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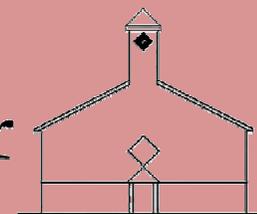
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The Clock Tower



Issue Number 22: May 2011
£2.00; free to members



MALSC is Archive of the Year!

In February 2011 the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre was voted Archive of the Year by the readers of *Your Family History* magazine and presented with the award at the *Who Do You Think You Are?* Live exhibition at London's Olympia.

Pictured at the presentation made on the *Your Family History* magazine stand are (from left to right) Tessa Towner (FOMA Chairman), Alison Cable (Medway Borough Archivist), Lyn Rainbow (Medway Council Library Services), Miriam Margolyes OBE, Amanda Thomas (Editor, *The Clock Tower*) and Nick Barrett (Editor-in-Chief, *Your Family History* magazine). Photograph by nicksmithphotography.com
More inside...

Also inside: The bid for Chatham's World Heritage status with articles by Joanne Cable and Nina Robinson, Brian Joyce on Gipsy Smith AND in our new column, *Magnum Opus*, Catharina Clement reviews Keith R Gulvin's book on the Medway hulks.

PLUS - THE LATEST ON STROOD'S CRISPIN & CRISPIANUS PUB

Archive of the Year

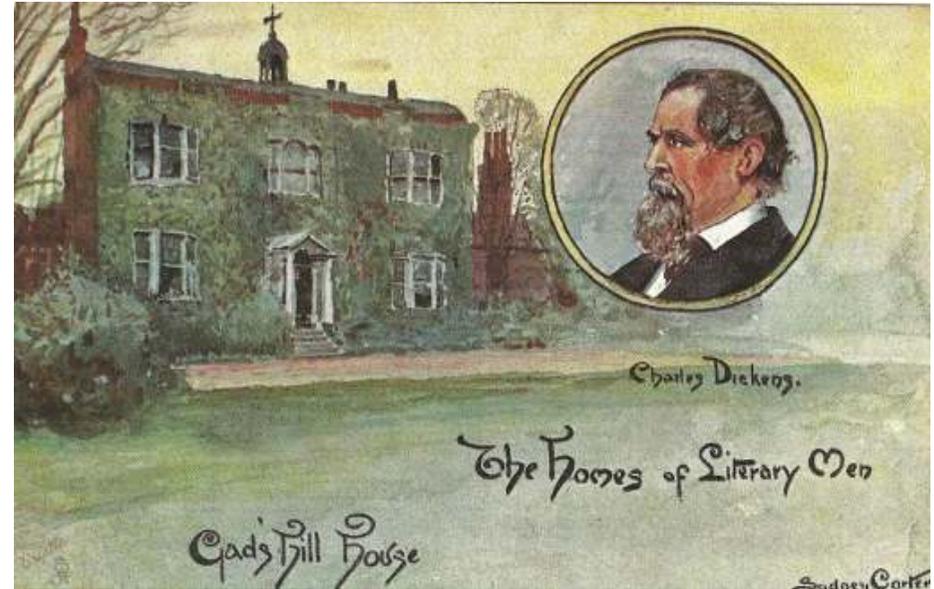
Amanda Thomas, Editor



On Saturday, 26 February 2011, The Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre was voted Archive of the Year by the readers of *Your Family History* magazine and the presentation was made at the annual *Who Do You Think You Are? Live* exhibition at London's Olympia. FOMA Chairman, Tessa Towner, and I were invited to join Alison Cable, Medway Borough Archivist, and Lyn Rainbow, Medway Council Library Services, at a special presentation by *Your Family History* Editor-in-Chief Nick Barratt and actress and genealogist, Miriam Margolyes OBE.



MALSC features in *Your Family History* magazine, Issue 13, May 2011



The Clock Tower is now fully indexed!

There is now a pdf on the FOMA website (www.foma-lsc.org/newsletter.html) which lists the contents of all the issues since Number 1 in April 2006. In addition, each of the past issues now includes a list of contents; these are highlighted with an asterisk (*).

If you have missed any of the previous issues and some of the articles published, they are all available to read on the website. Read them again - *A Stroll through Strood* by Barbara Marchant (issue 4); *In Search of Thomas Fletcher Waghorn (1800-1850)* by Dr Andrew Ashbee (issue 6); *The Other Rochester and the Other Pocahontas* by Ruth Rosenberg-Naparsteck (issue 6); *Jottings in the Churchyard of All Saints Frindsbury* by Tessa Towner (issue 8); *The Skills of the Historian* by Dr Kate Bradley (issue 9); *The Rosher Family: From Gravesend to Hollywood* by Amanda Thomas (issue 9); *George Bond, Architect and Surveyor, 1853 to 1914* by Pat Salter and Bob Ratcliffe (issue 10) plus all the regular features on the Victoria County History by Dr. Sandra Dunster and Dr. Andrew Hann, Edwin Harris by Janet Knight and Alison Thomas, not to mention regular contributors such as Betty Cole, Brian Joyce, JL Keys, Peter Burstow, Odette Buchanan and Catharina Clement.



MALSC's awards. Archive of the Year is to the right.

Betty's Postcards



FOMA Membership Secretary, Betty Cole, has collected postcards for about 25 years, and to date she has hundreds in her collection, including at least 50 on a Dickens theme.

I have quite a few postcards illustrating the homes of famous writers and poets but the card featured in this issue is the first I have from a series entitled, *The Homes of Literary Men* published by Raphael Tuck. I bought this card from America via an internet site and paid \$12.75 for it about two years ago. I was lucky to get the Dickens' card as I have bid for others since and have been outbid every time.

All our readers will be familiar with Gads Hill house at Higham. I passed it every day for six years on my way home from work at Gravesend Police Station. Charles Dickens, too, often passed it when, as a child, he was out walking with his father. Fulfilling his childhood wish to live there, he purchased the house in 1856 (see *The Clock Tower*, issue 09, February 2008; *The Rosher Family: From Gravesend to Hollywood*) and it remained his residence until his death in 1870. The chalet, now at Eastgate House in Rochester, was in the garden there.

There is no message on the back of the postcard and it was unposted - so no stamp or postmark to help date it although the quality, colour and condition of the card prove it to be *vintage* as sold to me. The publisher, Raphael Tuck, started producing postcards in the late 19th Century. Unfortunately, there are no official lists of the sets of cards they published because their head offices were bombed in December 1940 and their records were destroyed. They were probably the most prolific postcard publishers during the so-called *Golden Age* of postcards.

Tuck's *Oilette* series started to be produced in 1903 and the name was given to postcards showing reproductions from original paintings. The artist named in the bottom corner is Sidney Carter and it looks like 1904 underneath. The only artist of that name I can find was born in 1874 in Enfield, England and died in 1945. He could be the artist mentioned on the card.

I found out in my research that "The company (i.e. Raphael Tuck) was granted a Royal Warrant of Appointment by Queen Victoria in 1893 for the publication of the Queen's letter to the nation on the death of the Duke of Clarence." This card has *Art publishers to the King and Queen* at least proving it was published after the death of Queen Victoria. Another card from the series for sale at the present time was posted in 1909 so I think it is safe to say that this card is about 100 years old.

Do you know which famous authors or poets, at some time, lived in the following places, the postcards of which are all in my collection: 1. Hope End, Nr. Ledbury, Herefordshire; 2. Kirriemuir, Angus; 3. Eversley Rectory; 4. Ellisland Farm, Dumfries and Galloway; 5. Farringford, Freshwater, Isle of Wight. Just a few to test you and no getting on the computer!!! The answers are published on page 21.

The award is a tremendous honour for MALSC and a great deal of subterfuge was involved in keeping the presentation secret as the story was embargoed. Tessa and I were working together on the Kent Family History stand at Olympia and I knew there was something up when Tessa kept trying to pin me down on when I would be having lunch. It was only when we started to walk towards the *Your Family History* stand and Alison Cable and Lyn Rainbow came into view did I realise something important was about to happen, but there was an even bigger frisson of excitement when we were introduced to Nick Barratt. Nick is Editor-in-Chief of *Your Family History* and is a well known face to family historians from his involvement in television programmes, and in particular his appearances at the end of the early *Who Do You Think You Are?* documentaries. Miriam Margolyes presented the award and I was thrilled to be able to talk to her afterwards about Jewish family history (if only MALSC's Irina had been with us!) – and her involvement in the legendary *Blackadder* series.

Later the story was featured in *Your Family History* (Issue 13, May 2011, and as illustrated) not only in Nick Barratt's introductory letter but also in his Last Word column *and* as the leading feature on the news pages (as pictured): "YFH magazine is delighted to announce that the winner of the 2011 award is the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre. In what was a difficult competition to judge, given the strength of the nominations and the range of services that had been commended, the panel were impressed by the citations for Medway. The staff were praised for their knowledge and attention to detail, ensuring every visitor was given a friendly welcome and as much assistance as they needed to conduct their research."

The award for Archive of the Year is now proudly on display at MALSC and joins that of Winning Entrant in September 2007 for the Textus Roffensis in the Hidden Treasures Brought to Life Turning the Pages Competition organised by the British Library (see *The Clock Tower*, Issue 08, November 2007).

Editor's Footnotes will return in the next issue of The Clock Tower.

Please note that FOMA Committee contact details can now be found at the back of *The Clock Tower*, before *Betty's Postcards*. All details are also available on the FOMA website at www.foma-lsc.org

You may have noticed that this issue of *The Clock Tower* is jam-packed. In order to include all the information, news and illustrations, we have reduced the font size. If you find this difficult to read, you may find the website version easier at www.foma-lsc.org.

Civic Day 2011 Saturday 25th June

The City of Rochester Society will be *at home* at Eastgate House, together with other local voluntary organisations. This is a new nationwide event, the initiative of Civic Voice, successor to the Civic Trust.
Come and see us, learn more about what your Society and others do, and encourage your friends and family to come along too!

From the Chairman

Tessa Towner, Chairman.



On 3rd May 2011 we held our fifth AGM at Frindsbury, which was well supported. The meeting happened just as *The Clock Tower* was going to press and so will be reported on in the next issue. It does not seem like five years ago that we held the inaugural meeting of FOMA on 6th April 2006 - how quickly those years have gone by! In my opening speech, I commented on how much we have achieved in that time, and perhaps most exciting of all, the presentation at the *Who Do you Think You Are? Live* show in February this year of Archive of the Year. What an exciting day it was, and how proud we all are that MALSC is the very first winner of this award from *Your Family History* magazine.

The cataloguing of the City Of Rochester Archives (made possible by the grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund), including those of Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School, is proving successful and on schedule thanks to our project archivist Valerie Rouland and her group of volunteers. FOMA members have been helping sorting and repackaging files over the last six months and some interesting items have come to light. These include telegrams between Rochester City Council and London asking for information on the condition of King Edward VII after his operation for appendicitis. One of these pointed out that "His Majesty's subjects want to hear how he is progressing on Sundays as well as weekdays," signed by C Tuff Mayor of Rochester! There followed another with the comment heavily underlined: "Received at 5.30 Sunday June 29 1902." There were also posters announcing the postponement of the coronation and announcements of when it would then take place, along with posters relating to Queen Victoria's Golden and Diamond Jubilees. These were some of the more interesting finds but we know we will find even more as the work goes on and as Betty Cole relates in her article on page 18.

Please don't forget my request in the last issue for information on the names on World War One memorials. You will recall that we are continuing the work of Michael de Caville and his indexing of those who served, worked, or are buried in the Medway Towns. So far the response has been excellent, but we are still trying to track down World War One memorials in churches, chapels, businesses, schools, etc.. If you have any knowledge of a memorial anywhere in the Medway area then could you please make a note of where it is, all the names mentioned and forward them to me so that they can be researched and added to the growing list of names already indexed. My contact details are picketywitch@blueyonder.co.uk; 37 Ravenswood Avenue, Frindsbury, ME2 3BY, Kent.

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The Victoria County History

Dr Sandra Dunster



Dr Sandra Dunster was appointed by the University of Greenwich as Kent Team Leader for the Victoria County History's England's Past for Everyone (EPE) in October 2007. With the help of volunteers, she is researching and writing a history of the Medway Towns. She previously taught local and regional history at the University of Kent. Sandra was born and raised in Whitstable and, after 25 years absence, returned to live there in 1999.

Mary Lacy, The Female Shipwright

In the course of researching material for the forthcoming *England's Past for Everyone* paperback, *The Medway Towns: River, Docks and Urban Life*, I came across some interesting characters who had spent time in the towns. Not least of these was Mary Lacy, a woman who in the eighteenth century launched her career as a shipwright from the docks at Chatham.

According to her autobiography, Mary was born in Wickham in Kent and shortly afterwards her family moved to the village of Ash where she spent her childhood and early teenage years. By the time she was nineteen she had been in service for several years and was bored and discontented. Unrequited love left her 'unsettled in my mind and unable to fix myself in any place.' In the spring of 1759 her response was to steal men's clothing from her employer and a hat from her father and set off with no particular aim in mind.

After a couple of days on the road, she reached Chatham with just a penny in her pocket. Unable to afford lodgings Mary spent her first night in a pigsty in 'a farmhouse on the left hand of Chatham as you go down the hill.' In the morning she went down into the town and was given some food by the crew of a collier. Before long, everyone she met believing her to be a boy, and calling herself William Chandler, she was offered work on board a ship called the *Sandwich* as apprentice to the ship's carpenter, Richard Baker. Baker was a resident of Chatham with a house on St Margaret's Bank. *William* was well looked after by Baker and his wife who fed and clothed the *boy* and allowed him to join them at their home and in farewell celebrations at the Sun Inn before the ship set sail.

Life at sea was hard and within a year Mary was suffering from rheumatism and was hospitalised at Portsmouth, still maintaining her disguise. When she recovered she returned to sea but when the opportunity arose for her to become an apprentice shipwright at Portsmouth she leaped at the chance. She completed her apprenticeship in 1771 and continued to work at Portsmouth but within a year her rheumatism prevented her from working. It was at this point that she finally revealed her true identity and perhaps surprisingly she was granted a 'Superannuated Shipwright's' pension of £20 per year. According to her autobiography, she then moved to Deptford, married a Mr Slade and published her story a year later.

The book which tells her story was something of a success in its day, running to several editions. It was recently re-published by the National Maritime Museum: *Mary Lacy, The History of the Female Shipwright* (Greenwich, 2008). I am sure Mary would be delighted to know that her adventures are still being read today.

News and Events

Odette Buchanan, Friends' Secretary



In place of her usual update as FOMA Secretary, Odette Buchanan has been researching the background to the Crispin and Crispianus pub in Strood, which was sadly almost destroyed by fire in March.

The Crispin and Crispianus Public House, Strood

Unfortunately, this picturesque old pub on the London Road in Strood was gutted by fire on Saturday, 26 March, 2011. It had been closed since September, 2010 because, as the landlord Mr. Sketchley said, he could not afford to keep it open because of lack of trade, as is the case with many pubs in Medway recently. At the time of writing, it is believed the fire was started deliberately and police enquiries are on-going. It is hoped the building can be restored and surveyors are investigating; it would be tragic if it were to be demolished. The present building is early 17th century with later alterations and is Grade II listed by English Heritage. However, according to a document FOMA member Roy Murrant found at Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, the original building goes back to 1203 and was a dwelling house with jettied upper floor and a thatched roof. It was named after Crispin and Crispianus the patron saints of shoe-makers and the tenancy was given to Ralph Meakin and two others in 1276 for services to the Knights Templars. The next recorded tenancy was for 1361 when William Bathhurst, a woollen draper of Rochester City, used it as a shop. It remained 'a draper's shop on Strode Hill' until 1493 when Sampson Bullard sold it with a small orchard to Richard Clement, a vintner of Rochester City. He imported wines and it was then a wine shop until 1556 when an ale house licence was obtained by Elisha Clement. Maria Clement (a shoe-maker and clothier of Strode) sold it in 1558 to another shoe-maker, Isaac Cadams. He was granted a wine licence and his son Jacob inherited it on his death in 1613 and kept it until 1645. The name Crispin and Crispianus was still in use, which was particularly appropriate.

Subsequently, the building was bought by James Killick of Frindsbury and when he died in 1658 it passed to his sons Richard and David and it was then called Crispinn Inn. In 1667 Richard Killick bought out his brother for £123 and then sold the inn on complete with wine licence to John Parks, sailmaker of Strood, for £241 in 1673. The document continued to list subsequent landlords, owners and or tenants up to 1967; for the family history buffs, these are listed at the end of this article.

Apparently, the thatch was replaced with tiles in the 18th century and the original daub and wattle covered with Kentish weatherboard. Also in the 18th century when Strood was turnpiked in 1784, the pub, by then known as the Crispin and Crispianus, became an established coaching and travellers' halt.

When Charles Dickens lived at Gads Hill Place, Higham, he would often walk to the Crispin and Crispianus. J. A Nicklen wrote, "The master of Gad's Hill, his lithe, upright figure, clad in loose-fitting garments, and rather dilapidated shoes, was a familiar sight to all his country neighbours, as he swung along the shady lanes, banked high with hedges that were full of violets, purple and white, ferns, lichens [sic] and mosses. Often he would call at the old-fashioned 'Crispin & Crispianus' for a glass of ale or a little cold brandy and water, and sit in the corner of the settle opposite the fireplace, looking at nothing and seeing everything..." Dickens was no doubt gathering material for his novels and short stories for the pub is mentioned in a collection of the latter entitled, *The Young Commercial Traveller*. According to a letter in *The Chatham News* of 1945 from Mr. W. Glanvill Mason, a member of the Dickens Fellowship, on one occasion, Dickens noticed a woman with a baby in her arms sheltering outside from a thunderstorm. He told the landlady to call her in. After buying her a brandy he gave her a shilling and sent her on her way rejoicing. The Workhouse was just round the corner in Gun Lane – could this have been Dickens' inspiration for the opening scene of *Oliver Twist*?

Humphrey Wickham was a successful lawyer who, on 17th September, 1830, was summoned to the Crispin Public House to execute the will of a lodger, Charley Roberts, who had lived in the neighbourhood for over twenty years. It turned out that Charley Roberts was, in fact, Lord Coleraine, an impoverished peer. In 1893 it is recorded that the unlucky landlord at that time, Thomas Masters, was beaten up by one Noah Moore, alias Austin. Moore was sentenced to 14 days hard labour. By 1967 the landlord was John Kirby, a former Coldstream Guard and who had been one of the guards at Queen Elizabeth's coronation in 1953.

In recent times the pub has been very popular as a venue for many local clubs and societies, for example from the 1970s onwards, the Strood and District Aquarist Society, and in the 1980s the Swale Search and Recovery Club. Locally well-known folk groups played there regularly and the writer well remembers jolly staff gatherings after Parents Evenings at the secondary school where she used to teach. "It is a very comfortable and congenial place to meet, having a bar and a large lounge at the rear of the building," one group recorded.

*'And Crispin Crispian shall ne're go by
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered –
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers'
(Shakespeare Henry V's call to arms at Agincourt on St Crispin's Day, 25th October, 1415)*

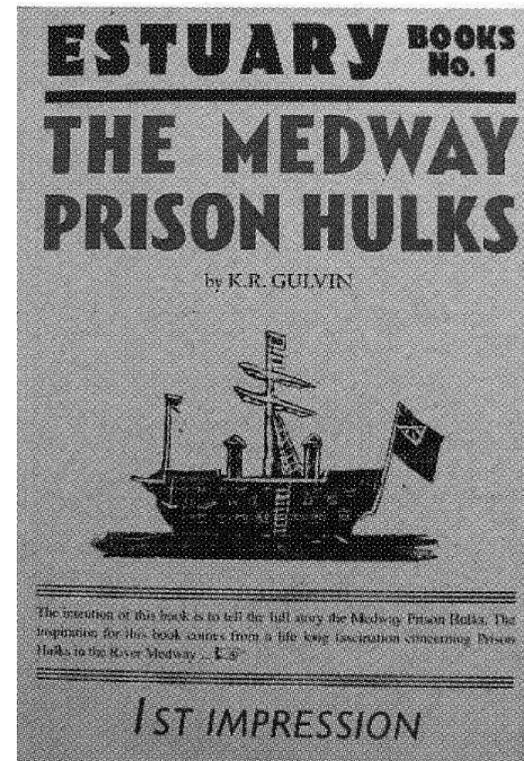
But who were St Crispin and St. Crispianus? Why should a pub in Strood be named after them? Traditional legend has it that they were twin brothers from a respectable Roman family. They were soldiers in the Roman army who converted to Christianity. In AD 284-6 they fled persecution for being Christians from co-Emperors Diocletian and Maximianus and settled in Faversham. They worked as shoemakers at the site of the Swan Inn and they were able to make their shoes very cheaply because angels delivered the leather to them in the night.

Magnum Opus Catharina Clement



A review of the latest Medway titles.

The Medway Prison Hulks by Keith R Gulvin



Keith Gulvin has produced a detailed piece of work on a subject matter which to date has had little in-depth local coverage, despite the Medway and Thames estuaries having housed convict and prisoner of wars in hulks for nearly a century. The work includes a detailed examination of health, social and working conditions in the hulks. Although the conditions were extremely harsh, and in a modern context deplorable, Gulvin concludes that these were not atypical of society in general during the early part of the nineteenth century. The chapter on the exquisite work undertaken by some of the prisoners, samples of which can be viewed in Rochester Guildhall Museum, is particularly illuminating considering the conditions they had to work under and the materials available.

Keith's book is well presented with a stylish and strikingly different cover. There are many beautiful illustrations of both the prisoners' workmanship and the hulks themselves. This book is well sourced and referenced covering a wide range of aspects about the hulks. It has useful appendices, which include two separate lists of convict and prisoner of war ships (hulks). I have only one small issue in that some plans or maps showing

the location of the hulks would have enhanced the book. Nevertheless, such a book is long overdue and adds much to the knowledge of local history. In paperback at £9.99 it is well worth purchasing a copy.

The Medway Prison Hulks, Keith R Gulvin, £9.99; ISBN 978-1-908067-00-5

Cindy's Little Gems

Cindy O'Halloran



Cindy is Senior Archive and Local Studies Assistant at MALSC, responsible for the daily management of the searchroom and non professional staff. She has worked at MALSC for six years following 12 years in branch libraries and as a teaching assistant at a local primary school. Cindy's interests include reading, gardening and anything to do with history, her main passion being the 17th century and the English Civil Wars.

Remembering Sgt R. F. Arnold of the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve

On 4 May 2011 the foundation stone for a new memorial to the crews of Bomber Command was unveiled, commemorating those who lost their lives during World War Two. The memorial is situated in Green Park in London and will contain some aluminium melted down from a bomber plane; it is expected to be completed next year. Among our collections at MALSC are photographs and documents relating to Sgt. Ronald Arnold of Rainham, Kent, who died exactly 67 years to the day on a bombing raid over France on 4 May 1944.¹ Ronald Frank Arnold 1890774 RAFVR of 166 Squadron was the rear gunner of Lancaster ME 645.

On the night of 3/4 May 1944 the Squadron took part in a raid on Mailly-le-Camp near Chalons-sur-Marne, Champagne, France, where a large number of enemy tanks and vehicles had been gathering as part of the counter invasion force. The Luftwaffe countered the Royal Air Force attack with every available fighter and during the battle Lancaster ME 645 was lost along with its crew of seven airmen. Correspondence among the collection, sent to his mother, Mrs F. G. Arnold of Station Road, Rainham, tells the poignant story of the loss of the aircraft, followed by the forlorn hope that the crew may have survived and been taken prisoner. Letters from the Priest of Trouan-le-Grand in 1946 indicate that almost two years later the bodies of the aircrew had still not been located. The Priest relates that he and his villagers had buried almost fifty airmen and tended their graves, but none were from Sgt. Arnold's plane. It was not until June 1948 that Mrs Arnold received news that her son's burial place had been located in Courtisols Cemetery, St Memmie. The crew had perished together and were interred in a mass grave where they still lie. For almost four years his family had searched for his final resting place not knowing what had happened to the flight.

The erection of the memorial to the aircrew of Bomber Command has been a controversial decision but the selfless sacrifice of young men such as Ronald Arnold played a crucial part in the eventual destruction of the Axis powers and they should not be forgotten.

1. MO91

The site was visited by pilgrims until as late as the 17th century and Faversham church has an altar to commemorate them as patron saints of shoemakers, saddlers and tanners. Well into the 18th century Faversham had festivities marking their Saints' Day, 25 October.¹ After their stay in Faversham, Crispin and Crispianus set off round Gaul as missionaries. They refused to renounce their faith and were executed on 25 October by order of Emperor Maximianus at Soissons (Roman Noviodunum), a contradiction to the execution story is the version that has them shipwrecked off Dungeness and entombed in Lydd, one of the Cinque Ports. There is a pile of stones at the east end of the town purporting to be their tomb. A version of the legend which attempts to accommodate both versions has it that their headless bodies were washed up on the shore at Dungeness and it was these which were buried at Lydd.

Yet what is the Strood connection? Remember, the first records we have of the building are in 1203 and it was given the name Crispin and Crispianus then. The owner's trade is not known – was he a shoe maker, tanner or saddler? Naming his house after his patron saints would very likely bring good luck and it is thought that the inn sign is an exact copy of a painting in the church of Saint Pantaleon at Troyes, in France.

At the beginning of April, shortly after the fire, FOMA Vice President, and our representative at Medway Council, Sue Haydock, contacted Edward Sargent of Medway Council who gave the following informal report:

“From what I have seen from the street, the damage seems to be from the first floor upwards. The left hand room was the worst affected but the two to the right of these do not seem as badly damaged in fact the walls at the front of the building that you can see through the windows in these two rooms do not even seem to have any smoke damage. However the structure at the rear of these rooms is now visible so it clear that there is more damage at the rear. The roof has virtually been destroyed. However, from what I could see, this is fairly modern and was probably built in the last century. There was no evidence of any early timber in the structure at all and it seems to have been made of small section softwood.”

So, fingers crossed the surveyors and engineers will say the building can be salvaged and restored. It would be a shame to lose it to an arsonist after at least 808 years, wouldn't it?

Owners/landlords/tenants since 1673

1673 – 1708	John Parks, sailmaker. Full name of inn restored on his death
1708 – 1754	James Eyre Turner, victualler of Frindsbury –leased to Joseph Smallman, victualler of Rochester and longest serving keeper of it.
1754 – 1786	On Smallman's death passed to daughter, Susannah Duke, wife of a Frindsbury miller.
1786 – 1801	On Susannah Duke's death Rachel Turner, brewer, leased the house to Rufus Day, victualler of Rochester.
1801 – 1823	Samuel Turner leased it to Rufus Day's son William.
1823 – 1844	leased to Stanley Collins, ironmonger of Strood.
1844 – 1854	Lease passed to William P. Wilson. (Ownership passed to Holmes & Style Medway Brewery during this time).
1854 – 1858	Lease passed to James Butcher.

1858 – 1869	Leased to Thomas Gray.
1869 – 1898	Thomas Martin Masters.
1898 – 1912	George Elford. ² (By this time Alfred Style, brewer of the Medway Brewery, was the sole owner).
1912 – 1929	Passed to his widow, Emma. (Now listed as owned by Style & Winch of Medway Brewery).
1929 – 1941	1929 sold to Barclay Perkins Brewery and leased to Sidney Herbert Sweetman, son-in-law of Emma Elford.
1941 – 1953	Leased to Gladys Sweetman, Sidney's widow.
1953 – 1958	Lease handed over to nephew, Roy Elford. (1955 Barclay Perkins merged with Courage Brewery to form Courage Barclay).
1958 – 1967	Tenant George Gillham.
1967 - ?	John Kirby (former Coldstream Guard).

Sources and Acknowledgments:

MALSC, Couchman Collection
 Henry Smetham, *History of Strood*
 Coulson & Collins, *A Chronology of Strood to 1899*

My grateful thanks to Roy Murrant for sourcing the old document at MALSC and supplying the photos.

Editor's Notes

1. The story of Crispin and Crispianus is reminiscent of the Grimm's Fairy Tales story, *The Elves and the Shoemaker*. Do these stories have the same origin? Please let the Editor, Amanda Thomas, know if you have any further information on this and any other aspect of the pub's history (see *The Committee* on page 45 for contact details).
2. George Elford was born in Cliffe in 1851 and married Emma Rebecca Pleasance in 1876; she was born in about 1850 in Rochester. George was the son of James Elford and Mary Anne Wilkins, and was part of the well known family of butchers in Cliffe. Extended members of this family, which also included the Topleys, ran pubs in the Medway area.

Request for Material

The Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre would like to expand its biography base to include more variety and diversity. Any information or material on local *celebrities*, past or present, with connections to the Medway area by birth, residence or close links would be much appreciated. This can include families as well as business partnerships. Particularly welcome would be material on Medway's *ethnic* families or persons and Rainham individuals, which are at present under represented in our collection.

Please contact Catharina Clement at MALSC on 01634 332714

boys. 'Rumours of an approaching end began to be circulated, and one evening in February a message came that the two Tylors were wanted.' They left the next day with his father and a number of other boys in the stagecoach to London.¹⁴

This was the final demise of nearly 55 years of Quaker boys' education in Rochester. It was recorded in the Rochester Meeting Minute Book for March 1829, on the occasion of Richard Lambert Weston's disownment from the Religious Society of Friends, 'it having been reported to this meeting that Richard Lambert Weston has been guilty of conduct towards his pupils of a grossly indecent & immoral character...' The decision to disown him was made 'in the complete conviction of his guilt.' Usually members were given an opportunity to put their case or show remorse but Weston was never given this chance. Whatever his misdemeanour, upon which I do not want to speculate, it was so grave that this comment was added at the end of the entry: that they hoped he would 'realise the enormity of his crime...of the reproach and scandal brought, not only on us as a people, but upon the Christian name in general-and of the injury done to Society in diffusing among the young the seeds of vice & depravity...' Weston died in Ashford in 1842 aged 69.¹⁵ His sons tried to reopen the school in Rochester in 1834 according to a no longer extant prospectus but they were obviously not welcomed. At about the time Tylor was putting together his reminiscences for his grandchildren, Joseph Green a descendant of a former pupil, was also trying to gather information about the schools at Rochester. He wrote to Lambert Weston, the eldest son in 1894 and received this reply from Dover: 'any reference on my part to Rochester School is as you may imagine a painful one. It was the Tomb of all the hopes & expectations of myself & my Brother and it became needful for us to carve out a fresh line in life in this we were both successful...' He made it clear he did not want to go down that route and for this reason, perhaps, no reference to the reason for the closure was given in the entries in the *Journal of the Friends Historical Society* in 1920-1.¹⁶

Notes

1. CKS, N/FMc 1/3, Canterbury Minutes of Mens Meeting 1793-1804; Travis Mills J, *John Bright & the Quakers*, (London, 1935) Vol 1 p236; Tylor C, 'Schooldays in the Twenties', *JFHS*, Vol 17 No 1 (1920); Nonconformist registers online at the National Archives
2. LSF, Scrapbook Vol N, Richard Lambert Weston prospectus 1820, f175; Tylor, 'Schooldays'; Carroll J & Goodbody O (ed), *Extracts from the letters of John Grubb (1766-1841) to Joseph Grubb (1768-1844)*, (Dublin, 1966) p28; Pease E, 'Diary of Edward Pease' (1824) electronic version on Bermac Books website; Robinson W (ed), *Friends of a half century: fifty memorials with portraits of membes of the Society of Friends 1840-1890*, (London, 1891) p109
3. Wood P, *Science and Dissent in England 1688-1945*, (Aldershot, 2004) p152; Tylor, 'Schooldays'; 1841 census; for Weston family photography business see www.photography-sussex.co.uk/index.htm
4. King W, *Arthur Albright: Notes on his life*, (Birmingham, c1900); Birmingham City Archives; MS1509/5/12-13 & 16, Personal Papers relating to Arthur Albright; Milligan E H, *Biographical Dictionary of British Quakers in Commerce and Industry 1775-1920*, (York, 2007) p3 for Arthur and his brother John Marshall Albright both pupils at Rochester; p211 for Joshua Green, who was aged 13 when this maths sample was produced and Albright about 12;
5. Tylor, 'Schooldays'; BLA, N699/44, Letter Samuel May to Priscilla May 4/2/1826; Milligan, *Biographical Dictionary*, pp142-3 on Thomas Gates Darton; Armitage E, *The Quaker poets of Great Britain and Ireland*, (1896) p148; 1851 Census; Stroud L; *John Ford (1801-1875): The life, work and influence of a Quaker schoolmaster*, PhD, University of London, 1947, pp35-38
6. Stroud, *John Ford*, p48; Tylor, 'Schooldays', Milligan, *Biographical Dictionary*, for Joseph Tylor see p446 under entry for Samuel Tuke-Charles Tylor became a barrister see p448 under entry for Henry Tylor his father.
7. Tylor, 'Schooldays'; Smith J, *Bibliotheca Quakeristica*, Part 1 (1883) p13
8. Tylor, 'Schooldays'; BLA, N699/4, Letter Samuel May to Priscilla May 4/2/1826
9. *ibid*
10. *ibid*; for Drewett see Wright's Directory (1838) and for Bishop see Rickman R, *Memoir of Benjamin Bishop with extracts from his letters*, (London, 1865)
11. *ibid*
12. *ibid*; Thompson S, *Memorials of John Ford*, (London, 1877)
13. Thompson, *Memorials of John Ford*; Tylor, 'Schooldays'; For Hillier see 1841 Census & local directories
14. Tylor, 'Schooldays'
15. CKS, N/FMr1/3, Rochester MM 1822-1834; For Weston's death see www.photography-sussex.co.uk/index.htm. His death certificate records his demise at Alfred House, Ashford on the 8th March 1842 described as a gentleman. His whereabouts cannot be traced on the 1841 census despite a thorough search.
16. LSF, Portfolio B, Letter Lambert Weston to J J Green 7/12/1894, f61; Smith J, *Descriptive Catalogue of Friends Books*, Vol 2 p877-for reference to prospectus.

Other hobbies were more precarious and dangerous. 'Jim Phillips, of Amptill, whose father was a chemist, had a box of Lucifer matches, then a novel invention. It contained a little bottle of phosphorous, into which the splints were plunged.' Henry Tylor 'bought one and lighted a fire with it and this being considered a breach of the rules, it was taken away.' Other treats could be obtained with the earned money, which was legitimate. Benjamin Bishop of Strood, who was blind and escorted by his daughter Abigail, sold gooseberry tarts made by the confectioner William Drewett of Rochester to the students. Abigail was according to Tylor rather 'prim.' You can judge for yourself from this photo of her below. 'There were seven tarts for sixpence, and two pence apiece provided a feast for three boys.'¹⁰

Regular outings were also a feature of the school. Mention has already been made of the trips to Burham Downs. 'We took our dinner with us. There was a small house of entertainment at the bottom of the hill, where, on one occasion, we were allowed each a mug of beer...' A strange refreshment break for a society that actively discouraged drinking and was involved in the temperance movement in the nineteenth century! It would appear the usual rest stop was Horsnail's mill for water on the way back; although they must have been virtually home by then. Another favourite outing was to Cobham Park, the home of the Darnley family. 'The walk was pretty long. A few of the little boys rode in the cart with the dinner and the bats and wickets...Here we saw sights quite new to some of us - the herd of deer feeding amongst the trees...a colony of herons with their long legs hanging from their nests in the tops of the highest trees...Then there were rooks, and the private gardens with its gay flowers and its beautiful song-birds...' Their walks also took them to the Lines at Gillingham where they came across soldiers exercising. Visitors sometimes took them to Chatham Dockyard to view the sheds where battleships were built. The school went en masse to see the launch of the *Prince Regent* in 1823, a 120 gun battleship, however this must have been a recollection by one of Tylor's elder brothers, as he was not yet at the school at that time. Probably of huge interest to young lads, but hardly a very Quaker activity in view of their expressed pacifism.¹¹

Abigail Newton (née Bishop); reproduced with permission of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain



Generally the perception is that Quaker Schools were plain, very religious establishments. Yet this is not the feeling gained from the life depicted above or Charles Tylor's recollections. The school was by all accounts a relaxed place with play and enjoyment permitted. However, John Ford was by his own account a religious man from an early age and did attempt to instil some of this spiritual ethos into his pupils at Rochester, though from Tylor's account not with a great deal of success and this at times frustrated Ford. Nevertheless, some of his religious instruction must have registered somewhere, as many of his ex-pupils were to make religious and evangelical visits in later life.¹² Much of the credit for the success of the school is given to John Ford. He certainly worked extremely hard and put in eighteen-hour days but had enough free time in his vacation in 1824 to privately tutor William Curry Hillier, the son of a naval officer and resident of the Old Hall in Boley Hill. Charles Tylor and his brother Joseph Savory were instructed by John Ford, who appears to have been highly respected by the pupils, but his 'Uncle Henry took his place under the latter [Lambert Weston], which he always regarded as a misfortune, for the master was little fitted for the training and education of boys.' How true a reflection this was of Lambert Weston's teaching abilities is questionable as he went on to teach in Dover in another private school. John Ford left to become headmaster of the newly opened Bootham School in York in October 1828.¹³ Ford may have been prompted to leave because he knew the school 'was already in a precarious position.' Apparently many of the older boys were aware of the situation and Grestock (a non-Quaker) commented: 'John Ford, this school is like a haystack which has been built askew and would fall down if it were not held up by a strong prop, and you are the prop.' Tylor considered that 'the teacher who succeeded him did not inherit his capacity.' The school saw out the autumn term and started a new one in 1829 with only about 40

Calendar of Forthcoming Events and Exhibitions

FOMA Events

14th June, 7.30 pm
Rochester High Street in the 19th Century
A talk by Elaine Gardner

13th September, 7.30 pm
150th Anniversary of the London, Chatham and Dover Railway
A talk by Bob Ratcliffe

Sat 1st October
Quiz Night
£5 for members and non-members.
BOOKING REQUIRED.

Tues 8th November
Mills and Broom
A talk by Odette Buchanan about the mills of Strood, including the water mills

Please note, booking for FOMA talks is no longer necessary!
All events - and until further notice - are at Frindsbury Parish Hall
Talks are £2 for members £4 non-members.
Booking for Quiz Nights and enquiries through the FOMA Secretary:
Odette Buchanan , 72 Jersey Rd, Strood, ME2 3PE; odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk; 01634 718231.

MALSC Events

Exhibitions

14th April – 31st May
Charting the Changes: Luton and Lordswood

2nd June – 12th July
Rochester High Street Remembered, incorporating reminiscences collected from residents of Watts Almshouses

14th July – 30th August
150 years of the London to Dover railway

2nd September – 5th November
Rainham history

PLEASE NOTE: MALSC WILL BE CLOSED FOR STOCKTAKING FROM 7TH TO 20TH NOVEMBER 2011.

20th November – 10th January 2012

Metal Men of Medway: statues, plaques and street furniture

12 January 2012 – 28th February 2012

Archives of Great Expectations: documents and discoveries from the Rochester City records

1st March 2012 – 24th April 2012

Medway Artist – the achievements of Dadd, Spencelayh, Wyllie, Maxwell and Dunbar.

MALSC OPENING HOURS

Please note the following revised opening hours at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.

As of 1 April 2010, MALSC will no longer be open until 6pm on a Tuesday, and will close at 5pm. The following opening hours therefore now apply:

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 9.00 am to 5.00 pm; Saturday 9.00 am to 4.00 pm. Wednesday and Sunday closed.

Talks and Events

14th September, 2.30 pm

Estella's Legacy

A one act play inspired by Dickens' *Great Expectations*. Written by Clare Graydon-James, performed by Anne Graydon and Clare Graydon-James.

Eastgate House

£6; no concessions

28th September (fully booked)

5th October (at the time of going to press still some spaces)

12th October (at the time of going to press still some spaces)

2.00 pm – 4 pm

Kent Family History Society

Introduction to Family History

FREE

Please ring MALSC for further information on 01634 332714

25th October, 7.30 pm

Mystery Animals

Neil Arnold

Eastgate House

10

became a poet. William Speciall was another student with a gift for reciting poetry and once when punished wrote a verse about his misdemeanour. This may have again been the influence of John Ford and Lambert Weston, who for a spell in the 1850s, taught Classics and Arts at a Dover boarding school. Generally the Quaker pupils were taught a broad curriculum and, despite Stroud's assertion that this may not have been of the highest quality, must have been of a reasonable standard as many went on to become highly successful businessmen and scientists. Hunton was in fact the first Quaker to receive a university education.⁵

John Ford's notion of discipline was progressive for its day, but not unusual in Quaker establishments. He quietly reprimanded the pupils when they were misbehaving and had a very friendly relationship with his students. Joseph Savory Tylor was annoyed 'one day by the unwelcome summons' of the bell to signal it was time for school or a meal and 'muttered as he came in: "Hang the bell." Ford 'instead of keeping him in for the offensive word, only said quietly: "Joseph, the bell is hung."' Young Joseph later became a doctor. Reminiscing Charles Taylor described how Ford 'played with them, conversed with them, and joked with them...It was not unusual to see him walking round the playground with two or three of the older boys on each side of him, as many as could hear him, all linked arm in arm.' Tylor felt that as 'the boys came from orderly and God-fearing homes' their general behaviour should have been good. He observes that 'a certain standard of truth and decency was maintained in the school,' but had 'reason to think that a lower tone prevailed amongst a portion of the older boys.' Whilst Ford could handle the 'disorderly and even uproarious' boys Elliott, the Latin teacher, found it difficult to control the at times 'wilful and turbulent boys' who tended to ridicule his Scottish accent.⁶ Whether it was their dress or manner the Quaker boys were sometimes picked on by 'louts, who would pinch their caps or throw stones at them. Because of the Friends' pacifism principle the boys should not have responded, but boys being boys they retaliated with apples. Apparently a *Band of Hope Almanac* for 1854, which is no longer extant, featured a woodcut entitled *The Apple War* 'representing some scholars at a Friends' school at Rochester, in Kent, throwing a volley of apples at some rude boys in exchange for stones!' They also were not averse to throwing stones at the herons in Cobham Park, but missed as they were above the treetops.⁷

The pupils were encouraged to have small plots to grow things. Tylor remembers 'a plot behind the lower class-room, divided into a number of small squares for such boys as loved gardening. Not a few brought this taste with them, and there were always applicants for vacant lots.' In February 1826 Samuel May told his sister: 'The boys are now beginning to do up their gardens and it now came to my turn to have one. Other extra curricular pursuits included playing such sports as cricket on the pitch near the river. Apparently some of older boys were strong batsmen and Bob Womersley frequently sent the ball into the marshes below. Gymnastics were also part of the sporting provision with 'parallel and horizontal bars...and a jumping frame.' From the description of the latter it appeared to be pole vault. The River Medway was also a tempting place for the boys to bathe having to negotiate both 'marsh and mud.' There were salt-water baths nearby, but the adventure in running risks was more alluring. Some of the younger pupils ran races on a level strip of ground and in winter such activities as sliding and skating were in vogue. Samuel May spoke of the boys having been 'skating and sliding several times' in February 1826, 'but I had not a pair of skates, so I was contented with sliding.' Presumably the river froze over and allowed them to skate on the ice.⁸ School playgrounds are usually the focus of young boys and Rochester was no different in this respect: 'No one at the school could ever forget the games.' Tylor was at two further boarding schools later, but 'they were in this respect not to be compared with Rochester...The memory of the play hours can scarcely be so pleasant as those passed on St Margaret's. Of games with ball there were Cricket, Rounders, Trap-ball, Egg-hat; of running games, Prisoner's Base, Stag...several games with marbles, peg tops...hoops, skipping...and kite flying; and in the playroom knuckle-bones and pop-guns.' Other pastimes occupied the lads in the evening: games such as 'chess, fox and geese.'⁹ The students were not above earning a bit of 'pocket money' by using their hobbies to make things to sell. 'Two of the boys in their playtime made birdcages which they sold at 1s 6d each; others quilted balls, the charge for which was fourpence.'



John Ford; reproduced with permission of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain

It would appear that the Quaker boys' schools in Rochester had a high reputation for scientific achievement. Wood placed the credit for this at the door of John Ford, who later taught at Bootham School, which produced many of the leading Quaker naturalists of the nineteenth century. Certainly from Charles Tylor's recollections the boys received instruction in chemistry and astronomy. However this aspect of the curriculum was more suited to Lambert Weston's talents, as he became a practical chemist (and as recorded in the 1841 census) and set up a photography business in later life. Ford taught the boys about the natural world by taking them on leisurely walks and sparking

their interest in collecting specimens. Although the boys themselves did not at the time perceive that they were learning anything useful: 'I do not think much was done towards a scientific acquaintance with extinct life.' Tylor in particular remembered autumn walks to Burham Downs, 'The low banks by the wayside abounded in the empty houses of innumerable snails, marked with beautiful various coloured bands...The older boys carried with them hammer and chisel to chip the fossil shells and spines out of the chalk...Burham Downs, which descended by a steep slope to the river shore, was sprinkled over with thicket and gorse, a most delightful place to satisfy [a] boy's curiosity and desire of possession. We gathered hazelnuts, blackberries and sloes and caught lizards and blindworms, all of which we carried home in triumph.' Lambert Weston had his own collection of fossil specimens, again suggesting that both upper masters instilled this love of the natural world into their pupils.³

However, more mundane subjects such as mental arithmetic and mathematics were also well taught. Arthur Albright received a good foundation 'in Latin, Greek, French and Mathematics.' His beautifully constructed mathematical calculations whilst at the school in the 1820s and samples of his penmanship are preserved in Birmingham City Archives. Albright was one of several ex- Rochester Quaker boys to enter into trade as a pharmaceutical chemist.

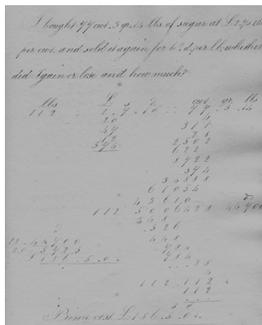


Arthur Albright; reproduced with permission of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain

Joshua Green was another pupil with a penchant for mathematics, as his example from 1826 below demonstrates; unfortunately the image has faded with age. Today a pupil would grab his calculator (that is if he knew where to start with this type of arithmetic) to work out the answer. He went on to run the family grocery business, so perhaps his maths education came in handy.⁴

The mathematics book of Joshua Green, 1826; reproduced with permission of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain

James Elliott, a Scotsman, tried to instil Latin in the boys in the 1820s, but it does not sound that many were overly interested, apart from 'William J Capper and Thomas Gates Darton, who read their Virgil with relish, and valued the teacher,' and so led him a merry dance. Young Samuel May wrote in a letter to his sister how he was plodding through his Latin and maths exercises, 'I am now reading in Cornelius Lepos in Latin, but in Ciphering I am now working in Promiscuous Exercises in rules.' Thomas Gates Darton's early interest in literature may have been influenced by his family's business of bookselling and publishing into which he entered in 1825 straight from school. Another former pupil who went on to have a successful literary career was Thomas Hunton from Great Yarmouth who



Unless otherwise indicated, all the above are held at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, (MALSC) Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4AU. Unless otherwise indicated, talks and events are £5, or £4 for FOMA members Further information is available from MALSC; please telephone 01634 332714 to book. TICKETS MUST BE BOOKED IN ADVANCE.

Please note: You may be aware that Medway Council has been relocated to Gun Wharf. This move does not include the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre and until further notice, we are still to be found in the Clock Tower building.

Exhibitions at Eastgate House

June 15th - 29th
Rochester High Street Remembered

July 20th - August 3rd,
Family History, to include Beginners in Family History
Talks on 23rd and 30th July, 10 am and 2 pm
Booking essential; tel. 01634 338141

July 25th
Civic Day hosted by the City of Rochester Society

September 8th – 11th
Heritage Open Days (content of exhibition still to be decided)

October 5th – 19th
150 years of London - Dover Railway.

Some MALSC talks and events also take place at Eastgate House – see above under MALSC Talks and Events.

Medway Museums and Library Service

Medway Museums and Library service has held a series of successful exhibitions, usually lasting about ten days, at Eastgate House, Rochester with the aim of both getting visitors into the house and highlighting the exhibitions put together by MALSC.

However, success depends on volunteers manning Eastgate House when exhibitions are on display, and we are keen to find more volunteers to avoid the stalwart few having to cover two or even three half days.

If you think could offer a two and a half hour morning or afternoon slot at future events please contact Elaine Gardner on 01634 408595 or e-mail emgardner@fsmail.net so that we can add you to the list and contact you before the next exhibition. Thank you!

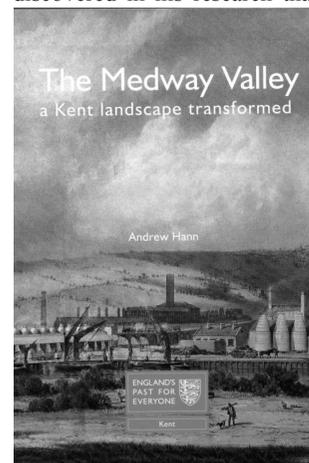
The River Medway: Industry and Development A talk at MALSC

Amanda Thomas, Editor



The main room of the Study Centre was absolutely packed on the afternoon of 23 March 2011 to hear the latest news on the progress of the Victoria County History *England's Past for Everyone* project. It was to great disappointment that in her introduction Local Studies Librarian, Norma Crowe, announced that Sandra Dunster would not be speaking. Sadly Sandra had had a fall the previous day and would be unable to attend. However, former FOMA committee member and Kent Team Leader of the initial project, Dr Andrew Hann, was not daunted and launched into a compelling discussion of Medway's industrial past. His book, *The Medway Valley: a Kent landscape transformed* was the result of the research conducted by him and a team of local volunteers. Many FOMA members were involved and the resulting book contains a wealth of information about the Medway Towns in its industrial heyday.

The project revealed how the Medway valley had altered in the nineteenth century, mainly as a response to the growth of London in the Industrial Revolution. The abundance of clay and chalk in the area meant these raw materials could not only be exported but also used in the development of Medway's own brick and cement making industries. The River Medway was a key factor in this development, as a useful transportation link and because the quality of its water was ideal for the brewing and paper making industries. As a result, the Medway Towns prospered and villages such as Burham and Wouldham spread outwards with the building of terrace housing essential for the influx of migrant workers. Andrew explained how he had discovered in his research that investment in the area had not come from local sources but rather from outside the area, particularly from individuals in London. His talk went on to show how industrial development and investment declined in the second half of the Twentieth Century, and lamented the destruction of Medway's rich industrial heritage: even the brick works at Burham may soon be built over with new housing.



It is hoped that Dr Sandra Dunster will be able to give her half of the talk soon. However, if you have not already done so, I urge you to purchase Andrew Hann's book (illustrated), as it is a wonderful addition to our understanding of Medway's heritage.

The Medway Valley a Kent landscape transformed, by Dr. Andrew Hann, is published by Phillimore & Co., ISBN 13: 978-1-86077-600-7, price £13.49.

Available to buy online at www.phillimore.co.uk.

12

Quaker Education and Schooling 1775-1840

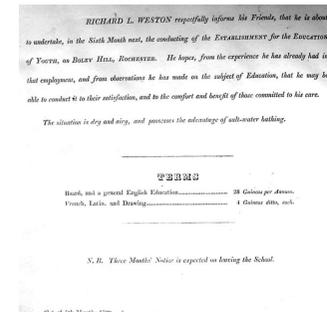
Catharina Clement



In 2005, Catharina completed a BA in history at Canterbury Christchurch University, and then began a part-time PhD in local history entitled *Reactions in the Medway Towns 1640-1660*. She has been involved in various local history groups and projects such as FOMA, CDHS, and the Victoria County History EPE projects. She won the 2009 Friends Historical Society Award resulting in a paper on *Medway Quakerism 1655-1918* delivered at the Institute for Historical Research and later this year at the Friends Library in London. Currently Catharina works for MALSC.

Part Four Richard Weston's School 1820-1829

Richard Lambert Weston, formerly a grocer from Chatham, acquired ownership of the school in 1820. He applied for membership to the Society of Friends in Rochester in 1794 aged about 21 and married Susanna Horsnaill in 1804. Richard went to Hitchin in Hertfordshire for three years in 1801 where there was a Quaker school, previously run by George Blaxland* (died 1801) the son-in-law of William Rickman, suggesting he may have taught there, as his prospectus claimed he already had experience as a teacher. He came to Rochester from Berkshire before 1794 and may have served his apprenticeship locally. Weston acted as proprietor of the school and taught the pupils in the early 1820s before his sons were qualified. Initially he was assisted by William Simpson, who had been a teacher there under Robert Styles and the pupil teacher John Ford. His sons Jasper and Lambert took over the teaching from the mid 1820s along with John Ford. Weston acquired the school to ensure his sons finished their education and pursued a career in teaching. They presumably served their apprenticeship under him with the guidance of John Ford. Lambert, born in 1806, was by 1824 teaching half the upper school whilst Ford taught the remainder. Jasper, born in 1810, tutored the younger children from the mid 1820s onwards.¹



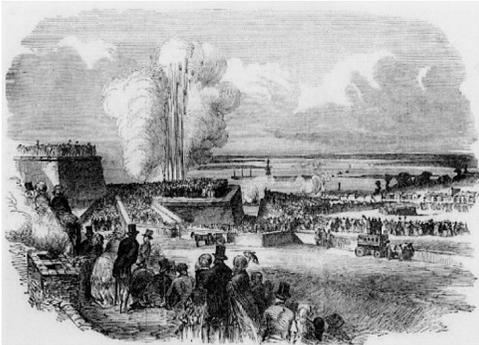
On taking over the school in June 1820, Weston issued a fresh prospectus for the school (illustrated). The fees for general education and board were 28 guineas with four guineas extra for French, Latin and Drawing. These rates were considerably cheaper than those charged by the Rickman sisters a year earlier and perhaps was one of the reasons why Weston had no problems in attracting so many students, both boarders and day pupils. Another apparent reason, from Charles Tylor's account of his schooldays, was John Ford's excellent teaching skills.

Weston's fresh prospectus, 1820; reproduced with permission of the Religious Society of Friends in Britain

In 1820 John Grubb described the school, in a letter to his brother, as having '40 boarders & 40 Day boys.' By 1824 Edward Pease reckoned the number of boarders exceeded fifty. John Ford found himself responsible for the moral welfare of 60 pupils towards the end of his career at Rochester. Thus the school under Richard Weston was extremely successful. In addition to the above staff Charles Tylor spoke of several other teachers (probably not Quakers) who taught various subjects such as Latin, German and French.²

*See *Reader's Letters* in *The Clock Tower* issue 21, February 2011 and in this issue (see page 15) for the on-going discussion about Blaxland.

37



Siege operations at Chatham - Springing a mine, Illustrated London News 22 July 1854 From the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

Today, the Field of Fire remains a largely open space of over 70 hectares. Re-named the Great Lines Heritage Park following a public consultation, it is Medway's most prominent green space – connecting Gillingham, Chatham and Brompton. New gabion walls, benches and paths have been installed and the feature lighting of Fort Amherst and the Chatham Naval Memorial (which commemorates almost 19,000

sailors from both World Wars who have no known grave) has changed Chatham's night-time skyline.

A view of the park and the new path



Fort Amherst's over-ground parkland is now permanently open to the public as part of the Great Lines Heritage Park. Gates open at 6:15 am each day (except Christmas Day) and close at 7:45 pm in the summer, 3:45 pm in the winter. A new footbridge opened on 29 April connecting the Fort to its Field of Fire. The Park has many roles but its biggest draw is the annual fireworks, Medway's largest organised display, which attracted more than 30,000 people in 2010.

The Friends of Great Lines Heritage Park (FOGLHP) is a new independent community group whose aim is to 'preserve and promote Great Lines Heritage Park (GLHP) as a valued and protected open space for the enjoyment and well-being of local residents and visitors, taking full account of its historical significance and the strong attachment to it felt by people of the Medway Towns.' We welcome any feedback from readers and more information can be obtained at www.foglh.org.uk and www.facebook.com/groups/medwaygreatlines

Further Reading

Chatham Dockyard and its Defences: World Heritage Site Nomination Document (available to download from the Chatham World Heritage website):

www.chathamworldheritage.org.uk/why-chatham

Brompton Lines Conservation Area Appraisal. Adopted Version May 2006

www.medway.gov.uk/pdf/02_ca_1_brompton_lines1.pdf

Conservation Bulletin 48: Naval Heritage. Managing change in the Royal Dockyards

John Schofield, Rebecca Child, Peter Kendall (English Heritage 2005)



A full Study Centre as Dr. Andrew Hann prepares to talk.

Dr. Sandra Dunster's regular Victoria County History column can be found on page 44.

Readers' Letters

We welcome letters and emails from readers with their comments. If you have anything you would like to say please write to: Mrs Amanda Thomas, Editor, The Clock Tower, 72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, Hertfordshire, AL5 5NS or email at amanda@ajthomas.com. FOMA Secretary, Odette Buchanan, often receives queries from members or visitors to the FOMA website, www.foma-lsc.org/index.html. If you have any additional information for the following correspondents, please contact the Editor.

From: Gordon - Mel
To: odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk
Sent: Sat, 16 April, 2011
Subject: Northfleet marriages

Hello Odette,

I have been searching for a marriage between a Matthew Dyke/Dike/Dicks and Mary ? circa 1790 - 1799 at Northfleet.

The first child I have found for them was William Dicks bap 15 Dec 1799 at Northfleet and there were several other children also bap at Northfleet. William Dyke and his wife Mary were living at Northfleet in 1841 census but it says they were not born in county. I have searched the indexes for Northfleet on your website but have been unable to find marriages for 1790 - 1799. Are you able to tell me if marriages are available to be searched for these dates and if so where??
Many thanks,

Mel

From: William Burrows
To: odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk
Sent: Tue, 5 April, 2011
Subject: Research?

Good afternoon,

As an 80 year old trying to put a little more into the Family History, could you advise me who or where am I able to obtain more information. Probably from the Norstead Parish around the early 1800s. I appreciate that this is probably outside of your remit, but just hoped you could point me in the correct direction?
Regards,

W Burrows – “Bill.”

Great Lines Heritage Park: From The Great Lines to a Great Park

Nina Robinson

Combining her interest in heritage and green spaces, Nina is a member of the Friends Of The Great Lines Heritage Park and the Friends Of The Admiral's Gardens (at the nearby Lower Lines park). This article describes recent improvements at the Great Lines Heritage Park and gives an introduction to the new Friends of Great Lines Heritage Park who aim to preserve and promote the park.

In March 2011, Chatham Dockyard and its defences secured its place on the new UK Tentative List of World Heritage Sites, as explained in the previous article by Chatham World Heritage Manager, Joanne Cable. Founded in 1547, the dockyard's heyday was in the age of sail and the beginning of the age of steam. It was instrumental in securing and maintaining Britain's worldwide influence, and so helped to shape the world we know today.

Photograph of part of engraving entitled *Chatham Dockyard from Fort Pitt, Kent comprising view of River Medway (Chatham Reach) and HM Dockyard, looking north-north-east from Fort Pitt Hill*. Engraved by R. Roffe from a drawing by G. Shepherd and published by G. Virtue, 26 Ivy Lane, London 1 November 1828. From the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre Couchman Collection, ref. DE402/18/p.2 (L)



Built to protect the dockyard from an attack by land, the Chatham Lines are today the best-preserved and most complete dockyard fortifications of their kind in the UK. But, (as set out in the bid documents), 'as well as the fortifications themselves, the Site also includes the open *Field of Fire*. Known as the Great Lines, this land was cleared so as to remove cover to an attacker, and was protected by a series of firing points at Fort Amherst and along the Chatham Lines. It also created the open ground on to which the defenders might emerge to engage an attacker before they could get within firing range. The presence of the Royal Engineers led to the Lines and the Field of Fire becoming an important training area throughout the 19th century. Siege warfare techniques, including tunnelling underground, were practised and regular major mock battles were staged as training exercises'.

Dickens describes such spectacles in the *Pickwick Papers*:



'The whole population of Rochester and the adjoining towns rose from their beds at an early hour of the following morning, in a state of the utmost bustle and excitement. A grand review was to take place upon the Lines. The manoeuvres of half-a-dozen regiments were to be inspected by the eagle eye of the commander-in-chief; temporary fortifications had been erected, the citadel was to be attacked and taken, and a mine was to be sprung.'

Chris Price, Chair of the Friends of Great Lines Heritage Park

Fort Amherst's parkland, now open to the public
Photograph courtesy of Chatham World Heritage



The World Heritage Site bid, and plans for the Great Lines Heritage Park have been keenly supported by members of the Chatham World Heritage Partnership. This is the (free) open body for anyone with any nature of interest in the site – whether they live there, work there, or simply have an interest in history, heritage, or the great outdoors. The Partnership now numbers just under 900 members, with an average meeting attendance of over 100. The Partnership has been involved in key decisions about the site – including the naming of the Great Lines Heritage Park – and benefits from special events and opportunities, such as last year's preview of the No 1 Smithery at Chatham Historic Dockyard, and this year's chance to be among the first members of the public to cross the new Fort Amherst footbridge.



Chatham World Heritage Partnership meeting at the Royal Engineers Museum
Photograph courtesy of Chatham World Heritage

Finally, we are just left to question when Chatham could be added to UNESCO's World Heritage Site List. The government has recently reviewed its 1999 shortlist of World Heritage Sites, and Chatham has maintained its place, alongside 10 other aspirants. Chatham is the only one of these not to have been recommended to undertake further studies and analyses before proceeding to

nomination, and is the only site with a complete and approved bid document. The UK can submit just one World Heritage Site nomination per year, with the next opportunity to bid in January 2012. The supporters of Chatham's bid are making a strong case for this date, to provide the earliest possible reward for their hard work and enthusiasm, and also to appropriately commemorate the 200th anniversary of the establishment of the Royal School of Military Engineering in Chatham.

Why not sign up to the Chatham World Heritage Partnership, and be among the first to hear when Chatham's nomination gets the green light? The Partnership is always open for new members – to join, visit www.chathamworldheritage.co.uk, or call 01634 331176.

Message Received: Mar 23 2011, 09:19 AM
From: Peter Costen
To: emgardner@fsmail.net
Subject: FOMA members' questionnaire

Dear Elaine,

Thank you for asking me for feedback, via the questionnaire, on events held by FOMA.

Although my COSTEN ancestors hail mainly from Burham, I live in Guernsey and have never attended a FOMA event (or visited Burham) and in all honesty I don't think I ever will. However, I greatly value the work that is done by the Friends and am more than happy to make my small annual contribution to that work (I have just renewed my subs via the website - that's a helpful facility).

I enjoy *The Clock Tower* and always find something of interest in each issue. Odette always writes interesting articles, and I enjoy *Betty's Postcards*, and in this issue I am enjoying the article about Wouldham Church where some of my forebears were married.

Thank you for all you do.

Best wishes,

Peter.

8 March 2011

Dear Amanda,

I am always amazed at just how much of interest and variety your Clock Tower has! Thank you for another one, Feb 2011 just received.

Your correspondent [*The Clock Tower*, issue 21, February 2011] asks about Blaxland. G Blaxland acted as solicitor to my G-G-grandfather Capt Thomas Baker and his son Thomas Henry B of Owletts, Cobham, in the 1870s: letters are normally signed G Blaxland who also mentioned his son. One letter of 7 May 1875 from 32 Lincoln's Inn Fields is signed as Jones Blaxland & Son. It seems to have been a will and estate business. Is this the next generation after G Blaxland of the Sheerness dockyard?

Could provide more details if there is interest,

Best wishes,

Michael

FOMA member, Michael Baker, has conducted some considerable research on the Baker family in Strood. His article, *Which Mr Baker? or By Nine Votes to Eight*, was published in *The Clock Tower* Issue 12, November 2008 and is available to read on the FOMA website at www.foma-lsc.org/newsletter.html.

Michael Baker has also written a fascinating work, *The Samuel Bakers, Tradesmen of Kent in the 18th and 19th Centuries*, ISBN978-0-9546517-1-8; further information is available from the Editor, Amanda Thomas, as above.

An Appeal for the Missing Families of the Gillingham Park Tragedy of 1929

Do you know any of these families?

In 1929 a fire in Gillingham Park at the annual charity fair killed 15 people. On **Sunday July 10th 2011** those killed will be remembered at the unveiling of a memorial in the park. The organisers would love to have all of the victims represented by relatives but at present cannot find the following four families **BARRETT** of 150 Shakespeare Road, Gillingham. Henry John Barrett and Emma (née Harrod) lost their son Reginald. **NICHOLLS** of 69 Napier Road, Gillingham. Albert Joseph died in the fire his wife Mary continued to live in Napier Road; his parents were Joseph and Jane Nicholls. He was survived by one sister Dorothy Alice Wager (married William C. Bowring). **SINDEN** of 22 Greenfield Road Gillingham. Ivor died in the fire his parents were George William A Sinden and Beatrice Minnie (nee Weston); he had a brother, whose name we cannot find. **SPINKS** of 61 Seaton Rd Gillingham. William 's parents were Herbert and Amy (née Tuxill); his sister Dorothy married Irwin Cleydon. If you have any family stories or anything connected with the tragedy please let me know. For full details please see www.firemanswedding.com

Please contact: Elaine Nutton on 01634 361827 or e-mail enutton@hotmail.com

The Victims of the Gillingham Fire Demonstration July 11th 1929

The Children

Scout Reginald Henry Lewis Barrett (aged 13)
Cadet David Stanley Brunning (aged 12)
Cadet Eric Edward Cheesman (aged 12)
Leslie George Neale (aged 13)
Cadet Leonard Charles Searles (aged 10)
Cadet & Scout Ivor Douglas Weston Sinden (aged 11)
Scout William Herbert Jack Spinks (aged 13)
Robert Dennis Usher (aged 14)
Scout Leonard Gordon Winn (aged 13)

The Men

Fireman Francis Bull Cokayne (aged 52)
Royal George Mitchell (aged 37)
Fireman Albert Joseph Nicholls (aged 56)
Fireman Arthur John Tabrett (aged aged 45)
Petty Officer John Thomas Nutton (aged 37)
Frederick Arthur Worrall (aged 30)

This is not just anecdotal evidence, or wishful thinking, and the bid's investors, as one would expect, carefully examined the evidence of World Heritage impact before committing funds. This includes the following facts and statistics:

- Greenwich and Kew both report a sustained increase in visitor numbers of 15% since they were added to the World Heritage list.
- Liverpool has seen great advantages for its tourist economy. It has now positioned itself as a popular cruise ship destination, and is discovering that consistently more visitors take part in World Heritage tours, than the more *traditional* Beatles tours. This diversification of their tourism industry has created more jobs, and provided more leisure opportunities for the whole community.
- The Jurassic Coast has found that 19% of visitors have chosen to visit because of its World Heritage Site status. This increase in interest has led to the introduction of new and more frequent bus services, which, of course, benefit the local community.
- In the USA, visits to World Heritage Sites have increased at a rate over and above other tourist destinations, at the rate of 9.4% to 4.2%.
- In the Jurassic Coast again, 13% of businesses have created employment as a *direct result* of World Heritage Site status (20 full time and 50 part time jobs).
- In the Cinque Terre, in Italy, lemons grown on the terraces of the World Heritage Site – which has been added to the list because of its agricultural heritage - sell for €2.50 a kilogram, rather than the average €1.80 outside of the site. This does not mean Medway residents should rush to stock up on citrus fruit, but rather speaks volumes about the hallmark of quality that World Heritage Site status conveys.

An obvious local benefit for Medway residents is the Great Lines Heritage Park, which has received almost £10million in investment since the World Heritage Site programme was begun. Thanks to the common vision of the site's landowners – elucidated in the Chatham Dockyard and its Defences nomination document – one of the principal aims of Chatham's World Heritage Site nomination is the revitalisation of the Great Lines as a popular heritage park. This has enabled a successful bid to government for over £2m investment in the park, and negotiations with Mid Kent College to invest over £8m in the full restoration and endowment of the 5.5 hectare Lower Lines Park, adjacent to their new campus in Gillingham. One of the most significant benefits of the government's investment is that, from April 29 2011, four hectares of the Fort Amherst site became free-to-enter public parkland – a major boost for local residents and tourists alike. A new pedestrian footbridge now connects the Fort to its Field of Fire, opening up multiple leisure and *commuting* routes between Chatham, Gillingham and Brompton.



*New illumination at Fort Amherst thanks to government investment
Photograph courtesy of Chatham World Heritage*

Some of these site components are readily understandable and appreciated, but some, like the Chatham Lines or Brompton Barracks are more hidden. This is deliberate in the case of the barracks, but the situation with the Chatham Lines is more complex. The Chatham Lines are a series of deep defensive ditches that protected the dockyard from landward attack by encircling it from the landward side, commencing at Fort Amherst and concluding in Gillingham. Cannons were placed along the Chatham Lines, looking out across the Field of Fire (the Great Lines) to ensure that an approaching enemy would be seen from far away, and would terminate their journey to the Dockyard before even arriving at Fort Amherst.



New pedestrian footbridge crossing the Chatham Lines at Fort Amherst Photograph courtesy of Chatham World Heritage

Brompton Village is also sometimes poorly understood. It is not included within the potential World Heritage Site boundary for convenience, rather as a unique civilian enclave, completely surrounded by a military and naval presence – the dockyard, barracks and the fortified Chatham Lines. How this unique entity rose to prominence is still the subject of scholarly debate, and the life of a civilian amidst the naval and military forces is a one of great interest. Whilst this is all of merit, in today's economic climate we need more than simple heritage interest or human intrigue to fund a World Heritage Site application. The Chatham World Heritage programme has been running for four years (since February 2007), funded by the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, English Heritage and Medway Council. Why have they chosen to invest in the application?

- First, World Heritage Site status is quite simply a chance to understand our heritage, and roots. It is a chance to recognise the thousands of men and women and the great engineering feats that have contributed to the shape of the world today. At its height, the British navy had over 800 vessels at sea. They required a total of 145,000 men to crew the ships, and a similar, very significant number ashore, to build, repair and equip the fleet. Technological advances at Chatham are reflected and replicated the world over. This should be a source of great pride for Medway and beyond, and World Heritage Site status is an important way of helping everyone understand what lies behind our defensive walls.
- World Heritage Site status will also be a significant boost to Medway's programme of regeneration. Medway is not, by any means, unique in *regenerating*, but it is unique in being able to found its regeneration for a world-class future on a truly world-class past.
- World Heritage Site status will increase Medway's international profile. This will help Medway attract visitors and new businesses, boosting the economy and investment in the area and increasing employment and leisure opportunities. The status is expected to increase visitor numbers, and in turn, fuel investment in public and private services.

About The Clock Tower

The Clock Tower is the quarterly journal produced and published by the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre (FOMA), www.foma-lsc.org/index.html.

Editorial deadlines

Please note, the deadline is the **last** Monday (or Tuesday when a Bank Holiday occurs) of January, April, July and October. Articles, letters, photos and any information to be considered for inclusion in the journal must be received before this date by the Editor, Mrs Amanda Thomas, 72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, AL5 5NS, Hertfordshire; amanda@ajthomas.com.

The copy deadline for Issue 23 is Monday 25 July 2011.

Publication date

The fourth Wednesday following the editorial deadline.

The Clock Tower is printed by Ray Maisey, Rabbit Hutch Printers, 106 Charles Drive, Cuxton, Kent, ME2 1DU; telephone: 01634 294655; fax: 01634 723510; email: Ray@Rabbithutchprinters.com

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Front Cover Accreditations and Website Information

The logo for *The Clock Tower* was designed by Bob Ratcliffe.

The banner design (incorporating the logo) and the title *The Clock Tower* were designed by Alexander Thomas.

The Clock Tower is also available at www.foma-lsc.org/newsletter.html

Further Information

Further information on the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre can be obtained on the MALSC CityArk website <http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/> or by writing to Medway Archives Office, Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4AU. Telephone +44 (0)1634 332714; fax +44 (0)1634 297060; email: malsc@medway.gov.uk

General enquiries about the Friends can be obtained from the Secretary, Odette Buchanan: 72 Jersey Road, Rochester, ME2 3PE. Telephone: 01634 718231; email: odette_buchanan@yahoo.co.uk

Membership enquiries should be directed to the Membership Secretary, Betty Cole, 25 Elm Avenue, Chatham, Kent ME4 6ER. Telephone: 01634 316509; email: bettycole@blueyonder.co.uk

Oak Apple Day

Betty Cole



FOMA membership Secretary, Betty Cole, is a volunteer at MALSC working with archivist Valerie Rouland on the project to catalogue, conserve and make available for research the contents of the 500 boxes of Rochester City Archives, the Archives of Great Expectations. This exciting project is funded with a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and volunteers have been uncovering some interesting documents - as Betty explains here.

The 29 May is Oak Apple Day, but do you know what this day commemorates? It was the day King Charles II entered London on the Restoration of the Monarchy and it was also his thirtieth birthday. Whilst we no longer celebrate this important day, documents found in the Rochester City Archives, show that in Rochester, and almost certainly other towns and cities during the 18th century at least, it was a big occasion.

Volunteers from FOMA and I have been undertaking various tasks for the Heritage Lottery funded project Archives of Great Expectations. One recent job was to sort into date order the contents of a box of Chamberlain's Vouchers. These vouchers were bills submitted to the Chamberlain of the City for payment, each voucher signed by the Mayor. They range from paying craftsmen for repair work on local buildings, food supplied for celebrations, to one shilling a time for whipping wrongdoers.

Among the vouchers, we found several lists of expenditure on food and drink for celebrations on Restoration Day. As the Restoration of Charles II was in 1660 we were puzzled that these bills were from various years in the 1700s and wondered if the event had been celebrated on a certain day each year and, yes, we were correct: this was *Oak Apple Day*. In 1664 Parliament decreed that the day be observed as a public holiday in perpetuity. Pepys wrote in his diary on Friday 1 June 1660, "...the Parliament had ordered the 29th of May, the King's birthday, to be for ever kept as a day of thanksgiving for our redemption from tyranny, and the King's return to his Government, he entering London that day." A special service for the day was included in the Common Prayer Book until 1859.

The documents in this one box range from the mid 16th to the 19th century. Unfortunately, there is not time as a volunteer to look at each document, although we certainly wanted to! However, this one example shows how much can be discovered from just one or two documents in the collection. It is such an exciting prospect and hopefully, in the next issue of the journal we will have more discoveries and perhaps some photographs of the documents.

"Chatham Dockyard is the supreme example of a Royal Dockyard largely unaltered from the age of sail.... The importance of the Dockyard is enhanced by its close association with contemporary military establishments. This combination of a substantially intact 18th century Dockyard with its contemporary massive landward defences is unique"

In essence, there are four principal claims that Chatham makes for World Heritage Site status.

- Chatham is the world's most complete Dockyard from the age of sail.
- Chatham was instrumental in securing and maintaining Britain's worldwide influence - and therefore in shaping the world we know today.
- The completeness of the dockyard and its defences is unique.
- Historic barracks and military installations complete the picture of Chatham as one of the world's greatest garrison towns, supporting and supported by, both the army and navy.

The proposed boundary for Chatham's World Heritage Site includes the Historic Dockyard, its closest defences – Upnor Castle, Fort Amherst and the Chatham Lines, and the Great Lines, military infrastructure - the Royal School of Military Engineering (Brompton Barracks), and Kitchener Barracks, and the unique civilian enclave village of Brompton. It also contains the site of the original Tudor Dockyard at Old Gun Wharf, and of course, the river Medway, which determined the strategic location of the dockyard and its defences.



*Aerial View of the potential World Heritage Site
Photograph courtesy of Chatham World Heritage*

Chatham Dockyard and its Defences: a future World Heritage Site.

Joanne Cable, Chatham World Heritage Manager



Joanne Cable has been Chatham World Heritage manager since 2007, and is responsible for the delivery of the World Heritage Site bid, and its many benefits. The most significant of these is the Great Lines Heritage Park. Prior to this, Joanne worked as European Network Co-ordinator for a Europe-wide collection of former naval and military towns, including the World Heritage Sites of Venice and Karlskrona, and the aspiring World Heritage Sites of Chatham, Rochefort and Cartagena. Born and raised in Medway, Joanne lives within the potential World Heritage Site village of Brompton.

To understand why Chatham is eligible for World Heritage Site status, and what impact this is intended to have, one must first understand what a World Heritage Site is. World Heritage Site status is granted by the United Nations to sites throughout the world that possess *Outstanding Universal Value*. These sites can be the work of man, or of nature, but are genuinely the best, or the only surviving example of their type. Chatham stands to take its place on the World Heritage Site List alongside such international icons as the Grand Canyon, the Taj Mahal, the Statue of Liberty, Stonehenge, the Great Wall of China, St Basil's Cathedral, Ayers Rock and the Pyramids. There are just over 900 World Heritage Sites worldwide, and currently there are 28 in the UK – well known examples here include Canterbury Cathedral, Ironbridge Gorge and Hadrian's Wall. The country with the most World Heritage Sites is Italy, with 44.

The concept of World Heritage began in the 1950s, with the Abu Simbel temples in Egypt. The temples were carved out of the mountainside in the 13th century BC, and were over a hundred feet high. In 1954, the Egyptian government decided to build the Aswan Dam, which required the flooding of the Abu Simbel temples. The United Nations objected to the loss of such significant heritage, and launched a worldwide campaign to protect the temples from destruction. The rescue project involved cutting the site into blocks weighing up to 30 tons, and relocating them in a new location – 65 metres higher than the original site, and 200 metres further back from the river. This took four years and was, somewhat understandably, considered one of the greatest archaeological engineering feats of the time. The cost of rescuing the Abu Simbel temples was c. \$80m, about half of which was raised by a United Nations campaign, collected from 50 individual countries. From this came the idea that some heritage is of *Outstanding Universal Value*, that is, of value to the whole of the international community, not just the country where it happens to be located. In 1972, this agreement was formalised in the World Heritage convention that today sets the procedure for the identification, protection and promotion of World Heritage Sites.

One may question what case Chatham makes for joining this illustrious list? Chatham is, of course, well known for its military and naval history, but this can often be underappreciated, partly because defensive heritage was never intended to make a public statement, in the manner of the Statue of Liberty or the Taj Mahal. Yet, Chatham Dockyard and its Defences has been on the government's shortlist of potential World Heritage Sites since 1999 – and no UK nomination for World Heritage Site status has ever failed. This is what the Department for Culture, Media and Sport said about Chatham in its World Heritage shortlisting:

Common Sense or Just Plain Lune-y?

Odette Buchanan



Odette takes a light-hearted look at the proposed change of name to the Medway Towns in 1945.

In 1945, it was proposed that Rainham, Gillingham, Chatham, Rochester and Strood amalgamate - sounds familiar? One of the many problems arising from this idea was what the five towns were to be called. The following paragraph appeared in the local papers, some national dailies, the *Sunday Express* and the two London Evening papers, the *Evening News* and the *Evening Standard*: 'Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham are planning amalgamation as a county borough and invite suggestions for a new name.' At the time responses came from all over the world from local residents stationed overseas in the armed forces. Surprisingly, out of the 145 responses received by the Town Clerk of the City of Rochester, who was charged with collating them, only 39 came from the actual towns themselves: just one from Strood, five from both Rainham and Chatham and 19 from Gillingham. What does this tell us? That not many of the local population read the *Sunday Express*? That not many were interested or that the majority were apathetic?

Whatever the reasons, we have answers from various British Forces Postings Overseas (BFPO) in Germany, the *British Army of the Rhine* (BAOR), various Royal Navy ships and the Kenya Pioneer Corps. Conversely, some were from members of the forces stationed at Chatham. Practically every county in England was represented with many from all areas of London. For example, a person from London WC1 thought to add weight to his suggestion by telling us that he had lived in Sidcup in 1935. Yet another wrote from NW10 on paper with a Harrods' letter head and a man from Lancing in Sussex told us he was an ex detective inspector in New South Wales, Australia. Someone from Manchester was the organizer of the North and Midlands Advent Mission. Were people more pompous 60 years ago? Another person wrote on company letter head and signed himself *Director*. Did people think that their occupation, status or what they did in a previous life would add veritas to their suggestion?

Harry F. Wingett wrote from Old Forge House in Gillingham informing the Town Clerk that he had been born and lived in Rochester, spent all his business life in Chatham and then went on to say, 'no mongrel names will satisfy anyone, the failure to amalgamate during the last 40 years arose from local jealousies... I was on Rochester Council for 22 years and should be aware of the old feeling in the City.' So, after this potted biography, he finished with the suggestion that it be called *Threeboroughs*. A Mr. Henry A. Hall all but enclosed a Union Jack with his response and one can almost hear him humming the national anthem as he penned his epistle. He used such phrases as, 'God Save True Democracy' and words such as 'voluntary,' 'dignity,' 'with respect,' and 'The Fatherhood of true spirit which always administratively functions respectively in human Misunderstanding.' This last word was heavily underlined in bold capitals. He signed off as 'I am, sir, very respectfully yours, Henry A. Hall.' Cllr. Ball from Hampstead sought to impress his suggestions on to the Town Clerk by writing no less than four times; Mr. R. E. Webb told us he was late of the East Kent (Buffs) Regiment, 1914–1918; a gentleman from NW5 used his professional headed paper which told us he was a baritone listed in *Spotlight*, current and ex-service. He would accept bookings for stage, screen, radio, concert, celebrity or popular events.

The youngest was a lad of 12 from Gillingham called Eric Watts and I wonder if he is still alive and living locally? He presented 12 very neatly written suggestions: *Medborough, Meddock, Triburg, Tripleston, Charoham, Chestingham, Gilchester, Gilham, Giloham, Rivaham, Riverham, Roichester* or *Dockingham*. Almost as young was Clive Wootton, aged 13, from St. Peter's in Thanet with beautiful handwriting. His contribution was succinct and to the point, neatly arranged on a post card: He suggested *Rochatingham*. I wonder if he too is still alive? Moreover, what prompted these youngsters to be drawn to the problem?

Apart from the pompous, there were the quirky and humorous. One respondent presented his idea of *Dewtringham* in the form of a scripted conversation between father and son:

'Its weight is felt throughout the world.

Dear Sir,

Daddy – I see by the *Express* they want a new name for Rochester, Chatham and Gillingham. What about it Peter? We'd better go in reverse and call it Atom Town or what's that stuff the bombs are made of?

Peter – Uranium 235

Daddy – That's it Uranium. A good name that.

Peter - No daddy, let's call it *Deutringham* because heavy water is called deutringham oxide.

Daddy – brilliant. A good name. What about the spelling?

Peter – Oh, call it *Dewtringham* because dew is water.'

A sweet little note on one of those airmail letters came from an L.A.C. Newton, R, who suggested *Medside* because 'this is the name for our three towns, we are in the Medway and we are but three who love each other.'

As mentioned previously, there were 17 suggestions that were related to the year 1945 and what was uppermost in people's minds then. So, for example you can see references to Churchill, Monty, the royal family, etc. One such letter suggested we call it *Winston* and make Mr. Churchill the First Freeman (this presupposed it would be a City rather than a county borough). There were one or two who treated the whole exercise as a joke. The best one was from a Dottie Mayden who lived at Lune-y-Been, Much-Missing in the-Belfry. She wrote, 'Dear Sir, I read with much interest(?) the suggestions of some 2,000 nomenclatures regarding the amalgamation of the local neighbourhoods. Put it in a nutshell which is both all embarrassing and euphonious, in short, call it *Stroodi-cum-t'others*. Yours very much etc. Dottie Mayden.' (Someone had written at the bottom that this had not been acknowledged!)

There was another amusing letter which suggested *Dihamchester* and pointed out why: '[The] *di-* prefix, as you know, means double so translation of above effort would be double hamchester or twice ham chester, or it could be spelt *Dyamchester*, more old world, what! Above suggestion presented free with seasons [sic] greetings and without malice aforethought or otherwise.' It was signed initial *BF* with a bracket saying, 'Yes they are my initials. This wag came from London W.12.'

The one I think the most convoluted and bizarre produced permutations of letter-strings common to each town and arrived at either *MEDHOLME* from *GILLINGHAM, CHATHAM, ROCHESTER* and *MEDWAY TOWNS*, as one anagram and *TRINHOME* from *CHATHAM, ROCHESTER, GILLINGHAM* as another. These anagrams were triumphantly emblazoned across the bottom of the page – a masterpiece of mathematical logic.

four abreast, the 'Blood and Fire' flag and a hundred rank and file. Taking in the situation at a glance, like an able commander, he waited until his forces had come well up and been consolidated, when suddenly averting the collision, he wheeled round and made along the High Street, laughing grimly at the discomfited youngsters. The laugh of the onlookers did not improve the self-complacency of the boys, and speedily the six lines slunk away."

On a return visit to Chatham more than fifty years later, Smith claimed that much of his success in 1880 had been based upon bluff. Thanks to his lack of schooling, he had problems reading the Bible aloud to the congregation, but managed to overcome his problems: "When I reached a big word, I commenced to give something by way of explanation and then began again at the other side of the big word. Nobody found me out. They got so excited that they did not see what I was after. I don't miss any big words now."

Much of his success in Chatham was due to his charisma. The *Chatham Observer* called him a *born orator*, who started his sermons by asserting, "I want to git at yer." And git at them he did. "One moment he causes them to bubble over with laughter with his unconventional expressions, and the next minute moves them to tears with his pathos." Certainly people remembered *Gipsy* Smith. As late as a return visit in 1932, hands shot up at Chatham's Central Hall when he asked if anyone remembered him from fifty years before.

One incident that Smith failed to mention on his return visits or in his autobiography occurred in May 1880. The Salvationists were holding a service in their hall on The Brook, and as usual a noisy crowd gathered outside and tried to disrupt it. At first, the worshippers increased the volume of their music to drown their opponents, but eventually *Gipsy* Smith's patience snapped. He threw open the door and pulled one of the youthful ringleaders inside and refused to release him until the service had ended. Word soon reached Phillis English, the boy's mother, who angrily burst into the hall demanding to see "the gipsy". The Salvationist and the publican (Mrs English was the landlady of the British Queen which was probably more than a coincidence) squared up to one another and there was mutual pushing and shoving. In the subsequent court case, Smith was judged to have committed two offences – by taking the boy into the hall against his will, and by keeping him there. He was bound over to keep the peace for three months. At this, he shouted, "I think this is cruel – it is not English law or justice." The police cleared the court, but Smith continued to harangue a crowd outside.

Gipsy Smith left Chatham for Newcastle in September 1880. During his nine months or so in the town, the charismatic twenty-year-old had breathed new life into the Salvationist cause locally, and it continued to go from strength to strength. His successor as Captain was George Roe, whom the local press labelled "the converted jockey," and Mary Roe was dubbed his "hallelujah wife."

Gipsy Smith was forced out of the Salvation Army in 1882. He had broken regulations by accepting a gold watch from his congregation on leaving Hanley, Staffordshire. He spent the rest of his life touring the country and the English-speaking world as an itinerant evangelist. Smith received the MBE for his work among the troops in the Great War and died aged 87 in 1947 on board the liner *Queen Mary* during his forty-fifth Atlantic crossing.

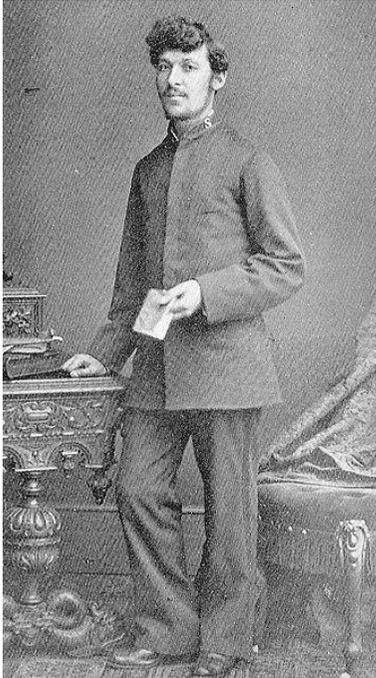
Sources

Chatham News

Chatham Observer

The Times

Gipsy Smith: An Autobiography, Gypsy Smith



Smith taken in about 1880 at the time he was in Chatham. The author has tried to establish ownership of this image but without success; we are therefore unable to credit it, and our apologies to any owner of this image.

“First they coughed and then I coughed, and half an hour or so after the service was timed to commence, one of them coughed again and asked me whether I was going to begin. I replied, ‘Not yet. I never begin until I know how to begin. I do not write my prescription until I diagnose my case. I will begin presently.’
Finally, an old man broke the awkward silence.
‘Who sent you here, my boy?’
‘The Reverend William Booth, the superintendent of the mission.’
‘Well, you won’t do for us.’
‘Why, what have I done? Why don’t you like me?’
‘Oh,’ said the old man, ‘You’re too young for us.’
‘Well,’ I said, ‘if you let me stop here awhile I shall get older. I am not to blame for being young. But if I have not any more whiskers than a gooseberry, I have got a wife. What more do you want?’”

Smith then held up the register of members, and told his small congregation that Booth had given him the authority to burn it and end Salvationism in Chatham. He then continued that he had no wish to do that and that he needed their

sympathy, prayers and cooperation.

Gipsy Smith eventually won the congregation round, and by his own estimate increased it from thirteen to three hundred members in nine months. But it was not easy. After six weeks in the town, he wrote to Booth, “If you don’t take me away from Chatham, I shall die.” The General hurriedly arrived the following Sunday, took the services himself and inspired Smith to keep trying.

After this inauspicious start, Smith settled down to the task of increasing the Salvation Army’s presence in Chatham. The Army provided him with a house at 4 Alma Place in the east end of the town, opposite the Axe Brand clothing factory. This was very near two of the local centres of drink and depravity – the High Street and The Brook. The Salvationists’ hall was in the latter den of iniquity, near its junction with Fair Row. A favourite outdoor pitch of the Salvation Army was in the High Street at the corner of Clover Street, which had a public house on each side and more nearby. As a letter-writer to the *Chatham Observer* wrote in 1945: “Frequently when customers in the pubs had had enough of the shouting outside, the doors would fly open and beer would be thrown over the congregation.” While the Salvationists marched from Clover Street to their hall on The Brook, they would sing, “Will you come, will you come/To our mission on The Brook?” often accompanied by a hail of missiles thrown by Skeleton Army supporters.

During one such march in August 1880, a mob of youths formed a six-man deep road block across Fair Row to prevent the Salvationists from reaching The Brook, and a large crowd gathered to witness the hopefully violent confrontation. The *Chatham Observer* told its readers how Gipsy Smith outwitted his opponents. “On came the leader, waving his arm like a windmill at the head of his four lines of musicians

What prompted any of the responders to address the problem? The majority of the letters were dated about a week after the item appeared in the paper. Had they wrestled with the idea night and day? Of course there was no Sudoku or television to occupy the mind then but still ...perhaps they did it as a relaxation from collecting train numbers or bus tickets or cigarette cards? This idea of a union of nerds determined to outdo each other with the most original and bizarre name with which to lumber generations yet to come is best summed up in that letter from *Dottie Mayden*. Perhaps this is the real reason why so few locals bothered to respond – they were simply more canny than those who didn’t live in the towns. Outsiders had no idea of the local councils’ concept of *consultation* - locals were cynical enough to think that no matter what interesting or apt labels were dreamt up, the councils would come up with their own idea in a committee and that would be the one.

The total number of names suggested was 268. They divide roughly into seven different areas: ones based on the name Medway, Rochester, Chatham, Gillingham, Kent, Dickens and the contemporary (that is, of relevance in 1945). The majority favoured names based on Rochester–90 including a petition of 33 people suggesting the conurbation be called *Rochester*. Second was those favouring names based on naming it after the river Medway–70, including a petition of ten calling for the name *Medway City*. Way behind them came 35 names based on Chatham, followed by 26 based on Gillingham, 17 relating to names of contemporary importance, 16 relating to Kent and last but not least, 14 based on Dickens or his books. So, we have the nerds, the pompous, the jokers and the apathetic, but, in among all these suggestions, there was one letter that was totally opposed to the idea of amalgamation, no matter what the name was, and five reasons were given. What happened? A big fat *nothing*. Much time, paper, committee and clerical effort was expended over several months and then the dust settled, the file was tied up and the next time anyone had cause to refer to it was November 2010 because it needed pins taking out and tape tying round it! Quite a good example of local government procedure.

Editor’s Note

Odette’s wonderful observations remind me of a comment made by an official from St Albans District Council when I queried their criteria for the new re-cycled waste collection (which incidentally now works very well): “The problem is, Mrs Thomas, one person’s common sense isn’t the same as someone else’s.”

Betty’s Postcard Quiz Answers

(No looking before reading this issue’s *Betty’s Postcards*).

1. Elizabeth Barrett Browning
2. Sir James Barrie
3. Charles Kingsley
4. Robert Burns
5. Alfred Lord Tennyson

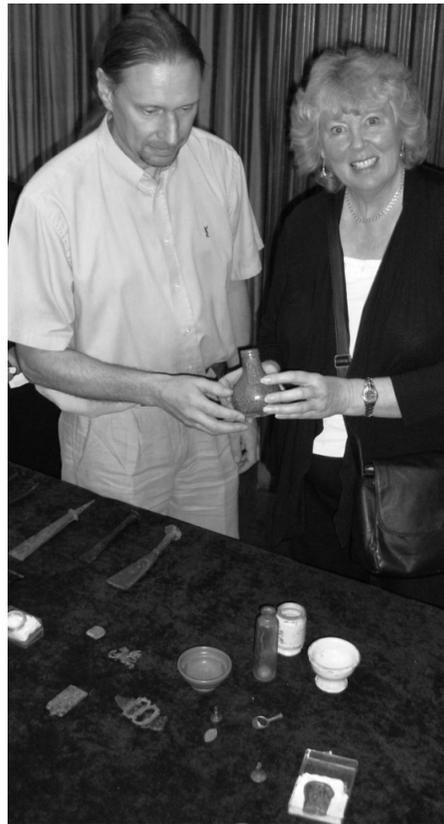
Illustrations of these postcards can be found in the website version of *The Clock Tower* at www.foma-lsc.org/newsletter.html

Mud, Glorious Mud!

Sue Haydock, FOMA Vice President



The fourth annual lecture of the Guild of Arts Scholars, Dealers and Collectors, entitled *Glorious Mud - Treasures from the Thames*, was held at the Carpenters' Hall in London. The main speaker was Dr Geoff Egan, FSA, of the British Museum, assisted by Ian Smith, Chairman of the Mudlarks.



Sue Haydock and Ian Smith, Chairman of the Mudlarks, looking at some of the finds from the Thames

22

It was a visit to the banks of the Thames with his father that first sparked Dr. Egan's interest in archaeology, and during his career he has played a leading part in excavations at the waterfront of London; he is widely published on the resulting finds. He spoke of the many and varied objects that are washed up on the banks of the river, from flint tools of the hunters in the post-glacial forests, Roman statues, buckles and coins and armoury, to pottery, cheap jewellery, early toys, and waste from London's industrial past. He said, "Almost every trade represented by London's Worshipful Companies can be identified in the archaeological record. Excavations have brought fresh insights into daily life, fashion and the developing economy of the city that was to become the capital of a worldwide empire. It was the Thames that created the city and it is the Thames that has preserved such a rich record of its long history; preserved for posterity in that special glutinous mud."

The presentation was entertaining and informative and examination of some of the finds was very popular. **WARNING - NO mudlarking is allowed without a permit from the Museum of London!**

From Gipsy Tent to Pulpit: Rodney Smith in Chatham 1879-80

Brian Joyce



Brian Joyce is a semi-retired teacher who lives and works in the Medway Towns. He was born in Chatham and has always been fascinated by the history of the area. Brian is the President of the Chatham Historical Society and the author of several books, including The Chatham Scandal, Dumb Show and Noise and Chatham and the Medway Towns, a History and Celebration. With Bruce Aubry, Brian co-wrote In the Thick of It- Medway Men and Women in the Boer War, which was published by their own Pocock Press. Brian is currently working on a similar volume which will examine the experiences of men and women from the Medway Towns during the First World War.

The Salvation Army had its roots in the East London Christian Mission created by the former Methodist minister William Booth and his wife Catherine in 1865. From the beginning, the Booths and their followers targeted the souls of the poor and marginalised elements of Victorian society. Their services were simple, with little ritual and no sacraments, but were filled with music. The Christian Mission adopted a national organisation along military lines in 1878 and renamed itself The Salvation Army. Booth was the *General* of this *Army* and its uniformed members were divided into *officers* and *soldiers*. Booth believed alcohol to be a major cause of poverty and depravity among the working class, and the virtues of abstinence and teetotalism were preached outside pubs. Not surprisingly, this noisy and very visible sect antagonised the drinks industry. In its early years, Salvationist meetings were often attacked by mobs organised and paid by local publicans. These anti-Salvationists became known as The Skeleton Army.

In December 1879, the Chatham Salvationists gained a new *Captain* – nineteen-year-old Rodney Smith. *Gipsy* Smith, as he was universally known, was born to a Romany family in a tent in Epping Forest in 1860. He received no formal education, and from an early age joined his family in their itinerant life making and selling baskets and clothes pegs. After his father and brothers converted to Christianity, Smith himself became a Christian, taught himself rudimentary reading and writing and the basics of evangelism – preaching and hymn singing. William Booth recognised Smith's talents at a Christian Mission meeting in London and persuaded him to become a missionary for what was soon to become The Salvation Army. After gaining experience in Whitby, Sheffield and Bolton, Smith was appointed to the vacant captaincy at Chatham and arrived in the town late in 1879. As he told his Medway Towns audiences when he returned in later decades, he had married only days before his arrival and spent his honeymoon in Chatham.

In his autobiography, *Gipsy* Smith described the situation as he had found it: "This station, which was several years old, had never been a success. If it had, then it had fallen very low. I was sent down to end it or mend it." During a sermon in Chatham on a return visit in 1913, Smith described his very first service at the small Salvation Army hall on The Brook. There had been a congregation of about thirteen.

The Legend of the Proctors

The prohibition of a Proctor enjoying this charity is thus spoken of in Wildash's *History of Rochester* – "How rogues and proctors became coupled together in this good man's interdiction we are not satisfactorily informed. The reason vulgarly assigned as his motive for excluding proctors from the benefit of his charity, and thus fixing a lasting stigma on the legal profession, is that when on the continent, he was affected with a severe illness, and having employed a proctor to make his will, found upon his unexpected recovery, that the villainous advocate had placed himself in too advantageous a point of view, and being of opinion that 'charity begins at home had perverted his employers benevolent intentions, and given to himself that which was appointed to God and to pious uses."

"An ingenious writer, however has suggested, and with much greater probability that the word *proctor* and *procurator* was the designation of those itinerant priests, who, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, had dispensation from the Pope to absolve the subjects of that Princess from their allegiance"

In Harrison's *Description of Britain*, 1577, it is stated: "Among Roges and idle persons, we finde to be comprised all Proctors who go up and downe with counterfeit licences, cosiners and such as go about the countrey using unlawfull games and practizers of physiognomie and palmestrie, tellers of fortunes, fencers, players, minstrels, jugglers, peddlers, tinkers, schollers, shipmen, prisoners gathering for fees, and others so off as they be taken without sufficient licence"

The following letter bearing on this subject was written to Sir James Emerson Tennent:

"Gad's Hill, Monday Aug 20th 1888

"My dear Tennent – I have been much interested by your extract and am strongly inclined to believe that the Refuge for Poor Travellers meant the kind of man to which it refers. Chaucer certainly meant the Pardonere to be a humbug, living on the credulity of the people. After describing the sham reliques he carried, he says: -

'But with these reliques whawne that he found
A poore persone dwelling up on lond,
Upon a day he gat him more monnie
Than that the persone got in monthes time
And thus with fained flattering and japes
He made the persone and the people his apes'

" And the worthy Watts (founder of the charity) may have had these very lines in his mind when he excluded such a man.

" Kindest regards from all my house to yours.

Faithfully yours ever

"CHARLES DICKENS"

Notwithstanding the foregoing theories, tradition still has something in its favour, and locally the lawyer legend is still favoured. In Chambers Dictionary, 1898, there is the definition: "Proctor, a procurator or manager for another: an attorney in the spiritual courts; a representative of the clergy in convocation; an official in the English universities who attends to the morals of the students and enforces obedience to university regulations."

Archives Update

Alison Cable, Borough Archivist



Quarterly Report for the Archives of Great Expectations: January to March 2011

Cataloguing

The cataloguing of Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical school collection started at the beginning of January 2011. First of all, we carried out some research on the organisation of the school and its history, in order to gain an understanding of its functions and activities. Then, by sorting through the 58 boxes, we identified:

- Duplicate documents and records of non-archival value. They will be given back to the school. They amount to six and a half boxes.
- Documents containing information about named individuals. They will not be made accessible to the public and this will be highlighted in the catalogue.
- Parts of the collection have already been arranged and listed at item level. This arrangement will be respected in the catalogue.

The structure of the catalogue is as follows:

C/ES 306/4/1	Governors' documents	1710 – 1938
C/ES 306/4/2	Headmasters' documents	1913 - 1970
C/ES 306/4/3	Administration	1913 – 1970
C/ES 306/4/4	Finance records	1879 – 2001
C/ES 306/4/5	Legal and estate records	1707 – 1988
C/ES 306/4/6	Staff records	1876 – 1962
C/ES 306/4/7	Pupils' records	1824 – 2008
C/ES 306/4/8	Publications	1885 – 2002
C/ES 306/4/9	School activities	1885 – 1997
C/ES 306/4/10	Photographs	1906 – 2000
C/ES 306/4/11	Plans and drawings	c. 1809 – 1997
C/ES 306/4/12	Old Williamsonian Club	1901 – 1992
C/ES 306/4/13	History of the school and information about former pupils	1891 – 2010
C/ES 306/4/14	Books	1715 – 1913
C/ES 306/4/15	Objects	c.1930 – 1940
C/ES 306/4/16	Miscellaneous	1928 – 1969
C/ES 306/4/17	Rochester Grammar School for Girls, Maidstone Road, Rochester	1911 – 1950

Whilst cataloguing, we are also taking the opportunity to improve the packaging of the records: paperclips have been removed and all folders have been replaced with acid-free folders or envelopes.

Volunteers

The first part of the volunteer work ended in February 2011. Since mid September, they improved the packaging of all the Town Clerk and City Surveyor's files: a total of 191 boxes. The work gave them the chance to familiarise themselves with the collection and the files they found interesting were the basis of a talk which took place at the end of February. The second part of the volunteer work will start mid April and will involve some repackaging and renumbering but will also call for palaeography skills.

The tasks are as follows:

1. RCA/N1/2/1: 1 bundle of Chamberlain's vouchers (circa 300 documents) (1577–1834) (Miscellaneous bundle of bills and vouchers relating to meals, fines for prostitution, maintenance of the town clock, etc). To sort documents into chronological order and to assign numbers – a task for one volunteer over three weeks (palaeography skills useful).
 2. Repackaging and renumbering finance and legal files (two to three volunteers over 1 or 2 weeks).
 3. Transcribing of documents to be digitised, for instance, early coroner's inquisitions, etc. This work would take place after the volunteers attending a palaeography course.
- Volunteer help may be required for other tasks, yet to be decided.

Conservation

Documents sent for conservation as part of this year's quota have now been repaired and were returned to us at the end of March 2011 thus enabling further cataloguing work to be undertaken. The repaired documents include:

- Map of Frindsbury housing estate
- Title deeds
- Coroner's inquisitions (C17th)
- Plan of St Nicholas Cemetery
- Council minutes RCA/A1/4 (C18th)

This work, plus the repacking materials, represents Medway Council's £3,000 contribution for 2010 to 2011. We are now compiling a list of work which will need to be undertaken during this financial year.

Edwin Harris – Recollections of Rochester

Alison Thomas

Archive and Local Studies Assistant, The Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre



After completing a degree in medieval and modern history at the University of Birmingham, Alison Thomas trained as a teacher and worked in primary education for several years. Whilst bringing up her family she had various part time jobs within education ranging from playgroup assistant to special needs teacher. Alison left work to become a full time carer for four years, and joined MALSC as Archive and Local Studies Assistant at the end of February 2010.

In this issue Alison provides the second part of Harris' recollections on Richard Watts' charity, the original of which can be found, of course, at MALSC.

Richard Watts and his Famous Charity Part Two

Watts died at Satis House on September 10 1579, and was buried in the nave of Rochester Cathedral on the south side of the steps leading to the choir. The stone covering his grave is in good preservation. The stone has armorial bearings with the words, 'Richard Watts, Esquire, died September 10th, 1579.'

The will of Richard Watts, which was made only 19 days before his death, is dated August 22 1579 and was proved in the court of the Bishop of Rochester on November 25, 1580. It is extant among the records of that court, but is much worn and in some parts scarcely decipherable....

Edwin Harris here gives a number of other extracts from the will:

'...First, that the Almesse House already erected and standing beside the Market Crosse ...' which Almesse House my will, purpose and desire is that there be re-edified, added and provided with such rooms as bee there already provided, six several Rooms with Chimneys for the comfort, placing an abiding of the Poor within the said Citie and also to be made apt and convenient places therein for vi good Matrices or Flock-beds, and other good and sufficient furniture to harbour or lodge in poor travellers or Wayfaring Men, being no common Rooges nor Proctors and they the said Wayfaring Men, to harbour and lodge therein no longer than one night, unless sickness be the further cause thereof, and these poor folks there dwelling shall keep the House sweete, make beds, see to the furniture, keep the same sweete and curtuoslie intreat the said Poor Travellers, and every of the said Poor Travellers at their first coming in to have iiiid. And they shall warm themselves at the Fyre of the residence within the said house, if neede bee" etc, etc

It is more than probable that Richard Watts instituted the Charity during his lifetime. His funeral must have been an impressive one, yet the wording on his gravestone is of the simplest...

It is curious that although "six several Rooms with Chimneys" were to be provided, Watts makes no mention of a fire in cold weather. I have been informed that so strictly has his will been carried out that there has never been a fire in any of the rooms.