

Grey Friars section of High Street in the C19th

We thank Angie Boon for the discovery of this picture of the Grey Friars section of High Street (formerly Frere Street) which she posted on the Facebook page 'Old Colchester and District in Pictures'. She found it featured in a copy of *The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* of Wednesday 13 October 1954. It is painted by the brothers James and George Temple and depicts a time just before the end of the stagecoach era. It shows the London coach about to descend East Hill on its way to Ipswich.

Ironically, this is almost the exact spot where today's tourist and long-distance coaches pick up and set down, the current 'bus station' (April 2020) being unsuitable. The key explains the various buildings depicted.

James and George Temple - *High Street, Colchester* - Watercolour on paper - 495mm x 785mm

1 2 3 4 5 6



KEY

- 1
FRERE HOUSE demolished in the 1930s, now Wetzlar Gardens
- 2
GATE HOUSE
and
EAST LODGE
- 3
WINSLEY'S HOUSE
- 4
HILLCREST
- 5
GREY FRIARS hidden behind tree
- 6
ALL SAINTS HOUSE

The caption printed with the picture in the 1954 magazine:

BUSY, BUSTLING COLCHESTER, Britain's oldest recorded town, has always been the scene of many comings and goings. This painting by the brothers James and George Temple shows the High Street in the heyday of the coaching-posting age. There is much to see in the town and the district round about—all fascinating, whether the oysters are in season or not.

James and George Temple

The brothers James Temple (1843 – 1921) and George Temple (1847 – 1910) worked together as artists for many years. James Temple spent two years rowing along the rivers and waterways from Warwickshire to London, sketching the scenes along the way. He then settled in London where he had become successful and sent for his younger brother George to join him. Their first assignment was to paint scenery and posters for Astley's circus. In the evenings they regularly attended, first, the Royal College of Art and later the Royal Academy Schools. Many of the brothers' illustrations appeared in the *Illustrated London News* from about 1867 onwards. They also contributed to the first edition of the *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News* when first published in February 1874. Their illustrations were published in every issue from then on. The rise of the camera in journalism led the brothers to concentrate more on watercolours than illustrations. The Duke of Cambridge and the Great Eastern Railway Company were among their many patrons. The Temples were an artistic family. Their father, Thomas (1821 – 1907) and grandfather George were both born in Leamington Spa. George was a wood engraver and draughtsman of sporting scenes and his son Thomas was a draughtsman and painter in oil and watercolour.

THE ILLUSTRATED SPORTING AND DRAMATIC NEWS,



The Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News was an English weekly newspaper founded in 1874, published in London, covering sporting and theatrical events. There were numerous similar publications in Britain at the time, including *The Illustrated London News*, sharing its address and some illustrators with the magazine. In 1957 it changed its name to *Farm and Country*, before closing in 1970.

This late C19th photograph shows the same view ...



... and the detail below shows more clearly, from the left ...

Hillcrest; Grey Friars with its large tree in the western side garden and the stable block on the eastern side; and All Saints House; all to be joined together, first, by the Ladies of Nazareth to form a convent school in 1904, then, in the C21st by OMC Developments to form the hotel.

