

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Philomena,

I should like to reply to Mr. Warren's letter, published in the September newsletter regarding a Secret Tunnel between Dover Castle and the Market Square. We have been involved in a lengthy correspondence with Mr. Warren for some time regarding the existence of this tunnel and have followed up every lead that he has provided. Unfortunately, no-one has actually come forward who has seen this tunnel. We wrote to his brother, who now questions that it was in fact a tunnel that he fell into and thinks that it was more likely to have been a vault or cellar. We have also corresponded with several people who claimed to know of the tunnel's existence, and in each case none was actually a first-hand account, only second or even third hand information or hearsay or in one case, anonymous.

Finally, we also requested assistance from our Technical colleagues in the Council, who confirmed our belief that the Market Square area was covered with alluvial deposits and therefore was a poor if not impossible medium for tunnelling. This view has also recently been supported by the Kent Underground Research Group.

These then are our reasons for discounting Mr. Warren's tunnel theories. However, as I have written to Mr. Warren, if anyone can provide us with some more tangible information, we would be more than willing to follow the matter up once again.

Yours sincerely,

Christine Waterman (MISS) BA AMA  
CURATOR

For Chief Executive

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## KEEPING DOVER TIDY

A group of four fourteen year old schoolboys, from Astor School, Dover, known - amongst other things - as the "Astor Grime Squad", volunteered to tackle some of the town's problem spots during their summer vacation.

I was pleased to accompany them and look after their interests, and it gives me pleasure now to say that all the tasks allotted to them were efficiently completed.

As a secondary consideration we anticipated that appreciative audiences or recipients of their labour might wish to reward the boys for their efforts. We therefore agreed beforehand that any gratuities received would go to the National Children's Home. That part of the operation was left in the capable hands of Mike McFarnell.

For those of you who have not met him I can introduce him as the Projects Officer of Dover District Council. His job was to designate our

tasks, to organise the various tools necessary for their completion, and most important, to squeeze money from his employers to cover the out-of-pocket expenses incurred by the boys. Perhaps of interest, one came from Folkestone and one from Whitfield.

Mike allowed us the use of his car, which we thought was above and beyond the call of duty. It could have been no bunch of violets at the close of operations.

On different days we were active in Folkestone Road, Maison Dieu Road, Pencester Road, the rear of Biggin Street, New Street and Castle Street. We also spent several days clearing mud and weeds from the river at Charlton Green. Let me briefly introduce that stretch of river to the uninitiated.

From the path one gazes down at the river bed (on a clear day) covered with perhaps eighteen inches of water. Set foot in it however and you have the doubtful pleasure of sinking immediately through eighteen inches of mud; much more as you move from the road. Waist deep in the middle and too deep to venture at all on the far side. By removing a dam we could lower the level of the water but it meant that our home made raft then grounded. Also it proved time-consuming rebuilding the dam again.

Any mud or weed which escaped down river before we could contain it obviously created problems in the lower reaches. As we scraped away, with sticks and rakes, I must confess that our thoughts dwelt on suction cleaners and mechanical grabs which would have filled a dozen skips in a matter of hours. And, practically of course, one would visualize starting the operation at Townwall Street and working inland. Our limited operation at Charlton proved that the mud island in the centre of the river acted as a magnet to all the other silt and rubbish finding its way downstream.

The only way these theories could be tested was for the boys to strip and wade in, which they did without hesitation. Perhaps too late now to offer thanks to Dover Engineering Works but, for the record, they did not hesitate to allow us the use of their leg waders, and more important, because I cannot conceive how we would have managed otherwise, they allowed us the use of their premises for washing and cleaning purposes.

Be warned. No washing machine can beat that mud. Well done Astor!

Barry Smith (Secretary)

## \* URGENT REMINDER \*

Members of the Society and their personal guests are invited to a WHITE CLIFFS EXPERIENCE Presentation by Dover District Council on 10 Jan. 7.00 at the Council Offices. Please fill in the slip on the letter you have received & return immediately. Please come & ensure a large audience.

