

# OCTOBER MEETING

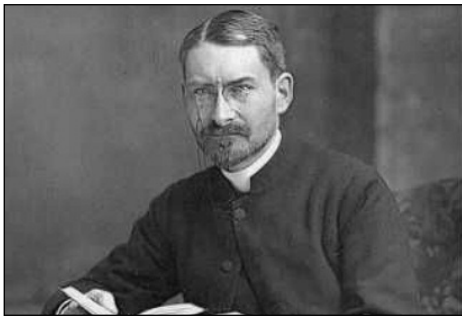
## Kent Maps Online

A talk by Michelle Crowther

Reported by Alan Lee

Kent Maps Online is a digital humanities project providing themed essays about the county of Kent. The brainchild of Carolyn Oulton, it is a collaboration between Canterbury Christ Church University and the American company JSTOR. Kent Maps Online publish two or three articles each month. In this talk Michelle concentrated on stories with a Dover connection and showed slides to illustrate how the site works.

The first item was the Dover Wesleyan Methodist Scrapbook and Reverend Hugh Price Hughes, who lived at 1 Buckland Terrace next to the Buckland Street Chapel. He preached his first sermon at the Snargate Street Chapel. This encouraged eighteen people to dedicate their life to Christ, and this at a time when there were over two hundred and twenty pubs in Dover. This then led Hughes to then found a Band of Hope Temperance Society in the town. In Dover, Hughes met



*Hugh Price Hughes*

feminist and social reformer Josephine Butler. Together they campaigned against the Contagious Diseases Act, first passed in 1864, and which was in force in Dover at this time. In 1871 the Dover Infectious Diseases Hospital was established in the former Ship Hotel on Custom House Quay.

David Baron, born in Suwalki, Poland in 1855 (in 1830 had been pacified by the Russian army). A Jewish convert to Christianity, he married Fanny Kingsford of Dover at Eythorne in 1883. By this time, he was a prominent figure with the Mildmay Mission. The Dover Chronicle, in 1884, reported that a sale of works at the Maison Dieu raised funds for the mission.

Articles about William Burges and his designs for the Maison Dieu, as well as David Copperfield, appear on Kent Maps Online. The group now have twenty articles dedicated to Dickens including his account of staying at the Ship Inn, Dover, from 29th April to 2nd May 1856.

Dover in the 19th century was full of people lodging here, many temporary either coming, or going to the continent.

Michelle then spoke about Dover at Night, an event that took place in March 2024. This was part of the wider Community History Days set up by Kent Maps Online. This led on to details of characters revealed in a number books.

W. G. M. Reynold wrote *Mary Price: or the memoirs of a servant girl*, published in 1851. Abducted by thieves, at night, whilst

at Mr Messiter's grocers, Snargate Street, she was dragged to Shakespeare Cliff and thrown over. She landed on a ledge and after twenty minutes clambered back up. In 1895, F. F. Montresor wrote, *Into the Highways and Hedges*, in which Meg, taking an evening walk, fell off Langdon Cliffs, once again she was lucky to fall onto a ledge.

Kent Maps Online is not just about the 19th and early 20th century. John Lyly's portrayal of Dover in the 16th century, in his book *Eupheus and His England*, is well researched.

On 5th August 1588 Sir Thomas Scott wrote to Lord Burghley informing him that the Spanish Armada had been sighted off Boulogne. Thirty ensigns of infantry and three cornets of horse were assembled on the Downs. Over the period of a day Scott gathered, and paid for, 4,000 men at Dover. On seeing the massed Armada in the channel many of these unprepared troops panicked and fled the town.

May Aldington, a 20th century author who lived in Dover, wrote *Love Letters that Caused a Divorce*. She led a colourful life and for years tried to obtain a divorce from her Catholic husband. Her son Richard wrote, among others, *The Death of a Hero*



George Augustus Sala

and *Life for Life's Sake*, both based on his experiences on the Western Front in WWI.

P. G. Woodhouse spent two years, between 1892 and 1894, at Malvern House Prep School, Kearsney.

H. E Bates (of *The Darling Buds of May* fame) wrote a short story, *An Aspidistra in Babylon*. In this he depicted Dover as a place where soldiers 'come into the town to drink beer, eat fish and chips and get off with girls'. He describes Waterloo Crescent as 'a crescent of cream and white'.

There are over 350 articles on their website. There is Anna Maria Hussey, and her sister Kate, who enjoyed exploring the cliffs and countryside in 1836, and John Edensor Littlewood, a mathematician, and who lived in Dover as a child.

Jessie Challacombe, daughter of Christopher and Martha Worsfold, born at 23 Maison Dieu Road, was a children's author. In 1891 she married Reverend William Challacombe of 44 Clarendon Road, two years later they moved to New Malden. Her first book, *The Brother's Promise*, was published in 1897. She wrote at least 12 novels and many short stories.

Michelle ended with George Augustus Sala, author and journalist, who, with his family, arrived in Dover as a boy in December 1840 and stayed in Snargate Street. In 1841 they moved to a cosy, old-fashioned hostelry, part of *The Gun Hotel*, Strond Street, owned by George Hipgrave. Sala later wrote an article, *The Streets of the World*, in which he concludes "he who knows not Snargate Street cannot be familiar with Dover."

Please visit Kent Maps Online. If you would like to contribute contact michelle.crowther1@canterbury.ac.uk