

The
Dover
Society

Newsletter

No. 46

April 2003



The American ship, *Northeastern Victory*, which was wrecked on the Goodwin Sands in 1946



THE DOVER SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1988

Registered with the Civic trust, Affiliated to the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies
Registered Charity No. 299954

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Front Cover picture

The American ship *Northeastern Victory* was wrecked on the Goodwin Sands at Christmas in 1946. Very little of her cargo was salvaged before the hull disappeared under the water. The masts, however, remained visible from Deal for many years.

The Objectives of the Dover Society

founded in 1988.

- to promote high standards of planning and architecture
- to interest and inform the public in the geography, history, archaeology, natural history and architecture of the area
- to secure the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic or public interest
- and commitment to the belief that a good environment is a good investment.

The area we cover comprises the parishes or wards of Barton, Buckland, Castle, Lydden, Temple Ewell, Maxton, Pineham, Priory, River, St. Radigund's, Town & Pier and Tower Hamlets.

All members receive three Newsletters a year and in each year the Committee organises about ten interesting events - talks, tours, visits, Members' Meetings and usually a Christmas Feast.

The Society gives Awards for improvements to the area, monitors planning proposals and supports, joins in or initiates civic projects and arts events.

Editorial

THE NEXT MEETING IS THE FOURTEENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING on Monday 14th April at St. Mary's Parish Centre, when the speaker will be Bob Goldfield of Dover Harbour Board. This will be the last indoor meeting until October.

Summer outings will take place each month from May to September and details of these are listed on the back cover as usual. Remember to book early for the trips you wish to join. Application forms for the first of these will be available at the AGM. After that contact Joan Liggett for forms or further information. The first outing in May is to Hever Castle and should be a very enjoyable 'May Day' experience with music and dancing for the occasion. The June event will be a river trip, probably a repeat of the very popular Thames trip on the 'Pocahontas'. Once again - book early!

This newsletter includes many of its usual features, a report from Chris Taft, an article by Ivan Green, accounts of Society meetings, reports from Planning and two more snippets of Dover history in 'Glimpses of the Past'. This collection is proving a very popular feature of the Newsletter and I was disappointed that four or five promises of contributions from members did not materialise in time for this issue. I know there is a wealth of experience and interesting anecdotes out there and have spoken to many members with tales to tell. If you have any memories which you think may be suitable for the series please let me know. They can be your own memories or those of friends or relatives.

You may remember the discussion of a 'Praise and Shame' list, which arose at our brainstorming session. Jack Woolford provides more information on this at the end of his planning report. Comments and suggestions are welcome. Please contact Jack

with your views.

The deadline for copy for the next issue is 16th June, but I would appeal to all contributors to send in copy earlier than this date if they have it ready. It is a great help to an editor (whether myself or a successor) to spread the work over several weeks instead of

leaving it for the last two or three.

Thanks are due, as ever, to all our contributors and to our advertisers. Please continue to support them. Our grateful thanks to all distributors who continue to get the newsletters to your doors.

Editor

FOOTNOTE: WANTED – AN EDITOR

I have now held the post of Newsletter Editor for eleven years, having taken over from Philomena Kennedy for the September issue in 1991. I have thoroughly enjoyed my time as editor but would like to find a successor when I have completed twelve years at the job - that is after the April issue 2003. The applicant will need to have a PC and to collect all the material for each issue, edit it, send it for proof-reading and present the copy to Adams Printers on disc. Alternatively, should we find an editor with the expertise to do all the page-setting as well as the above, the Society would be lucky indeed - and it would save a great deal on printing costs. If there is an enthusiastic member out there who would like to undertake this fascinating and rewarding job, please get in touch with me. Needless to say, I shall be happy to support and help the new editor for several issues and to continue to contribute articles in the future.

Merril Lilley

DEADLINE for contributions

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 47 will be Monday 16th June 2003.

The Editor welcomes contributions and interesting drawings or photographs. 'Paper copy' should be typed at double spacing. Handwritten copy should be clear with wide line spacing. Accurate fully proof-read copy on computer discs is acceptable; please ring 01304 205254 to discuss details.

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THE EDITORIAL AND PRODUCTION TEAM WOULD LIKE TO THANK PFIZER LTD. FOR THEIR GENEROUS DONATION OF £500 TOWARDS THE COST OF THIS ISSUE

The work of the

PLANNING

Sub-Committee

Reported by JACK WOOLFORD, Chairman

While sharing Dover Town Council's resentment at not having been consulted, we welcome the improving prospect for the Heathfield Home Zone and congratulate the Council on its Protocol with Calais (which may bring in some EU money), and its promotion of the Riverside Walk with Kent County Council which we have championed since it was first proposed by the New Dover Group forty years ago.

We congratulate Railfuture for sharing our view that local buses should call at Dover Priory, the sensible location for the Bus Station, although buses from Folkestone would have to drive round the Worthington Street roundabout and back up Folkestone Road.

We think that Spooft Ltd's proposed Conker College at East Cliff is less divisive than asylum accommodation

but regret that Dover District Council did not share our (and the government's!) view that radio masts should be shared rather than new ones built as, for example, at Kearsney Bowling Club. We are also puzzled that whilst, according to the newly adopted Local Plan, Dover is not short of housing, there should be so many more planning consents for Buckland Mill, the Technical Collage, Whitfield Port Zone, Lorne Road, Westmount and Webbs. We are particularly concerned that the Foundation Stone at Westmount (1876) which contains a family scroll in Hebrew in a vase with coins, etc, must be saved and then suitably displayed in the Museum. On the other hand we have nothing but praise for the conversion of the White Cliffs Experience into a combined Library, Museum, Theatre and Adult Education Centre (parking excepted).

We very much enjoyed the second meeting of the Port Consultative Committee, much better housed in Cruise Liner Terminal 1 although our breath was taken away by an uncanvassed change of Chairman.

MEMBERSHIP NEWS **SPRING 2003**

SUBSCRIPTIONS PLEASE... SUBSCRIPTIONS PLEASE...

Our AGM takes place on Monday April 14th and I look forward to receiving your subscriptions of £6 single or £10 for joint members on that date. Otherwise paying by standing order is an excellent method - very helpful to the membership secretary - and I am always delighted to provide the required form. Unlike a direct debit the amount paid from one's bank account by standing order remains fixed as specified.

Due partly to Gift Aid, which now covers about 75% of membership, our subscription has not increased. Welcome news. If you are a tax payer and have inadvertently forgotten to sign, please do so, if you wish, on the application form at the end of this newsletter and send it to me. The declaration requires signing once only, not annually.

We much regret that over the past year death has claimed Mr Richard Standing, Mr Bill Breeze, Mrs Helen Johnson, Miss D. Green, Mr Arthur Aylen and Mr Maurice Miles.

Recent new members include Mr J & Mrs B Allison, Mr & Mrs P Drew, Mr B Edwards, Mr T & Mrs B Tomling, Mrs P Hackney, Mr F & Mrs D Coda and Mrs D Devalle. We hope that they will be glad to have discovered us.

Sheila R. Cope

PRAISE & SHAME

by Jack Woolford

PROMPTED BY OTHER Kent Federation Amenity Societies in East (notably Ramsgate and Margate) and West Kent (Bexley) and after very much cogitation and consultation the Planning Committee have decided to go public on the state of Dover. The following letter has been sent both to the 'Dover Express' and 'Dover Mercury'.

'Dover, like nearly every town in the country, suffers from architectural eyesores inflicted on us by architects and developers who appear blind to their surroundings. In Dover these are well known - Burlington House, Woolworths, the Premier Lodge Hotel, as seen by the thousands who pass along Townwall Street to the Docks, and the B&Q Store, etc, etc. These cannot in the short term be changed and unfortunately at present we have to live with them.

However, there are areas of the town, seen by visitors and residents alike which could and should be smartened up if we are to make Dover more attractive to we who live here and wish to attract others to visit the town. De Bradelei's and the surrounding area have been considerably smartened up and show what can be done with a little investment. The underpass to the town, although at times suffering from pools of water and litter, is kept reasonably clean. But coming up into King Street visitors are faced with an unkempt area which surely needs smartening up. Visitors must ponder about the attitude of people who allow one of the gateways to the town to be so neglected. Both corners of Townwall Street with Bench

Street have buildings which are eyesores, as is the site of the former Crypt public house. For visitors driving along Townwall Street or walking from the seafront this main entrance should be attractive. But with a shabby amusement arcade on one side and a derelict area on the other, this entrance is shaming. Boarded up shops in Bench Street and King Street (the property next to the Inland Revenue, once an indoor market, and the site of Walter's shoe shop, in particular) do nothing to enhance the entry to the Market Square. Nor does the *buddleia* growing from the building used by Topo



Sight of the old Crypt, Bench Street

- 6 Gigio. On St Mary's Passage, two back areas of properties fronting Cannon Street have accumulations of rubbish and rats have been seen in the vicinity.

Walking through the town the pedestrianised area presents an acceptable image and is kept clean although it is a pity that the paving around the Eight Bells pub is badly broken. It is heart warming to see the good efforts of the new cafe with its seating area under outdoor heaters surrounded by nice railings, which is well patronised even in winter. Looking up Pencester Road the isolated building next to Pencester Park, used, (dare we say?) by

Town Centre Management, could be smartened up and the rubbish behind the shops on the north side of Biggin Street must attract rats. The 'Dover Express' offices themselves need a facelift.

All the above areas could do with a little investment in time and cash. **This matter will be ongoing. Please tell us what you think! Have we been unfair? What have we missed? Please write, phone or e-mail me at:- 1066 Green Lane, Temple Ewell, Dover CT16 3AR. Tel: 01304 330381**

Editor's Note: Some of the views expressed in Jack Woolford's letter may not be the views of the Editor or of all the members of the Society.



Two views of the old army recruitment centre, under Henry VIII's Motte Bulwark at East Cliff. The site has now been partially cleared and is 'to let'





Derelict site of the corner of Bench Street and Townwall Street



Dover's infamous eyesore - Burlington House seen over the BP garage and adjacent derelict site

Photographs by Merril Lilley

THE NOVEMBER MEETING

Two Speakers - 18th November 2002

TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT

MIKE WEBB, Manager

Reported by Tessa George

MIKE WEBB EXPLAINED that Town Centre Management is a government initiative but it has its own constitution and on the Board are members of the Town Council, the Dover District Council, Kent County Council, the Dover Society and the Chamber of Commerce, with support from other organisations, including the Dover Harbour Board, Sea France, P&O and Boots. Thus it is a mixture of the public and private sector.

He told his audience that when he took up the position as Town Centre Manager he had never worked in local politics and he explained some of the difficulties of the job and gave examples of work done by the Centre in 2002.

The first was of providing funding for the Christmas lights in the town. Some of this came from SeaFrance and Dover Harbour Board and SALCO put the lights up, but it was all done on a shoestring, without sufficient money and the result was a disgrace. In spite of this, he said, we do have the biggest SWITCH-ON in Kent, where no money changes hands and staff from the Marlowe put on an all day kiddies' show. Terry Sutton commented that he had never seen so many people in the Market Square.

TCM opened the new Co-op superstore and were given their first cheque towards River Watch, the idea for which came from the Dover Society. At the same time they obtained the co-operation of the Co-op management to help keep the land clear

beside the B&Q site.

Mike was asked to open the children's event on that occasion by letting off balloons with all the children who attended the store on the Saturday afternoon. However, he had to decline because he was supporting the major Dover game on the same day, so they came up with the idea of letting off the balloons at the match between Dover and Oxford. There were two hundred balloons donated and TV and newspaper coverage of the event.

He said there was so much more that the TCM could do. One problem was that in the private sector they were dealing with an entrepreneurial spider that wants to be involved in everything as opposed to the public sector which runs on a hierarchical structure. The two structures, he said, were wholly incompatible, since the doers do not want to be controlled by rules and regulations. We do need, he thought, elected politicians to decide how much is going to be public and how much will be private. We need an enabling council. This was not, he stressed, a party political sentiment but was based on the fact that Dover Town Centre Management is the worst funded TCM scheme in the whole country. They have received £15,000 from Dover District Council (compared with Shepway who get £50,000) and £600 from the Town Council (compared with £10,000 in Shepway). When the TCM moved, the Town Council paid the rent for one year, £3000. When Mike talked to colleagues in Hastings he discovered that they received £30,000. He said that the TCM could not exist without substantive support. Things were likely to get worse because the District Council have indicated that they intend to cut core funding and pay instead for project

funding. He asked how they could apply for project funding if they did not get the core funding necessary to exist.

It made him sad to reflect that our town did not make use of its opportunities. He said 'it is a marketeers' dream. Who could ask for more, the beauty, the infrastructure, the castle, the people going past our front door, and somehow we cannot make a success of it. It's unbelievable.'

But, he said, there were changes afoot which gave cause for optimism. He had spoken to Bob Goldfield, the new Managing Director of the Harbour Board, to Nadeem Aziz, the new Managing Director of Dover District Council, who were both very positive. Another newcomer to the town is Clive Cook, the new principal of South Kent College, an enormously energetic person.

He went on to say that TCM must change its own direction. We have done a lot of populist things to raise money and if that is what the town wants then that is what TCM will continue to do; Christmas lights road show, pop groups playing, boat races on the Dour, Father Christmas on midsummer day giving out Easter eggs and the talent show which became a national attraction.

As well as these the Board decided we should focus on the key things which we do so well. The first of these is SHOP WATCH, which we introduced and for which we won an award. This grew out of Dover TCM initiative. We now have nearly 90 different companies on two-way radio and CCTV.

The next is RIVER WATCH to look after the beautiful River Dour and keep it clean, a project supported by the Dover Society for many years. The river is amazingly clean from an environmental point of view and there are trout in almost the whole length of it. What is needed is not just the occasional clean-up but an on-going system of care. Watch this space! The Co-op is already giving us financial and legal support. There is one problem.

We are unable to cut weed because of a rule of the Environmental Agency. One of the worst areas is outside 'Riverside' where the weed is rife and allows rubbish to collect.

Lastly there is another project for which we need a name. We do not want to call it SLUM WATCH, but that is what it is. We are trying to get errant landlords to clean up their properties. There are, of course, difficulties. Often it is not known who owns a property and they are protected by an Act of 1990.

He went on to say that TCM wants to work with the Town Council and he welcomed Councillor Drew, the first independent councillor. He ended by saying that the TCM has support from many sources who say it is a model. The latest example is an exclusive, in the form of a letter from HRH Prince Charles, who was aware of Mike's column in the 'Dover Express'.

LIFE IN DOVER DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR

A summary of Derek Leach's talk

DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR Dover was in the front line with troops coming and going, both the fit and the wounded, the dead constantly being brought ashore from damaged and sunken ships to be laid out in the Market Hall, the warships and aircraft coming and going, and the efforts of the Dover Patrol to protect our shipping against U-Boats. This meant that Dover was also a target for bombardment both from the sea and from the air. The lives of ordinary Doverians changed out of all recognition.

The great new naval harbour had been completed five years earlier but was not prepared for war. It would have had no defence against the German Fleet if their

10 vessels had breached the minefields. The harbour defences were improved with booms at the eastern entrance and two blockships at the western entrance to narrow it. The land defences of the harbour were equally neglected and in 1914 air defences were non-existent. Fortunately, it was many months before they were needed. The first planes soon arrived at Swingate Downs, although the aerodrome had not been built! They were tied to stakes for the night. The planes were unarmed and had no bombs but the pilots had pistols!

On August Bank Holiday, 3 August 1914, crowds of locals and Londoners on a day trip came to see the war preparations, hoping to catch sight of a naval battle. At teatime buglers on street corners summoned sailors to rejoin their ships in the harbour. As the destroyers went out on their first patrol the crowds cheered.

War was declared on 4 August 1914. Shoppers were out in force stocking up their cupboards; otherwise, all was calm.

Normal cross-Channel services stopped immediately. Holidaymakers rushed back from abroad. The Dover Fortresses extended from St Margaret's Bay to Folkestone Pier. Access to Dover was only by rail or by the main roads and entry and exit permits had to be produced. All Dover newspapers had to be vetted by the Army for the first year.

The Dover Police Force was augmented by 150 Special Constables including all the doctors in the town. Police were also in charge of Fire Brigade work and kept a close watch for espionage - most aliens had been removed. They also had to process the dead arriving at Dover after naval actions and disasters, Dover Scouts guarded telephone lines and tunnels and also acted as messenger boys generally. A Sea Scout troop was formed to watch the coast. Women took on unfamiliar jobs such as tram conductresses and preparing mines. On the outbreak of war Dover pubs had to close at 9pm but then fell into line with the rest of the country - noon to 2.30pm and 6pm-8pm.



Women preparing mines

The Expeditionary Force moved safely across the Channel, including the three infantry regiments based at Dover, with bands playing and flowers thrown by the crowds. Five battalions arrived taking over the Duke of York's School, the Citadel and Connaught Barracks. Volunteers arrived in Dover to be trained. A great fleet of buses and lorries arrived in Dover for use in Flanders.

15,000 refugees plus wounded soldiers arrived in Dover when the Germans captured Ostend and Dunkirk. Dovorians raided their wardrobes to provide them with clothing.

The newly-completed Marine Station and the railways were in constant use, first transporting Belgian refugees at the beginning of the war, then soldiers going to and from France, the wounded returning as well as army and navy stores throughout the war. Up to 20 hospital trains per day left Dover. 101,872 special trains carried over 12 million soldiers including one and a quarter million wounded during the War. Many of the latter could not continue their journey beyond Dover and were taken to the Dover Military Hospital on the Western Heights where many died.

In November 1914 a 500 strong Volunteer Training Corps was formed in Dover commanded by Sir William Crundall and undertook guard duty and digging trenches around Dover. In December four battalions of Dover volunteers were formed as part of 'Kitchener's Army' and then three reserve battalions - all billeted in civilian homes for months. There were several camps around Dover, both permanent and temporary: at the Castle, Fort Burgoyne, Western Heights and Connaught Barracks built during the War; the Duke of York's School was taken over, Langdon Fort, Archcliffe Fort, Guston Aerodrome, Swingate Aerodrome, Northfall Camp, The Danes, Broad Lees, Longhill, Langdon Prison and Maxton. In addition there were rest camps at the Oil Mills, Victoria Park

and South Front Barracks. There were also tented camps but civilian billets were used during the winter! The Army Pay Corps was based in Dover throughout the war with empty houses commandeered as offices and military quarters as was part of the Dover Union and, later in the war, Victoria Park and Dover College. There was a lack of military training facilities in Dover. Two rifle ranges were set up on the east cliffs and two more to the west of Dover. There were also schools for bombing, mortar training etc. A seaplane base was established on Dover Sea Front by converting the old skating rink. AA defences were improved with searchlights at Drop Redoubt, Castle Keep and Langdon Battery.

The German government offered a prize to the first airman to bomb England. On December 14 it happened - in Mr Terson's garden in Leyburne Road. The great guns across the Channel could be heard over the Christmas church bells. Parade services were held at New St James' Church for most of the War. Soldiers attended Temperance Teas at St James' Parish Hall but numbers dwindled and meetings ceased. In church prayers were offered on behalf of the enemy but not with unanimous approval. One patriot at New St James' did not say amen but regularly said, 'May they lick the dust!'

1915

A fortress full of soldiers, a harbour full of sailors and a town full of evening-free flappers soon created a situation that had to be faced. This led to the opening in April 1915 of the Girls' Patriotic Club in a room over a grocer's shop, which remained popular for the rest of the war. There was great rivalry between the soldiers from the Western Heights Barracks and the sailors. On many occasions they would meet in Snargate Street, pile up their hats and belts and have a fight. Married women invited soldiers' and sailors' wives to weekly Happy Afternoons, held above the Co-op.

An emergency committee was set up in

12 case Dover civilians had to be evacuated before an invasion or if the German Fleet bombarded the town. When air raids became prevalent it arranged the first siren warning in England. Hand bells were kept at Dover Police Station for issue to specials to warn people to leave for their allotted spots behind the hills. Fortunately these arrangements were never needed.

In March the first U-Boat was sunk off Dover. The crew was captured and imprisoned at the Castle. The marching of the crew through Dover caused great excitement. The naval air station at Capel was completed - used by small airships for spotting submarines. Zeppelin raids began in 1915 dropping many bombs in the harbour and around the town but causing little damage. Severe lighting restrictions were imposed and places of entertainment closed at 10 pm. Officials decided Dover was in little danger!

1916

In January 1916 a daylight attack occurred when a seaplane dropped bombs near the

harbour's eastern entrance. Later in January came the first real air raid, by moonlight, causing damage in several parts of the town and a fatality. A man picked up an unexploded bomb and took it to the police station in a sack. Fortunately, it was a dud. Other seaplane attacks followed throughout the town killing several people including a seven year old boy on his way to Sunday School.

In February the P&O Liner *Majola* was sunk near Dover with 155 drowned. Bodies were brought to Dover with the Market Hall used as a temporary mortuary. It served this purpose throughout the War. In the same month Dover was bombarded by destroyers but shells fell harmlessly beyond Dover, except for one in Glenfield Road. Two British destroyers attacked and two German destroyers were sunk and three badly damaged. All the dead were buried at St James' cemetery - the Germans in a mass grave. In May seaplanes attacked at night and no attempt was made to stop them. From the end of July onwards the siren went every night.



German aircraft attacking Dover Harbour



Boys cheering US troops in Market Square

1917

US soldiers arrived in Dover with an enormous amount of money and with loads to eat but they were very generous. Odd items would 'fall off' their ration wagons, always it seemed where there was a group of children. Troops returning from France marched up Castle Hill to the de-lousing station and children would watch as they undressed completely and then marched naked from the first building to the second. Fumigated clothing was returned badly shrunken!

The last daylight raid was in August. September 24, 1917, was Black Monday with 40 bombs falling on Dover killing seven and heralding a week of air raids. Shops were ordered to close by 6pm and everybody went to dugouts or the caves.

A variety of air raid shelters were used. There was a nightly pilgrimage to the caves. The majority from the poorer homes went to the Oil Mill caves, which could hold thousands. Other caves under the Castle were reserved for servicemen and their families, which were bomb

proof. Storage vaults under the Phoenix Brewery and the caves in Trevanion Street and tunnels in the Western Heights including the railway tunnel were used. Two sets of caves at the back of High Street were used as was the Grand Shaft, the crypt under the Town Hall and even the police cells. Budge Adams remembered, 'St. Mary's air raid shelter was in the basement of Sir Richard Dickeson's provision warehouse opposite the school in Queen Street where hundreds or even thousands of sides of bacon hung. We sat on the floor between the rows of bacons. If a bomb had fallen on the warehouse with us in it, it would have been difficult to differentiate between boys and bacon!' A large number of shelters were built in the town but very few were completed due to the shortage of labour! A tunnel was dug from Folkestone Road to Tower Hamlets but raids were over by the time it was finished. The Garrison used dugouts. However most people stayed in their houses without cover. Cinemas and theatres stayed open.



In September 1917 several parts of Dover were hit, including Wesley Hall in Folkestone Road and Dover Gas Works with seven killed. 29 September was one of the worst nights. On the next night Dover

Engineering Works was hit.

With food in short supply a Food Production Committee was organised locally, then a Food Control Committee. Allotments were extended. Flowers in



Wesley Chapel, Folkestone Road in ruins

gardens were replaced with vegetables. The Archbishop was consulted about the propriety of gardening on Sunday and his qualified permission enraged the Sabbatarians. The Committee introduced food rationing. Most people lost a bit of weight but were otherwise OK! Coal shortages led to the creation of the Dover Fuel Control Committee. Even light, gas and electricity were rationed during autumn of 1918. Increasing air raids caused public lighting to be abandoned.

1918

The Zeebrugge Raid main force left Dover on 22 April 1918. Nothing more was heard other than tremendous gunfire during the night. After the raid, 23 April 1918, the battered old cruiser *HMS Vindictive* returned to Dover and received the homage of every ship in port as well as the cheers from the crowd on shore. 156 died and 400 were wounded in the raid. The dead were taken to the temporary mortuary in the Market Hall. 66 were buried together at St. James' Cemetery. All Dover watched the procession.

From July 1917 to November 1918 nearly 4 million troops went from Dover to France.

The heaviest bombs to fall on Dover dropped in May 1918. Few if any of the raiders got back home. The last bomb to fall on England was on Dover in July 1918. At least 184 bombs and 23 shells from ships had fallen on Dover itself and another 370 fell within three miles of Dover.

There was a threat of attack on the town in order to break the lines of communication with France. Every precaution was taken. In July 1918 instructions were issued entitled *NOTICE TO EVACUATE THE TOWN IMMEDIATELY*. People were to meet at places of assembly and await orders, carrying warm clothing, food and drink for 12 hours. Everybody would move by different routes to Acrise, then by train to the West Country. Preparations were completed but the

threat of invasion receded as the Germans retreated.

In August 1918 a big armada including the battleship *Glatton*, was assembled at Dover to recapture the Flanders coast. On 16 September the *Glatton* was at anchor at the eastern end of the harbour when a big explosion set the ship alight. There was a threat to other ships, the harbour walls and the town itself from the big store of ammunition on board. The decision was taken to torpedo the vessel with men still trapped on board. More than three-quarters of the complement were killed or injured. 57 men were missing - trapped in the hull. The *Glatton* was treated locally, unofficially, as a war grave until it was lifted years later.

On November 11, 1918 came the Armistice. All the ships' sirens honked continuously, rockets were bursting everywhere and aircraft did wild capers over the town and harbour. Assistants rushed out of their shops, clambering up on horses and trams. The vicar's wife went into the garden and banged a gong!

POW's started to arrive soon afterwards and were given a great welcome by crowds and the Prince of Wales. The whole of Dover turned out the week before Christmas 1918 to greet Field Marshal Sir Douglas Haig and his commanders when they returned to England with an escort of destroyers and aeroplanes, landing at the Eastern Arm and then driving along the crowd-lined seafront. Sir Roger Keyes had received the Freedom of Dover a few days earlier in the Connaught Hall. "Hail, dauntless Dover' was sung at the tops of our voices", said Mrs Rudkin, the vicar's wife. The Mayor announced plans for a Dover Patrol Memorial on the cliffs. Prolonged salvoes of Kentish fire clapping accompanied Sir Roger as he unwrapped the Zeebrugge bell.

There was a plan to give every Dovorian, who had stayed during the war, a medal but various problems meant it was dropped. So Dover's many heroes were never recognised.

THE CHRISTMAS FEAST



— *by Merrill Lilley* —



THE CHRISTMAS FEAST was held on December 14th 2002 in Dover College Refectory, its usual venue, and those who attended enjoyed the customary splendid buffet provided by the College caterers and a welcome sherry and ample wine, provided by the Society. There was the customary raffle, with many excellent prizes suitable for the festive season, and some carol singing, accompanied by an elaborately-illustrated song sheet, put together by Joan on her computer. Lillian Kay gave a reading from Dickens and led the carol singing with her usual enthusiasm.

Many thanks are due to Joan who organised the event, to Mike who supervised the wine, Lillian who led the singing and Sheila and Jeremy who ran the raffle.

However... there was one disappointment and this was the attendance at the event. It was the lowest number of members we have had since the Feast was first held at the College.

Only 54 members were present and, while this number was just enough to cover the cost of the evening, this was not our main concern. It is a large hall, needing a large gathering to promote a convivial atmosphere. The acoustics are poor and it is difficult for voices to carry here. The carol singers did their best, but sounded oddly weak with such reduced numbers. In the past we have had between eighty and

one hundred people at the Feast. We would like to attract such numbers every year to make this a festive gathering.

So what is the answer?

We would be reluctant to change the venue. We tried this once, without success. Also, new members attending the Feast for the first time, were delighted and awed by their surrounds, declaring it a marvellous place for a Christmas feast.

Why did we have fewer members than in the past? Was it the cost of the evening - £18.50, the same as 2001? This was not unreasonable, considering the price included the hire of the hall, the delicious buffet with attentive service, a generous schooner of sherry on arrival, ample red and white wine provided on each table and coffee and mints to follow.

Joan is investigating the possibility of reducing the cost next year but it would not be substantially less than this year's figure. In addition the committee has discussed at some length the question of providing entertainment and hopes to do this next time. In the past we have had various contributions from individual performers, or groups, such as the 'Barber Shop'.

We would like to have some views and suggestions from members. What would you like? Have you ideas for entertainers? Please reply as 'Letters to the Editor' and we can print your views.



Wine and Wisdom Evening

17th February 2003

reported by Ian Murton



St. Mary's Church Hall was the venue for the Dover Society's 10th Annual Wine and Wisdom evening with quiz master Clive Taylor, as always, ready to challenge and torment! I'd spent the previous couple of weeks honing up my lip reading skills (which I find very useful on these occasions) and so together with the 12 teams of six, our sadly depleted team of four were ready for the off. First round - 20th century history, so far so good!

The rounds were going well and teams were fortified with the ample supply of wine and fruit juice. During the interval food was distributed, no doubt to stimulate our minds to cope with the Dingbats we had to solve. Our team did very well on this apart from not having the acceptable answer of 'Life begins at Forty' - who dared to suggest that XL represents 40 and not extra large!

Clive as always was very much in charge - it didn't matter that in

1930 copper may have turned a flame green, nowadays it is apparently blue - but it was all good natured challenging and Clive was generous with his scoring on a number of questions. By round Six our team was lying in third place, our highest position ever, but then we plummeted badly and scored only three points for 'Quotations'. I suppose eighth place was not too bad and there's always next year.

The winners of the first prize of engraved glasses were APTA with an amazing score of 88. Who are they we wonder, since they would not disclose the secret of the letters! At the end of a very enjoyable evening Chairman Terry Sutton thanked Clive and his team for an excellent quiz, and Joan Liggett for organising both the event and the food (not forgetting all of her helpers).

We're all looking forward to 2004 Clive!

◆◆◆◆ The Dover Pageant ◆◆◆◆

The date for the next Dover Pageant has been set for the 5th June 2005. The event will only be on the one day which is not on a Bank Holiday weekend. SAGA Group Limited have agreed to continue their sponsorship and work has started on the script. The first crossing of the English Channel by Blanchard and Jeffries, 1785, the epic swim by Captain Webb, 1875 and the Battle of Trafalgar, 1805, will be a few of the episodes included in the script written by Noreen Thomas. The Dover Society has been very supportive over the years and if you are interested contact Mike McFarnell on 01304 201711

THE JANUARY MEETING

Two Speakers - 13th January 2003

THE EASTERN DOCKS CAVES

By Les Holyer

Reported by Derek Leach

WE KNOW THAT DOVER'S CHALK CLIFFS are riddled with caves and tunnels created at different times over hundreds, if not thousands, of years. They have been used to live in, to shelter from bombs and shells, to house wartime hospitals and command centres and, more recently, as a regional seat of government in the event of a nuclear attack.

Two years ago Dover Harbour Board gave Les Holyer, an employee, permission to film some of the White Cliffs' more recent and little known caves. This video was shown with some still photographs to an enthralled audience of 120.

With war threatening in 1939, the Royal Navy began to construct 34 storage caves for ammunition, mines, torpedoes and fuel in the cliffs behind the Eastern Docks. The access tunnels, passageways and storage caverns were dug with hand-held compressor tools and fitted out 24 hours every day, despite the shelling and bombing, until they were completed in 1944.

First we were shown the works associated with the massive oil storage reservoirs. The original aim was to provide enough fuel to supply the Home Fleet for ten days. Behind two innocent looking entrances at the foot of the cliffs are access tunnels 10 feet wide and eight feet high leading to

eleven flights of stairs with 165 steps up to the storage level. Here, in the hollowed out caverns are five storage reservoirs made of concrete three feet thick and 32 feet wide, 600 feet long and 40 feet deep. When full they could hold 4,155,741 gallons of oil. A simple float in the oil connected to an external gauge indicated the contents at all times. An 800 feet long pipe tunnel with 18 inch pipes connected the reservoirs to the Eastern Arm to receive the oil from tankers and supply the Royal Navy vessels.

There was separate access to the petrol tank caves. The access tunnels are only three feet wide and seven feet high. Larger tunnels were dug specially to allow the eight metal petrol tanks thirty feet long by nine feet round to be installed in the three chambers. The passage connecting these chambers is 146 feet long and 96,000 gallons of petrol could be stored.

Finished in 1944 this complex was used before the end of the War and was not emptied of fuel until 1968.

In 1991 the Ministry of Defence handed the complex to Dover Harbour Board. Various suggestions for its future use have been made including wine storage, mushroom farming, sand/ballast storage and even a multistorey car park. Perhaps it is best left as a reminder to future generations of the lengths Britain was prepared to go in order to defend this country.

Unfortunately, situated in the high security area of the Eastern Docks and being so hazardous, there is no prospect of it being opened to the public.

Goodwin Sands Shipwrecks

A talk by Anthony Lane

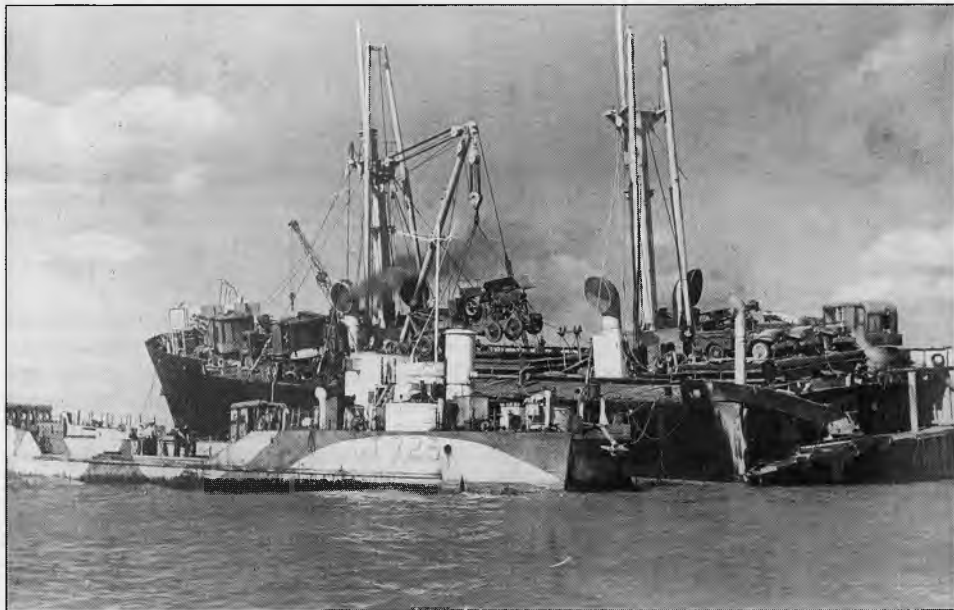
Reported by May Jones and Merrill Lilley

LIKE MANY OTHER coastal dwellers the good folk of Deal had a reputation for being more interested in the booty provided by wrecked ships than in the fate of the crews and stories of battles between revenue men and would-be smugglers were commonplace.

In his well illustrated talk, Dr. Lane quoted one of the few actually authenticated cases, which occurred in 1909. A merchant vessel, the *Mahratta*, ran aground and tea, a commodity subject to duty, began to find its way ashore. As the customs officer came

knocking at the door of a suspect house, the owner was busily disposing of the contraband. Strangely, thirty years later, another *Mahratta*, also carrying tea, was wrecked in the same place.

The Goodwins are notorious for wrecks and there are countless stories told of them over the centuries, tales of sunken galleons and treasure waiting to be found. Deal was a thriving town and always busy with sailors coming ashore for food and other pleasures. Sometimes as many as five hundred ships might be anchored in the Downs. Dr. Lane told us many accounts of wrecks on the Sands,



Probably the most infamous recent wreck on the Goodwin Sands was the American freighter *Helena Modjeska*, which went aground off Deal and broke in two in 1946. The ship carried 5,000 tons of food, of which a fair amount was smuggled ashore to supplement the restricted and rationed diet of the period. There were also a large amount of lorries and other vehicles aboard and in this picture a crane is being lowered into a landing craft from the forepart of the ship.



The Greek-registered *Ira* was a Liberty ship almost identical to the *Helena Modjeska*. In March 1947 she ran ashore on the outer side of the Goodwins close to the earlier wreck of the American *Luray Victory*, here seen in the background. Here the *Ira* lies intact, but within a few days she had broken in two and the afterpart had almost vanished.

but, he said, there were not that many really serious single wrecks involving great loss of life.

However, there were several during the great storm of 1703 when there were hurricane force winds for many hours and high winds for another two weeks. The Royal Navy lost four vessels on the Sands, the *Stirling Castle*, the *Northumbrian* the *Mary* and the *Restoration* and about 1100 seamen out of 1260 perished, including Admiral Beaumont.

Those were the days when there were no lightships to warn mariners of the

proximity of the Goodwin Sands and even lighthouses on the North and South Forelands could give only an indication of the coast and where the sheltered waters of the Downs might be found. These, in 1635, were the first two lights to help mariners locate the Goodwins. Later came four lightships, the North Goodwin, the Gull, the South Goodwin and the East Goodwin. The Gull was established in 1809 and the North Goodwin in 1795. These were very valuable in their day and could fire a cannon to indicate there was a wreck on the Sands. The first lighthouse to guide vessels into the port



The most tragic of the wrecks on the Goodwins in later years involved a lightship, intended to warn other mariners away from the Sands. In November 1954 the South Goodwins vessel broke from her mooring and drove up on the sand bank in near hurricane conditions. All 7 crew were lost, the only survivor being Ronald Murton, a scientist with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

was built in Ramsgate in 1795.

Life-saving improved in Victorian times, with lifeboats serving the area, but it could take five hours to row a heavy lifeboat out to a wreck if there was no wind, the RNLI men showed great courage often facing extreme weather. The Downs lifeboats in the twentieth century were in service throughout both World Wars when many lives were saved, but salvage operations were more difficult than in peace time.

In 1914, the *Montrose*, the vessel in which Dr. Crippen had escaped to Canada, was destined to be sunk to block

the entrance to Dover Harbour but it broke loose from the Prince of Wales pier, drifted across the harbour and thence along the coast, eventually ending up on the Goodwins.

The area was particularly hazardous in World War II when there were no light vessels. All ships with European destinations were boarded in the Downs and searched for contraband destined for Germany.

With so many vessels in narrow waters collisions were inevitable. In one instance, two ships collided, one, the *James Harold*, an American Liberty ship,

22 with a cargo of petrol which caught fire.

Even after hostilities ceased there were casualties. Of American Liberty and Victory ships, supplying food and equipment to Europe, several were lost in these unfamiliar waters. In 1946 the

Helena Modjeska went aground on Deal beach with a 5000 ton cargo of tinned turkey, fruit cocktail and vehicles. The captain was found dead in a hotel in Ramsgate. The owners gave permission to any men who came to unload the



The *Silvia Onorato* was an Italian steamer that came to grief at the northern end of the Sands in 1948 on a misty day. The crew refused to leave the ship despite bad weather and it was three days before Coxswain Fred Upton and the Walmer lifeboat could get them ashore. The coxswain won the RNLI Silver Medal and the mechanic the Bronze for persistence in a service which lasted 51 hours, 45 of them being at sea.

The last serious threat of oil pollution was posed by the Liberian tanker *Panther* which struck the Sands in March 1970 while carrying 25,000 tons of crude oil. There were fears that the ship would break up, but discharge of 10,000 tons of the cargo into another vessel was eventually successful. Five tugs managed to free the ship six days after her original stranding.



cargo to take what food they needed - a heaven sent opportunity to supplement food on ration and points. One family was heard to complain afterwards that they were tired of turkey! Had they known that there were 35 tons of gelignite aboard the helpful 'locals' might have been less eager to act as stevedores!

The most recent wreck involving loss of life was the tragic stranding of the South Goodwin lightship in November 1954. In near hurricane conditions the vessel broke away from her mooring and was driven on to the sands. The only survivor was a scientist from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, who had been studying the migration of starlings. His rescue by a USAF helicopter from Manston aerodrome was the first rescue of this kind to be carried

out. All the crew of the light vessel was lost.

Since then a number of other ships have grounded on the infamous Sands but all have been refloated although some caused fears of oil pollution, like the tanker, *Panther*, in 1971.

With modern aids to navigation and more powerful engines in ships, the Sands pose much less of a threat nowadays. Instead it is collisions in the Dover Straits that cause concern.

When our speaker had finished we felt that we had learned a great deal but had only scratched the surface of the subject. There are so many shipwrecks and so many untold stories that it would take a book to tell them all. We are grateful to Dr. Lane for his informative and intriguing account of the 'Shipwrecks of the Sands.'

The Western Heights Preservation Society

report from Chris Taft

Since the last edition of the Dover Society Newsletter, the Western Heights Preservation Society (WHPS) has remained busy. This time of year is when we plan the summer activities and so are busy working away behind the scenes. Despite this we have still found time to undertake some more project work at the Town Ditch and have been able to arrange a visit to the Citadel - now the Immigrant Removal Centre. For more details of what we have been planning and working on see the summaries below.

* * * * *

Town Ditch Work Days

Last year work began on clearing the ditch leading from the Drop Redoubt to the cliff edge. Since then, more projects days have been undertaken and more are planned with the aim of clearing this ditch completely - opening up Western Heights and improving access. Prior to completing the clearance work, however, a fence will need to be erected at the far end to prevent accidents. So far, work is progressing very well and by the next update I hope to be able report that this work is complete.

* * * * *

Planning for this year's Lecture and Open Day

The Western Heights Open Day 2003 will hopefully be the biggest and best ever. This year's event, organised by the White Cliffs Countryside Project, will be on Sunday 8th June 2003. As in the past, the WHPS will run a stall on the site of the former Grand Shaft Barracks and, as last year, we shall be opening the Grand Shaft. On top of all this we have approached English Heritage to investigate the possibility of a one-day-only opening of the Drop Redoubt. Should permission be granted, more details of this will be available from the WHPS at the below address. With all this extra work planned we shall be requiring more and more members to help out - if you are not a member already, now would be the time to join.

* * * * *

Memories Project

As part of our continuing commitment to preserve the history of the Western Heights, our Chair for Publicity and Promotions, Tamsyn Edwards, has launched a project to capture memories people have of the Heights as it once was. For more information see the footnote to this article and find out how you may be able to help.

* * * * *

Citadel Visit

Owing to the change of use at the former Young Offenders Institution, visits to the Citadel Bastion were, for a time, not possible. Now the changeover is complete, however, the WHPS is once more able to offer its members the chance to visit this fascinating part of the Heights. The first trip is set for mid February and, at the time of writing, places are filling fast. If you would be interested in joining the next visit, contact the Society at the address below to join the WHPS for news of the next trip.

* * * * *

Information Sheets

In preparation for the Open Day, and as grounding for future work, the WHPS is producing a series of historical information sheets on various parts of Western Heights. There is a lot of work involved but it is hoped the first batch (which will include the Drop Redoubt, St. Martin's Battery and North Entrance) will be ready for the Open Day in June.

* * * * *

To continue our work the Society needs the support of its members, whom we thank for all their help so far. We are encouraging new members to join and welcome ideas from anyone that can further our work. To find out more or to join please contact the Hon. Secretary at: 66 Union Road, Deal, Kent CT14 6AR or visit the site www.dover-western-heights.org.uk

FOOTNOTE: Memories of the Western Heights

CAN YOU HELP? Towards the end of the working life of the Grand Shaft Barracks at Dover's Western Heights, Mr Ron White was working in the kitchen, catering for families staying at 20 Married Families Hostel, as the Grand Shaft Barracks was known at this time. Forty-three years later Mr Ron White was reliving his memories of Western Heights and sharing those experiences with the Western Heights Preservation Society (WHPS). These memories form part of a new project run by the WHPS to capture and record for posterity people's memories, experiences and stories. In furtherance of this project we are appealing for anyone with memories of Dover's Western Heights to make contact with the Society.

THINK BACK... Were you based at the barracks? Did you work at the Heights? Were you a child who played with your friends at Western Heights? Do you remember your relatives talking about Western Heights? Do your friends have memories of visiting there?

We want to hear from you to share your memories with us and help us to piece the jigsaw together. The Society is keen to find out more of the secrets the Heights may hold. If you feel that you can assist us with our research then please do not hesitate to contact Tamsyn Edwards, Chair of Publicity and Promotions at: 8 Astor Avenue, Dover, Kent CT17 OAR or email tamsyne@excite.com. You may also wish to visit our website www.dover-western-heights.org.uk

Plans for **DOVER DISCOVERY CENTRE**

report from Terry Sutton

DOVER DISCOVERY CENTRE, constructed from the shell of the closed down White Cliffs Experience, is gradually taking shape with the overall project scheduled by completion this time next year. Dover District Council handed the complete property, not including Dover Museum, over to Kent County Council, saving district council tax payers £100,000 a year.

Julie Flanagan has been appointed manager of the new Discovery Centre. The completion of the centre will be in four phases, providing a learning and leisure centre for the Dover district. The first phase, already completed, was the opening of the UK on-line Information and Communications Technology (ICT) computer centre linked as the hub to six satellite outstations in Dover, Deal, Whitfield, Tower Hamlets, St. Radigund's and Elvington. Another early completion is a pre-school nursery for children aged 3-5 and an art studio.

The second phase, scheduled for completion around Easter, is the move of the Adult Education Centre from

Westmount, Folkestone Road so that students can start the summer term at the new location. The third phase, in the summer months, is the switch of the public library from Maison Dieu House to the Discovery Centre. Also moving there will be the junior library from Maison Dieu Gardens and the depot for the mobile library. A new facility will be a dedicated youth library geared towards teenagers.

The official opening of the library complex is set for September 6th, but that could be rolled back. At that stage the cafe-restaurant, with 60 covers, should be open. Kent County Council is putting the cafe management out to franchise.

The final exciting stage of the enterprise will be the opening of the former Time and Tide theatre, in the tower block, as a community theatre, with seating for an audience of around 120. In charge of the project is Roger Gabriel, a former pupil and then a teacher at Dover Grammar School for Boys.



EDITOR'S NOTE. View of the new White Cliffs Experience and the Museum, featured in Newsletter 10, May 1991. At the time Leo Wright commented, 'how happy we would be if the banks and shops could be re-located, thus making possible a piazza and stepped garden and opening up the side view of what is arguably the best building in Dover'. What a great idea. Could it still be done?

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The Rev John MacQueen

Priest of St Mary the Virgin, 1698-1729by Ivan Green

'Old John', or 'Old Rev.' as he was popularly known in Dover, was parish priest of St. Mary's at a most interesting period of Dover's history, a time of complete change, and considerable progress, in many fields.

During the reigns of Charles the Second and James the Second the town suffered greatly from royal displeasure. Except for a few rich people and a priest or two, the townfolk had been solidly behind Parliament during the time of the Commonwealth, when we had no king. With the return of the monarchy in 1660 they had to suffer severely for it.

Charles abrogated Dover's prized charter which had been granted by Queen Elizabeth, and forced his own charter on the town, which cost them more money than was available, and in consequence the town had to sell land and the chamber above the Biggin Gate to make ends meet.

Charles had hoped that his new charter would eliminate the anti-royalist, and the nonconformist, factions from all the branches of civic life, and also ensure the return to Parliament of MPs who would be subservient to the court and to his demands.

Anyone not conforming to the Church of England was disqualified from holding any office in the town, and the groups of nonconformists were persecuted. Some of their members were driven from the town, deprived of their livings or imprisoned, and their places of worship, often private houses or workshops, destroyed.

Man was set against man, and any co-operation between the various groups was impossible. This deplorable state of affairs continued into the brief reign of James the Second, and in particular royal interference in the town's internal organisation was a continuing problem. In fact, only months before James fled to the continent, Robert Jacob, elected Dover's mayor in 1688, was

removed from office, he being considered untrustworthy by the Privy Council. He was not the first, but he was the last, Dover mayor to be so illegally treated. When James the Second fled abroad, and was deposed in 1689, all this interference and persecution came to a sudden end, but it left an unfortunate vacuum, both in public life and in personal relationships, a situation which threatened chaos. Enter old Captain William Stokes, one of Dover's great citizens, of whom we shall say more later, who steadied the helm for several years. One of his first acts was to call a 'Horn Blowing', a gathering of the townfolk, in the Market Square and to declare, to a cheering population, the end of James the Second's reign. They tore down the royal arms of Charles the Second, which he had directed should be placed prominently in St. Mary's Church, and made a bonfire of it, together with a copy of his hated charter, in the Market Square.

The years of stress and dissension had however left behind them many social and, especially, religious problems, and there were many old scores to be settled. The Baptists, the Society of Friends, and the Presbyterians began to prosper, at last no longer persecuted by the civil power, but the Church of England, previously the favoured church, fell upon difficult times for several years, and it was fortunate that, eventually, "Old John" was appointed in 1698.

He was very much a man of the people, short, stout, unkempt and quite careless of his personal appearance and hygiene, a lovable man with a great weakness for alcohol which he consumed in large quantities, mixing with the people, and sharing their lives. His easy going nature soon prompted the churchwardens to take advantage of him by depriving him of church fees and other emoluments in order to lessen the cess then levied for church



purposes, but he seemed not to have protested.

He liked his drink increasingly as time went on and night after night, with the parish clerk, he went the rounds of the alehouses. The parish clerk was a great talker and teller of tales, and the pair of them were "back room boys" and in company with others of their kind, they consumed vast quantities of liquor. Of course, few people in Dover would have dreamed of drinking liquor which had paid the new fangled and to them iniquitous excise duty. Supplies came into the town, and were distributed, by night, and nobody questioned from where, or indeed how, they had come. Indeed, it would have been very dangerous to have done so.

John and his clerk got into all kinds of escapades when they were well past the sober stage. On many occasions the pair of them were discovered next morning fast asleep in the churchyard, having quite failed to cover the last few yards home, and sometimes they slept off their drink on a bench in one of the old alehouses. On more than one occasion, having imbibed too freely in one of their favourite haunts, the "Light of the Son" on the Crosswall at the harbour, both were fished out of the muddy

water by boathooks, having failed to negotiate the wooden bridge by which it was connected to terra firma.

Of course, people were a little scandalised at times, but Dovorians got on well, and often affectionately, with old Rev. John. After all, he was usually sober enough to baptise, marry and bury, and on Sundays he turned out a good sermon, a most important part of Sunday at that time. Above all, he was very human, and he lived with his flock and shared fully in their life, which

was certainly more than could have been said for some of those supporters of a decadent royalty who went before him, or many of those chilling inhuman pillars of Victorian rectitude who came after him.

After thirty years however he could not carry on unaided and in 1728 he asked for an assistant, but insisted on choosing his own man. The people were however equally insistent that the choice must be theirs. Perhaps they wished to make sure that he would not be merely another drinking pal of old Rev. John. In the end they had their way, but the old priest did not like the sober, staid, rather strait-laced new man and refused to have anything to do with him. The dispute dragged on for months and at last the people were exasperated with Old Rev, and they decided that he should preach at St. Mary's no more.

On the next Sunday, when he entered the pulpit the congregation started to sing the 119th. Psalm, which contains 176 verses. He sat patiently until they had finished and then moved once more to the pulpit, whereupon they started the Psalm again. After a third attempt, he asked to speak. 'My friends', he said, 'I think we are now about even. I have, in this place, often told you a very pretty story; and today you have

30 entertained me with a very pretty song: So now, farewell', and he left the church.

Things were finally settled, however. It was agreed that the young man should do most of the work and that Old Rev should be paid £15 a quarter and allowed to officiate from time to time, because everybody was fond of him and did not want to hurt him. He was content. He had countless friends and few enemies. He spent nothing on clothes and little on food, and many a family always had, and still would, give him a meal at any time. Moreover, in those days £15 a quarter would buy a great deal of uncustomed liquor and convivial company in the snug little "Light of the Son", or at the

busy "Flying Horse Inn" in Flying Horse Lane, or for special occasions there was always the "York Hotel", and the "Ship Inn", or "Wrights", down at the harbour.

Old Rev. continued to enjoy life among his people, sharing their joy and their grief, until he died, to be buried in St. Mary's churchyard on 13th January 1733, mourned by the whole town. When he was appointed, it was to a community divided into many hostile warring factions, bitterly at odds with each other, and when he died he was mourned by everybody. The social crisis of the town had been resolved, and the many old, deep wounds inflicted in the Stuart reigns had been healed.

GLIMPSES OF THE PAST

Some snippets of Dover History

SEA PIRATES

contributed by Margaret Robson with material from an article by David Grant

YOU may recall a reference in the Dover Society Newsletter of April 2000 by Peter Pascall to the skill of the Cinque Port pilots, of whom it was said that they knew the Channel and the waters up to the Port of London that they could tell where they were in the deepest of fogs by dropping a greased lead down to the sea floor, drawing it up and observing and tasting a sample. Was it fanciful? Who knows? - but by one of those extraordinary coincidences an old 'Daily Telegraph' supplement of October 1969, saved originally for an article by Bertrand Russell, came to light. Thumbing through its yellowing pages I discovered a far more interesting one, 'Pirates by Charter', by David Grant.

Here it is in paraphrase:

One March day in 1293 a Norman ship came bounding along the Kent coast flaunting an obscene signal to her enemies in the Cinque Ports. From Sandwich she rounded the Dover cliffs and on to the heights of Hastings. Twelve dead dogs and

twelve murdered English mariners swung from her yard arm. King Edward I, occupied more in wars with Scotland and Wales, made a strong protest to King Philip of France and then let the matter drop. Not so the men of the Cinque Ports. In days the Channel coasts were ablaze. Still neither French nor English king acted and so the pirate admirals of England and Normandy declared their own war. The English fleet disguised as traders assembled at Portsmouth to deflect suspicion from the Cinque Ports. The French massed 200 towering warships, each flying a red streamer signifying 'Death without Quarter'. An empty marker ship had already been placed outside St. Mahe off Brittany where battle was to commence.

The English set sail and, in the teeth of a gale, reached the marker ship first and dropped anchor. As soon as the French appeared they weighed anchor and scattered. The French sailed on. As they sailed past the English ships closed in.

Before sunset the battle was over. As a result of this engagement the French king annexed some of Edward's castles in Aquitaine and so began the Hundred Years War.

Edward, angry at the situation now forced upon him, demanded an explanation, to which the men of the Cinque Ports reminded him that he, the King, was sworn to see them righted according to the laws, customs and franchise which he and his ancestors had granted. And so this small body of men lived a charmed life in outlawry from the time of the Danelaw until the Battle of Agincourt. English seamen, right up to the time of Drake and Hawkins, were noted for their nautical genius, which came from a life, barefoot in all weathers, with neither compass, chart or rudder and only one square sail. Their tubby boats, not like Viking long boats, could rocket out of the

blue and vanish in a pall of smoke. When it came to dodging the currents of the deadly Goodwins, your Kentish cog could turn on a cockleshell.

After 500 years a-roving, the Cinque Ports were, one by one, locked in their harbours by the movements of the Channel tide, their only acknowledged master. Their final burst of glory came in the reign of Henry IV when a Henry Pay from Faversham ('Arripay' as the Spaniards called him) captured a French squadron and roped in no less than 120 ships, laden with iron, salt and wine! But such deeds were already anachronisms, for the ports of Southampton, Plymouth and Bristol could each send greater tonnage to the wars than all the Cinque Ports together.

Footnote: David Grant's first book 'Waes', set in the Cinque Ports, was published by Allen & Unwin in 1968.

ROYAL SECRET REVEALED AT DOVER

contributed by Terry Sutton

THE visit to Dover by Queen Elizabeth I in the autumn of 1573 is well documented. But not so well known is her second visit to Dover in August 1601 when, two years before her death, for the first time in history the term 'Great Britain' was heard. Queen Elizabeth I, then 67, travelled in some secrecy to Dover in 1601 for the sole purpose of trying to persuade Henry IV, King of France, to cross the Channel to talk about the balance of power in Europe. For 42 years she had ruled the kingdom and won respect throughout Europe as a ruler. Age was beginning to tell on her physical powers but she was determined to reshape the map of Europe. And she knew her views were shared by the king of France. But, to her annoyance, she failed to persuade Henry to cross the Channel from Calais to Dover. He, in turn, suggested she board a ship and meet him in Calais. It was not to be and she wrote him, in her own hand, regretting that because of their royal positions neither could be seen to meet in the others' lands. She added that there was something of importance she wished to reveal but dare

not commit the subject to paper. Of course this captured Henry's curiosity and he sent over, in secret, his minister Rosney (afterwards the Duc de Sully) who was swiftly unmasked on arrival at Dover, arrested and taken before Elizabeth at Dover Castle. She was not too annoyed at his secrecy and drawing him aside, out of the earshot of others, explained her proposals for keeping a counter balance to Austria by forming the Low Countries into an independent republic.

Rosney, in his memoirs, recalled that Elizabeth spoke about the future of linking England and Scotland. For the first time she revealed she wanted to make James VI of Scotland her heir. "One day the King of Scotland will become the King of Great Britain," predicted the great Queen during her meeting with the French minister in Dover Castle. And so it came to pass. It was only on her deathbed, suffering from blood poisoning, that Elizabeth revealed to her ministers the decision about which she had secretly told the French minister in the ancient walls of Dover Castle.

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PROGRAMME 2003

Members and guests are welcome at all meetings except the Annual General Meeting which is for members only.

MARCH 17 Monday 7.30pm	TWO SPEAKERS Wendi Atherton: Dover Castle Garrison Jack Woolford: Dover Prize Quiz
APRIL 14 Monday 7.30pm	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING Speaker: Bob Goldfield, Dover Harbour Board
MAY 3 Saturday Pick-ups	HEVER CASTLE. Enjoy traditional May Day Music and Dance. Try the 'splashing' water maze. Explore a Tudor manor house. £18pp Pickwick 0900, Frith Road 0910, Brook House Car Park 0920
JUNE 19 Thursday Coach timings	By special request - a repeat trip on MV Princess Pocahontas sampling the Thames Experience. £25pp to include lunch Pickwick 0815, Frith Road 0810, Brook House Car Park 0800
JULY 10 Thursday am Coach timings	St Peter's Village Tour History brought to life! £10pp Pickwick 0800, Frith Road 0810, Brook House Car Park 0820
AUGUST	London - Tour of the Houses of Parliament am/pm: your choice. Details later. £18pp
SEPTEMBER 13 Saturday	LA COUPOLE - an underground city built to launch V2 rockets, it now explores the conquest of Space as well as life in France during the war. An elevator takes you below the 42 metres high dome. £25pp
OCTOBER 20 Monday 7.30pm	SPEAKER Michael Hinton: Josephine Butler and Dover Brainstorming Session
NOVEMBER 17 Monday 7.30pm	TWO SPEAKERS Reg Coleman: 15 May, 1940 Dick Bolton: Royal Cinque Ports
DECEMBER	Christmas Feast

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