

# foreword

My involvement with Silchester and its archaeology goes back almost 50 years. Over this time my focus has been on investigating the Roman town and its origins in the Iron Age. Most of the work has taken place within the Walls, tucked away in the north-east corner of the parish, my journeys from Reading only requiring me to pass through the eastern or northern boundary to reach my excavations. This has left me with great gaps in my experience and knowledge and with little opportunity to explore and appreciate the wider parish, its varied landscape, its history since Roman times, its buildings and the people who have shaped its development.

*The Silchester Story* rectifies this. A dedicated team has consolidated a considerable amount of historical detail from numerous sources to chart the evolution of the parish over the centuries following the end of the Roman administration of Britain in AD 410. For the first time in a single publication the history of Silchester's more modern buildings and landmarks is recorded along with fascinating glimpses into the lives of these who in the 19th and 20th centuries were the movers and shakers in the evolution of the parish.

The result of two years' work is this handsome volume, of interest not only to residents of Silchester, but also to historians within Hampshire and beyond. I have enjoyed learning so much about a parish which has been so generous to me in its support and hospitality and has become a second home, and to reading about numerous individuals from famous men such as the First Duke of Wellington to villagers like Ambrose Ham, amateur cricketer and restorer of the chancel screen in St Mary the Virgin church. These and many more all contributed to a rich and varied heritage.

Take time to savour every part of this book. It is a valuable compendium of fascinating detail about a delightful part of north Hampshire.

Michael Fulford

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Map of Silchester with the parish boundary shown in blue



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