



Historical Association

The voice for history

HA REGIONAL RESOURCES

# SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS: ESSEX



The individuals listed here have been collated by members and affiliates of the Historical Association Primary Committee for use as a starting point to think about framing a local study around an individual and/or an important site. The list represents the collated research of the author and is by no means an exhaustive list. In their research, every effort has been made for representation and balance, but as is the nature of significance, different people will know of different people locally who they feel are significant to them. If you think there is someone that should be included on the list for your local area – let us know!

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

### DANIEL PAGE

MEMBER OF THE HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION PRIMARY COMMITTEE

Daniel Page is a history subject leader from Norfolk, whose main interests are local and social history, medieval, Tudor, Saxons and the 20th Century. He is a new member to the Primary Committee of the Historical Association and is thoroughly enjoying the opportunity to work and collaborate with other historians. Growing up on the North Norfolk coast, he enjoys exploring the county and East Anglia as a whole due to its rich diversity of history. He writes children's fiction and poetry in his spare time, taking inspiration from his love of history and the coast.



## SIGNIFICANT INDIVIDUALS: ESSEX

## SIGNIFICANT PERSON

## LOCATION

## BIO SUMMARY &amp; SUGGESTED ENQUIRY QUESTIONS

## HISTORICAL PERIOD USEFUL LINKS

BYRHTNOTH  
Saxon Warrior

Maldon

Saxon Ealdorman who died in 991 at the Battle of Maldon in Essex. He is the subject of an ancient poem and a recent statue of him has been erected at Maldon Promenade Walk.

Saxon  
(Pre-1066)English  
Monarchs

**Who was Byrhtnoth? Why is he remembered?**  
**What does the Saxon poem 'The Battle of Maldon' tell you about Saxon England?**

GEOFFREY DE  
MANDEVILLE  
LandownerGreat  
landowner  
in Essex

First Earl of Essex. Norman magnate and Constable of the Tower of London. Estates were primarily in Essex. Involved in 'The Anarchy' and fought on both sides of the conflict.

Medieval

Britannica

**What evidence is there in Essex of the Normans? Local studies and visits to churches and castles could form a starting point. How was Norman England organised? How did the Normans change England?**



**SIGNIFICANT PERSON****LOCATION****BIO SUMMARY & SUGGESTED ENQUIRY QUESTIONS****HISTORICAL PERIOD****USEFUL LINKS****ELIZABETH FRANCIS  
Witch(?)**

Chelmsford

During the Chelmsford witch trials of 1566 Elizabeth confessed to having a cat called Satan which she used to harm people. She was released, but arrested for witchcraft again in 1579 and hanged.

**Were there witches in Tudor England? Focus on the locality. Consider the Chelmsford witch trials. How were witches uncovered?**

Tudor

[The Witch, The Weird & The Wonderful Blog](#)

**ANNE KNIGHT  
Reformer/Abolitionist/  
Feminist**

Chelmsford

Anne was a reformer, abolitionist and pioneer of feminism. She wrote the first leaflet for women's suffrage as well as forming the first UK women's suffrage group in Sheffield circa 1851.

**Compare Anne Knight with other notable social campaigners of the period. How influential was she?**

Victorian

[National Portrait Gallery](#)

[Spartacus Educational](#)

**DICK TURPIN  
Criminal**

Hempstead

Notorious highwayman who was hanged for his crimes in 1739. Some aspects of his criminal career have been embellished over time.

**Who was Dick Turpin? What was crime and punishment like in Georgian Britain?**

Georgian

[National Archives](#)  
[Britannica](#)

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## HISTORICAL PERIOD

## USEFUL LINKS

### GUGLIELMO MARCONI Inventor



Chelmsford

Marconi was an Italian inventor who developed long-distance radio transmissions. Marconi's law (the relation between length of antennas and maximum signalling distance of radio transmissions) and radio telegraph. He based much of his business in Chelmsford.

**Chelmsford Museum has an industrial exhibition which has much information and displays on Marconi in Chelmsford. Children could form their own enquiries from a visit to the museum. How did Marconi's inventions improve communication? How important were the Marconi operators onboard the Titanic?**

20th Century

[The Nobel Prize](#)  
[Chelmsford City Museum](#)  
[Science Museum](#)

### ALFORD GARDNER RAF Volunteer and Windrush Passenger



Tilbury

One of the passengers aboard the 'SS Empire Windrush' which docked at Tilbury in 1948. This ship brought the first West Indians to Britain after WW2. He was born in Jamaica and served in the RAF.

**What was the 'Empire Windrush'? Why did people on the Windrush come to Britain? How were they treated when they arrived? Maybe ask pupils to study and compare with settlers from other periods of history they have studied.**

20th Century

[Essex Record Office](#)  
[BBC News](#)  
[Windrush Foundation](#)