

Dover history

– a selective bibliography

The modern method of teaching history is to have pupils read historical documents, diaries and wills from the past comparing them with contemporary documents and conditions. Thus seeing what changes have occurred and whether any progress has been made. Essentially a good method it does however have its drawbacks. It is possible to study the period 1750-1900, the Industrial Revolution, and be totally ignorant of Nelson and Trafalgar and Wellington and Waterloo. One gathers from Mr Davy, head of social studies at Channel High School, that this has been going on for at least twenty years.

Most of the schools that I have worked in have poor, inadequate libraries and therefore cannot supply the documents and books necessary to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. A few crafty teachers are now publishing 'case books' containing selections of historical documents, brief quotations, too frequently out of context, to fill the gap.

Dover pupils and students are particularly fortunate in that there are many books on Dover history and many primary sources of information and access to these are in the Local Studies Collection at the Dover Public Library.

So much is available that I have only selected books comprehensible to pupils and have sufficient information to justify reading.

HISTORIOGRAPHY

The viewpoint of the writer and the reader are of equal importance and errors of judgement can occur unless we keep reminding ourselves of this. The doyen of Dover historians is John Bavington Jones and he wrote when England was the centre of the largest empire in the world and it was the duty of the white man to bring civilisation to 'the lesser breeds without the law'. Bavington Jones was as highly prejudiced historian and it shows, but he was an honest recorder and worthy of respect. This is characteristic of all these historians in this bibliography and it is obvious that times have changed – but have they improved? I doubt whether Bavington Jones would think so! This is the function of history and we must always be aware of the question of historiography.

The bibliography follows standard scholarly format/ First is given the author, followed by the title and completed with the imprint which includes the publisher and the date of copyright preferably or the date of publication. The letters n.d. indicate that no date is available. Squared brackets indicate that the information came from another source other than the book.

If you know of a book on Dover that is not included in this bibliography leave that information at the Dover Local Collection for inclusion in a revised annotated bibliography.

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