

NOTES FROM THORNHAM

If you are interested in the people and places of the Thornhams and surrounding villages you will one day find yourself in the Ipswich Record Office. Whether you have a specific interest or are browsing at random, a fruitful visit can be guaranteed.

A gem in the vast collection is the Henniker Archive which contains material about family and properties from 1277 to 1964, including every-

thing from mundane bills, letters and rent books to the grand estate map surveyed by Timothy Skyunner in 1765. It shows Sir John Henniker's newly acquired Thornham Hall estate – the map's beautifully drawn cartouche is shown here.

This is the earliest large scale map of the area and, considering that

Skyunner must have surveyed it from scratch, it is remarkably accurate. For later information the Record Office has tithe maps of the 1840s and a fine collection of Ordnance Survey maps starting in the 1890s.

An interesting diversion is a group of letters from Charles II to the Sultan and to the Grand Vizier. Designed to impress, enormous and laden with gold leaf and the Great Seal, they are signed 'Your most affectionate friend Charles R'. The letters were carried by Lord Chandos in 1681 when he went to Constantinople and Aleppo as British ambassador to the Ottoman Empire. They protest about whatever level of complaints British merchants of the Levant Company might have about trade with the Ottomans. Once in post, Chandos was to select and deliver the appropriate letter. Presumably the unused letters found their way into the Henniker Archive via the later marriage of a daughter to a Duke of Chandos.

For details of the Record Office and the Archive see: bit.ly/Thornhams

MARCH EVENTS IN THORNHAM ● Friday 17th: Talk at the Village Hall, organised by Friends of Thornham Magna church ● Sunday 19th: Thornham Magna litter pick ● Friday 24th: Village Hall film, *A Street Cat Named Bob*, £5, please book Priscilla 01379 672903

