

From punishments to a more congenial subject. It is recorded that when *Victory* was on her passage from Spithead to the River Thames with the body of Lord Nelson on board, she anchored on December 13 off Dover owing to bad weather, and on December 17, she moved to the southern end of the Downs, where she again anchored. On December 18, 1805, her log states: "At anchor in the Downs. Received on board 40 butts of beer and 10 butts of water from Dover." A butt of beer is 108 gallons, and let us hope that it was brewed from good old English hops - and that it was somewhat stronger than some of the present-day beer.

The *Victory* left the Downs on December 19, and after disembarking the body of Lord Nelson at The Nore on December 23, she arrived at Chatham on December 25.



LORD NELSON.

(A Dover Society vice-president, Terry Sutton points out that Nelson's body was preserved on board ship in a barrel of alcohol to prevent deterioration before the funeral. Various folk tales have been in circulation about the crew tapping this 'brew' on the voyage back to England such as their liking for alcohol, with suggestions the barrel was far from full when it reached our shores!)

And so the famous *Victory* came back again to her home port, and her log-book tells us: "Wednesday, December 25, 1805: At moorings in Long Reach, River Medway."

The *Dover Express* account concludes, 'Home again on Christmas Day, perchance the Men of Kent and Kentish Men and the men who hailed from Dover were able, on Christmas night, to gather round their firesides and, with distant memories of the roar of the *Victory's* and the howl of the sou'westerly gale, spin many a yarn about The Battle of Trafalgar.'

Two Gunners of Dover Castle

◆◆◆ by Peter Burville ◆◆◆

FOR THE FAMILY HISTORIAN and other researchers, wills and inventories can be a rich source of information on past lives that is not available from other records. The subjects of this note, gunners William and John, were two of the sons of John Burvill who was born in the parish of Little Mongeham but spent his adult life in the Hougham and Hawkinge area.

John senior was well connected. He was the sole executor, and his family a major beneficiary, of yeoman John Avery of Hougham's will¹. The Mayor of Dover, Thomas Broome, was overseer of the will. According to Bavington Jones², in 1659:

'Thomas Broome was a Sergeant at Law. At the time of his election there was some expectation of the restoration of

the Monarchy and it is understood that this Mayor saw the coming event. On the landing of Charles II at Dover, on the 25th of May 1660, it is recorded in the Corporation minutes: That on coming ashore, the Mayor of this town, Thomas Broome, Esq., made a speech to his Majesty on his knees, and that Mr. John Reading, Minister of the Gospel, presented His Majesty with the Holy Bible, as a gift from the town, and his gracious Majesty, laying his hand upon his breast, told the Mayor, nothing should be more dear to him than the Bible.'

The presenting of bibles to returning monarchs seems to have been the norm. As the King made his entry into the City of London³ 'The Presbyterian divines obstructed his passage only to have the honour of presenting the Bible amid their fervent salutations.'

Like his father John, William died in a four-week period of 1673 when four adult members of the family passed-away, doubtless the victims of same illness. The church records of the local parishes do not suggest there was an above average number of burials at the time. The 1673 inventory⁴ of William's assets, signed by Thomas Broome, states (with values in £-s-d):

Item primus his pursse and girdle and weareing aparell three pound	03-00-00
for tow yeares and 3 quarters pay for his guners place In Dovor Casle	33-00-00
Item. William Worly bond of tenn pound	10-00-00
Item bonds and bills and other depts despoorte fifty pound totall	50-00-00 96-00-00

Clearly William's affairs took a long time to resolve as the probate⁵ prepared by his brother John is dated 17JUL1675. Amongst other things it states: '...that the Thirty three pounds monie owed in the said July to be due for Guners pay, is not yet rent nor likely to be ever had, the sume being due from the Castle of Dovor as they say it is not paid into them from the King's Majesty. And also that the sum of Ten pounds mentioned in the said Inventory to be due from William Worly upon bond, being not yet rent by this Accomptant nor ever likely to be, the said Morly being grown poore and gone away wherefore he prayeth allowance for the said sevall sums'.

Gunner William's pay was for a period of two years and 3 quarters so he was paid £3 a quarter, or ought to have been! As there were no Lay Taxes⁶ during 1674 and 1675 perhaps the King's coffers were rather low.

Although stated to be of Hawkinge, in his will⁷ yeoman William states 'I quitt and give to my sister Christian Burvill my house and lands in Capell parish and if she die without heires, then to returne to my brother James Burvill'. There is no mention of property in his will other than that in Capel le Ferne.

William's brother John died during 1682. John, of Hawkinge, in a will of some 144 lines, left properties in Hougham and Dover but none in Hawkinge. This mirrors brother William's will in his being described 'of a parish' in which he left no property.

In the inventory⁸, dated 10NOV1682, of John's assets his brother James and John Sutton recorded various items including (the values are in £-s-d):

One presse, twoe chestes,
 one brasse copper
 one paire of sheets
 and one Ranger sword 2-03-04

For three yeares pay due to
 the testator the 29th of
 September last for his
 service as a Gunner in
 his Majesties ffort called
 Motes Bulwarke in Dovor
 at £9-02-06 paid 27-07-06'

The total value came to £252-17-06,
 quite a sum.

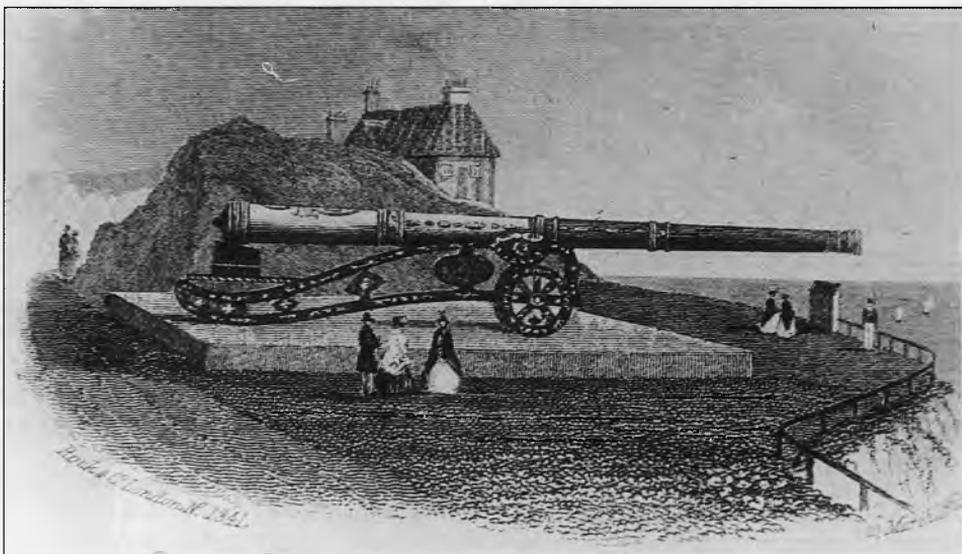
The 'ranger' sword may have been
 one of the curved variety normally
 carried by a cavalry soldier.

As a gunner in the Mote's Bulwark at
 Dover Castle, John was being paid £3-0-
 10 a quarter by the King. This was
 marginally more than the £3 William
 had been paid. It rather looks as though
 William and John, although they had
 sufficient land from which to earn a
 living, chose to be gunners leaving

others to run their farms. One cannot
 tell whether the brothers were at Dover
 castle during the same period time but,
 given the apprenticeship format of the
 times, it is unlikely they went to that
 employment as adults. What can be said
 is that they were likely to have been
 very much affected by the turmoil
 before and during the Commonwealth
 Period, of 1649 to 1660, in which the
 castle played a significant local role.

The precise birth-years of the two
 gunners is not known to me but they
 were born in the late 1630s or early
 1640s, so the yeoman brothers could
 well have been at the castle during the
 later years of the Commonwealth.

Who then were the gunners of Dover
 Castle? The gunners were permanent
 staff, in the employment of the Lord
 Warden of the Cinque Ports, who was
 funded directly by the king. The castle
 would have been garrisoned by various
 regiments but the gunners, who were
 responsible for deploying the permant



Queen Elizabeth's Pocket Pistol, Dover Castle

ordnance such as Queen Elizabeth's pocket pistol, would have been locals or living locally. During 1661 there was a 'Gentleman of the Ordnance' with 17 gunners but by 1674 to 1676 there was one master gunner and only four gunners 9. In the immediate post-commonwealth period gunners were paid 8d or 6d per day. On a seven-days-a-week basis the 8d pay-rate fits in well with William and John's remuneration. Carpenters of this period would have commanded about a shilling (12d) a day but could have had considerable management responsibility and been

unable to achieve a high number of work-days in the year.

A Dover Castle display associated with the impressive Queen Elizabeth's pocket pistol states it has a 24 feet long barrel and fired a 12-pound ball with accuracy up to a distance of one and a half miles. The display also records 'During the Civil War, the gun was used by Parliament and surrendered to Royalist forces at Lostwithiel, Cornwall, in 1644, from where it was returned to Dover.' Even by sea this must have been a difficult armament to move around the country.

REFERENCES

1. Will dated 09JUL1660, John Avery yeoman of Hougham.
2. John Bavington Jones, *Annals of Dover*, 2nd edition, 1938, page 331
3. Christopher Lee, *The Sceptred Isle*, Penguin Books, 1998, page 245
4. Inventory 08AUG1673, PRC 11/35/41
5. Administration of will, 17JUL1675, PRC2/36/164
6. M. Jurkowshi et al, *Lay Taxes in England and Wales 1188-1688*, PRO Publications, 1998, page 293
7. Will dated 18JUN1673, William Burvill of Hawkinge, PRC17/73/235
8. Inventory 10NOV1682, PRC11/35/40
9. G. M. Atherton, *Soldiers of the Castle, Dover Castle Garrisoned*, Triangle Publications, 2003, pages 13 and 17

MEMBERSHIP NEWS

SPRING 2005

SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE DUE AGAIN

The amount is unchanged (see application form at end of newsletter) and is a bargain. Please pay promptly, but after you have considered the alternative of paying by standing order - if you do not do so already - because once set up it is nearly always a trouble free and convenient method. Just ask me for a form to complete and accept my thanks which also go to all those members, nearly half, who now pay by standing order.

Because our subscriptions are low we need to raise extra money to help with the costs of meetings. Charging an admission fee has been considered and rejected and so raffle proceeds can make all the difference between profit and loss at individual events. Thanks, therefore, to donors of prizes who often slip them on to the table anonymously, and to buyers, sellers and folders of raffle tickets.

Our welcome new members are: Mr J & Mrs S White, Mr W & Mrs A Hamblin, Miss N Goodfellow, Mr Y Tykhoneriko, Mr A & Mrs L Sencicle, Miss E Reeves.

We send our condolences to the families of members who have died during the year: Mrs P Alexander, Mr J Hewitt, Mr H Cleaves, Miss J Pearce, Mrs B Fitch, Mr J Chandler, Mr S Shearman, Mr E H Baker, Miss K Goodfellow, Mr W E Greenwood.

Sheila Cope