

Basildon Borough

The Tudors

Who were the Tudors?

The Tudors are the best known family to rule England and Wales. This period of history, from 1485 to 1603, was full of drama, change, and adventure.



Henry Tudor was a Welsh prince, who defeated King Richard III at the Battle of Bosworth and became King Henry VII.

His son, Henry VIII, became king in 1509 and is probably the most famous English king ever. He is known for having six wives, his lavish lifestyle and breaking away from the Catholic Church to create the Church of England.

His only son, although only being 9 years old, became King Edward VI when his father died in 1547. He was a Protestant and was even harder in his punishment of Catholics than his father had been.

Edward died at the age of 15 in 1553. His sister Mary was next in line, but she was Catholic, and the advisors wanted a Protestant, so they tried to put Edward's sixteen year old cousin, Lady Jane Grey, on the throne. She was only queen for 9 days before she was arrested and executed.

Mary I was queen for only 5 years but in that time, she ordered the execution of many Protestants earning her the nickname 'Bloody Mary'. Mary had no children so when she died in 1558 her sister became queen.

Elizabeth I reigned for 45 years during a time known as 'The Golden Age'. She defeated the Spanish Armada and encouraged explorers to discover new lands. She never married and had no children so her death brought an end to the Tudor dynasty.

How do we know people lived here in Tudor times?

We know people lived in this area in Tudor times from looking at the history the buildings that we can still see today.

Pitsea

Great Chalvedon Hall is on Tyefields in Pitsea, near where the road meets Rectory Road.

The hall is Grade II listed, which means some features of the building can't be changed. It is described as 'an early 16th Century timber-framed and plastered house'.

Before Mary Tudor became queen in 1553 she took an income from the manor farms at Great Chalvedon Hall and Pitsea Hall (later renamed Cromwell Manor).



This was taken when it was still a private house and you can see the distinctive dark timber frame typical of Tudor buildings. Great Chalvedon Hall has had many changes over the years and is now a public house.

Cromwell Manor in Pitsea Hall Lane dates from the 15th century and was once known as Pitsea Hall, it was built sometime in the 16th century.

Thomas Cromwell was Henry VIII's first minister. The king gave him Pitsea Hall in 1539.

In the 1800s the publisher William White of Sheffield produced a small history of Pitsea in his yearly gazetteer and directory.

Reproduced here is the entry information for Pitsea from the 1848 edition.

‘Pitsea Hall, an old farm house, near the creek, gives name to a manor, which has been held by the Cromwell, Howard, and Cook families, and passed from the latter to that of Moyer.’

Cromwell Manor is a listed building but has seen many changes in its time. In 1950 the name was changed from Pitsea Hall. In 1999 it opened as a bar and restaurant and is now a wedding and events venue where many people from the area have been married.



This is a modern photograph but you can see the tall chimneys and steep roofs often found in Tudor buildings.

Billericay

Protestant preachers had influenced the town and many people followed the new religion. Four local people (Thomas Watts, Joan Hornes, Elizabeth Thackwell and Margaret Ellis) were burnt at the stake. Two other residents (Joan Potter and James Harris) were tortured for their Protestant faith during the reign of Queen Mary.

During the 1300s Billericay had grown into a commercial centre with many inns for traders and pilgrims heading to Canterbury. In the Tudor period it was a hub for local trade and agriculture. There are several buildings from this time still standing in Billericay High Street, although they have seen many changes in the past 500 years.

High Street No. 12

The gabled south cross wing of a former C16-C17 timber-framed house.



High Street No 38

A late C16 timber-framed house with later additions and altered in the C18. The interior has a beam inscribed with the date 1577.



The Chequers Inn, Number 42 High Street

Originally a single C16 timber-framed and plastered house with cross wings at the north and south ends to which an extension was added in the C17



HIGH STREET Nos 57 to 61

Originally a C16 hall house but now considerably altered. There are cross wings on the north and south ends and an extension on the south end.



The Red Lion Inn, No. 113 High Street

Part of a C15 building but very much altered in the C18 and C19.



Wickford

Fore Riders, Old Nevendon Road

A small C16 timber-framed house, altered in the C18 and later, now weatherboarded. The interior has exposed timber-framing. There is the remains of a moat.



Great Broomfield's farmhouse, Cranfield Park Road

A C16 and C17 timber-framed house built on an L shaped plan. The interior has exposed beams and an inglenook fireplace.



Little Burstead

Stockwell Hall, Tye Common Road

Formerly owned by the Earl of Mexborough. A C16-C17 timber-framed and plastered house, refronted in the C18.

On the east gable there is a large clock face with the figures originally made of blackened bones, but now largely replaced by wood.

The interior has C16-C17 panelling, doors and richly carved fireplaces.

There is the remains of a moat.



Hatches Farmhouse, Hatches Farm Road

A C16 timber framed and plastered house. The interior has C16- C17 features including panelling and doors of around 1545 with panels carved with heads in roundels, cupids and foliage.



Dunton

Wayletts, Brentwood Road

A C16 timber-framed and plastered farmhouse.

