make maintenance and grass cutting quicker, easier and therefore less costly.

In the best of circumstances these removed gravestones that are still legible are then safely propped up against the church or graveyard boundary walls, so that they can still be read and can provide a continuing historical resource. Both propped and discarded stones can be found at Hargrave graveyard.

Yet a further alternative that can be seen in some graveyards, where stones are laid flat to be reused as material for informal path paving, which with foot traffic will see natural wear resulting in their inscriptions eventually being lost forever.

Fortunately for those with an interest in the history of Hargrave families, Whitehead appears to have recorded around 50 memorials in the late 1920's that no longer exist in situ in Hargrave graveyard. His transcripts provide a significant additional data resource that supplements the information gathered as part of the 2022 Hargrave graveyard survey (see elsewhere on this website). At that time, the survey team were only able to record the 158 existing memorials, and of those several are obviously in a worse condition than 100 years ago. Those that are worn but still present, now have the potential for completion of their inscription record when compared with the earlier fuller versions transcribed by Whitehead.

The schedule at the end of this article covers all the now removed and missing Hargrave memorials and their inscriptions as recorded by Whitehead in the late 1920s'.

A further exercise will in due course see remaining inscriptions cross checked against the existing main graveyard memorials database on this website.

For Information:

A new graveyard survey of All Saints Chevington was carried out in 2025 by a similar team as for St Edmund's, Hargrave in 2022, but with the addition of Simon Williams local churchwarden. The intention is to publish findings plus additional background research online later this year (2026). Here there are currently over 270 remaining gravestones and memorials, but the proportion of missing inscriptions is much smaller in comparison to St Edmund's, Hargrave, with only 14 identified as missing with reference to the Chevington Whitehead 1920's survey.

Please Note:

There are just a couple of general issues to be aware of with the Whitehead records. Firstly the plot reference numbers he used bear no relationship to any records held by the church, and there is no Whitehead plan to accompany the transcripts. As far as is known, Hargrave Church appears not to have ever used a plot numbering system, and the pre-existing 1970's plot plan is basic and not numbered. That is why a new plot numbering system was suggested in the 2022 survey.

The second issue is that there is the very occasional inaccuracy in the inscription as he recorded them, when comparing against gravestone inscriptions that still exist in the graveyard. These discrepancies may have originated with Whitehead or when the transcripts were retyped by A. D. D'Ews in 1986 for publication as part of 'Churchyards of Suffolk: index of names & places – Whitehead Collection, vol. 1'.

(The complete Whitehead Collection is held for research purposes by the Society of Genealogists (sog.org.uk/research/collections). Basic SoG membership is available at £85/year or a day pass to visit their main library base in London can be obtained online for £20.)

Who was L. G. Haydon Whitehead (1899 – 1984)?

There is limited information available online referencing Haydon Whitehead, but this article builds on the baseline data provided by the Long Melford Heritage Centre, <https://melfordheritage.org.uk> .

Born in Peckham, London on 17th November 1899, he was christened Leslie Hugh Haydon Whitehead, but appears to have preferred the use of Haydon rather than Leslie once in to adulthood, i.e. L. H. Haydon Whitehead. He was the only child of John Haydon Whitehead (1867 – 1905) from Farlington, Hampshire and Annie Florence Elliot (1863 – 1953) from Reading Berkshire. Both parents were

teachers, with his father becoming Head Teacher at Long Melford, Boys School prior to his death and his mother working at Long Melford Girl's School, until retirement in 1937.

Haydon lived his life in Long Melford, losing his father to meningitis when he was just six years old. On her retirement as a Headmistress, his maternal grandmother Susan Elliott came to live with him and his widowed mother. He was to follow his parents in to the same profession, studying as a student teacher at Manchester Municipal Training College, and he can be found in the 1921 Census, lodging with a Mrs Esther Ann Black in Chorlton, Lancashire.

Prior to his teacher training he had from 1915, served in World War 1, as a Private (Reg. No. 51028) in the 6th Battalion, Northamptonshire Regiment, part of the 54th Brigade Eastern Division that saw action at the Somme Offensive in 1916, the Battles of Arras and Third Ypres in 1917 and the First and Second battles of the Somme and Hindenburg in 1918, before his post-war transfer to the Army Reserve in 1919.

He met Madelaine Edith Laura Byford known as Edith (1902 – 1976) from Glemsford, Suffolk, who was one of six children of Stanley Byford (1875 -1924) and wife Sarah Brewster (1878 - 1955), both born in that village. Her father Stanley is recorded as a Coconut Mat Maker and Finisher. Leslie and Madelaine were to marry at St Mary the Virgin Church, Glemsford on 3rd April 1926, and whilst Edith is listed on her marriage certificate as without occupation, she is known to have previously worked in service as a kitchen maid. She was also later to take up the teaching profession. There is no record of any children resulting from the union.

The couple can be found in the 1939 Register, with Haydon now listed as Record Searcher and Genealogist, whilst also acting as A.R.P. (Air Raid Precautions) Communication West Suffolk C.C., whilst Edith is recorded as School Teacher, along with V.A.D (Voluntary Aid Detachment – British Red Cross) Suffolk, and A.R.P. West Suffolk C.C. By 1942, Haydon was also a member of H Company, 10th Battalion, Suffolk Home Guard.

Apart from his hobby of collecting graveyard memorials, Haydon was also apparently skilled in tracing family histories. In 1932 he produced two sets of coloured heraldic shields showing the coats of arms of the Barnardiston family which resulted from his research in to their family history. They were presented to and subsequently displayed in the parish church of St Peter and St Paul, Kedington which that family had a strong connection to.

The couple were very active in the local community, with Haydon a member of the Parochial Church Council, and apart from his usual duties, he is known to have assisted in updating the Holy Trinity parish church terrier (logbook of physical and land activities) in 1934.

Haydon also had an extensive knowledge of the history of Lavenham and his home village of Long Melford, and he had published several books including 'Lavenham: its antiquities' in 1927 and a guide to Holy Trinity Church, Long Melford.

In the 1930's he was actively sharing his knowledge as part of historical group tours by organisations such as the Workers' Educational Association, local Archaeological Societies, and passing on his findings to other individuals and academics. He was still contributing in later life, expressing his views in the letters page of the local paper in the 1970's.

Edith was also active in her spare time, being a branch member of the Royal British Legion and the British Red Cross, with the couple frequently attending social events such as charitable whist drives.

Following Edith's death in 1976, Haydon was to die alone, on or soon after 22nd December 1984. He was laid to rest at the local Long Melford Church.

References to Haydon Whitehead found in the Local Press Reports.

The following item was printed in the Suffolk and Essex Free Press on the 18th August 1920.

LONG MELFORD - Petty Sessions, Aug 13th.

(Before Rev. Sir William Hyde Parker, Bart., Chairman, Lieut.-Colonel Probert, Brig-Gen, Coxhead, C.B., and W.R. Hustler, Esq.)

WITHOUT LIGHTS

Leslie Whitehead, student, Melford, was summoned for riding a bicycle without lights, at Glemsford, August 4th. —He admitted the offence.

P.c. Cole said that while duty at Bells Lane he stopped defendant, who had no lamps. He admitted he was doing a foolish thing.

This was his first offence, and the Chairman told him he was very stupid to run these risks, and on the other hand he ought to set a better example. Fined 5s., including costs.

The following item was printed in the Suffolk and Essex Free Press on the 18th April 1929.

LONG MELFORD

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL,— A meeting was at the Schools on when 17 members were present. The Rev. R. S. Bree (rector) was in the chair. Referring to the guide book to the parish church, the Chairman said it was written by Mr. Whitehead, a Melford student, and author of "Lavenham and its Antiquities," who generously allows the sale of the book on behalf of the Fabric Fund.

The following item was printed in the Bury Free Press on the 10th March 1932.

..... Another welcome gift is the work of Mr. L. H Whitehead, of Long Melford, who has made two sets of coloured heraldic shields showing the coats of arms of all the Barnardistons, connected with the church. These are framed and hung in the vestry together with a genealogical tree of the family.....

The following item was printed in the Bury Free Press on the 26th March 1932.

SUFFOLK MARRIAGES

TO THE EDITOR. Sir, —I should be greatly obliged if you could spare space publish this final report, with thanks where due.

Mr. Percival Boyd, F.S.A., is indexing, at great personal expense and labour, all marriages recorded in England's parish registers. He works by county, and has already issued indexes of ten counties, including about one-fifth of Norfolk. A promise of local help induced him to undertake Suffolk, with the result that the marriages of its about 500 parishes are now ready for his index.....

..... Then come the transcribers. Champion of them all is Mr. L. H. Haydon Whitehead, of Long Melford, who has copied 81 registers in West Suffolk.

The following item was printed in the Yarmouth Independent on the 30th July 1932.

LAVENHAM'S CHARM

Yarmouth Archaeologists Long Excursion

HISTORIC CHURCH

.....Sixty members of Yarmouth Archaeological Society on Thursday week travelled more than 150 miles by car and motor coach to see two places – Lavenham and Long Melford. They were well rewarded for the journey

.....An hour was spent in the inspection of Lavenham, the party having the benefit of Mr. L. H. Haydon Whitehead, the author of one or two books on the district, and Miss McClenaghan, who wrote 'The Springs of Lavenham'

Next the party came to Long Melford. First of all they visited the church.....

.....The magnificent 15th century church was described by Mr. Haydon Whitehead, and its wonderful glass was inspected.

Mr. Whitehead pointed out that the building owed its magnificence to three circumstances – the proximity of the Abbey at Bury St Edmunds, the generosity of Clopton's, of Kentwell Hall, and the wool trade, the merchants of which helped in the building.....

The following item was printed in the Suffolk and Essex Free Press on the 29th March 1934.

LONG MELFORD

PEROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL

A meeting was held at the Girl's School on Friday evening, The Rector presiding.....

.....Col. Robinson urged the desirability of bringing the terrier up to date, and Messrs, Coldham and Whitehead with the Churchwardens, were appointed a Committee for this purpose.....

The following item was printed in the Suffolk and Essex Free Press on the 20th June 1935.

WORKERS EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME

Visit to Lavenham and Long Melford

A Whitsun Programme

An event which seems now well-established as an annual occurrence — the joint meeting of the Bury St. Edmund's and Ipswich Branches of the W.E.A.—took place last week. In spite of the very uninspiring weather, a party of 35 members met in Lavenham at 10.30, and were conducted round that most delightful old town by Mr. L. H. Haydon Whitehead, who literally seemed to know every stick and stone of the place.....

..... After lunch, Long Melford was visited, and here again, Mr. Whitehead proved himself a fund of information. Passing through the town, one realised why it was called "Long Melford". Though there were few outward visible signs of fine old timbered houses in Long Melford. Mr. Whitehouse said that many existed, and were delightful inside, but that they had been masked in a more modern, but less interesting style.....

The following item was printed in the Suffolk and Essex Free Press on the 20th October 1938.

FORMER MELFORD RECTOR

Dr. Nathaniel Bisbie, of whom see Dictionary of National Biography, being son of the Rev. Bisbie of Tipton, Staffs, by Margaret, daughter of Anthony Hoo, of Bradley Hall, Staffs, was born on June 5th, 1635. He was Rector of Long Melford 1660—1690, when he was ejected from his living for refusing to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary.....

.....The writer is much indebted to Mr. L. Haydon Whitehead, of Long Melford, for his assistance in connection with the verification of the marriage of this Dr. Nathaniel Bisbie, and for extracts of the Bisbie entries in the Long Melford registers, obtained from his own records.

The following item was printed in the Suffolk and Essex Free Press on the 25th July 1974.

Letters to the Editor

Why Sudbury?

Sir, — Does Mr. Moore seriously believe people in, say, Shotley, have the slightest interest in Sudbury? Has he even looked at the map of the new council area? If not, may I tell him Hadleigh happens to be central.

Why not sell off all the other offices using the money to reduce the rates? Incidentally, Sudbury has always had an over-developed sense of its own importance.

L. H. H. WHITEHEAD. Long Melford

The following item was printed in the Suffolk and Essex Free Press on the 5th September 1974.

Letters Page

Melford Foundry

Re New Melford Venture. The foundry was indeed Ward and Silver, but only up to 1885. It was founded prior to 1844 by David Ward and James Silver. Both these people came from the Wickham Market area of East Suffolk. When James Silver died in 1885 the name of the firm changed from Silver and Ward to David Ward.

The old name still seemed to have stuck to the present day as was to appear when Mrs. Bury, a Long Melford antique dealer bought a farm waggon on which the four wheel hubs had the name David Ward, Long Melford, Suffolk on each and a makers plate so worded. It had on it a Stowmarket auctioneer's label describing it as Ward and Silver, Melford. Hardware premises were built prior to the 1914-18 war on the site of the blacksmith's shop which had been in existence well over two hundred years.

The last master blacksmith there had been an apprentice at Ward and Silver. This was Mr. William Brockwell, who on retirement became warden of Melford Hospital.

L. H. HAYDON WHITEHEAD

**Nicholas Newman
March 2026**

Hargrave Graveyard - Missing Memorials and Inscriptions Gathered by Haydon Whitehead c.1920's

Whitehead Plot No.	S.W. Plot						
	Line One	Line Two	Line Three	Line Four	Line Five	Line Six	Line Seven/Eight
3	In memory of	John FENTON	who died 8 Jan 1742	aged 68 years			
4	Here lieth ye body of	Alice ye wife of	John FENTON	who died 23 May 1729	aged 46 years		
6	In memory of	William FENTON	who died 29 Apl 1786	in the 76th year of his age			
7	In memory of	William PHILLIPS Senr	who died 12 May 1769	aged .. years			
8	In memory of	Elizabeth ye wife of	William FENTON	who died 21 Aug 1750	in the 39th year of her age		
9	Here	lieth ye body of	William FENTON	who died 10 Dec 1722	aged 70 years		
10	In memory of	Dorothy wife of	William FENTON	Who died 11 Jany	1747	aged 67 years	
11	In memory of	Mary the wife of	Lancelot DANBY	who died 24 Sept 1786	aged 83 years		
12	In memory of	Willm FENTON	who died 19 June 1765	aged 87 years			
13	In memory of	James FENTON	who died 23 Sept 1769	aged 47 years			
14	In memory of	Samuel FENTON	who died 27 Jan 1760	aged 44 years			
15	In memory of	George UNDERWOOD	who died 18 Nov	1752	aged 52 years		
16	In memory of	John FORDHAM	who died 9 March 1781	aged 87 years	also of		
	Hannah his wife	she died in the year	1754				
18	In memory of	Maria the wife of	Robert HARVEY	died 27 Decr 1841	aged 42 years	also of three children	who died in infancy
19	In memory of	Thomas FROST	who died 25 June	1752	aged 22 years	also Thomas his son	died .. Dec aged..Months
20	In memory of	Joseph BONNET	Formerly of Depden	who died 17 Novr 1853	aged 78 years		

S.E. Plot							
21	In memory of	Samuel EDGLY	who died 1 Aug 1770	aged 81 years	also of		
	Sarah his wife	she died 24 Mar 1744	aged 60 years				
22	In memory of	Letice the wife of	John CLAYDEN	Who died 5 Novr	1750	aged 28 years	
23	In memory of	Mary relict of	James SANDERSON	who died 28 July	1850	aged 57 years	
24	In	memory of	Thomas SIMPKIN				
25	In	memory of	MARY wife of				
		also of	Robert their son	who died 3 Oct 1862	aged 29 years		

West & South Tower Plot							
33aur.....d 18 year	(J.B. 1804)					
34	In memory of	Elizth the wife of	Jeremiah BEALES	who died 30 Apl 1812	aged 83 years		
35	In memory of	Jeremiah BEALES	who died 26 May 1792	aged 67 years			
36	In memory of	John CLAYDEN	who died 22 Mar 1800	aged 43 years	also of Betsy his daughter	aged 18 years	
37	Sacred	to the memory of	Martha the wife of	Samuel CLAYDEN	who departed this life	6 May 1815	aged 88 years
38	Sacred to the memory of	departed worth	John FENTON	who died 11 Oct 1828	in his 78th year	also Eliz his wife	who died 23 Feb 1825 in her 72nd year
39	Sacred to the memory of	Henrietta Mary	daughter of	John & Elizth FENTON	Who died 13 March 1846	aged .. years	
	also	Margaret Kezia	who died 24 June 1861	aged 71 years			

Under S. Nave Wall Plot

40	In memory of	Anna the wife of	Giles STEWARD	who died 7 Jan 1795	aged 67 years		
	also of 3 children of	Giles & Elizth STEWARD junr	who died infants				
41	In memory of	Elizth the wife of	Daniel GALLANT	who died 29 Feby 1772	aged 72 years		
42	In memory of	Giles STEWARD	who died 28 Oct 1762	aged 70 years			
43	In memory of	Giles STEWARD	who died 26 July 1761	aged 47 years			
44	In memory of	John PLUMB	who died 8 Jan 1777	aged 85 years			
45	In memory of	Sarah the wife of	John PLUMB	who died 3 Dec 1774	aged 76 yrs		

East of Chancel Plot

49	In memory of	Ann the wife of	Robert FROST	who died 8 Nov	1812	aged 45 years	
51	In memory of	G..... WARD	(G.S.1805)				
57	In memory of	James MORTLOCK	who died 18 Sept 1820	aged 69 years			
58	In memory of	James MORTLOCK	who died 27 Apl 1818	aged 30 years			
63	In	loving memory	of	Mary SEELY	who died	24 Jany 1894	aged 95 years
64	In	loving memory of	Mary	Wife of James LAST who died	22/11/1900	aged 77 years	
69	In	loving memory	of	Mary Ann SEELEY	who died 29 dec 1923	aged 85 years	

North Plot							
70	Sacred	to	the memory of	Lucy wife of	H. TURNER	who died 27 Dec	1842 aged 58 years
	also Harriet Moore their	daur died 20 June 1850 aged 36 yrs	Sacred to the memory of Henry	TURNER	Who died 30 Jan	1861	aged 74 years
76	In memory of	George DEATH	who died 12 May 1907	aged 63 years			
89	In	memory of	William son of	Chales & Maria	PHILLIPS	who died 11 Feb 1862	aged 44 years
91	In	Affectionate Remembrance	of	Jeremiah BURCH	who died 4 May	1882	aged 58 years
95	To	the memory of	Holden NUNN	who died 7 Aug 1840	aged 69 years		
103	R.I.P.	Elizabeth Margaret the devoted and beloved wife of Elias BRIDGE		Passed beyond the veil	8 Nov 1913 aged 68 years		
104	R.I.P.	Elias BRIDGE the beloved and devoted husband of Elizabeth Margaret BRIDGE		Passed beyond the veil	21 June 1922 aged 80 years		
105	In loving memory of	Mary Jabobs the beloved adopted daughter of Elias and Elizabeth BRIDGE		Passed beyond the veil	24 July 1917		
108	In loving memory	of	Emma NUNN	who died 25 Jan 1922	aged 57 years		

Unfortunately there is no Whitehead Plot Plan that could be used to identify his plot locations.

Nicholas Newman
March 2026