

The Story of Eastbourne

Tudor Eastbourne

Use this box to explore and uncover the Tudor story of Eastbourne and the surrounding area.

Find a selection of real and replica artefacts used and made by people in Eastbourne as well as suggested learning activities. This box also features digital files including an introduction to Tudor Eastbourne



In the 16th and 17th centuries, there were more burials in Eastbourne than baptisms and the population might have disappeared if people from elsewhere in the country and from France hadn't moved here. The first people in Eastbourne's Parish registers, on 23rd November 1558 are James Boycate and Margaret Bodle getting married. Other surnames are Mounser, Gillam, Gascoyne, Petibon, Brabant, Ticehurst, Erridge, Akehurst and Dallington.

If you weren't a rich landowner in Eastbourne, you might have worked as a Brewer, a shepherd or miller.

Richard Vernon was the Vicar at the Parish Church in Old Town from 1588 and recorded the burials of Widow Brown, Timothy's wife and John the Molecatcher as well as many others. After 1590, there was a plague in Eastbourne and some people were buried in the church yard. One of the hopeful cures for the plague at the time was to 'take a pennyworth of dragon water, a pennyworth of oil of olive and a pennyworth of treacle. Then take an onion, and fill it full of pepper, then roast it and put it in the liquor. Drink it at night, and lay soap and salt to your feet, and sweat upon it, and with God's blessing you shall recover.

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In the 17th Century, when the Wilson family were living in Bourne Place (Compton Place), they might have known John Peckham, the Ostler at the Lamb, Edward Guttall a Glazier, Thomas Stone a shopkeeper, Edward Smith a locksmith, John Rosam a Mason, Thomas Lowes a shoe maker, Nicholas Kenward a Mercer, John Browman a shepherd, Simon Bennett a Glover, Edward Peckham a Labourer, Richard Bartholomew a tailor, John Bodye a fisherman or Robert Herriot s Husbandman.

Cobham Browne was one of the Wilsons servants; he was buried in Eastbourne on 4 April 1653

Although Richard Vernon the Vicar lived to be 84 years old, a lot of people died from accidents, some 'slayne by a fall from his horse' some drowned 'coming from fishing all round in the sea very neare the shore' in 1625, Richard Marden was 'slaine; by the fall of a chalk pit in 1651' and in 1654 Thomas Brittain, a hat dresser of St Olaves Parish neere London was buried.

John Bodye left his best cloake, his seaegowne and two paire of his breeches in his will in 1609

John Burchat left his wife all copyhold land except 'the newe shoppe' which was to go to his son Richard when he turned 21 'with all my working tools as Bellowes, hammers, anvils and all the implements belonging to the shoppe.'

Most families would have a table with benches either side to eat their meals, only the very rich had individual chairs

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Contents

All of the real Tudor objects in this box have been found in Eastbourne.



Cloak or coat fastener

Although Romans used clothes fasteners like this one, they became really popular in the 15th century. They worked in the same way as hook and eye fasteners do today.



Gold gilded shirt or dress fastener

This is similar to the fastening above but would have belonged to a much wealthier Tudor person in Eastbourne. It is much more delicate so was probably part of a dress or shirt.



Broken spoon handle with acorn knob

This broken spoon is a great example of the most common type of archaeology - other people's rubbish! When this spoon was broken, it would have been thrown away, only for it to be dug up again 500 years later!

Anne Boleyn and Henry III adopted the motifs of Honeysuckle and Acorns. Honeysuckle has long been a symbol of love and devotion, while an acorn symbolizes fertility, growth and new life



Elizabethan Coin

All coins were made of either gold or silver (not copper and certainly not paper) and a coin was worth what its metal was worth. A penny or two for a pot of ale is about right, a loaf of bread was 2d (two pennies)

A servant would be paid £2-5 per year!

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Decorative Stud or Button

This small stud would have been for decoration on a cloak. If you look really closely, you can see the dark red roses around the outside.



Buckle

This buckle would have fastened a tudor man's belt or clothing strap



Replica Elizabethan Coins

Replica Hornbook

This was used by children who were learning to read. A sheet of paper was mounted onto a wooden board with a handle. The paper was protected by a thin layer of clear animal horn.

At the top was written the alphabet, in both capital and lower-case letters, followed by simple combinations of letters. Children would have repeated each of these carefully after the teacher, before practising simple sentences. The Lord's Prayer would have been written on the lower half of the paper.



Replica inkwell and Sander or Pounce Pot

The pot contained pounce (powdered cuttlefish bone) or very fine sand that was used to dry ink on a page or to make the paper smooth enough to write on.