



Newsletter

No. 87

November 2016



*Bluebird Heritage Trail
Pavement Waymarker*



THE DOVER SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1988

Affiliated to the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies
Registered Charity No. 299954

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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



As this is the last newsletter before Christmas I would like to wish all of our members, advertisers and the staff of Adams the Printer a very merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous 2017. Special thanks must go to all those who work behind the scenes. They are much appreciated and their work keeps the Society alive and functioning.

Details of this year's Christmas meal are inside the back cover. I would like to remind you that you can bring non-members. It may encourage them to become members of the Society. If anybody would like to donate a prize towards the Christmas raffle could you please pass it to a member of the committee or Denise who runs the raffle. She can be contacted at the Society's meetings or through the editor.

Could you write an article or story, with a local theme, or write reports of meetings and outings? Then contact the editor.

Finally I would like to remind members of the meal held at il Rustico before each of our indoor meetings. This is an excellent chance to get to know other members and meet the speakers for that evening. It is always an enjoyable event with a three course meal with a drink plus coffee/tea and biscuits all at a very reasonable cost. The usual start time is 6pm. Anyone who is interested in attending please contact Alan Sencicle, Jeremy Cope or me for further details and the menu. All contact details are inside the front cover.

Alan Lee - Editor



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DEADLINE for contributions

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 88 will be Wednesday 18th January 2017. 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. Copy on computer disc or by e-mail is acceptable. Pictures via e-mail must be as high a resolution as possible in JPEG. Please ring 01304 213668 to discuss details.

Publication in the Newsletter does not imply the Society's agreement with any views expressed, nor does the Society accept responsibility for any statements made.

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Society Outing

The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum 28th May 2016

— Derek Donnelly —



Downland Gridshell Building © Weald and Downland Museum

An 8 o'clock start to what turned out to be a lovely sunny day to the South Downs National Park where the museum is situated about 3 miles from Chichester. Our driver for the day was Ian, who we have had in the past, so we were in very good hands. Everyone was on time at the various pickups giving us a good start to the trip and so we set off past the queues of lorries out of Dover to our first stop at Clackett Lane services. After a short stop we rejoined the M25 and headed, through some slow traffic, towards the A3 junction where we would be turning off to head down to the museum. Coming off the A3 we passed through the lovely countryside and villages and arrived at the museum at midday. Tickets were arranged and guide maps issued and we set off into the open air museum and some refreshments.

The museum was founded in 1967 and is a leading independent museum and charity. Its daily operation depends largely on its

volunteers who form most of its workforce. The buildings on display originate from the Weald and Downland of Kent, Surrey, Sussex and Hampshire and are spaced out over the large area (about 40 acres) most with their own period kitchen gardens and some with livestock. There is also a working mill (17th century) which supplies flour to be sold in the museum shop. Strolling around the site you can also see the shire horses that are used to carry out various tasks around the museum during the year.

The nice thing about this type of museum is that you can set your own pace and take your own route around the site, stopping when you want and as long as you want. As the weather was beautiful, hot and sunny with some cool breezes, it was a pleasure just to stroll along and see how they used to live in different times, without being hurried along trying to cram everything in a set time.

Some of the buildings were very interesting and had displays inside, including one with a working Tudor kitchen with volunteers demonstrating cooking, etc. It was in complete contrast to what we have today with all our modern appliances. Also the fact that the privy was outside at most houses was a reminder of the good old days, though we did in one house, in an upstairs bedroom, find an ensuite. It reminded me of a guest house we once stayed at.

During our walk around we came across a family of piglets asleep, top and tail, in the sun at one house, which had a large kitchen garden as well, which would have been a source of food as well as a small income from the sale of pigs and surplus crops in those times.

The Museum's award-winning Downland Gridshell Building was the first timber gridshell building to be constructed in the UK and is a lightweight structure made of oak laths. It is regarded as an iconic building and both architects and other interested visitors travel across the UK (and further afield) to view this unique example of the technique. Completed in



2002, the building was financially supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Visitors to the museum can take a free guided tour round the Downland Gridshell Building and artefact

store each day at 1.30pm.

We all re-joined our coach and set off about 5pm for the journey home via a slightly different route that took us through some lovely villages and scenery. On the way, Ian, our driver, pointed out the amount of properties that were painted in a bright yellow trim, the window frames, doors etc, that all belonged to the Cowdray Park Estate. These properties were spread around several of the villages en-route and on the way we passed the polo fields, where a match had just finished. We cut across to the M2/A2 on the way back to avoid any possible congestion on the M20 and as we didn't stop were back in Dover around 8pm, thanks to Ian's excellent driving.

It now only leaves me to say, on everyone's behalf, a big thank you to Pat for once again organising a lovely day out for us all. Also our thanks to Ian our driver for a safe and informative trip.



Ensuite Bedroom



Market Hall from Titchfield

MEMBERSHIP NEWS - AUTUMN 2016

Sheila Cope

It is disappointing that our numbers have fallen to 456 but with the onset of our winter meetings we trust that numbers will again increase toward that elusive 500 which has for so long been the aim of our hard-working Chairman. Nevertheless, the fact that all those members have taken the trouble to pay their subscriptions is probably quite creditable for a town of our size.

We have been to the funerals of too many members lately, two of whom have worked hard for the Society. In the early years of Cowgate cemetery maintenance John

Mavin played an active part until ill-health forced him to retire from the work. He was particularly interested in shipping and photography. Bill Naylor succeeded Leo Wright as Secretary and served for many years until March 2013. He was also a member of the planning committee and being a long-time resident of Dover had no illusions about the uphill task facing us all.

In spite of the summer break we have recently welcomed: Mr M and Mrs J Kennedy, Mr G & Mrs M Margery, Mr R & Mrs E Meadows, Mrs W Stokes, Mr Luo, Mrs B J Skinner and Mrs P & Mr R Stroud.

River Dour Partnership

Jeremy Cope

Our work to improve the Dour continues and (a warning) unless you are prepared to take the long view you might as well not start. Funding projects now means that money comes not from the Government but from Lottery or other charitable funders. Getting the money requires the input and skills of volunteers. We are lucky with the commitment of our committee members and very positive support and help from Chris Gardner of South East Rivers Trust, the Environment Agency and Dover Big Local. As previously reported our major projects are to fund fish passes at Lorne Road and Halfords weirs but in addition to see what improvements can be made to the immediate environments. First we must fund the necessary investigation and surveys to confirm any project's soundness, that it is appropriate for the Dour and of benefit to our community. Armed with that information we can then

approach major funders for the significant funds required to implement the project.

Other projects involve fundraising for better signage, volunteers' equipment for the river clear-ups, working with Dover Tales on publicity for the river and progressing the idea of volunteer River Wardens.

Our thanks are due to Tower Hamlets Gardeners who donated the prize money from their local competition to help with our work. We very much appreciate such gestures of support. We also have money collected at the Regatta.

Again - well done the clean-up volunteers. They do a really grand job. If you would like to be involved in any of the above work do please contact me on 01304 211348 or Sue Bradford at White Cliffs Countryside Partnership 01304 241806

Society Outing

Royal Horticultural Society Summer Flower Show Hampton Court Palace Sunday July 10th 2016

Maureen Morris

So far 2016 had been cool, with a lot of rain and not many sunny days, but flowers in our gardens seem to have bloomed well so we were looking forward to the Dover Society trip to the RHS Summer Show at Hampton Court Palace to see what the experts had achieved this year. We were not disappointed.

Our coach left Dover at about eight in the morning, we picked up a few more gardening enthusiasts at Sellindge and after a good journey we arrived at Hampton Court at about eleven o'clock. Our coach was parked alongside dozens of others and hundreds of cars. It took about 25 minutes to walk from there to the flower show site. As we passed through the palace grounds we admired the immaculate kitchen gardens full of well growing vegetables and wondered at the large conically sculpted yew trees alongside the lawns beyond. We joined an ever growing mass of people converging on the entrance gates to the Garden Show area of the palace grounds. But everything was so well organised that we all passed through easily.

At this point the weather turned a bit showery and umbrellas appeared but it was not serious and we had to decide where to go and what to see. This was not as simple as it might seem. There was so much to see and so many people that progress was slow. Fortunately the grass underfoot was well trodden and the wide metal temporary trackways made walking fairly easy. Those of us with an interest in particular types of plants could head for those areas but we wanted to see everything. That was a mistake given the size of the show. It is the largest flower show in the world and an average of 130,000 people visit every year. So we saw what we could as the pathways led us onward.

The Floral Marquee, a huge tented area, was full of every kind of plant you could think of. We could recognise some of the flowers and perhaps even put names to them but they were far from ordinary. The show had then been on for the whole week but the shape and colour range of the blooms was still perfect. Every variety of flower or plant was there and displayed with artistry. We saw antirrhinums with



A Giant Wave in the Hythe Garden



Garden for Crohns Disease Best Summer Garden



*Rocket Science
Model Outside Floral Marquee*



*Dogs Trust
- A Dogs Life Show Garden*



*UNHCR Border Control
Best Conceptual Garden*

yellow and red stripes as well as in the normal shades of pink and orange and lilies and orchids of every hue. There were ferns and dry desert plants, varieties of grasses, clematis and many other climbers, too many to mention individually but all of the flowers were displayed to show them to their best advantage.

The Festival of Roses Marquee featured roses of every colour and habit, be it for appearance, perfume or suitability for a particular situation. The 'Rose of the Year' is called 'Scent of Heaven'. It is a classic tea-shaped hybrid with orange-salmon blooms and has a rich perfume. The Butterfly Dome was full of wildlife friendly plants which would encourage the insects to the garden. Butterflies were free flying here in abundance.

There were so many aspects to the whole flower show that it is impossible to list and describe everything. There were conceptual gardens, water gardens, botanical gardens, city gardens, feel good front gardens, vegetable boxes, gardens from the USA, gardens supporting the many different charities and one from the Dogs Trust to show how man's best friend can enjoy a garden safely. The 'Best Garden of the Show' this year was designed for the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust and showed how growing the right plants can hold back heavy rainfall, release it slowly through a

series of water features and reduce flash flooding and help wildlife. This was in contrast to the Drought Garden which used plants which survive in very dry conditions.

It was so hard to see in detail everything which was on offer owing to the large area of the site. But we found places where we could eat on straw bales and other seats to sit on to rest our weary legs. There were jazz bands to listen to and a children's scarecrow competition to look at. Everything was immaculately clean and tidy and well organised, quite surprising given the number of people moving around. This was the last day of the Show. Many were queuing to buy folding plastic boxes on wheels in which to carry away their final plant purchases. After 4 p.m. when exhibitors were dismantling their displays their redundant plants were being offered for sale to the visitors. Happy customers were soon trundling away their loaded trolleys or hugging waving plants to their chests as they made their way back home to their own gardens.

It was a full and busy trip and really too much to be able to see in one day but we had a good journey back to Dover with several plant trophies safely stowed away in the luggage hold of the coach. We had learned a bit more about flowers and plants and confirmed again that gardens are wonderful and life enhancing.

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Planning Committee

Patrick Sherratt

It is with sadness the Planning Committee has lost the valued contributions of Bill Naylor who recently passed away, he will be greatly missed. This now leaves three vacancies on the Planning Committee, we are hopeful that one person has agreed to join the team and I would like to have one person from River and one from Whitfield as the Committee currently has no members from these locations. This will give a balanced view when discussing planning applications in particular as Whitfield continues to expand.

Dover Western Docks Revival (DWDR)

Nothing to report since comments in the last newsletter. This is possibly because DHB are waiting for the result of their application to extract sand from the Goodwin Sands. We continue to press DHB for "quality" within the project

Dover Leisure Centre

DDC have, as expected, decided the DOVER leisure centre will be located at Whitfield as a DISTRICT leisure centre. Consultations took place but were in fact only the process of ticking boxes to say the community had the chance to comment. My report of last month clearly detailed this. We are deeply concerned that Dover will now have no leisure facility and we shall continue to press for a facility similar to those provided at Deal (population circa 20k) for the 30,000 residents of Dover.

DTIZ (St James Development)

Breaking news is that there is contamination on the site that DDC had not allowed for and to remove this a further £5million is required. I

immediately contacted DDC upon hearing this but DDC have denied this as "mischief-making". It was also pointed out that the timescale for completion was well behind schedule but DDC refused to provide any revised timescale. DDC had previously given the following completion dates: Cineworld (Block B) June 2016, Retail (Block C) July 2016, Retail (Block D) August 2016, Retail (Block A) October 2016. Travelodge Hotel October 2016. Entire project complete October 2016.

If it is substantiated that DDC Contamination Report failed to identify all the contamination on the site this reflects the poor quality that exists within the DDC Planning and Regeneration Depts.

Although no update for almost six months in respect of outlets who have signed up a recent planning application for new site hoarding with names of outlets indicates that at least six are relocating from the existing town centre.

Castle Street

As reported last month. With the closure of several office/businesses in Castle Street there has been a surge of applications (six properties in the last six months). I have had several meetings with DDC, Residents and one architect who is representing three of the applications. Our view that this street is important to Dover and should not revert to a mass of one-bedroom flats akin to Folkestone Rd. seems to have worked as two properties withdrew applications and re-submitted for conversion to maisonettes. We have supported this type of residential development and suggested to DDC that

this should be the minimum standard for future applications. As these properties become inhabited we shall keep a close eye on the domestic refuse situation accumulation and anti-social activities

Section 215 of Town and Country Planning Act 1990

We are deeply concerned that DDC are no longer interested in continuing this in Dover as they are now concentrating across the District. Yet again Dover suffers.

Western Heights and Farthingloe

The CPRE were successful at a recent High Court appeal and we await what will now happen. The summing up of the judges were highly critical of DDC and reflects many of the views made by Dover residents in respect of DDC failing to deliver quality projects for Dover, with a list of errors on major projects that supports our concerns about poor professionalism and possibly needs to be scrutinised.

Transport Matters

We continue to campaign for the upgrading

of the A2 from Lydden including a Whitfield Bypass. The need for variable speed on the A20 as well as support for a third Thames crossing as far east as possible. We have made written comments to the "Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission" as well as to KCC in respect of "Kent Local Transport Plan 4". The full potential of the High Speed rail service has not been maximized for Dover due to the failure of car parking facilities at Dover Priory and the service being available east of Dover after campaigning by our MP for Deal and Sandwich. We have over the years had lengthy correspondence with our MP and DDC but to no avail. Therefore, it was interesting that a recent application was made for a significantly reduced car park. Initially I had thought at least something is moving forward but a letter from Network Rail could indicate more delay as they quote "*Network rail are aware of the proposed development. However, they will not be in a position to transfer any land that will result in Network Rail being dependent accessing their maintenance facility across third party land.*"

COWGATE CEMETERY

Jeremy Cope

This summer has been, weather-wise, somewhat different. The early mild and damp months brought on considerable growth with the following dry period allowing us to strim the grass over the lower half of the cemetery. This all came to an abrupt end with the heavy rain ending the record breaking September heatwave leading to the cancellation of our Saturday working session. It's back to normal but hey-ho we will still enjoy both company and work.

Subject to weather working sessions for the months ahead are:-

Month	Thursday	Saturday
November	3rd	10th
December	1st	10th
	2107	
January	5th	14th
February	2nd	11th
March	2nd	11th
April	6th	22nd

We welcome volunteers - we need volunteers.

If you would like to come and try us out please contact me on 01304 211348 or email jeremycoppe@willersley.plus.com

Dover Bluebird Heritage Trail Launch and Inaugural Walk

— Alan Lee —

The Concept and Making of the Trail

Dover with its iconic White Cliffs and Dover Castle, attracting over 300,000 visitors a year, is known and recognised throughout the world. There are many more, not so well known historic treasures, throughout the town. The idea of the Bluebird Heritage Trail is to encourage visitors into the heart of Dover and discover what amazing heritage it has to offer.

Early in 2014 the Dover Port and Community Forum decided that to attract more visitors to the town it needed to raise public awareness of the many local heritage assets. From this came The Bluebird Heritage Trail project with The Dover Society agreeing to take the lead on behalf of the Forum.

The total cost of the project was estimated at £64,000. The Dover Society agreed to take the lead on behalf of the Forum. A grant application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £59,000 was successful and the Harbour Board provided the £5,000 balance. The grant also required a guarantee of local funding to maintain the trail for 10 years. This was met by Dover District Council and Dover Town Council agreeing to provide up to £1,000 a year each for the first 5 years and The Dover Society guaranteeing the further 5 years. The project was well supported by specialists, volunteers and various other organisations.

The local community became involved via a series of workshops which covered graphic design, website/app design and local history research. Local schools were involved in linked events and businesses

briefed as part of the promotion. A Dover company, Live Heritage, won the contract to develop the website and app. The pavement markers were designed and made. Detailed arrangements were made with the highways authorities and the Harbour Board, owner of the seafront promenade, regarding location and installation of the markers. Finally volunteers helped test the trail route, the booklet, website and app.

Launch Day

On Saturday 27th August 2016 over 75 people gathered in Dover's Town Hall, the ancient Maison Dieu to launch the Bluebird Heritage Trail. Derek Leach, Chairman of the Port and Community Forum and Chairman of the Dover Society, the lead on the project, opened the proceedings. He explained that the reason for the trail was to assist Dover's regeneration whilst major redevelopment took place. The aim is to tempt more people into Dover to make it more of a visitor destination through the use of the town's many historic assets. Derek said that he was extremely grateful to all the funders, helpful contractors and those locally who had made the project a reality, either by substantial time and expertise donated (valued as worth £30,000) or as very co-operative staff of the highways authorities, Dover District Council and the Port of Dover.

Work on the project will continue. The website and app, over time, will provide increased historical information, images and visitor facilities in the town. A team of voluntary webmasters will be trained to vet and load additional material on the website. This will include a page called My



Cutting the Red Ribbon to Start the Inaugural Walk

Bluebird where the public will be able to share their Dover memories of people, places and events. There will also be other opportunities for the community to participate.

Everyone then moved outside where a ribbon cutting ceremony signified the official opening of the trail and start of the inaugural walk. Following this those present then set off, individually or in small groups, in glorious sunshine. On the day the walk officially ended by the Seaports Centre where the walkers had their 'Bluebird Passports' stamped to mark the occasion. Many people carried a camera while others used their smart phones and tablets to take advantage of the app to obtain extra historic information. Taking part in the inaugural walk were DDC Chairman Sue Chandler, Dover Town Mayor and Mayoress Neil and Jackie Rix and Dover Harbour Board chief executive Tim Waggott.

The Dover Heritage Trail links 31 of Dover's historic buildings, sites and monuments. The initial simple idea trail has developed into an exciting self-guided trail with distinctive bronze Bluebird Heritage Trail pavement markers along the route. You can walk any part of the trail

and start or finish wherever you choose. The main section, from the Town Hall to the Clock Tower area, is 1.71 miles long and could take 2 hours; if you include the final section from the Clock Tower to the Admiralty Pier Gun Turret it is a further mile. There is a specially designed website and an app.

A free, attractive self-guide booklet with a route map is available from the Visitor Information Centre, the website or from various shops and pubs throughout the town.

Website:

www.doverbluebirdtrail.org.uk

The app can be downloaded via a link on the website.

The app contains historic information and images about the local heritage attractions and visitor facilities in the town, including comprehensive directions and trail map.

The app is GPS-enabled to determine your location when the app is running in the background and will trigger notifications when you are close to a point of interest. Content will be shown automatically as you move around the trail but you can manually access any of the content from any location.

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Castle Ward
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Competition*

Christmas Trees displayed in windows will be judged from the Monday before Christmas until 6th January, the last day of Christmas to respect tradition

Captain Carey, the Queen and World War I shipping in the Channel

————— Lorraine Sencicle —————

Newsflash, the Times special correspondent in Folkestone 28th October 1914:

'The French Steamer 'Amiral Ganteaume' carrying about 2,500 French refugees from Calais to Havre, struck a floating mine this afternoon about 12 miles off Cape Gris Nez. It is believed that the passengers were saved, with the exception of between 30 and 40, by the South Eastern and Chatham Company's steamer 'Queen'. Fifteen of the passengers were drowned, and about the same number were crushed to death when the two vessels came together.'

Although World War I (1914-1918) technically began on 28 July 1914, on 3 August Germany declared war on France and massed her troops on the Belgium border. In accordance with the written obligation of 1839 to uphold the neutrality of Belgium, the UK demanded Germany to respect it. They refused and the next day, 4 August, Britain declared war on Germany, the latter's troops having swept through Belgium, routing the Belgian army. Then on 14 August, they defeated the French at Charleroi and on the 31 August, the British Expeditionary Force at Mons. The subsequent fighting consisted mainly of trench warfare with the German capture of the Belgium coast having put Allied shipping under constant threat.

The defences of Dover were placed on a war footing, both on land and sea. The entrance and exit to, the now Fortress Dover, was strictly by the railways and the main roads to Folkestone, Deal and Canterbury. Special passes, limited in number, were necessary for those who required to enter or leave the town. The Military Authorities had the power to arrest and search. All local newspapers were



MBE - Member of the British Empire - awarded to Capt Carey yet Dover has forgotten him - Lest we Forget

subject to censorship by the military and anyone approaching any defensive works would be stopped. Cross-Channel ferries were transferred to Folkestone from where they took troops to the Continent and brought back civilians desperate to get back to England.

One such ship was the Queen a steel triple screw turbine steamer, built in 1903, by Denny's of Dumbarton for the South Eastern and Chatham Railway Company (SECR). Her tonnage was 1,676 gross, 345 net and she had three compound direct drive steam



Queen - c 1905-10 besides Admiralty Pier. Courtesy of Dover Museum



The Queen Cross Channel Turbine Steamer Built by Dennies of Dumbarton 1903 Torpedoed 26th October 1916

turbines, one of high pressure driving the central screw and two of low pressure, driving the outer screws. She was the first cross Channel turbine steamer to come to the port and was put on the Dover/Calais route in June 1903. The Queen quickly became a favourite both for speed and for comfort and was seen by the Company as one of the main reasons for the dramatic increase in passengers in that and subsequent years.

Robert Edward Carey (1864-1942), was born on 30 October 1864 at 2 Townwall Street, Dover, and went to sea with his father when he was 14. They mainly worked on colliers, brigs and schooners sailing out of Dover. In 1892, Robert joined SECR and was married to Eliza Pont the following year. On 20 October 1914 he was appointed the Master of the Queen and six days later, on 26 October, he had taken the Queen across the Channel to Boulogne. On the return journey, at 16.30hrs, off the Varne bank, he saw distress signals. They came from the Amiral Ganteaume a 4,560 ton steamer built by Napier and Miller Ltd, Glasgow, in 1902. She was carrying some 2,500 French refugees from Calais to Havre and according to a Times special correspondent in Folkestone she had, 'struck a floating mine about 12 miles off Cape Gris Nez.'

Donald Waylen, a Daily Mail reporter was on board the Queen, writing that screams could be heard some way off. As they came closer, they could see that most of the passengers on the Amiral Ganteaume were tightly packed on the main deck with some climbing the mast. To his horror, passengers could be seen jumping or being pushed overboard.

Waylen went on to write that the sea was running high and with great skill, Captain Carey manoeuvred the Queen to the leeward side of the Amiral Ganteaume. Then, according to Wentworth Huyshe (1847-1934), who was on the Queen, 'Before this seaman like manoeuvre was complete ... we saw that the whole mass of the refugees were frantic with terror, shouting, crying, gesticulating frantically, waving caps and handkerchiefs. A long loud, wailing cry of terror and despair arose, but mingled with it, and soon, thank God, drowning it, the sound of cheering and clapping of hands and a joyous shout of 'Vive l'Angleterre!' Huyshe wrote that although rescue was at hand, some passengers jumped over the side and swam away from the Queen.

Once alongside and gangway made, the passengers of the Amiral Ganteaume

swarmed onboard the Queen, pushing others to the ground and trampling on them. About 15 passengers were pushed overboard between the two ships and were crushed to death or drowned. One woman, carrying a small child, jumped at the wrong moment, fell between the two ships and they were both crushed. A number of the crew and passengers of the Queen, who were helping, were also knocked down in the rush. Nonetheless, as the Daily Mail reporter observed, 'The crew and passengers of the Queen worked splendidly to rescue the refugees, and eventually their coolness had a pacifying effect, and something like order was restored.'

Eventually, with 1,964 passengers on board from the stricken vessel, the Queen sailed for Folkestone. The captain and crew of the Amiral Ganteaume, remained with the ship and as they parted the two captains saluted each other. Arriving at about 19.00hrs the injured - seventeen - were first taken to the Pavilion Hotel and then to Folkestone Hospital. The remainder were put on a train for London and on arrival, they were taken to Alexandra Palace. Of the injured one died, one lost a leg and two others had an arm amputated. Several children were badly scalded or burnt about the head.

The Amiral Ganteaume eventually made it to Boulogne, where her crew stated that she had not hit a mine but that the ship's boiler had exploded. Most of the passengers who had been thrown into the sea were rescued by fishing boats out of Boulogne. With watertight bulkheads closed, the Amiral Ganteaume was towed to Bordeaux where she arrived on 27 October and was examined.

The official inquiry took place in Paris where the captain of the Amiral Ganteaume said that Napier & Miller in Glasgow had built the ship in 1902 and that the operator

was Chargeurs Réunis of Havre. He went on to say that the vessel had been torpedoed on the starboard side between the engine and the stokehold. The helmsman had seen the periscope of a submarine. A formidable explosion had occurred raising a column of water about 50 yards high.

The examination of the Amiral Ganteaume found that one of the damaged lifeboats led to the discovery of fragments of a German torpedo. This, French and British experts stated, proved that the vessel was torpedoed by a German submarine. They provided photographs that included ones showing the torpedo fragment.

The conclusion was that the ship had been subject to a torpedo attack without military excuse. With the help of the Channel steamer Queen and the trawler Sagaie nearly all the passengers were rescued. Four engine-room hands were killed by the explosion and 20 passengers, consisting of old men, women and children. Finally, the attack was the first recorded attempt made to sink a passenger vessel.

The first German submarines, or U-boats as they were hence forth referred to, had appeared in the Channel around the middle of September 1914, sinking the Aboukir, Hogue and Cressy, off Zeebrugge. All three had men on board from Dover. Immediately after, the Admiralty gave notice that a minefield was to be laid in the eastern entrance to the English Channel, between the East Goodwin Lightship and Ostend. The Scout, Attentive, was attacked by a U-boat on 27 September. This was the first appearance of the U-boats in the Channel and led to the withdrawal of the Scouts from patrol duties. They were replaced by the Dover Patrol, from March 1915, under the command of Rear Admiral Horace Hood (1870-1916)*. The Patrol had bases in both Dover and Dunkerque and consisted of

naval destroyers, small submarines, drifters and requisitioned fishing vessels.

With regards to what had happened to the Amiral Ganteaume, the view of the Admiralty, was that the devastation caused by the submarine's torpedo was catastrophic. However, submarines were a 'novel craft' and not a great concern. To that date, the official statement issued on 1 December 1914, said, 'During the first four months of the War the raids of German submarines have resulted in the destruction of seven of our men-of-war and four or five merchant ships. By gunfire, however, the Germans have succeeded in destroying three men-of-war and some 50 merchantmen.' Therefore, it was concluded, that it was only a matter of time before the naval establishment will have worked how to deal with the 'novel craft.'

*NB: In the Battle of Jutland (31 May-1 June 1916) Rear Admiral Hood commanded the Third Battleship Squadron but was killed when his flagship battle-cruiser Invincible was sunk on 31 May.

The Admiralty did, initially commend Captain Carey on the successful rescue of most of the passengers from the Amiral Ganteaume, then nothing more was said. The Captain quietly carried on with the transporting of troops across the Channel. This, many in Dover found offensive, something that the Dover Express took up followed by the national newspapers. The result was that the French awarded the Captain Carey with the *Medaille de Sauvetage en Or* (2ièm classe) and the *Medaille d'Or Societe Centrale de Sauvetage de Naufrages*. King Albert I (1909-1934) of Belgium created him *Chevalier de l'Ordre de Leopold*. Sir Francis Dent (1866-1955), General Manager of SECR, gave Captain Carey a gold watch. Then, in November 1917, when George V (1910-1936) was

returning from Boulogne on the hospital ship *Anglia*, of which Captain Carey was Master that day, the King personally expressed his appreciation.

That year King George, recognised that there was a gap in the honours system. There was no official acknowledgement of the many thousands of people who had served in numerous non-combatant capacities during the war. In order to make amends, on 4 June that year he introduced the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire and Captain Carey was honoured in the New Year's Honours list of 1919.

Throughout the War, Captain Carey was involved in the transporting of troops to and from Calais and Boulogne and also between Southampton and Havre. Following the War he was appointed Master of the 2,384 ton *Maid of Orleans* a steel twin-screw passenger and cargo steamer launched 4 March 1918. Along with other cross Channel ships, she was commandeered for active service in World War II (1939-1945) and was part of the May-June 1940 Dunkirk rescue.

It was reported that the *Maid of Orleans* was so packed with troops that they were standing shoulder to shoulder when the ship was attacked by five planes. When she arrived in Dover, it was reported that 'blood was running down her sides! The ship was also involved in the Normandy D-Day landings of June 1944 and after making several trips to the beaches hit a mine on 28 June, sank off St. Catherine's Point, Isle of Wight and five crew members were lost.

Then in 1925, Captain Carey was appointed the Commander of Southern Railways Channel fleet and his flagship was the newly launched *Isle of Thanet*, a post he held until he retired in 1929. The 2,664 ton *Isle of Thanet* was a steel twin-screw

turbine steamer built by Denny's of Dumbarton and launched on 23 April 1925. She was provided with Babcock & Wilcox water-tube boilers, oil rather than coal-fired and made her inaugural voyage to Calais on 24 July. In November that year she was transferred to Folkestone for the Boulogne passage.

The Isle of Thanet was the first hospital ship to go into Dunkirk and made several trips. She also saw activity in the D-Day Landings as the deputy HQ ship of Force J commanded by Admiral Philip Vian (1894-1968). Following the War in July 1947, she reopened the Dover-Boulogne service and in May 1948 was transferred to Folkestone until September 1963. She was then brought to Dover until towed away on 10 June 1964 to be broken up.

After he retired, Captain Carey occasionally took charge of other vessels. In 1934, he was the Master of the 12,568 ton US Dollar Steamship Line President Cleveland, when at 04.50hours on Saturday 13 September, he was informed by the First Officer that the land station had reported a ship on fire. His ship was 5 miles south of the Barnegat Light, New Jersey, and Captain Carey ordered the lifeboats to be prepared and informed the engine room that he would go to the rescue. The President Cleveland made for the 11,520 ton US Ward Line Morro Castle, the ship in distress and was alongside about 06.30hours. By that time the 22,424 ton luxury liner, Monarch of Bermuda, the passenger-cargo vessel City of Savannah and the 6,565ton cargo ship Andrea F Luckenbach as well as a number of small craft were at the scene of the disaster. Captain Carey ordered the launch of a motorboat to assess the situation and the officer in charge reported back that there was no one in the water.

The Inquiry was held in New York where it

was stated that the fire was discovered at 03.10hours and that 137 passengers and crew were killed. The cause of the fire was never determined but it was noted that fire precautions left a lot to be desired and that on board were stocks of highly inflammable fluids such as kerosene and turpentine. Captain Carey came in for a great deal of criticism from his four senior officers for not giving the order to launch lifeboats, saying that they had lost confidence in him. However, the Dollar Line inquiry exonerated Captain Carey and two of the officers were relieved of their duties at their own request. Afterwards, it was said that throughout his career Captain Carey had the reputation for being precise and not tolerating the 'rule of thumb'. That he had always refused to carry out any plan, whether it was put forward by management or men, which had not been thought through to his satisfaction. In 1940, Captain Carey was awarded the MBE, along with other members of his crew, for the lives they saved in the Amiral Ganteaume disaster.

The Queen, the ship involved in the Amiral Ganteaume rescue, was the first turbine steamer commissioned by SECR and initially worked the Dover-Calais run. In 1907, she was transferred to the Folkestone-Boulogne service from where she was commandeered in World War I as a troop carrier. In August 1916 she was involved in another heroic rescue when she helped to take off the packed but disabled troop transport ship Empress Queen to safety. The 2,140 ton steel paddle steamer belonging to the Isle of Man Steam Company, had been commandeered by the Admiralty on 6 February 1915 as a troop carrier.

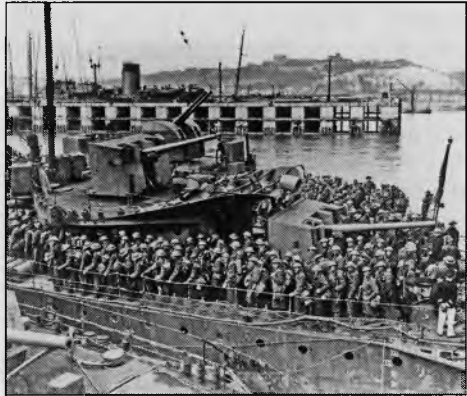
On returning from Le Havre to Southampton on 1 February 1916, with 1,300 men on board, she ran aground on

rocks off the Isle of Wight during foul weather with poor visibility. Destroyers and other ships, including the Queen, took off the troops but the crew stayed on board in order to try and save the beleaguered ship. However, the weather deteriorated further and the Bembridge lifeboat managed to rescue the 110 people still on board. The Queen was still in the vicinity and she rescued a further nine.

However, towards the end of 1916, about 300,000 tons of shipping was being destroyed every month in the Channel and North Atlantic. Secret German documents showed that U-boats were travelling on the surface at night, passing over the Channel Barrage, a huge net, with minefields on either side, that was strung across the Channel suspended from fishing boats and buoys. On 26 October 1916, while making the return journey after disembarking troops, German destroyers surrounded the Queen.

The German commander allowed the crew to take to their boats and then they blew up the brave little ship Queen. According to the Admiralty report, she drifted for over three hours before finally coming to rest on the South Goodwins. The ship's crew were picked up and returned to Dover. Lewis Dilnot (21), the ship's cook, later died from injuries sustained while launching the vessel's lifeboat.

In the twenty-four hours that the Queen was sunk, ten destroyers were sunk in the Channel by U-boats, including the torpedo-boat destroyer Flirt, commanded by Richard P Kellett, but nine of her crew were saved. The Tribal or F Class torpedo-boat destroyer Nubian, commanded by Montague Bernard, was disabled, and grounded in the succeeding gale. Six patrol boats were also sunk. The carnage at the Somme when in the course of three months



WWI Troop Ship at Admiralty Pier © Dover Museum

in 1916, 420,000 British service men, 200,000 French and 450,000 Germans were killed or injured and a total of 400,000 from both sides were killed together with the incessant U-boats attacks led to the resignation of Herbert Asquith (1852-1928) as Prime Minister (1908-1916) on 7 December.

In charge of the Dover Patrol at the time the Queen was sunk, was Admiral Sir Reginald Bacon (1863-1947) and regardless of the attempts to stop the U-boats attacks they continued. In April 1917, about 875,000 tons of British and Allied shipping were destroyed and subsequent shortages led to the introduction of partial rationing in June 1917 and general rationing on 1 January 1918. Vice-Admiral Roger Keyes (1872-1945) replaced Admiral Bacon on 31 December 1917. Shortly after, the British First Sea Lord, Sir John Jellicoe (1859-1935), was dismissed but before going he had proposed a raid on the Zeebrugge/Ostend U-boat base and Keyes' objective was to formulate a plan – the annually celebrated Zeebrugge Raid!

This story along with many other local articles of interest can be found on Lorraine's website at;

<http://doverhistorian.wordpress.com>

Looking Back Forty Years

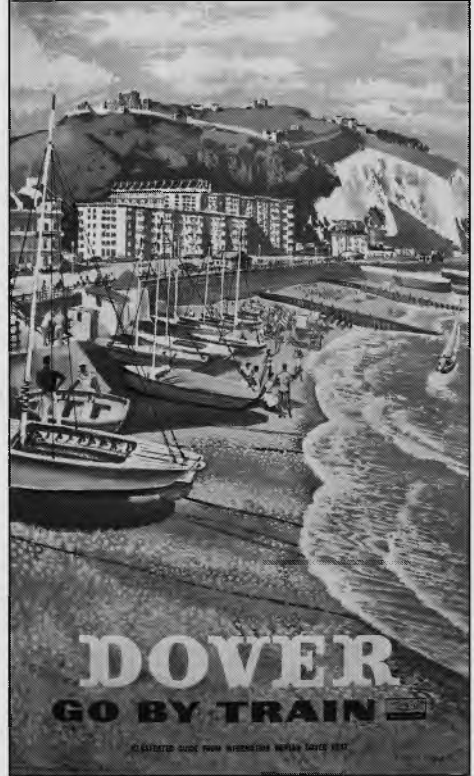
Terry Sutton

When Dover Film Society screens its next film show, in March, one of the films to be shown will take us back forty years to 1976. Which made me think of the similarities of that year and this year, similarities but how different!

In 1976 the then Labour Prime Minister Harold Wilson suddenly, without warning, resigned. In 2016 the Conservative Prime Minister David Cameron suddenly resigned without too much warning! In 1976 the government had imposed an austerity regime. There was a similar drive in 2016.

But in 1976 inflation was running at around 20 per cent (in October that year it topped 23.35 per cent). Today it's around one per cent. The bank rate in October in 1976 stood at 15 per cent. Today it floats around 0.25 per cent. How different.

In 1976, because of the national financial situation, the pound slumped in value. As a result scores of Continental shoppers, mostly from France and Belgium, arrived in Dover to get good value for their money. Dover shopkeepers enjoyed a boom time. In 2016, as a result of Brexit, the value of the



SR British Rail Dover Poster



Harold Wilson Resigns 1976



Prince Charles 1976



Great Britain II 1976

pound slumped for a while. A few extra shoppers arrived from the Continent to buy more cheaply in the shops. But Dover shopkeepers hardly had a boom time.

The year 1976 kicked off with the official opening of Dover's indoor sports centre in Townwall Street. In 2016 plans were being made for a new sports centre, possibly at Whitfield. Presumably the 1976-built sports centre in Woolcomber Street will be demolished.

What else was happening in 1976! A young Royal Navy officer steered HMS Bronington into the Eastern Arm of Dover harbour. He was Prince Charles in command of the navy ship charged with ensuring channel shipping kept to the "one-way" traffic system in the English Channel. *He was surprised to see me (and a couple of other reporters) there to greet him!*

In 1976 Dover was selected as the finishing point for the Financial Times race for yachts from Sydney, Australia to the UK. The winner was Great Britain II which covered the distance in 67 days.

1976 proved to be one of the hottest summers for centuries with the temperature in June approaching the nineties. There was very little rain resulting in a drought, with reservoirs drying up and, in some places, water stand points in the streets.



Dover Carnival Firemen 1976



Jubilee Way Construction Started 1976



Installation Deputy Constable Brigadier Maurice Atherton

In 1976 work was in progress constructing the A2 bypass from the top of Lydden Hill to the Eastern Docks via a viaduct that was later to be named Jubilee Way. Dover people walked some of the seven mile route before the road builders took over.

And, we were told, the new highway would be widened to dual carriageway in a few years. Forty years later we are still waiting.

In 1976 there was a new senior officer in charge of Dover Castle. He was Brigadier Maurice Atherton appointed Deputy Constable of Dover Castle and who proved to be a good friend of members of The Dover Society. He remained our President for many years.

Its good fun looking back and I hope you enjoy the film which our Dover Society member Mike McFarnell screens for us every year.

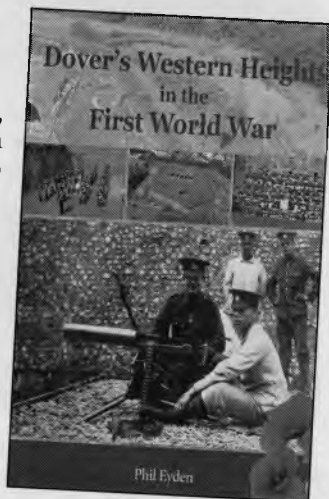
B.O.O.K R.E.V.I.E.W.S

Reviewed by S S G Hale

Phil Eyden is a researcher for Western Heights Preservation Society and has written two books on Dover history.

Dover's Western Heights in the First World War

During the First World War three regiments defended Dover, the East Surrey and the East Kent regiments at the Western Heights and the Royal Fusiliers at the Castle. They also trained reinforcements for the Western Front and these will appear in regimental histories, the Dover Anti-Aircraft Corps will not. They were a local civilian group, hired by the Admiralty, who for 20 months provided search light defence against Zeppelins. Useless against airplanes they were disbanded and were taken over by the army. All 166 members of the Corps are listed and since Dover is a highly stable society descendants of these men are likely to still be here and these lads were obviously local heroes.



Dover's Forgotten Commando Raid



After several cancellations the raid on Hardelot finally took place on 21st April 1942. 100 commandos under Lord Lovat and 50 Canadians of the Carleton and York regiment under Lieutenant Ensor set out for France transported by the Royal Navy. The commandos landed successfully, but in the wrong place, under non directed fire, sent out patrols and returned with only one casualty. The Canadians waited offshore but navy navigation was weak and the locality uncertain so they returned when the withdrawal signal was given by the main party. The objective was to capture a prisoner, and destroy the search light and general reconnaissance. The later Dieppe disaster shows that lessons were not learned.

Phil Eyden has researched both military and civilian sources, both books are well illustrated and are well worth reading. 25,000 soldiers were sent to the Western Front, with about 100,000 soldiers stationed in Dover 1914-1918

the local shops regretted their leaving.

Proceeds from these books will donated to the Western Heights Preservation Society.

Film Show - The Battle of the Somme

Alan Lee

On Monday 12th September 2016, thanks largely to the efforts of Mike McFarnell, the people of Dover, and from further afield, were treated to a free viewing of original footage of the Battle of the Somme. The film was released through the kind partnership of the Imperial War Museum and English Heritage.

In 1916 whilst the Somme Campaign was ongoing, the Battle of the Somme film was released as newsreel and seen by over 20 million people. Audiences flocked to the cinemas for a chance to see actual footage from the battlefield and in the hope of spotting their loved ones on screen.

The film was 74 minutes long and was shown at the Silver Screen Cinema, Dover, with the kind co-operation of the management and staff. There were two showings one at 11.00am and one at 2.30pm. The film was also shown in the secret wartime tunnels, Dover Castle, on Sunday 11th at 7.30pm.

The Battle of the Somme was a major allied offensive against the German Empire during the First World War. It



Before the Attack The Battle of the Somme 1916

lasted from 1st July to 18th November 1916 on both sides of the River Somme in France. It was one of the largest and bloodiest battles in history, in which more than 1,000,000 men were wounded or killed. In 1916 the British, French, Italian and Russian armies, (the Allies), had agreed a strategy of combined offensives against the Central Powers. The Somme offensive was the Franco-British contribution. The main part of the offensive was to be made by the French army, supported on the northern flank by the Fourth Army of the British Expeditionary Force.

When the German Army began the Battle of Verdun on the Meuse on 21st February 1916, many French divisions intended for the Somme were diverted and the supporting attack by the British then became the principal attack.

The first day of the Battle of the Somme on the 1st July 1916 against the German Front Line comprised:

A diversionary attack at Gommecourt on the northern, left wing of the attack front by two divisions of the British Third Army.

A centre thrust totalling over 100,000 men of 12 divisions in five corps of the British Fourth Army between Maricourt and Serre in the vicinity of the Albert-Bapaume road.

An attack astride the River Somme on the British right wing by two corps of the French Sixth Army from Foucaucourt-en-Santerre south of the Somme to Maricourt on the north bank.

At 07.20 hours, ten minutes before Zero Hour, eight huge mines were detonated. The largest was under Hawthorn Redoubt at Beaumont Hamel a German strongpoint on the crest of Hawthorn Ridge. The plan was to detonate the mines and to lift the heavy artillery barrage off the German front line at the same time, ten minutes before the infantry attack. This gave the German troops sheltering in their dugouts and bunkers forewarning that the British attack was imminent. As the British began their advance, the German troops who had survived caved-in bunkers carried out their well-rehearsed drill of climbing out from the protection of their deep bunkers to man the smashed-in trenches and their strategically-placed machine gun positions. This had devastating consequences for most of the men in the British battalions advancing towards them.

Heavy casualties in many sectors of the British attack, with large numbers of men wounded or killed by German bullets



Hawthorne Ridge mine explosion



Leaving the Trench



Over The Top



German Soldiers



Sikh Soldiers



British Wounded during Battle of the Somme

before they could even cross No Man's Land, resulted in only a few small successful gains of ground north of the Albert-Bapaume road.

South of that road and on the far right of the attack the British achieved significant success on the front between Mametz and Maricourt, with troops of the 18th and 30th Divisions successfully reaching their objectives by the end of the day.

Almost all the divisions attacking north of Mametz village had a day of disappointment and loss. Small parties did reach some of their objectives beyond the German front line, but the overwhelming loss of thousands of British troops wounded and killed within the first hour of the attack limited the possibility of any support or reinforcement.



The Somme Dead

The first day of the Battle of the Somme achieved limited success and was also the worst day in the history of the British army, with over 57,000 casualties, mainly on the front between the Albert-Bapaume road and Gommecourt, where the attack was defeated and few British troops reached the German front line.

The British army on the Somme was a mixture of the remains of the pre-war regular army, the Territorial Forces and the Kitchener Army, which was composed of Pals Battalions, recruited from the same places and occupations.

Following the tragedy of the first day of the battle on 1st July, with its heavy British losses and limited gains in captured ground fighting settled into a war of attrition

At the end of the battle on the 18th



German POWs

November the British and French forces had penetrated only 6 miles into German-occupied territory. The Anglo-French armies failed to capture Péronne and were still 3 miles from Bapaume, where the German armies maintained their positions over the winter.

Notable for the importance of air power and the first use of the tank the battle remains controversial over its necessity, significance and effect.

The dreadful irony of the situation would be that within 14 months the ground won



Early Tank on the Somme 1916

at such great cost to the British Army in 1916 would be swept back under control of the German Army in the Spring Offensive of March and April 1918.

Refurbishment Committee

Jeremy Cope

We continue to lobby and work for improvements to standards of cleanliness and of reduction of litter in our town. It is not easy to affect standards which can only come from how all who live in Dover conduct themselves. One area that has improved is the verges alongside the A2 and the A20 roads. Not, I fear, because car and lorry drivers have improved their behaviour but simply that those responsible have sorted matters. A thank you to Alan Sencicle for his lobbying.

The planters in the middle of town have been really very good this year. One area that Sylvie Parsons continues to lobby about is the care and maintenance of the topiary in the Market Square which could do with some TLC.

Jenny Olpin and John Cotton continue with their liaison with the police through their regular meetings. They take forward members' concerns so that if you have any matters you feel are appropriate do please let Jenny know tel: 01304 825011 or jenny.olpin@uwclub.net

Other matters

I understand that we can still keep our old fashioned street lampposts if they need to be converted to use LED lighting. Our particular concerns are the lampposts in, for example, Castle Street. Jenny and Mike Weston continue to work at getting signs for tourist use on the paths that include the Bleriot Memorial and Langdon Cliffs.

If our members have concerns on any of the matters covered by the committee do please let me know on 01304 211348

Four Who Made Rolls

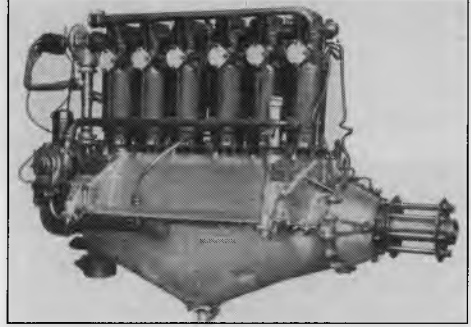
Terry Sutton

St Margaret's History Society has published a most valuable 140-page book packed with information that anyone interested in local history or the motoring industry should read.

The fully illustrated publication: *When Rolls and Royce made History on Dover's White Cliffs*: is based on St Margaret's Bay links with the men who created the world-wide famous Rolls-Royce brand.

The book's foreword is written by Christine Waterman MBE, vice chairman of her village history society and one of our society's vice-presidents. Christine supplied a wealth of details about the history of St Margaret's to help the author, aviation journalist Paul Tritton of Canterbury, write such a well-researched publication.

This research tells how four men, all associated with this area, worked together not only on the production of motor cars but also, proving most valuable in wartime, the perfection of aero engines.



Rolls Royce Hawk Engine

Few realise that the unmistakable roar of the Spitfire's engines, heard so often in the Battle of Britain, owed their genesis to a cliff-top conservation at St Margaret's Bay shortly after World War One had broken out.

Two men, St Margaret's resident Henry Royce and a visitor, were watching a Dover Patrol airship off the Bay fighting a strong headwind and, because of a low-powered engine, making little progress.



Sir Frederick Henry Royce
© Rolls Royce
Heritage Trust



Charles Stewart Rolls
© Rolls Royce
Heritage Trust



Claude Goodman Johnson
© Rolls Royce
Heritage Trust



*Viscount Northcliffe of
St Peter's in the County
of Kent*

It is believed this wartime incident persuaded Royce, of Rolls-Royce fame, to design a more powerful aero engine that in time gave birth to the Merlins that powered The Spitfire, the Hurricane and Avro Lancaster bomber. And eventually the four Rolls-Royce Proteus gas turbine engines that powered the now departed Dover hovercraft.

The author has discovered much about the private lives of the four men on whom this book is based.

There's the pioneer aviator the Honourable Charles Rolls who was a co-founder of Rolls-Royce and who made the Swingate area of Dover his flight take-off centre. His pioneer "there and back" flight of the English Channel is fully described in this book.

St Margaret's Bay resident (1913-1917) engineer Sir Frederick Henry Royce who, we read, virtually ditched his wife to carry on with his nurse, accepted by all as "his constant companion."

Rolls-Royce's managing director Claude Johnson lived at Granville Road, Kingsdown where he entertained many famous people including Gustav Holst. Johnson was another who had an



1914 Silver Ghost © Paul Tritton

interesting life. After he eloped, ditched that wife and then lived at Kingsdown and elsewhere with a wealthy widow he eventually married.

The fourth newspaper owner Viscount Northcliffe (The Times and Daily Mail) had a home at St Peter's, Broadstairs. During his short life he owned 13 Rolls-Royce cars, used his newspapers to advertise the marque and encouraged the other three to take an interest in the early days of aviation. He was another regular visitor to St Margaret's Bay in the days when the village was a millionaires' playground.

Did you know that Lord Northcliffe lent Dover mayor Sir William Crundall his electric phaeton vehicle so he could take part in the motor show at Crabble Athletic Ground in 1899 (one of the first car shows in the country). Charlie Rolls, whose statue is on the sea front, was one of the other nationally known drivers taking part at the Crabble show.



Vickers Vimy

**When Rolls and Royce Made History on Dover's White Cliffs. By Paul Tritton. Price retail: £14.99.*



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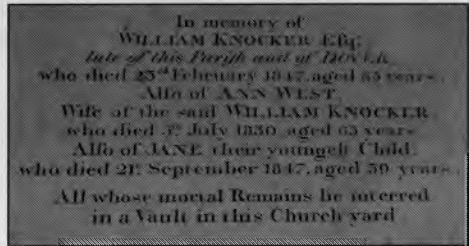
William Knocker (1761-1847) Father to a Succession of Town Clerks

Martyn Webster

The careers of a three generational succession of Dover's Town Clerks from 1797 until 1935 all really started with William Knocker (1761 – 1847) upon whom this second essay will focus. The family needs little introduction, stemming back in Dover to the 1670s, their original trade being that of barbers and periwig makers through their progenitor, William's father, John Knocker (1721/2-1793), later Steward to Sir John Hale of Hackington, Canterbury, his story already having been detailed in my first essay "The Knockers of Dover".

William, out of a total of nine children, seven of whom died in early infancy from two marriages, was John Knocker's only surviving son, born to him at the age of forty years, by the second of his two marriages. A daughter of the first marriage, Susanna, born in Dover June 1748 also survived into marriage to Stephen Kennett, cooper of Folkestone, and a family of her own who died in 1798. It was William who first came to local prominence in Dover's affairs. From him descended the family tradition of legal service as solicitors, freemen of the borough and town officials through son number eight Edward (1804-1884).

William Knocker was born on 20th March 1761 and baptised at Dover St. Mary's on 29th March 1761, the son of John and Mary, nee Styles. It is not known alas where they then lived. Where he was schooled also cannot be traced but it was very possibly in Canterbury. What is known however is that at the age of sixteen he took articles of clerkship for five years on 2nd May 1777 with William Slodden, solicitor of that city,



*William Knocker Wall Plaque
in Church of St Anthony the Martyr Alkham Kent*

his father no doubt having good connexions there through his stewardship to Sir John Hale. From about 1786, and by then a Freeman of the Borough of Dover since 1782 at his twenty first birthday "by birth", William Knocker, qualified as a solicitor, set himself up in legal practice in Dover and is recorded as having a fine house on the Esplanade or Ropewalk. On 25th September 1787 at the age of twenty six years he was married at St Mary's to Ann West King (then only twenty years of age), the daughter of shipbuilder Thomas King, of a locally prominent family whose number included William King, twice mayor of Dover. Thus he embarked, no doubt with the help that his wife's monied background brought him, on his legal career in Dover, surely gaining privy through his marriage and by his own exertions, to all the covert machinations of local governance. From 1811 his business was known as "W & T Knocker" in partnership with his eldest son Thomas (who died in 1830). By so doing he was made Mayor of Dover four times between 1792 and 1817 and again in 1832 (aged seventy years). It was said that during his mayoralty the mayor's seat in St Mary's Church was never empty during Sunday services.

During his first mayoralty in 1798 the men of Dover were formed into eight volunteer companies and it was William Knocker who was captain of one of them. He thereby actively engaged in promoting the efficiency of the volunteer corps at Dover all the while the armies of France were mustering in 1804 on the opposite coast and preparing for invasion. He also had the captaincy of Archcliffe Fort whose guns were often actively employed in repelling the attacks of French privateers. Thus he came to the fore locally. In about 1820 William Knocker had sold his house on the Esplanade and bought the existing Bushy Ruff paper mill at Temple Ewell. He subsequently developed this with great endeavour by a programme of works including the construction of a canal to form a working enterprise producing brown and white paper. He also had constructed a very fine colonial style mansion nearby (which alas now is derelict after a subsequent checkered history) whereto he moved with his wife Ann in about 1825. Ann Knocker died at Bushy Ruff House on 5th July 1830 aged 63 years.

William Knocker had fathered thirteen children by his wife Ann, many of whom went on to illustrious futures. For example second son John Bedingfield Knocker (1793-1861) became a Royal Naval Commander based at Harwich later in the Indian Army, Madras and lastly manager of the London Bank in Snargate Street (now the Masonic Hall). He was the great grandfather of William Robert Knocker who is the modern day source of many of these notes. John and his family are buried in one of the large vaults at the top of Cowgate Cemetery (now repaired after desecration during the 1980s).

No doubt however much to everyone's surprise and dismay not least to his three old maid daughters still at home who

promptly moved out, William Knocker took off, at the age of seventy two years, with his "housekeeper" Sarah Tyson aged twenty years (baptised at Dover St James on 12th September 1813, daughter of Matthew McCormack Tyson, of Dolphin Lane, paper hanger). He married her out of the public eye three years after his first wife's death, at Chislehurst on 13th September 1833. Why Chislehurst remains a mystery but by its distance probably a purposeful disguise from local awareness bearing in mind the great difference of ages of the two parties.

As a final incredible twist in his life, by Sarah, William Knocker fathered his last and fourteenth child Frederic on 25th June 1835 when seventy four years of age and his wife still but twenty one. Frederic subsequently left Bushy Ruff at the age of twelve with his young mother upon his father's death in 1847 when the mill was sold and the big house given up. He was educated at King's School Canterbury, then went on to a career as a railway clerk at St Pancras raising a London based family among whom was Frederick William Knocker, one time museum curator at Penang, Straits Settlements and latterly the last curator (and also last Knocker of Dover) of the old Dover Corporation Museum until 1939 (he died long time widowed and descendentless unlamented at a hospice in Uckfield, Sussex in 1944). Frederic in retirement had returned to Bushy Ruff Cottage (not to be confused with the House) where he died in 1915 aged 79 years and was also buried like his father in Alkham churchyard, along with his first of two wives Janet (nee Hawkes). Their grave alas now subsumed in undergrowth but its inscription fortunately on record, his mother having died in distress after commission some years earlier to Colney Hatch Asylum, Hertfordshire in 1889 aged 75 years. This branch and their descendants were very much the forgotten Knockers,

perhaps consciously so.

William Knocker died "at his cottage" at Bushy Ruff on 23rd February 1847 aged eighty five years as a result of having dislocated his right shoulder and/or broke his right arm, and even his leg, some two months earlier after walking in his sleep one night and having fallen downstairs. He was apparently in the habit of every morning before breakfast walking up the hill to Ewell Minnis (the high ridge behind Bushy Ruff) and probably was in a daze in the dark when the accident occurred.

According to his obituary in a contemporary edition of the Dover Telegraph he died "a lamented gentleman", "a bright example to his fellow townsmen" and "conspicuous in using his influence and exertions in the promotion of every benevolent and pious institution". Further poignantly noting "when retired, from public life, the village schools became the objects of his care; and, he was often seen surrounded with a group of little children attentively listening to his kind and impressive advice". Apart from them, he certainly knew how to father a veritable school of children of his own into great age with an eye to two wives married at twenty to help him!

His railed grave site and flat tomb together with his first wife Ann, their unmarried son George Wigzell Knocker (1800-1863) formerly of the Honourable East India Company and three spinster daughters, Elizabeth Styles (1791-1880) Anne Wellard (1797-1873) and Jane (1808-1847), may be seen to this day. It is barely identifiable, badly eroded and subsumed by undergrowth to the left of the path leading through the churchyard from the lychgate to the church door at Alkham. A full transcription of the memorial inscriptions of this grave site are thankfully on record. Within the church may also be seen a wall

plaque to their memory. There is as yet no known depiction of the man himself.

The will of William Knocker is a subject of special note. A full copy of this will and its four codicils, the last of which was drawn up on his deathbed, typed with narrow spacing, requires eight sheets of foolscap and a further five similar sheets are required to cover the contents of affidavits by the young widow, some executors and some witnesses. These were largely due to apparent alterations or errors in the original manuscripts. It could be said that the whole might be considered as a good example of why a solicitor should never be allowed to draw up his own will!

The will itself was drawn up shortly after the death of his first wife, the first codicil after his remarriage, the second on the birth of his youngest and only child by his second wife and the third and the fourth, the last of which he had been unable to actually sign eleven days before his death, to amplify provisions for his wife and eleven year old son. All these documents except the last codicil were kept in a locked drawer of a cabinet in William Knocker's bedroom, to which Sarah Knocker had kept the key. She had frequently been reminded about the contents of the locked drawer but professed no knowledge of the nature of the documents themselves. Shortly before his death William Knocker had told his oldest son and one of the executors John Bedingfield Knocker about the whereabouts of his will and the key but that the drawer should not be opened until after the funeral. This request was complied with and only then were the will and three codicils found in the drawer in a sealed envelope.

Codicil number three dated 22nd May 1841 is worth reading for conjugal interest "I give and bequeath unto my wife Sarah in

addition to what I have given her by my other codicils the bed whereon we sleep and such of the furniture and materials in the chamber wherein we lie as she may think proper to choose also I give to my son Frederic my gold watch chains and seal so soon as he is of age to take care of them".

William Knocker's will was proved in London on 7th August 1847 whereby his estate was basically and complicatedly distributed among his surviving children and provision made for his young wife and son and his education and also for the upkeep of his parents' grave at St Stephen's, Hackington, Canterbury. The winding up of the estate and distribution of possessions, chattels etc. took years and not without very evident contention. This is clear from a handwritten memorandum written on 4th March 1847 by two of the executors, sons John Bedingfield Knocker and William Knocker junior (1795-1882 Royal Naval Commander and Merchant Navy Captain) in which it is recorded "We deeply lament the unseemly conduct during the projected arrangements for the interment of the remains of our late father and the niece of the elder of the undersigned Knockers, and the occurrences at the very grave itself, and seeing what occurred on such occasion we can have no confidence that the most unlooked for and unreasonable proceedings may not on a much less solemn occasion present themselves, and we hereby wish our Edward Knocker (brother) as co-executor and an attorney to understand it is our wish he carries out the intentions of the will in their plain literal meaning without favour or affection and without reference to the relationship between our father's children. The moveable property in the house at Bushy Ruff and elsewhere over which it is our duty as executors to exercise control and nothing will be removed without the mutual concurrence of all". Clearly in such a large family all was not

sweetness and light. William Knocker had altogether fourteen children, eight surviving at his death (five sons and three daughters). He had no less than sixty-five grandchildren although twenty-one were born to him posthumously. All were children of his sons who married (none of the daughters married), thirty four out of the sixty five being sons. In spite of this solid male foundation modern male descendants are but numbered and my next essay "A Succession of Town Clerks" will reveal that the Dover Knockers were as unprolific as their progenitors had been the opposite. It was once suggested that "the Knockers bred like flies but it would be but a few generations hence that all who started from one will be again back to square one" William Knocker's children were as follows:

By Ann West King -

1. John (1789-1790). Buried St James.
2. Thomas (1790-1830) Solicitor. Buried St James.
3. Elizabeth (1791-1798). Buried St James.
4. John Bedingfield (1793-1861) RN Commander, Indian Army Madras & Banker. Buried Cowgate.
5. Mary (1794 -1812). Buried St James.
6. William (1795-1882) RN Commander & Merchant Navy Captain. Buried Boulogne.
7. Ann Wellard (1797-1873). Buried Alkham.
8. Henry (1798 -1820). Buried St James.
9. George Wiggzell (1800 -1863) East India Company. Buried Alkham.
10. Sidney Herbert (1802- 1831) Lieutenant R.E. Buried Tobago, West Indies.
11. Edward (1804-1884) Solicitor, Town Clerk. Buried Torquay.
12. Elizabeth Styles (1806-1880). Buried Alkham.
13. Jane (1808-1847). Buried Alkham.

By Sarah Tyson -

14. Frederic (1835-1915) Railway Clerk. Buried Alkham.

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Dover is Awakening

Alan Lee

At last there are things stirring in the town. We have had this year an increased number of activities within the town. These have included, amongst others The Town Hall Tours, Dover Greeters, Film Festival, Dover Big Local Hub, Dover Music Festival, Dover Regatta, River Dour Walks, Blues Festival, Walking Festival, Bluebird Trail, Western Heights Open Days and Tours, Heritage Open Days, Urban Fete and the Tudor Festival.

Up on the Downs and the White Cliffs Countryside Partnership have organised a summer of diverse activities to suit everyone. This included many activities for the younger generation under the banner of the Green Gang.

Dover Big Local have taken a number of initiatives aimed at improving the environment and the health and wellbeing of local people. They have taken the lead on forming a group to attract more tourists and visitors into the town. A Makers Market aimed at getting 18 to 30 year olds into business start-ups regularly appears in the precinct.

Dover Town Team, Dover Harbour Board and many other groups are now working more closely together to bring improvement to the area and to enhance the lives of local people.

Let us all pull together and continue this most welcome trend.

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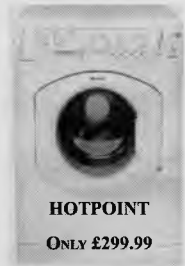
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Social events Writing for newsletter

Projects e.g. clearance, surveys, photography

Any other interests or expertise

PROGRAMME 2016/17

*Guests are welcome at all meetings except the Annual General Meeting which is for members only.
You may pay on the night before the AGM and attend the meeting.*

2016

November 21
Monday 7.30

Speakers: **Brian Flood** "Dover's Great War Airfields"
Christine Waterman "St. Margaret's Oral History Project"

December 11
Sunday
12.30 for 1pm
£24.00

Christmas Lunch/Feast

Our luncheon is on Sunday this year and will take place in the Stone Hall of the Maison Dieu. As usual, there will be a three course meal with coffee and mints. A welcome drink is included. Other drinks may be purchased at the bar. There will be musical entertainment and our end of year raffle. Please make sure you complete the booking form with your choice of menu.

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2017

January 16
Monday 7.30

Speakers: **Tim Waggott** "Port of Dover Developments"
Neil Wiggins "Town Centre Project"

February 20
Monday
7.15 for 7.30pm
£8 pp

Wine and Wisdom

Our ever popular quiz evening in St. Mary's Church Hall with Clive Taylor and his team. Price includes food and complimentary wine on each table. Make up your own table of six. If you are unable to make up a table, we will fit you in where appropriate. There will be prizes for first and second place (in the event of a tie, there will be a play-off).

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Book early to avoid disappointment for this popular event.

March 20
Monday 7.30

Speakers: **Jon Iveson** "Crosses and Court Halls"
Viking Recruitment "Maritime Skills Academy"
to be confirmed

April 24
Monday 7.30

Annual General Meeting

All nominations for elected posts within the committee and any resolutions must be received by the secretary no later than 14 days before the date of the meeting.

Speakers: **Kate Pinnock/Ross Ingham**
"Town Hall Project Update"

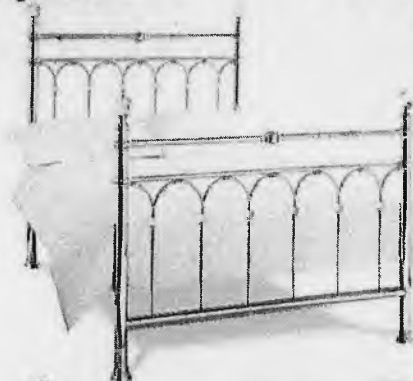
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