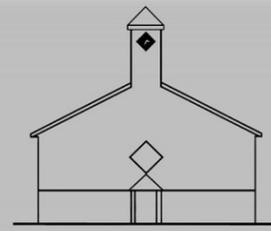


The Clock Tower



The Newsletter of the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

Issue Number 07: August 2007



Photograph by Mick Gell

Vice President of The Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, Professor Sir Robert Worcester KBE DL (left), and MALSC Borough Archivist, Stephen Dixon, at *An evening with Sir Robert Worcester: commemorating the 400th anniversary of the voyage to Jamestown, USA* on 24th May 2007 at the Guildhall Museum, Rochester, Kent.

The event took place to mark the formal launch of the exhibition *Pocahontas, An American Princess: The Birth of a Colony* which is running until September 2007 at the Guildhall Museum; admission is free of charge. The central exhibit is the 1617 burial record for Rebecca Wroth or Rolf, alias Pocahontas, contained in the first parish register of St George's church, Gravesend, and held at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre. The background display panel will be transferring to St. George's Church, Gravesend in mid September 2007.

From the Chairman

Tessa Towner, Chairman.



In this issue I would like to bring everyone up to date with some of the exciting developments concerning the Friends (FOMA).

First, I am delighted to announce that FOMA has now been affiliated with the Kent History Federation which will enable us to cover our volunteers under their insurance, and in addition they will also publicise our events in their journal.

We hope to arrange a travelling exhibition to visit the libraries in the Medway area promoting FOMA and the projects being undertaken by the volunteers; this will probably start in the spring of 2008. It is also hoped that in the next few weeks work will have started to list and sort the illustration collections held by the Local Studies section and also that of the Ian Fraser slide collection.

We have been liaising with the local press and Peter Cook from the *Medway Messenger* hopes to produce monthly articles on local historical events. If you have any ideas or suggestions for this we would be pleased to hear from you.

A date for your diary is the Local and Family History Open Day on 15th September 2007 to be held at the Civic and Presentation Suites at the Civic Centre in Strood. Approximately twenty local history groups, including the Kent Family History Society (KFHS) will be taking part and mounting displays about themselves - of course we will have a stand there too! We would ask for help on the day to man the stand and to generally help MALSC who are the organisers of the Open Day. This event is now biannual, so please come along on the day and help us make this as successful as the previous two have been.

Finally, I would like to appeal to all members, including those overseas. I am sure that many of you look on Ebay at some time or another. Please, keep an eye open for anything that might be of interest to FOMA or MALSC of anything relating to the Medway area, and notify our archivist Stephen Dixon (stephen.dixon@medway.gov.uk) or by writing to the Medway Archives Office, Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4AU; telephone +44 (0)1634 332714; fax +44 (0)1634 297060.

If you would like to join the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, please contact Lisa Birch, Membership Secretary, Medway Archives Office, Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4AU. Telephone +44 (0)1634 332238; email lisa.birch@medway.gov.uk.

News and Events

Cindy O'Halloran, Friends' Secretary

Kingswear Castle Trip - Sunday 23rd July 2007

The day began with wind and torrential rain, hardly an auspicious start to our trip on the river! However, by lunchtime the rain had abated and the sun dared to show its face. Nearly thirty intrepid FOMA members embarked on our three-hour trip on board the Kingswear Castle. The cruise left Chatham Dockyard and headed down river to Fort Darnett. Committee Member, Bob Ratcliffe, gave us a very informative and enjoyable commentary for the whole of the journey, with only the briefest of breaks. We tucked into our Ploughman's lunches with gusto, whilst taking in the fresh air and wonderful views.

A visit to the engine room below decks was a welcome chance to warm up and watch the fascinating engines that power the vessel. The furnaces are coal fed to provide the steam for the paddles - not an enviable job in the hot weather!

The Kingswear turned round at Fort Darnett and we headed up river as far as the M2 bridge. We had an excellent view of the area now cleared for the Rochester regeneration project, though the river is now sadly free of the commercial ships that formerly plied their trade on the Medway. Just a few large vessels were moored alongside the remaining warehouses, and the views of the Castle and Esplanade were beautiful in the glorious sunshine. Unfortunately the tide was not high enough to allow us passage to Cuxton and so we returned to Thunderbolt Pier.

The trip provided an excellent opportunity to catch up with FOMA members who are often just email contacts, and we all agreed that another trip would be well worth undertaking. Many thanks to Committee member David Carder for arranging the trip and to Bob Ratcliffe for his entertaining commentary.



Picture by Roy Murrant, former Chairman of FOMA.

Front row from left: April Lambourne (Archive and Local Studies Officer) Joe Shub and Irina Shub (Local Studies Librarian). Back Row from left: Bruce Aubry and Brian Joyce (local authors and publishers and founders of the Pocock Press)

FOMA Visit to the Snodland Historical Society Museum and Church

On Saturday, 2nd June 2007, FOMA members gathered to join Dr Andrew Ashbee for a tour of the Snodland Historical Society Museum and church. The afternoon was warm and sunny as we walked through Snodland to the beautiful church by the River Medway. Here, Dr Ashbee gave us a short talk on the history of the church, its monuments and leading families. We then toured the building to examine the architecture and features. There is an interesting collection of brasses in the Church and outside, the grave of Thomas Waghorn R. N. On such a beautiful, quiet afternoon, with the river lapping below the church, it was easy to imagine the scene when the Pilgrims on route to Canterbury passed this way and took the ancient ferry across the water.



Photograph by Anthony Clarke

The restored wealden house in Snodland the High Street on the day of the visit and bathed in June sunshine

Our group then toured the fascinating little museum located in the old fire station. Dr Ashbee has assembled a wonderful cornucopia of artefacts, documents and exhibits relating to Snodland and its past. Every member of the group found something to interest and amaze them. If you have an interest in Snodland, this is the place for you! The Snodland Historical Society has researched varying aspects of local and family history. They have produced many useful publications, copies of which can be viewed at MALSC or are available to purchase from Dr Ashbee. At the end of our visit, we retired to the Devonshire Rooms, where Mrs Ashbee and her helpers provided us with a wonderful cream tea with cakes galore.

Our thanks to Dr and Mrs Ashbee for arranging such an enjoyable afternoon, and we hope to repeat the visit next year.

The Snodland Historical Society Museum, is open on Wednesday and Sunday afternoons, from 2.00 to 5.00 pm; further information is available on the website at <http://www.snodlandhistory.org.uk/>

In this issue of The Clock Tower, Dr Andrew Ashbee completes his series of three articles on Thomas Fletcher Waghorn with, Who was Waghorn's Father?

FOMA Members

One of the best aspects of being Secretary for the Friends is receiving interesting news about the activities of FOMA members. Alan Moss, City of Rochester Society Journal Editor and Membership Secretary, sent us the following information about Pat Salter's latest book.

A Man of Many Parts - Edwin Harris of Rochester, by Pat Salter, published by the City of Rochester Society.

Anyone who has the slightest interest in Rochester and its surroundings needs to know about Edwin Harris. He was one of the City's *characters* and without him our knowledge of Rochester and its history would be much the poorer. My own meagre efforts as a contributor to books, pamphlets and articles about the City have been enriched by dipping into Harris's own writings. To those of us who act as City Guides, Harris must also be an inspiration, as he was the first official guide and acted in that capacity for many years. During Rochester's Civic Week in 1931 he conducted tours of the City each day at 10.30am, 11.45am and 6.00pm: no mean feat for a man in his 73rd year.

Harris was a prolific writer, both in fact and fiction, however, any history student - and the seeker after truth - must always bear in mind that in his writings the two sometimes become intertwined. So long as that is remembered, his books, pamphlets and articles are a joy to read. But it is as an observer and recorder of contemporary events that he is at his strongest, and for that alone we must be grateful.

Edwin Harris is most often remembered for his writings, but he was indeed a man of many parts: a business man, running the thriving family printing business from The Old Curiosity Shop in Eastgate, a respected antiquarian, an authority on Charles Dickens and founder member of the Rochester branch of the Dickens Fellowship, a special constable, druid and devoted family man. He was also truly a man of Rochester, living almost all of his 79 years in the City.

Harris's life needed to be properly documented and in this volume Pat Salter has done it full justice. Pat has invested an immense amount of time and effort in her research and should be very proud of the finished product. Moreover, The City of Rochester Society is proud to be associated with this work and commends it most warmly to all who share with us a love of our City of Rochester.

A Man of Many Parts - Edwin Harris of Rochester by Pat Salter is available, price £8.95, from the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, and other local outlets. It can also be purchased direct from the publishers (<http://www.city-of-rochester.org.uk>), the City of Rochester Society, 32 Powlett Road, Frindsbury, Rochester, Kent, ME2 4RD, adding £2.00 for postage and packing. Cheques should be made payable to *The City of Rochester Society*.

The Conflagrations of Chatham and their Consequences: A Talk by FOMA Vice Chairman, John Witheridge

On Tuesday 16th October 2007 at 7.20 pm at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, Strood, FOMA Vice Chairman, John Witheridge, will be giving a talk entitled, The Conflagrations of Chatham and their Consequences or, The Great Fires of the 1800s and the Fallout that Followed.

There were three great fires in Chatham. The first, of which not much is known took place in approximately the 1760s/70s; about 90 properties were burnt. The next occurred in 1800 which burnt a great number of dwellings and warehouses along the riverside in Chatham damaging 80 properties and disrupting patients in the hospital. There were three deaths. The last, in 1820, again destroyed the properties of many of the inhabitants of Chatham and signalled the end of at least two well known families of the area. There were several imprisonments, many court cases and possibly the removal of at least one family to another area of the country as a result of prejudice or *misdemeanours*.

The talk is £3.00 for FOMA members and £4.00 for non members. Further information from Cindy O'Halloran, Friends' Secretary, at cindy.ohalloran@medway.gov.uk or on +44 (0)1634 332238/332714

FOMA Christmas Wine and Wisdom

This year's Christmas Wine & Wisdom will be held on Friday December 7th 2007, at the Presentation Suite, Civic Centre Strood, commencing at 7.00 pm. Food will be provided, but please bring your own drinks. There will be a raffle and a prize for the winning team. Further information from Cindy O'Halloran, Friends' Secretary, at cindy.ohalloran@medway.gov.uk or on +44 (0)1634 332238/332714

Calendar of Forthcoming Events and Exhibitions

2nd August to 25th September

Exhibition: From the Medway to the Congo and beyond: the remarkable story of the Pococks of Upnor

by Bruce Aubry; Brian Joyce and Sandra Fowler.

4th September at 7.30p.m

Talk: From the Medway to the Congo and beyond: the remarkable story of the Pococks of Upnor

by Bruce Aubry; Brian Joyce; Sandra Fowler.

15th September

Local and Family History Open Day

9.00 am to 4.00 pm, Civic Suite, Strood.

A showcase for groups involved with the history of Medway and a chance to learn more about MALSC.

1st October to 3rd November

Exhibition: Naval Catastrophes: 1707: Sir Cloudsley Shovell and the wreck of the Association

by Norma Crowe.

30th October 7.30pm

Talk: Naval Catastrophes: 1667 The Dutch in the Medway

by Alan Moss and Peter Downton.

19th November to 29th January 2008
Exhibition: Thomas Hellyar Foord
by Bob Ratcliffe.

7th December 7.00 pm,
FOMA Christmas Wine and Wisdom (quiz night and raffle)
The Presentation Suite, Civic Centre Strood, commencing at 7.00 pm.

12th December 10.00 am to 12noon
Mince Pie Day.

12th December 2.30pm
Talk: A social and architectural history of the Foord Almshouses
by David Hubbard.

31st January to 29th March 2008
Exhibition: Rochester Cathedral: a selection of pictures from the Cathedral's photographic
archive.

Unless otherwise indicated, all the above are held at the Medway Archives and Local Studies
Centre, Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4AU. Further information is available
from Cindy O'Halloran, Friends' Secretary, at cindy.ohalloran@medway.gov.uk
or on +44 (0)1634 332238/332714.

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).

Editorial deadlines

The first Monday (or Tuesday when a Bank Holiday occurs) of February, May, August and November. 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 08 of *The Clock Tower* is Monday 5th November 2007.

Publication date

The third Wednesday following the editorial deadline.

Copyright

The copyright of the contents of *The Clock Tower* belongs to the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre and the authors and owners of any articles and photographs printed. The contents of *The Clock Tower* may not be reproduced without permission of the Editor and/or the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.

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 on: <http://ajthomas.com/theclocktower>

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, Cindy O'Halloran, at the above address, or by telephoning +44 (0)1634 332238/332714. Membership enquiries should be directed to the Membership Secretary, Lisa Birch: lisa.birch@medway.gov.uk; +44 (0)1634 332238

The Committee

Patron

Rt Rev. Dr Michael Nazir-Ali,
Bishop of Rochester



President

Russell (John) Race, JP, DL



Vice Presidents

Cllr Sue Haydock (Medway Council Representative), Pat Salter, Brian Kingsley Smith, Bruce Aubry, Professor Sir Robert Worcester KBE DL

Chairman

Tessa Towner: 37 Ravenswood Avenue, ME2 3BY, Kent.
picketywitch@blueyonder.co.uk

Vice Chairman

John Witheridge: 28 Greendale Gardens, Gillingham, Kent.
dewitheridge@hotmail.co.uk

Treasurer

Jean Skilling: 15 Port Close, Lordswood, Chatham, ME5 8DU, Kent.
jean.skilling@blueyonder.co.uk

Archivist

Stephen Dixon: stephen.dixon@medway.gov.uk

Secretary

Cindy O'Halloran: cindy.ohalloran@medway.gov.uk

Membership Secretary

Lisa Birch lisa.birch@medway.gov.uk; +44 (0)1634 332238

Members

David Carder: 53 The Ridgeway, Chatham, ME4 6PB, Kent.
david.carder@baesystems.com

Dr Andrew Hann: 32 Darwin Court, Rochester, ME1 1NP, Kent.
ha81@gre.ac.uk

Bob Ratcliffe: 12 King Edward Road, Rochester, ME1 1UB, Kent.

The Clock Tower Editor

Amanda Thomas: 72 Crabtree Lane, Harpenden, AL5 5NS, Hertfordshire.
amanda@ajthomas.com

Archives Update

Stephen Dixon, Borough Archivist



Following the recent announcement of Medway Council's phased vacating of the civic centre in Strood and its relocation to the former Lloyd's of London offices in Dock Road, Chatham, from April 2008, much time has been spent contributing our own service's needs to the officers preparing the council's future footprint. We do know a future Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre will not be accommodated at the new civic centre and that our modern records service will be busy in the run up to the move as our colleagues in departments affected appraise their record storage needs. We will keep readers informed as to developments which as always in these situations should be seen as an opportunity for an enhancement of our facilities.

Accessions

In the last edition of *The Clock Tower*, I announced the deposit in the archives of the ledgers of Parker and Son, High Street, Cliffe, grocers, drapers, clothiers, provision merchants and ironmongers, 1917-1943 (DE1133). We have now also received the records of Cliffe Memorial Hall (DE1140). I am always pleased to see our collections relating to the Hoo Peninsula strengthened.

We recently purchased a treasure trove of architectural drawings of George Edward Bond of Victoria Buildings, 384 High Street, Rochester and his partner Frank T. Goring also of Victoria Buildings, 384 High Street, Rochester and 2 Southfields, Rochester, architects and surveyors, clients including Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School, High Street, Rochester. The collection was found in the attic of a house in Rochester. Bond was the leading architect in north Kent at the turn of the century and these beautiful and detailed drawings will complement our various series of local government building plans. Prospective users of the collection should be aware that some conservation treatment may be necessary before it can be opened up to research (DE1142).

New acquisitions also include additional records of the Dunkirk Veterans' Association, meeting at Royal British Legion Club, 78 Livingstone Road, Gillingham, which include wartime reminiscences, 1944-2006 (DE1148).

We have acquired letters, circulars and notes addressed to Mr. J.E. Winfield, 9 Chester Road, Gillingham, chief voluntary worker, and Rev. Cecil J. Soar CF, Lynwood, 59 Rock Avenue, Gillingham, from Kent County Council Public Assistance Department, County Hall, Maidstone, War Damage Commission (London and Regional Office, Tunbridge Wells), concerning the operation of rest centres including the Baptist Hall, Green Street, Gillingham, 1940-1944 (DE1149).

Lastly, we have added to our collections reminiscences and facsimiles of supporting documents pertaining to James William Cheesman (born Chatham 1920) and Frances Enid Margaret Cheesman (1923- 1992), pre and post their emigration from the Medway Towns to Australia (M159).

Volunteer Activities

Friends' Chairman, Tessa Towner, and Treasurer, Jean Skilling, have begun the Friends' first volunteering activity, setting to work on sorting, packaging and listing two sacks of documents found on a FOMA trip to Eastgate House in 2006. So far the material seems to relate to client business of a local solicitor, Reginald Stedman. I am sure Jean and Tessa will have much fun in establishing how his records came to be in Eastgate House, and we look forward to a write-up in a future edition of *The Clock Tower*.

Following the FOMA AGM (see *The Clock Tower* Issue 06), we now have many budding volunteers waiting in the wings. We have recently contacted some of these with definite plans to let them loose on the Ian Fraser slide collection contained in the archives and the local studies illustrations collection! We can make a concerted effort to promote and make accessible our untapped photographic material. The other tasks we have previously identified can be tackled in succession.

Volunteers are asked to sign a volunteer agreement form which places them on an official footing with the council, and ensures they are covered by our insurance. This also enables volunteers to take advantage of a range of special discounts in local libraries. If you are interested in joining the team, then please contact me at stephen.dixon@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.

Staff

I am glad to report that Lisa Birch, Archives Assistant, has had her contract extended to December. Lisa is currently listing the records of Rogers, Stevens and Chance, who had a monopoly in public house valuation in the south east. The collection contains a wealth of information on pubs and breweries and we hope once it becomes available, it will throw light on the heyday of pubs from the late 19th to the mid 20th Centuries. I am delighted to say the owner recently converted his terms of deposit from loan to donation thereby making the collection an asset in more than one sense. I must again express thanks to Roy Murrant for his liaison work in helping the deposit take place several years' ago.

Archives of Great Expectations

This project aims to open up our biggest collection, the Rochester City Archives, to community use for the first time. Our application form for funding from a major national grant making body has reached draft stage and further letters of support have been received. We have nearly finalised the financial aspects of our bid and completed investigations into the educational potential of the project. If our bid is successful, we can promise more exciting volunteering activities which form a crucial part of the project. The Friends will be kept posted as to progress.

CityArk

April Lambourne, Archives and Local Studies Officer, has added to the CityArk database her list of the records of the Rochester and District Natural History Society. Though now sadly dissolved, the society played an important role in the Medway area for over a century or more, its achievements including the nurturing of the eminent naturalist and broadcaster Dr. Jim Flegg. To view April's list, please visit:

[http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/query/results/?Mode=Search&SearchMode=explorer&SearchWords=&DateList=&.submit=Submit+Query&Boolean=AND&Results=25&PathList=%2FCharities and Poor Relief Organisations 1500 1987%2FCh Me 01 Rochester and District Natural History Society 1879 2002%2F&.cgifields=Verbose&.cgifields=Exact](http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/query/results/?Mode=Search&SearchMode=explorer&SearchWords=&DateList=&.submit=Submit+Query&Boolean=AND&Results=25&PathList=%2FCharities%20and%20Poor%20Relief%20Organisations%201500%201987%2FCh%20Me%2001%20Rochester%20and%20District%20Natural%20History%20Society%201879%202002%2F&.cgifields=Verbose&.cgifields=Exact)

We have launched our *Sea Salts* project with the principal series of records from the Hospital of Sir John Hawkins Knight in Chatham collection. Scans are in the process of being uploaded and can be viewed from the Imagebase referral page (link 14) [http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/query/results/?Mode=Search;PathList=%2FZ4 Imagebase%2F%0A;SearchWords=;DateList=](http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/query/results/?Mode=Search;PathList=%2FZ4%20Imagebase%2F%0A;SearchWords=;DateList=)

Scanning of the municipal burial registers of Gravesham and Medway is still in progress and we expect scans of the Gravesham records to be published shortly. This work constitutes part of the *Way of Death* project.

An expansion of the CityArk server's storage capacity by means of adding a RAID Array with 2000Gb capacity will enable the uploading of several exciting new films to our MovieBase shortly. These will include footage of boating on the River Medway and the Rochester Historical Pageant of 1931. At the same time, an upgrade of the ImageBase will include forward and back buttons to improve navigation of the images.

Finally I must congratulate our Vice President Pat Salter on the publication of her book on the local historian and guide Edwin Harris (see the News and Events page above) , which represents the results of several decades of research into Harris, a man of many parts. Pat recently mounted an exhibition on Harris at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre and has given talks on him. Pat worked as Senior Archives Assistant at this office from 1989-1997.

A Man of Many Parts - Edwin Harris of Rochester by Pat Salter is available, price £8.95, from the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, and other local outlets. It can also be purchased direct from the publishers (<http://www.city-of-rochester.org.uk>), the City of Rochester Society, 32 Powlett Road, Frindsbury, Rochester, Kent, ME2 4RD, adding £2.00 for postage and packing. Cheques should be made payable to *The City of Rochester Society*. Copies of her book can be obtained from the City of Rochester Society.

Useful addresses online:

Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre Medway Council Civic Centre Strood Rochester Kent ME2 4AU: archives@medway.gov.uk

Online database and imagebase: <http://cityark.medway.gov.uk>

Online leaflet: <http://www.medway.gov.uk/archive.pdf> (Adobe Acrobat Reader required)

Educational use of Medway Archives:

<http://www.medway.gov.uk/index/leisure/archives/6834.html>

Useful links: [http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/cgi-](http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/cgi-bin/interface.cgi?Mode=Search&PathList=%2FZ2%20USEFUL%20LINKS%2F%0A&SearchWords=&DateList=)

[bin/interface.cgi?Mode=Search&PathList=%2FZ2 USEFUL LINKS%2F%0A&SearchWords=&DateList=](http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/cgi-bin/interface.cgi?Mode=Search&PathList=%2FZ2%20USEFUL%20LINKS%2F%0A&SearchWords=&DateList=)

List of record agents: [http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/cgi-](http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/cgi-bin/interface.cgi?Mode=Search&PathList=%2FZ5%20Record%20agents%2F%0A&SearchWords=)

[bin/interface.cgi?Mode=Search&PathList=%2FZ5 Record agents%2F%0A&SearchWords=&DateList=&Boolean=AND&Results=50](http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/cgi-bin/interface.cgi?Mode=Search&PathList=%2FZ5%20Record%20agents%2F%0A&SearchWords=&DateList=&Boolean=AND&Results=50)

Details of events:

[http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/query/results/?Mode=Search&PathList=%2FZ7_Current_additions to CityArk%2F%0A&SearchWords=&DateList=](http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/query/results/?Mode=Search&PathList=%2FZ7_Current_additions_to_CityArk%2F%0A&SearchWords=&DateList=)

How to find us: <http://cityark.medway.gov.uk/about/contact/>

Who was Waghorn's Father?

Dr Andrew Ashbee



Dr Andrew Ashbee was born and bred in Snodland. The former Head of Music at Rochester Grammar School for Girls, he currently teaches music appreciation for the WEA. Dr Ashbee is internationally known for his work on Tudor and Stuart music and musicians, especially the Maidstone composer John Jenkins. He is the Honorary Curator of Snodland Millennium Museum and the Chairman of Snodland Historical Society.

In this last of a series of three articles, Dr Ashbee examines the genealogy of Thomas Fletcher Waghorn, one of Snodland's most famous residents, and pioneer of the overland route to India via Egypt.

The question cannot be answered with absolute certainty, but we can review the evidence, both fact and fantasy. In her biography *Care of Mr. Waghorn* (Postal History Society, 1964), Marjorie Sankey writes:

‘Thomas Waghorn ... was a butcher with a shop exactly opposite the *Mitre* [Chatham]. His wife had been a Miss Stedman, a descendant of the aristocratic Field family of The Hall, Ashurst Park, from an eldest son, who had been disinherited for marrying the daughter of a veterinary surgeon. This may be the foundation of the legend of our Waghorn's aristocratic birth and fortune. The butcher Waghorn had had three daughters before the birth of their only son. Another daughter was born later.’



From the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre Couchman Collection, ref DE402/16/p.12. High Street Chatham. Reproduction Postcard entitled Old Chatham, High Street, looking east and entry to Full of Love Alley and The Brook, showing range of buildings on north side of street including entrance to Fullalove Alley, disused poulterer's shop and weatherboard buildings. Street scene shows bystanders and carriageway. Couchman's accompanying notes pertain to redevelopment of area and laying out of Bachelor Street 1900-1902. Published for Kent County Council, Chatham Library by Collectorcard, Croydon, Surrey. Original exposed before 1902.

The marriage to Stedman is also reported in Freda Harcourt's entry for Waghorn in *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004). Family genealogists have looked into this connection and have concluded that the butcher might be the Thomas Field Waghorn, baptized at Teston on 7th October 1770, illegitimate son of Hannah. This, of

course, is a generation earlier than Sankey and Harcourt assert, and concerns a baptism rather than a marriage. No Stedman is mentioned, but the middle name, Field, might well identify the father. The date of this baptism tallies well with the elder Thomas's burial at St Mary's, Chatham, on 28th March 1826, aged 56.

But his *marriage* is established beyond doubt by an entry in the Snodland parish register:

28th July 1794: Thomas Waghorn, butcher, Chatham, to Ann Goodhugh of Snodland.

The marriage was witnessed by John Goodhugh, Ann's father, and William Gorham, Ann's brother-in-law. Both were married to Fletchers, from whom the younger Thomas gained his middle name. Sankey's list of children born to the couple is incomplete and Harcourt again followed her in naming Thomas as their only son. The registers of St Mary's, Chatham, show the following offspring:

John, baptized 9th September 1795. Nothing more is heard of him and he may have died in infancy.

Elizabeth, buried 14th February 1797, an infant.

Ann, baptized 3rd March 1798; emigrated to Australia in 1853 and died there.

Thomas Fletcher, baptized 16th July 1800; died 1850 and buried at Snodland.

James Goodhugh, baptized 29th December 1802; buried 14th October 1804.

Mary Jane, baptized 27th June 1804; buried at Snodland 25th May 1883.

Edward, baptized 14th May 1806; emigrated to Australia and died at Queen Street, Melbourne, on 18th July 1868.

Eliza, baptized 12th July 1809; buried 29th August the same year.

Frances, baptized 1st August 1810; buried at Snodland 14th December 1848.

Sarah*, baptized 9th June 1813; emigrated to Australia in 1855 and died at Prahan, Melbourne, on 14th February 1887.

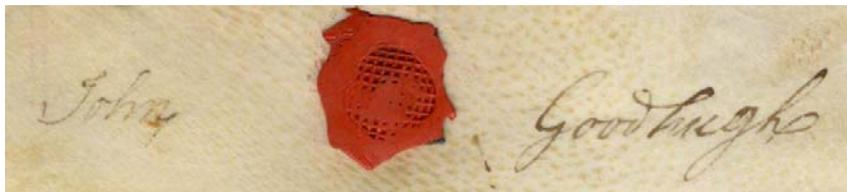
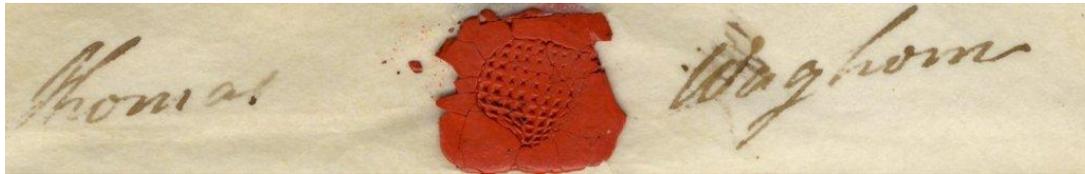
I must here acknowledge the great help I have received from Mrs. Robin Handley of Junee, New South Wales, descended from Sarah*, for supplying copies of documents and of facts about the Waghorn family, gleaned during her own researches and through contacts with Australian descendants.

What else can we find about Thomas Waghorn I? On 30th June 1800 a terrible fire broke out in Chatham which destroyed a hundred properties. It began when sparks from a blacksmith ignited a shed full of cordage, hemp and oakum and spread along the High Street. The *Times* (2nd July 1800) reported:

'Monday forenoon, between 11 and 12 o'clock, a fire broke out at a Wharf a little way above the Sun Tavern, Chatham, which raged with dreadful violence upwards of two hours; both sides of the main street are in one heap of ruins, from within three or four doors of the Sun Tavern to the Union Flag, and very few of the houses opposite that space, towards the new road, have escaped. [...]

Waghorn was not affected and was one of the most generous contributors to the relief fund, donating £5. 0. 0. A second fire of equal devastation occurred on 3 March 1820, and Waghorn this time subscribed £1. 0. 0. to the relief effort. Accounts of support to the sufferers in both fires were meticulously kept and published by William Jeffery. MALSC documents also show that Thomas subscribed to sermons associated with the Chatham Free

Schools in 1814 and to the First Annual Report of the Chatham Church Sunday School in 1815. In 1826 Pigot's Directory gives the address of Waghorn's butcher's shop as 139 High Street, Chatham. (For some reason Pigot's 1823 Directory excludes all butchers!) This may have been his since the 1790s. The Land Tax records before 1805 record that he owned three other houses as well as his own. (A problem is that the Land Tax records at the Centre for Kentish Studies (CKS) are now available on microfilm only and it has proved extremely time-consuming and difficult to compare even two of the relevant volumes in seeking continuity or change of ownership/tenancy. One needs to see the originals side by side.) There seem to have been some changes, though these are not yet properly established, but on 31st August 1816 Waghorn was declared bankrupt and had to sell the three houses. The bankruptcy indenture, which is in my possession, shows that John Goodhugh had been a partner with Waghorn in buying the houses in Trinity term 1800-01, no doubt in the hope of setting up his son-in-law on a secure footing. The sale of the houses probably cleared his debts and Waghorn continued to trade.



The signatures of Thomas Waghorn I and John Goodhugh from the bankruptcy deed in the possession of Dr Andrew Ashbee.

Unfortunately none of this helps with the tracing of Waghorn's genealogy, but it is worth noting that the reasonable prosperity of Waghorn in the years following his marriage is just as likely to have come from Goodhugh's support as from any connection with putative aristocratic forebears like the Fields. I have always been sceptical of the illegitimacy story and propose another line of enquiry that might prove more fruitful: Waghorns as butchers.

It is intriguing to find two, and subsequently three, Waghorns trading as butchers in Rochester and Chatham and it seems worth investigating if there is any link between them. Apart from Thomas I, there was a younger man, William, in Rochester High Street. William's family was investigated by Robin Handley and others. He was baptized at Otham, near Maidstone, on 17th January 1796, the son of Samuel and his second wife Ann (nee Rose). He was of St. Nicholas parish, Rochester, on 26th June 1821, when he married Ann Biggs, so presumably he had already set up his shop (a few doors to the west of The King's Head). They had eight children, one of whom, James, is well documented as an omnibus proprietor, and the family appear in the censuses.

Samuel's two marriages at Otham: first to Margaret Bolton on 10th October 1785 (two children: Samuel and Elizabeth), and second to Ann Rose on 27th October 1794 (four children, of whom William was the eldest) can be traced in the International Genealogical Index, or IGI, on <http://www.familysearch.org/>, but the Otham baptisms are not yet included. However, the register shows a baptism for a Samuel on 29th July 1759, the son of another Samuel and Ann. No record of this marriage appears at Otham, so they must have come from elsewhere. I have traced six children in the Otham register:

Mary	bap.	10 th July 1757
Samuel	bap.	29 th July 1759
Sarah	bap.	21 st August 1763
William	bap.	26 th January 1765
Thomas	bap.	12 th October 1768
Edward	bap.	15 th June 1771 (buried 22 nd October that year)

I do not know the occupation of Samuel I, but Samuel II was a butcher and it is possible the father was too. I suggest that there is a strong likelihood that Thomas the elder was Samuel II's brother. True the baptism date of 12th October 1768 does not conform with his stated burial age of 56, but there is only eighteen months difference and experience in many years of transcribing documents has shown that discrepancies of this magnitude (or greater) are commonplace. In those days there were no official records of baptisms, marriages or deaths other than the registers, so much depended on memory and mental calculation, either of which might prove fallible. No apprenticeships have been found for the family and they may have learned their trade from each other. If so, it is quite likely that the elder Samuel taught his sons. Later William may have come under the wing of Thomas I and, following his training, established himself in Rochester High Street. Eventually, too, there is Edward, Thomas I's son, another butcher (who on this basis would be William's cousin) trading first in Rochester and in later life in Melbourne.

Whilst this butchery link may be supposition, I feel it provides a much firmer foundation than an attribution to an illegitimate birth with no known later history. In time we may learn more.

If you have any further information which may shed light on the mystery of Waghorn's genealogy, please contact The Clock Tower Editor, Amanda Thomas, at amanda@ajthomas.com.

The Pocock Family of Upnor

Brian Joyce

Brian Joyce, co-founder of the Pocock Press, was born in Chatham, attended school in Rochester and studied at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne. After working in Newcastle and Sussex, he returned to Medway, where he has lived ever since. Brian is the author of The Chatham Scandal – A History of Medway’s prostitution in the Late Nineteenth Century, Dumb Show and Noise – Theatre, Music Hall and Cinema in the Medway Towns, Chatham and the Medway Towns - A History and Celebration, and (with Bruce Aubry) In The Thick Of It – Medway Men and Women in the Boer War 1899-1902.

Visitors to MALSC between 2nd August and 25th September 2007 will be able to view an exhibition on the Pococks, probably the most notable family in Upnor’s history.

The exhibition focuses on two of the most renowned examples of Victorian exploration: Sir John Franklin’s expedition to search for the Northwest Passage in 1845, and Henry Morton Stanley’s second expedition to Africa in 1874. The former was an unmitigated disaster in which all the participants died without getting anywhere near their goal. The latter was a success in that Stanley managed to answer a number of outstanding questions about central Africa; he proved, for example that the source of the River Nile was in Lake Victoria. Stanley had selected Frank and Edward Pocock to be two of his three English assistants; the *Dark Continent* claimed the lives of both brothers. Frank and Edward were born after the death of their uncle Francis, whose bones, together with those of the rest of the Franklin Expedition, lay frozen in the Canadian Arctic. The brothers were aware of their uncle’s icy fate; one wonders whether they reflected upon it as they toiled and sweltered in the feverish heat of central Africa.



Frank Pocock, and engraving taken from a photograph of c. 1874 (latest); the logo of the Pocock Press.

Bruce Aubry, Sandra Fowler and I have been researching the Pocock family and their exploits for some time. A few years ago, for example, Bruce and I, with help from our Belgian archivist friend, Michel Vermote, were able to view the Stanley collection at the Royal Museum for Central Africa in Brussels. The archivist, the late Maurits Wynants was kind enough to show us important Pocock-related pages of the diary kept by Stanley during the expedition, and provided us with photocopies. Quite independently, Peter Cook, a local journalist, has been ploughing the same furrow, and we are delighted that he has agreed to participate in our talk at MALSC on 4th September.

The Franklin Expedition, which comprised two Royal Naval ships, the Erebus and Terror, sailed from Greenhithe in May 1845. The expedition’s commander, Sir John Franklin, was the latest in a long line of explorers

attempting to find a navigable sea route linking the Atlantic and Pacific oceans via the Canadian Arctic. Franklin was expected to be away for some time, and the vessels carried supplies to last three years, much of it in tins. Several Medway men were among the crews of these ships, including John Hartnell of Brompton. He died during the expedition's first winter in the Arctic, and was given a marked grave. Canadian archaeologists who examined his frozen and well preserved remains in the 1980s found abnormally high quantities of lead in Hartnell's tissue. They concluded that it came from the solder used in the manufacture of the food tins; eating large quantities of food contaminated with lead would have caused the ships' officers to make muddled decisions which probably contributed to the expedition's final fate.

Among the crew of HMS Erebus was twenty-four year old Able Seaman Francis Pocock from Upnor. He and his shipmates spent their first winter icebound at Beechey Island. When spring came, they sailed on, but became icebound again during the winter of 1846-7; Franklin died during this harsh period. Spring brought no relief this time, and both ships remained locked in the ice. The sailors spent a second winter in the same terrible situation. By the spring of 1848, the food was running out and thirty men had died. In their desperation, the 105 survivors abandoned the Erebus and Terror and began to trudge southwards across the ice to find safety. Their route was traced by later search teams who followed the trail of supplies and possessions they jettisoned to lighten their load. One by one, all the sailors, including Francis Pocock, succumbed to exhaustion and cold, and dropped in their tracks. There were no survivors.

We can only speculate as to the time and manner of Pocock's death. Unlike his nephews, who died in Africa thirty years later, he left no letters or diaries, and none of his companions had the energy to record his death. Frank and Edward Pocock never met their uncle, but his fate was frequently talked about within the family. Did Francis Pocock's spirit of adventure live on in his two nephews?

Frank and Edward were, like previous generations of Pococks, fishermen on the River Medway at Upnor. To augment their living, the brothers and their father Henry also helped maintain and crew the yacht moored at Upnor belonging to Sir Edwin Arnold, the editor of the *Daily Telegraph*. Arnold, a Gravesend man and a former pupil at the King's School in Rochester, was the joint backer, with Gordon Bennett of the *New York Herald*, of HM Stanley's second African expedition. Arnold recommended the Pocock brothers to Stanley as strong, reliable and resourceful assistants who knew boats and for whom working on the river was second nature. For the brothers, this was a unique opportunity to work with a notable explorer, world-famous since his *discovery* of David Livingstone a few years earlier. By agreeing to help Stanley penetrate the darkness of Africa, discover the source of the Nile and travel across the continent from the Indian Ocean to the Atlantic, they were leaping into the unknown; could they really have imagined the conditions and tasks which awaited them?

The brothers were tremendous assets to the explorer, and rose to every new challenge that confronted them. As Stanley later wrote to Henry Pocock in Upnor: "Few fathers can boast of such sons as yours. Both Frank and Ted proved themselves sterling men, noble and brave hearts, and faithful servants..."

The expedition, entitled, The Anglo-American Expedition for the Discovery of the Nile and Congo Sources, set off from Zanzibar on the east coast of Africa in early November 1874. In addition to Frank and Edward Pocock, Stanley took a third Englishman, Frederick Barker, more than 300 Africans, eight tons of stores and a forty feet long wooden boat, the Lady

Alice. Porters were able to manhandle the vessel through the jungle, as it was built in several sections, which could be bolted together when required. Frank and Edward would be particularly useful in ensuring the seaworthiness of the Lady Alice when it was assembled. As it pushed its way westwards through the jungle, Stanley's procession stretched back a half-mile.

Over the next few months, Frank and Edward, neither of whom had strayed outside the south of England before, were struck down by several bouts of malaria, but it was typhus that killed Edward in mid January 1875. His brother Frank wrote in his diary: "He was buried at night under a mango tree with a deep cross cut in the tree. The burial service was performed by Mr Stanley...His head lays east, his feet west, God rest his soul."

In March 1875, the expedition reached the south shore of Lake Victoria. Stanley ordered that the Lady Alice should be assembled, a process which Frank supervised and checked. The explorer then set off to circumnavigate the lake, a thousand-mile voyage which took 57 days. Stanley left Frank Pocock in charge of the more than a hundred porters and servants who remained in base camp during this anxious time. Then Frederick Barker died. As Frank confided in his diary: "I was alone, the only white man with one hundred and sixty six men under my charge". The young Upnor fisherman was facing challenges unthinkable a year or two before, and was not found wanting.

For a further two years, Frank Pocock assisted Stanley, organising the porters and servants, dispensing summary justice and fighting off attackers. Frank was evolving from a simple, sturdy Kentish fisherman into an experienced and mature explorer. Who knows what Pocock could have achieved later in life if he had survived this expedition? Tragically, Frank's potential can only be guessed at.

By 3rd June 1877, the expedition was very close to the Atlantic coast; the survivors had almost crossed Africa from east to west. The River Congo flowed very swiftly at this point, with strong currents and series after series of rapids and waterfalls. It seems that Frank decided to station a canoe half way between sets of rapids to act as a rescue point if any of the convoy got into difficulties. However, rather than lower the boat across the river on lines, he decided to take it across himself by shooting the rapids. Pocock's gamble did not pay off – the canoe was sucked downwards and the current shot it over the Zinga Falls. Nine of its crew abandoned the canoe, but Frank Pocock was swept away. Five days later, some of the African bearers reported to Stanley that they had spotted the corpse of a white man floating on its back in the river. They recognised Pocock by the bandages with which he had bound his ulcerated feet.

Frank's death nearly destroyed Stanley. "BLACK WOEFUL DAY," he wrote in his diary, and followed it with an increasingly incoherent and rambling entry, his handwriting deteriorating as his emotions got the better of him. He later wrote to Frank's father: "I would to God that Frank had to write to you about my death rather than I should be compelled to write about Frank's."

As I wrote earlier, Bruce Aubry, Sandra Fowler, Peter Cook and I have been fascinated by these Pocock stories for some years, and when Bruce and I decided to start writing and publishing books on Medway history, we named our venture The Pocock Press using the most well-known picture of Frank as our logo. However, we cannot claim to have rediscovered a completely forgotten part of the area's history. Visitors to Upnor Church are

invariably impressed by the fine plaque there which commemorates the memory of Francis, Edward and Frank. There is also a memorial plaque to Edward in St Nicholas Church in Strood, where he sang in the choir.



The plaque at Upnor Church, from the Frindsbury Extra Parish Council website (<http://www.frindsburyextra-pc.gov.uk/twoupnorbrothers.htm>)

The local press has also published articles on Frank and Edward from time to time. For example, in 1961, a Sunday newspaper serialised Stanley's diaries, which prompted a *Chatham News* article on Alice Pemble of Luton, Chatham, a great-niece of the brothers.

When Richard Hall published his biography, *Stanley the Adventurer Explored* in 1974, articles on the Pococks appeared in the Medway press, because Hall was the first biographer of Stanley to have had access to the diaries of Edward and Frank Pocock. These volumes, lying in the attic of Mrs Jean Brown, another grand-niece of the brothers, were discovered by chance. Richard Hall had visited Mrs Brown in Gloucestershire seeking information for his book, and had come away fairly disappointed. However, then, and in his own words, "A few months after my trip to Stow on the Wold, a message came from Mrs Brown. Was I still interested in Stanley? If so, I might like to know that her son, while clearing out the attic, had come upon a cardboard box containing some old diaries. She was not certain, but thought they might be diaries kept by Frank and Edward; perhaps I would like to examine them? The simple and poignant record made by the Pococks during their ill-fated venture into Africa had come to light again after being lost for almost a century."

These diaries were eventually donated to Rhodes House Library, Oxford. Both Sandra Fowler and Peter Cook have travelled to Oxford to read the originals; MALSC is fortunate enough to hold a typed transcript kindly donated by Joanna Downard.

In June of this year, Mrs Brown's sons Rob and Martin travelled from Yorkshire and Germany respectively to meet Bruce, Sandra and myself at MALSC. They were accompanied by Pat White, yet another grand niece of the brothers, who is particularly interested in the family's genealogy. They brought with them a huge amount of Pocock material, some of which they have generously lent to MALSC for the duration of our exhibition.

Stanley wrote in his diary that, "Edward Pocock is kind enough to act as my bugler, because from long practice at the military camps at Aldershot and Chatham, he understands the signals. He has familiarised Hamadi, the chief guide with its notes, so that in case of a halt being required, Hamadi may be informed immediately." Thanks to Rob and Martin Brown, Edward Pocock's bugle has pride of place in the exhibition. They have also lent us the pocket knife that Frank took on the expedition. These artefacts, along with a club and axe also dating from the expedition and lent by Rochester Guildhall Museum, enable us to edge physically closer to Frank and Edward Pocock.

Our exhibition ends with a few reminders that the Pocock family's adventures continued into the twentieth century. One wonders how long it will be before the exploits of another member of the family draw themselves to our attention.

The exhibition on the Pococks could not have taken place without the kind help of Rob and Martin Brown, Pat White, Joanna Downard and Michel Vermote. Thanks must also go to Reuben Childs, Kent Family History Society (Medway Branch), Derek Moore, Ron O'Neill (Genealogy Printers), Tony Sutton, Tessa Towner, Ken Williamson and the staffs of Rhodes House Library, Guildhall Museum Rochester, National Archives, and of course the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.

The exhibition, From the Medway to the Congo and beyond: the remarkable story of the Pococks of Upnor by Bruce Aubry, Brian Joyce and Sandra Fowler will be held at The Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre from 2nd August to 25th September 2007.

The talk, From the Medway to the Congo and beyond: the remarkable story of the Pococks of Upnor by Bruce Aubry, Brian Joyce and Sandra Fowler will be held at The Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre on 4th September at 7.30 pm.

Grandad's Memories

Di Bower

Di Bower was born in Yorkshire, the daughter of a military family. She travelled extensively as a child, but when her father left the army, the family settled in the Medway Towns. Di was educated at Fort Pitt Grammar School, worked in the avionics industry for 30 years, and joined Medway Council six years ago to form an Internal Temporary Staff Agency. Apart from her interest in Medway life and local history, Di makes dolls' house miniatures and has recently acquired a lively Springer Spaniel puppy.

Di's grandfather, Roland (Rolie) BERTIE, was born in Bristol in 1884. At the age of 14 he enlisted in the 1st Gloucester Volunteer Artillery Regiment as a drummer/gunner and observer. In 1901 he moved from Bristol to the Medway area and in 1905 met and married Jane (Jeanie) MUNGEAM – a descendant of William Mungeam, the first Mayor of Rochester (1460). Rolie was a local post master, was involved in the local scouting movement and wrote the Stargazer column in the Chatham News; he died in 1951. During the closing years of the First World War he kept a daily diary, and then following the armistice, he wrote a piece called Memories. Di Bower now shares extracts from these writings which give a vivid insight into his experiences on the Italian border.



Dear Dad & May. Sept 15/18
Cheerio! Hope you are both
fit & well,
Glad to say I am quite "OK."
War news keeps cheerful, soon
see the end of it now, so shall
soon see you both again.
Shall have heaps to talk about
then, shan't we!
All Good Wishes
Rolie.

ADDRESS ONLY CORRESPONDENCE
POST CARD

Roland (Rolie) Bertie, 15th September 1918, and reverse of image

Grandad reported for duty with the 1st Reserve Battalion of the Honourable Artillery Company on May 9th 1917 and arrived in France on his way through to Italy on August 4th 1917. In October 1917 French and British troops were sent to Italy after the German-Austrian army broke through the Italian front at Corporetto and began an advance towards Venice. French and British troops played a notable part in the campaign initially in a reserve and support role during the Italian defence of the River Piave in 1917, then in the defeat of the

Austrian June offensive. The British Divisions formed the spearhead of the final drive across the Piave river leading to the total defeat of the Austrian army.

20th March 1918

Battery hill fighting – thick mist in valley clear on hilltops – wonderful sun effects on clouds, mist on hills during the morning. Filling Lewis Gun magazines in the afternoon – got boots from Snobbs – many rumours from France.

4th April 1918

All day working party with haversack rations. Village on plateau being shelled – on gas guard from 11 pm to midnight – RATS. Sleeping about 140 of us in a hut – very crowded. Snow water for cooking and washing.

7th April 1918

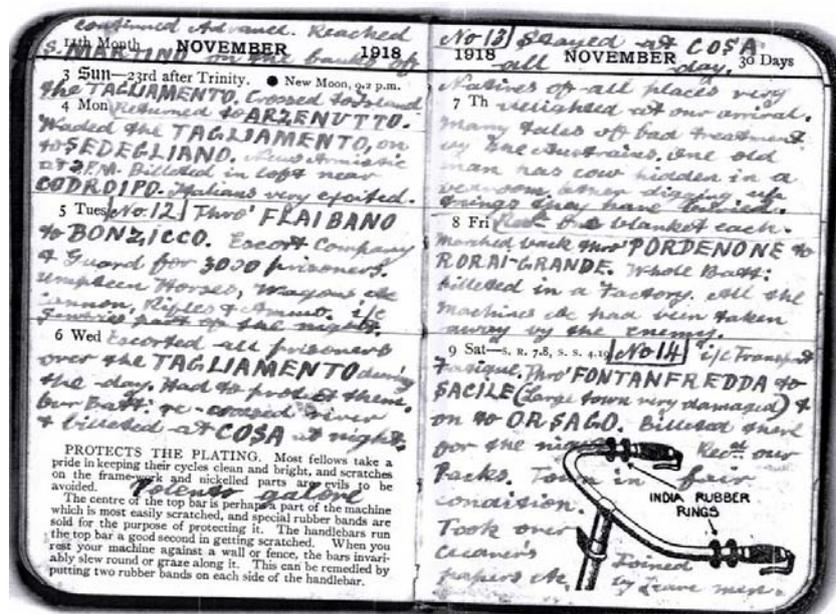
Snow and sleet storm all day. Very bad weather. Ammunition fatigue etc ready for move. Move up to second line trenches. Spend night in a cave.

8th April 1918

Moved into Italian mountain tents on crest to left of Magnaboschi. Water carrying fatigue in enemy view. Mess orderly for tea. Gas guard on cave and tents. With working party on Lewis Gun post – very cold.

10th April 1918

Heavy snow storms in night. Morning fatigue clearing roads of snow with snow ploughs etc. Duke of Connaught motored past. On wood fatigue [picture] in afternoon – rain and snow storm.



An image from Roland Bertie's original diary

23rd October 1918

Our Battalion supported by the Royal Welsh Fusiliers crossed the Piave in small boats under machine gun and shell fire and forced a landing on Grave-Di-Padadopolous [Grave di Papadopoli] – met 2 regiments of the 7th Austrian division – took 50 prisoners before midnight.

24th October 1918

Had charge of prisoners today, heavy shell fire all day, pouring with rain. Sent prisoners down. Took up new post at dusk and dug in. Out Battalion taken over 350 prisoners so far. Main attack held up we have to hang on. Held pass until dusk then started a new drive. Troops landed for counter-attack – Lewis Guns used. Worked around and captured more. 3 Regiments of Italian landed at east end of island – handed all our prisoners to them...enemy planes bombing pontoons...our losses about seventy killed and wounded.

5th November 1918

Escort Company and Guard for 3000 prisoners, umpteen horses, wagons etc cannon, rifles and ammunition. In charge of sentries part of the night. Escorted all prisoners over the TAGLIAMENTO during the day. Had to protect them – our Batt. re-crossed river & billeted at COSA at night...Natives of all places very delighted at our arrival. Many tales of bad treatment by the Austrians. One old man has cow hidden in a bedroom, others digging up things they have buried...

19th November 1918

Bath parade, new towels and socks...

30th November 1918

Reached IMST before dawn – de-trained after breakfast...marched into IMST headed by the bands...

8th December

Wrote postcard home [see the images below of the front and reverse of the same postcards]...I am now somewhere in Austria hope to be home early in the New Year.



Dec: 8th/18
Dear Dad & May,
Sorry I shall not see you this year, but hope to be in old Blyth fairly early next year.
Hope you are both O.K., glad to say I am very fit & well.
I am now "some-where in Austria", but, my address is as before as our mail is sent on from Italy.
Very cold here, but, quite nice.
all Good Wishes for Xmas, & a Bright & Happy New Year.
yours
Kovilex

At Last!
Standing for Italy
en route for Blyth
at 4-45 40 day.
Cheers!
Love & Kisses
Kovilex

Memories

By 'Hawkeye'

November 11th, and Memories are synonymous.

Sad memories to most, glad memories to some, and, to others who, like myself, 'came thro' ' memories that are both sad and glad.

Mostly our thoughts to-day are of the finish of the War. As a war time member of the Honourable Artillery Company I remember the finish of the scrap on the Italian/Austrian front. I remember Percy, married on his last 'Blighty' leave, and killed soon after re-joining us.

And Mick who wished for death because he lost his eyes, but who is happy again to-day, thanks to St. Dunstan's. The little gallant band of Italian watermen who floated us, six at a time on tiny flat bottom boats, across the deepest and most dangerous spans of the wide swift running PIAVE RIVER when the 2nd Bn [Battalion] of the H.A.C. captured the island of GRAVE-DI-PAPADOPOLI, and so started the last great advance. The password 'CARDIFF' – chosen because the Welsh Fusiliers crossed with us to support.

A Welsh boy who had half his ear blown off, but refused o turn back.

A [sic] Austrian, one of our prisoners, who, at dawn, working under hellish fire, helped us with our wounded.

The next days [sic] counter-attack, and the pouring rain which swelled the river and made the task of those behind us ten times worse.

The arrival of other bemuddled [sic] and thoroughly soaked Regiments. Men of Devon, the Gordons, Borderers, Manchesters, Yorks and Lancs, Durhams, Staffordshires and Northumber Fusiliers to mention a few, and also our Italian comrades in arms, all drenched to the skin, endured a hellish barrage as the big attack was begun, and rank after rank plunged once more into the river's icy waters, struggling breast high in the swift stream to gain the enemy's bank.

The explosion of one shell on the edge of the shingle which lifted two pack mules fifty feet in the air.

Te general advance, and the hold up again on the bank of the LIVENZA RIVER, the crossing of this river and the capture of PORDENONE, a good size town the streets of which were littered with rubbish with many buildings burning, and the Railway Station burnt out.

The old lady, and a young girl, who, from the shelter of their isolated cottage door, on a country road beyond PORDENONE, waved and blew kisses as we passed by, whilst in their

gateway lay a dead Austrian Machine-gunner [sic] across his gun. Just beyond lay two dead horses beside an over-turned gun limber, an old man, apparently the husband of the old lady at the cottage, was, quite regardless of his own danger from bullets flying about, slicing steaks from the rump of the near-side horse.

Another icy experience was the crossing of the TAGLIAMENTO RIVER, and when, at the village of SEDEGLIANO on the afternoon of November 4th news of the Armistice on that Front was made known we felt strangely indifferent, we thought it merely meant another theatre of war for us.

At BONZICCO we had to protect some of our prisoners from the villagers, who became very threatening.

At COSA half the village was digging for hidden treasures, ornaments, flacons of wine and two large round cheeses came up from under one kitchen floor.

One old man had a cow upstairs in his bedroom, behind the door between the bed and the wall, he must have carried it up as a calf, he was very proud of it, and it was very clean. On the return journey we re-crossed the PIAVE RIVER, by pontoon bridge this time, on November 11th, and the news of the Armistice on the Western Front was passed along the line, only to be greeted with the singing of 'Tell me the old old story.'

Billeted that night at BREDADIPIAVE we found the news from the Western Front officially posted up, then only did we realise it was true, we were by no means elated because also posted up were lists of those killed, wounded and missing in the attack, and the advance which followed it, and from those who had just returned.

It is of those and of those who went before them, that I have the dearest 'MEMORIES' of all.

The Victoria County History at MALSC

Dr Andrew Hann, Committee Member



Dr Andrew Hann was appointed Kent Team Leader for the Victoria County History's England's Past for Everyone (EPE) programme in September 2005. Employed by the University of Greenwich, Andrew is based in the Medway area and is a Member of the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.

As the Kent *England's Past For Everyone* (EPE) project draws to a close, I would like to thank everyone who has been involved over the past two years. This ambitious and innovative local history initiative would not have been possible without the support of a large and enthusiastic team of volunteers. To celebrate the end of the project we will be holding an event in the Pilkington building on Medway campus on Saturday 27th October 2007. This event will be a great opportunity to thank all those involved in the project for their hard work over the past two years, and also to look to the future of the *Victoria County History* in Kent.

Following a fund-raising event at the Bridgewardens' Chambers on the 27th June 2007, we have now secured enough money to start planning for a new project, which will focus on the Medway towns. This will be a two and a half year project exploring the history of the Towns from 1650 to 1950 through a series of case studies. Again we hope to involve volunteers in every aspect of the research, and will be working in collaboration with the Friends of Medway Archives who are shortly to submit a bid for funding to catalogue the Rochester City Archives – a vital source for the new study that is currently inaccessible. Further details about the new project will be circulated shortly.

On a sadder note I will be leaving EPE Kent this August, 2007, to take up a new post as Senior Properties Historian with English Heritage. I will, however, continue to be involved with the project until the end of November on a part-time basis, and thereafter as an interested observer. My successor will be appointed over the summer and will take over the day-to-day running of the project in the autumn. There will be a short period of overlap so that they can get properly acquainted with the study area and the volunteer team before my departure. My association with the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre will continue.

I have very much enjoyed working with everyone over the past two years, and in the process have learnt a great deal about the history of Kent. The paperback volume of the *Victoria County History's England's Past for Everyone* will be published in the summer of 2008 and will be a fitting tribute to all our collective efforts and, of course, to the study of our local history.

Editor's Footnotes

Amanda Thomas is a freelance writer and public relations consultant. Born in Chatham, but now based in Hertfordshire, she belongs to several historical organisations, including the Kent Family History Society, the North West Kent Family History Society, and The Council for British Archaeology; she has a degree in Italian from the University of Kent and is a member of their alumni association.



Summer should mean long warm days in the garden or on the beach, a pause in the normal chaotic routine. Unfortunately for those of us connected in any way to the taking of public examinations, it does not. For years I had a recurring nightmare when the words, "You may now turn over the paper..." reverberated in my subconscious together with a fear that I had not studied or revised for the examination before me. Thankfully I have not had that dream for some time, perhaps because the taking of exams in the summer period has once again become a reality in a household with two teenage children.

This year, the lull between taking exams and waiting for the results has been filled with the interesting and diverting task of visiting prospective universities with my son. Universities now welcome parents to their Open Days, recognising their role in footing the bill for their offspring's further education. To be honest, my role at the visits was more an attempt to re-live my student days. I relished accompanying my son, at times finding it hard not to say, "It wasn't like this in my day..." Of course it wasn't, but had I wanted my son's experience to have been more like my own, I shouldn't have been there at all. I am glad, however, that I was, as the experience was enlightening in more ways than one.

Most universities throw open their doors throughout the early summer attracting prospective students - and their parents - with exhibitions, demonstrations, sample lectures and seminars; some even host mini-courses to give an idea of what to expect as an undergraduate. My son wishes to read archaeology, and it was fascinating, though somewhat alarming, to see that most departments did not expect a great deal of specific knowledge of the subject from their prospective intake. Many teaching staff made it clear that the first year would contain an element of 'spoon-feeding' as secondary education today equips students with little formal knowledge of ancient history, civilization or language.

Such a situation is inevitable when the National Curriculum no longer includes Classics, and many state schools do not make the study of history or a modern foreign language compulsory at GCSE; the formal teaching of English grammar is history itself. I was further dismayed recently to read in *The Sunday Times* newspaper (12th August 2007) that the 'last dedicated A-levels in Latin and Greek are to be scrapped from next year...the OCR exam board is planning to combine the two subjects along with ancient history and classical civilisation into a single classics A-level, to be taught from 2008.' The article goes on to say that although pupils will still be able to specialise in Greek or Latin, the proposals necessarily mean that the study of ancient languages will be watered down.

Language is a key to unlocking history, and as such its importance should not be underestimated. Language can provide as many clues to our past as any trench, piece of pottery, or Roman coin. For example, English contains multiple clues to a history of invasion and immigration with words whose origins lay in the languages of the Vikings, Normans and Romans. We don't need archaeological evidence to see the Latin influence in Welsh words such as *fffenestr* (window), *eglwys* (church) and *pont* (bridge), though further investigation would need to establish if such words do derive from a Roman presence or because they have been absorbed from English neighbours and invaders speaking a tongue peppered with

(Norman) French. By comparing the elements of language which are the same, the migration and origins of our ancestors can be inferred, particularly when coupled with archaeological evidence and new scientific techniques comparing genetic makeup.

As is often the case, there is a quiet revolution brewing in many English state schools, thanks to dedicated groups of teachers and parents. According to the Cambridge Latin Course website, over 3,000,000 copies of its course have been sold, and I suspect most of those sales have been in the last few years. Interestingly, The Latin Club at my son's state school, which uses the Cambridge course, is one of the most popular and well attended lunchtime clubs of all.

If you would like to join the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, please contact Lisa Birch, Membership Secretary, Medway Archives Office, Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent ME2 4AU. Telephone +44 (0)1634 332238; email lisa.birch@medway.gov.uk.

Famous Medway People...



©Stuart Cresswell

*Lady Rebecka Rolfe, formerly Matoaka, or Pocahontas, of the Algonquin Nation.
Kindly supplied from the private archive of her descendant, Mr. Stuart Cresswell.*

The previous issue of *The Clock Tower* (06, May 2007) marked the four hundredth anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, Virginia, with a special series of features on Pocahontas. After the publication of the above portrait on the front cover, Stuart Cresswell re-contacted the Editor, Amanda Thomas, with the following information:

“I have now heard from David Morenus [one of the American descendants of Pocahontas] as to the provenance of the frontispiece portrait of Pocahontas. This is what he says: ‘That image was scanned at the University of Texas at Austin, from their copy of the book, *World Noted Women, Or, Types of Womanly Attributes of All Lands and Ages*, published in New York by D. Appleton and Company, 1883. (Their copy anyway; the first edition was 1858.) The book was by Mary Cowden Clarke (1809-1898) with seventeen engravings on steel by W.H. Mote, from original designs by Charles Staal. (See <http://utopia.utexas.edu/project/portraits/index.html?img=313> and note the identical blemishes.)’ ”

The exhibition celebrating the founding of the Virginia and American colonies is running until September 2007 at the Guildhall Museum, Rochester, Kent; admission is free of charge. The exhibition will centre on the 1617 burial record for Rebecca Wroth or Rolf alias Pocahontas, contained in the first parish register of St George’s church, Gravesend, and held at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.