

The earthquake at Fairlop

The 1884 Colchester earthquake, also known as the Great English Earthquake is well recorded and occurred on the morning of 22 April 1884. It caused considerable damage in Colchester and was the most destructive earthquake since the Dover earthquake of 1580. Reports suggest that between 3 and 5 people were killed but this is not confirmed. There were 1,250 buildings damaged and included most settlements all the way to Ipswich. Waves caused by the earthquake destroyed many small craft.

Less well known is the earthquake, which occurred on 8 February 1749. It seems that 1749 - 50 was noted for earthquakes, and by all account the 1749 earthquake was significant.

This is mentioned in a talk on the life of Smart Lethieullier given by Mr. C H Chown to Barking and District Archeological Society in 1939.

Smart Lethieullier was the Squire of Aldersbrook Manor House near to what is now City of London Cemetery.

In a communication to the President of the Royal Society dated 27 February 1749 Smart Lethieullier writes about that he is unable to learn the extent of the earthquake to the east of London.

He had been in the garden and did not feel anything, but his wife felt the motion in the house, being exactly like what she had often heard described when she had been in Italy.

(Ilford Recorder and Essex Record Office)