

companies and government into action. In 1966 Lord Duncan Sandys got grudging government support for the Civic Amenities Act which created conservation areas and encouraged public participation in planning. New community spirit was generated and local pride resulted. Nowadays the presumption was in favour of adaptation rather than wholesale redevelopment. Derelict buildings were almost as popular with developers as

Greenfield sites.

It was, however, unfair to blame 'planners'. We all shopped in their superstores and bought fake hall-houses or emasculated Edwardian dwellings. If 'personal service' shops were to survive we should use them. We should encourage developers who were not nostalgia-bound and were confident enough to build houses which belonged to the twenty-first century.

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

from Terry Sutton

The Blighted Cliffs *a new book by Edwin Thomas*

Edwin Thomas uses the backdrop of Dover during the Napoleonic Wars to tell his yarn of murder, espionage, money-laundering and smuggling. The author walked our town and, with the help of museum staff, visualised what Dover was like in 1806 when there was illicit cross-Channel trade by smugglers.

He interweaves historical events with imaginary activities of his hero, naval officer Martin Jerrold, who is suspected of murder and gets romantically involved with a smugglers' moll. The story builds with a plot of a wealthy Dover banker who is funding Napoleon's conquests by illegally exporting golden guineas to France in exchange for smuggled brandy and silks.

The climax comes with a French commando-style raid resulting in the capture of Dover Castle. The enemy forces get into the castle grounds through a stepped tunnel that runs from near the shoreline, through the chalk cliffs to exit inside the walls. (Yes, one exists).

Dover Castle is eventually recaptured by the British dragoons thanks to the bravery of our Royal Navy hero.

At one stage he is locked up in Dover gaol but escapes through a network of underground tunnels used by the smugglers to hide contraband. One tunnel, from the Market Square, comes out through a tomb in the churchyard of old St James' Church. (A tunnel through water-laden strata under the river Dour? I find that one unlikely.)

The Blighted Cliffs (Bantam Press) £10 hardback, is obtainable at Dover public library where the author gave a talk in the spring. The book will be obtainable in paperback this summer.