

The  
Dover  
Society

# Newsletter

No. 45

December 2002



Visitor Centre at Azincourt

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# THE DOVER SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1988

Registered with the Civic trust, Affiliated to the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies  
Registered Charity No. 299954

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## *The Objectives of the Dover Society*

*founded in 1988.*

- to promote high standards of planning and architecture
- to interest and inform the public in the geography, history, archæology, natural history and architecture of the area
- to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest
- and commitment to the belief that a good environment is a good investment.

The area we cover comprises the parishes or wards of Barton, Buckland, Castle, Lydden, Temple Ewell, Maxton, Pineham, Priory, River, St. Radigund's, Town & Pier and Tower Hamlets.

All members receive three Newsletters a year and in each year the Committee organises about ten interesting events – talks, tours, visits, Members' Meetings and usually a Christmas Feast.

The Society gives Awards for improvements to the area, monitors planning proposals and supports, joins in or initiates civic projects and arts events.

## Editorial

We hope to see many of you at the next meeting which is the Christmas Feast on December 14th at Dover College Refectory. Book with Joan Liggett if you have not already done so. Details of the rest of the indoor meetings are listed on the back cover as usual. Remember to book a table for the popular February Wine and Wisdom evening.

The last summer outing, a day trip to Azincourt, was a great success and is reported here by Joyce Molyneux, who gives us her own historian's view of the battle. Thanks to all who contributed photographs, plans and maps. Joan Liggett, with her usual efficiency, organised the event, despite many setbacks, including a last-minute switch to a different coach company, and, as ever, she deserves our congratulations.

The autumn season started with a flourish, coinciding, as it did, with the news of Dover District Council's proposed restructuring plans, perceived by most residents as unwelcome CUTS! As it happened, the speaker booked for the October meeting was none other than the Managing Director of Dover District Council, Nadeem Aziz, who had to face a barrage of questions at the end of his talk. Jack Woolford reports on this. After the interval, when our speaker had departed, the assembled company got down to the annual brainstorming session, with plenty of current ideas for discussion. As usual, I have collated the findings and presented them as they emerged at the meeting. However, as most members will be aware, the following week the Council had second thoughts on several of their proposals, after they had feedback on the views of Dover District's residents. The summary of the Society's views was sent to the Managing Director and the Chairman of DDC. A response was received stating that our views would be taken into consideration at the full Council meeting.

This newsletter includes many of its usual features, reports from Paul Hadaway and Chris Taft, an article by Ivan Green, reports from Planning and Projects and three more snippets of Dover history in 'Glimpses of the Past'. This collection is proving a

very popular feature of the Newsletter and I have four or five promises of future contributions from members. If you have any memories which you think may be suitable for the series please let me know. They can be your own memories or those of friends or relatives.

Thanks are due to all our contributors and to our advertisers. Please support them at Christmas. Culver Gallery calendars and pictures make great presents. Take a look at Serendipity's huge collection of antique

china when you are in Deal. Visit Elham Antiques. Note that Castle Fine Arts has moved, but Deborah Colam can be contacted on the same telephone number.

Our grateful thanks to all distributors, especially Joe Harman who has just given up the job, having done it from the beginning. He is replaced by Martyn Burton. Congratulations to Vice-President, Ivan Green, on the occasion of his 90th Birthday.

Seasonal greetings to all our readers.

*Editor*

### FOOTNOTE: WANTED – AN EDITOR

I have now held the post of Newsletter Editor for eleven years, having taken over from Philomena Kennedy for the September issue in 1991. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as editor but would like to find a successor when I have completed twelve years at the job, that is after the April issue 2003. The applicant will need to have a PC and to collect all the material for an issue, edit it, send it for proof-reading and present the copy to Adams Printers on disc. Alternatively, should we find an editor with the expertise to do all the page-setting as well as the above, the Society would be lucky indeed - and it would save a great deal on printing costs. If there is an enthusiastic member out there who would like to undertake this fascinating and rewarding job, please get in touch with me. Needless to say, I will be happy to support and help the new editor for several issues and to continue to contribute articles in the future.

*Merril Lilley*

### DEADLINE for contributions

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 46 will be Monday 17th February 2003. The Editor welcomes contributions and interesting drawings or photographs. 'Paper copy' should be typed at double spacing. Handwritten copy should be clear with wide line spacing. Accurate fully proof-read copy on computer discs is acceptable; please ring 01304 205254 to discuss details.

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The work of the

# PLANNING

Sub-Committee

Reported by JACK WOOLFORD, Chairman

We are more than pleased by Dover District Council's rejection of proposals for demolitions, conversions and additional housing on the scheduled Ancient Monument of the Western Heights. Advised by John Peverley, author of 'Dover's Hidden Fortress', who single-handedly saved the Moats from the then Dover Borough Council's plan to infill them with domestic rubbish (late 1950s), we emphasised the availability of grants for conservation and the consequential enhancement of a priceless asset to tourism. We also recalled the two occasions when the New Dover Group and then the Dover Society successfully appealed against the Home Office for demolishing a Victorian Powder Magazine and for an ill-designed building on the skyline .... We await developments ....

We are pleased to have been invited to join Dover Harbour Board's Port Consultative Committee to be consulted as well as informed on future developments. We already knew about the two new berths at the Eastern Arm. We now know that two more are possible and that there will be no

development at the Western Docks before they are commercially feasible. If there is to be a Westport (from the Admiralty Pier to Samphire Hoe) the ferries will have to pay for it. The M2/A2 will be upgraded: but not before 2008. And as Chief Executive and Chairman, Bob Goldfield, persuasively argued, neither traffic on Townwall St nor the restoration of the rail link to the Western Docks was in the control of the Port which was no more than a bus stop. Anglers at the Admiralty Pier might get more parking space but residents (who were well represented) must accept that 'Dover is the Port and the Port is Dover'. There was no reference to the promised Watersport Centre on Granville Gardens, although it has been suggested that Pencer Pavilion would be better sited there.

Whilst accepting that the £3m deficit must mean cuts in Dover District Council's services, we have joined the chorus of support for the 'Dover Express' campaign to 'Save Our Loos'. We also very much applaud the Express's 'River Watch' and will press for a survey by the local councils to revive the proposal, expressed thirty years ago by the New Dover Group for a Riverside Walk from Kearsney to Townwall Street.

We continue to await the name of the superstore in the proposed St James redevelopment of the Town Centre and wonder what work of art will suitably replace the vandisable fountain in the Market Square.

## MEMBERSHIP NEWS DECEMBER 2002

The Society has been in existence for fourteen years and we have an accumulation of past newsletters. We intend to offer some for sale at each meeting starting with number eight which was the first in booklet form. (Prior to that, newsletters were stapled A4 sheets). Some early issues, particularly 10, 11 and 12, are no longer available but please let me know if you wish to obtain any others.

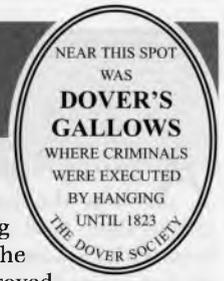
Thanks again to members who continue to supply raffle prizes, particularly for the Christmas Feast when we hope to see at least one prizewinner at each table.

For the past four years our numbers have remained constant in October, 408 again. We welcome Miss R Matthews, Mr C and Mrs M Batchelder, Mr D Embry, Miss M Johnston and Mrs A Johnston.

*Sheila R Cope*

# Last Plaque - Project Completed

*Report from Terry Sutton*



**A**t long last our project, to put up ten historic plaques in the town, is completed. Much of the success of the project is due to the perseverance of past chairman Jeremy Cope and his wife, Sheila, who deserve our thanks. Little did I know, some five years ago, when I suggested installing the ten blue plaques to commemorate the Millennium, what hard work it would prove.

The tenth and final plaque was officially 'unveiled' in September on the outside wall of The Eagle public house at the junction of Tower Hamlets Road and London Road. Thanks to the help of Dover's town clerk, Robert Bailey, the ceremony was carried out by Dover's Honorary Recorder, Judge Andrew Patience QC, who was in town for Cinque Ports' Speakers' day.

This tenth 'gallows' plaque is near the spot where, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Dover's felons were executed. It had been planned to install the

plaque on another wall on the other side of the road but gaining permission from the ground landlords proved difficult. So the new owners of The Eagle, the Harvey family, came to the rescue.

The ceremony was attended by Dover's town mayor Mrs Diane Snallwood (also Speaker of the Cinque Ports) and a small group of our members. Many of our other members who would have liked to attend were on a society-organised visit to the battlefield of Agincourt.

I was able to thank the Recorder and his wife - also a judge- and others for attending the ceremony and also to thank Jeremy and Sheila for their hours of work in obtaining the various consents for the installation of the plaques. So, all ten plaques, marking historic events or places, are now in place. I hope they will mark the Dover Society's stake in the town for centuries to come.

## ST MARTIN'S EMMAUS *Report by Terry Sutton*

St. Martin's Emmaus at Archcliffe Fort, just off the A20 at Dover, has made great strides since this Newsletter last described the work there. The Dover Society has helped in the establishment of the centre for otherwise homeless and unemployed men and women. The centre is usually completely full, with twenty Companions who keep busy with a variety of tasks ranging from furniture restoration to collecting unwanted item from the wider community. A new £100, 000 smart showroom has been opened boosting average sales to about £2, 000 a week. As a result the Companions are ensuring that the centre is now roughly breaking even. In

the future they hope to make a profit that can be used to assist other charities including the establishment of other Emmaus centres elsewhere in the country.

In September the founder of St Martin's Emmaus, Francis Watts, retired as chairman of the trustees although he remains a trustee. He has been succeeded by John Clayton, the former Director of Planning and Technical Services with Dover District Council.

Members are reminded that if they have any items of furniture, or other goods, no longer wanted please let St Martin's Emmaus know. Ring 01304 206600 or 204550 to arrange collection.

# Project Review

Report from Lesley Gordon

Assure sign that an undertaking is proving rewarding and successful is when the participants voluntarily extend their field of endeavour. So it has been with the Cowgate cemetery clearance project, aimed at removing years of all enveloping growth so as to make the pathways and gravestones accessible once again to visitors. Praise for the efforts of the Society's two clearance teams flooded in over the summer after they extended their operations to four of the eight large plots. The two original plots (6 & 7) have had damaging tree growth removed, as has plot 5 (bottom left, seaward corner), which was badly damaged by bombing during the war. The groups will finish mowing these three plots over the winter months and will then return to tree clearing on plot 1 (above plot 5). The other 4 plots are being tackled from time to time by the White Cliffs Countryside Project's own team, and by pupils from Dover College. Do go and take

a look. One or two of you may be moved to swell the ranks of the Saturday morning team (which meets once a month), in which case contact Jeremy Cope on 01304 211348.

One benefit of the new work at Cowgate, is that yet more gravestones are becoming accessible and being recorded. This is a continuing process and will eventually enable families and civic authorities alike to locate burials in the cemetery and have available all inscriptions that remain legible to date.

Of further interest to Society members in September was the opening to the public of the Unitarian Church, one weekend, as part of the Civic Trust Heritage Open Days. The article in August's Newsletter brought forth a number of visitors and the Society was instrumental in securing press coverage in the Dover Express. A letter of thanks has been received from the organizers at the church.



Tree falling at Cowgate Cemetery.



Photographs: Jack Woolford

# The October Meeting

## Talk by Nadeem Aziz

*Report by Jack Woolford*

Initially appointed as Director of Planning and Technical Services but after two-and-half years promoted to Managing Director, Nadeem Aziz, a civil engineer, explained his appointment to Dover District Council after ten years with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets regenerating Dockland and creating Canary Wharf. At age forty he felt it was time to move on and, while coveting a job with the London Borough of Richmond, he applied to Dover to practice being interviewed: and was appointed. Whilst hesitating, John Moir invited him to Dover for a week-end during which his younger daughter said: 'Dad, what is wrong with this place? People keep saying 'Good Morning' to me'.

This was pivotal. Dover, he thought, was a fantastic place with great people and great history, but didn't realise its full potential. East Kent, unlike Surrey, was very under-rated and Dover had more than its fair share of negative press and image. There were areas of economic deprivation, poor health, transport, employment and entertainment. Despite some excellent schools there were many dropouts and teenage pregnancies. As elsewhere there was a breakdown of community, with crime, dependency culture and the 'They should do something about it' culture. In addition Dover had problems as the United Kingdom's No. 1 Port, including bootlegging and asylum seekers in the front line of what is a national, international

and global issue.

The Council, he said, must join up these issues through the Area Strategic Partnership and at Regional level with SEEDA, Kent County Council etc. There must be economic regeneration via the Dover Town Investment Zone with a developer for a mixed use development with major retiling and leisure facilities in the Town Centre. Working with the Harbour Board, which has withstood the battering from the Channel Tunnel must continue, and with SEEDA for regeneration of the coal-mining areas, with 1000 new homes. Rail/freight services must be restored, A2 dualled, and A20 improved to avert Operation Stack.

On the social front we were in the Crime Reduction Partnership with the Police and through SRB and SureStart trying to include excluded communities and giving them aspiration and skills.

The opening of Dover Discovery Centre reinforced our commitment to life long learning. All this was being done at a time of restructuring and major budget adjustments because fairly substantial capital reserves had rightly been spent on maintaining levels of service and on the Deal Dryside and Pier and Youth Spaces. For fifteen stable years the Council had been safe, traditional and conservative (small 'c') and now needed to be more focused, creative and 'in touch'. Extensive and intensive consultations were proceeding, trying to accommodate community views in making necessary but difficult decisions.

# 8 BRAINSTORMING SESSION - 14th October

*Reported by Merrill Lilley*

*It is customary for us to have at least one brainstorming session in the annual programme. This is always a valuable exercise. As one member remarked, 'that was good fun'. This year the members divided into three groups, each with a committee member to lead the discussion. Jack, Jeremy and Derek fulfilled this role admirably. There were four discussion topics and I have attempted to summarise the results from the three groups.*

**1. THE FUTURE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT.** (*Jack Woolford had given us some guidance earlier, by explaining the implications of unitary authorities.*)

If there was to be one large unit stretching from Oxford to Surrey, to Thanet and to Dover, it was felt that this would be unwieldy, if not ridiculous. Most were against it, but felt that it might, eventually, be inevitable.

One group said - no to government from Guildford! We don't want to be the poor relations! We want to be local! We would like to keep what we have - Town Council, District Council, County Council.

Some said Kent should remain as one unit, even if there were different subdivisions (East, West, Medway?)

A balance of economy was needed in each unitary authority.

**2. RESPONSE TO RESTRUCTURING (SAVINGS OR CUTS?)**

Following the news that DDC is to undertake a major restructuring, part of which involves achieving in the region of £2.7 million of savings in the next financial year, the groups were asked for their reactions.

**Museum** - The greatest reaction was to the proposed cuts in museum funding of £200,000, which is a 45% cut. Members were in strong opposition to this, pointing out that the museum is one of the best in the country, with a splendid record of successes. It was at the heart of the community and contributed greatly to tourism and

education. To cut the number of curators from three to one and also reduce to number of custodians would be disastrous and mean a huge reduction in some services and the cessation of others. It was accepted that some cuts would have to be made but it was felt that the Council figure of 45% was severe and should be reviewed. There were various suggestions, including the idea that if the temporary exhibition programme was discontinued, the space might be let to outside concerns which would pay for their own exhibitions.

**Tourism** - The proposed cut for tourism includes the reduction of staff from five to one.

There was much discussion on the need to keep the 'brand' name of Dover and its white cliffs and to continue to promote the White Cliffs Countryside as an attractive tourist destination. Any idea of combining with Canterbury was seen as disastrous and should be rejected.

The annual town guide should remain, even if a charge has to be made for it. It is not true that everyone has access to a web site. Town guides are still needed.

**Toilets** - The closing of toilets was deplored as unnecessary.

**The Fountain** - The fountain should remain as a favourite feature in the Market Square. It should not be fenced off.

**The Town Hall** - Should be kept - it is an invaluable asset to the town, social events, concerts, shows, historical interest for visitors.

### **Savings** - How can the Council save money?

- Cut down on expensive, glossy in-house brochures?
- Cut down on expensive consultancy exercises?
- Ask the government for more help for the region?
- Closely monitor local services. Efficiency of car park attendants was questioned.

### **3. PRAISE AND SHAME LISTS**

The idea of compiling praise and shame lists of buildings and sites in Dover was discussed and most people were in favour of this. Some groups merely discussed the feasibility and publicity angle of such a study. Others began to name actual sites, with the 'shame' list headed by the Crypt site in Bench Street, the apparently abandoned site on the corner of Bench

Street and Townwall Street, Burlington House, the former Army Recruitment Centre on the A20, Woolworths and Lidl's

### **4. SUGGESTIONS FOR OUTINGS AND SPEAKERS**

#### **Outings**

Kent/SE: Amhurst Fort, Chatham Maritime Museum, Down House, Betchley Park, Eltham Palace, Yalding Gardens, Hever Castle, a local brewery, Portsmouth Dockyard, Coastguard Station (small groups).

London: Houses of Parliament, another river trip.

Abroad: La Coupole, WWII rocket site, Ypres, Waterloo, Brussels.

#### **Speakers**

Representative from English Heritage, National Trust, Demelza House, Dover Counselling Centre (Janet Johnston).





# WESTERN HEIGHTS

*Report from Paul Hadaway*



Dover's Western Heights have long played a salient role in defending the gateway to England. Over time this role has led to an almost unique landscape where humans have shaped the natural topography of the Heights to create the strangely steep and angular slopes so different from the rolling downland that surrounds the rest of Dover. Now, thanks to grant money from the Countryside Agency (CoA), the Western Heights are fulfilling a new role as the gateway to the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

The AONB is a designation confirming the national importance of the Kent Downs and runs from the white cliffs at Dover, across the North Downs to the Surrey border, encompassing about a quarter of the county. The designation offers legal protection, helps conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the downs whilst providing access, information, education and enjoyment to visitors or locals alike. This is where the Western Heights have an important role to play, acting as a magnet to draw people in to exploring the wider Kent Downs.

The White Cliffs Countryside Project (WCCP) applied for and was awarded a grant under the CoA Downs Around Towns' grant scheme administered by the Kent Downs AONB unit at KCC. This money has all been targeted at attracting more visitors to the Heights whilst improving access to, and around, the site. Improvement work carried out on the Western Heights included:

- \* Three new flights of steps built
- \* 60 metres of paths revetted
- \* Gravel treatment of approx. 200 steps & 120 metres of paths
- \* Old dangerous railway sleeper steps removed & replaced & handrail repaired

These site improvements are benefiting the many people who use the area for recreation, enjoy exploring the rich history and wildlife of the Heights or the accidental casual visitors who find their way to the site and are stunned by what they find, hidden from much of the town's view.

We are very aware that some of the 50,000 visitors to the Heights each year do find their way on to the site by accident. Many of you will have seen our full colour. Explore The Western Heights leaflet and on-site welcome panels which, through this grant, have been redesigned. The new welcome panels, situated at all the main car parks or entrances to the Heights, feature a three dimensional map of the site (much better for getting your bearings, two dimensional maps of the Heights just look like a jumble of geometric shapes!) featuring site information, information about the AONB, photographs and a colourful frieze showing some of the plants and butterflies found there. The site leaflet, which follows a very similar format but contains extra information about the history of the Heights, is available from various places in the area including all Tourist Information Centres, libraries, museums and local attractions.

- \* Approx. 250 metres of paths cleared of vegetation back 2 metres either side

Besides trying to encourage more visitors to the site through the leaflet we have also installed a new series of way-marked trails to the Western Heights from key points in Dover town. This scheme is based on the 'Corridors to the Countryside', a similar scheme the WCCP established in Folkestone with the aim of encouraging people to explore the countryside surrounding their towns. This is key to the aims of the 'Downs Around Towns' grant scheme which promotes ways of establishing links between towns and these important 'green lungs' areas like the Heights. The new trails are marked by brown, heritage style, arrow signs featuring a walking man symbol, the Kent Downs AONB logo and a symbol featuring the Drop Redoubt in plan with a marbled white butterfly in the centre and the wording 'WESTERN HEIGHTS LOCAL NATURE RESERVE - Gateway to the Countryside'. The trails run from the Priory Railway Station, Pencester Bus Station, Market Square and Dover Sea front / DeBradelei Wharf.

It is hoped in the future to expand this scheme to include trails to other sites around Dover, particularly Whinless Down and, in conjunction with the National Trust, Langdon Cliffs. We will also be attempting to secure funding to design and erect panels explaining the routes, with a map, at the start of all the trails. Hopefully this funding will also come through the same grant scheme, so watch this space for more details.

Dover has a lot to offer both within the town and in the green areas surrounding it.

We are very lucky as Dovorians to have such a wealth of important, species rich, well managed, accessible areas of countryside on our doorstep. It is only right that these areas are treated with respect and promoted for the valuable resource they provide, be it for recreation, landscape, history or wildlife. WCCP will continue to work to encourage as many people as possible, locals and visitors alike, to explore, understand and respect our local countryside as much as I am sure many of us already do.



The new signposts in use.

# The Western Heights Preservation Society

report from Chris Taft

*In the August issue of the Dover Society Newsletter, I reported on the Western Heights Preservation Society (WHPS) and provided an update on what has been achieved. Since that publication the Society has been working on a lot more projects. A summary of some of the achievements is given below.*

## **WHPS Lecture Evening**

In June of this year the Society hosted its first public lecture evening. Dover Museum kindly allowed us the use of their education facilities and Jon Iveson, the Curator of the Museum, gave the lecture. The evening was opened with an address from the WHPS Chairman, Cllr. Mike Eddy. Mr Iveson then delivered his lecture entitled: Drops, Ditches, Secrets & Tunnels in which he provided a fascinating history of Dover's Western Heights. His talk was illustrated with some excellent slides of the Heights as they are today and of the site as it once was. The evening concluded with the opportunity for more informal discussion over a selection of cheese and wine. It provided a wonderful opportunity for members to meet the committee and for local people to ask those questions about the Heights that may have been niggling them for some time. The turnout was fantastic and provided a preamble to the Western Heights Open Day, held the next day.

## **Western Heights Open Day**

This year's Open Day proved to be a wonderful success. Organised by the White Cliffs Countryside Project (WCCP) it was attended by representatives from several organisations, including the WHPS. The weather held out with the rain only moving in about ten minutes after the fast stall was packed up. An estimated 500 people attended, beating all previous

records, and all had an enjoyable day. Regular features included the ever-popular guided tour led by the WHPS, Napoleonic Military Displays from the Cinque Ports Volunteers and a number of displays by local green wood working groups. The open day was staged on the site of the Grand Shaft Barracks and the WHPS looks forward to next year's event, which it is hoped will be held in June or July.

## **St. Martin's Battery Graffiti Removal**

After the success of the Lecture Evening and Open Day, members of the WHPS commenced the first phase of a new project. It is the intention of the WHPS in the coming year to see graffiti removed from St. Martin's Battery and it has now been agreed with English Heritage that a paint layer can be applied to the walls to discourage further graffiti and improve the appearance of the emplacement. As a build-up to this the first gun emplacement of the three has been cleaned of graffiti and tidied of rubbish. It is hoped to continue this work on the remaining two positions as soon as possible before the next phase of the work is started.

## **Erection of a WHPS Notice Board**

Thanks to the generosity of Pfizer UK the WHPS has been able to erect its own notice board at St. Martin's Battery. The board is now in place and at present contains only basic Society information. However, over the coming months we hope to be able to

use it to convey more information about the Western Heights and the WHPS.

### **Election of a Society President**

During August it was the pleasure of the WHPS to welcome its first President, John Peverley, who has been a long term supporter of Dover's Western Heights and who has written on the history of the area. His book: *Dover's Hidden Fortress* remains extremely popular as a reference book and is regularly consulted by members of the WHPS. We look forward to working with John in the years to come.

Once again the last few months have been very busy and there is much more the WHPS hopes to do. We have many plans for major work that can be achieved with the right financial backing. To continue our work the Society needs the support of its members, who we thank for all their help so far. We are also encouraging new members to join and welcome ideas from anyone that can further our work. To find out more or to join please contact the Hon. Secretary at: 66 Union Road, Deal, Kent CT14 6AR or visit the site:

[www.dover-western-heights.org](http://www.dover-western-heights.org)

## **BOOKS**

**NOW AVAILABLE**

### **THE CENTRAL ESTATE AND THE HARTLEPOOLS**

*by Jack Woolford*

Published by Printability Wolviston at £10.99

For Society members available for £10.00 from Jack Woolford  
1066 Green Lanes, Temple Ewell, Dover CT16 3AR • Tel: 330 381

*(Reviewed in Newsletter 43)*

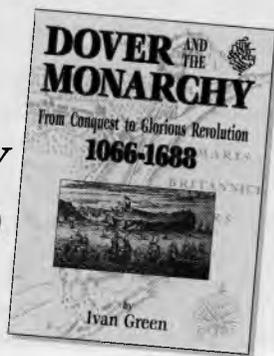
### **CHRISTMAS OFFER TO MEMBERS ONLY**

*Ivan Green's*

### **DOVER AND THE MONARCHY**

*for £5.00*

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When the Queen Mother died two posts were left unfilled. We lost our Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and the Constable of Dover Castle. While we wait to learn of the next appointment, we speculate on who might be chosen to take the place of the Queen Mother. Many think that Prince Andrew would be a suitable candidate. He has a naval background and he is a royal prince. In history there is a tradition of a younger son or royal prince holding the post.

In some cases the holder was heir to the throne and relinquished the post when he became king, as Terry Sutton points out when he provides an insight into some of the past Lord Wardens. Many early holders of the dual office met untimely ends but many illustrious names are included among more recent wardens.

## Lord Wardens of the Cinque Ports

*by Terry Sutton*

There have been, over the centuries, many famous names who have held the posts of Lord Warden and Constable of Dover Castle. Many were of royal blood. Some lost their heads - literally - because of the job. At least one was murdered.

In the days when a man who commanded a castle was more important than one who commanded an army, the post of Constable of Dover Castle was a more high-ranking one than that of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. In addition Dover Castle was the 'key to the kingdom'.

The first Constable was Godwin, Earl of Kent, who was described as Lord Protector of Dover. It was his second son, Harold (1020-1066) who was killed fighting William the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings. Harold's mother was Gytha, sister of Canute's Danish brother-in-law. Harold was in charge of the castle after his father's death and legend has it that he did not die at Hastings but, badly wounded, crept back to Dover, where he spent the rest

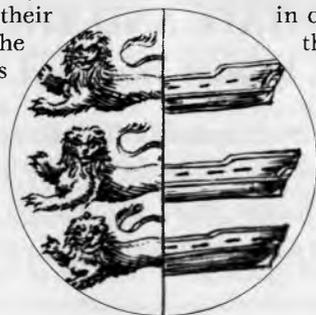
of his days hiding in a cave near Dover Castle.

While Harold was away at Hastings and elsewhere, Bertram Ashburnham was in charge of the castle and when the Normans arrived, via Folkestone, he refused to surrender the castle to the invaders. It is said that William was so angry his troops burned the town of Dover, captured the castle and had Ashburnham beheaded.

The first person to be appointed, it appears in May 1236, as Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and Constable

of the Dover Castle was Bertram de Crioll, thus the first man to hold both posts. When he died he was buried in St. Radigund's Abbey.

Sir Roger de Leybourne was Lord Warden twice in the thirteenth century, during the stormy days of the wars between the king and the barons. He gave up the post to Prince Edward (later Edward 1) and went off to die in the Holy Land. He was buried in Palestine but his heart was sent home to go into a shrine in Leybourne



The arms of the Cinque Ports.



Dover Castle.

Church in Kent.

Another unlucky Lord Warden and Constable of Dover Castle was Henry de Montfort, son of Simon of the same name. He gave up the job when he went off to fight on the side of the barons in the Midlands. He was slain in the Battle of Evesham.

Prince Edward was Lord Warden and Constable in 1265 at the time when the Cinque Ports were still in rebellion. He was so conciliatory that he was able to persuade the portsmen to forget their differences with the king. Then like many others, he went to do battle in the Holy Land.

Sir Stephen de Pencester was appointed to the dual office in 1267 and held it for more than thirty years, proving to be a great historian of the castle. His name is remembered in Dover's Pencester Gardens.

No one was very happy when Bartholomew, Baron de Baldemere, was appointed the 57th Constable of the castle in 1320. He was known as the 'bold, bad baron' and the local girls kept out of his way. But he went too far when Queen Isabella of France requested shelter at Leeds Castle while on her way to Thomas a Becket's shrine at Canterbury.

Bartholomew made a few unsolicited advances to her and she complained to the King, Edward II, who had the baron's head chopped off!

His successor, Sir Hugh de Despenser (Junior) fared no better. He was executed as a traitor at Hereford in November 1326. He was followed by Edmund de Woodstock who was also executed. That made three Lord Wardens in a row to end their days on the scaffold.

A fourteenth century Warden and Constable was Sir Simon de Burley and



Walmer Castle.

16 when Richard II was in town he handed the castle keys to Simon. He became the victim of intrigue and was charged with plotting to sell Dover Castle to the French. He was locked up in Dover Castle and executed for treason in London in May 1388. By this time nobles were beginning to see that holding the posts of Lord Warden and Constable of Dover Castle could lead to trouble.

Edmund, Duke of York, grandson of Edward III, was on safer ground when he was appointed at the end of the fourteenth century. He also acted as Regent during the absence of Richard II abroad. Henry, Prince of Wales, held the dual office in 1409 and gave up the posts four years later when he became Henry V. His younger brother, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, was another Lord Warden in 1415 and held office for 42 years. He was later persecuted and placed in prison, where, it is suspected, he was murdered. Lord Saye and Sele, who followed, had his head chopped off at Cheapside in London in 1450 because he took up the unpopular cause of the Duke of Suffolk.

One of the most illustrious Lord Wardens was Prince Henry, Duke of York, who was appointed Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports by his father in 1493. Henry never forgot his association with Dover when he became Henry VIII and he often visited the town, arriving in great state at the castle. The most famous occasion was when he assembled his fleet in Dover before sailing to the Field of Cloth of Gold.

George Villiers, Duke of Buckinghamshire, was another Constable of Dover Castle who died violently. He was stabbed to death by a young officer, John Felton, at Portsmouth in 1628.

Another royal title holder was Prince James, Duke of York, appointed two months after the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, but forced to resign in 1669 because he avowed himself a Catholic under the Test Act.

These are some of the tales that can be told about previous Lord Wardens. However, since the seventeenth century the Lord Wardens have had more peaceful histories. Among the famous names are included William Pitt the Younger, the Duke of Wellington ( who died in Walmer Castle, the official residence, in 1852), Viscount Palmerston, George, Prince of Wales, Sir Winston Churchill, Sir Robert Menzies and, most recently, Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, the Queen Mother.

The list of Cinque Ports most generally quoted is that embodied in the 1668 charter of King Charles II. It is as follows:

<i>Head Ports</i>	<i>Corporate Members</i>	<i>Non-corporate Members</i>
HASTINGS	Seaford Pevensey	Hydney Northeye Bulverhythe Petit Iham Bekebourne Grange
NEW ROMNEY	Lydd	Broomhill Oswardstone Old Romney Dengemarsh
HYTHE	—	West Hythe
DOVER	Folkestone Faversham	Kingsdown Ringwould St Peter's St John's Margate Goresend Woodchurch
SANDWICH	Fordwich	Walmer Deal Stonar Ramsgate Sarre Brightlingsea
WINCHELSEA	—	
RYE	Tenterden	—

# Dover Counselling Centre says Goodbye to Janet Johnston

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by Merril Lilley

On 16th October I attended a gathering at the Counselling centre to mark the retirement of Janet Johnston and to welcome her successor, Paul Atkinson.

In her speech Janet said she wanted to thank all those who had supported her dream to create a generic counselling service for South East Kent in 1988. Obviously the centre aimed to continue to provide a service for those affected by the Zeebrugge disaster and the Deal Barracks bomb but to extend the service to support anyone struggling with emotional difficulties related to more individual disasters within families.

In particular she thanked, for their support over 15 years, Dover District Council, Dover Harbour Board, P&O, Hoverspeed and their parent company Seacontainers, Kent County Council and Health Trusts.

She said that the reality of what the centre had become had exceeded her dreams. Its commercial services now covered Kent and beyond. Its community services which were set up for Dover, Deal and Sandwich now served many more people who came to Dover from all over Kent, especially if they needed support following trauma. Sixty or so counsellors covered the county in thirty venues for the commercially contracted work and thirty of these also worked out of Dover. There were six supervisors for the counselling and administration team, ten people who provided training to organisations and eight psychological debriefers.

The centre had a board of ten directors, all volunteers. Two had been directors since inception, Michael Krayenbrink and Bill Moses, the current Chairman. Of the others, Pat Milner was a fellow of the BAC&P (British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy), Claudine Nutley was the

director of Kent University's Counselling Course, Pam Brown, a retired academic and sculptor, was the Chair of Fund Raising, Bob Fautley, retired Chief Inspector of Police, who was in charge of the coroners' team following the Herald disaster, Penny Brown was from Christians Together in Dover and Ann Gilham, the company secretary. The admin. team was composed of people who are amazingly committed to their work and most of them had experienced tragedy of one sort or another. Janet said that one customer in particular, Mac, had ensured that the quality of the Dover Counselling Service was known to all Health Trusts across Kent. She found the day an emotional one and said the transition was confusing. She intended to continue her commitment to ensuring the survival of the centre and would be helping there one day a week now that she had given up the bigger responsibility into the capable hands of Paul Atkinson, her successor. Her role would be to obtain more contracted work and support fund raising efforts.

Speaking to the assembled guests she said she hoped they would continue to be helpful. The financial needs of the Centre would increase from January 2003, when the six years of National Lottery subsidy ended. The notion that counselling was provided by volunteers should be scotched. The demand was great, with 220 new referrals each week. Counselling was a profession that, for most counsellors, provided their only earnings, although much ancillary support and equipment was provided by volunteers and donations.

Janet ended by asking for any suggestions for potential new customers or ideas for fund raising and thanked everyone, once again, for their support.

Janet's email address is: [janet@johnston.co.uk](mailto:janet@johnston.co.uk)

# AGINCOURT

Pas de Calais



**25 OCTOBER 1415**

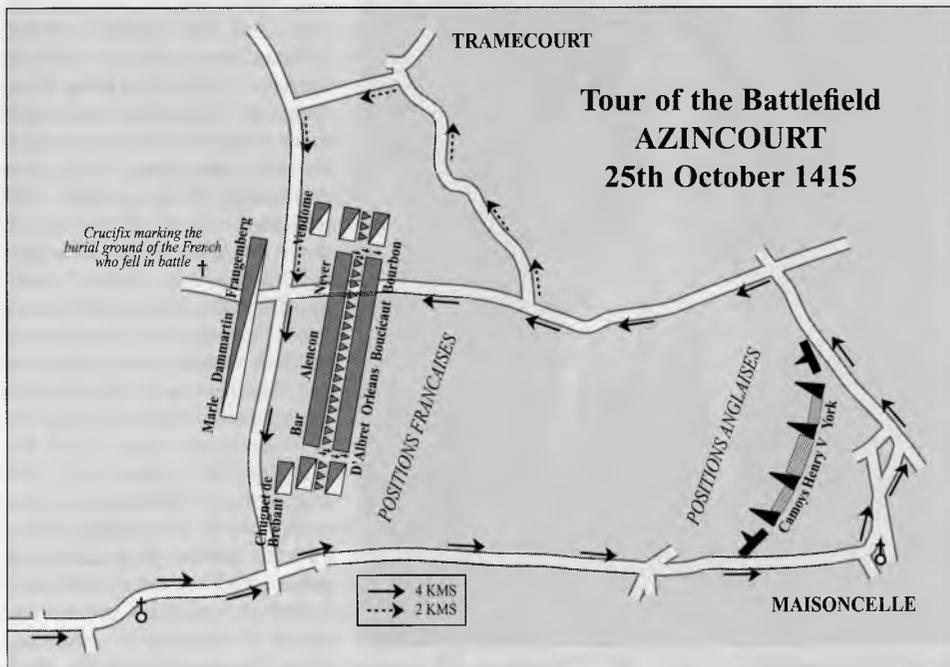
# AZINCOURT

## THEN AND NOW : 1415 - 2002

Report by Joyce Molyneux

On August 11th 1415 the 27 year old King Henry V sailed from Southampton bound for Harfleur to pursue his more than dubious claim to the throne of France. Harfleur was ill-defended since the French had expected Henry to attack from the English enclave of Calais. It was, however, strongly fortified and the garrison and townspeople endured a month-long siege until starvation compelled their surrender on September 22nd. The summer had been excessively hot and Henry's forces had made repeated attacks on the city walls in unbearably humid and swamp-ridden conditions. 'Once more unto the breach', thanks to

Shakespeare, has indeed become a familiar catch-phrase in our language. Henry had lost relatively few men in the fighting, but dysentery and desertion had halved the size of his army. To move towards Paris was unthinkable and so Henry began his arduous march to Calais, there to rest and reprovise his troops ready for a further offensive in the spring. The march must have been gruelling: the French carried out a scorched earth policy ahead of the advancing English and destroyed the bridges across the Somme, a barrier Henry had to pass on his way to Calais. He was compelled to rebuild the broken causeway at Voyennes to get his troops across, only to



20 be confronted a few days later by the French army near the small village of Agincourt.

The French had at last got their act together, though feudal rivalries and a divided command did nothing to enhance their fighting capacity. Officially in charge of the army was the Duke of Alencon, but it was Charles d'Albret, Constable of France, commanding the French centre, who bore the brunt of the ensuing battle. Numbers engaged in medieval battles are difficult to estimate, but Henry can have had barely 5-6000 men, the French several times that

number. Some estimate 40-60,000, but it is doubtful if more than 12,000 actually took part in the combat, those in the rear becoming dismayed spectators of the slaughter which unfolded in front of them.

The armies spent the night of October 24th within sight and sound of each other, a night graphically described by Shakespeare, the English bidden to prayer and silence by a sober and caring king, the French jousting and carousing in their tents.

At dawn the following morning, the famous feast of Crispian, both sides assembled their ranks, the English knights flanked by companies of archers, the French foot-soldiers by lords and knights on horseback. For several hours they faced each other, each waiting for the other to make a move. At length, to the sound of drums and trumpets, it was Henry who led the attack. What followed was a scene of utter carnage. Hails of arrows from English longbows brought down the heavily armoured French knights; in the confusion they jostled and unseated each other; once down on ground made soggy by persistent rain their cumbersome armour rendered them completely impotent. English swords, axes and pikes did the rest and the French were driven back. Thousands of Frenchmen were killed for the loss of relatively few Englishmen. Shakespeare puts it as low as 4 named nobles and 25 others, but this is a gross underestimate: several hundred would be nearer the mark. Henry ordered, probably unsuccessfully, that



Knight on Horseback.

Photograph: D.S. member



Town Hall, Azincourt.

*Photograph: Jack Woolford*

no plunder should be taken, but he did kill his prisoners, mistakenly thinking that they were a threat to his rear. Within days he was safely back in Calais. A glorious victory had been won and England went wild with excitement and pageantry. The aftermath is an anti-climax. In 1417 Henry captured Rouen and the French agreed to treat. Prolonged negotiations resulted in the Treaty of Troyes in 1420. Henry promised to marry Katherine de Valois, while her father, Charles VI, acknowledged Henry and his heirs as his successors. The future Henry VI arrived in 1421. Henry V's remaining years were spent in defending his conquests against the Dauphinist party. He died on campaign, probably of dysentery, in 1422. He was 34 years of age.

\* \* \*

Our expedition started from Dover on September 21st, 2002, when 29 members of the Society reached Azincourt, the present name of Agincourt, after travelling in comfort, first on P&O Stena's 'Aquitaine' and then by luxury coach across the

pleasantly undulating country-side of the Pas de Calais. Within the village roadside figures of archers and knights and the medieval emblems of England and France welcomed us into the fifteenth century. We were taken straight away to the new medieval centre, most attractively and imaginatively built to house a memorable representation of the heroic events of 1415. The entrance to the building is overhung with huge wooden bows, door handles are bowshaped, while parts of the outer walls are faced with steel-tipped wooden stakes to represent those that Henry dug into the ground to protect his archers and impale the advancing French troops. Inside the centre the walls are lined with placards giving the historical facts surrounding the battle, while one wall commemorates the names of the English dead.

Our guide showed us first a panorama of the battlefield, the beautifully made and brightly coloured figures representing the English and French positions before battle began. The battlefield itself occupied an imperfect rectangle of land situated between the three villages of Agincourt,

22 Tramecourt and Maisoncelle, the English occupying slightly ground to the south and in front of Maisoncelle, the French barely half a mile to the north on a broad front between the villages of Agincourt and Tramecourt. Next came a clever representation of the night before battle: medieval tents on either side of a small

room represented the opposing armies, the French tent holding a figure of Charles d'Albret, the English that of Henry V. Their mobile faces described the waiting night from either point of view in words from the text of Shakespeare's *Henry V*. A further room used computer graphics to show the movements of the forces on the field and



Azincourt Church.

*Photograph: Jack Woolford*

that part of the tour finished with a short film outlining the artistic legacy of the battle from the fifteenth century poetry of Michael Drayton to Kenneth Branagh's film of Henry V. There remained the hands-on experience allowing us to wander at will among exact replicas of medieval armour and weapons of war. Some of us found swords we could scarcely and lift, bows that we could not draw, helmets we could barely see through and armour that would have rendered us useless on any battlefield. Indeed the plate armour of a fully equipped knight weighed in the region of 40lbs, a crucial factor in the incapacity of the French to retaliate against the English attack.

I am sure that we all found the displays an objective and memorable exhibition of one of the messiest and bloodiest battles in

medieval history - though it did make one proud to be English!

Next there was a break for lunch and the description of the available menu in the only cafe still open in the village made two of us thankful we had brought a packed meal. Afterwards our driver took us on a tour of the perimeter of the battlefield. At one corner stands a simple, rough-hewn granite column, the only memorial to all who died at Agincourt, named by Henry from the castle that bore that name.

I cannot end without a tribute to Azincourt today, a pretty, flower-filled, carefully tended village whose quiet calm belies those cruel events of 1415. Thanks are due to our driver, Peter, who joyfully entered into the spirit of the day and to Joan, as always, for organising a wonderfully memorable expedition.



Azincourt Memorial.

*Photograph: Jack Woolford*

# GLIMPSES OF THE PAST

## *Some snippets of Dover History*

### BORN IN THE YEAR OF WATERLOO

Derek Leach

Ann Fry was born in Dover in the year of Waterloo, 1815, and these are her (edited) memories first told in the Dover Express on 30 April 1909 when Ann was aged 94.

She was born in a little double-fronted Dutch-tiled house next to the sawmill off Charlton Green (site of the present Charlton Centre car park). Edward Fry, her father, was a cooper who worked for Mr Kingsford at Charlton Oil Mills (later Chitty's Mill and now the site of Halfords), and also for Mr Walker at the brewery, which later became Leney's. Charlton Mill used to grind corn in the summer and crush oil seed in the winter. One of Ann's childhood playmates was George Clark who started the Dover Nurseries firm. Just over the river was St Mary's Workhouse and she was often taken there to see the inmates. There was no bridge across the river at Charlton, only a plank to cross. Wagons, carts, horsemen and cattle splashed through the water. Charlton Fair was always held on quarter-day, 6 July, with swings, stalls and booths down each side of the road. There was another big fair that lasted a week: Bartholomew's Fair by Chapel Hill (above Buckland Terrace).

When Ann was a child old Charlton Church, a poor little place, stood close by the river. It was made larger in 1827. Ann attended but services were only held once a fortnight. Mr Monins was the Rector 'a very good man, or so they said' but he usually sent, from Ringwold, his curate who rode a donkey to and fro. Ann and her husband were both in the choir. There was no organ but a clarionette, a serpente' (a

sort of French horn), a big brass viol and other instruments. There were no houses below Charlton Green except for Mr Kingsford's and three old cottages (near where the bottom of Park Avenue is now) until Ashen Tree Lane Dairy was reached. The road was called Charlton Back Road with Gorely's Fields on one side and Maison Dieu Park on the other. There was a wall round the park until Mr Moxon pulled it down and built Brook House (now Maison Dieu car park).

There was a lot of smuggling when Ann was a child (nothing has change!). Seamen used to bring ashore illegally beautiful lace and silk. Ann's father would have nothing to do with smuggling - but sometimes bought things from the smugglers! Everybody did.

Ann went to school in Queen Street, to the Quakers' School, supported by prominent Dover Quakers. Later a larger school was built at the foot of Durham Hill called the Girls' School of Industry. As a child of seven Ann saw a man hanging at Black Horse Lane - Dover's place of execution (by the Tower Hamlets traffic lights) - and never forgot it. He had shot at a coastguard officer. Both families lived in Dover and so there was 'a great to-do' when he was hung. Ann's teacher held her up for a better view! When Ann left school she went into service at the home of young Mr Walker, the son of the brewery owner, who lived in a large house with a fine garden where the Prince Albert pub stands in Biggin Street. Priory Farm was just behind and there were no other houses in that

direction until you reached Maxton. Ann was living there when the corporation bought the Maison Dieu and converted it into a gaol, closing the old gaol in the Market Place. Mr Walker then moved to a new house at Alfred Place.

Where Castle Street is now there were just meadows and gardens except for Mr Jeken's house, which later became the Town Clerk's office. Stembrook ran from the back of St Mary's Church through the river (no bridge) to Dolphin Lane and the brewery. There were some big houses that way; old Mr Walker lived in a large house in St James' Street; Peter Fector lived in Fector's Place (now the lower end of Russell Street); Admiral Bazely lived in St James' Street beside Fox Passage; John Finnis (who owned the timber yard in Biggin Street) and George Stringer had houses in Dolphin Lane. George Stringer, a farmer from Whitfield, had a long barn in what is now the Castle Street area. Victoria Park was then called Stringer's Field. Ann remembered Edward Knocker going to live in Castle Hill House (which still stands). She remembers often seeing Edward's father, William, walking arm in arm with the Duke of Wellington (Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports) to old St James' Church. William Knocker lived at The Esplanade and had a house and paper mill at Bushy Ruff.

Ann became Mrs Bailey when she married in 1844 and went to live in Trevanion Place (where the Leisure Centre now is) where Mr Trevanion's house once stood. He owned much of the land up to Laureston Place which was called Little Waldershare. Later John Minet Fector built Laureston House. Wilson Gates had a farm beside Trevanion Street. On the other side of Woolcomber Street near the sea was Clarence House, where Madam Rice lived, with a very large garden all down the side of Upper Townwall Street. She was a very fine lady who wore wonderfully big bonnets, but never gloves because, she said,

it wore them out! She owned a carriage and pair. Close by her garden was the Quakers' Burial Ground but nobody was buried there in Ann's time as far as she could remember. There was also the Round House in Townwall Street, built by John Shipdem, the Town Clerk. According to Ann, people said that he built it round so that the devil would not catch him in a corner! It was built on the site of a black hole where prisoners were put (presumably the old 'hole in the wall' gaol). At the corner of St James' Street and Woolcomber Street was the old Rectory, reaching nearly to the church and making the entrances to Woolcomber Street and Trevanion Street very narrow. Ann remembered it being pulled down. St James' Poor House was in Woolcomber Street and Ann remembered her father-in-law, a verger at old St James' Church, paying the Poor Relief in the vestry before the Dover Union was formed (in 1836). In about 1850 Ann had her likeness painted by a travelling artist who was staying at The Three Mackerels on the corner of Trevanion Street and Woolcomber Lane.

Dover changed greatly during Ann's lifetime. When she was a child there were only two houses on the seafront: Smith's Folly under the castle and the York Hotel by the harbour (Western Docks). The seafront was a wide stretch of shingle used as a ropewalk and a military parade area. There were no railways, no steamboats and no gaslight.

Ann's husband died in 1853 and she was left with two children, but was very proud of the fact that she had never claimed parish relief. Nevertheless, she was pleased to be receiving (in 1909) the newly introduced old age pension. By 1909 she had been a widow for 56 years and had lived under five sovereigns: George III and IV, William IV, Victoria and Edward VII.

I wonder what she would make of Dover now, nearly 100 years after she was interviewed?

## COLLECTED MEMORIES OF A CENTURY

Some more extracts from the writings of Budge Adams

*The last Newsletter included an extract which described Budge's early days in 37 Castle Street in 1909. He lived there for most of his childhood, except for a gap between 1912 and 1915 when the family moved to Millais Road, where they were during the first year of WW I. This episode recalls a vivid memory of the early days of the war in December 1914 when Budge was only five years old.*

*Editor*

On Christmas Eve 1914 a German airman, Lieut. von Prodzynsk, demonstrated the destructive potential of bomber aircraft and achieved, from an Englishman's point of view, the unenviable distinction of being the first man to drop a bomb on Britain - a bomb so small that it was stowed in the cockpit of the aircraft and simply dropped over the side by the pilot. It fell 75 metres due north of St. James's Rectory (now the site of a new doctors' surgery) on land held by the Terson family, who lived at 25 Castle Street, just five doors from our business premises. The story was that a bomb had fallen in Terson's garden. This was ambiguous because the Tersons had two gardens and in the story they were not differentiated.

My father decided to 'go down to 37' to see the extent of the damage, if, as I think he believed, the bomb had fallen only five doors away. And I went with him. We soon found that as far as our property was concerned all was well. Later we learned

that a cabbage or two had been destroyed and a hole had been made in Terson's garden and that Mr. Banks, whom my father knew, 'was surprised and rather frightened'.

We began to walk back to Buckland along Maison Dieu Road and near to the Five Ways - a name not used until very much later - we heard the noise of aircraft engines overhead. Whilst we searched the sky for the aeroplanes we heard a shout or possibly a scream from our right in Godwyne Road. A bassinet, entirely uncontrolled, was careering down the hill and a dark heap that lay on the ground at the junction with Harold Street, turned out to be the nursemaid in charge. A man who was walking up the hill tried to intercept the baby carriage but missed it. Possibly it was his shout that I heard. My father quickly summed up the situation, ran into and a little way up Godwyne Road and managed to grab the pram and stop it. My admiration knew no bounds. My father

was a hero! The nursemaid was attended to by people living near. She had only fainted, I suppose, through fear of the aeroplanes. She soon recovered and took charge of the pram and its unconcerned cargo. We never knew who she was, nor whose child it was, but I can remember her thanking my father.

We then walked on and almost immediately,



Castle Street in 1914. 'Riverside House' at left covered with a red-leaved creeper.

when we were just beyond the site of the present-day Baptist Church, we saw the Taube, aircraft whose bulbous backward-pointing wing tips clearly identified them, being shelled by anti-aircraft guns, whose bursts always seemed to be a long way from the target. The guns, as I now know, were not specifically built as anti-aircraft guns, but, the war being just less than five months old, they were modified field artillery remounted to fire at a high elevation - good examples of the uncanny British ability to improvise when faced with the unexpected.

I was frightened by the black and white bursts - why some black and some white? My father attempted to reassure me, but in spite of that I was, I regret to say, so frightened that I soiled my pants. My father's cool reaction was to tell me in no uncertain terms that under no circum-

stances should a son of his (and an Adams to boot!) do such a thing and he hurried me home to be cleaned up. He did not lead me by the hand but drove me on ahead of him with strong promptings to hurry. When we arrived my mother, who wore a long black skirt that almost swept the ground and a blouse with a white lace collar supported by strips of whalebone at the side, was sitting on a chair in the breakfast room and kneeling there, with her head buried in my mother's lap, was our little 'tweeny', sobbing her heart out and wondering where all this awful activity would lead us. My mother prised the 'tweeny' out of her lap and took me off to the scullery for a clean-up operation. The next picture I have is of my mother pouring a cup of tea for the distracted girl, who was by that time less tearful and showing signs that she would survive.

## THE BATTLE OF BRITAIN

Memories of Summer 1940 by Dick Whittamore

The summer of 1940 was blessed with beautiful fine weather, clear blue skies, warm days and sweaty nights. But with the enemy forces only 21 miles away in France it is no wonder that Dover suffered its fair share of activity during those decisive months now known as the 'Battle of Britain' when two fighting forces battled for air supremacy over Kent.

I was a 15 year old page-boy at the Dover Hippodrome in those dark days. The 'dripping bone' as it was sometimes affectionately called, was an old music hall type theatre presenting variety and revue and, at Christmas, the traditional pantomime. Members of the forces from all parts of the commonwealth relaxed in the 580 seat playhouse each evening despite dogfights overhead in the sky, the occasional bomb and, later in the war, enemy shelling. Nearly every week a strip-tease act topped the bill to remind the

soldiers of their loved ones and home. It was difficult to get artistes to come to Dover during those Battle of Britain days because they realised that, with the enemy so near, an invasion might take place at any time. Still the theatre bravely carried on playing its part in entertaining the troops and the few local civilians who braved the journey to Snargate Street in Dover's dockland. I am particularly reminded at this time of the community singing sessions we had, the sound of a full house singing old favourites is a sound which cannot be described on paper - the atmosphere was electric! The theatre boasted five bars so there was plenty of opportunity for the soldiers to get 'tanked up' beforehand - if they could afford it.

Those 1940 days bring to mind the dogfights overhead which I stood watching for hours. On clear days the fighting took place very high up and the planes were like



The badly damaged *Royal Hippodrome* and adjacent buildings, looking up Snargate Street towards New Bridge.

small silver crosses glistening in the sunlight. The rattle of machine gun fire could be heard as the attacker zoomed down on the weaving plane below. It was difficult to tell which planes were which at a great height - they all left similar vapour trails crisscrossing the sky. I saw many planes spiralling down to earth, on fire and was always glad to see a parachute opening, although, unfortunately, this was not always the case. It was the thing to collect pieces of shrapnel in those early days of the war, but if fighting was overhead, one had to take great care, as shrapnel sometimes came down like rain rattling on rooftops and building and it was red hot. At night we used to watch the searchlights trying to locate enemy planes so that anti-aircraft guns could fire on the target. On clear days we could also see the French Coast and often watched activity in the Channel and over Dover Harbour.

Before about July 1940, according to my records, Dover only had about 40 air raid warnings (or alerts as they were commonly called) but as the Battle of Britain continued we were getting five or six warnings a day. On bad days six or

seven hours could be spent in caves or shelters, although these were not widely used until September 11th, 1940, when a stick of bombs was dropped along the seafront area, killing at least ten people. Most of them were in a local pub which received a direct hit. This action brought an influx of civilians into the caves. They brought chairs, oil stoves and their valuables and they slept in the caves at night. Some elderly people stayed in the caves almost until the end of the war, getting their braver friends to do their shopping for them and attend to their needs.

Yes, the summer of 1940 was a tense time - but an exciting one! Despite all that had happened already no one believed that we could possibly lose the war. We knew that the Churchill bulldog would see us through.

*Note: the Hippodrome carried on entertaining the troops until 25th September, 1944, when it was badly damaged by an enemy shell. The very last shell to land in Dover was on the 26th September, just one day later. The theatre never reopened.*

# Porters, Chair Men & Sedan Chair Men

by Ivan Green

In the 19th century there were several privately provided but publicly controlled services, much like our modern taxis. One of these was the town's porters.

To quote from a local record of 1828: 'The employment of these porters, is to carry parcels to any part of the town, to attend funerals, and to carry the baggage of passengers, either to, or from the customs house, or to embark or land their horses, carriages, &c.

Each has a ticket, or number, and they form a regular establishment under the commissioners of the Paving Act, who have published the following rates of portorage:

- For shipping or unshipping any horse, mare, mule or gelding is 1s 0d
- For shipping or unshipping of every carriage with two wheels. 5s 9d.
- For shipping any carriage with four wheels 10s. 6d.
- For every trunk, portmanteau, chest, box, bag, bundle, packet, or parcel, conveyed from any Inn to the Custom House, and from thence to or on board any boat, passenger vessel or packet boat, and conveyed to the Custom House, and from thence to any

Inn, or to the Custom House only, or direct to any Inn, or to any part of the town, not exceeding 28 lbs. wt. Os 6p.

- Above 28 lbs and not exceeding 56 lbs. 1s 0d.

- Above 56 lbs. and not exceeding 1 cwt is 1s 6d. Above 1 cwt. and not exceeding 2 cwt. 2s. 0d. Above 2 cwt. and not exceeding 3cwt. 3s. 0.

- For every additional half hundred cwt. 0. 6d.'

## CHAIR MEN

Chair men were the taxi men of the 1830's. Each had his own bath chair of wicker construction, with two large solid tyres like pram wheels at the rear and two small steerable wheels at the front, which the passenger controlled by means of a long lever.



*Yorick at Dover; going to embark for Calais*

On extreme left, two chair men carry a passenger aboard. Just left of centre, a town porter carries a parcel. Mrs Yorick does not seem very well dressed for what may be a stormy crossing. In background, sails and rigging of many ships in the harbour.

Each was inspected periodically by an employee of the council to ensure that it was serviceable and clean, and provided with a seat cushion and a rug. The owners were also inspected to ensure that they were 'sober, of good repute, respectably dressed and clean'. Any who failed inspection were prohibited from working. They were hired by time, the usual being a minimum of an hour.

Chairs were specially recommended 'for widows and matrons of forty years of age and above'. When such a lady went out to tea a chair man was hired and informed of the time when he was to return to take the lady home. Fastidious passengers could use their own cushion and rug if they wished, and were encouraged to report to the Commissioners of the Paving Act of any shortcomings in the service provided.

Regrettably some accidents did occur. For instance there is a record of 1830. A respected matron was being pushed down the rough track which later became

Durham Hill when the chair man stumbled and released the chair, which gathered speed and eventually deposited the respected matron on to the bank, displaying her naked lower limbs to the public gaze. A social disaster indeed!

One wonders what people of that time would have thought about our modern delightful bikini clad girls!

The provisions for porters appear to have lasted well into the 19th century, since in the Paving Act of 1810 it was the Commissioners who licensed 'porters and sedan chair men' though a provision was made to 'preserve the ancient rights of the mayor and jurats in respect of the old established town porters'. By this means the ancient rights of the mayor and jurats were added to those of the commissioners of the new paving acts.

This is the only reference I have been able to find of the officially approved use of sedan chairs in the town, but there may of course be others.

## B·O·O·K R·E·V·I·E·W *from Terry Sutton*

The Terror before Trafalgar - Nelson, Napoleon and the Secret War

*by Tom Pocock*

The part played by Dover and Deal in the secret war waged against Napoleon before Trafalgar is revealed in a new book just published. *The Terror before Trafalgar - Nelson, Napoleon and the Secret War* (James Murray: £20) tells how Walmer Castle (the official residence of the Lord Warden) became the hub of intelligence-gathering about French invasion plans against Britain. Author Tom Pocock, an authority on the life of Nelson, recalls the days when the Admiral's fleet was anchored off Deal and his trips ashore to rendezvous with Lady Emma Hamilton in the Royal Hotel (then called The Three Kings). British spies were

shipped out of Dover and Deal by former smugglers to glean information around the port of Boulogne where Napoleon's invasion fleet was building up. Experiments on new fangled weapons - submarines and mines - were carried out off Walmer Castle after being taken on board secretly at Dover. Traditional naval officers were disgusted at this kind of warfare with few realising the implications to Britannia's rule of the waves if the enemy copied these new weapons.

Anyone with an interest in the Napoleonic era, or the history of the Dover area, will find this book fascinating.

# LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Nice to see the plaque in position at the Eagle pub. but perhaps a word of caution because I think many are associating the pub with the gallows. I noted the following extract from 'By the Way' in Dover reference library.

'The Eagle Hotel, on a commanding corner position. The original was built on the former site of the 'Black Horse', shortly after 1839. It possessed a tea garden but that attraction was discontinued when it was rebuilt in 1863. Brockman served in 1843 and might well have been the first to do so. The new house had teething troubles from the start and by 1868 the licence was suspended. It next traded as 'The Denmark Arms' but the new name did little to change its fortunes. The licensees changed every year up to 1877 and in 1893 the sign was once more 'Eagle'. It was an outlet for many years of John Smith's Tadcaster Brewery but went to Courage in 1946, then perhaps Elder, then Foster.

In 1997 the title changed to 'The Olde Irish Times'. Shortlived. Back with us now as the 'Eagle'.

Barry Smith

\*\*\*

I write to congratulate all concerned on the successful completion of the Society's Millennium project of installing ten blue commemorative plaques around the town, highlighting places of historic interest.

They will be a permanent source of

information for residents and visitors alike.

Sheila and Jeremy Cope particularly deserve our thanks for their tenacity and determination in seeing the project through to completion.

John Owen

\*\*\*

I fear I can award you no more than a 'beta-minus' for French history!

I don't know whether Louis XVIII visited Dover in 1813 but he certainly didn't embark for France in that year, as France was still under the control of Napoleon.

Indeed you can work this out... if Louis fled to Belgium in March 1815, after eleven months in Paris, he couldn't have arrived there before April 1814.

N. Turns

*Editor's Note: Mr. Turns is absolutely right! The events described in Terry Sutton's article on Louis XVIII's embarkation from Dover must have occurred in 1814 and not in 1813!*

*So who made the mistake?*

*Answer: a Dover Express reporter writing in 1863 for a series in the newspaper entitled 'Fifty Years Ago'. His article describes the event in graphic detail and is very interesting. However the reporter got his facts wrong - by one year. What a great example to illustrate the saying, 'Never believe everything you read in the newspapers! Many thanks to Mr. Turns for putting us right.'*

## THE VARNE LIGHTSHIP EDITOR'S NOTE

The Editor apologises for an error in Newsletter 44. The Cover caption for the Varne Lightship depicted there should read Varne Lightvessel 75.

Anyone wishing to know more about lightships is referred to Anthony Lane's book *Guiding Lights, the history of the development of lightships*. ISBN 07524 21158, Price £17.99. It is available from TEMPUS PUBLISHING, The Mill, Brimscombe Port, Stroud, Glos. GL5 2QG or from Dr. A.R. Lane, 40 Alison Crescent, Whitfield, Dover CT16 3LN. Telephone: 01304 827663

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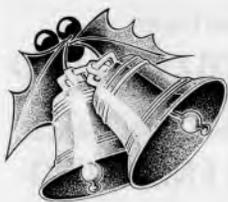
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**Contact the editor, Mike McFarnell or Hugh Gordon  
if you want more information.**

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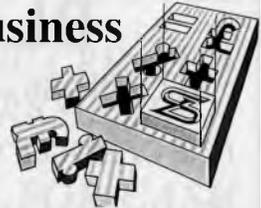
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I/We could sometimes give practical help with the following (*please tick boxes*)

Social events  Writing for newsletter

Projects e.g. clearance, surveys, photography

Any other interests or expertise .....

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# PROGRAMME 2002-2003

*Members and guests are welcome at all meetings except the Annual General Meeting which is for members only.*

2002

DECEMBER 14                      START THE FESTIVE SEASON IN STYLE  
7 for 7.30                          Christmas Feast at Dover College Refectory. £18.50

2003

JANUARY 13                      TWO SPEAKERS  
Monday 7.30                      Dr. A Lane. Goodwin Sands Shipwrecks  
   Lesley Holyer. The White Caves of Dover

FEBRUARY 17                      WINE AND WISDOM with Clive Taylor. £4.00  
Monday 7.30                      Application Forms now available from Joan

MARCH 17                          WENDI ATHERTON, Dover Castle Garrison  
Monday 7.30                      Jack Woolford: Dover Prize Quiz

APRIL 21                            ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
Monday 7.30                      Bob Goldfield: Dover Harbour Board

SUMMER OUTINGS                More details in April Newsletter  
MAY 3                                Hever Castle. May Day Music and Dance. £20.00

JUNE                                 River Trip

JUNE                                 London Trip

SEPTEMBER                        France - possibly La Coupole WWII rocket site

OCTOBER 13                        Reg Coleman: May 10, 1940  
   Brainstorming Session

NOVEMBER 17                      Miachael Hinton: Josephine Butler and Dover  
   Dick Bolton: Royal Cinque Ports

\* APPLICATION FORMS FOR ALL OUTINGS AVAILABLE AT INDOOR MEETINGS  
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