

The following two articles published in Bygone Kent, March 1999 also appear in Mike Igglesden's book 1930-56. Mike is living in Perth, Western Australia and has been since 1956 but still follows all things Dovorian with great interest.

1944 RETURN TO DOVER

Harold Terrace and then 18 Frith Road

— by Mike Igglesden —

"**Y**ou can't possibly live 'ere". The removal man, even after experiencing three years of housing conditions in wartime Britain, was aghast at the view which met his eyes upon arrival at our future home in Harold Terrace, Dover. It was a somewhat daunting sight. Our terraced house had lost its left-hand neighbour, which had been nearly removed by a bomb or shell, apparently a year or so before. The rubble and small sections of remaining walls of this casualty of war were already being claimed by a vigorous growth of tall green weeds and rambling plants of various species.

Spirits were not exactly buoyed by the climatic conditions of the day. It was early winter 1944. It was late afternoon. It was cold. It was raining hard. We were also tired from our journey from outer Western London where we had spent the war years until now.

But we were fortunate. There were many people of that era who also would have given anything to have been in the position of assuming possession of accommodation of any

standard. What to do? No decisions had to be made. We were home. We had left Dover in 1936 and were back.

Mother entered the downstairs door leading into the kitchen. One step into the room and crunch, her left foot disappeared under the floorboards. Dry rot. What a misnomer is that description of a reason for wood decay. Upon investigation, we discovered that there were few tiles remaining in place on the roof. Over a period of time the rain had descended from floor to floor, soaking and dislodging much of the lath and plaster ceilings and rendering portions of the floors very unsafe with this 'dry rot'.

There was a roll of old linoleum lying in the hall. Ever resourceful, Dad grabbed a hammer and a bag of flat headed nails from his tool box, carted, with help from his two sons, the lino upstairs and nailed it to the underside of the rafters in such a fashion as to direct most of the rain water out through the glassless 'window'. Meanwhile the furniture was unloaded into the first floor rooms and set down on builder's planks placed across the floor, to avoid the

repetition of Mother's unfortunate kitchen experience. Understandably, there were many months of builders coming and going before the house was in any way weatherproof, or remotely in a condition which could, today, be deemed acceptable for human habitation. But it was a place of our own. Many people in that era were not so fortunate.

This of course, was of no great concern to a 14 year old boy used to seeing such situations and worse, in London over the previous years. But - next morning there was an object of concern. In amongst the overgrown garden across the road was the outline of a boat. A boat of doubtful pedigree about 16 foot long, clinker built in very poor condition with grass,

brambles and stinging nettles growing knee high all around her and some even finding their way up through the bottom planking. It was love at first sight. The boat was instrumental in rekindling my infatuation with small boats, which was to endure for a lifetime.

In Dover we found preparations for D Day were well advanced. Boys with small boats not tolerated. Indeed, the sea front was still covered in barbed wire, concrete and steel anti tank landing devices all along the beaches. Trucks and guns rumbled through the town. All the corners of the main roads had previously been concreted to reduce damage, which turning track vehicles tended to impart on normal bitumen surfaces.

A History of the **MARKET SQUARE BUSINESS**

— by Mike Igglesden —

A building that escaped major damage was the shop in the Market Square. It had been in the family since 1788. In 1736 a certain John Igglesden was born in Tenterden, Kent. He became a Master Mariner, making many voyages to America, probably transporting migrants to the New World, but by the age of fifty-four he had had enough of the sea and retired to Dover where, amongst many other interests, he became a gunner at the castle. During this time he married Elizabeth Nash,

in 1760, and they had a family of five daughters and four sons. John was made a Deacon of the Baptist Church in 1781. He died in 1824 aged eighty eight years. Writing in his history of the Dover Church, the Reverend Benjamin Martin wrote: *'The above family form a very pleasant part of the congregation, most being either members or hearers.'*

I can imagine the excitement of those 'members and hearers' together with the other citizens of Dover four years