

information detailed research has revealed. The author's comments on details convey her pleasure in finding, for example, in the account of the 1216 siege: 'There was a continual watch kept during the night... and every hour a horn or trumpet sounded to keep them all awake... At the time of Spanish Armada in 1588... The propriety of the time expected gentlemen to fight with pikes; the nimblest men with firearms; the clumsiest with bills, and the blockheads with pick and shovel as pioneers...'

The maps, diagrams, documents and pictures, culminating with World War II are plentiful, beautifully reproduced, arranged to accompany the text, and those in colour more than fit for framing. These alone are more than worth the £10 cost of purchase. Professor Colonel Richard Holmes says: 'This is a little gem of a book'. In fact, it is a masterpiece.

BELOVED EMMA by Flora Fraser

(John Murray £9.99)

from Terry Sutton

This new paperback, *BELOVED EMMA*, tells the story of the rags-to-riches career of Emma, Lady Hamilton. She was born Emy Lyon in Cheshire. She climbed the social ladder through domestic service, prostitution and then becoming the mistress of several wealthy men before marrying Sir William Hamilton.

Emma was a regular visitor to Dover when she crossed the Channel in the late 18th century. She often crossed the Dover Strait with her husband as he journeyed to and from his post as British ambassador in Naples. But, in later life, she purposely kept away from Dover when, deeply in debt and suffering from dropsy, she scurried away to live in Calais where her eventful life ended. She knew she was too well-known in Dover.

It was as Sir William's wife she met and fell in love with Horatio Nelson and had his child. But after Nelson's heroic death in the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805, society turned its back on Emma and their daughter. She fell heavily into debt, moved down market in her London accommodation until, like many other debtors at that time, she decided to set up home in Calais. There, getting fatter, sadder and taking too much wine, she died in poverty in January 1815 forgotten and unmourned.

Years later, in the First World War, a group of British officers put up a plaque in Calais marking the spot where she died but that was lost during the bombardments the French town suffered in the 1939-45 war. Another fresh one is now in place in a side street off the Rue Royal and in April 1994 an American woman unveiled a monument to Emma in the Parc Richelieu, roughly on the spot where Emma was buried.