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anchored off Dover. National victories were celebrated in the town with parades, balls and grand suppers. The town was illuminated and candles placed in windows. Thomas noted that two captured French generals attended one of these balls! Captured French sailors were usually kept in the town goal; occasionally old and infirm prisoners were sent back to France and released.

Despite the wars, Thomas carried on his business, ordering goods and sometimes travelling to Canterbury, usually by chaise, but sometimes walking part way to Bridge or the Halfway House. On one occasion he describes walking all the way, commenting finally, 'got home at six and thank God met Mrs. P again in health and safety'. He describes his visits to London by coach via Rochester or by water from Whitstable, combining business with sightseeing.

Thomas expresses concern for individuals fallen on hard times: debtors held in Dover Castle and a man held in the Market Place stocks being pelted by the crowd. In 1807 he witnessed a riot when a crowd demanded the release of four smugglers; magistrates read the Riot Act and mounted soldiers quickly cleared the Market Place. A crime took place in his own home when Thomas had to sack a servant for stealing a pair of stockings.

Many odd incidents are recorded, including Dovorians towing a whale, stranded on the Goodwins, back to Dover, where it was put on display for 6d; later, it was boiled for oil and its gigantic skull displayed at the top of a cliff. A pig was buried in a cave following a cliff fall, but was dug out alive after six months, still able to walk. Whilst there is no record of Thomas playing any sports, he attended horse racing at Priory Fields, Barham

Downs and Buckland Valley and watched cricket matches in Northfall Meadow.

Thomas retired from his drapery business in 1804 and in 1806 his wife died. He recorded her last hours, 'She called me to her bedside and said, "Give me your hand. I am dying. Send for the doctor"... at 12 she was failing fast...at five I could scarce feel a pulse remaining. At six I felt the parting pang and saw her breathe for the last time, when she expired without a struggle and fell asleep'. Mrs. Pattenden was buried alongside Thomas's parents in St. Mary's Churchyard. He lived another 13 years, still taking a keen interest in life, writing, sketching and recording events in his notebooks, most of which survive.

Source: The Pattenden Diaries 1797-1819 by A.L.Macfie, Archaeologia Cantiana, Vol. XCIV, 1978.

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Contact the editor at:

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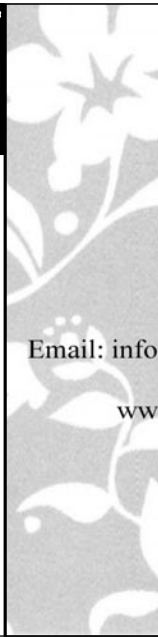
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