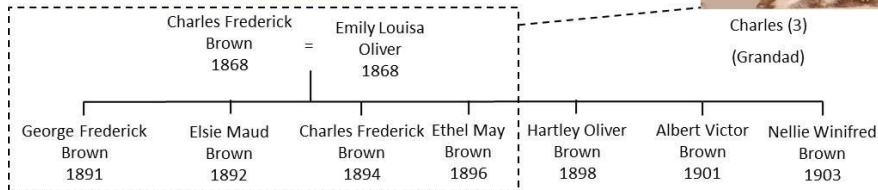


# The Story of the Brown Mersea Clock

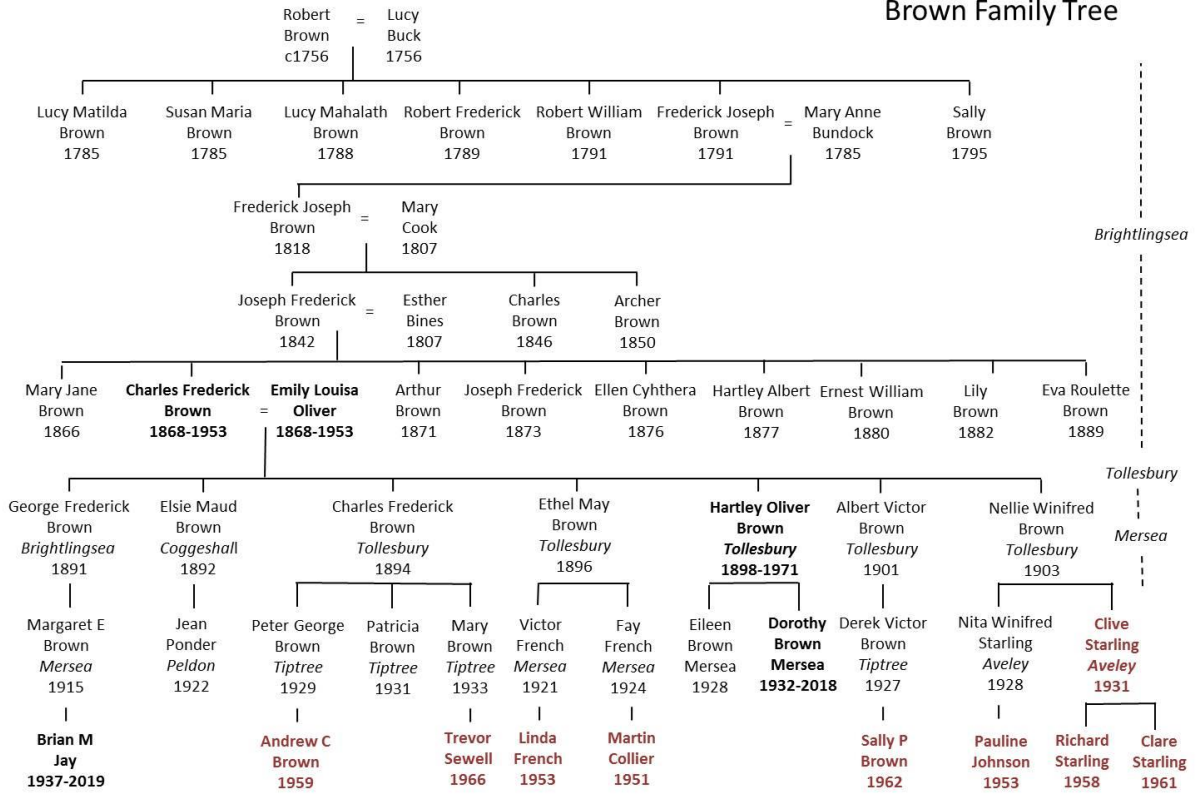
## by A Brown descendant



After spending 100 years on Mersea Island, great grandfather Charles Brown's clock was moved from Mersea to Chelmsford on 4<sup>th</sup> September 2020.



# Brown Family Tree



1897

Charles (Granddad) Emily

George Ethel

Charles (Great Granddad) Elsie

The clock was already over 100 years old when Great grandad Charles Brown (b. 1868) bought it, probably before 1920. It has been at Firs Chase, Mersea practically all this time, passing on to his son Hartley who lived there and then Hartley's daughter Dorothy Brown who also lived her whole life at Firs Chase. Dorothy died in 2018 and the clock went to Brian Jay (George Brown's grandson who also lived on Mersea). After Brian died in 2019, his wife Pauline felt that the clock should go to a Brown and contacted me.

When we collected the clock from Mersea, Brian's wife Pauline gave me a folder which contained various notes on the Brown family history that Brian had collected, and that night I found a note related to the clock: *"Clock dated 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 1780 on rear of the face. Grandfather Clock owned by Great grandfather Brown now with Dorothy Brown No 8 Firs Chase."*

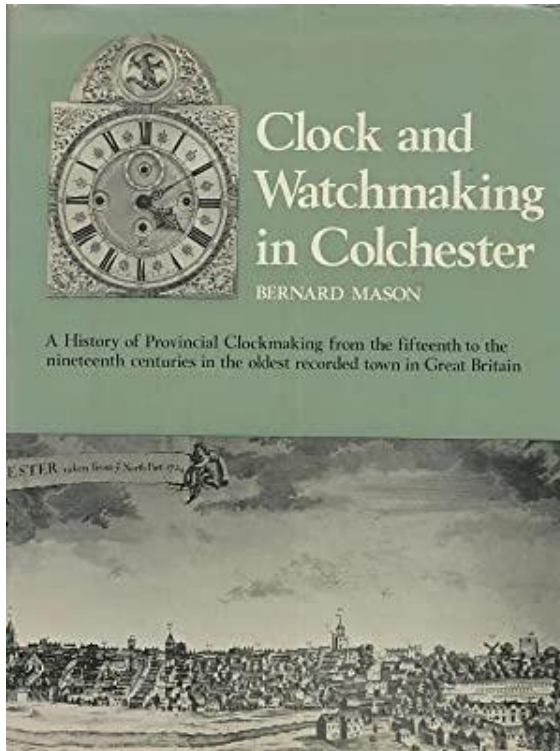


***"Nathaniel Hedge" signed clock face***

The name *Nathaniel Hedge* originates from an 18<sup>th</sup> century clock maker from Colchester.

# The Hedge Family

Having established that our clock was made by **Nathaniel Hedge (4)**, the following text describes his family connections with the weaving and clock making trades, adapted from the text of Bernard Mason's excellent and detailed book "Clock and Watchmaking in Colchester" (for reference selected photos from this book are annotated with: BM page number).



*Clock and Watchmaking in Colchester*



*by Bernard Mason*

Bernard Mason was born in Ipswich in 1895 and lived in Colchester. His home which he named Tymperleys, housed 216 Colchester clocks of the 375 known to be in existence at the time. He collected clocks from 1927 to 1979, published his detailed book in 1969 and bequeathed his house and collection to Colchester. From recent enquires with Colchester museum their records suggest they have 10 Hedge clocks in the collection and 6 are currently on display at Hollytrees Museum in Colchester Castle Park which will be visited when Covid restrictions are lifted.

There is a good presentation on-line: "*Colchester Clock and Watch Makers 1710-1850*" given by Robert St-Louis at the Bytown Times meeting in Nov 2019. The Bytown Times is published five times a year by the Canadian Ottawa Chapter 111, National Association of Watch and Clock Collectors:

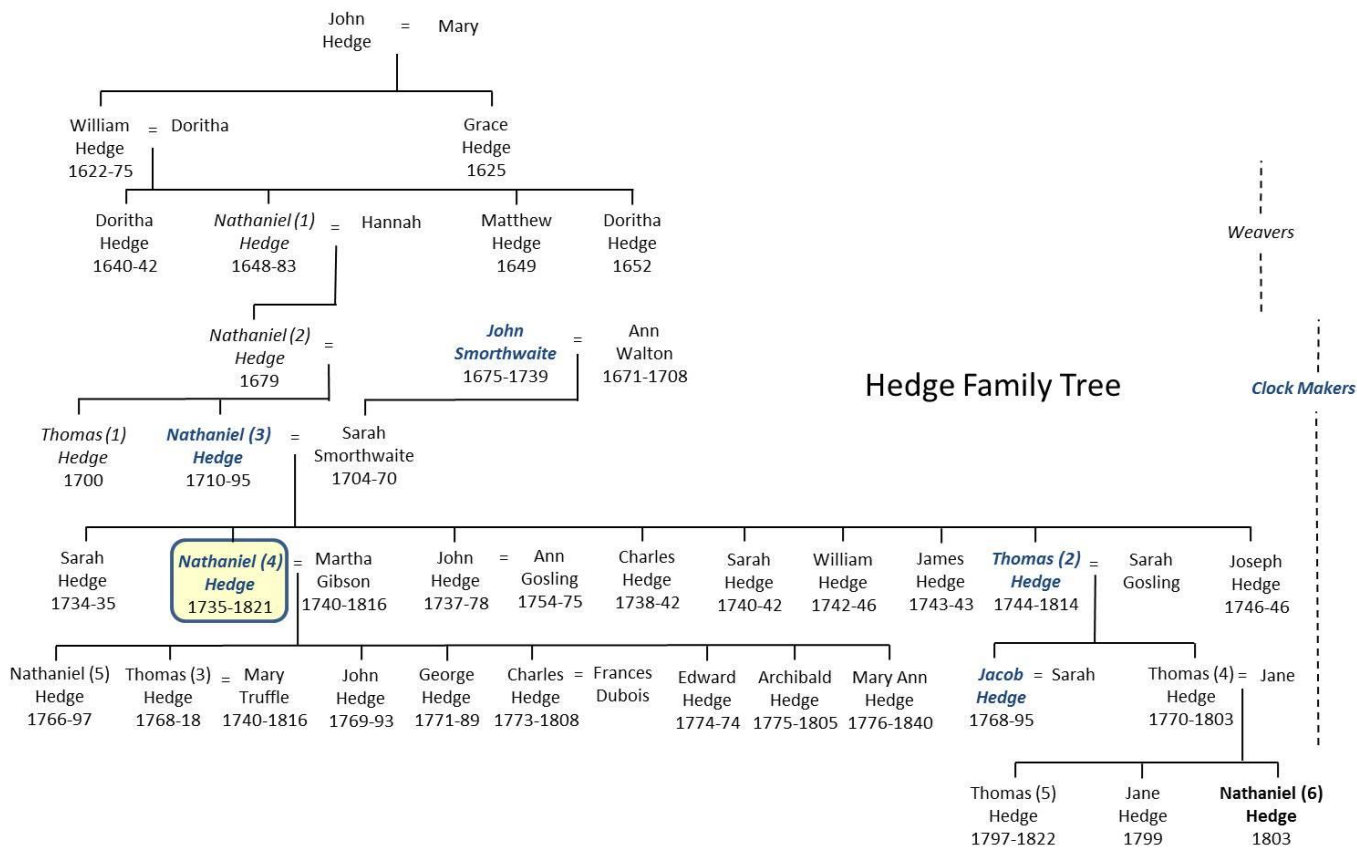
<https://timetales.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Colchester-Makers-1710-1850-final.pdf>

The Hedge family set up in business in 1739, running a factory from 1745 until the late 1780s.

The family names of Nathaniel and Thomas were repeated in every generation, and were especially enjoyed by those members of the family engaged in the clock and watchmaking businesses.

As several of the Nathaniel Hedges were contemporaries, much confusion has existed in the past. To overcome this, they are numbered from one upwards commencing with the first recorded Nathaniel (1) (**Nathaniel (4)**'s great grandfather), born in 1648 and the first Thomas (1), born in 1700.

When our clock was made in 1780 there were three Nathaniel Hedges (3), (4) and (5) being aged 70, 46 and 14 respectively.



*A Tree full of Hedges (Nathaniel (3) was apprentice clock maker to John Smorthwaite)*

The Hedge family, through at least five generations, were in business in the parishes of St Botolph and St Mary Magdalen, within the liberties of Colchester, originally as weavers of Bays and Says, woollen cloths, for which Colchester was famous for some hundreds of years.

Their family tree is on Ancestry:

**Nathaniel (3) HEDGE (1710-1795)**

- 1710: Nathaniel (3) HEDGE born Colchester
- 1733: Nathaniel (23) married Sarah SMORTHWAITE (29) October 1733
- Children:
  1. Sarah HEDGE (1734-1735)
  2. Nathaniel (4) HEDGE (Jan 1734-1821)
  3. John HEDGE (1737-1778)
  4. Charles HEDGE (Nov 1738-1742)
  5. William HEDGE (1742-Sept 1746)
  6. James HEDGE (1743-1743)
  7. Thomas (2) HEDGE (Apr 1744-1814)
  8. Mary HEDGE (28<sup>th</sup> Aug 1745-1745)
  9. Joseph HEDGE (Aug 1746-21<sup>st</sup> Nov 1746)
- 1770: Sarah SMORTHWAITE died 1<sup>st</sup> May age 66
- 1795: Nathaniel (3) died 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1795 age 85

### **Nathaniel HEDGE 4 (1734-1821)**

1734: Nathaniel HEDGE (4) born Jan 1734 Colchester

1765: Nathaniel (31) married Martha GIBSON (32) 17<sup>th</sup> Feb 1765 and set up his own business.

Children:

1. Nathaniel HEDGE (5) (Sept 1766-23<sup>rd</sup> Apr 1797)
2. Thomas HEDGE (3) (Jan 1768-26<sup>th</sup> Jan 1811)
3. John HEDGE (6<sup>th</sup> July 1769-22<sup>nd</sup> Jan 1793)
4. George HEDGE (Oct 1771-26<sup>th</sup> July 1789) Colchester
5. Charles HEDGE (11<sup>th</sup> Feb 1773-28<sup>th</sup> Jan 1809) London-Colchester
6. Edward Alexander HEDGE (Mar 1774-18<sup>th</sup> Dec 1774) Colchester
7. Archibald Septimus HEDGE (Oct 1775-26<sup>th</sup> Aug 1805)
8. Mary Ann HEDGE (23<sup>rd</sup> Nov 1776-1840)

1816: Martha GIBSON died 13<sup>th</sup> May 1816 age 83

1821: Nathaniel died 8<sup>th</sup> Dec 1821 age 87

### **Nathaniel HEDGE 5 (1766-1797)**

1734: Nathaniel (5) HEDGE born Sept 1766 Colchester, grandson of Thomas (2).

## **Nathaniel Hedge (1) (1648-1683)**

It would appear that during the first half of the seventeenth century the Hedge family who were weavers by trade, was moderately prosperous, and Nathaniel (1), born in 1648, inherited certain property from his father, William, who died shortly before 1675. In January 1682 he sold two tenements near Magdalen Green in the parish of St Botolph to maltster James Harrison for £78. Nathaniel (1) died in 1683 at the age of thirty-five, leaving his son, Nathaniel (2), then only four years of age.

## **Nathaniel Hedge (2) (1679)**

Nathaniel (2) was born in 1679 in Colchester.

In 1693 Nathaniel (2), at 14 years of age, was apprenticed to John Harvey, a substantial weaver, for 7 years.

On 20 December 1700, Nathaniel (2) was admitted and sworn a free burgess<sup>1</sup> of the Borough of Colchester.

The cloth trade had not recovered fully from the 12 weeks' siege (when Royalists were sieged by Parliamentarians within Colchester in 1648) with its destruction of 200 houses and the crippling fine of £14,000 to prevent the town from being pillaged, and later the plague (1665-66) which claimed 4,731 lives. This did not deter Nathaniel Hedge (2), at 21 years of age, from setting up business as a weaver. He must have done this some 4 months before being admitted a free burgess, because on 13<sup>th</sup> August 1700 he engaged an apprentice, Robert Culpert, who was indentured to him for the unusual period of nine years from that date.

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<sup>1</sup> *Free Burgess* meant a freeman of a borough, a necessary qualification for carrying on a business in the town

Evidently things did not work out satisfactorily because at the Colchester Borough Sessions Court held 10<sup>th</sup> July 1701 it was:

*Ordered yt. Robert Culpert ye apprentice of Nathaniel Hedg. be discharged from ye said Hedg. and serve ye remainder of his time which was nine years from the 16<sup>th</sup> day of August last past with Joseph Gant, weaver under ye terms of yer former Indentures by which he was prior to have and beyond of his time double apparell of all sorts good and new and 5 shillings in money.*

It is indicative of the state of the trade at the time that this transfer did not last long, and at the Colchester Borough Sessions held 27<sup>th</sup> July 1704 it was ordered that:

*Robert Culpert late apprentice of Nathl. Hedg. afterwards of Joseph Gant be turned over to serve the remainder of his time with Robert Bassle which was for nine years from ye 16<sup>th</sup> August 1700.*

Little is known about Nathaniel (2) during the following twenty years, but such evidence as exists suggests that he continued to earn a precarious livelihood as a cloth weaver.

His eldest son, Thomas (1), was born in 1700 and was admitted and sworn a free burgess on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1721.

At the Colchester Borough Sessions held 5 March 1705 Nathaniel (2) was convicted of wood stealing. He was ordered "*to pay two shillings and six pence to ye poor and ye like to Abraham, ye Lord of Kent's Bayliffe*".

Again on 17<sup>th</sup> July 1707 he was committed to gaol for misbehaviour having no sureties.

His second son, Nathaniel (3), was born in 1710 and was destined to establish for himself, and his descendants over four generations, a lasting reputation as watch and clockmakers of outstanding merit.

### **Nathaniel Hedge (3) (1710-1795)**

Nathaniel (3) was born in 1710 in Colchester.

No details are available covering Nathaniel Hedge (3)'s early life, but it is evident that he, together with his elder brother, Thomas (1), worked for their father as cloth weavers until Nathaniel (3) was 18 years of age. At this time it must have been apparent that the business would not support all three and it was decided that Nathaniel (3), as the younger son, should seek a new trade.

On 1<sup>st</sup> May 1728 Nathaniel Hedge (3), aged 18, was apprenticed to John Smorthwaite, clockmaker of All Saints' parish, Colchester, for a term of 7 years. This was unusually old for starting an apprenticeship; they would typically start at age 14. Smorthwait charged Nathaniel's parents a cheap rate of £10 for the apprenticeship (one third the normal rate he charged for another apprentice he took on).

Bearing in mind the economic circumstances of the family at that period, the question arises as to how and where Nathaniel's father found the £10, which was a considerable sum in those days.

Later events suggest that he achieved this by persuading John Smorthwait to purchase the freehold of the property he occupied in the parish of St Mary Magdalen, doubtless remaining on as a tenant.

The property comprised a messuage or tenement, at one time divided into four renteries and later into three, and was probably the last of the Hedge family property inherited from his grandfather, William.

John Smorthwaite bequeathed the property to his brother and, in due course, it descended to William Smorthwaite of Kirkby Lonsdale in Westmorland, from whom Nathaniel Hedge (3) later purchased it on 13 July 1753. This was the first of a number of properties in and around Colchester purchased by Nathaniel (3) during his latter years and was probably acquired principally for sentimental reasons. When he died in 1795 he left the property to his two executors, **Nathaniel (4)** and Thomas (2), who conveyed it for a nominal consideration to Charles Hedge, son of **Nathaniel (4)**, doubtless with a view to keeping it in the family as long as possible.

There is no conclusive proof, but all the evidence points to the roots of John Smorthwaite's clock making business stemming from 1693 when Jeremy Spurgin obtained a lease of a tenement in All Saints' parish, adjoining the Castle Inn in the Great Street of the town, and established himself there as a clockmaker. When he died 6 years later, his widow, Jane, carried on the business.

A few years later she sold the clockmaking stock-in-trade to John Smorthwaite who continued the business, occupying the same premises, until his death on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1739. Jane Spurgin moved to the adjoining parish of St Nicholas, where she carried on the business of ironmonger.

Nathaniel (3) commenced his apprenticeship with John Smorthwait on 1<sup>st</sup> May 1728, and for the next five years all appears to have gone well. He must have been an apt pupil and a conscientious worker and by this time would be equivalent to a competent journeyman, although with two years of his apprenticeship still to serve.

John Smorthwait, who married a second time in 1722, had one daughter, Sarah, by his first wife, Ann Walton who died in 1708. Sarah was about 29 years of age in 1733.

Nathaniel (3) and Sarah were evidently very fond of each other, but about this date he allowed his affection for her to outrun his discretion. It requires little imagination to appreciate their panic when they realized what had happened.

John Smorthwaite was not only a successful and important tradesman in his parish of All Saints', but he was a strict churchman and at the time churchwarden at All Saints'. The marriage of his daughter would be an important event in the parish. Nathaniel (3), with knowledge of his own background, would realize that he would not be an acceptable son-in-law.

As the weeks and months went by and the risk of discovery became imminent, their anxiety must have become unbearable, and on 2<sup>nd</sup> October 1733, Nathaniel (3) applied for a marriage licence. The following is an exact copy of the licence:

*Appeared personally:—*

*Nathaniel Hedge of the parish of All Saints', Colchester, aged 26 years and alledged he intended to marry with Sarah Smorthwait of the parish of All Saints', Colchester, aged 27 years.*

*Licensed them to be married in the parish church of Alresford in the county of Essex.*

*2<sup>nd</sup> October 1733.*

There are two points of interest in the licence. In the first place he added 3 years to his own age, which was 23 at that date, doubtless because Sarah was nearly 29, her declared age was reduced to 27, making them appear more equal in age. In the second place the marriage was to be solemnized in the parish church at Alresford. Although not more than five miles from Colchester, Alresford was a quiet backwater, and no rumour of a wedding there would be likely to filter through to Colchester.

It is unlikely that Nathaniel (3) said anything to his master until after the wedding, but when he did his worst fears were realized. John Smorthwaite turned them both out of the house, and from that

moment he ceased to have a daughter. He was not only a proud man and stern father but proved to be of an unforgiving nature, for in his will, made 18<sup>th</sup> May 1736, there is no mention of his daughter, son-in-law or grandchild.

In 1737 John Smorthwaite took on another apprentice, Samuel Downum, a blacksmith's son from Newton, Suffolk.

Not discouraged by the uncompromising attitude of his father-in-law, Nathaniel (3) turned for help to his friend, William Cooper, who had himself completed his apprenticeship with John Smorthwaite in 1728 (i.e when Nathaniel (3) started his apprenticeship at the same place) and started in business on his own account as a clockmaker in All Saints' parish. William Cooper, took Nathaniel (3) into partnership and they traded as Cooper and Hedge until the death of John Smorthwaite in January 1739.



*1735: Eight-day Long Clock by Cooper & Hedge BM No. 203, p129)*

In the meantime Nathaniel (3)'s daughter, was born at the end of January 1734 and baptized Sarah, after her mother, at All Saints' church on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1734. Unfortunately she died the following year, which also witnessed the birth of their eldest son, **Nathaniel (4)**, the person who would eventually make our clock in 1780.

On 24 April 1734 Nathaniel (3) was admitted and sworn a free burgess of the Borough of Colchester, a necessary qualification at that time for carrying on a business in the town. As a free burgess of the Borough, Nathaniel (3) was entitled to a Parliamentary vote for the election of Members of Parliament for the Borough and he exercised his franchise on at least 9 occasions. Since he had completed only 5 of his 7 years apprenticeship with John Smorthwaite, he took his Freedom by patrimony from his father rather than by servitude which he could otherwise have done.



His third child and second son, John, was baptized at All Saints' church 10<sup>th</sup> September 1737; he died 5<sup>th</sup> March 1778, aged 41. A fourth child, Charles, was baptized at All Saints' 4<sup>th</sup> December 1738; he died 27<sup>th</sup> May 1743, aged 5.

Nathaniel (3) was summoned to serve on the Jury at the Colchester Borough Sessions no less than 8 times between 1734 and 1739, and in August 1738 he was fined for failing to appear. He was a good churchman, and between 1736 and 1776 he attended and signed the minutes of no less than 57 parish or vestry meetings at his parish church of All Saints'.

The death of Nathaniel (3)'s old master, John Smorthwait, on 4<sup>th</sup> January 1739, gave Nathaniel (3) his first great opportunity, which he seized without hesitation. In fact his actions at that time provide a valuable sidelight on his character.

Within 6 weeks of John Smorthwait's death, Nathaniel (3) had negotiated successfully with Smorthwaite's widow to acquire the stock-in-trade, tools and goodwill of the clockmaking business. He set himself up to trade on his own account, under his own name, and on 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1739 made successful application to the Colchester Borough Sessions Court for the transfer of Smorthwaite's apprentice, Samuel Downum, to him for the remainder of his seven-year period.

These transactions suggest he was a man of strong character with a clear idea of what he wanted, the ability and courage to take an important decision promptly and act upon it immediately.

Nathaniel Hedge (3) established himself, 2 doors away to the west, trading under his own name. The house which is illustrated below was subsequently numbered 97 High Street and was demolished in 1935, to give access to a car park at the rear. This old photo from Bernard Mason's book has been annotated and compared with today's street view, and 100 High Street can be clearly identified.



103. Nathaniel (3) Hedge  
(1772-1795)



Original Hedge business at  
97 High Street, Colchester  
Nathaniel (3) Hedge (1739-1772)

John Hedge (1772-1778)

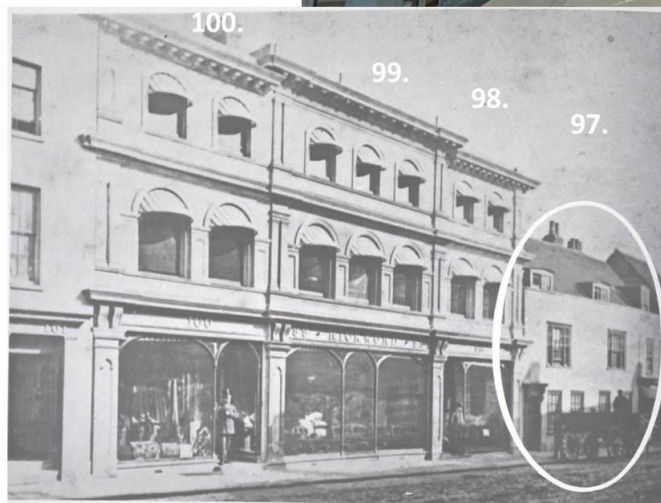
Thomas Hedge (2) (1778-1814)

Demolished 1935, access to car park

100 High Street can be identified from the earlier photo (BM, page 330)

Looking further towards 97 the location of 97 High Street can be seen (access road).

- 93. Thomas (2) Hedge  
(1767-1778)
- 94. John Hedge  
(1771-1772)
- 95. John Smorthwaite  
(1702-1739)
- 103. Nathaniel (3) Hedge  
(1772-1795)



Original Hedge business at  
97 High Street, Colchester  
Nathaniel (3) Hedge (1739-1772)

John Hedge (1772-1778)

Thomas Hedge (2) (1778-1814)

Demolished 1935, access to car park

The locations of of Nathaniel (3)'s master John Smorthwaite's premisis and the homes of Nathaniel (3)'s younger sons John and Thomas (2) are all close to the Castle Inn.

Nathaniel (3) must have had complete faith in his ability to build up a successful business fairly quickly. By breaking his partnership with William Cooper he gave up a certain income, and faced a short period of heavy out-goings and small income. For a man recently married and with a young family (sons **Nathaniel (4)**, John and Charles aged 5, 2 and 1) this called for faith and courage.

It is almost certain that he had no rich relations from whom he could borrow money to finance himself, and most unlikely that during the five years of partnership he had saved enough to pay down the whole of the purchase money to Mrs Smorthwaite. In all probability he paid part in cash and the balance by instalments spread over the following few years.

This faith in himself was fully justified as he proved to be a keen business man as well as a fine craftsman. Nathaniel (3)'s family continued to grow steadily.

- 5. William HEDGE (1742 - Sept 1746)
- 6. James HEDGE (1743 - 1743)
- 7. Thomas (2) HEDGE (Apr 1744 - 1814)
- 8. Mary HEDGE (28<sup>th</sup> Aug 1745 - 1745)
- 9. Joseph HEDGE (Aug 1746 - 21<sup>st</sup> Nov 1746)

Both his daughters and three of his sons died as infants, leaving only three sons, **Nathaniel (4)**, John, and Thomas (2), to join and follow him in the clockmaking business and to ensure the continuance of his family.

During this period he made both thirty-hour and eight-day clocks (Bernard Mason collection):



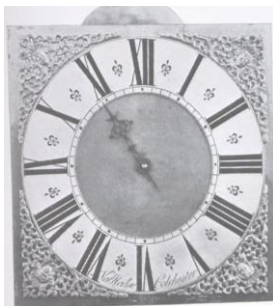
*Long-Case Clocks by Nathaniel (3) Hedge*

*a) Thirty-Hour Oak  
1742*

*b) Eight-day Lacquer  
1743*

*c) Eight-day Oak  
1746*

*d) Eight-day Oak  
1746*



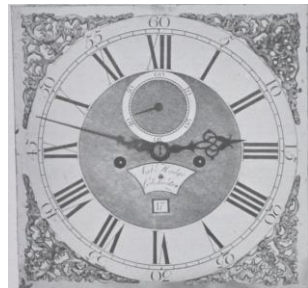
*a) BM No. 40*



*b) BM No. 148*



*c) BM No. 74*



*d) BM No. 6*

- a) A thirty-hour long-case clock of about 1742 by Nathaniel Hedge (3). The thirty-hour open-frame lantern-type movement is enclosed in a plain polished oak case of simple design with flat top. The spandrels are typical 'head and scroll' design. The dial centre is plain matt which was necessary to show up the hand, a delicately fretted design leaving very little metal. In general appearance the dial lacks some of the charm of the earlier models. [BM No.40 p83]
- b) An Eight-day lacquer long-case clock of about 1743. The minute divisions of the chapter ring are in a very narrow band, leaving a wide outer band for abnormally large arabic figures at five-minute intervals, which detract from rather than improve the appearance. The dial centre is devoid of ornamentation and the seconds circle is unusually narrow. The hands are well modelled and typical of the early 1740s with bold 'urn and scroll' corner spandrels. [BM No.148 p106]
- c) An Eight-day oak long-case clock of about 1746. [BM No. 74 p107]
- d) An Eight-day oak long-case clock of about 1746. [BM No. 6 p109]

It is perhaps surprising that during the early years of the business Nathaniel (3) continued to produce thirty-hour brass lantern clocks, such as had been made for over a hundred years, except that by this time they were fitted with anchor escapements and long, seconds, pendulum. In all probability he would have taken over stocks of parts.

Nathaniel (3) also produced a number of thirty-hour hooded wall-bracket clocks. These clocks were a development of the brass lantern clock. The movements were basically the same, but were usually fitted with a small brass arch dial and invariably carried the maker's name on a small boss in the arch.

Although these hooded wall-bracket clocks were not unique to Colchester, very few are to be found in other parts of the country, including London.

Another popular model made by Nathaniel during the first 15 years of his business was the thirty-hour, usually single-handed long-case clock with eleven-inch square brass dial. These were in either polished oak or pine cases.

From examples which have survived it would appear that the 'batch' production of cheap thirty-hour long-case clocks did not commence until shortly after 1750.

In the range of more expensive individual clocks which Nathaniel (3) Hedge produced during this early period are found eight-day long-case clocks with either square or arch dials. The dials of all these movements were twelve inches square, whether with or without the arch. The cases were usually made in oak and either stained and polished or finished with Chinese lacquer.

It would appear that Nathaniel Hedge (3) devoted considerable time and attention to watchmaking, and during the first ten years produced an appreciable number of verge watches housed in gold or silver pair-cases. Unfortunately only a few have survived, largely owing to the rising value of gold and silver which resulted in the cases being melted down and the movements destroyed.

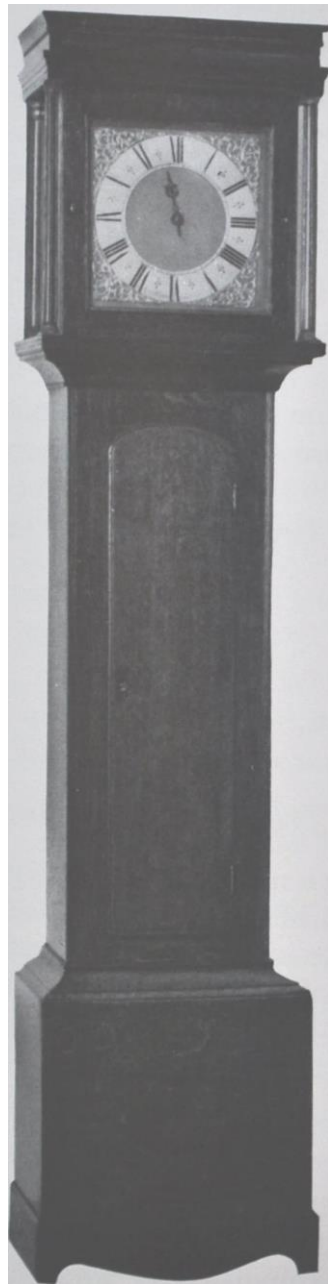
Amongst the number of these eight-day clocks surviving, no two dials are exactly alike, but all are attractive examples of the period, with silvered chapter rings and seconds circles and brass corner spandrels. All have date apertures and the hands, although generally in tune with the period, disclose small variations in design. The impression is that he gave individual attention to the design and production of his more expensive clocks and made no two exactly alike.

There is no evidence that he produced any wall dials during this period.

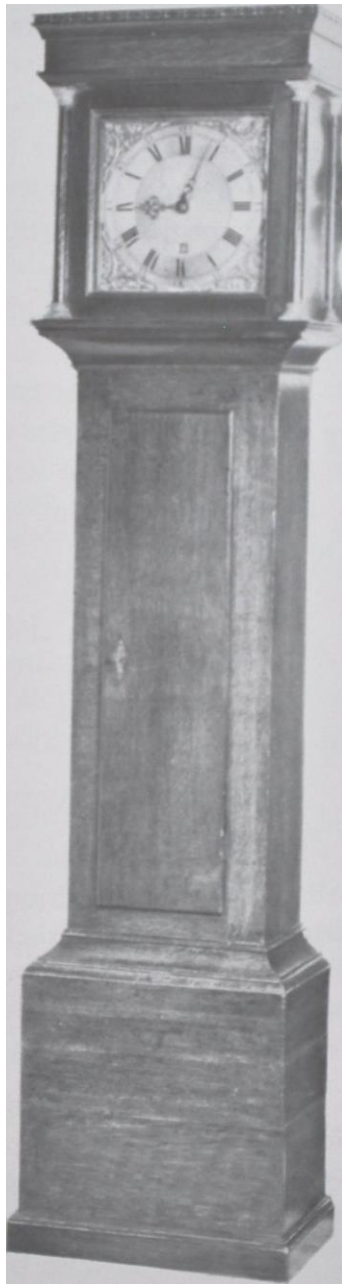
In 1749 Nathaniel (3)'s eldest son, **Nathaniel (4)**, having reached the age of fourteen, commenced training with his father as a watch and clockmaker. Nathaniel (3)'s second son, John, followed two years later, in 1751 and his fifth, but third surviving son, Thomas (2), in 1758.

Unfortunately there are no records of formal indentures, which may be accounted for by the fact that the town was without a Charter and had no local government between the years 1740 and 1763. For the same reason neither **Nathaniel (4)**, nor John, was able to take up his Freedom of the Borough when completing apprenticeship on reaching the age of 21. It was not until 19<sup>th</sup> January 1764 that the two brothers were admitted and sworn free burgesses.

It was probably between the years 1749 and 1764 that the real expansion of the business started, and small 'batch' production of relatively cheap thirty-hour long-case clocks was initiated. Two examples of these cheaper long-case clocks made during this period are shown below.



BM No. 118  
1752



BM No. 56  
1750

(BM p 335)

*Thirty-hour long clocks by Nathaniel Hedge (3)*

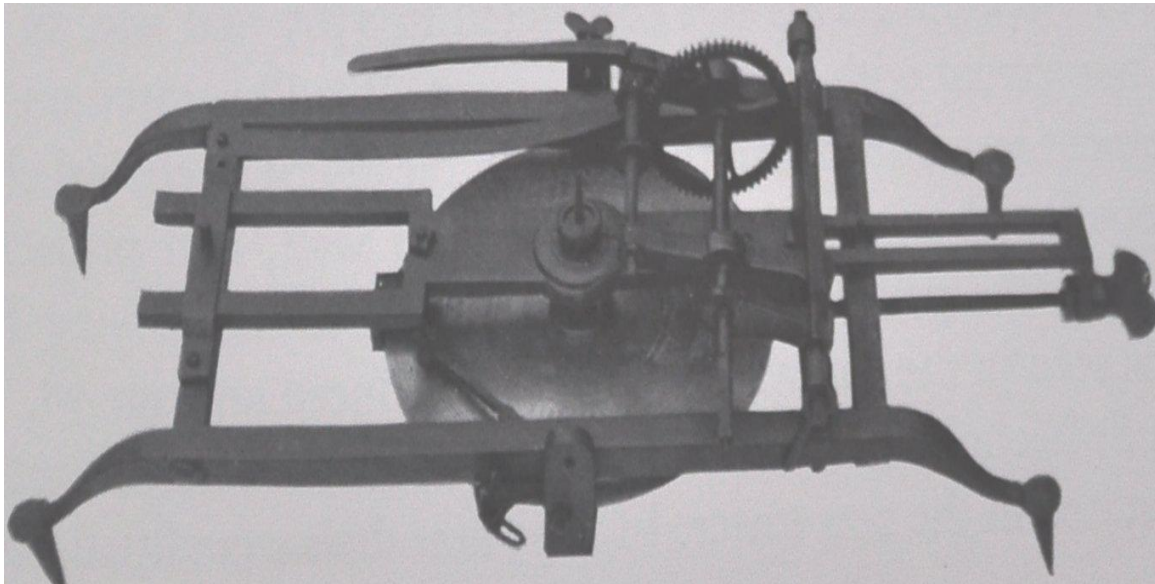
Whereas most of the Colchester clockmakers worked on a small scale, this business, during its most prosperous period from 1745 until about 1778, operated as a small well-equipped factory.

It produced not only high-grade long-case and other clocks and watches, but a large number of relatively cheap thirty-hour long-case clocks, many of which were sold to farmers and others, not only in Colchester but in the surrounding districts.

Although many of these thirty-hour movements were housed in simple polished, grained, or lacquered pine cases of no special merit, the movements were always of a high order and over a hundred of them are known to be still in existence and mostly in good working order (ours is one of them).

The machine used for generating the gears is preserved in the Colchester Museum and it is almost certain that, apart from engraving the dials, the business produced complete movements, not only for its own requirements but also on behalf of some of the smaller makers in the town and district.

Bernard Mason's collection included 47 clocks and 3 watches made by this business and many more could have been added.



*Gear cutting machine used in original Hedge business  
Colchester Museum*

On 20 July 1763 Nathaniel (3) took as apprentice William Payne for seven years at a fee of £12 12s 0d.

Early in 1765, **Nathaniel (4)**, now 30 years of age, married Martha Gibson and started in business on his own account about two hundred yards farther up the High Street on the opposite side, in St Nicholas' parish.

There is no evidence to suggest any strained relationship between **Nathaniel (4)** and his father. In fact it was quite natural for him to take the opportunity, on marrying and leaving home, to start in business for himself.

This is even more understandable when it is borne in mind that there still remained three fully trained members of the family to manage the business — Nathaniel (3), now aged 55, John aged 28, and newly qualified Thomas (2) aged 21.

On 29<sup>th</sup> August 1765, Thomas (2) was admitted and sworn a free burgess, in right of birth, from his father.

From 1739 until **Nathaniel (4)** started on his own account, in May 1765, all clocks and watches made by the business were signed '*Natl. Hedge*'. After May 1765, clocks and watches made by the original business were signed with the one word '*Hedge*', whilst those made by **Nathaniel (4)** were signed '*Nathaniel Hedge*' or shortened to '*Nathl. Hedge*'. The clocks and watches which survive bear out this method of distinction and this confirms that our clock was made by **Nathaniel (4)** in 1780, some 15 years after starting his own business.

On 27<sup>th</sup> March 1744 Nathaniel (3) was elected churchwarden of his parish church of All Saints', and on five occasions between 1751 and 1769 he was nominated for election by the Justices as Overseer of the Poor of his parish. Apart from work connected with the church he appears to have devoted the whole of his time to his business during the first 20 odd years.

By 1763, however, with three grown and fully qualified sons in the business, he was able to devote some time to the civic life of the town. On 31<sup>st</sup> October of that year he was sworn in as an 'Assistant' of the Borough - an office he held continuously until he resigned on 5 September 1785, at the age of 75 years.

On 9<sup>th</sup> January 1764 he was sworn for the Grand Jury, a sure sign that by then he had established himself as a successful businessman and a substantial householder.

The 13 years from 1765 to 1778 covered a period of great activity in the business, and the impression gained from the examples still available is of large-scale production to sell at economic prices, in addition to a number of good quality long-case arch dial clocks and wall dials.

Bernard Mason's collection embraces some 20 clocks of this period, including a few examples of the cheaper thirty-hour long-case clocks with sound movements but with no cases of outstanding merit, and some with no merit apart from the original price.

The following table has been derived from all clocks associated with Nathaniel (3) Hedge that are referenced in Bernard Mason's book.

Year	Clock	Maker	BM Collection Number	BM page
1735	Eight-day Lacquer	Cooper & Hedge (3)	No. 203	p129
1742	Thirty-hour Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 40	p83
1742	Thirty-hour Pine	Hedge (3)	No. 14	p333
1743	Eight-day Lacquer	Hedge (3)	No. 148	p106
1743	Verge Watch	Hedge (3)	No. W4	p143
1745	Thirty-hour Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 04	p333
1745	Eight-day Lacquer	Hedge (3)	No. 122	p167
1746	Eight-day Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 6	p109
1750	Thirty-hour Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 56	p335
1752	Thirty-hour Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 118	p335
1753	Eight-day Lacquer	Hedge (3)	No. 147	P160
1755	Eight-day Lacquer	Hedge (3)	T. Dunford	P162
1758	Eight-day Walnut	Hedge (3)	No. 111	p163
1760	Eight-day Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 104	p166
1760	Eight-day Lacquer	Hedge (3)	No. 41	p168
1765-70	Eight-day Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 157	p171
1765-70	Eight-day Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 26	p171
1766	Thirty-hour Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 27	p178
1766	Eight-day Mahogany	Hedge (3)	No. 38	p177
1768	Thirty-hour Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 105	p180
1770	Thirty-hour Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 09	p178
1770	Eight-day Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 60	p172
1770	Eight-day Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 24	p172
1770	Eight-day Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 164	p174
1775	Thirty-hour Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 78	p179
1775	Thirty-hour Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 155	p180
1775	Eight-day Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 110	p174
1775	Eight-day Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 82	p173
1776	Eight-day Mahogany	Hedge (3)	No. 106	p177
1778	Thirty-hour Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 67	p179
1778	Eight-day Mahogany	Hedge (3)	No. 116	p175
1778	Eight-day Mahogany	Hedge (3)	No. 01	p173
1780	Eight-day Mahogany	Hedge (3)	No. 83	p175
1785	Eight-day Oak	Hedge (3)	No. 101	p184
1785	Thirty-hour Walnut/Pine	Hedge (3)	No. 18	p184

*Grandfather clocks made by Nathaniel (3) Hedge*

It is to be regretted that no records of this business have survived, either by way of account books, price lists or advertisements, to give a clue to the prices charged for their clocks.

There is a tendency to attach far more importance to clocks than to watches and yet the latter must have comprised a significant part of the business. Between the years 1764 and 1778 eight advertisements appeared in the Ipswich journal announcing the loss of watches made by Nathaniel Hedge (3). Whilst the number is small, it is significant in relation to the number of advertisements for lost watches by other makers.

There are actual examples or records of watches by Nathaniel Hedge (3) bearing the following serial numbers — 5423, 7030, 9180 and 9449. Assuming he started numbering at 5,000, and used each consecutive number there-after, it would suggest that between the years 1739 and 1778, the business produced some 4,500 watches, an average of some 115 watches a year. This figure is not inconsistent with the structure of the business during that period.

A verge watch in silver pair-case by Nathaniel Hedge (3) in 1743 (BM No. W4, p143) is shown below.



The names of the men who made the clock cases for the business cannot be stated with certainty, but the following records provide strong pointers to two or three who worked for it.

The following advertisement appeared in the Ipswich journal of 12<sup>th</sup> October 1754.

*CLARK BLYTH.*

*Joiner, Cabinet and Chair Maker over against Mr. Nathaniel Hedge Watch Maker in parish of All Saints, Colchester, etc. etc.*

Another advertisement appeared in the Ipswich Journal of 26<sup>th</sup> October 1765 as follows:

*All persons that stand anyways indebted to the Estate and Effects of James Deane, late of Colchester, in the County of Essex, Carpenter, deceased are hereby desired forthwith to pay the same to his Executors, Samuel Clay of Grinsted in Colchester aforesaid, Farmer and Nathaniel Hedge the Elder of Colchester aforesaid, Watchmaker, or to one of them, or they will be sued without further notice; etc. etc.*

It will be remembered that at the time the description, 'Carpenter', was applied to anyone from a carpenter and joiner to a builder and would certainly include 'Cabinet-maker'. The fact that James Deane appointed Nathaniel Hedge as an Executor of his estate suggests either a personal friendship or a close business association. Another cabinet-maker who was active in the town during this period was 'John Kendall, Joyner, At the Chest of Drawers and Sconce, near the Red Lyon Inn in Colchester'. He may well have been responsible for some of the better quality cases used by Nathaniel Hedge.

The following incident serves to show that 'smash and grab' is not solely the product of the twentieth century and that justice, two hundred years ago, was rough, summary and presumably salutary.

*The Gaol Kalendar.*

*"Joseph Broadbent            ) Committed 30<sup>th</sup> January 1766 by  
Richard York                 ) Thomas Wilshire Esq. Mayor  
and charged on Oath of Thomas Hedge with stealing a pair of Silver Buckles, value ten shillings  
out of the shop of his father, Nathaniel Hedge"*

The Colchester Borough Sessions Book records on 7<sup>th</sup> April 1766 - Recognizances for appearing to prosecute —

*"Thomas Hedge, son of Nathaniel Hedge, of Colchester watchmaker, in £10 to appear and prefer one or more Bills of Indictment against Joseph Broadbent and Richard York, Labourers for Felony and give evidence thereon.*

*Indictments found at this Session:*

*Richard York of Colchester, Labourer, Guilty by confession.*

*To be whipped in the cart from the Gaol to the Three Crowns, from thence to St. Nicholas church and back again to the Gaol on Saturday next between the hours of twelve of the clock and one and then discharged."*

By 1768 Nathaniel (3) had acquired land and property in the county of Essex and as a Freeholder he voted on at least three occasions for the election of Knights of the shire for Essex.

Nathaniel's wife, Sarah, died 1<sup>st</sup> May 1770, aged 62, and was buried in All Saints' churchyard. Some two years later, in November 1772, he married his second wife, Elizabeth Mead, a widow of All Saints' parish.

At the time of his second marriage, Nathaniel (3) was 62 years of age and took the opportunity to retire from active business and moved with his wife to No. 103 High Street (which was unfortunately destroyed by fire in 1952). He was in a comfortable financial position to retire and could do so without anxiety, as the business would continue under the able management of his sons, John and Thomas (2).

At the same time his son, John, moved with his wife into No. 97, where the business was established.

For the next few years the management of the business devolved on the two brothers, John aged 35, and Thomas (2) aged 28.

It is a little surprising to find that during this period the business traded under the title 'Thomas and John Hedge', despite the fact that Thomas was seven years junior to his brother John.

There is no evidence of clocks and watches signed 'Thomas and John Hedge', but examples of this period continued to be signed 'Hedge'.

The Ipswich Journal of 16 July 1774 recorded:

*Thomas and John Hedge near the Castle, Colchester, being appointed by His Majesty to receive and exchange Gold coin of his Kingdom according to his Royal Proclamation beg leave to inform the Publick that for their accommodation, attendance will be given every day (Sunday excepted) until the 5<sup>th</sup> of September.*

They were appointed again in 1776 to exchange the deficient gold coin, between 1<sup>st</sup> May and 19<sup>th</sup> August that year.

On 1<sup>st</sup> March 1778 John Hedge died, aged 41. It is probable that the death of John at the comparatively early age of 41 was a severe blow to the business. Apart from his appointment on 16<sup>th</sup> April 1776, together with his brother, Thomas (2), as Overseers of the Poor of All Saints' parish, he devoted his whole time and energy to the business which had continued to flourish under his personal supervision and leadership.

Following his death, there remained only his younger brother, Thomas (2), then 34, to manage the business. Thomas (2) immediately moved from No. 93 to No. 97 High Street, where the business was established, and remained there until his death in 1814.

There is, however, every indication that from about 1780 the business started to decline. Thomas Hedge was undoubtedly a capable businessman, but his interests were wide and various and his heart was not really in the clockmaking business.

In addition to being Overseer of the Poor for his parish of All Saints', Thomas was already active in local government, having been elected a Common Councilman on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1775, an Assistant in 1784, a Coroner in 1788, an Alderman in 1790, a Justice of the Peace in 1796, Mayor in 1797, and again in 1801, 1804 and 1808.

As a further commercial enterprise Thomas Hedge (2), in partnership with a Mr J. Hamilton and others, operated a number of Post-Coaches to London and towns in Suffolk, from 1783 until his death in 1814, when they were continued by his grandson and partners.

Within three months of his brother's death Thomas advertised in the Ipswich Journal – 'Wanted, one or two journeymen clockmakers that are good hands—may have constant employ'. The result of this advertisement is not known, but it is probable that one of the senior journeymen employed in the business at this time was William Woodcock, who subsequently started in business in Colchester on his own account as a clock and watchmaker.

At the time of the death of John Hedge, Thomas's elder son, Jacob, was only nine years of age, and presumably for some years the day-to-day management of the business devolved, to a large extent, on William Woodcock. He was one of the witnesses to the will of John Hedge on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1778, and later to the will of Nathaniel (3) on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1787.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1790 Jacob Hedge, having completed his apprenticeship and reached the age of 21, was admitted and sworn a free burgess.

At this time, or shortly afterwards, William Woodcock left to commence his own business, and Jacob Hedge took over the day-to-day management under the general guidance of his father, Thomas (2).

As stated above the business started to decline from about 1780 and this process continued during the last ten years of the century.

All trace of Jacob Hedge is lost after May 1794. The business once more relied solely on Thomas Hedge (2) who was becoming increasingly involved with his other business interests and public duties.

Nathaniel (3), died on 14<sup>th</sup> March 1795, and Bernard Mason has been driven to the conclusion that shortly after that event Thomas disposed of the business. By that time it would have dwindled to a point where it was making little or no profit and no longer justified the space it occupied in Thomas's house.

In about 1798-9 Thomas (2) married his second wife. It is more than likely that he was influenced to dispose of the business prior to this date so that he could offer his second wife a home commensurate with the dignity of the position he had achieved in the town.

The quantity of his household furniture sold in a two-day's sale after his death in 1814 suggests that every room in the house was furnished for dwelling purposes.

There is no record of the sale of stock-in-trade or tools and equipment in any newspapers of the period which suggests the possibility of a private sale to his elder brother, **Nathaniel (4)**.

This theory is supported by the lack of any reference to the clockmaking business in Thomas's will, which he signed in 1811, and which contained very detailed lists of his assets and instructions for their disposal.

Unless further evidence comes to light it must be assumed that the 'Original Hedge Business' ceased to exist at a date between 1795 and 1798.

There is little to record about Nathaniel (3) during the twenty years of his retirement. The Vestry meeting of All Saints', held 9th April 1776, was the last recorded occasion when he signed the minutes. At this meeting his sons, John aged thirty-nine, and Thomas(2) aged thirty-two, were nominated to be returned to the Justices for election as Overseers. It would appear that Nathaniel (3) retired from active parish work in favour of his sons.

He continued his civic duties as Assistant until 1785 and to record his vote at Parliamentary elections until shortly before his death.

In 1791 the Great Universal Directory for Essex recorded Nathaniel (3) Hedge as 'Gentleman', in a list of principal inhabitants.

It is clear that he earned the respect, if not the affection, of his fellow townsmen and enjoyed a happy and honourable retirement.

Although he retired from active participation in the business at the age of 62, it is certain that he continued to take a close interest and that his sons would consult him on important issues and seek his advice on knotty problems.

His business instincts, or perhaps failing health, caused him to make his will which he signed on 9<sup>th</sup> April 1787.

He bequeathed £200 to the children of his sons, **Nathaniel(4)** and Thomas(2), living at his death. To his wife, Elizabeth, her wearing apparel and linen and such part of his household effects as she might choose to the value of £15. In addition he instructed his sons **Nathaniel (4)** and Thomas (2) to pay to his widow, out of his real and personal estate, the sum of 8 shillings weekly during her lifetime for her own personal use, free from control of any future husband she might have.

To his sons **Nathaniel (4)** and Thomas (2) he left all his messuages, lands and other real estate, together with the balance of his chattels and household effects for them and their heirs to hold as tenants in common, appointing them as executors of the will.

Another eight years passed before Nathaniel (3) died on 14 March 1795, at, for those times, the great age of 85 years. He was buried in the grave of his first wife, Sarah, in All Saints' churchyard, quite close to his master and father-in-law, John Smorthwait.

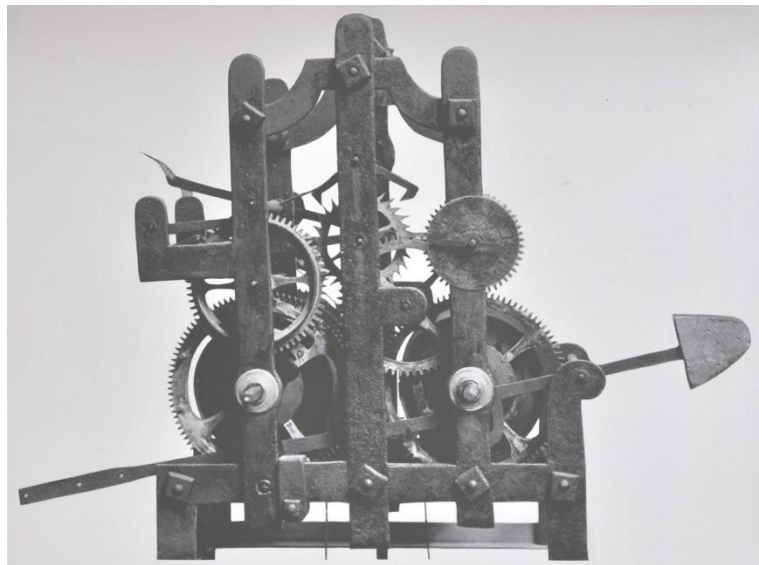


### **Nathaniel Hedge (4)** (1735-1821)

**Nathaniel (4)** was the eldest son of Nathaniel (3) and Sarah Hedge. He was born in 1735 in Colchester. The exact date is not known because there is no entry in the baptism register at All Saints', although the baptism of each of the other members of the family is duly recorded.

The probability is that even as a small boy he spent a lot of time in his father's workshop, and certainly from the age of fourteen, if not earlier, he would start his full-time training as a watch and clockmaker. By 1756, when he reached the age of 21, he would have been a first-class craftsman, and under normal conditions would have taken up his Freedom of the Borough. It happened, however, that in 1740 the town lost its Charter and had no proper local government, until the new Charter was granted in 1763. On 19<sup>th</sup> January 1764 he was admitted and sworn a free burgess, in right of birth, from his father.

In 1764, the year before he left his father's business, **Nathaniel (4)** completed and signed an eight-day, two-train anchor escapement turret movement for the church at East Bergholt in Suffolk. Berenard Mason acquired this movement, by replacement, in 1952.



*Two-Train Turret Movement East Bergholt Church, 1764 (BM Collection No. 113, p146)*

From what is known of **Nathaniel (4)**'s life it is fair to assume that he was a dedicated craftsman and inherited much of his father's business acumen. It is likely that from an early age he made up his mind to own his own business, and bent all his efforts towards that end, even to the date of his marriage.

Be that as it may, it was not until he was nearly 29 years of age that, on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1765, he married Martha Gibson, of the adjoining parish of St Nicholas, who was then 25 years of age.

**Nathaniel Hedge (4)** established his own business on May 4<sup>th</sup> 1765, in St Nicholas' parish, on the south side of the High Street, near the Red Lion Inn.



1900: Red Lion and St Nicholas Church

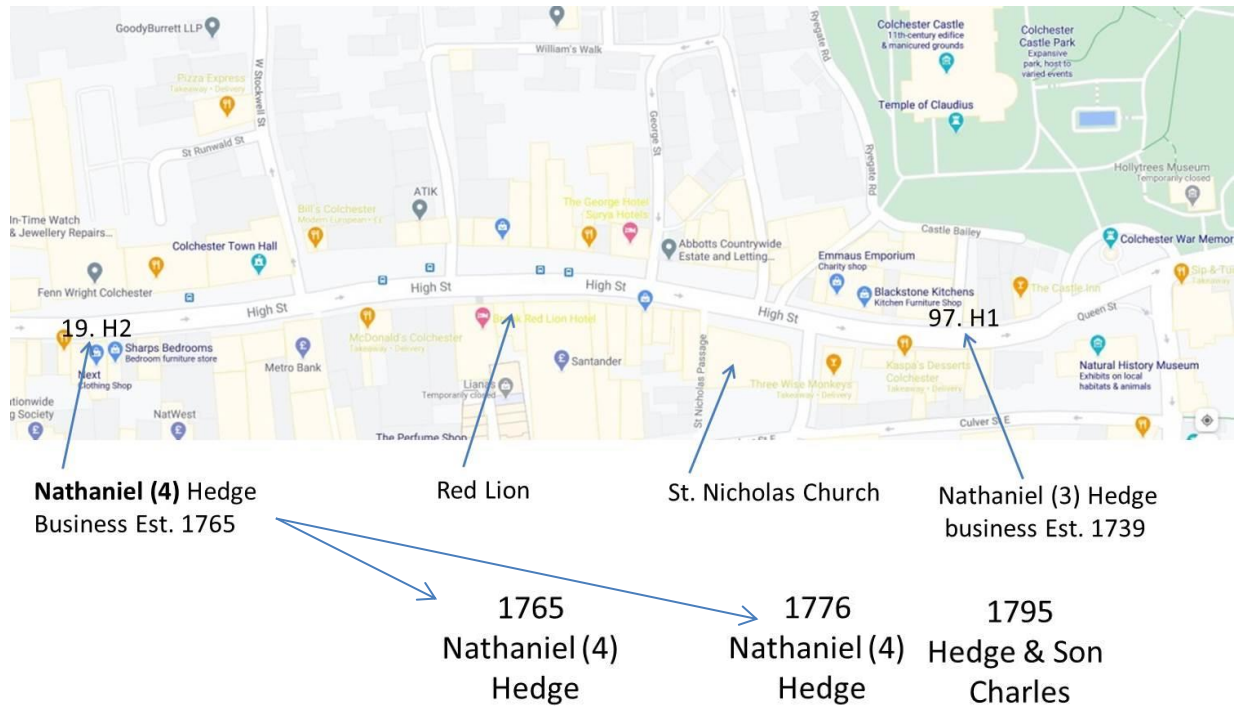
The following advertisement appeared in the Ipswich Journal:

4 May 1765, Colchester:

NATHANIEL HEDGE, jun  
WATCH-MAKER and GOLDSMITH,  
Takes this Method of acquainting his Friends,  
**T**HAT he has taken a Shop near the OBELISK in COL-  
CHESTER, and sells all sorts of Watches and Clocks, Plate,  
plain Gold and Funeral Rings, Jewellery, Japann'd and plated  
Goods, &c. Ladies, Gentlemen, and others, that please to honour  
him with their Comands, may depend upon being served on the  
lowest Terms, and the Favour gratefully acknowledged, by their  
Jobs done in the above Articles in the neatest Manner.  
obedient humble Servant, NATH. HEDGE, jun.  
M. HEDGE, Milliner, takes this Opportunity of acquainting her  
Friends, that she has just brought from London an Assortment  
of the most genteel and fashionable Goods, and hopes for the Conti-  
nuance of their Favours, which will be gratefully acknowledg'd.

This advertisement discloses that Nathaniel's wife was already established in business as a milliner and decided to carry on, at least for a time. It is believed that she did so for five years until they moved into the next parish of St Runwald, by which time she had three young children.

The location of the shop and house premises where **Nathaniel (4)** started his business is shown below relative to the Red Lion, St Nicholas Church and his father Nathaniel (3)'s premises at 97 High Street.

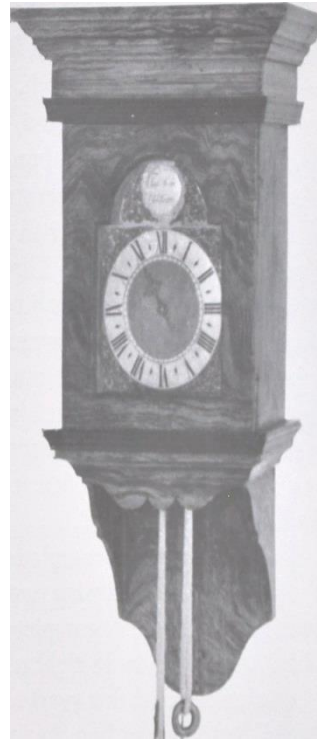


**Nathaniel (4)** was a fine craftsman and a dedicated watch and clockmaker, with only an economic interest in the jewellery, gold and silversmith side of the business, which was a necessary adjunct, especially during the early years.

He indentured an apprentice, Philip Weatherley, in May 1765, for a term of seven years.

At the Assembly held 24<sup>th</sup> September 1765, **Nathaniel (4)** was nominated and duly elected a common councilman and took the Oath of Allegiance at the Assembly held 7<sup>th</sup> October that year.

During the first few years he continued to make a small number of the earlier traditional clocks, such as thirty-hour brass lanterns and thirty-hour hooded wall-bracket clocks.

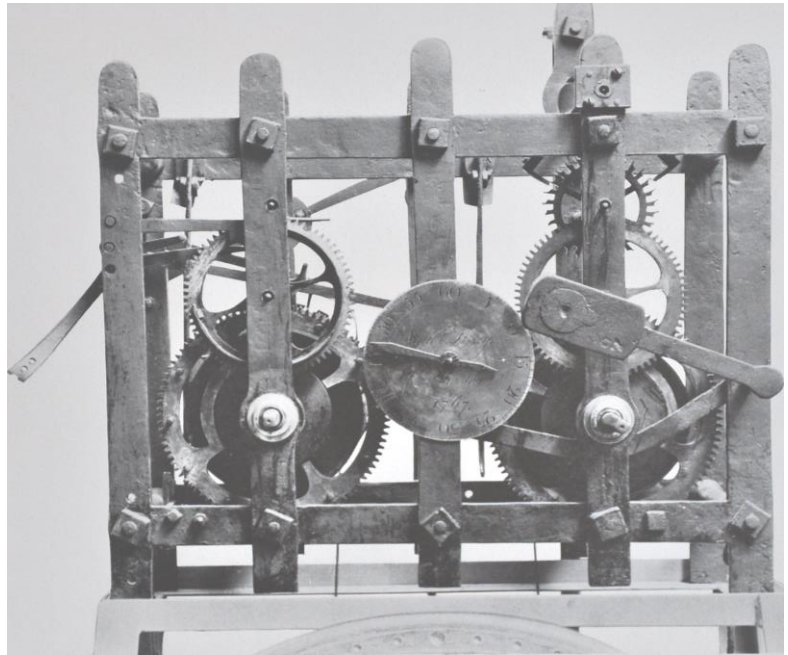


*Thirty hour hooded wall bracket (BM No. 44 & No 37, p 343)*

These clocks were rapidly passing out of favour, and he probably made very few, and those only during the first two or three years, whilst he was becoming established.

When **Nathaniel (4)** established his own business, it was necessary to distinguish his clocks from those of the parent firm. This he did by signing his clocks with his name in full, '*Nathaniel Hedge*', or shortened to '*Nathl. Hedge*', whilst the original business dropped the '*Natl.*' and signed their clocks with the single word '*Hedge*'. This mutual arrangement is confirmed by the clocks which have survived and has enabled the maker of our clock to be identified unambiguously as **Nathaniel (4)**.

In 1766 **Nathaniel (4)** was commissioned to make a turret movement for his parish church of St Nicholas'. This was completed in 1767 and was an eight-day two-train movement with anchor escapement. St Nicholas' Church was entirely demolished in 1955 (to be replaced by the Co-op's departmental store, St Nicholas House).

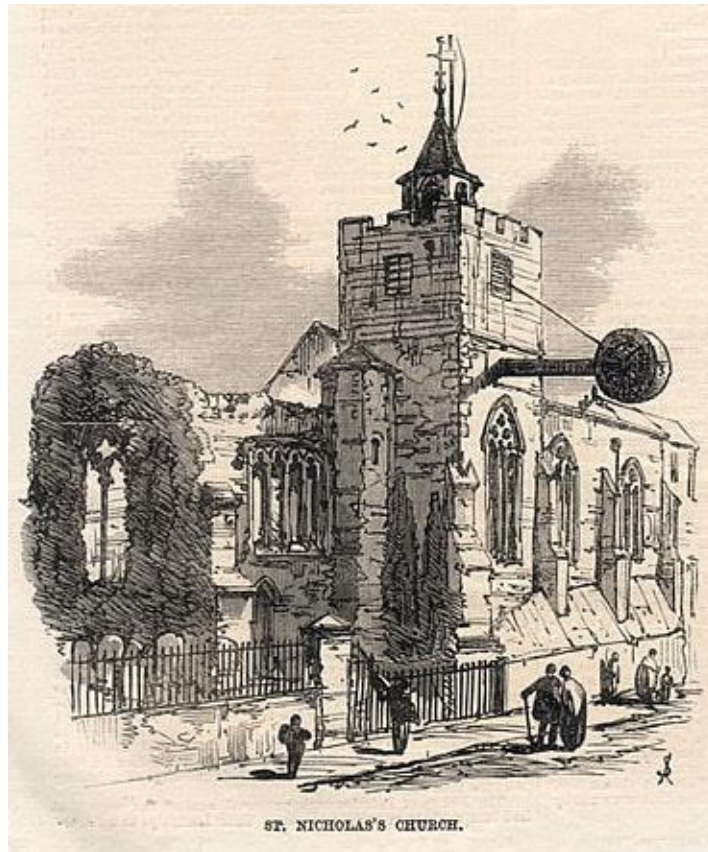


*Two Train Turret Movement from St Nicholas Church Colchester 1767 (BM Collection No. 99, p148)*

The movement was installed in the tower of the old St Nicholas' church and was equipped with two dials, facing east and west, and projecting some eight feet over the pavement. It became known as the 'Frying Pan' clock and can be seen in the engraving of 1830.



*Ruins of St Nicholas' church High Street 1830 (BM p38)*



*St. Nicholas, 1869*

*The church of St. Nicholas, in the High-street, with its projecting clock-dial, is half a ruin: it is more than 160 years ago that the old tower fell down through the roof of the chancel, which has never been restored while the other portion of the building is kept in repair and used for public worship.*

*The Illustrated London News, June 18, 1869, page 613*

When St Nicholas' church was rebuilt in 1878, the movement and dials were reinstated in the new tower.

In 1893 new dials were fitted, surrounded with heavy stonework and set much closer to the tower. This condition was maintained until 1914, when the stonework became unsafe, and the church wardens decided to dismantle the clock rather than incur the heavy expense of extensive repairs.

The movement remained in the tower until 1923, when the church wardens advertised it for sale. It was purchased by a firm at Lymington, Hants, and was installed in the small church at South Baddesley nearby.

Here it continued to give good service for another 28 years, until it was replaced in 1951 by an electric movement. Later that year Bernard Mason was successful in tracing the movement to South Baddesley and acquiring it for his collection of Colchester clocks.



**Nathaniel (4)**'s first child, a son, was born in 1766 and, following family tradition, was baptized Nathaniel (5), on 1<sup>st</sup> October at the parish church of St Nicholas.

There is some mystery about Nathaniel (5) because, although he lived to the age of 30, there is no evidence that he was ever trained for or engaged in any trade or profession. From what is known of his father's character this could only have arisen because his eldest son was in too delicate a state of health all his life to endure workshop training or the rigours of business life.

Some support for this theory arises from the fact that when Nathaniel (5), having been admitted and sworn a free burgess in 1787, voted at the Poll for Members of Parliament on 11<sup>th</sup> December 1788, he was described as 'Gent', a term which was not used for men engaged in trade. The same description was applied to him at the election on 16<sup>th</sup> June 1790, but the theory is a little shaken at the election in May 1796, when he is described as 'Goldsmith'. It could be that at this date he was helping his younger brother, Charles, also a goldsmith. Nathaniel (5) died 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1797 aged 31, and was buried in St Peter's churchyard.

On 6<sup>th</sup> October 1766 **Nathaniel (4)** was sworn for the Grand Jury for the North Ward, a possible recognition of his status as a common councilman.

**Nathaniel (4)**'s second child, a son, was born in 1768 and baptized Thomas (3) on 8<sup>th</sup> February, to be followed the next year by another son, John, baptized at St Nicholas' on 31<sup>st</sup> July. John died on 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1793, aged 23 years.

It is quite possible that **Nathaniel (4)** produced a few thirty-hour long-case clocks, but none came to Bernard Mason's notice, and in his opinion **Nathaniel (4)** did not attempt to compete with the "small factory" production of the parent firm. [We therefore have a rare example?]. He concentrated rather on a more limited number of excellent eight-day movements in good quality cases.

An attractive bracket clock, verge escapement, in ebonized case by **Nathaniel (4)** is shown below.



*Eight day Mantel clock c.1765 (BM p349)*

An eight-day brass arch dial clock in a lacquered oak case, made by Nathaniel (4) between 1765 and 1770, is shown below (clock (a)).

The Eight-day clock shown below (clock (a)) was probably one of the last long-case clocks made in Colchester to be housed in a lacquered case. The dial has all the characteristics of the period from 1750 to 1765. The corner spandrels and ornaments in the arch are of a matching design but rather featureless. The seconds sub-dial is recessed and attractively engraved, whilst the hands still retain something of the character of an earlier period.

Another long-case clock by **Nathaniel (4)** made during the same period is shown below (clock (b)). Despite the rather late design of the hands, the dial is very attractive with the silvered hour circle, corner spandrels and recessed seconds sub-dial with its engraved centre. The phases of the Moon are well displayed in the arch. The movement is housed in a well-figured mahogany case of good design, enhanced by three flambeau finials.



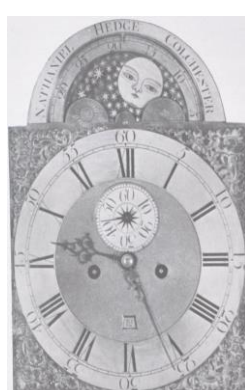
*Long-Case Clocks by Nathaniel (4) Hedge*

*a) Eight-day Lacquer  
1766  
BM No. 126 p345*

*b) Eight-day Mahogany  
1766  
BM No. 66 p137*

*c) Thirty-Hour Oak  
1766  
BM No. 46 p186*

*d) Eight-day Oak  
1770  
BM No. 54 p186*



Little is recorded of Nathaniel's activities during the first five years but it is evident the business prospered, because towards the end of 1770 he moved into larger premises in St Runwald's parish, on the south side of High Street, opposite the Three Cups Inn. These premises were subsequently numbered 22 High Street.

The following table has been derived from all clocks associated with **Nathaniel (4)** Hedge that are referenced in Bernard Mason's book.

Year	Clock	Maker	BM Collection Number	BM page
1764	Two-Train Turret Movement	<b>Nathaniel (4)</b> Hedge	No. 113	p146
1765	Thirty hour hooded wall bracket	<b>Nathaniel (4)</b> Hedge	No. 44	p343
1765	Thirty hour hooded wall bracket	<b>Nathaniel (4)</b> Hedge	No. 37	p343
1765	Eight-day Mantel	<b>Nathaniel (4)</b> Hedge	E. J. Buckingham	P349
1766	Eight-day Lacquer	<b>Nathaniel (4)</b> Hedge	No. 126	p345
1766	Eight-day Mahogany	<b>Nathaniel (4)</b> Hedge	No. 66	p137
1766	Thirty hour Oak	<b>Nathaniel (4)</b> Hedge	No. 46	p186
1766	Two-Train Turret Movement	<b>Nathaniel (4)</b> Hedge	No. 99	p148
1770	Eight-day Oak	<b>Nathaniel (4)</b> Hedge	No. 54	p186
1775	Verge Watch	<b>Nathaniel (4)</b> Hedge	E. J. Buckingham	p145
1801	Old Bay Hall clock	<b>Nathaniel (4)</b> Hedge		p352
1810	Verge Watch	<b>Hedge (4)</b> and Bannister	No. W9	p203
1810	Duplex Watch	<b>Hedge (4)</b> and Bannister	E. J. Buckingham	p203

*Clocks made by **Nathaniel (4)** Hedge*

A number of advertisements appeared in the Ipswich Journal, recording the loss of watches and offering rewards of half a guinea or a guinea if found and returned to Mr Nathaniel Hedge, watchmaker, opposite the Three Cups Inn, in Colchester. One of these watches, made by **Nathaniel (4)** Hedge and numbered 2128, was reported lost in 1771. This suggests that **Nathaniel (4)** commenced numbering at 2,000 to distinguish his own make from those of the original business whose numbers ran from 5,000 upwards.

Nathaniel was a great family man and in addition to the three sons mentioned, there followed in quick succession:

- George, born 11<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1771, died 26<sup>th</sup> July 1789, aged 17.

Philip Weatherley completed his apprenticeship with Nathaniel Hedge in 1772 and the following year Nathaniel indentured John Walker for seven years. The latter completed his apprenticeship and was admitted and sworn a free burgess, in right of service, on 4 September 1780. This apprentice may have worked on our clock which is dated as 9<sup>th</sup> Nov 1780

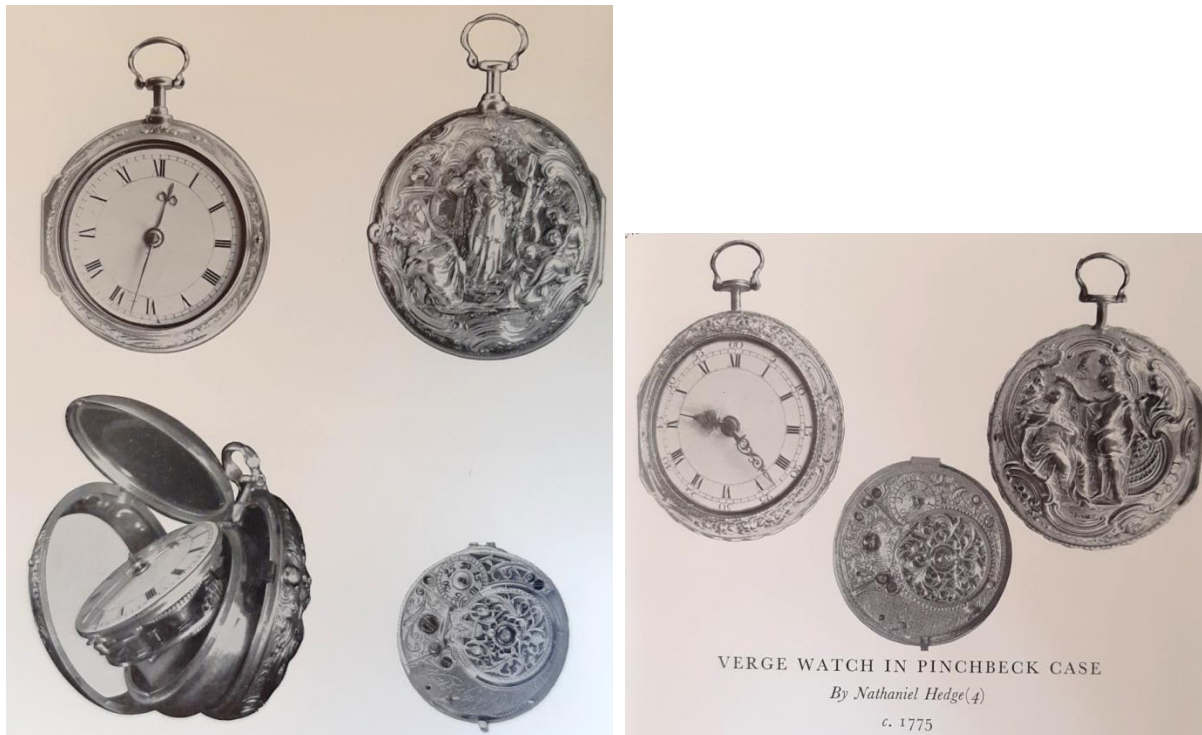
On 31 August 1772 **Nathaniel (4)** was nominated and duly elected and sworn in as an 'Assistant', whilst at the same Assembly his younger brother, John, was elected a common councilman. **Nathaniel (4)** held the office of Assistant continuously for forty-nine years until his death in 1821.

- Charles, born 11<sup>th</sup> Feb. 1773, died 26<sup>th</sup> Dec. 1808, aged 36.
- Edward Alexander, born 13<sup>th</sup> April 1774, died the same year.

In 1774, and again in 1776, Nathaniel (4) was '*appointed by His Majesty to receive and exchange deficient Gold coins of this Kingdom according to His Royal Proclamation*'.

- Archibald Septimus, born 5<sup>th</sup> Nov. 1775, died 26<sup>th</sup> August 1805, aged 30.

A gold pocket watch by Nathaniel Hedge with verge escapement in 22-carat gold pair-case of 1775 is shown below.



Watches by **Nathaniel Hedge (4)** 1775 (BM p145)

In 1776 the **Nathaniel(4)**'s family (7 children: Nathaniel (10), Thomas (8), John (7), George (5), Charles (3), Archibald (1), Mary (0)) moved three shops farther west, into the premises subsequently numbered **19 High Street**, which brought him into St Peter's parish.

In 1776 the family moved three shops farther west, into the premises subsequently numbered 19 High Street, which brought him into St Peter's parish. In the same year Mary Ann was born on 20<sup>th</sup> December 1776 (she died 23<sup>rd</sup> January 1840, aged 64).

The great tragedy of **Nathaniel (4)**'s life was the loss of all seven of his sons at relatively early ages, the last to die being Thomas (3) who pre-deceased his father by ten years. Both **Nathaniel (4)** and his wife, Martha, bore their sorrow with Christian fortitude which won the admiration and affection of their many friends.

During this period, Standing Committees of the Council were not a part of local government organization, but ad hoc committees were elected from time to time to deal with specific problems. **Nathaniel (4)** was elected to serve on a number of these committees, dealing with such matters as the finances of the town and maintenance of town property etc.

He had a strong sense of civic responsibility, and without doubt his business acumen and unswerving integrity were recognized by his fellow townsmen who called upon his services in many matters affecting the commercial life and civic activities of the town.

**Nathaniel (4)** was sworn in for the Grand Jury at least twelve times between 1767 and 1791. One occasion, at least, must have proved very embarrassing. He was sworn for the Grand Jury at the Quarter Sessions held 12<sup>th</sup> April 1779 when Sarah, the wife of his younger brother, Thomas (2), was before the Court, accused of *'misbehaviour, especially towards her husband'*.

**Nathaniel (4)** was conscientious in exercising his franchise as a free burgess by voting at the Poll for Members of Parliament for the Borough on at least ten occasions after 1767 and on three occasions for the Recorder of Colchester.

When, at the Court Session held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1784, one of Nathaniel's journeyman-watchmakers, William Lane, who was summoned under the Act concerning bastards, **Nathaniel (4)** stood surety for him in the sum of £20, a gesture which was characteristic of the man.

**Nathaniel (4)** was a sincere churchman and it is not surprising to find that he was elected churchwarden of St Peter's church in 1779 and continued to hold that office for 32 years. When he retired from the office on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1811 he was 76 years of age.

Nathaniel's elder sons were growing up and in the tradition of the business would be joining their father. Had conditions been normal this would have applied particularly to his eldest son, Nathaniel (5) when he reached the age of 14 in 1780. There is no evidence that Nathaniel (5) received any training or engaged in any business during his short life. He died in 1797, aged 30. He was probably too delicate in health to be active in business.

In the meantime Charles, the fourth son of **Nathaniel (4)**, was 14 years of age in 1787 and commenced training with his father as a watch and clockmaker, silver-smith and goldsmith. It is likely that from the first he developed a leaning towards the work of the silversmith and jeweller and concentrated on these crafts at the expense of watch and clockmaking.

When he had finished his 7 years training, his father sent him to London for a year to gain further experience with Messrs Love, jewellers of Bond Street. It was during this period that Charles met the lady who was to be his future wife.

When Charles returned from London at the end of 1795 his father took the adjoining premises, subsequently numbered 18 High Street, and established Charles there as a goldsmith and silversmith, transferring all that class of business, as well as jewellery, from his own business at No.19.

It is possible that **Nathaniel (4)** welcomed this arrangement which enabled him to concentrate his energies on watch and clockmaking in which arts he was a dedicated craftsman; moreover, he was 60 years of age at that time.

It would appear that **Nathaniel (4)** did not hand over the goldsmith's business entirely to his son, Charles, because on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1801 the Ipswich Journal reported the theft of goods to the value of £13 from the shop of Hedge and Son, goldsmiths of Colchester.

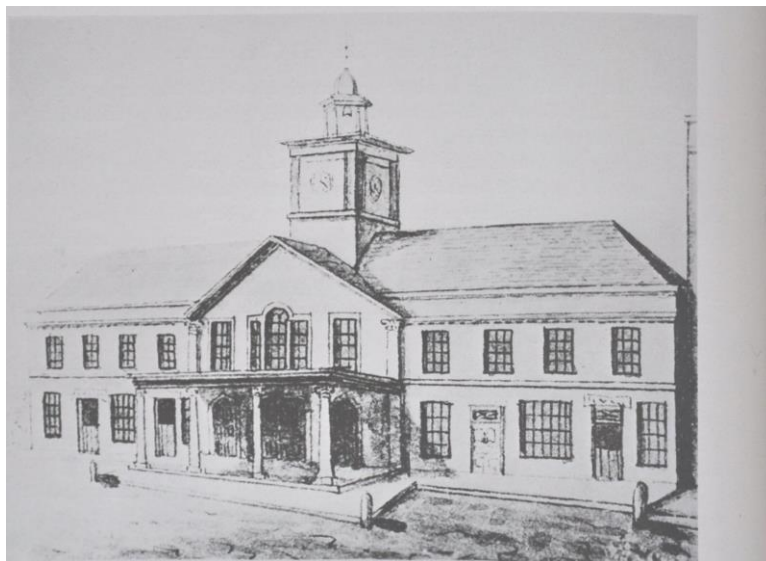
During the first thirty years in which **Nathaniel (4)** owned his own business he devoted time to public works as an Assistant on the Borough Council and as churchwarden of St Peter's church, but it is likely that throughout he made the business his first interest and responsibility, and kept his public duties within such bounds as allowed him to build up a prosperous business and a fine reputation.

His generosity matched his prosperity, as is shown by his contribution of £5 5s 0d in March 1798 towards the Voluntary Fund raised in the town in aid of the government at a critical period, and his subscription of £2 2s 0d for the relief of distressed Germans in 1814. These latter were probably the families of German soldiers stationed at Colchester during the threat of invasion by Napoleon.

In 1798 Nathaniel indentured George Lewis as an apprentice for seven years as watchmaker, silversmith and jeweller. On completing his apprenticeship, most of which was probably spent with Charles Hedge, George Lewis joined the firm of Messrs Love, jewellers of Bond Street, London, doubtless on the recommendation of Charles Hedge.

Early in 1800 one of the Members of Parliament for Colchester, Mr Robert Thornton, offered to provide the town with a public clock and commissioned **Nathaniel (4)** Hedge to make it. At the time there stood at the top of High Street, on the north side, the 'Old Bay Hall'. Since the decline of the Bay and Say trade it had been used as a corn market and offices, but was then in a very bad state of repair.

In March 1801 the Council agreed to spend £385 to reconstruct the centre section and generally repair the building. At the same time they agreed to spend an additional £100 to construct a turret over the centre of the building to accommodate the presentation clock, with three dials, facing south, east and west.



*The 'Old Bay Hall' at the top of High Street, Colchester in 1804, showing the Public Clock made and installed by **Nathaniel (4)** Hedge.*

**Nathaniel (4)**'s youngest son, Archibald Septimus, was admitted and sworn a free burgess, in right of birth, from his father, on 28<sup>th</sup> June 1802. His father bought him a commission in the East Essex Militia with which he was serving at North Shields, Northumberland, when he died 25<sup>th</sup> August 1805, after a long illness.

The Essex Equitable Insurance Society was formed on 22<sup>nd</sup> November 1802. At the second General Yearly Meeting of the Society, held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1804, **Nathaniel (4)** Hedge, together with Josiah Walls and J. Rudd were elected Auditors (presumably for the ensuing year). On 24<sup>th</sup> December 1814, **Nathaniel (4)** was elected a Town Director of the Society, an office he held until 1816, by which time he was 79 years of age.

Early in 1803 **Nathaniel (4)** Hedge engaged a new journeyman clockmaker, Joseph Banister, whose first job, on joining Hedge, was to install the new clock. This information was given to Bernard Mason, '*as a tradition handed down in the family*' by Joseph Banister's grandson. It was obviously a two-train movement, striking the hours on the bell accommodated in the cupola superimposed on the turret.

In 1807 **Nathaniel (4)**, then 72 years of age, took Joseph Banister into partnership and thereafter traded in the watch and clock-making business as 'Hedge and Banister'.



Verge Watch with Silver Hunter Case by **Hedge (4)** and Bannister c.1810  
(BM Collection No. W9, p203)



Duplex Watch Movement by **Hedge (4)** and Bannister 1810 (E.J. Buckingham, BM p203)

On 7<sup>th</sup> May 1808 Hedge and Banister advertised in the Ipswich journal: "To watch Finishers—a good workman may have constant employ, on application, or by letter post paid to Hedge and Banister, Colchester". A similar advertisement addressed to "Clock and Watch Finishers" appeared in September of the same year.

On 26<sup>th</sup> December 1808 Nathaniel Hedge's son Charles died after a short illness. Within a month of his death his father announced his intention of carrying on the business, in the following advertisement in the Ipswich journal:

*Colchester, 26<sup>th</sup> January 1809.*

*Mr. Hedge respectfully informs his Friends and the public that the widow of his lamented son, Charles Hedge lately Jeweller, Goldsmith etc., having declined the business, in consideration of annuities to herself and her infant son, it is his intention with proper Assistants to carry on the same for the future. And he hopes by the strictest and unremitting attention, to merit a continuance of the generous support he has for so many years gratefully received.*

*All persons who have any demands upon the late Mr. Hedge are requested immediately to send their accounts to Mr. Hedge or to his son, the solicitor, that they may be discharged.*

It is not surprising that, when **Nathaniel (4)** needed a competent assistant to carry the day-to-day responsibility of the goldsmith's and jewellery business, his thoughts should turn to his late apprentice, George Lewis. He succeeded in persuading George Lewis to join him, but from the following announcement in the Ipswich Journal it appears that he was obliged to attract him by the offer of a partnership.

*Colchester 8<sup>th</sup> March 1809.*

*Mr. Hedge being unable from his age, and his extensive watch and clock trade, to carry on without a confidential Assistant the business of Jeweller, Goldsmith etc., in which from the decease of his son, Charles Hedge, he is again engaged, most respectfully informs his Friends and the public—That he has taken as Partner in the concern, from Lady-day next, Mr. George Lewis, a few years since his apprentice, who, from a residence of four years in one of the finest houses in London, Messrs Love, Jewellers etc., of Bond Street has obtained such a competent knowledge of the business and improvement of taste as to warrant the assurance of being always able to offer an elegant and various Assortment of fashionable articles in the above branches, and that all orders received will be executed with promptitude, exactness and punctuality.*

*The Watch and Clock business carried on as usual, by Hedge and Banister.*

The partnership only survived for three years, and its dissolution was announced through the medium of the Ipswich Journal.

*Colchester, 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1812.*

*The Partnership between Messrs Hedge and Lewis having been dissolved on the 24<sup>th</sup> of June last, by mutual consent, Mr. Hedge respectfully informs his Friends and the public he intends (with competent Assistants from London) to continue the business of Goldsmith, Jeweller etc., for the benefit of the children of his deceased son; and hopes by a sedulous attention to all orders he is favoured with, and by having a constant and various supply of fashionable articles in the above lines to insure a continuance of that liberal support he has so long gratefully experienced.*

*All debts due to the late partnership of Hedge and Lewis are to be received by Mr. Hedge, who will discharge all debts due from it.*

It will be noticed that the 'infant son' of the 1809 announcement had now become 'children', but perhaps Nathaniel's age of 77 may be taken as a reasonable excuse for this slight departure from fact.

In the meantime the partnership between **Hedge (4)** and Bannister in the watch and clockmaking business continued to make satisfactory progress, but by 1<sup>st</sup> December 1813, **Nathaniel Hedge (4)**, then seventy-eight years of age, decided he could no longer run the goldsmith's business and at the same time take a major responsibility for the watch and clockmaking business.

Accordingly, he agreed with Banister to dissolve partnership, the latter purchasing **Nathaniel (4)**'s share in the business. The terms of the agreement are worth recording as they are indicative of the fair-minded, indeed generous attitude of **Nathaniel Hedge (4)**, in this, as in all his dealings with his fellow men.

*DISSOLUTION OF PARTNERSHIP.*

*Nathaniel Hedge and Joseph Banister.*

*1<sup>st</sup> December 1813.*

*Nathaniel Hedge, Watch and Clockmaker, Goldsmith,  
Jeweller and Silversmith.*

*and*

*Joseph Banister, Watch and Clockmaker.*

*Nathaniel Hedge and Joseph Banister have carried on a Co-Partnership in Watch and Clockmaking. Deed of Co-Partnership executed by them on or about 1<sup>st</sup> June 1807 for a term of twelve years.*

*Banister agreed with Hedge for the purchase of his share of the business at the sum of £550 to be paid without interest by half yearly instalments of £50 to be paid on the 1<sup>st</sup> June and 1<sup>st</sup> December. First instalment to be paid next June.*

*And on making up the accounts of the said Partnership and a valuation of the Stock-in-trade and effects the share and interest of the said Nathaniel Hedge therein amounts to £1219. 8. 6. which the said Joseph Banister agrees to pay in half-yearly instalments of £60. commencing 1<sup>st</sup> June next until 1<sup>st</sup> June 1819 when the £550 will have been paid— then £110.*

*Edward Searle, Woollen Draper as Surety --- The said Nathaniel Hedge, his successors, Executors, Administrators or Assigns shall not nor will either directly or indirectly carry on or be in any manner concerned in carrying on the Trade or Business of a Watch or Clockmaker within the Borough of Colchester aforesaid, for the term of ten years from the date hereof.*

*And further that the same Joseph Banister, his Successors, Executors, Administrators or Assigns shall not nor will at any time during the term of ten years directly or indirectly carry on or in any manner be concerned in carrying on the several Trades or Businesses of a Goldsmith, Silversmith, or Jeweller within the Borough of Colchester.*

*Signed by*

*Nathaniel Hedge.*

*Joseph Banister.*

*Signed sealed and delivered in the presence of us :-*

*John Cooper, W. Sparling Junior.*

This decision was duly announced to the public through the medium of the Ipswich Journal.

*Colchester 10<sup>th</sup> January 1814.*

*Messrs Hedge and Banister with Gratitude for past favours inform a Generous Clock and Watchmaking in Colchester Public that they have dissolved Partnership and that the manufacture of Watches and Clocks will in future be conducted in the same shop (No. 19 High Street) by Banister alone, who relying on his experience in the above Trades solicits attention to a large Assortment of Watches and Clocks which for excellency of workmanship and reasonableness of charge are warranted not to be surpassed.*

*N.B. The Jewellery, Gold and Silver business by Mr. Hedge as usual at No. 18 High Street.*

In his will, which he signed on 29<sup>th</sup> April 1816, **Nathaniel (4)** left the residue of his estate to his wife, Martha, and his daughter, Mary Ann, in equal shares, with reversion of the whole estate to survivor, if one of them died in his lifetime.

The timing of the will and its provisions suggest that **Nathaniel (4)** knew that his wife was very ill, but probably even he did not realize that she would die within 8 days. The notice of her death, although undoubtedly drafted by **Nathaniel (4)**, is worth recording because it is another strong pointer to the fine character of these two outstanding people.

Colchester Gazette, Saturday, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1816.

*Died on Tuesday morning in her 83<sup>rd</sup> year sincerely regretted, Mrs. Hedge, the wife of Mr. Hedge, goldsmith etc. of this town—Her unaffected piety Genuine Christian humility and warm benevolence of heart, rendered her truly beloved and respected; and manifested the reality and power of that faith and trust in her Redeemer, which sustained her through many severe domestic trials during her protracted life, and shone with even increased brightness in*

*the last moments of her existence, leaving a lively and consoling example to those who witnessed their animating influence, and to her surviving relatives and friends justly endearing the memory of her Christian graces and exemplary moral virtues.*

In 1818 **Nathaniel (4)**, now eighty-three years of age, retired from active business, and the announcement of this event, which appeared in the Colchester Gazette of the 21<sup>st</sup> March, is given in Nathaniel's own words. He loved words and high sounding sentiments, but he probably wrote with complete sincerity.

*In retiring from Active Life, Mr. Hedge cannot forego the self-gratification of expressing his deep sense of the liberal support he has, during so long a period, received from his Friends and the Public; a support which has cheered him in the many painful vicissitudes of his protracted life and stimulated his endeavours to merit that confidence and Respect he has had the happiness to obtain. Obligations like these do not oppress but communicate to the heart a lively pleasure which survives in full force when every other is passing away . . . "*

*He presumes to solicit for his successor, Mr. Banister, a continuance of those Favours granted to himself; in the firm conviction that Mr. B. will omit no effort to warrant the recommendation.*

The final chapter in the business activities of **Nathaniel (4)** Hedge was closed in March 1818 by the following announcement in the Colchester Gazette.

*J. Banister*

*Having purchased the House, with the Jewellery and Plate Stock of his late and respected Partner in the Watch Trade, Mr. Hedge, earnestly solicits the Patronage of his Friends and the Public as a Watchmaker, Jeweller, Gold and Silversmith, Cutler etc., assuring everyone that no exertion shall be wanting to introduce to their attention a most extensive and fashionable Assortment of every Article in the above Lines; and having for some time opened a Foreign connection he avails himself of it to export the greatest part of the stock now purchased and in the course of a few weeks to offer a new one for inspection; while this opportunity for a foreign disposal will enable him from time to time to have a constantly renewed fashionable stock.*

*The assistant previously engaged and approved as entirely competent by Mr. Hedge will continue to superintend the Jewellery and Plate concerns.*

*Colchester 21<sup>st</sup> March 1818.*

As from the above date the business of watch and clockmaking established by **Nathaniel Hedge (4)** in 1765 passed to, and traded under, the name of Joseph Bannister.

**Nathaniel (4)** Hedge now 83 and completely retired from business, lived another three and a half years.

Although **Nathaniel (4)** retired from business he continued to take an active part in civic life in his office of Assistant. He voted at the Poll on three occasions up to within six months of his death, and on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1821 was one of the candidates for the election of a 'Headman' for the Head Ward of the town.

**Nathaniel (4)** died on 8<sup>th</sup> December 1821 aged 86 years. The notice of his death reads:

*Died, on the 8<sup>th</sup> instant, universally beloved and esteemed, at the advanced age of 86 years, Mr. N. Hedge, formerly Jeweller and Watchmaker in this town but for several years retired from business.*

The family vault in St Peter's churchyard, which records the death, not only of **Nathaniel (4)** and his wife, but of 12 of their children and grand-children, bears the inscription:



*and assigns forever and I do hereby nominate constitute and appoint my respected friend James Barts of Grove Hill , Camberwell in the County of Surrey Esquire and my said Daughter Mary Ann Hedge Executor and Executies of this my last Will and Testament and lastly I do hereby revoke and make void all former and any other Will or Wills and Codicil or Codicils thereto by me made declaring this only to be and contain my last Will and Testament In witness whereof I that said Nathaniel Hedge gave hereunto my hand and seal the twenty ninth day of April in the year of our Lord One Thousand Eight Hundred and Sixteen Nath'l Hedge [7] Signed sealed published and declared by the said Testator as and for his last Will and Testament in the presence of us who in his presence and at his request and in the presence of each other have hereunto subscribed our names as witness thereto Philip Grotton Surgeon Colchester John Cooper Jeweller Colchester Maberly of Colchester Essex.*

**Proved** at London 11<sup>th</sup> March 1822 before the Judge by the Oaths of James Barts Esquire and Mary Ann Hedge Spinster the Daughter and Executors to whom action was granted first sworn only to administrator.

The only descendants to survive **Nathaniel (4)** were:

- His daughter, Mary Ann, who devoted much of her life to writing children's books, of which she published some 36 different books during her lifetime.
- His grandson, Edward Hedge, who was a Barrister-at-Law at Lincoln's Inn, London.

Edward's father, Thomas (3), was articled to Mr. William Mason, the leading attorney in Colchester. Afterwards he practised in Colchester, first in partnership with Mr. Daniel Sutton and then on his own account. On the formation of the Essex Equitable Insurance Society in 1802 he was elected one of the first Town Directors. During his short life he passed rapidly through all stages of local government, and was elected Mayor of the Borough on the 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1807. He married Mary Truffie, a widow, at St. James' church, Colchester on 26<sup>th</sup> August 1802. He died 26<sup>th</sup> January 1811.

### **John Hedge (1737- 1778)**

**Nathaniel (4)**'s younger (by two years) brother John was trained by his father Nathaniel (3) as a watch and clockmaker and, although without formal indentures, was a skilful craftsman in the 'Art and Mystery' of clockmaking by the time he was 21 years of age.

Although he was due to take up his Freedom in 1758 he was unable to do so, for the same reason quoted in respect of his elder brother Nathaniel (4) (i.e. the town had lost its Charter), until 19<sup>th</sup> January 1764, when at the age of 24, he was admitted and sworn a free burgess, in right of birth, from his father. Later the same year he stood surety for his friend, Byatt Walker, on the latter's application for a marriage licence.

Nothing is heard of John during the next six years apart from the fact that he voted at the Poll for the election of Members of Parliament for Colchester, on 16<sup>th</sup> March 1768.

It was a period during which the business was expanding in the factory production of inexpensive thirty-hour long-case clocks, which probably demanded the whole of John's time and attention. Moreover, the sum of the evidence available suggests that John did not enjoy very robust health and was not in himself a strong character, being overshadowed and dominated by his younger brother, Thomas (2).

In 1771 he married by licence Ann Gosling of St Botolph's parish in Colchester. At the time he was 34 years of age and his wife only 17 years old.

The licence gave John's age as 25, an error of convenience to reduce the disparity, and it may be remembered that when his father, Nathaniel (3), married by licence, he added three years to his own age, for the same reason.

John and his wife occupied a house next but one to the Castle Inn and subsequently numbered 94 High Street. The same year their son, John, was born and baptized on 13<sup>th</sup> November at All Saints' church, but died 6<sup>th</sup> April the following year.

The next year, 1772, was one of activity and change for John Hedge. On 7<sup>th</sup> April he was sworn on the Grand Jury to represent the East Ward, and at the Assembly held 31<sup>st</sup> August he was chosen as a common councilman and formally elected on 4<sup>th</sup> September. In November his father, Nathaniel (3) retired from active business, on marrying his second wife, and moved from the business premises at No. 97 to No. 103. John, as the elder brother and presumably the senior active partner, moved into No. 97, his brother Thomas remaining at No. 93.

It was also during 1772 that John began to take an active part in the work of his parish church of All Saints. He attended and signed the minute book at the vestry meetings on 21<sup>st</sup> April and 16<sup>th</sup> September, and continued to do so during the following five years.

John Hedge was sworn for the Grand Jury for the East Ward on three occasions between 1773 and 1777 and during the same period appeared in Court five times, twice when he summoned neighbours for trespass, and three times when he was himself the defendant in minor cases.

John's wife, Ann, died 16<sup>th</sup> September 1775, aged 22 years, and was buried in All Saints' churchyard on 20<sup>th</sup> September.

At the vestry meeting held 9<sup>th</sup> April 1776, John Hedge was appointed, with his brother Thomas (2), also Mr Henry Johnson and Nathaniel Abbot, to be returned to the Justices for the appointment of two of them to be Overseers of the Poor of the parish of All Saints' for the year ensuing. On 16<sup>th</sup> April 1776 the Justices, Mr J. King and Mr Thomas Boggis, duly appointed John and Thomas Hedge, being substantial householders in the parish of All Saints' to be Overseers of the Poor of the said parish.

John was in his 41<sup>st</sup> year when he made and signed his will on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1778. At the time he described himself as *'sick and weak in body but of sound mind'*.

The length and nature of his illness are not known. However, he did not rally, but died on 2<sup>nd</sup> March and was buried alongside his wife and infant son in All Saints' churchyard.

In his will, John left the sum of £20 to his *'honoured father'*, Nathaniel Hedge (3). The whole of his Real and Personal estate, subject to the above, he left to his brothers, **Nathaniel (4)** and Thomas (2), as Tenants in common, appointing them his executors. He charged his brothers to pay out of the estate an Annuity of £30 to his father during his lifetime, and after his death an Annuity of £10 to his widow during her lifetime. He also charged them to pay his mother-in-law, Ann Gosling, the sum of 5 shillings a week during her lifetime — such payment to be exclusive of her then husband or any future husband. He also left the sum of 5 guineas to his mother-in-law for mourning.

Presumably he calculated that his estate was sufficient to meet these bequests and still leave a reasonable balance to be divided between his two brothers. This suggests that the estate was not inconsiderable and the fact that it had been accumulated during the twenty years' of John's partnership is a guide to the prosperity of the business at this period.

### **Thomas (2) Hedge** (1744 – 1814)

**Nathaniel Hedge (4)**'s younger (by 9 years) brother, Thomas (2) was the 8<sup>th</sup> child and third surviving son of Nathaniel (3) and Sarah Hedge. He was born at (subsequently) 97 High Street, in the parish of All Saints', Colchester, and baptized 30<sup>th</sup> May 1744.

There was a gap of 7 years between Thomas and his next elder surviving brother, John, and by the time Thomas reached his teens the business was firmly established and expanding. The economic circumstances of the family were greatly improved, and it is likely that Thomas enjoyed a more liberal education and many opportunities to broaden his knowledge and experience beyond the narrow confines of the clockmaking business.

Nevertheless, it is certain that his father insisted on Thomas undergoing a full period of training in watch and clockmaking until he reached the age of 21.

Whereas his brothers, **Nathaniel (4)** and John, were dedicated craftsmen it is likely that Thomas was never wholehearted in his enthusiasm for the clockmaking business, looking on it more as a means of livelihood than as a vocation. This comment is not intended to convey any criticism of Thomas' character, which was basically sound and undoubtedly moulded by the conditions under which he grew up.

As a younger son he was probably made much of by the family and was allowed more leisure time than had been possible in the case of his elder brothers. Moreover, the higher standard of living which the family then enjoyed enabled Thomas to use his leisure wisely to broaden his horizon and equip himself for the important part he took later in local government.

He certainly developed a love of horses, which in later life was to influence his commercial career.

On 29<sup>th</sup> August 1765 Thomas was admitted and sworn a free burgess, in right of birth, from his father.

In January 1766 two men were arrested for the theft of two silver buckles valued at ten shillings from the Hedge shop. It was Thomas, although only 22 at the time, who prosecuted, and not his father nor his elder brother.

This was a small incident but indicates Thomas' strong and dominant character which developed even more as the years passed.

In June 1767, Thomas, then 23, married Sarah Gosling, aged eighteen, of Little Bentley, and took a house in All Saints' parish, next to the Castle Inn in High Street, subsequently numbered 93 and only four doors away from the family business at No. 97.

Their eldest son, Jacob, was born in 1768 and was followed by a second son, Thomas (4), in 1770. Both were baptized at All Saints' church on 29<sup>th</sup> June 1770.

Thomas (2), from the relatively early age of 25, became closely associated with the Borough Sessions Court and was known to prosecute on a number of occasions, when some people, a little more easy going or lax, might have allowed the incident to pass.

At the Quarter Sessions held 11<sup>th</sup> April 1774, he preferred a Bill of Indictment against Robert Sparrow for stealing a quantity of iron from his premises. It is doubtful whether the value of the iron was much, but the sentence was transportation for seven years.

Thomas was sworn on the Grand Jury for the East Ward on at least fourteen occasions between 1771 and 1790. On 9<sup>th</sup> April 1776, he was appointed, with his brother, John, Overseer of the Poor of the parish of All Saints'.

Thomas exercised his franchise by voting at the Poll for the election of Members of Parliament for Colchester on nine occasions between 1768 and 1796, and for Recorder for Colchester in 1813.

On 14 July 1777, a William Maire was charged on the Oath of Thomas Hedge with having committed a violent assault on him and, being unable to find sureties, was committed to gaol.

On 7 March 1778, Thomas' elder brother, John, died and after his death Thomas moved from No. 93 into the Hedge business premises at No. 97, where he remained until his death in 1814.

The year 1778 was an unhappy one for Thomas Hedge (2). He had been married to Sarah Gosling for 11 years when he summoned her for '*misbehaviour*'. Bearing in mind the position he held in the parish and in the town, it is certain that he would not have taken this step unless he had been driven to it as a last resort after possibly years of trouble with her.

Jacob Brown of Little Bentley and John Gosling of Ramsey were sureties, each in £10, for her appearance at the Quarter Sessions held 27<sup>th</sup> April 1778. The Indictment runs:

*For Sarah, the wife of Thomas Hedge, of Colchester in the county of Essex, Watchmaker, to appear and answer to all such Matters and Things as shall be objected against her by the said Thomas Hedge, her Husband and in the meantime to keep the Peace and be of Good Behaviour towards Our Sovereign Lord the King and all his liege Subjects and especially towards the same Thomas Hedge her husband.*

Less than 3 months later, she was again before the Quarter Sessions on the same charge on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1778. The same two men were sureties, but the amount had increased to £50 each.

This was again repeated at the Quarter Sessions on 5<sup>th</sup> October, but on this occasion Thomas Hedge was sworn in on the Grand Jury, representing the East Ward, which appears an embarrassing and unusual procedure.

Sarah Hedge appeared at each Quarter Sessions thereafter until 3<sup>rd</sup> April 1780 on a similar charge, and with the same two sureties. Nothing further is heard about her until 28<sup>th</sup> April 1783 when the gaol Kalendar for the Easter Sessions records:

*Committed to gaol for twelve months unless in the meantime she finds two sureties to be bound in a Recognizance of twenty pounds each for her good behaviour to all the King's Subjects and especially towards Thomas Hedge.*

*Sarah Hedge otherwise Sarah Goslin committed January 30<sup>th</sup> 1783 by Thomas Boggis Esq., charged on the Oath of William Edwards one of the Petty Constables of the Parish of All Saints' in the said Borough with a Breach of the Peace and she having refused to find Sureties.*

Her case was mentioned at the Midsummer and Michaelmas Sessions, and continuance of her sentence confirmed as she still failed to find sureties.

Sarah completed her sentence and was discharged from gaol on 19<sup>th</sup> April 1784. Nothing further is reported about Sarah, but she must have died a few years later, as Thomas Hedge married again about 1798/9.

His second wife, Judith Ann, presented him with a son, who was baptized, John Thomas, at All Saints' church on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 1801.

The disgrace of his first wife's behaviour does not appear to have had any adverse effect on Thomas' progress in local government affairs. Possibly he had the sincere sympathy of his fellow townsmen and certainly his strong and upright character won their respect.

On Charter Day, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 1784, when the Mayor and other officials were elected for the ensuing year, Thomas was duly elected and sworn in as an Assistant, which was the first stage in promotion from a common councilman.

Four years later, on 1<sup>st</sup> September 1788, Thomas was elected one of the Coroners for the Borough, an office to which he was re-elected each year until 1796 when he was appointed a Justice of the Peace and continued as such until his death in 1814.

Reference was made earlier to Thomas' love of horses which may well have influenced his decision when, in 1783, he entered into partnership with Mr J. Hamilton to run a new Post Coach from Woodbridge and Ipswich in Suffolk, via Colchester, to London. This was only the first of a number of Coaching Services run by the partnership during the succeeding years.

Thomas invested considerable sums of money in the coaching business, acquiring substantial properties at Ipswich, Colchester and Ingatestone for Post-Houses and Stabling. Presumably the

coaching business held greater interest for him than the clockmaking business, the management of which had devolved largely on his eldest son, Jacob.

Thomas' younger son, Thomas (4), followed his father in the coaching business, but predeceased him. Thomas (4) died in 1803 but left two sons and a daughter. His eldest son, Thomas (5), born in 1797, followed his father in the coaching business and moved to Ipswich. The younger son, Nathaniel (6), born in 1803, followed his uncle Jacob in the clockmaking business.

In the meantime, Thomas (2) continued to progress in local government. On 2<sup>nd</sup> September 1790 he was elected and sworn in as an Alderman of the Borough. As a small point of interest, the Great Universal Directory for Essex, published in 1791, records:

*'Thomas Hedge, Watchmaker, Silversmith Coachmaster and Coroner.'*

This was a full programme for any one man, but Thomas at 47 was still in his prime and possessed unbounded energy, coupled with considerable business ability and a strong character, which enabled him to achieve his ambition to serve his native town both as an outstanding magistrate and one of its leading citizens.

No good purpose would be served by enumerating the many references, during the seven years from 1790 to 1797, to Thomas Hedge (2) in his various capacities as magistrate, alderman and businessman. At the same time it is worth noting that at the Assembly held on 30<sup>th</sup> September 1796, Thomas Hedge was sworn in as a Justice of the Peace for the Borough.

In the following year, at the Assembly held 29<sup>th</sup> September, he was sworn in as Mayor of the Borough for the ensuing year, an office which he filled with distinction.

On 20<sup>th</sup> October 1798, Thomas Hedge was one of the Commissioners for the Borough of Colchester, appointed by the King's Warrant for selling the Land Tax.

Thomas Hedge's coaching business was proving very successful and in June 1798 he advertised a new service:

*Well lighted and guarded London and Yarmouth  
HAMBRO MAIL COACH  
for carrying the Foreign Mails sets out from  
the Spread Eagle Inn, Gracechurch Street every Monday.*

In May 1801 the coaching premises he rented at Ipswich were sold by auction and purchased by him. The following description of them gives some idea of the scope of his operations.

*All those Freehold Premises situated and adjoining the Coach and Horses in Brook Street Ipswich, aforesaid, now in occupation of Mr. Hedge, Coachmaster, consisting of a Dwelling House, Malt Offices, Stabling for 30 horses standing for five carriages, a large yard and good garden.*

In June 1801 a very interesting presentation took place which could hardly have a parallel at the present day. It was not reported in the Ipswich Journal until 14<sup>th</sup> November, when the following appeared:

*As a tribute to Thomas Hedge Esq. (our present worthy Mayor) a very elegant Silver Cup has lately been presented to him, together with a purse of gold, for strenuous and successful exertions in his Magisterial capacity, on which is inscribed as follows:—*

*To Thomas Hedge Esq., a Magistrate of this Borough, as a small Testimony of approbation due to his late exemplary and effectual exertions in bringing to public justice a band of robbers, this Cup is presented by Friends to a spirited administration of the Laws of their Country.*

*Colchester June 30<sup>th</sup> 1801.*

This cup was preserved in the Hedge family until 1957 when, on the death of Mrs Hedge, it was presented by her heir, Mr J. C. Hedge, to the Colchester Borough Council. It is exhibited in the Holly Trees Museum, but will be transferred to the Borough Regalia when accommodation permits.

Thomas Hedge was elected Mayor, for a second term of office, at the Assembly held 31 August 1801. A further distinction awaited Thomas Hedge when, on 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1802, the Lord Chief Justice of the Courts of King's Bench and Common Pleas appointed him 'Thomas Hedge Esq., Mayor of this Borough, a Commissioner for taking Bails in the Counties of Essex, Suffolk, Cambridge and Hertford'.

At this period in history the threat of invasion by Napoleon was very real, and amongst the measures taken by the Government was the formation of Volunteer Corps of Infantry in those parts of the country likely to be affected.

An appeal from the Lord Lieutenant of the County always receives loyal support in Essex, and the following report from the Ipswich Journal of 19<sup>th</sup> August 1803 proves that, so far as Colchester was concerned, it was equally true 220 years ago.

*19 August 1803, Colchester.*

*Mr. Bawtree read a letter on Friday last from the Lord Lieutenant of the County, signifying his Majesty's most gracious approval and acceptance of the offer of a Volunteer Corps of Infantry formed by the inhabitants of this town and on Saturday evening a Meeting was held for the purpose of enrolling. The number who have already enrolled amounts to 787 from which a Grenadier Company, a Light Infantry Company and eight Battalion Companies have been formed and the following Officers appointed.*

*Captains. Thomas Hedge, John Keeling.*

*Lieutenants. C. Hedge, John Hedge.*

It will be seen that the Hedge family was well represented and included Thomas Hedge. It was perhaps as well that the Volunteers were not called on to resist an invasion, because Thomas, at his then age of 59, was a little old to commence military training.

In addition to enrolling, Thomas contributed £10 0s 0d towards the cost of establishing the Loyal Colchester Volunteers, even as five years earlier he contributed £6 6s 0d towards the total of £1050, Voluntary Fund raised in Colchester towards the aid of the Government at a critical period.

It would seem natural that within two years of the formation at Colchester of the Essex Equitable Insurance Society, Thomas Hedge was elected one of the Town Directors on 7<sup>th</sup> May 1804.

On 29<sup>th</sup> September the same year he was sworn in for his third term of office as Mayor of the Borough. This was followed by a fourth term on the 1<sup>st</sup> October 1808, a record which alone demonstrates the high regard in which he was held by his fellow townsmen.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> June 1807, Thomas' second wife, Judith Ann, died, which at his then advancing age must have been a severe blow to him.

Thomas' legal experience and ability were recognized in high places. The Ipswich Journal reported under the date:

*16 February 1808, Colchester.*

*The Lord Chancellor has appointed Thomas Hedge of this place, Gent. to be a Master extraordinary in the High Court of Chancery.*

Throughout his life Thomas was always a good churchman and took an active part in the work of both the church and parish.

Thomas made and signed his will on 7<sup>th</sup> August 1811. In it he left the whole of his personal and real estate, with one small exception, on trust for his son, by his second wife, John Thomas, then 10 years of age.

The will is a formidable document of eight pages of small closely written script. It enumerated his various properties and gave clear and detailed instructions to his executors on the administration of the estate during the minority of his son. It, moreover, instructed his son on its disposal at his death, with all possible alternatives according to the family his son might leave. Having built up quite a considerable fortune he seemed determined that it should benefit the son of his second marriage and his descendants, which is what in fact happened.

The only exception in the will was the stables, buildings and hereditaments at Ingatestone in Essex which he left to his grandson, Thomas Hedge (5), then fourteen years old, the son of Thomas' (2) younger son Thomas (4) by his first wife, who followed his father in the coaching business.

Thomas Hedge (2) died on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1814, and the following account of his death, which appeared in the Colchester Gazette of 23<sup>rd</sup> July is a tribute to the man which is best given in its original form.

*Died on Saturday last (16<sup>th</sup> July 1814) universally esteemed and respected by all who had the opportunities of appreciating his value, that able and experienced Magistrate, Thomas Hedge Esq., of All Saints' parish in this Borough. His uncorrupt integrity, his unshaken independence, his peculiar acuteness in the development of evidence, and his impartial decisions, uniformly entitled him to the respect and consideration of his townsmen. No man, in his limited sphere of action, ever more strenuously devoted his services to the welfare of the public and the prevention of dispute and litigation. Long will his memory be endeared to the Corporation, whose character he most respectably upreared; and long will his name be embalmed in the affections of those who applied to him for advice and information.*

He served the office of Mayor four times to the satisfaction of all parties, and had just exceeded his 70<sup>th</sup> year.

Shortly after his death Thomas' household effects were sold by auction at a sale lasting two days. The list of the contents of the house gives the impression of very comfortable, if not gracious, living.

### **Jacob Hedge (1769 - 1794-98)**

Jacob Hedge, the eldest son of Thomas (2) and Sarah Hedge, was born in 1769 and baptized at All Saints' church on 29 July 1770.

His early life is a closed book, but it is certain that he could not have enjoyed a very happy childhood. He was only 9 years old when his mother was first in Court for '*misbehaviour, especially to her husband*', and only 14 when she was committed to gaol for 12 months.

By this time he would have started his apprenticeship training with his father as a watch and clockmaker.

It is not surprising that, with such a home background, he took the earliest opportunity to establish his own home. On 17<sup>th</sup> August 1789, when he was 20 years of age, he married Sarah Bridges, aged 17, also of All Saints' parish, and they settled in a house very close to the business premises at No. 97 High Street in All Saints' parish, where they remained until his death.

When Jacob reached the age of 21 he was admitted and sworn a free burgess, in right of birth, from his father, on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1790, and on 19<sup>th</sup> June he voted at the Poll for Members of Parliament for the Borough.

At the Assembly held 30<sup>th</sup> August the same year, Jacob was amongst the 24 freemen chosen to elect Coroners, Claviors and Chamberlain.

Jacob Hedge was bound over in the sum of £20 together with his sureties, each in the sum of £20 to appear at the Quarter Sessions held on 4<sup>th</sup> October 1790:

*For the said Jacob Hedge to keep the Peace and be of good behaviour towards our Sovereign Lord the King and all his liege people and especially towards Sarah his wife.*

He also appeared in Court on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1791, and on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1791.

At the time of his first appearance he had only been married for 14 months, and it is somewhat surprising that within such a short time he was treating his young wife in a manner necessitating appearance in Court. The only reasonable explanation is that he had inherited from his mother some of her instability of character, and it is possible that drink was the source of the trouble in both cases.

It is to be presumed, however, that he was not too out of hand, because at the Easter vestry meeting at All Saints' on 26<sup>th</sup> April 1791 he was included amongst three parishioners nominated to be returned to the Justices for the appointment of two of them to be Overseers of the parish. It is perhaps significant that he was not appointed.

There is no record that Jacob and Sarah had any family and in that respect Jacob was unique amongst the men of the Hedge family who married.

The last record of Jacob Hedge which has been traced to date is when he paid the rates on his house in All Saints', on 13<sup>th</sup> May 1794. By 4<sup>th</sup> August that year the house was in the occupation of a Mr Reeve.

It is possible that he died between May and August 1794, but no entry can be found in the burial register of All Saints' or any other of the Colchester parishes.

It is possible that he left the town, but if he did so he died before 1798 when his widow married Sergt Major William Gough of St Runwald's parish, Colchester.

### **Charles Hedge (1773- 1808)**

Charles Hedge was the fifth son of **Nathaniel (4)** and Martha Hedge. He was baptized on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1773 at St Runwald's church.

It is reasonable to assume that his father gave him a full training in watch and clockmaking besides initiating him in the mysteries of the silversmith and goldsmith's arts. It would appear, however, that his preference was for the latter crafts because, when he was admitted and sworn a free burgess on 25<sup>th</sup> May 1796, he was described as Charles Hedge of Colchester, Silversmith (son of Nathaniel).

Later the same year he was described as a goldsmith, in a conveyance of family property in St Mary Magdalen parish, from his father and uncle, as executors of his grandfather's (Nathaniel (3)'s) will, to him, for a nominal consideration.

Charles' father, **Nathaniel(4)**, was by training and preference a watch and clockmaker, although when he started in business on his own account in 1765, he included silverware, gold and jewellery, as was common practice at that time. It would seem, however, that he welcomed the interest of his son, Charles, in that side of the business as an opportunity to divest himself of it.

He established Charles in adjoining shop premises as a silversmith and goldsmith, retaining the watch and clockmaking business himself.

It was within the family tradition to take an active part in local government, and Charles was no exception. On 6<sup>th</sup> September 1800 he was elected one of the 'Coroners' of the Borough, an office to which he was re-elected each year until 1804.

Charles subscribed 5 guineas towards the cost of establishing the Loyal Colchester Volunteers, in which he served as a lieutenant.

On 7<sup>th</sup> September 1805, Charles was elected a common councilman of the Borough.

Charles was married on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1807, at St George's church, Hanover Square, London, to Miss Frances Dubois of Upper Grosvenor Street, and their son, Charles, was baptized at St Peter's church, Colchester, on 13<sup>th</sup> July 1808.

Charles Hedge died on 26<sup>th</sup> December 1808, after a short illness, and was buried in the family vault in St Peter's churchyard.

His father, **Nathaniel (4)**, took over the business and in exchange paid annuities to Charles' widow and infant son. The widow remained in Colchester until 1810 when she sold her household furniture by auction, and returned to London. In due course her son, Charles, became a coal merchant at Camden Town, and in May 1831 was admitted and sworn a free burgess of the Borough of Colchester, in right of birth, from his father.

### **Nathaniel (6) Hedge (1803 – 18xx)**

Nathaniel (6) was the second son of Thomas (4) and Jane Hedge. He was baptized on 19<sup>th</sup> June 1803, at All Saints' church.

He was the grandson of Nathaniel Hedge (3) who founded the clock-making business, and the nephew of Jacob Hedge who managed the business for his father, Thomas (2), from 1789 until his death in 1794/5.

Nathaniel (6)'s elder brother, Thomas (5), followed his father and grandfather in the coaching business and died at Ipswich in 1822.

Nathaniel (6) was only a few weeks old when his father, Thomas (4), died on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1803 and only eleven years old when his grandfather, Thomas (2), died in 1814.

When Thomas (4) married Jane in 1795 they lived in a house (subsequently numbered 103) in the High Street, which was owned by father, Thomas (2), and was occupied by Nathaniel (3) until his death early in 1795.

After the death of Thomas (4), his widow, Jane, remained in the house (No. 103) with her two sons, Thomas aged 6 and Nathaniel aged 1, until the end of the year.

Bernard Mason did not establish where Jane moved to, but thinks it most likely that she went back to her own people at Ipswich. If this was the case then doubtless Nathaniel (6) would have served his apprenticeship to a watch and clockmaker in that town.

This theory is rather undermined by the first reference to Nathaniel (6) to be found in All Saints' parish.

At the vestry meeting held 20<sup>th</sup> April 1824, Nathaniel Hedge (6) was elected to serve on a committee to inspect the state of the tower, the bells and the fabric of the church.

At the date in question Nathaniel (6) was almost 21 years of age. It is most unlikely that he would have been elected on the committee unless he had been living in the parish for a few years and been a regular attendant at the church.

This suggests that his mother either remained in Colchester, possibly moving into No. 95 High Street, or returned when Nathaniel was old enough to commence his apprenticeship.

When Nathaniel (6) was fourteen years of age, his grandfather, Thomas (2), had been dead for 3 years and there is considerable doubt whether the original clockmaking business was still running.

It could be that Nathaniel (6) obtained his training with Joseph Banister in Colchester.

On 18<sup>th</sup> October 1824 Nathaniel (6) was admitted and sworn a free burgess, in right of birth, from his father. At the beginning of 1826, Nathaniel (6) was established as a watch and clockmaker at No. 95

High Street. This was two shops to the east of No. 97 where the original clockmaking business was established in 1739, which premises were sold shortly after the death of Thomas (2) in 1814.

Nathaniel (6) was Overseer of the Poor of the parish of All Saints' for the year 1830-31. He continued to be a regular attendant at the vestry meetings for some years and as late as 1839 his name was put forward, last on the list, for Overseer.

His business was not successful, because on 8<sup>th</sup> September 1830 he filed his Petition in Bankruptcy. The estate paid the creditors a dividend of four shillings and nine-pence in the pound on 11<sup>th</sup> March 1831.

His bankruptcy does not appear to have affected his activities to any serious extent. He was a common councilman in 1831 and in 1832 and in the latter year was elected one of the twenty-four freemen, responsible for electing Coroners, Claviers, Sergeants-at-Mace and the Chamberlain. He was elected for the same duty in 1833, and in 1834 was elected High Constable.

As a freeman he voted at the Poll on at least seven occasions between 1831 and 1837.

Either the bankruptcy did not cause him to close down, or if so, he re-started shortly after 1832 because he was definitely in business as a watch and clockmaker at 95 High Street in 1835. On 31<sup>st</sup> August that year he was again elected a common councilman.

Early in 1836 he took a Thomas Archer into partnership which lasted only a few months.

He was evidently in financial difficulties during this period because he was summoned for debt on a number of occasions during the ensuing three years.

In September 1839, a London Surgeon Aurist used Nathaniel's premises for consultations during a fortnight's visit to the town. The same thing happened in March 1840 when a Surgeon Dentist from London spent three weeks in Colchester.

Even these emergency measures did not fend off the final collapse of his business. On 5<sup>th</sup> November 1841 Nathaniel (6) appeared in the Insolvent Debtor's Court at the Shire Hall, Chelmsford, when he paid £47 9s 1d into Court.

Although notice of opposition had been lodged, no one appeared against him and he was ordered to be discharged. Mr Simpson, a silversmith of Denmark Street, London, the detaining Creditor who had given notice of opposition, applied to be appointed Assignee, which was granted.

By the 4 March 1842, the business had been wound up and the premises taken over by Mr J. B. Harvey, bookseller.

There is no record at Somerset House of the death of Nathaniel (6) Hedge, and Bernard Mason is of the opinion that he emigrated and died abroad.

There is some doubt whether Nathaniel (6) actually built any clock movements himself.

Two oak long-case clocks, signed by him, are illustrated on BM p327.

These are both eight-day movements of the period 1825-30, and the author is inclined to credit Nathaniel (6) with, at least part, manufacture of these movements.

The general finish is well below the standard established by earlier members of the Hedge family and if it is typical of Nathaniel's work, his failure in business is readily understandable.

### Clock calibration

Date 7<sup>th</sup> Sept. 2020 Measured one hour with my watch. 60 mins and 10 seconds (4 min/day).

$$T = 2\pi \sqrt{\frac{L}{g}}$$

For a perfect pendulum the Length would be  $L = g(T/2\pi)^2$

and with a period of exactly 2 seconds and  $g = 9.81 \text{ m/s}^2$

$$L_o = g(T/2\pi)^2 = 9.81(2/2\pi)^2 = 0.993961 \text{ m}$$

The period measured is  $3610/1800 = 2.005556 \text{ sec}$

$$L_m = g(T/2\pi)^2 = 9.81(2.005556/2\pi)^2 = 0.999491$$

Length reduction required  $0.999491 - 0.993961 = 0.00553 \text{ m} = 5.5 \text{ mm}$

Reduced pendulum length by several turns and measured again:

Measured one hour with my watch. 60 mins and 2 seconds (less than 1 min/day).