

of vital importance, all hands were rescued by the heroic conduct of Benjamin and William Burvill and their boat's crew...."

Three of these heroes had been in Maidstone goal the previous year. The medal with the inscription round the rim 'WILLm BERVILLE, Wreck of the "REYNARD" of Jersey off Dover, on the 25th Sept 1860' is now in the possession of his great-great-grandson William.

Given the evidence was justice served in this case? Were the boatmen who were clearly skilled in the matter of rescuing both people and ships justified in "taking charge", or was the ship's master right to accept the *Aureo's* probable fate on Dover beach rather than risk losses? Certainly the reputation of "Dover Sharks" was known to the master, as when first grounded he refused to let even

coastguards and customs officers aboard his ship.

On a personal level, Benjamin Burvill features in my "Troglydotes of East Cliff" article (Dover Society Newsletter No. 32, August 1998) and in the book "The White Cliffs of Dover" written by Peter and Julie Burville. Both article and book are illustrated with copies of William Henry Prior's charming watercolours of the cave-cottage where Benjamin James was born. At the time of Benjamin's incarceration in Maidstone goal his wife Martha Elizabeth had just given birth to their first child Benjamin Charles.

This article is based on material from "An East Kent Family: the Burville's", a book in progress that attempts to record the lives of the family through the centuries and suggests an origin for the surname.

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SOCIETY PROJECTS

Report by Jeremy Cope

RIVER DOUR

The White Cliffs Countryside Project 2009 working parties are now underway clearing the rubbish from the river, a vital job if we are to make the most of one of our most important natural assets. If you want details please contact the project on 01304 241806 or at their website at

www.whitecliffscountryside.org.uk

The River Dour Steering Group met in April to exchange views and news. Dover Town Council said that they intended to complete their project at Charlton Green

this summer. The Environment Agency despite budgetary pressures has plans to improve the natural resources of the river. Dover District Council's plans include the river as an important feature of developments in the town with members of the group continuing to lobby for further improvements.

Dates for the working parties.

Thursday 20th August
Friday 25th September
October to be advised