

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

later, when in 1786, lifting off from the castle, the first successful hot air balloon crossing of the Channel was accomplished. The world was getting smaller.

It was John and Elizabeth Igglesden's eldest son John who in 1788, aged twenty one, opened the bakery business in the Market Place. This year, 1788 was also a year well established in British history as it was then that the 'First Fleet' of eleven ships sailed for Australia loaded with 770 men, women and children, deemed to be undesirables by English Society. The voyage lasted 251 days and it must have been a horrific journey for these convicts.

John married Amy Mash in 1791 and, like his father before him, was made a Deacon of the Baptist Church. Of their six children John Bourne and Benjamin were both to carry on the business. John Bourne was deeply involved in the Baptist Church and was, apparently, a very well respected member of the community. He was made a Freeman of the Borough as, in fact, were many Igglesdens over the years. Looking ahead to 1816 ten Igglesdens subscribed to a fund for building a new chapel in Adrian Street. It is now the Unitarian Church and was completed 1820. Plaques around the walls testify to the Igglesdens' many years of commitment to the Baptist faith. Ivan Green, in his book 'Dover Pictorial History', described it as 'a great treasure, being one of the few remaining early, almost unaltered, 19th century Preaching Houses'.

There is a preponderance of Benjamins, Johns and Marys in our branch of the family. Double checks on dates (where possible) have to be made to keep one on the research straight and narrow! We have a sampler sewn by a Jane Igglesden, aged 6, beautifully worked. It must have been hard on the eyes making such fine stitches. The Victoria and Albert Museum suggested it was done approximately 1790 to 1800.

John Bourne Igglesden died (at an early age of forty years) in 1836 and his brother Benjamin took over the bakery. He and his wife Mary (whose father, according to their marriage certificate, was a Master Miller) lived over the shop with their children, Jane, Benjamin, George, Frances and Clara. The 1861 census shows Benjamin as a Master Confectioner who remains 'head of the household' aged fifty six. Son Benjamin Alfred now aged twenty seven, baker, married his cousin Mary Bourne on 4th June of that year. George, the second son, now aged twenty three, was to become a watchmaker and jeweller with three shops in Snargate Street. The excellent article by Margaret Mustard entitled 'The Igglesdens of Dover and Ashford' ('Bygone Kent' Vol.5 No.5) mentioned the fact that when George Igglesden, watchmaker and jeweller, married, he and his family lived in the Dour House, River, Dover. When my family and I rented an old house in the same area in 1974 it was, and still is, named The Dour House. Until I read the



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article ten years later we had no idea that we had very probably been living in my great-grandfather's brother's house for twelve months. Quite remarkable.

Also listed on the 1861 census was daughter Clara aged seventeen, sister-in-law Rachael Martin, baker's assistant and a 14 year old baker's boy. The new small steam paddle wheeler 'Maid of Kent' which commenced service that year was the talk of the town and was an additional harbinger of a new era for the all-important port and its future development.

Another event to take hold of the imagination of the public at about that time - and not only Dover residents - was the swimming of the Channel by Captain Matthew Webb in 1875. A bronze statue in his honour was cast and erected on the promenade where it still stands, be it in a changed location, today.

By 1871 Benjamin Alfred, now 37 years old, was head of the household

in 7 Market Place with his wife Mary (nee Bourne), and children Robert nine (who in 1930 was to become my grandfather), Benjamin Arthur seven, Emily four and Bertha three. Mother-in-law Ann Bourne seventy-six (nee Igglesden, widow of Henry Bourne) was also resident, as she

was until she died aged eighty nine years. When Benjamin Arthur left school he became a watchmaker's apprentice, possibly to Uncle George. By that time, 1881, his father was employing two men and three boys. Probably they were the staff of two small branches established about then, one in London Road and the other in Foord Road, Folkestone, Benjamin Arthur died at the age of thirty one.

My main interest lies with Robert, my grandfather, who by 1890 (then aged twenty eight) was listed in Pyke's Blue Book as a grocer/tea dealer at 146 Snargate Street and 12 Effingham Street. Soon after his marriage in 1888 Robert set sail for Australia with his wife Mary (nee Dixon) and small son Henry Alfred (known as Harry). They settled in Melbourne just over 100 years after the first convicts were sent to Botany Bay.

My other three uncles were born in Melbourne - Douglas b.1890 who lived only five months, Robert Arthur b.1891 who was killed on Vimy Ridge,

France, in 1917 and Sidney Dixon b.1894. That Melbourne had been pronounced a city thirty seven years before their arrival highlights the speed at which this new branch of the Empire was flourishing.

The remaining additions to the family were May who was born in 1896 (but she only lived for one day) my Auntie Kitty in 1898, my father 'Teddy' (Dad) in 1903 and Auntie Jessie in 1906.

By 1891 'Jimmy' Graves and his wife, Mary, were living over the shop and he had become a partner in the business which was then to be known as Iggesden and Graves until just before World War Two. Benjamin Alfred had retired by then and 'living on own means' at 23 Randolph Gardens.

It seems that after approximately six years in Melbourne, Robert's parents asked him to return to Dover to take over the business. From this distance in time it seems to have been a strange situation as Robert was trained as a grocer, not a confectioner;

also one would have thought someone a little closer to home could have done the job! Imagine that long journey with four very small children. They must have been stoic people in those days. The voyage would have been made at a time when the sailing vessel was being gradually supplanted by steam ships. I have yet to discover the mode of travel for Robert and family. Many passenger ships were steam powered but rigged for sail to be used as an auxiliary – the older sailors being sceptical of the reliability of this new-fangled steam engine. Even so, in 1902 the only five-masted full-rigged ship ever built – the Preussen- was launched. She was destined to be wrecked just off Dover. I remember seeing the outline of the remains of her hull at low water in the late 1940's.

The whole of the front of the shop was knocked down and rebuilt in mock-Tudor style in 1905 and the accommodation over the shop was converted to a tearoom, which became very popular with Dovorian

over the next thirty years. Not long afterwards (1909) the French aviator, Bleriot, won the race to be the first man to fly the Channel. Mum tells me that a screen was erected around the aircraft, just north of the castle, and the public were charged to see this recently arrived piece of history. Entrepreneurs at work!



Lean financial times beset the bakery, due in part to some unwise placing of its profits in a religious organisation (not Baptist) and possibly because Robert, as before mentioned not being a confectioner by trade, lost interest in the business. Be that as it may, a certain irony exists in that Mary Igglesden, Robert's wife, had, years before, given my Auntie Lily's mother her very first job as a kitchen maid.

From humble beginnings of kitchen maid this lady was to come forward in this 'hour of need' and saved the business with the necessary funding. Harry's wife (my Aunt Lily) and my Dad (Teddy) took the place in hand and saved it from disaster. But how people worked in those days!

I hardly saw my father for years as he was always working in the bakehouse behind the shop. I believe this bakehouse is now a café. Igglesden and Graves used to do a great deal of catering. Cricket Week was always busy. My mother, Barbara, and Auntie Lily were run off their feet ensuring that supplies to various marquees were adequate, that the temporary waitresses were performing their functions in a satisfactory manner and generally overseeing all the aspects of the catering business.

In 1936 Grandfather Robert died. Dad sold the business and we left Dover. The Igglesden era in Dover Market Square was over. Uncle Harry, an esteemed Master Builder, and his wife Lily remained a few more years as the sole representatives of our family in

the town until (as previously described) we returned in 1944. The new Tea House, the 'Pharos', named after the Roman Lighthouse which stands on the cliffs above the town, was a great financial success.

The old shop, after some time as booksellers/stationers has reverted in part to its original role in the town. It is now named 'Dickens Corner' referring to the legend that the steps of the shop were where David Copperfield rested on his way to visit Aunt Betsy Trotwood. The upstairs restaurant has been refurbished in the 1920's style. Partaking of a meal there in 1997 the history of the place was over-whelming and I could almost expect to see one of my forebears, who had lived and worked there all those years ago, come up to the table and ask 'Tea or coffee, Sir?'

