



Newsletter

No. 108
November 2023



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THE DOVER SOCIETY

FOUNDED IN 1988

Affiliated to the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies
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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 Dover Town Council, Guston Parish Council, Hougham Without Parish Council, Langdon Parish Council, Lydden Parish Council, River Parish Council, St Margarets at Cliffe Parish Council, Temple Ewell Parish Council and Whitfield Parish Council.

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

First although it is a bit early, I, along with the committee, would like to wish all of our members and advertisers a Merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

A reminder that the booking form with details of the 2023 Christmas Lunch are on page 23 in the centre pages of this newsletter. To avoid disappointment please book early. If anyone would like to donate a prize for the raffle, to be held on the day, could you please give to any member of the committee, or pass on to Denise at the Society open meeting in November.

With regret, after ten years, Denise will be stepping down from running the raffle at our meetings. For the next couple of years, she would like to concentrate looking after her new baby, John. If you are willing to take on the responsibility for running the raffle, then could you please contact the chairman Jenny or Denise.

The following request has been received from Sheila Cope.

Vintage Newsletters

In June 1988 the first of seven Dover Society Newsletters appeared in the form of an A4 size leaflet, its pages stapled together. This was followed in September 1990 by Newsletter no. 8, a booklet printed by Adams in the form now so familiar to us all.

In my role as Membership Secretary for much of that time, I have stored five copies of each Newsletter in case they were required for reference or for members who wished to fill gaps in their own collections. However, thanks to the good offices of Paul Skelton who scanned many years of back numbers, enabling them to be accessed online, such storage of booklets is no longer necessary. One copy of each issue should be sufficient to keep for archive purposes.

I am therefore offering copies of these vintage Newsletters to any member who would like them in return for a small donation to The Society. Whether you seek one particular issue or many, please contact me on 01304 211348 or email sheilacope@willersley.plus.com

Alan Lee, Editor

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DEADLINE for contributions

The last date for the receipt of copy for issue 109 will be Wednesday 31st January 2024. 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 to be submitted in JPEG and not imbedded in the text of the article and must be in as high resolution as possible. Please ring 01 304 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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* * * * *

DOVER GREETERS

Dover Greeters are volunteers greeting visitors to Dover. We love doing it and invite you to come and try it once!

Tel: 01304 206458

Dover Society Outing

Runnymede Thames Cruise & The Savill Garden

5th September 2023

Rodney Stone

The Society was prevented from undertaking trips in the past two years by first Covid and then lack of numbers. It was a relief and a pleasure to make this one, and our organiser, Iain Robertson, laid on something special. Forty-four participants had to be up with the sun-rise for an early start round the M20 and M25 to Runnymede for a cruise on the Thames. The area has strong Magna Carta connections (corny joke: Where was Magna Carta signed? Answer. At the bottom! Wrong. It was sealed, not signed, and no-one knows exactly where it took place.) The event is marked by a sculpture on the plain next to the river. It has twelve chairs denoting the advent of the jury system that we have today.

With the boat to ourselves and a prompt Ploughman's Lunch eaten before some of it melted in the heat, we sailed past well-appointed residences (think of a value, double it and add a zero or two. It's all about location, as they say,) and we viewed royal land, with Windsor Castle itself on

the skyline. Cameras were much in use during a calm and blissful experience.

A brief return to the coach took us to The Savill Garden. Every T-shirt proclaimed The Royal Estate, so majestic it was. An architectural masterpiece houses the obligatory restaurant, café and gift shop, all a cut above those found elsewhere. The grounds are a bringing-together of woods, gardens and walks, each with a theme, even one for winter, and all exquisitely designed and maintained. The garden is a haven for the enthusiast and the casual visitor needing to relax. We finished with a cream tea that fitted the lavish surroundings.

Our thanks go as ever to Iain for organising, at a price that could not be bettered, and seeing us round and in and out, and to Janet, our caring, patient and imperturbable driver in face of whatever the motorways present. Particularly Iain, who came down the day before to plan a route for the coach as the road between two pick-up points was closed.



Windsor Boat



Windsor trip Savill Gardens

Environment Committee Janet Dagys, Chair

The Environment Committee continues to meet at the Dover smART premises next to the Yacht Club on the second Monday of January, March, May, July, September & November. Members also communicate and share information through a WhatsApp Group. We continue to focus on the appearance of the town, cleanliness, litter, rights of way and tourism, taking action when and where we can be effective and can make a positive difference. The Dover Society includes many rural areas around the town and we would welcome new members from these areas to have their voice heard on these topics.

Ongoing areas of interest have been the Market Square development, the Dover Beacon Project on Bench Street, the Painted House, the state of buildings in the town centre and the seafront, the availability and condition of toilet facilities in the town and on the seafront, litter and conservation of listed buildings and trees.

A member has been following-up with Crown Estates which is responsible for the six badly rusted light poles on the seafront close to the Eastern Docks, two of which are missing a light. Progress on making the repairs is going very slowly. Crown Estates has initiated a project in its Capital Renewal Programme and options available are currently being assessed before it will go into design in 2024!

We continue to follow up on the very poorly maintained building above the Post Office in Biggin Street. Photographs have been posted to the DDC website but no action by the building owner has yet been taken.

We encourage Dover Society members to post photos of excessive litter they see to the

DDC website at <https://forms.dover.gov.uk/xfp/form/1184>; also photos of buildings in a poor state of maintenance in the town centre at <https://www.dover.gov.uk/Report/Report.a.spx>.

The Environment Committee is keen to protect trees in Dover and recently started a new project to identify and document trees in the area which provide significant public amenity value. We are creating a list of these trees, along with photographs, which we will share with the Planning Committee to use when they are reviewing new requests for planning permission. Making a tree the subject of a Tree Protection Order (TPO) can be implemented only when a tree is under threat. This threat could be an immediate or foreseeable threat, for instance where it is known that a property could change hands in the future.

We continue to liaise with our colleague and Dover Town Council 'Walkers are Welcome' promoter, Pam Brivio, on walks in the town, and with Jayne Miles (Town Centre Manager, Dover District Council), Chris Townend (Growth & Development, Dover District Council) local Kent Police and other local town, district and KCC councillors.

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Planning Committee

Graham Margery - Co Chairman

Although the summer holiday period has brought fewer planning applications for us to review overall, the work has continued unabated. In total we have reviewed some 71 applications that are potentially of interest and made formal response to Dover District Council in respect of 25 of them. As ever we would encourage members to look at planning applications that may be of interest to them and make comment to Dover District Council as they feel appropriate, or contact our Planning Committee with their views. Applications can be found on the DDC website or the Dover Society Website under Planning.

Planning Applications update;

Dodds Lane: We mentioned in the last newsletter an approved planning application for a dwelling in Dodds Lane at the end of the existing terrace effectively restoring the building destroyed in the war. Subsequently the developer has submitted a fresh application for a reduced-cost project comprising a flat-roofed bungalow on the site of the former bowling alley of *The Three Cups* pub. The Town Council and the Dover Society have objected to this scheme as being out of keeping with the locality and a number of local residents also objected, but the application has, nevertheless, been granted planning permission.

North Military Road: Dover District Council had submitted a planning application for a three-storey building comprising twenty self-contained flats on what is currently the car park at the bottom of North Military Road. This application was subsequently amended slightly to reduce cost, but remains essentially the same. The scheme has now been granted planning permission, subject to seventeen planning conditions involving the approval of sample materials and details of

doors and windows to ensure their suitability for the location, and also a landscaping scheme. Approved schemes can take years to come to fruition or even be started so don't hold your breath, but since this is a DDC project it might start more promptly.

Bench Street: I'm sure many people will have seen that numbers 14 & 15, the former *Funky Monkey* bar, have now been demolished to ground level and one of the cellars has been excavated. Demolition work is currently underway on number 11, the former *Castle Amusements*, the so-called Banksy building. We understand that the contractor is responsible for the demolition rubble and will own any fragments of the Banksy that remain. It's intriguing to imagine what might happen to them. Perhaps they will be sold as souvenirs like the old Berlin Wall! There are still no detailed plans for what will replace these buildings and it may be some time before anything new comes along, but we continue to engage with Dover District Council to try and influence the plans before irreversible decisions are made.

Section 215 Enforcement: About nine years ago, The Dover Society together with Dover District Council and the Town Council worked on a project to identify properties in and around the Town Centre that were becoming an eyesore and were in need of repair or redecoration. Some 70 properties were identified. Under Section 215 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990, the Local Planning Authority (DDC) has the power to request and, if necessary, compel property owners to carry out remedial work. Initially, DDC made good progress in this, with the result that about 50 of the identified properties completed or at least started on the remedial work, but sadly the project stalled for various reasons. Subsequently things have

progressively declined. Earlier this year the Planning Enforcement Department at DDC was moved out of Legal Services and transferred into the Planning Department and this has resulted in a marked change in approach. Representatives of DDC Planning Department have made a visual survey of the town and have produced a list of properties that are in need of remedial work and progress is being made to bring about the necessary improvements. You may have noticed a number of properties in the Town with scaffolding erected at the front and some of this will be as a result of these actions. We firmly believe that when the town centre looks scruffy it is a deterrent to visitors and is depressing for residents, so these improvements are vitally important for all. Long may it continue but hopefully not be necessary in the future.

Local Plan: According to the DDC website, the Local Plan sets out the vision, strategic objectives and overarching development strategy for the growth of the district over the period to 2040. It provides the planning policy framework to guide the future development of the area, addressing needs and opportunities for housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure, as well as the basis for conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment, mitigating and adapting to climate change, and achieving well designed

places. There have been two drafts of this plan published in January and October 2021 and we made detailed comments to both of these drafts in the hope of making improvements that we see as beneficial for the future. The plan has since been passed to the Planning Inspectorate who will examine the plan and hear oral evidence during November and December 2023. We await the final publication of the Local Plan with great interest as it will be used to guide and justify decisions that are made, and we too will refer to it in our responses to planning applications and other major developments.

De Bradlei Wharf: Since the sad demise of the *De Bradlei Wharf* retail outlet in Cambridge Road, Dover Harbour Board has submitted a Planning Application for the demolition of the buildings. They were built in the mid-19th century and were used as boat building yards and for other marine related activities, until becoming redundant due to changes in ship design and changes in requirements by the Royal Navy. Interestingly, they were used in Operation Fortitude, as part of the 1944 deception plan to make the enemy believe the invasion of Europe would come from the Dover area. This involved the use of dummy tanks and landing craft, many of which were built or stored at these yards. The popular restaurant, *Cullins Yard*, uses the name of one of these earlier boat building enterprises.

Dover Society Visit to The Duke of York's Royal Military School [now a Royal Military Academy] Alan Lee

On Thursday 3rd of August, following this talk at the AGM, Andrew Nunn, School Trustee, accompanied by Rachel Robinson, School Alumni & Development Officer, welcomed a group of fourteen Society members. There then followed a most interesting, comprehensive and

knowledgeable talk and guided tour which took in various buildings including the original dining hall and the school chapel. The Society wish to thank Andrew and Rachel for their help and organisation that made the day a huge success.



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Speakers Day 2023

Martyn Webster

It was the annual Speaker's Day of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports on Saturday 7th October. This year it fell to Dover to host the proceedings on a seven-year rotation between the five ports and ancient towns (next time in Dover will be 2030).

A colourful procession of officers, mayors, dignitaries and invited guests many resplendently clad in red and trimmed robes, tricorne hats, wigs and gowns, hung with mayoral chains and shoulder borne civic maces, assembled from the Market Square back to St Mary's Church at 11 o'clock headed by a Scots piper, flanked by sea cadets, guides and scouts following behind a lifelike puppet creation depicting a channel swimmer. The march off was signalled by a peal of bells from St Mary's.

This eclectic parade processed via the underpass to the Esplanade where a ceremony of "Thank you/recognition to the Sea" was movingly conducted by the Rev. Catherine Tucker, the Dover Mayor's Chaplain.

Pride of place was taken by the Town Sergeant bearing the Silver Oar, symbol of



Speakers Day Swimmer

the Lord Warden, whose post is currently vacant after the death of Lord Boyce, and whose replacement is anxiously awaited by what was described as "discernment." Present in his place was the Deputy Constable of Dover Castle, in full uniform, literally the Lord Warden's deputy.

A fine Mayors/VIP lunch, suitably addressed by Dover's Mayor, Sue Jones, was then served at the Dover Patrol in surroundings which gave a superb panoramic view of Dover Harbour, perfected by a display by the two Dover Harbour tugs choreographed with fire hoses.

The Dover Society was represented by Chairman Jenny Olpin, and executive members Carol Duffield and Martyn Webster who were in thrall to Freemen of the Borough Terry Sutton, Jeremy Cope, Pat Sherratt and Adeline Reidy all wearing their exquisite badges and sashes and Sheila Cope.

This was truly a unique historic memorable occasion to savour in our minds in beautiful warm clear visibility weather which made all the difference.

Only to be greatly regretted was the fact that there had been next to no advance public advertisement given to it. To have done so would have alerted the good folk of Dover, especially the younger ones, to the depth of tradition, heritage and civic pride which this ceremony engenders. This is to the loss, but all the better for those few who happened to be present in the streets at the time and were able to benefit from this great age-old spectacle.

Next Speaker's Day will be hosted in 2024 in Sandwich.

River Dour - Water, Water Everywhere...

Deborah Gasking

... the country is facing “an existential threat” and reaching “the jaws of death ... we will not have enough water to meet our needs.” This warning, given in March 2019 by Sir James Bevan, couldn't be clearer.

So, what's this about? If you look at the flow of our River Dour, you will note that it is rather healthy considering summer has just passed:

Monthly mean flows in the southeast this summer meant that the rivers were normal. Groundwater levels in the chalk ranged from above normal to exceptionally high in the east during August. The southeast received normal rainfall for this time of year, and in the past 6 to 12 months – above normal. Normal monthly mean flows were observed in the Dour at Crabble at the end of August. But in the southeast, the Rivers Dour and Darent, at Hawley in north Kent, were the only key sites that saw above normal flows.

Also... The UK is not actually as wet as we think.

While our temperate climate brings frequent rain, an average of 133 days totalling 885 millimetres (a tweak under 35 inches), our notoriously variable weather means that dry spells can come at any time of year:

This unpredictability is partly due to Britain's geographical location, where warm and dry tropical air from the south collides with cold and wet polar air from the north.

At the same time, warm moist air from the sea is driven by our prevailing south westerly winds onto our western uplands

where it rises over the mountains, cools, condenses, and releases rain. This not only makes the west wetter, it also keeps the east drier:

Climate change is altering our weather:

In the last two decades we have had nine of our ten warmest years on record. In summer 2019, after three dry years, river levels dropped so much that some waterways disappeared. There could be worse summers to come. By 2040, more than half our summers could be hotter than some of the hottest heatwaves the UK has already experienced, river levels could drop by as much as 80 percent, and water shortages could be significant.

The pattern of rainfall is also shifting, winters will be generally wetter, and summers will be much drier. While more winter rain sounds like a boon, it will likely fall in intense downpour events during which rain is difficult to capture: a winter flood won't necessarily assuage a summer drought.

By 2040, we expect more than half of our summers to exceed 2003 temperatures.

Furthermore...

The population of the UK is expected to rise from 67 million now to 75 million in 2050. All those extra people need houses and roads and energy and food and places to work, all of which will require more water.

On the present projections, many parts of our country will face significant water deficits by 2050, particularly in the southeast where much of the UK population lives.

Water covers three quarters of the Earth's surface yet around 97% is salt water and 2% is frozen – leaving just 1% available as fresh water.

Did you know...

Each glass of water you drink has been drunk many times before – some figures say it's been through 4 other people before you and some say as many as 12.

Whatever the figure, it's still pretty impressive – and the thought that you are probably drinking dinosaur pee is mind-blowing!

So how does water get to our taps?

These are our main water sources:

70% groundwater – As rain soaks through the ground it is stored in aquifers.

23% rivers – Water is taken from rivers to fill the reservoirs, or pumped directly to water treatment works for supply. More than 15% of the water taken from rivers comes from recycled water which has been cleaned at wastewater treatment works and released into the river.

7% reservoirs – Southern Water has four reservoirs, the largest is Bawl Water on the Kent/Sussex border, followed by Weir Wood, Darwell and Powdermill in Sussex.

Water authorities take the water from these rain-fed rivers, reservoirs, and aquifers, treat it, and then pump it into our

homes through some 208,000 miles of pipes.

Our wastewater is then collected, treated, and discharged back into rivers and the sea, where it evaporates, rises over the mountains, cools, condenses, and releases rain . . . And so, the cycle continues.

In developed countries such as ours, people's relationship with water is out of touch. Yet we do not only drink water, we swim in water, sail or row on water, we walk along rivers, canals and lakes. We cherish water in various ways, but often neglect its social, environmental and cultural value at the same time. It can be easy to take it for granted. But, by undervaluing water, we contribute to its poor management, and increasing scarcity.

Unless we all know the worth assigned to water, it will be hard to truly protect our water resources.



Powdermill Reservoir, East Sussex



Bawl Water Reservoir, Kent & Sussex Border



Weir Wood Reservoir, East Sussex

Cowgate - Tree Gravestones

A very American story – sadly, none in Cowgate

Deborah Gasking

Tree gravestones are rare. It is unlikely that you will ever see one – as far as I know, these are unique to the USA. They look so real that they blend in with the surrounding trees, appearing at first to be part of nature.

There are several theories as to why tree-like gravestones became popular. As the industrial revolution grew in the late 1800s, it infringed on forests. Trees were being removed at what some felt was a shocking rate, to clear land for farming and cities. At the same time, funerary art was in transition. Modest gravestones were taking the place of elaborate monuments, following a theme in art and architecture in general. It was becoming more popular to own simple, back-to-nature, rustic items than elaborately carved furniture and elegant formal homes.

By the mid-1800s, gravestone symbols shifted focus from death to the deceased's life. Trees became a natural choice for grave markers as they were a powerful symbol of life, drawing from the Bible's tree of life and tree of knowledge. If live trees were planted on a gravesite, the roots would often interfere with the caskets below ground. But trees made of stone would be a great solution!

Woodmen of the World. In 1882, a gentleman named Joseph Cullen Root heard a church sermon about pioneer men who were clearing the forests to provide for their families. The preacher praised those who were clearing the land for being hard-working and launching the country into a new era of development. He felt that they should be honoured and coined the title "woodmen" for those who were so industrious. The sermon inspired Root so much that he wanted to help provide for

others too. So, in 1890, Root started a non-profit organisation designed for the common man, so no one would have to die without life insurance. It was more than an insurance company; it was a fraternity. He called it the *Woodmen of the World* and they promoted their organisation as being for the "Jew and Gentile, Catholic and Protestant, the agnostic and atheist." The company motto stated that "no Woodmen shall rest in an unmarked grave." Rustic treestones were already popular when the *Woodmen of the World* was founded but the fraternity made them even more popular. They created standard designs for treestones and sent them to local stonecutters for carving. Initially, each person who bought life insurance through the *Woodmen of the World* was also given a free gravestone. The company later changed their policy to providing \$100 toward a tombstone if it had their logo on it. The symbols of the *Woodmen of the World* were the axe, wedge, and sledgehammer (also known as a beetle or maul) – symbolizing industry, power, and progress.

Requirements to Join the Woodmen of the World. For all their talk of equity, not just anyone could join the *Woodmen of the World*. These were the original joining requirements (all of which were later rescinded, with the exception of religious freedom): Male. Caucasian. Age 18 to 45. Any religion. Reside in one of the 12 "healthiest" states: Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Missouri, North and South Dakota, Nebraska, Ohio. No hazardous occupations, such as underground miners, gunpowder factory employees, saloon keepers, sailors, railroad workers, liqueur manufacturers or wholesalers, and professional baseball players.

Embellishments. Over time, stonemasons began to add plants to the tree gravestones. Early treestones, in the mid-1800s, were simple, they had life-like bark and stumps of branches. Some had ivy on them; being an evergreen plant, it represents eternity, fidelity, and a strong affectionate attachment to the deceased. Since ivy clings, it can also be a symbol of the deceased efforts to cling to life and can mean they had a long battle with illness before they died. Wheat symbolizes a long life for one that was “harvested” by the reaper when it was time. Many of the *Woodmen of the World* gravestones had doves with olive branches on them as well. The olive branch is a symbol of peace. Some families had animals added to their loved one’s treestone – lambs were a symbol of an infant’s death.

A Step Out of Poverty. So how did fraternities and insurance companies come to be intertwined in the first place? A little history lesson will help explain. In 19th century America, only the very wealthy bought life insurance. At that time, men were usually the breadwinners of the family so women were not allowed to take out life insurance policies for their husbands. If a man took out a policy for himself, creditors came after the money soon after his death. This meant that the death of a husband and father would leave his wife and children destitute. In the mid to late 1800s, many families were hit hard with this reality since more than 620,000 men died during the American Civil War alone. Epidemics and

fatal injuries left many more in jeopardy. In addition, accepting charitable donations during that time period was seen as a sign of weakness. So, families were often hit with the double stigma of shame on top of grief. To combat these problems, working-class men joined clubs, societies, and fraternities that supported families after a member’s death. The compensation wasn’t seen as a humiliating hand-out because the man had “earned” it by proving himself to be hard-working and of good character during his membership in a lodge. And what about all the fun that typically went with membership in a club, society, or fraternity? Well, that kept the man coming back for more – and paying his insurance premiums for decades.

The End of an Era. For many years, the *Woodmen of the World* organisation continued to grow. Membership reached 88,000 by 1898 and 750,000 by 1915. This was a highly successful organisation at first, but as the initial members began to age and die, it became expensive to put a treestone on every Woodman’s burial site, especially as production costs for treestones continued to rise. Then came the Great Depression and it hit fraternal organisations hard, causing the use of treestones to dwindle in the 1920s. Furthermore, the creation of welfare and social security programmes in the 1930s made charitable insurance plans obsolete and the *Woodmen of the World’s* plan to provide every member with a gravestone died (no pun intended).



Treestones

Cowgate Update

Our volunteer work parties have dwindled so much this year, despite call-outs for help within the Society, to just three regulars. Negotiations with *White Cliffs Countryside Partnership* have proved positive. They will now commit to two sessions a year – probably Autumn and Spring (the best times for nature!) to have a blast through our cemetery.

The Boltons, Coal and Dover

Dick Bolton

The Bolton family hail from Tyneside. My father, Stanley R Bolton, a chartered shipbroker, came to Dover in 1933 and joined P Hawksfield & Son Ltd of Castle Street, as their Shipping Manager. During his time with Hawksfields he had three offices: firstly, on the quayside of Granville Dock in a magnificent brick warehouse, then to a small brick building, still on the Cross Wall and lastly to the office below the Clock Tower at the entrance of the Prince of Wales Pier.

Stanley met our mother Kathleen Brett at the Greenleas Tennis Club in Connaught Park. They married in the new St James Church on the 31st of August 1935. I was born in their new home at the bottom of Whitfield Hill in 1937 and in 1945 my sister Rosemary was born in Waldershare Park, to which Dover's Royal Victoria Hospital had been evacuated. Stanley was a member of Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) and during WW2 served in London and later Brussels planning the movements of shipping. In the early 1960s he became a Special Constable and then after retiring from Hawksfields in the mid-1960s, he joined P & O as a Purser. He was joined in Kent by an elder brother John (Jack) S Bolton who was a manager in London and Richborough with Pearson and Dorman Long, owners of Betteshanger and Snowdown collieries. He then joined the National Coal Board, next to the Royal Cinque Ports Yacht Club. Both brothers now lived near to each other in the new Gateway flats. Jack was in the London Scottish Regiment. They went to France in September 1914 and in October were at the Battle of Messine Ridge; the first volunteer unit to see action in the war. He was then commissioned in the Durham Light Infantry and later, the recently formed, RAF.

He saw action in Northern Italy in the Battle of the Piave River, directing artillery fire from a basket under a tethered balloon. He had a parachute, which he said was useless and a telephone line to pass orders and ask to be winched back to the ground if he came under fire!

P Hawksfield & Son Ltd. The founder, Peter Hawksfield, a master mariner and owner of three cargo sailing ships, was persuaded by his son Henry V Hawksfield to join him as a coal merchant. So, on the 14th of September 1876, they commenced business in St James' Street Dover and owned one sailing ship, the "Conrade", a brigantine of 320 tons but were soon chartering other vessels to carry coal from the ports of South Wales and the Northeast to Dover. Peter died in 1892 and his son took over. In 1902 the last of the sailing ships went out of service and were replaced by SS "Peter Hawksfield" and SS "Kenneth Hawksfield" named after the great grandsons of the founder. Their father, Henry T Hawksfield (HTH) joined the firm in 1905 and became Managing Director in 1923. Until now the handling of coal was an inefficient, slow and dirty business, using shovels and baskets on many different quays. In 1923 the firm leased a site from



Customs House Quay, Granville Dock

the Harbour Board and a new coal wharf was built at the Granville Dock, with the first of three quayside cranes which “grabbed” the coal from the ship and loaded into wagons for delivery by rail and into “hoppers” to fill lorries for local trade. On their sixtieth anniversary in 1936 Dover had one of the country's most efficient wharves for handling coal; moving 200 tons an hour, accurately weighed and automatically sorted by size. Coal was now arriving from Scotland, Northumberland, Durham and Yorkshire.

Hawksfield's first major challenge had come in 1919 when Europe was in post-war chaos. Now “bunkering” was urgently needed twenty-four hours a day, to keep British and foreign ships on the move. The next challenge was the coal strike of 1921 (and in 1926). So, to keep electricity and gas flowing imports were quickly arranged, from Belgium, Germany, France, Poland, Canada and the USA.

In November 1932, the Company moved office to Castle Street. HTH was one of the first members of the Coal Utilization Council, which looked at ways of burning coal more efficiently. A new show room was opened and supported by three local ironmongers: George Thomas of King St, Joseph Thomas of 86 London Rd and Mr A T Blackman of 30 High St. Here you could see working examples on how to use various solid fuels for all your domestic needs!

HTH's sons Peter and Kenneth joined the firm in 1936 and 38, but in 39 they and other staff were called up for war service. The Port of Dover was closed to all merchant shipping, except carriers of coal. After the evacuation from Dunkirk our Southeast coastline, for seven miles inland, became a prohibited zone. The firm's HQ moved to London, but their new home was blitzed three times! “Accounts” returned to Dover and “Shipping” went to Newcastle.

Throughout these years coal was shipped to Dover from Blyth and the Tyne. In 1941 the wharf offices were damaged and on the 6th of September 1942, 60 Castle Street was destroyed. At the outbreak of war, the company owned three colliers of which two were sunk. On the 9th of July 1940, the SS “Kenneth Hawksfield” was damaged by a bomb off Dover and on the 21st of June 1941 was sunk by a mine off Aldeburgh, Suffolk, bringing coal from Blyth to Dover. The SS “Hookwood” was sunk by a mine on a similar journey on the 23rd of November 1939. The surviving vessel was the SS “Kathleen Hawksfield.”

In 1945 Hawksfields joined ACW, a group of companies trading between Dover and Poole. From then the firm expanded into the local domestic market across Kent, with over 50 lorries delivering a quarter of a million tons of coal a year. 1946 saw the Shipping department re-established to handle shipping and cargoes for Southern Wharfs Ltd. A new office was built on the Castle Street site and opened in 1952. Later the firm became part of Powell Duffryn.

Memories! HTH and Mrs Hawksfield lived at Ripple Court, where Sir John French, 1st Earl of Ypres had been born. In the summer, the Hawksfields held a Garden Party for all their staff and families. Whilst the grown-ups mingled and played tennis we swam in the pool and played in the outbuildings until it was time for the strawberry tea, with acres of strawberries! At Christmas, each family was given a chicken. Then, I think, it was the only time we ate chicken during the year. When I was at Dover Grammar School my father got me a holiday job on the quayside as a “teller.” As the crane lifted a load of oranges onto the quay, I had to count and record each crate and make sure it got into the warehouse safely. The Dockers put up with me and I learnt many words I had never heard before!

A Naval Brewhouse? At Dover?

Andy Plumbly

Introduction. Many Society members will know that, following the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the Maison Dieu at Dover became a small Royal Navy victualling yard. The brewery there was the smallest and longest-lived of all the Navy's brewhouses: four locations delivering the daily gallon ration until 1831.

The Crown acquired a 'well-fitted brewhouse' on the site. Items including a mash tun and millstone were purchased mid-sixteenth century. During the Armada campaign (August 1588), Sandwich beer soured very quickly but Dover's was 'as good beer as was brewed in London'. Victualling at Dover was suspended during the Civil War then revived by the Victualling Board (VB).

In continuous operation between 1690s-1820s, Dover supplied beer to ships in the Downs, periodically supplementing supplies elsewhere. The Navy used commercial brewers nationwide, although from the 1750s it was self-sufficient at its major ports.

The Victualling Board. The era of the naval brewhouses coincides with the VB, responsible for feeding crews worldwide. There is now broad consensus that the VB did a good job. The diet had far too much salt and alcohol and not enough fresh food to provide vitamins, but naval food was reliably better than seamen got at home.

Certainly, the VB had failures, and several concerned the beer supply. The standard of past naval beer had been dire, justifying in-house production. Brewing science was rudimentary. Due to uncontrollable

fermentation all brewers tried to avoid summer production, the Navy's most active period. As a reason for sour beer, this inescapable seasonal problem was as valid as it must have been irritating for frustrated recipients. As for preservation: even sound beer suffered when stored in wooden casks for any time in good conditions, let alone warships' crowded holds. The VB insisted on a six-month warranty, but bulky beer was used first, being unlikely to last, and replaced whenever possible.

Rationale for the Beer Supply. The Navy relied on beer. Safer than water, men were accustomed to a large quantity, and it provided most of their carbohydrates. Furthermore, it was (wrongly) believed that beer mitigated scurvy. Substitute wine/spirits could not provide sufficient hydration.

The quality of beer, and water improved gradually, but summer brewing remained risky. With solutions in sight, the beer supply was abolished prematurely in January 1831, following a botched costing



A contemporary depiction of Southdown

comparison with rum. Water quality on board remained inadequate until iron tanks were universal, and steam enabled distillation. Neither applied until the 1850s.

The VB established its brewhouses as follows:

- 1) Hartshorne, East Smithfield, London, leased 1680s
- 2) Insworth, near Plymouth, rented 1680s
- 3) Dover, revived 1690s
- 4) Southdown, Plymouth, purpose-built 1730s replacing Insworth
- 5) Weevil, Gosport, commercial brewery acquired 1750s
- 6) Red House, Deptford, purpose-built 1790s replacing Hartshorne
- 7) Royal William, Plymouth, almost complete externally 1831, to replace Southdown, never used.

Except Insworth and Dover, these became substantial establishments. Greenwich Naval Hospital built its own brewhouse in 1717, replaced in 1831, simultaneous with abolition.

Type of Beer. Replicating a period beer is complicated; materials and processes have changed. Nevertheless, a 2021 “recreation” of Sea Beer proved heavily hopped to last and between 3-4% ABV to avoid incapacitating crew members imbibing periodically. Another beer, ‘Petty Warrant,’ was brewed regularly, weaker for issue in harbour; comparable to universal small/table beer.

Sources. Many of the few published references to naval brewhouses are inaccurate, most imply they were peripheral. Local records are limited for defence establishments and few commercial records survive. However, a rich archive of VB material exists at Kew and Greenwich.

Summary Chronology of HM Brewhouse at Dover

The VB's first raw material purchases attributed to Dover are hops from John Hollingberry in October 1698 and malt from Thomas Scott in October 1700. Contracts allocated to Dover in succeeding years aggregate to:

Volume (Malt Quarters = Beer Tuns)	Prop'n of VB Whole	Gallons
1701 2,063	23%	441,375
1702 3,447	31%	737,658

Dover's early share of in-house output from the three small breweries was, therefore, significant.

VB out-letters first refer to Dover in 1708, ordering the Agent ‘to brew as much beer as possible in HM Brewhouse [and] to employ the brewers at Deal’, to supply the Downs. Principal Deal supplier was Jeremiah Kelly, implicated in a famous fraud investigation centred on Portsmouth, where contractors conspired with pursers to falsify receipts, receiving payment for beer never delivered.

Between 1709-10, the VB bought beer from these brewers in the Rochester and Chatham area:

	Total Tuns (= 216 Beer Gallons)
Thomas Best (Chatham)	751
John Bryan & Matthias Fletcher	479
Hannah Helby & Richard Wood	212
John Olive	375
John Ivyhurst	883

By 1728, the Dover brewhouse was in a bad way: inefficiently configured and utensils worn out, precluding repair ‘without much charge [that] would not reduce the number of persons employed, but only lessen their labour’. Even so, Dover beer had a good reputation, despite poor maintenance

common to all VB premises. In 1746, the Downs commander wanted a storeship stationed there permanently, to ensure continuity of supply of all victuals but especially beer and to mitigate the issue that 'when the wind is south-east...vessels cannot get out of Dover'. During the Seven Years War (1756-63), the VB frequently shipped beer westward. Indeed, Sir Edward Hawke, blockading Brest prior to victory at Quiberon Bay, banned beer from Plymouth, insisting on alternative sources.

During the American War, cooping practices at Dover caused concern. Drinkable beer remained essential; cask quality was key. In 1781 a critical London VB Officer reported that beer casks were mended with pickle staves, heavily impregnated with salt, then inadequately cleaned without boiling water and not properly seasoned, thus subject to leakage, exacerbated by storage of cask hoops sufficiently chaotic to promote rot. Staff censure seems to have had due effect.

In 1784, Henry Belsey was appointed Master Brewer, a new title for an existing role, presumably comparable to the brewery manager's status elsewhere. Belsey was deemed 'a sober, diligent man, a very good judge of corn, [who] had worked in the Brewhouse [as] a Labourer for several years, and that he had acted as Foreman.'

Ships often returned beer deemed defective, port staff frequently upheld the quality. The sloop *Scout* objected to two batches of Dover beer so Russell, VB Agent, asked local brewer Collins to assess the quality which he confirmed acceptable. The matter was referred to the London Master Brewer Fisher 'a person of great knowledge and experience,' who concluded the first batch was neither sour or stale but flat...brewed as long back as

last November and with old hops but being still sound. I think, as the warm weather approaches, it will recover itself, and be fit to issue again' and 'the second...was new beer'. Overall, Fisher considered brewing 'appears to be conducted with due care and attention, and the beer in store at present is in good condition'.

Dover remained a key resource during the next war and VB beer remained popular. Being duty free, it was attractive to external customers such that eternal disputes with the Board of Excise resulted. In 1802, the VB was asked to supply thirsty dockyard smiths since contractors had proved unreliable but this was precluded, the VB unable to supply even its own bakers at Dover since 'any allowance of beer issued on shore would be disposed of...to the great loss...of the Revenue'.

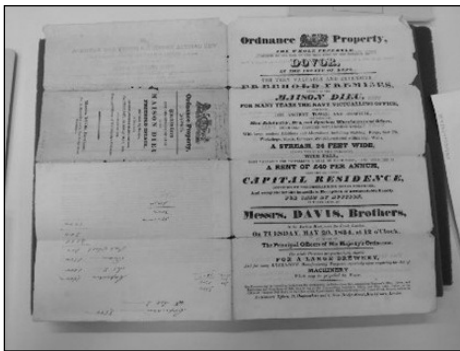
In 1804, the VB wanted a steam engine but was told 'a horse engine will be better adapted for working the pumps at Dover': probably pragmatic due to small-scale operations. Constrained by under-funding, another VB irritation was anonymous accusation. In 1807, outpost breweries were portrayed as inefficient; the VB responded describing appropriate procedures across the estate including the revelation that Dover mashed three times, between Weevil's two and four at Deptford and Southdown.

In 1812, Master Brewer Henry Bowles retired aged 72, on a £150 salary after 31 years' faithful VB service. It seems he was not replaced and, by 1822, Dover's day was done. The VB recommended supplying the Downs by hoy from Deptford and, in March, the *John* was appropriated from Plymouth.

In June 1825, the VB 'inspected the several Premises belonging to this Department at

that Place', observing 'that the Mash Tub was perfectly fit for use, but the Coolers totally decayed...they had become unfit for use before the Establishment was finally put down. The bottom of a new Copper [stood] in the Yard,' subsequently sent to Deptford. The officers considered 'whether it can ever be expedient to re-establish the Dover premises as a Victualling Yard' but, having observed the Naval Premises at Deal saw 'no reason to think it will ever be advisable,' proposing instead 'to remove such of the materials as may be useful [to] Deal, or elsewhere, and to sell the Dover Premises,' although 'the Wharf, Pump and Water-side Premises should of course always be retained for temporary supplies of Water.'

The protracted site sale process resulted in transfer to the Board of Ordnance in 1830 for £7,500, followed four years later by public sale.



Auction Notice

Dover may have been a small VB site but it had the potential for significant commercial operations. The brewhouse location is uncertain. According to the History of the Corporation of Dover, the Ordnance Department 'separated the lots, selling the mansion privately, and the

Maison Dieu itself, with the land down to the river, was then purchased by the Dover Corporation...'

Dover Purchase Summary

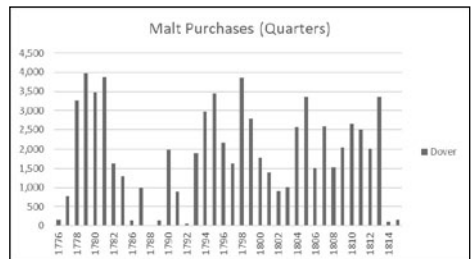
ADM 20: 1684-1787. 2,643 hundredweight of hops costing £10,974

Top 5 suppliers: William Pilcher, John Robinson, Henry Henshaw, Phineas Stringer, John Reynolds

ADM 112: 1776-1826. 6,018 hundredweight of hops costing £35,556

Top 3 suppliers: John Bolland; George & James Finch; Thomas Jull (or Tull?)

ADM 112: 1776-1815



Aggregate 70,900 quarters of malt & tuns of beer = 15,314,400 beer gallons.

Conclusion. In my King's PhD thesis, *Thirsting for Glory – Beer Supply to the Royal Navy in the long Eighteenth Century*, I am exploring the importance of the largely unknown naval brewhouses to establish their true significance as a new mirror on the historian's Contractor State model.

The brewhouse at Dover is unusual in that the VB neither replaced nor upgraded it. Hence, output volume remained reasonably constant while proportional significance declined, but Dover remained an essential reserve source of supply for a critical commodity. Within the hidden world of naval beer, Dover is the best-kept secret, and I am hoping for the Society's help in addressing that.

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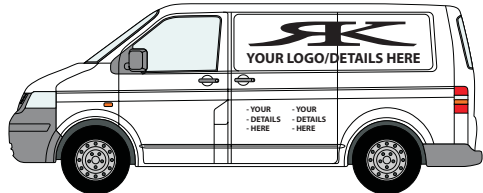


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I/We could sometimes give practical help with the following (please tick relevant sections)

Social events Writing for newsletter Projects e.g. clearance, surveys

Photography Any other interests or expertise

**The Dover Society Festive Lunch and Entertainment Sunday 3rd December 2023
At The Marina Hotel, Dover Waterfront, CT17 9BP**

Price £30.95 per person to include arrival drink, three course meal, tea, or coffee and entertainment. Wine or other drinks may be ordered and purchased at the venue. The lunchtime entertainment will be clarified in the November newsletter. Arrival drinks will be available from 12.30 pm. Lunch will begin promptly at 1 pm. Please select from the following menu,

- Arrival Drink:** a) Bucks Fizz
b) Fruit Juice
- Starter:** c) Classic Prawn Cocktail with buttered brown bread and fresh lemon
d) Ardennes Pâté with rustic toast and red onion chutney
e) Winter Vegetable Soup with herb croutons
- Main:** f) Roasted Turkey with all the trimmings and roasting juices
g) Roast Beef with all the trimmings, Yorkshire pudding and roasting juices
h) Grilled Cod in a creamy lemon butter sauce
i) Nut Roast (V) roast potatoes, seasonal vegetables and vegetable jus
- Dessert:** j) Traditional Plum Pudding with brandy sauce
k) Warm Chocolate Brownie with vanilla ice cream
l) Apple and Almond Crumble with vanilla ice cream
m) Cheddar Cheese and Brie with crackers and grapes

Tea, Coffee and Minced Pies

To book your place(s), please complete the form below and return it together with your cheque made payable to THE DOVER SOCIETY to the Social Secretary, Mrs. Lyn Smith, 2 Redlands Court, London Road, River, Dover CT17 0TW together with payment cheque. If paying by BACS the details are: The Dover Society, account no. 80864803, Barclays Bank Dover, sort code 20-02-62, giving your name and FL as reference. If you require a table for more than eight people, then please contact Lyn Smith. The form can also be returned by email to steve.lyn@uwclub.net

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Telephone: Email

Please select for each person, your arrival drink and choice of menu

Name(s)	Arrival Drink	Starter	Main	Dessert
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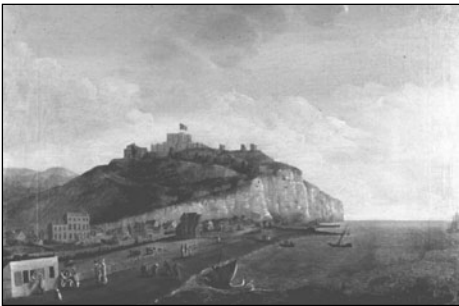
Around Dover Museum – Sarah Rice

An Independent Woman of Means

Vronni Ward – Dover Museum

Without a doubt Sarah Rice (1754-1842) was a woman of great stature and eminence in the Dover community. She was the Beyoncé Knowles of the 18th and 19th Century! Married to Captain Henry Rice of the British East India Company, she lived in the imposing Clarence House built (date unknown) in a wonderful position with views across the English Channel as well as at Bramling House in Ickham which commanded a view of the boats mooring for favourable winds to sail to France.

Sarah Rice came from a seafaring family. Her father, John Samson (sometimes spelt Sampson) and her Uncles Brooke and James were all captains of East India Company ships and were extremely wealthy. The family was of Huguenot stock, settled in East Kent from France in the 17th century, where they manufactured copies of China porcelain, known as Samsonware. Sarah's mother, Margaret Walton, traced her decent from the Anne Marlowe who kept a public house in Canterbury until 1629. She was the youngest sister of Christopher Marlowe the famous playwright.



*Painting of Clarence House owned by Dover Museum
on loan to Dover Town Hall*

The house was built, in Dover, on land between what is now Russell Street and Woolcomber Street. Nearby, before Castle Street was built, was a donkey stable providing tourists rides along the beach. The donkeys took a liking for Sarah's flower garden... and she got quite grumpy about it!

Unfortunately, we have no painting of Sarah and so we are unsure as to her appearance. She was described as “not exactly handsome, but a smart looking girl.” However, she took care of her appearance buying her clothes in London; a bill survives for a sarsenet pelisse (a long silk cloak often trimmed with fur) from R & G Thompson of Cocks spur Street and another for furs from P. Poland & Co, located next door to the Lyceum. She was clearly a formidable, matriarchal figure that inspired a number of characters in English literature. It was said that the characters of Mrs Norris in Mansfield Park who has been described as ‘a cruel, righteous busybody’ and/or Elizabeth Bennett in Pride and Prejudice who is ‘bold, intelligent, and independent, with a witty sense of humour’ by Jane Austen were based on her. It was also said that she was one of two local personages on which Charles Dickens (1812-1870) based the character of Betsey Trotwood, in Dickens’ David Copperfield. Betsey was portrayed as a woman of independent nature with strong views. She did not care for public opinion, and she drove her carriage herself through the streets of Canterbury in defiance of public opinion ...very much like Sarah herself. Another example of her forceful character was demonstrated in an encounter with the Duke of Wellington. When a gun battery was stationed near her house in Dover she was offended as much by the sight of it as by the

sound. She had all the shutters closed and invited the Duke of Wellington, then at Walmer Castle, to call. Mrs Rice explained to him that she would have to continue in darkness as long as the guns remained, whereupon the duke gave orders for the battery to be moved forthwith.

A scurrilous story about Sarah's large fortune relates to how Captain Rice bet a friend ten guineas that he would succeed in marrying the heiress (who brought with her a dowry of £30,000). He succeeded in his quest, bringing his ship, the Dutton, into Dover harbour in order to give a ball at which he proposed. Henry and Sarah married on 29th January 1776 when he made generous settlements on his wife and future children, Henry Junior and Edward. Henry Rice, as well as being Captain of the British East India Company, owned Dover's Latham, Rice and Co bank together with a company which managed homing pigeons.

Upon Henry's death in 1797 Sarah became the managing director of the bank Latham, Rice & Co. They did not confine their activities to banking, describing themselves as "merchants and agents." They kept a fleet of fast small ships to trade and to obtain news quickly from agents in Calais and other continental ports. For more speedy return of the information, they organised a carrier pigeon service.

She retired from her banking position in 1811 in favour of her son Edward. By this date, the annual sums available to each partner had increased: Samuel Latham £1,600 and Henshaw Latham and Edward Rice £800 each. These were respectable sums in a provincial town like Dover.

Her relationships with her sons were emotionally mixed. Her eldest, Henry, went up to Cambridge and took holy orders. He was by all accounts a ladies' man, a gambler

and a spendthrift. He married Lucy Lefroy whose family were close to the Austen family...hence, the references in Jane Austen's novels. Jane Austen took a shine to Henry who, according to her, was 'a pleasant boy who had bright eyes.' She wanted Sarah to buy the vicarage attached to an adjoining parish. However, Sarah would have none of it, which led Jane Austen to proclaim that she was 'a perverse and narrow-minded woman to oblige those whom she does not love.' Although Sarah shared her affections differently between her two sons, in terms of money she treated them equally. She bought Henry a house in Essex and Edward, Danecourt House near Dover. The younger son Edward married Jane Austen's niece - Elizabeth Knight. Jane's brother Edward had been adopted by the Knights. Edward Royds Rice went into parliament as a Liberal MP (1837-1857) and prospered. In contrast, Henry had his money left to him in trust in her will and was constantly going into debt. Interestingly, Sarah specified that after Henry's death, his sole surviving daughter would get the bulk of his inheritance, again just the interest but that it was to go to her alone for her sole use and not for any debt of her husband or any husband she happened to marry. Sarah was obviously aware of the problem of married women not having any property to call their own.



Clarence Hotel, Dover



Burlington Hotel, Dover 1898

However, following her death in 1842, her beautiful Clarence House was sold to the Clarence Hotel Company. The company took years to build the hotel and they found that they had over-stretched themselves financially and eventually had to lease the hotel to the Imperial Hotel Company which opened the Imperial Hotel in 1867. Its fortunes were chequered closing in 1871 and it later it changed hands to become the

Burlington Hotel (1897) which was demolished in 1949 after extensive war damage. The site is now subsumed within the St James' Retail Complex.

Sarah Rice was truly an independent woman and in the words of Beyoncé Knowles and Destiny's Child: "The shoes on my feet, I bought 'em. The clothes I'm wearing, I bought 'em... All the women who independent. Throw your hands up at me. All the honeys who making money. Throw your hands up at me. All the mamas who profit dollars Throw your hands up at me!"

Here at the museum, we have our new Channel Crossing temporary exhibition open until May 2024, do pop in and let us know what you think. We open: Monday to Saturday 9.30am to 5.00pm. Open Sundays in the summer 10.00am to 3.00pm. Admission is FREE. Tel: 01304 201066 www.dover.gov.uk/museum

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George Dickinson

Patricia Allan

Today Victoria Crescent is an attractive Georgian terrace of eleven three-storey terraced houses which are situated on the High Street in Dover, only a hundred yards or so from the historic Maison Dieu built in 1200 A.D. now being used as the Town hall, and at the time of writing, undergoing a major renovation project.

The exterior of these houses has hardly changed at all throughout their lifetime, but the Crescent itself has seen many changes in its 188-year existence. Many of the houses through the decades have had a dual role of commercial and domestic use. The ground floors being used for all types of businesses ranging from dressmakers, saddle makers, butchers, boot makers, undertakers, law firms, lodging houses and even a chiropodist.

In December 1973, the Crescent houses were given a Grade II listing as they were deemed to have special architectural significance and unique characteristics. The listing would protect this lovely historic terrace. Although two of the houses were demolished in the street widening scheme of 1903, numbers 1 and 13.

Facing the Crescent on the other side of the High Street is the former Royal Victoria Hospital, which was formally opened in 1851, closed in 1987 and finally turned into apartments in the 1990s. The original hospital building has a Grade II listing.

But what are the Crescent's origins? Who had the grand vision of building a sweeping arc of thirteen houses? The developer and builder of the Crescent was George Dickinson (sometimes spelt Dickenson) 1793-1843. George was born in Greenwich,

London to Captain Thomas Dickinson R.N. 1754-1828 and his wife Frances De Brissac 1760-1854. Thomas had succeeded his father John as Superintendent of the Ordnance Transports at Woolwich, with quarters in the Tower of London. Frances De Brissac was a woman of pure Huguenot descent, her father being one of the French silk weavers of Spitalfields, London. Thomas and Frances married on the 30th of June 1781 at Christ Church, Spitalfields, London. Theirs was an extremely successful marriage and they produced ten children. George was their ninth child and their youngest son.

Their eldest child John 1782-1869 was at fifteen years old apprenticed for seven years in the stationery trade to Thomas Harrison of Leadenhall Street in London. By 1804 he was trading as a stationer in London on his own account and was already on his way to becoming very successful. In 1806 John was supplying the East India Company with paper on a large scale but was so far only selling papers made by other firms.

The craft of papermaking in England was traditionally in the hands of the descendants of the Huguenot refugees, but as conditions in France improved some of them returned there. The making of paper had been a laborious process made by hand, and the output was low. John Dickinson had been experimenting for years on making an advanced paper-making machine than that already existed and in 1807 and 1809 he devised and patented a machine which enabled paper to be made in continuous rolls. Looking for a suitable site in which he could install his new machinery, in 1809 he bought his first mill

in Hemel Hempstead called Apsley Mill. In 1810 John Dickinson married Ann Grove, daughter of banker Harry Grove. In 1810/1811 he bought his second mill Nash Mill, another former corn mill from the medieval period.

Now back to George Dickinson. In 1818 Frances Dickinson advanced her eldest son John a substantial loan in exchange for him to take his youngest brother 25-year-old George into his mills and teach him the business. This arrangement was clearly not a success. George was an awkward, difficult, loutish youth according to John's wife Ann who despised his lazy disposition. By 1822 John had managed to secure a loan from other sources so that he could be released from the contract on his brother's account. In August John went to see his mother to discuss his brother George renting the Buckland Mills, near Dover.

In December 1822, twenty-nine-year-old George Dickinson full of eagerness and enthusiasm departed Hertfordshire for Kent and his Buckland Paper Mills, buying some new machinery prior to his departure. In 1825 he bought land at Charlton, on the High Street and built himself a fine mansion he named Brook House.

By 1826 he occupied Bushey Ruff Mill and in 1833-1834 he built himself a steam

paper-mill at Charlton called the Spring Garden Mill. The name came from the chalybeate spring which yielded iron rich spring water, very favourable for the making of paper. This mill was situated off Peter Street (near the present-day Charlton Centre Car Park) and not far from his house.

Now George Dickinson had grand designs on relieving the monotony of the straight street by building a graceful crescent of thirteen houses facing his mansion Brook House on the Charlton High Street. The proposed site was land that fronted onto the Dover to Barham Turnpike Road and was already occupied by seven cottages and leased to a Mr John Emptage a cabinetmaker who had a workshop at the rear. In an agreement for the sale and purchase of the leasehold land dated 31st October 1833 this is clearly the beginning of the Crescent being built.

In December 1835, the houses have been built as Mr John Emptage is now living in his new home at number 10 Charlton Crescent (it's original name) and his newly built workshop is at the rear. The seven cottages have been demolished and the empty site, fronting what is now the High Street, has been fashioned into an ornamental garden for the pleasure of the residents.



Victoria Crescent Old



Victoria Crescent New

On the 23rd of September 1837, forty-two-year-old George and twenty-year-old Susan Hall were married in Charlton, Dover. Susan was the daughter of Charles Hall a fellow paper maker. Their happiness was short lived, George was declared bankrupt in December 1837. In 1838 his mill at Buckland was advertised for let "as most eligible and desirable" and famed for the quality of its papers. It was by now making white paper as well as the usual brown and blue. Despite several disastrous fires in its history, the mill very much enlarged successfully produced paper until 2000. The Buckland Mill site has now been converted into extremely desirable waterside properties.

Bushey Ruff Mill was occupied by William Knocker in 1838 and it seems to have ceased production by 1850.

The Spring Gardens Paper Mill was taken over by James Brock. In 1856 it was advertised as desirable freehold premises lately used as a Paper Mill, together with four cottages, store house, stable, in the parish of Charlton. William Crundall became the new owner of the mill which was used as a sawmill and timber yard for more than one hundred years. The Charlton Shopping Centre and the car park now occupy the site.

George Dickinson's paper making business in Dover had lasted for only fifteen years. He had clearly been progressive by introducing white paper-making to Buckland Mill and also patenting a couple of new machines. His downfall was probably due to the failure of the Spring Mill venture. In March of 1839, an Assignment of the Leasehold for the Crescent was signed between George Dickinson and his assignees and banker John Minet Fector esquire.

George and his wife returned to London after his bankruptcy. His fine house on the High Street was eventually offered for sale by auction. It was acquired at a cost of £1,336 with the ambition of converting it into the Dover Hospital and Dispensary by way of Thanksgiving after the town had escaped the epidemic of cholera which had scourged England. The people of Dover had raised a sum of £1,760 and after alterations, the hospital was formally opened on the 1st of May 1851.

In the 1841 Census, George and Susan were living by independent means in Dalby Terrace in Islington in a fine Georgian terrace built in 1803 by a manufacturer a Mr Dalby.

On the 1st of July 1843 George Dickinson of Spencer Street died in Clerkenwell, Middlesex aged 48. He was buried on the 5th of July at St James Churchyard in Clerkenwell.

On the 12th of October 1847, his widow Susan Dickinson married William Catley a chemist in the Parish Church of St Marylebone, Westminster.

John Dickinson died on the 11th of January 1869. His company went on to become John Dickinson Stationery, one of the largest manufacturers in the world, owning the well-known brands of Basildon Bond and Lion Brand.

As for his young brother George who came to Dover to make his fortune, marrying a local girl, it wasn't all about failure. He left behind a gift his fine house can still be clearly seen behind the new facade which was added in the Victoria Hospital alterations. Today nearly two hundred years after its conception, Victoria Crescent is still a part of Dover's rich history, George Dickinson's lasting legacy to our town.

St. Mary-in-Castro

Peter Sherred

Sitting high on the heights above the town and port and located within the grounds of Dover Castle is the church of St Mary in Castro arguably the oldest church of Christian worship of the town which is still functioning. In the absence of documentary evidence of the early history of the church one can derive much information from its construction for it is almost entirely of re-used Roman material. It has been suggested that the church was built in the 4th to the 11th centuries – quite some age range! The adjoining Pharos, an original Roman structure, probably dates from the 1st century and in later centuries it seems to have been adapted to form a western tower of the church. It was for a time used as the bell tower of the church which use continued until the late 1600s. The likelihood is that the Romans built the Pharos as a lighthouse in this location to guide shipping round the Foreland to the principal port at Richborough. It is likely to be the earliest human created structure in the grounds of what now forms Dover Castle.

An important thing to note is that the church is cruciform in shape. An interesting feature is a bricked-up door in the south wall which is of Saxon work. After the upheavals of the Commonwealth the church became disused and neglected such that by the eighteenth century the church was in a ruinous state, having been used as a coal store, being roofless and abandoned. In the nineteenth century the church was comprehensively restored, or rebuilt, and reconsecrated for divine worship. Its interior decoration of mosaic and tile wall covering to a design of William Butterfield FSA architect sparks differing views as to its suitability in a place of worship. During the

restoration of the church under Sir Gilbert Scott, architect, the vestry was built in 1888 and the North Transept which had been used as a vestry was restored to the church. The levels of the entire church were refloored and some new windows inserted. The entire church was re-seated, the choristers' seats were taken out of what had been the Sanctuary and placed beneath the tower the upper walls of which were rebuilt with a new roof and parapet.

The Church served as the garrison church for the military of the Dover and Shorncliffe garrisons until December 2014 when 2 South East Brigade was disbanded, and the army retrenched to barracks at Chatham and other locations. A plaque was erected in the church to record the ending of the specific use of Saint Mary in Castro as a garrison church. This event led to a discussion as to the future of the church within the grounds of the castle, but an enlightened English Heritage preferred to retain a working, or functioning, church rather than leave it to fulfil a purpose as a museum. After consultations between English Heritage, the Diocese of Canterbury, the Ministry of Defence, and other interested parties, the church made the transition to civilian status. It currently operates as an extra parochial church in the Diocese of Canterbury of the Church of England. Effectively, this status reflects the fact that the church does not operate as a parish church since it predates the parochial system and it was a Royal, or later a military, church within the castle grounds remaining as such until the army withdrew in 2014. With the departure of 2 Brigade the congregation became part of the Diocese of Canterbury under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of

Canterbury. A Memorandum of Agreement between various parties as to its use and status was agreed in principle.

There seems to be a public impression that the church of St Mary in Castro is no longer a functioning church. This is most definitely not the case for, under the guidance of the former Co-ordinating Chaplain the Reverend Canon Jonathan Russell, the church evolved into a very special sacred space with a committed congregation members of which worship at the church every Sunday at 10am. The church is, however, open to allcomers, and most services of worship have visitors to the castle entering the church finding to their amazement a functioning church rather than a museum! The church retains strong links with its military history and throughout the year veteran or cadet groups attend special services such as those commemorating Sea Sunday, Battle of Britain, Remembrance, or St Barbara's day (the patron saint of miners, gunners, engineers and others creating or working with explosive elements) which are held at the appropriate times of the year. The church remains a focal point for military units that remain in the area. Baptism, wedding, funeral, and memorial services still take place at the church for those with a close association with the military or the castle community. In December celebrations of the Christmas season take place with the holding of a Christingle Service for younger people and the traditional Midnight Mass is celebrated. In Holy Week local town Christians carry three large wooden crosses to stand outside St Mary the Virgin Church in Cannon Street before being taken up to St Mary in Castro where they are affixed to castle walls, so they are visible to people in the town. At sunrise on Easter morning a service is held by St Mary-in-Castro to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Currently, the church is served by a ministry team comprising four ordained members of the clergy, a licensed Lay Reader and a Lay Chaplain. In January 2023 I was commissioned as the Honorary Co-ordinating Chaplain at St Mary in Castro in succession to Jonathan Russell, a considerable privilege for a self-supporting priest. Enquiries regarding services at the church or other matters relating to the church can be directed to me personally. General oversight of the operation of the church is through a church council comprised of elected members of the congregation. All committed to the work of the church act as a team. Standards of those who have served as Lord Wardens of the Cinque Ports and those serving as Deputy Constable of Dover Castle are displayed throughout the church including the Transepts. Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother's standard together with those of Sir Winston Churchill, The Duke of Wellington, James Duke of York (who succeeded as King James II in 1685) among others are displayed at various points in the church. Of the Deputy Constables, Brigadier Maurice Atherton's standard is displayed. Society members will recall he served as a local magistrate as well as being President of the Society. The Lord Warden for the time being is the Constable of Dover Castle. Presently the post of Lord Warden is vacant following the death in November 2022 of the last Lord Warden, Admiral of the Fleet the Lord Boyce KG GCB OBE a former submariner who in 2004 succeeded Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother as Lord Warden following her demise. The installation of a Lord Warden invariably begins within the grounds of Dover Castle with a service in St Mary in Castro before the ceremony descends to the town and to the grounds of Dover College where the installation takes place in a Court convened by the Confederation of the Cinque Ports.

On many of the special occasions, where St Mary in Castro provides a service, military personnel or veterans attend complete with their standards which are paraded through the church and placed in the Sanctuary nearby the altar. The pride with which the standard bearers carry out their duties is a wonder to behold and is extremely touching. One such standard bearer who attends at the church for such military services is Dover 'born and bred' man Harry Hopper of Pioneer Road in the town who frequently bears the standard of the Royal Artillery. On Battle of Britain Sunday this year the Royal Air Force Association standard was borne by 92-year-old Peter Markick of Deal.

Harry Hopper was born in a house in Glenfield Road which property was 'shelled out' during the Second World War. His parents had many local connections. After education at Barton Road, Powell School and Charlton Primary School as well as St Mary's and Oakleigh House (which some Society members may recall was based in Maison Dieu Road), at the age of 14 he became an apprentice jockey which was to stand him in good stead for what followed. In 1957 he was commissioned into the Royal Artillery at the age of 18 for three years. He subsequently joined the King's Troop at St John's Wood London and then as a member of the 5th Field regiment of the Royal Artillery he

found himself first in Hong Kong and subsequently in Malaya and Singapore. In 1960 he came out of the army and became a professional groom to the East Kent Hunt. Among his subsequent varied roles, he became a publican with Ind Coope spending ten years with the company and working in five different pubs, finishing as the manager of the Black Bull on Canterbury Road in Folkestone.

Harry joined the Royal Artillery Association just at the beginning of the new (21st) century and was also a member of the Royal British Legion, Dover Branch. Sadly, the Dover branch folded in 2005 through lack of members. While on paper the branch had several members, attendance at meetings of the branch was poor. Harry was a colleague of Pat Cunningham who was Chairman of the Royal Artillery Association and who, Society members may recall, was the Lord Warden's (the Lord Boyce) Admiralty Sergeant until Pat's death a few years ago. Harry took over the post of Chairman of the Royal Artillery Association upon the death of Pat Cunningham. Before Pat's death Pat, Harry and others, would meet up at the Dover Sea Angling Association premises in Priory Road until the Dover Branch was folded. It then merged with the Canterbury Branch of the Royal Artillery Association where Harry held the post of Vice Chairman.

Among the many and varied jobs Harry has undertaken during his civilian working life was a spell as a bus driver for East Kent and then, later, Stagecoach. Following retirement Harry devotes much time to Royal Artillery affairs attending meetings in Canterbury. In 2015 Dover (White Cliffs) Branch of the Royal British Legion was created and Harry became a member. When time permits, he attends meetings of the local Legion branch in the Railway Club, now (The Phoenix Club), off Crabble Road



Peter Markick with RAFA Standard and Licensed Lay Reader Lieutenant Colonel (retired) John Morrison

in River where the reconstituted Branch meets.

On Merchant Navy Day on the seafront this year (2023) 1st September - Harry joined the line-up of standard bearers on parade and, by and large, he attends all military commemorations held locally and some further away when he is proud to bear the Royal Artillery Standard. Harry also turns out when time permits at the Royal British Legion events with the Royal Artillery standard particularly for services of commemoration and remembrance. Harry always cuts an impressive figure by the way he holds himself and his impressive mutton chops make him a face easy to remember! Most interesting and important is that Harry's services are all undertaken on a purely voluntary basis. All the time he is around the Royal Artillery locally can rest assured for a professional and proper bearing while the standard is being carried. He is always a very welcome guest at St Mary-in-Castro. Harry has given a lifetime of commitment to horses and is one of the local 'characters' who give richness to the life of the town of Dover.

Another person who attends St Mary in Castro from time to time is Christine Walton a resident of Knights Templars on the Western Heights who is deeply committed to veterans' affairs. She has her origins in Hackney north London but moved to Dover with her husband Brian in 2010. Both are retired. Originally Christine attended the Deal branch of the Royal British Legion (where she remains a member) but following the creation of the new Dover (White Cliffs) Branch of the Legion she became a member of that branch and is also a member of St Margaret's branch. Attending a battlefield tour inspired her to become ever more involved in veterans' affairs and so she became Treasurer in 2016 of the newly formed Dover branch then

became Secretary in 2017. Thereafter she has taken on the job of the Poppy Appeal annually for Dover and St Margarets. Her concern for veterans and their interests led her to start a Friends of Veterans Breakfast Club in 2017. This meets every third Saturday in Wetherspoons between 9 and 11.30am. Such meetings have themes such as Battle of Britain, Trafalgar, Remembrance - determined by the time of the year. A recent meeting had thirty-seven people attending.

Pre-Covid, Christine organised meetings for veterans and their partners at the café in the Charlton Centre but since the Covid pandemic these meetings now take place twice a month in St Mary's Church parish centre. Christine is also involved with the Veterans Singing Group, in Deal, and she has taken over responsibility for the Channel Dash while organising all the Dover branch activities. Next year, 2024, looks as if it will be a busy one for Christine with the eightieth anniversary of the D Day landings in addition to the usual V.E. Day and V.J. Day commemorations. St Mary-in-Castro will be available to play its part in any commemorations planned for 2024. In view of her commitment to veterans and their concerns Christine is invariably invited to commemoration events that take place in St Mary-in-Castro. She is well respected by veterans and their associates.

Advance Notice! St Mary-in-Castro will be hosting a Celebration of Christmas on 21st December at 7pm where the public is invited to come along and sing well known carols and secular seasonal songs. The Pharos Chamber Choir will be present and that is always good value to add to an event. It promises to be a good event so why not come along? Contact 01304 203548 to book in which is essential as there is a capacity limitation. Do remember St Mary-in-Castro is open to one and all and is functioning.

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History and Development of the Aerial Ropeway

Colin Varrall

One of the four main collieries established in the Kent Coalfield during the early part of the 20th century was the East Kent Colliery, later becoming Tilmanstone Colliery. This colliery went into receivership prior to being taken over by a new manager and eventual owner, Mr. Richard Tilden Smith. He was responsible for further developing the colliery, made possible by creating a close-knit community spirit among the colliery's work force. As a result, plans were eventually put forward by Mr. Tilden Smith for a permanent mining village to be built close to the colliery and with the construction of 230 houses for the miners and their families. The Elvington Town Scheme was completed in 1927.



Richard Tilden Smith

Richard Tilden Smith was born on 14th of October 1865, the son of a well-known Sussex banker. He played cricket for the Surrey Club and won many golf trophies. Before reaching the age of 21 years old, he took a prominent part in opening up the Maitland Coalfield, New South Wales, Australia.

Mr. Tilden Smith had made the decision and arrangements for the purchase of the mining rights for the East Kent Colliery from the ground landlords, in accordance with a decision arrived at by the Railway and Canal Commission Court.

He was understood to have been a strong advocate of the creation of a Coal Board and the compulsorily amalgamation of all

the collieries in the country, very similar to what would later become the National Coal Board. He had attempted to induce the Government to adopt this idea when he visited the House of Commons.

Tilden Smith was responsible for building Adelaide House, that still remains today, adjacent to London Bridge and bordering the river

Thames. The imposing Grade II English Heritage listed office building was constructed in 1925 and became the first steel-frame building and tallest commercial building in London. It was recognised as the first skyscraper in the City of London. The site Tilden Smith obtained had originally been the Adelaide Hotel and Adelaide Buildings. During the excavations for the new building, a Gothic arch from the first stone London Bridge was discovered, which had been built in 1176/1209.

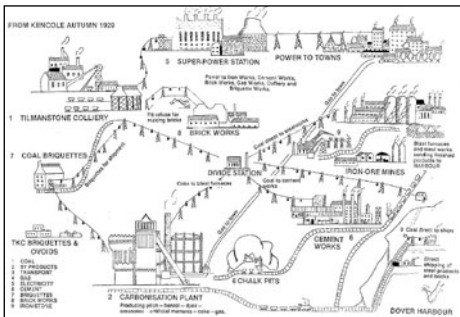
As the colliery developed it was Mr. Tilden Smith who realised that further expansion was necessary, having the vision of an Industrial Eden in East Kent. With the possibility of mining coal at a deeper level beneath the colliery and the opening of a new shaft, it was hoped the workforce could be increased from 1,200 men to 5,000 men. Mr. Tilden Smith had set himself two main factors - raw materials and transport. Concentrating on coal production would ensure that the share of benefits would increase automatically, and he got one hundred percent of support

from the colliery workers. He had already secured controlling interests in the Folkestone Gas Company, Deal Gas Company, and the East Kent Gas Company. Further industries were planned, which would require and use coal to generate power. Expanding local industry would need electricity, cement, gas, coke, and briquettes, with the likelihood of selling these products more cheaply across other regions of Britain, as well as to other countries around the world.

In readiness, Mr. Tilden Smith began building a briquette plant at the colliery, which developed the Tilmanstone (Kent) Colliery Limited "New Coal" from its Lockwood's Clean Coal Process Plant. Mr. Tilden Smith believed the cost of transporting coal from the colliery to Dover Harbour was too expensive and time-consuming and, as a result, had the idea of an aerial ropeway to provide a faster and more direct route to export Kent coal from Dover Harbour. However, there was strong opposition from prominent coal transport railway companies and issues were found with the initial plans as part of the first application for the ropeway. This initial application to the Railway and Canal Commission was made in December 1926, with plans being opposed by the Southern

Railway. As a result, a court hearing began, costing £20,000 in legal fees, to justify and secure the rights of a ropeway being built. The ropeway was proposed by Tilden Smith as he felt the local railways were gradually increasing their rates for transporting the coal out of Tilmanstone Colliery. It was noticed that the Southern Railway was charging 5s. 9d. per ton to transport the coal a distance of 10 miles from the colliery to Dover, as opposed to 8s. 6d. being charged for the carriage of coal to from the colliery to London, a much greater distance. Tilden Smith claimed he had often seen insufficient coal wagons being provided for the movement of coal stocks, this he blamed for the slow production of coal, which reduced any potential profits being made. Eventually, plans were granted for an aerial ropeway to be built, conveying coal from Tilmanstone Colliery to Dover Harbour over a distance of seven and a half miles, with approval of the Railway & Canal Commission. In February 1927, an estimate of £30,000 to construct the ropeway was revised to £61,195. A 5,000 tons capacity reinforced concrete coal bunker was constructed in April 1928, which would discharge 750 tons of coal per hour into the holds of coal ships moored alongside the Eastern Arm at Dover Harbour. Dover Harbour agreed to contribute £97,000 towards the overall amount of £250,000 it had cost to the complete the entire system of the ropeway.

The first of the two sections of the ropeway were officially opened on 12th of October 1929, with the second section of the ropeway finally being opened several months later on 14th of February 1930, but in the absence of Tilden Smith. His untimely death occurred during a meeting he attended at the House of Commons on 18th of December 1929. Tilden Smith had



Plan of the proposed route of the ropeway with other industries

met with members of Parliament to discuss the Coal Bill, the first suggestion of a proposition for the establishment of a National Coal organisation. It was not until 1947, that the National Coal Board was actually founded.

During its short working life of around 10 years, the ropeway had been capable of carrying 120 tons (imperial) per hour, in large metal buckets that were suspended from the four-inch metal cable. Coal was transported in each of the 566 buckets, each having the capacity to carry 4.25cwts. of coal. The buckets were spaced along the cable 46 yards apart and travelled at a speed of 130 yards per minute. Where the ropeway crossed main roads and the Southern Railway line, large steel gantries were constructed, some originally having netting, and then later timber platforms, positioned below the level of the guide wheels which carried the ropes, to prevent any damage being caused to vehicles if there was a spillage of coal below.

The ropeway was being used during the early stages of the Second World War, but the whole mechanism soon came to a halt when a military gun emplacement was placed into the two tunnels where the ropeway exited the cliffs in line with the

Eastern Arm at Dover. The ropeway did not return to use after the war. Most of the structures were left standing, but remained derelict until the mid-1950s, when the order was given for the ropeway to be dismantled. It is believed parts of the mechanism were demolished, while other sections may have been shipped to India, where they were possibly rebuilt and reused. It has been claimed that the ropeway regularly had faults and suffered from a lot of mechanical issues.

Very little of the ropeway still exists today, other than the walls and floor sections of the 'divide' station, the concrete floor section of the 'angle' station near Langdon Bay and one of the last original stanchion bases, which is situated on the edge of the cliff at Langdon Bay. The 'divide' station had been built with the intention of it being at the centre of a large network of ropeways that would transport coal and other materials to and from other planned industries. These would have seen the construction of a carbonisation plant, power station, gas and cement works, and facilities for the pulverisation of coal and coke. The original proposal was for the ropeway to pass over the edge of the cliff, but engineers instead decided on excavating a tunnel that made a 90° turn facing out from the cliffs above Dover Harbour, in line with the Eastern Arm. At the end of the harbour arm was a 25,000 tons capacity coal staithe.

In March 2019, the Elvington and Eythorne Heritage Group were fortunate in purchasing the original volumes of court proceedings books, which were produced following the first application made by Tilden Smith for the construction of the aerial ropeway. These documents helped with the production of a book that was published in 2020, written about the history and development of the ropeway.



Opening of the 'divide' station 12th October 1929

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Connaught Barracks Welcomes Hungarian Refugees

Barry O'Brien – Dover Tales

I was recently lucky to have had the opportunity of an informal catch up with 'Mr Dover,' Terry Sutton MBE, and, ironically, soon after, tidying away Dover Society newsletters, found an article Terry had written outlining how the current crisis in Ukraine, following the Russian invasion, brought back memories of events in 1956 when Hungarian refugees were welcomed and cared for in Dover, following the Hungarian Uprising.

Although non-communists had won the 1945 election in Hungary, by 1948 the AVH, (Államvédelmi Hatóság or State Protection Authority), had the country within their control and had begun eliminating the Party's political opponents.

The Hungarian leader, Mátyás Rákosi, was considered a hard-line communist and was fully in league with Moscow. The AVH created a climate of fear, effectively curtailing the freedom of speech and arresting anyone who spoke out against communism. Even something as simple as listening to western music could, potentially, lead to arrest.



Stalin's man in Hungary Matyas Rakosi

The Hungarian economy was under pressure supporting, as it did, the many Soviet troops and officials stationed in the country, creating economic hardship for ordinary people, while the Russian language was imposed. Hungarian street signs were replaced with those in Russian, which was also being taught in Hungarian schools.

On 25th February 1956, Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, denounced many of his predecessor Joseph Stalin's crimes and human rights abuses and outlined his proposed policy to be less hard-line than Stalin and to use diplomacy, not force, in his dealings with other governments; all of which encouraged those in the Eastern Bloc to imagine that greater freedoms might be achievable.

Within months the Hungarian people had begun to protest against Rákosi's regime, leading to his being replaced, in July 1956, by one of his close associates Erno Gerő, who, having been involved in party expulsions, proved no more popular than Rákosi.

On 23rd October 1956, students marched through Budapest, intending to present a petition to the government. As the numbers taking part in the procession grew, Gerő delivered a harsh speech that greatly angered the demonstrators causing police to, eventually, open fire. This proved to be the start of the Hungarian Revolution.

As the uprising spread the central committee agreed that Janos Kadar should be made party leader and Imre Nagy made prime minister.

Nagy's proposed reforms included free elections, an impartial legal system, the total withdrawal of the Soviet army from Hungary, removal of farms from state ownership and, perhaps most crucially of all, that Hungary should leave the Warsaw Pact and declare neutrality in the Cold War.

Khrushchev refused to accept Hungary leaving the Warsaw Pact, not least because it would leave the USSR somewhat exposed to Western Europe through Austria to the West.

Soviet tanks and soldiers soon entered Hungary to crackdown on the protests. Hungarians tried to flee but were blocked from leaving the country, many were killed or injured. Some 26,000 Hungarians were tried, leading to imprisonment and execution. Prime Minister Nagy was himself arrested and executed, to be replaced by János Kádár who crushed the remaining resistance.

An exodus of thousands of refugees fled Hungary and it was not long before the first of those refugees arrived from mainland Europe by ferry into Dover Marine Station.



Hungarian refugees on their way to England 1956

The Rotary Club in the form of *Dover Express* reporter Terry Sutton, was there to meet them.

"The British government warned the Mayor of Dover (Cllr Sydney Kingsland) that a 'score or more' refugees were expected to arrive in Dover" with a request from Whitehall to ensure they were welcomed.

Terry later recalled, "Dover's mayor and town clerk requested my help, as a member of The Round Table, in organising the reception of the refugees. I asked fellow members of The Round Table for their support, and they agreed.

The army barracks in Dover were empty of troops, so Connaught Barracks were taken over as a refugee camp."

As a point of information, the 1st Battalion The West Yorkshire Regiment (The Prince of Wales's Own) were on garrison duties in Northern Ireland during 1955-56 and were soon to arrive at Connaught Barracks where, in 1958, they would merge with the East Yorkshire Regiment (The Duke of York's Own) to form The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire.



Connaught Barracks, Rebuilt in 1962

Terry Sutton continues: "Whitehall provided food, while my Round Table mates and I took over the responsibility of entertaining hundreds of refugees.

Paper for letter-writing was provided while football matches against local teams were organised. This task continued for about two weeks before national organisations such as the Red Cross took over from we weary Round-Tablers."

Between 19th November and 3rd December 1956, 4221 refugees arrived at Dover. The Immigration Service, numbering fewer than 400 staff including managers, nationally was increasingly hard pressed, covering as it did 30 different ports across the United Kingdom twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

An estimated total of some 20,000 Hungarian refugees arrived in Britain, welcomed as heroes, with people anxious to ensure they could enjoy the forthcoming Christmas. In all, over twenty member states of the UN responded to calls for assistance as approximately 200,000 people, or 2% of the population, left Hungary, most of them crossing by foot into Austria.

Joe Szarvas was a 21-year-old mineworker who joined others raiding the Communist party headquarters for weapons which they used to attack the Russian troops. "The euphoria was tangible for every Hungarian," he said. He was later sentenced to hang for his part in the uprising but "I escaped on 'St Peter's bicycle' (by foot)." While he was in a refugee camp in Austria the British arrived and said, "Listen, young man, if you want to come to Britain, we will give you pocket money and a job." Soon he was being given a slap-up meal in barracks near Swindon as a guest of the army. "The only English

word I had was 'thank you,' but the *Tommies* taught us every swearword there was by the end of the night."

Matyas Sarkosi was a 19-year-old trainee journalist who escaped by crossing a river under fire from Russian troops. He walked across what turned out to be a minefield into Austria and the refugee camp in Graz. One day, a woman in a WVS (Women's Voluntary Service) uniform asked all those who wanted to come to Britain to line up behind her, he said. "I had a vision of Britain as a dark place with cobblestones and *Oliver Twist* running round picking pockets." Students were welcomed into the universities, and he went to St Martin's School of Art, going on to work for the BBC and become a successful novelist.

Boxer Joe Bugner, born József Kreul Bugner, who arrived in the UK as a young boy, became the British heavyweight champion and fought Muhammad Ali for the world title. Louis Permyer, a pastry chef, started Louis' Patisserie in Hampstead North London. His first impression of Britain was of "a grey and foggy place. No one could cook properly so I thought I would try my luck."

Associated Press footage of refugees arriving from Ostend can be seen at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T6IhvC53c>
HUNGARIAN REFUGEES LAND AT DOVER - NO SOUND

While Queen Juliana of The Netherlands bids welcome to Hungarian refugees thanks to British Pathe again without a soundtrack.

<https://www.britishpathe.com/asset/253617/>
Queen Juliana Bids Welcome to Hungarian Refugees (1956)

I do not usually publish poems but, although early, the committee would like to wish all our members a happy Christmas and prosperous new year.

The reason Rudolph is not mentioned in the poem.

Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer is a fictional reindeer created by Robert L. May, and first appeared in a 1939 booklet written by May and published by Montgomery Ward & Co. the U.S. department store & U.S. retail corporation.

Editor

‘Twas the Night before Christmas

Clement Clarke Moore (1823)

Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the house
Not a creature was stirring, not even a mouse;
The stockings were hung by the chimney with care,
In hopes that St. Nicholas would soon be there.

The children were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of sugar-plums danced in their heads.
And Mamma in ‘kerchief, and I in my cap,
Had just settled down for a long winter’s nap.

When out on the lawn there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from my bed to see what was the matter.
Away to the window I flew like a flash,
Tore open the shutters and threw up the sash.

The moon on the breast of the new-fallen snow
Gave lustre of mid-day to the objects below,
When, what to my wondering eyes should appear?
But a miniature sleigh, and eight tiny reindeer.

With a little old driver, so lively and quick,
I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.
More rapid than eagles his coursers they came,
And he whistled, and shouted, and called them by name:

“Now DASHER! Now DANCER! Now PRANCER! And VIXEN!
On COMET! On CUPID! On DONNER! And BLITZEN!
To the top of the porch! To the top of the wall!
Now dash away! Dash away! Dash away all!”

As dry leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky.
So up the house top the coursers they flew,
With the sleigh full of toys and St. Nicholas too.

And then in a twinkling, I heard on the roof
The prancing and pawing of each tiny hoof.
As I drew in my hand and was turning around
Down the chimney St. Nicholas came with a bound.

He was dress all in fur, from his head to his foot,
And his clothes were all tarnished with ashes and soot:
A bundle of toys he had flung on his back
And he looked like a peddler just opening his pack.

His eyes how they twinkled! His dimples hoe merry!
His cheeks were like roses, his nose like a cherry!
His droll little mouth was drawn up like a bow
And beard of his chin was as white as the snow.

The stump of a pipe he held tight in his teeth,
And smoke it encircled his head like a wreath.
He had a broad face and a little round belly,
That shook, when he laughed like a bowlful of jelly.

He was chubby and plump, a right jolly old elf,
And I laughed when I saw him, in spite of myself:
A wink of his eye and a twist of his head,
Soon gave me to know I had nothing to dread.

He spoke not a word, but went straight to his work,
And filled all the stockings, then turned with a jerk.
And laying his finger alongside his nose,
And giving a nod, up the chimney he rose.

He sprang to his sleigh, to his team, gave a whistle,
And away they all flew like the down of a thistle.
But I heard him exclaim, ere he drove out of sight,
MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL, AND TO ALL A GOODNIGHT!!

PROGRAMME 2023/24

Non-members are welcome at all meetings except that only members may vote at the Annual General Meeting. You may join, pay on the night and vote at the meeting.

2023

November 20 **General Open Meeting**
Monday 7.30 **Speaker: Graham Tutthill** "Scoop!"

December 3 **Dover Society Festive Lunch The Marina Hotel, Dover Waterfront**
12.30 for 1pm Menu details along with the booking form can be found in the centre pages of
£30.95 pp this newsletter.

2024

January 15 **General Open Meeting**
Monday 7.30 **Speaker: Andy Milton** "Dover Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI)"

February 19 **Dover Society "American Supper" Quiz Night**
Monday **(This year with a mystery quizmaster)** Our ever-popular light-hearted quiz
7.00 for 7.30pm evening held in St Mary's Church Hall. Make up your own table of six, or, if you
£5 p.p. are unable to, we will fit you in and where appropriate. Prizes for the winning
team (in the event of a tie, there will be a play-off). As this has been planned as
an American Supper-style evening, please bring along the food and drink that
suits you.

To book:

By post, please contact Lyn Smith, 2 Redlands Court, London Road, River, Dover
CT17 0TW, or to book by email send to Lyn at steve.lyn@uwclub.net

To Pay:

By cheque, made payable to "The Dover Society," send to Lyn Smith at the
above address.

Electronic payment by BACS:

Account name; The Dover Society

Sort Code; 20.02.62

Account Number; 80864803

As a reference please quote; DS Quiz (plus your name)

Then confirm with your details by email to Lyn Smith.

March 18 **General Open Meeting**
Monday 7.30 **Speaker: David De Min** "Developing the Citadel"

April 15 **Dover Society Annual General Meeting**
Monday 7.30 **Speaker: Josianne Murrel** "Alkham Valley Community Project"

*All indoor meetings are held at St. Mary's Parish Centre
Non-members are welcome on all society outings.*



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