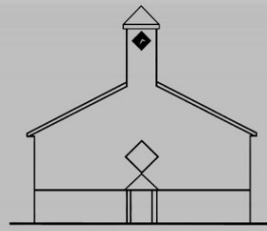


# The Clock Tower



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

Issue Number 06: May 2007



*©Stuart Cresswell*

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

This issue of *The Clock Tower* marks the four hundredth anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, Virginia, with a special series of features on Pocahontas.

An exhibition celebrating the founding of the Virginia and American colonies will run from May to September 2007 at the Guildhall Museum, Rochester, Kent; admission will be free of charge. The exhibition will centre on the 1617 burial record of Pocahontas, contained in the first parish register of St George's church, Gravesend, and held at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre.

## *From the Chairman*

Tessa Towner, Chairman.



*At this year's Friends' AGM, Tessa Towner, previously Vice Chairman, was voted to succeed the retiring Chairman, Roy Murrant.*

My involvement with the Friends of Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre (FOMA) started with the efforts of a few dedicated local people to help Borough Archivist Stephen Dixon raise funds to purchase the Robert Sands letter. The letter is an account of Sands' adventures as a powder monkey at Trafalgar in 2005. It was from this that the idea for FOMA grew, and thanks to a dedicated group of people became a reality.

I have spent my whole life here in the Medway Towns. I was born in Frindsbury where I grew up and still live, and consequently I have found that the wealth of artefacts and documents to be found in MALSC of great use in following the history of Frindsbury – one of my greatest interests. I have now managed to put together a pictorial social history of the Parish, which shows the changing face of the area in which three generations of my family lived, putting flesh on the bones of my other interest, that of family history. Each week spent at MALSC brings to light further fascinating insights into all aspects of our local history.

We want to encourage more people to join us, wherever you may live. Please talk to your friends, ask them to join, to help and support us, to visit MALSC and to take part in our various events and trips. If you can, we would love you to get involved in all the wonderful projects Stephen and his staff have lined up for the years to come.

*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](mailto:lisa.birch@medway.gov.uk).*

## *News and Events*

Cindy O'Halloran, Friends' Secretary

### Launch of Medway MovieBase

The Medway MovieBase was launched on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2007 at the Civic Centre, Strood, Rochester, Kent. The afternoon was a great success, with a huge turnout by Friends' members and the general public. The keynote speech by Dr Frank Gray, Director of Screen Archive South East, was entertaining and was followed by a film show by Tony Blake, film collector and historian. This included footage of activities around Kent and the Medway area from 1910 onwards including the Whitstable oyster dredgers, hop picking, Chatham street scenes, the Royal Engineers' band, a wartime cameo by members of the Royal Artillery based at a local fort c.1940, colour film of Frindsbury Church at Harvest, the River Medway, Dreamland at Margate and a personalities' golf match at Gravesend. The highlight however was footage of the experimental Short Brothers' aircraft Maia and Mercury (see [http://www.imperial-airways.com/Short\\_mayo\\_composite.html](http://www.imperial-airways.com/Short_mayo_composite.html)). The unanimous opinion was the event should become an annual one, and Dr. Frank Gray suggested afterwards that the next event could possibly be combined with a workshop.

## FOMA Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2007 at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre and was very well attended. Following the meeting, Stephen Dixon gave a presentation detailing the Volunteer Projects about to be undertaken, for which there was considerable interest.



*Left : The new committee.*

*Back row from left to right: Cindy O'Halloran, Stephen Dixon, Dr Andrew Hann, Amanda Thomas, Lisa Birch, Jean Skilling.*

*Front row from left to right: Cllr Sue Haydock, Tessa Towner, John Witheridge*

*Below: Stephen Dixon, Borough Archivist (fourth from left, pointing) recruits volunteers for the special projects.*



## Summer 2007 - FOMA Visit to Snodland – book now!

A special FOMA outing to Snodland Historical Society and the Snodland Millennium Museum will take place at 2.00 pm on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2007. The tour will be guided by Dr Andrew Ashbee, Honorary Curator of the museum and Chairman of Snodland Historical Society. The tour will begin at the museum which is situated in Waghorn Road, Snodland, ME6 5BQ, Kent.

Tickets for FOMA members are £3.00; non members £5.00. For further information please telephone the Friends' Secretary, Cindy O'Halloran, on 01634 332714, or by email, [cindy.ohalloran@medway.gov.uk](mailto:cindy.ohalloran@medway.gov.uk) before 31st May 2007, as availability is limited.

## *Gun Lane Mortuary*

On 28<sup>th</sup> February 2007, builders working on the old mortuary in Gun Lane, Strood, discovered documents (c.1858, and 1870-1921) which had been locked in a safe for over one hundred years. During building works to convert the building to residential premises, workmen needed to remove the ancient safe still sitting in the old office. With no keys, it was broken open and the documents were discovered inside. Despite the length of time the documents had been stored in the safe they had survived in remarkable condition. The building has been the object of vandalism, fires and structural damage to the roof allowing rain water to penetrate, but the quality of the safe was such that the documents have survived in tact.

The documents, comprising financial records, paying in books, and list of jurors and letters dating from 1871, and referring to the overseeing of the Poor Law, have been handed to the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre (MALSC) by Cllr Sue Haydock. Sue said, “Whilst visiting the site as part of my day job working for the Diocese of Rochester, one of the workmen mentioned the papers and showed them to me. Wearing my hat as the Council’s Champion for Heritage Matters, and as a Vice-President of the Friends of Medway Archives, I recognised their significance and offered to take them to MALSC.”



*Left: the contents of the Gun Lane Mortuary safe are examined at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre*

This is a very important deposit as much of the Strood Parish papers have been scattered about. These will add a few more pieces to the jigsaw – although if anyone knows the whereabouts of any others, we shall be pleased to see them.

The overseeing is still carried on today by the Strood in Need Charity, the Trustee of which is Cllr. Jane Etheridge.

## *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 07 of *The Clock Tower* is Monday 6<sup>th</sup> August 2007.**

### Publication date

The third Wednesday following the editorial deadline.

### Copyright

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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 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](mailto: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](mailto:lisa.birch@medway.gov.uk); +44 (0)1634 332238

## *The Committee*

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## *Archives Update*

Stephen Dixon, Borough Archivist



The period since the last newsletter has been exceptionally busy with much catching up on new accessions to stock, on some of which I have pleasure in reporting below. I never fail to be astonished at the quality and importance of collections still out there.

The archive service received some welcome regional publicity recently when BBC TV South East's *Today* programme featured a report on our Medway Moviebase. Your author and our collaborator Tony Blake were interviewed. We next feature in the London episode of the BBC4 series *Britain In Pictures* to be broadcast in June or July concerning Jezreel's Tower.

At the time of writing, the feature can be viewed on the BBC South East web site: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/player/nol/newsid\\_6590000/newsid\\_6596300/6596311.stm?bw=bb&mp=w\\_m](http://news.bbc.co.uk/player/nol/newsid_6590000/newsid_6596300/6596311.stm?bw=bb&mp=w_m) This may need to be launched in stand alone player.

### Accessions

I am glad to report the BAKER family, formerly owners of Owletts, Cobham, have donated the title deeds to that property. The house is now owned by the National Trust. The deeds cover the period from the Sixteenth to Eighteenth Centuries when the HAYES family were in residence (DE1136).

We have also agreed to buy a large quantity of drawings of the George BOND architectural partnership from the turn of the century. The gems in this collection include drawings of the former Sir Joseph Williamson's Mathematical School in Rochester High Street.

Other recent deposits include a Land Tax redemption register for North Aylesford Division of the Lathe of Aylesford packed with names 1799-1947 (DE1138), a petition from the freemen, burgesses, property owners and ratepayers of the City of Rochester to the Mayor, asking him not to discontinue proceedings for the recovery of City Dues from William LEE 1842 (DE1135/RCA), and ledgers of Parker and Son, High Street, Cliffe, grocers, drapers, clothiers, provision merchants and ironmongers, 1917-1943 (DE1133).

Also of interest are a visitors' book and record of testimonials of performers and artists at the Gaiety Theatre of Varieties, 49 High Street, Chatham (later Chatham Empire Theatre of Varieties) and Barnard's New Palace of Varieties Nos.107-109 High Street, Chatham, chiefly pertaining to their stays at the guest houses of a Mrs. WRAITH, 5 Holborn Lane, Medway Street, Chatham and a Mrs. HETTERLEY [5 or 6 Holborn Lane, Medway Street, Chatham], illustrated with photographs and newscuttings of performers, 1902-1905 (DE1130), minute book of the Gillingham Women Citizens' Association [affiliated to the National Council for Equal Citizenship] 1937-1948 (DE1129), Additional Records of Wycliffe Congregational Church, Perry Street, Northfleet 1889 – 1983 (DE1127, N/C/270) and facsimile drawings of installations at Kent Oil Refinery (BP Oil Refinery), Isle of Grain, client the Anglo-Iranian Oil Company Ltd.

(later British Petroleum (BP)), prepared for the main Kent Refinery Project in the 1950s (DE1126).

Of genealogical note, we have received the principal deposit of the records of the nonconformist sect the New and Latter House of Israel or Jezreelites, headquarters Jezreel's Tower, Chatham Hill, Gillingham 1881-c.1960 (DE1122, N/JZ/153). I am glad to say this deposit received a good mention in the press.

We have received the personal papers of Brigadier Basil CHICHESTER-COOKE RE CBE DL (deceased) of Hammond Place, High Street, Upper Upnor, comprising correspondence with the local authority and others, stencil typescript notes, printed ephemera, maps, plans and drawings pertaining to conservation issues in Upnor 1975-1986 (DE1120), architectural drawings and surveys of Martin CAROE of Martin Caroe and Partners, London NW1, chartered architects, architect to Rochester Cathedral 1983-2000 (DE1116), architectural drawings and surveys of Emil Godfrey of Carden, Godfrey, MacFadyen and Sturgis, London EC4, architects, also pertaining to Rochester Cathedral 1952-1983 (DE1115, DRc) and photographs of Gillingham Gas Works including women working in wartime 1923-1946 (DE1110 [part]).

We also have a scrapbook relative to the history of the parish of Bredhurst and Bredhurst Church, compiled 1964-1968 and 1975 by L.A. Griffith, a list of members of the elocution class of Strood Working Men's Club and Institute subscribing towards testimonial to Charles ROACH SMITH, their president, c.1900, apprenticeship indenture of Cyril Valentine HAYZELDEN of Deramore, Palmerston Road, Chatham, to Short Brothers (Rochester and Bedford) Ltd., Seaplane Works, Rochester, [aeronautical engineers] (2 items, paper) 1930, Stencil typescript press release issued by Directorate of Public Relations, Ministry of Aircraft Production, Millbank, London SW1 supplying description and attributes of Shorts' Shetland flying boat, 17 May 1945 and Amalgamated Engineering Union (AEU): and records of Short Brothers' Seaplane Works, Rochester, kept by a Mr. Dickenson of the Engineers' Department, pertaining to industrial relations, closure of works and transfer of operations to Belfast, County Antrim, Northern Ireland 1938-1947 (all DE1114)

Aviation enthusiasts will be interested in the personal papers of (William) HOWARD (Lesley) BELL AFRAeS, MSLAE, successively engineering apprentice, sales representative for and chief inspector of Short Brothers of Rochester and Belfast, aeronautical engineers, divisional assistant chief inspector of Elliott Automation, Maidstone Road, Rochester and in latter years a publican 1912-1985 (DE1109). *Chatham Observer* credits Mr. Bell as being the first apprentice in the aircraft industry, July 1909.

On a final and poignant note, we have received a guarded volume of pencil architectural drawings and notes by Helen M. SMETHAM ARCA 1904-1905 daughter of Henry Smetham the historian of Strood, partly relating to and accompanied by photographs of Rochester Cathedral. Helen Smetham died at Durham in 1925 and was buried at Strood Cemetery. It is clear from his notes inside the volume that Henry Smetham was devastated by his daughter's early death. (DE1111 [part]).



## CityArk

We have uploaded scanned images of the Dartford censuses for 1801 and 1821. These are rare survivals as full lists of residents only appear officially every ten years from 1841 (except for 1941) so family historians with Dartford ancestors will be happy with this latest addition to our imagebase. I must express thanks to North West Kent Family History Society (NWKFHS) for funding this work.

The imagebase might also be added to shortly with scans of the main series of records contained in the Hawkins' Hospital collection. Hawkins' Hospital is the oldest naval charity in the world, dating from 1592 and serving former members of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and dockyard shipwrights. This will form part of our proposed *Sea Salts* project for publishing scans of our nautical and maritime records online.

An expansion of the MovieBase is planned imminently, to include film of the Rochester Historical Pageant of 1931, a film on historic Rochester and a short cine film on the opening of Wigmore Library.

The *Way of Death* Project has taken a step forward with scans of the Dartford Borough Council cemetery records now being uploaded. The records comprise the burial registers and burial register indexes for Watling Street and East Hill Cemetery, Swanscombe Cemetery and Stone Cemetery.

The purpose of the *Way of Death* Project is to enable family historians and genealogists to proceed from parish burial registers for the town centres whose parish cemeteries were filled up by the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century and whose entries therefore dry up at about that time, to the registers of the new municipal cemeteries subsequent to that time. We express our thanks to the Bereavement Services Section of Dartford Borough Council for funding the Dartford part of the project North West Kent Family History Society for collaborating with us on this project.

The scanning of the Gravesham municipal cemetery records is in hand and discussions with Kent Family History Society and Medway Council's Bereavement Services Section are in progress with regard to the more local municipal cemeteries.

## Conservation Work

We have received back from our contractor a large quantity of documents that have been conserved and repaired. These documents, mainly maps and plans, are therefore now available for public inspection again after a period of being *unfit for production* as we say in the trade.

Items of interest now available include a Wilmington Tithe map (P397 additional, DE 272), Sutton at Hone Tithe map and award (P358/27/1), Rainham tithe map (P296/27/1), Longfield Tithe map and award (P231/27/1A-B), Charles SLOANE's Darnley estate map 1759 (U565/P7), various Horton Kirby Civil Parish settlement certificates, surveyors of the highways' accounts, parish constable's vouchers (P193) and Watts' Charity estate plans, Rochester (DE64; CH46)

## Volunteers

I am glad to say we had sufficient take-up of projects at our annual general meeting for several projects to be put in hand in coming months. However, we are always happy to add to our list so please contact us if you are interested.

## Archives of Great Expectations

This project is being organised by the Friends and aims to open up access to the Rochester City Archives to community use and provide a learning resource. Preparations continue for this, our flagship project, and several important stages have been achieved since December.

I conclude my report for this edition with a request for new members! While numbers are healthy and the committee was delighted with the turnout for the AGM we are all conscious of the need to grow so as to be strong and viable in the future.

## *In Search of Thomas Fletcher Waghorn (1800-1850)*

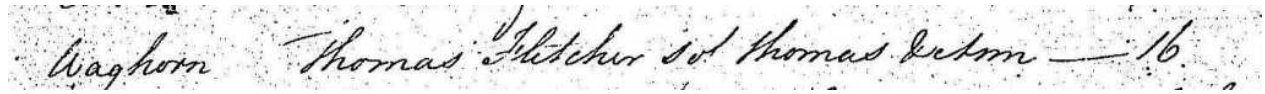
Dr Andrew Ashbee



*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. Andrew 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 the second of a series of three articles, Dr Ashbee examines the life of one of Snodland's most famous residents, Thomas Fletcher Waghorn, pioneer of the overland route to India via Egypt and to whom in 1888 a statue was erected in Railway Street, Chatham.*

Quite rightly Thomas Fletcher WAGHORN is known as a Chatham man. His father was a Chatham butcher with a shop in the High Street, and all the children were baptized at St Mary's, including Thomas on 16<sup>th</sup> July 1800.



*From the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre Medway Ancestors Imagebase. Entry in the Chatham St. Mary baptism register. By kind permission of the priest-in-charge and parochial church council of the Ecumenical Parish of St. John (URC/Anglican) including the United Benefice and Parish of St. Mary and St. John (P85/1/22)]*

But there is a strong Snodland connection too. Thomas Waghorn senior and Ann GOODHUGH, Thomas Fletcher's parents, were married at Snodland on 28<sup>th</sup> July 1794; his grandparents, John Goodhugh and Elizabeth (née FLETCHER), were among the principal inhabitants of the village. The bond between Goodhugh and Thomas Fletcher was very strong. Not only was the latter was



an executor of and beneficiary in Goodhugh's will, but when Thomas Waghorn senior died in 1826, Ann moved to Island Cottage, next door to her parents. Goodhugh then transferred ownership of the house to Thomas Fletcher. Several of Waghorn's surviving letters were written from *Holborough*, indicating that this was his base when in England. Around 1841 he built *The Lodge* as a permanent home for himself and his second wife. They are buried in the churchyard of All Saints, Snodland, as are two sisters and many ancestors; there is a memorial to Thomas Fletcher Waghorn in the church on the south wall of the nave.

*Ink drawing of Waghorn, c.1850, from the Snodland Historical Society collection.*

Waghorn is by far Snodland's most famous parishioner. Before his bicentenary in 2000 I began research into his life and work, initially for a pamphlet and accompanying exhibition which we mounted at Snodland Millennium Museum. A summary of his career appears on our website: [www.snodlandhistory.org.uk](http://www.snodlandhistory.org.uk). Research has continued intermittently, and we continue to gather what material we can for our Waghorn collection at the Museum. Whether I shall ever find time to complete a full account is open to question. There are two extensive studies of Thomas Fletcher Waghorn: *The Overland Mail*, 1948, by John K. SIDEBOTTOM, and *Care of Mr Waghorn*, 1964, by Marjorie SANKEY, both published by the Postal History Society. Sidebottom's work is excellent in every way and scrupulously documented, concentrating on the postal service of the Overland Route with relatively little biographical detail. Sankey, on the other hand, writes a vivid biographical account, though there are some questionable assumptions, some errors, and a lack of precise references to sources, which are noted only in a concluding bibliography. There are also some curious omissions, not least any notice of Waghorn's first marriage. It is also unfortunate that Freda HARCOURT's entry on Waghorn in the new *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* has taken Sankey's account as a basis and is itself full of errors. As a contributor myself I find this inexplicable, since the very thorough editorial process should have weeded them out. Corrections have now been made to the on-line version, but alas the printed one must stand until a reprint materializes. Furthermore Harcourt has portrayed Waghorn in a very negative way and in the worst possible light, calling him a 'self-publicist', one who 'offered useless advice', a man with 'extraordinary ideas and gross ignorance', 'restless, hyperactive, crude, with ambitions far above his ability to achieve them', concluding that 'whether liar or simpleton, Waghorn had played no more than a minute off-stage part' in Anglo-Egyptian affairs. He *was* an infuriating man. He *was* thick-skinned and never took 'no' for an answer. He had a violent temper and, as the *Church Family Newspaper* (July 1901) states, 'he had a genius for quarrelling with people'. His friends acknowledge his hyperactivity and volatile temper, but pay tribute to his devotion to the cause of establishing an Overland Route to India through Egypt. Among them is the Strood antiquary Charles ROACH SMITH:

Waghorn was the very incarnation of an impetuous, excitable personality, allied to great energy and vitality. These qualities alone made his great task possible. ... Waghorn was the type of man by whom tasks that look like miracles are accomplished. He wrought many such ...

THACKERAY too in his *Notes on a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo* pokes fun at Waghorn's energy:

The bells are ringing prodigiously and Lieut. Waghorn is bouncing in and out of the court yard full of business. He only left Bombay yesterday morning, was seen in the Red Sea on Tuesday, is engaged to dinner this afternoon in the Regent's Park and (as it is about two minutes since I saw him in the court yard) I make no doubt he is by this time at Alexandria, or at Malta, say, or perhaps both. *Il est capable*. ... If any man can be at two places at once (which I don't believe or deny), Waghorn is he.

And following Waghorn's death Charles DICKENS wrote a sympathetic appreciation in his new journal *Household Words*.



Engraving of a painting by David Roberts RA of a meeting with the pasha in Alexandria on 12<sup>th</sup> May 1839. Improvements to the Overland Route were discussed. Waghorn is the middle officer shown.  
From the Snodland Historical Society Collection.

At Snodland we receive numerous requests for information about Waghorn's family from those who believe they are descended from or are connected with him. We have to point out that he had no children, but other connections are possible. We have been helped greatly by two ladies, one descended from Waghorn's sister Ann and the other from his sister Sarah, both of whom emigrated to Australia (as did his brother Edward). The family continued to flourish there and preserved mementos of him. Unfortunately what would have been a most valuable collection was destroyed during World War Two when a ship was sunk containing a case of documents being returned from Australia to England in connection with a family inheritance matter. The Australian connection is important, for late in life Waghorn began agitating for an extension of the steam service to that country and between 1846 and 1848 wrote three pamphlets on the subject.

After Waghorn died, an appreciation was published in the first issue of *The Illustrated Australian Magazine* which led to a letter from a Captain BALLINGALL. This tells us it was the *Thalia* on which Waghorn served following his dismissal from the navy in 1817, and also records him taking emergency duty as First Mate on a larger ship following the death of the captain at Cape Town:

Capt. Ballingall being highly satisfied with the acquirements and good conduct of Mr. Waghorn, recommended him for the appointment; and he was appointed accordingly. Mr. Waghorn was at this time only nineteen years of age, and by the energy of his character and good conduct, had thus recommended himself on his first voyage in a merchantman to the office of first mate of a ship larger than the *Thalia*. He did his duty to the satisfaction of the captain, and on being discharged from the ship on her arrival at her destination in London, he returned to the East Indies, and embarked in the pilot service.

Waghorn's time in the Bengal Pilot Service was interrupted by the First Burmese War (1824 to 1826) in which he distinguished himself as a naval officer and received letters of thanks and commendation. In 1829, with typical self-promotion, he published these in *Steam Navigation to India, by the Cape of Good Hope*. The route through Egypt was not yet part of his plans, but this

soon materialized when the East India Company began trials for their vessels in the Red Sea. His arguments with the East India Company, the Post Office and the Government abounded at this time, but eventually he was encouraged to try taking mail via Egypt and did so throughout 1829 to 1830. Between 1832 and 1834 he re-joined the Royal Navy on one of their pioneering steam ships taking mail from Falmouth to Alexandria. This gave him valuable knowledge of the mail service and also enabled him to complete his qualification as Lieutenant, left in abeyance in 1817. Having made friends with the Pasha, between 1835 and 1840 he devoted all his efforts to establishing the Overland Route through Egypt. He was not the first, nor initially the most enthusiastic promoter of the route, but earlier attempts to set it up were beset with problems which had to some extent been resolved when he came on the scene. He it was who was able to put the final part of the jigsaw into place, in particular the 84 mile trek across the desert from Cairo to Suez. Waghorn's principal aim was to speed the mails between England and India; passengers were secondary to this. Nevertheless their numbers continued to increase, in spite of many discomforts. One can get a good idea of the journey from Emma ROBERTS' *Notes of an overland journey through France and Egypt to Bombay*, London (1841) (available via [www.gutenberg.org](http://www.gutenberg.org)) and Samuel BEVAN's *Sand and Canvas* (1849). Emma shows that Mrs Waghorn was also in Egypt at the time of her journey, giving practical advice and loaning her a canteen. Bevan was employed by Waghorn to accompany the travellers across the desert. Many guides and pictorial descriptions of the route were produced.

Waghorn's efforts eventually proved in vain, partly due to a murrain which destroyed all his animals, and partly due to the emergent P & O Company's ability to finance superior ships, travel and accommodation. Waghorn then turned his attention to speeding the route through Europe, especially via Trieste and Austria, but the government broke its promise to reimburse him for the trials, crippling him financially and emotionally. He wrote:

Overwhelmed by the competition of this giant association [the P & O], I was entirely deprived of the advantages of this creation of my own energy, and left with it a ruin on my own hands ... In my hands the Egyptian traffic was English, and I venture to say that it would have continued to this day had I not been interfered with. But my successors gave it all up to the Pasha, and under the altered and the altering circumstances of Egypt, it will be fortunate indeed if the circumstances of that act do not bitterly atone for the hardships so inconsiderately and wantonly inflicted upon me. ... I will only add that on the commencement of my career I was possessed of property by inheritance. This has been sacrificed, and I am still left in debt to the extent of £5,000.

It is a heroic but sad story. There is more than a grain of truth in HARCOURT's disparaging account, but she gives him no credit for his remarkable efforts and achievements. *The Times* (seeking the fastest service for the latest news) and many ordinary travellers were grateful to Waghorn and saw the government, the Post Office and the East India Company all dragging their heels rather than support his schemes. There are letters from Waghorn extant in the collections of papers of many senior government officials, including GLADSTONE, Lord BENTINCK, Sir Robert PEEL, Richard COBDEN, and Sir John HOBHOUSE. No doubt to officialdom he was a lowly Second Mate and naval man who surely was incapable of carrying out these novel and - in their eyes - risky enterprises. But those who experienced what he was able to set up found a generally efficient service with competent staff. In addition, he was able to speed up the Indian mails to around forty to fifty days rather than the former six months. Those in India were

extremely grateful for this. It is a curious but useful bonus that present day philatelists are among Waghorn's most enthusiastic supporters. The study of mail carried by his service 'Care of Mr Waghorn' flourishes and the surviving covers (however tatty) sell for hundreds of pounds.

The Overland Route in the form Waghorn knew lasted around thirty years. When the Suez Canal was opened Ferdinand de Lesseps, the builder, said of Waghorn,

He it was who first conceived the idea; it was his indomitable courage and perseverance that led me on to prove its practicability. I am pleased to have the opportunity to proclaim the noble qualities of that much underrated gentleman; but he was in advance of his age, and the very plans that were scoffed at when first mooted were those which, in my position as engineer of the works, have enabled me to carry them through.



*The Waghorn statue at Suez, erected by Ferdinand de Lesseps, 1872, but destroyed during the 1956 war with Britain and France. From the Snodland Historical Society Collection.*

*The search for information on Waghorn's family has taxed researchers for many years and in the next issue of The Clock Tower, Dr Ashbee will conclude his series with an in depth look at Waghorn's genealogy.*

**Summer 2007 - FOMA Visit to Snodland – book now!**

A special FOMA outing to Snodland Historical Society and the Snodland Millennium Museum will take place at 2.00 pm on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2007. The tour will be guided by Dr Andrew Ashbee, Honorary Curator of the museum and Chairman of Snodland Historical Society. The tour will begin at the museum which is situated in Waghorn Road, Snodland, ME6 5BQ, Kent. Tickets for FOMA members are £3.00; non members £5.00. For further information please telephone the Friends' Secretary, Cindy O'Halloran, on 01634 332714, or by email, cindy.ohalloran@medway.gov.uk before 31st May 2007, as availability is limited.

## *Friends Overseas*

### **Medway Memories**

Daphne Guthrie, Papatoetoe, New Zealand

I was born in Gillingham in 1934 at the house of my aunt, my mother's sister, 140 Corporation Road. When my parents first married they lived in Nile Road Gillingham, but then shared my Aunt's house while they saved for a home of their own. My father was employed by C J Howard and Son as a bricklayer and worked on quite a few large projects. One was the development of Begonia Avenue and Hawthorne Road in Rainham, and my father had the opportunity to be among the first buyers. He bought number 32 Begonia Avenue (see photograph), a bungalow and one of a pair. Begonia Avenue also had two storey houses and a group of Alms Houses.



When war broke out in September 1939 all building ceased so we were left with a lot of open ground around us. Great for the children of the area to play, and during the war they grew cereal crops, wheat and corn in the main on the land. In Pump Lane down towards the River Medway there were many orchards growing cherry, pear and apple. We had a lovely view of the Medway and at night we could see the twinkling lights of Sheerness. I also remember the red sails of sailing barges.

My first school was Twydall Lane Infants' in Romany Road. This was a new school and once again development stopped because of the war and it was surrounded by allotments during these years. Also all the railings around the playground were taken for munitions. New entrants only attended half days to begin with, but I can't remember quite why that was but probably to do with fear of air raids.

Our family lived at Begonia Avenue until we emigrated to New Zealand in 1952. I really didn't have much say about emigrating, except that being young I thought it was a good idea because Dad was not happy and I was keen to travel. New Zealand in the early 1950s was not the place it is today, quite Victorian in some ways so a bit of a shock.

Today, as far as my family history is concerned, the Medway Archives' Cityark service is obviously a great help. Initially I was a bit overawed by the website, but on the occasions I did use the 'contact us' button for help I always got a very friendly reply.

*Daphne Guthrie is a member of the Kent Family History Society and is currently researching the names LAYZELL, HARDY, TRUEMAN, GUY, WILTSHIRE, MEXTED, PARSLOE, WILLIAMS and WILMSHURST in Medway and Kent, Wiltshire, Hampshire, Dorset, Sussex, Essex and Norfolk, and Fyfe in Scotland.*



## *The Victoria County History at MALSC*

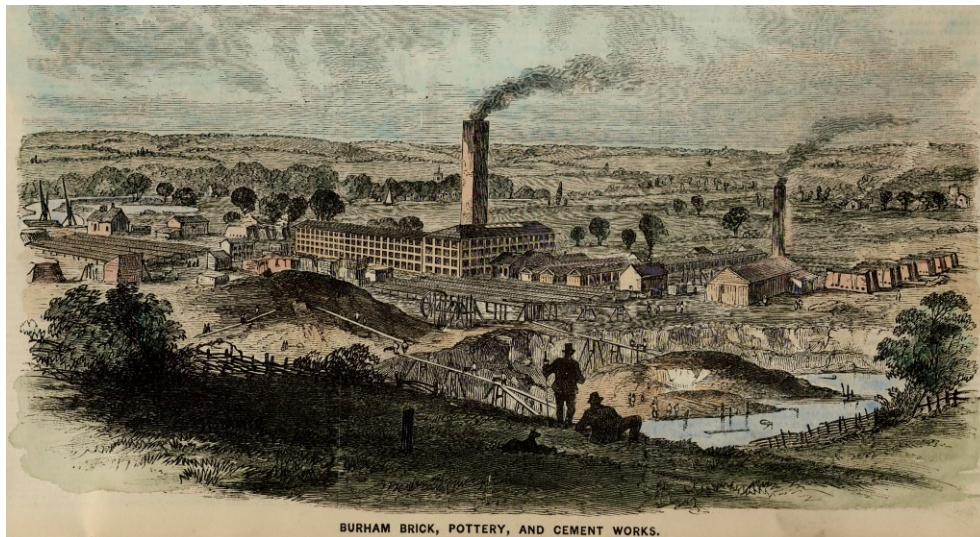
Dr Andrew Hann, Committee Member



*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. The article which follows is taken from the latest chapter to be written of the work which is to be published in 2008.*

### Reading the Landscape for Evidence of the Industrial Past

Historians have long recognised that the history of an area can be 'read' from its landscape. This provides a unique historical record of past human occupancy as the activities of each generation have been etched into its surface, one on top of another. Indeed, the landscape has been likened to a document whose original text has been largely erased or overwritten, leaving only faint impressions still visible. It is the job of the landscape historian to uncover and make sense of these surviving fragments in order to piece together evidence about the daily lives of those inhabiting an area in the past. Wandering over the lower Medway valley today we can readily identify evidence of such past activities: the daily toil of generations of farmers, the growth of settlements, the movement of people and goods through the landscape, and, of course, the processes of industrialisation. In this article I set out some of the ways in which industry has left its mark on the landscape.



*Burham brick, pottery and cement works showing tall engine shed and tramway. The Illustrated News of the World, 8 Oct 1859*

1930s' archive film of the lower Medway valley reveals an intensely industrial scene, the result of two centuries of continuous development. Fields have given way to factories, and quiet hamlets become bustling industrial villages. Yet, over the past half century much of this evidence of industrialisation appears to have been erased from view, with the area now seemingly rural in character. The cement works which dominated the scene in 1938 have long gone, leaving only scattered fragments along the riverside. In many cases these remains are now buried under new housing estates or tons of spoil dumped during flood defence work. At Lee's works in Halling only the footprint of the barge dock remains visible, and adjacent to it the wall of a kiln bank, now covered in light brush. The dock is choked with silt and reeds, but still clearly defined by a shuttered concrete wall (see photograph).



*Former dock at Lee's cement works Halling, now silted up and overgrown with vegetation*

A 1991 survey of the site also found a large derelict brick shed with steel beams, identified as an engineering workshop, but this now appears to have been demolished. The site of Hilton, Anderson and Co.'s nearby works at Halling Manor is another that has now been redeveloped for housing. Here the main survival is a short section of the tramway which linked the cement works with its quarries to the west of the A228. This runs adjacent to the old Bishop's Palace on a raised embankment, the northern end of which is constructed of brick with concrete cladding. Elsewhere more substantial remains survive, though now largely shrouded with vegetation. At Burham it is possible to make out the foundations of several banks of bottle kilns, raised tramways and slurry backs, as well as the footprint of slurry mixers from the later phase of the works when four rotary kilns were in operation. As elsewhere the riverside quay is probably the best preserved structure. Further downstream the brick bases of chamber kilns can be traced at both the West Kent works of William Margetts, and Peter's works at Wouldham Hall, immediately to the north. At the latter the site of 16 bottle kilns is also marked by heaps of destruction debris.

A careful reading of the landscape can thus uncover significant evidence of cement manufacture in the valley despite the clearance of most sites in the past forty years. It is, however, the dozens of chalk and clay pits that scar the landscape which provide the most powerful reminder of this important industry. In the heyday of Medway cement in the late nineteenth century these excavations covered around five per cent of the land surface of the eight parishes, and spread out along both sides of the valley. Today many are overgrown with vegetation: prime brown-field sites for redevelopment. Those pits on the east bank of the Medway can best be viewed from the high vantage point of Blue Bell Hill. From here the landscape stretches out a patchwork of scrub-covered hollows, rich green pastures and straggling villages. The two Culand pits lying directly below the scarp are amongst the most prominent. Here there is still evidence of the tramways

which carried the chalk down to the riverside works, along with the rusted remains of several wagons. The track from the upper pit passes through a half mile long tunnel, emerging close to Petts Farm, which remains in a good state of preservation. From the riverside quarrying is evident too, from the line of white chalk cliffs running intermittently along the valley sides from Aylesford to Wouldham and Snodland to Frindsbury. The immense size of these features can, though, only truly be appreciated from close quarters. Houlder pit associated with Lee's works at Halling covered some 500 acres and was in places more than 100m deep. It was used as a bomb and ammunition store by the RAF during World War II. In a sense once the observer becomes attuned to the signs of quarrying activity it appears everywhere in the landscape.



*Section of raised embankment which carried tramway into Halling Manor cement works*

Just how pervasive an impact the lime and cement industry has had can best be illustrated by an example. At Frindsbury Ness, chalk quarrying has transformed the whole topography of the area. What was described in the early nineteenth century as a gently sloping promontory affording scenic views of Rochester Castle and Cathedral is now a low lying industrial estate bounded to the north by a sheer cliff of chalk some 30 metres high, on the top of which Frindsbury's All Saints church sits rather precariously. South of the church formerly stood a mansion called Quarry House, which Hasted commended for its beautiful views of the river and surrounding country. This house was described by an officer stationed at Upnor Castle in 1750 as the Kentish Vauxhall, as it had become a favourite place of resort for the people of Rochester and Chatham. On fine days, crowds of fashionable promenaders would walk the circuit of paths that criss-crossed the area. By the mid-nineteenth century the crowds of visitors had gone as the shoreline took on a more industrial tone. Shipyards and quays lined the water's edge, whilst a number of quarries steadily ate into the peninsula, feeding the seven cement works which were erected along the shoreline between 1851 and 1888. In 1897, with much of the chalk reserves of the area exhausted, Quarry House was demolished for the chalk upon which it stood.

Cement manufacture required not only chalk, but also river mud or clay. Extraction of this material has, like chalk quarrying, had a profound impact on the landscape of the valley, although one that is initially less apparent to the casual observer. Much of the mud came from the saltings of the Medway estuary: low-lying coastal salt marshes used primarily for grazing sheep. It was dug out by teams of men known as 'muddies', who beached barges on the marshes, loaded them up at low tide, and then floated off as the tide rose. Today we can see evidence of their activities all round the estuary in the form of shallow depressions cut into the sediments. Where digging was particularly extensive, such as Upchurch marshes, and the south side of the Hoo peninsula, the saltings still have a distinctive pock-marked appearance. Some sense of the scale of these

operations can be gained by looking at the activities of S.J. Brice and Sons, one of the larger mud contractors on the Medway at the turn of the century. They dug out 1,356,000 tons from East Hoo Creek between 1881 and 1911, and 557,000 tons from nearby West Hoo Creek between 1881 and 1907. Indeed, by the late nineteenth century the level of extraction was such that Rochester Corporation, and later the Medway Conservancy Board and Admiralty, began to raise serious concerns about the impact on navigation. Clay diggers commonly breached sea defences to beach their barges, and the depressions they dug enabled water to flood over a wider area. This reduced the rate of flow in the river causing silting of the channel. The estuary that we see today, with its many marshes, mud banks, creeks and channels, is then, to some extent, a legacy of this period of intense exploitation. Though moulded by the competing forces of river flow and tide, its shape has been significantly influenced by this human intervention.

Brickfields have generally left a less visible imprint on the landscape, as most contained few permanent structures and often existed for only a few years until the brickearth of the area was exhausted. Moreover, once a brickfield was abandoned the site was often quickly reclaimed for cultivation. Orchards, in particular, thrived on the Thanet sands exposed once the brickearth had been removed. Today the sight of flat fields up to six feet below road level is one of the clearest indications of brickmaking. These lower ground surfaces can be found across the study parishes, but particularly in Frindsbury, Strood and Cuxton where many of the larger brickmakers were based. One substantial site lies between the A228 and river Medway north of Cuxton, another around Temple Manor in Strood is now the location of an industrial estate. In Frindsbury the search for evidence is hampered by the fact that housing now covers many of the former brickfield sites. Nevertheless, the many localised changes in ground level are suggestive. For instance, the steep drop behind numbers 17-45 Iden Road almost certainly reflects the removal of brickearth and Thanet sand when this area was part of the substantial Nursery Brickfield. Other evidence of brickmaking comes from the glass, china or other detritus washed up on beaches and coastal marshes around the Medway estuary. This material was part of the household refuse shipped up from London to provide the 'rough stuff', a mixture of coke and ashes, used for firing the bricks.

Substantial remains of brickfield buildings are found only in the south of the study area where businesses tended to be larger and more mechanised. At Burham the foundations of Cubitt's large pottery and engine shed can be traced amidst the undergrowth, along with kiln bases, washbacks and the remains of an elaborate tramway system which linked the different parts of the site. When established in 1852 the Burham works were the most advanced in the world. Situated on a gentle slope, the buildings were arranged along the tram lines so that each stage of production moved closer to the quay, ensuring only coke to fuel the engines and kilns had to be carted uphill. Piped water was provided to the works from a large reservoir which still survives, as does the massive river wall from whence the bricks were loaded on to barges. There were also extensive buildings at the Aylesford Pottery Company's works including the pottery 'a large square building of three floors, with six circular pottery kilns, each with six furnaces', two Hoffman kilns, six Scotch kilns and numerous drying and making sheds. This site has, however, now been lost under Forstal industrial estate, although traces of the clay pit can be seen at the edge of Cobtree Manor Park.

The most visible reminders of the Medway valley's industrial past are, however, not the remains of long vanished works or the scars left by excavation, but the rows of workers' cottages which line the hillsides on both sides of the river (see photograph). What matters here is the visual impact of house-building across the study area. Cottages erected by manufacturers or speculative builders for the growing industrial population from the mid-nineteenth century have a distinctive style which marks them out from earlier dwellings. The majority are brick-built, arranged in terraces and relatively uniform in style and layout. They tend not to adopt the vernacular features common in earlier buildings such as the use of ragstone, weather-boarding and thatch. In a sense, therefore, they appear just as much an alien intrusion into the rustic landscape as the cement works and quarries in which their residents worked. In villages such as Wouldham and Halling it is easy to spot where these rows of workers cottages have been grafted onto an existing village centre. Often they form ribbon-like extensions along the roads to the works, as at Holborough Road in Snodland and New Town in Halling. Elsewhere terraces occur in splendid isolation, marking the location of former works. Ravens Knowle south-east of Wouldham and Scarborough Cottages, a mile north of Burham, are good examples of this. Only in Strood and Frindsbury is the late nineteenth century housing more varied in style, reflecting the more diverse economies of these parishes, although they too had their fair share of workers' terraces, particularly in the area north and west of Strood station.



*Cement workers cottages in Wouldham*

# *A Clock Tower Special Feature: Pocahontas*

## *Introduction*

Stephen Dixon, Borough Archivist

This year marks the four hundredth anniversary of the founding of the English Virginian and American colonies - *Jamestown 400* - and Medway Archives has had a part to play.

The Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre (MALSC) holds the earliest Gravesend parish register, containing the burial record for Pocahontas, daughter of the local American Indian chieftain Powhatan whose sanction the early settlers needed. Pocahontas (or Matoaka) was born in Virginia, America, in about 1595, daughter of Chief Powhatan of the Algonquin Nation. She was the first native American in Virginia to convert to Christianity and in 1614, she married Englishman John ROLFE. Rolfe brought Pocahontas, or Rebecca, as she was then known, and their son Thomas to England, where she was presented at Court to King James I. On their return to America in 1617, and whilst their ship was still in the River Thames, Pocahontas fell ill. She died in Gravesend, where she was buried.

An special exhibition featuring the register goes on display at the Guildhall Museum in Rochester from May to September 2007 and is available to visit free of charge. The exhibition will be formally launched with a lecture on 24<sup>th</sup> May by Sir Robert Worcester of Allington Castle who is a member the Jamestown organising committees. Sir Robert has recently agreed to become a Vice president of the Friends of MALSC. In his speech he will also make mention of MALSC's most famous document, the *Textus Roffensis*, which contains the earliest record of the English language and English laws and therefore of great interest to our American cousins.

## *A Descendant of Pocahontas*



*Stuart Cresswell is the nine times great grandson of Matoaka, or Pocahontas, of the Algonquin Nation. Amanda Thomas, Editor of The Clock Tower, spoke to him about his famous ancestor and the story of his family.*

When Stuart CRESSWELL first made contact with me, via the Kent Family History Society, one of my first questions was whether he felt he shared any traits with his famous grandmother, Pocahontas. The response was one of amusement and a reminder that as eleven generations separated them, this was unlikely. Yet on reflection, Stuart Cresswell admitted that when walking on the fells near his home in Threlkeld, Cumbria, he does have “a good sense of position and directions.”

Stuart was born in Dowlais, Glamorgan in the 1930s; he is married to Marion, a Scot, and has three adult children. The son of a third generation doctor, Stuart’s family is descended from yeoman farmers in Worcestershire and Herefordshire, and from the marriage of Peter ELWIN of Thurning Norfolk to Anne ROLFE, the granddaughter of Pocahontas and John Rolfe of Heacham, Norfolk. Whilst Stuart’s career was spent in the engineering industry, he has been active in local history since the 1950s and has a regular column in the local paper called *125 Years Ago*. Stuart is company secretary of the new organisation formed to manage Keswick Museum and Art Gallery and to redevelop it into a thriving attraction for the northern Lake District; he also runs a fascinating website, [www.threlkeld.org.uk](http://www.threlkeld.org.uk).

The following account of Stuart Cresswell’s ancestry is adapted from this website and from information and private family papers very kindly provided by him. Additional information is from the website of another Pocahontas descendant, David Morenus, <http://pocahontas.morenus.org>.

Matoaka, or Pocahontas, was born in about 1595, during the closing years of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. The pet name Pocahontas was given to her by her father, Wahunsonacook - dubbed King Powhatan by the English - Great Chief of the Algonquin Indians of Virginia. John Rolfe was baptised 6 May 1585 at Heacham, Norfolk. He was the twin son of John Rolfe and Dorothea MASON, married 24<sup>th</sup> May 1582. John senior was a merchant at King’s Lynn but died in Nov 1594 aged only 32. Young John married in England and in May 1609 sailed for Virginia. His ship was wrecked in the Caribbean, where a daughter named Bermuda was born, baptised on 11<sup>th</sup> February 1609/10. The family finally arrived in Virginia in May 1610, but sadly mother and child died shortly after arrival.

John Rolfe was a prominent member of the Jamestown colony and it is believed that he suggested the cultivation of tobacco, using seed he brought from Trinidad. This variety of tobacco was much more pleasant to smoke than the native plant and its cultivation and subsequent export saved the colony. Another well known member of this community was Captain John SMITH, a military man, born in Lincolnshire, who had arrived in Virginia in 1607. The life of the colonists

was hard, famine was common, and Smith was foremost in their search for food which took him into Indian territory, trading with the Chicahominy Indians for corn.

During one such expedition, Smith was surrounded by Indians, one of whom he shot dead. He was captured and taken to their chief Opechan Canough and then to the Great Chief Powhatan. Powhatan decided that Smith should be killed, but as he was about to be clubbed to death, Pocahontas threw her body over his and pleaded with her father for Smith's life. Smith remained with the tribe for several weeks and though a deep friendship grew between him and Pocahontas, theirs was not the love story depicted in the Disney film. The colonists in Jamestown struggled for survival throughout the first winter, and Pocahontas paid regular visits with food and to visit her friend Smith. However, in 1609, when Smith returned to Europe for medical treatment for an injury to his leg, the colonists told her he had died.

In 1613 another Jamestown colonist, Captain Samuel ARGALL, went exploring for food along the Potomac river. He learnt that Pocahontas was visiting one of the Indian tribes in the area. Aware of the value of the Chief's daughter as a bargaining tool, Captain Argall and Japazaws of the Patowomeck Indians captured her and took back her to Argall's ship. Powhatan only met enough of the demands to keep negotiations open, and eventually Pocahontas was allowed to move to a new settlement called Henrico which was lead by Sir Thomas DALE. During this time, Calvinist minister Alexander WHITAKER and some of the leading colonists, including John Rolfe, worked to convert her to Christianity. Pocahontas was baptised as a Christian, the first Native American to do so. With Powhatan's consent she married John Rolfe in 1614, and within the year she had given birth to a son, Thomas, at Smith's tobacco plantation in Virginia. The marriage of Pocahontas to John Rolfe created what is known as The Peace of Pocahontas, six years of peace between the Jamestown colonists and Powhatan's tribes.

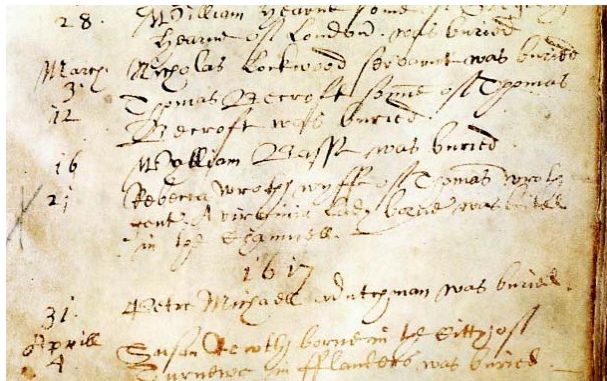
In 1616 the Rolfe family sailed for England with Sir Thomas Dale with a view to raise funds for the Virginia Company. Pocahontas created great interest in London and she was presented at court to King James I on several occasions. Pocahontas spent seven months in England, and there also met Captain John Smith again. In March 1617 the family set sail on board the George for America, but it soon became clear Pocahontas would not survive the journey home. She was taken ashore at Gravesend suffering from either pneumonia or tuberculosis and died shortly afterwards.



*Gravesend 1662  
Drawn by Jonas  
Moore, engraved by  
C. Matthews 1842,  
and coloured by  
Malcolm Wright;  
courtesy of Medway  
Council.  
This illustration  
appears in the History  
of Gravesend by  
Robert Pierce Cruden,  
published 1843.*



The parish register, which is held at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, contains the record of Pocahontas' burial which is believed to be in the vault beneath the chancel of St George's church Gravesend. The original parish register will be on display from May to September 2007 at Rochester's Guildhall and is one of the most poignant and important exhibits in this commemoration of the four hundredth anniversary of the founding of the Virginia and American colonies.



The burial entry for Rebecca Rolfe in the parish records of St George's church, Gravesend, held at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre

Following Pocahontas' death, John Rolfe intended taking the infant Thomas back to Virginia, but by the time to ship put in to Plymouth it was clear that young Thomas would not survive the voyage. Thomas was left in the care of another member of the Virginia Company, his uncle Henry Rolfe in London. On 13<sup>th</sup> September 1632 Thomas married Elizabeth WASHINGTON at St. James, Clerkenwell, London. Their daughter, Anne was born in 1633, but Elizabeth died shortly after. In 1640 Thomas married again, to Jane POYTHRESS, and it is this line which gave rise to the vast number of descendants in the United States, including the distant cousin of Stuart Cresswell, David Morenus.

In about 1635 Thomas Rolfe left his daughter Anne in England with his cousin Anthony Rolfe and returned to Virginia to claim his inheritance: his father, John, having died in 1622, possibly in the great Indian massacre of that year. John's will of 1621 left to Thomas land in Virginia, believed to be Smiths Fort. In addition, a Virginia Company letter of 1618 indicated that, "...Opechankano and the natives had given the country to Mr Rolf's [sic] child..." possibly meaning that Thomas should succeed to the chieftainship of the Powhatans. Indeed, in 1646 Thomas Rolfe was granted Fort Chickhominy and 600 acres, provided he kept a guard there. He also patented several other tracts of land, including his inheritance of 120 acres "by gift from the Indian king," and Smith's Fort, 1200 acres at the mouth of Gray's Creek.

Interestingly, Anne Rolfe did not follow her father to America, and in 1659 married Peter ELWIN (1623-1695) of Thurning, Norfolk. In 1698 their son Fountain Elwin (1661-1696) married Ann HASTINGS (c1675-1767). Fountain Elwin and Ann had a son called Peter Elwin (1701-1782) who became a barrister and in 1729 married Philippa MARSAM (c1703-1784).

Stuart Cresswell's private family archive provides a fascinating insight into the life of his ancestors in the late 1700s and beyond. In 1729 Peter Elwin and Philippa Marsam also had a son named Peter, the great great great grandson of Pocahontas. In February 1750/51, Peter married first Margaret, the daughter of Sir Edward PASTON of Branington. They had nine children:

Peter, Mary, Elizabeth, Marsham, Philippa, Margaret, Margaret, Charlotte and Lucy. Stuart explained that it is well known in the family that Peter Elwin (b 1729) was “paying attention to Susanna his second wife before the death of his first, and Margaret knew it.” Indeed, when Margaret died, Peter married in 1768 that same Susanna (1748 – 1830), daughter of William BELL of Saxthorpe. Peter had a further 17 children with Susanna: Caleb, Coulson Fountain, Fountain, Ann Dorothy, Mary, Sarah Harriet, Martha Susanna, a stillborn girl, Hannah, Susanna, Hastings, Peter Hewitt, Hastings, Anne, Marsham, Barbara and Lucy. The surviving Elwin children can be seen in a portrait dating from around 1784 from Stuart Cresswell’s private archive (see below).



*©Stuart Cresswell*

*Kindly supplied from the private archive of Mr. Stuart Cresswell.*

*From a cartoon for the portrait of some of the children of Peter Elwin of Booton, painted by Reinigle c. 1784.*

*Behind from left to right: Dolly, Charlotte (Mrs Williams), Mary (holding doll), Sarah (Mrs Lloyd), Patty, Peter (holding whip), Susannah (Mrs Wrench).*

*In front on floor: Marsham (great great great grandfather of Stuart Cresswell), Ann (Mrs Colombine).*

*The information is taken from the back of the picture. Of Peter Elwin’s 26 children only two had not been born by 1784; only 14 survived, nine of whom are depicted in this portrait.*

The child sitting on the floor to the left of the portrait is Marsham Elwin(1784-1831), great great great grandfather of Stuart Cresswell. In 1809 Marsham married Emma Louisa WHITWELL (1781-1870), the divorced wife of Sir George Berney BROGRAVE who had cited Marsham as the “other man”. They begat Mary Ellen (1820-1893) who in 1845 married Rev George Edward SYMONDS (1820-1892).



*Dr Edmund Symonds with his mother Mary Ellen Elwin in South Africa about 1893 shortly before her death*

Mary Ellen and George's marriage produced successive generations of doctors: Dr Edmund Symonds (1853-1907) who married Fanny Turton ARCHBELL, and whose daughter Mary Ellen (1892-1947) married Sir Arthur James Croft HUDDLESTON in 1910 (see photograph below).



Mary Ellen Symonds and Sir Arthur James Croft Huddleston were Stuart Cresswell's grandparents.

Looking at the photographs and illustrations of Stuart Cresswell's ancestors, it is true that there is no discernible similarity between them and their famous ancestor, Pocahontas. Although perhaps the dark eyes of the Elwin children in the 1784 Reinigle cartoon are a clue.



*The modern day descendants of Pocahontas are marked with an asterisk.  
Back row: \*Stuart Cresswell, Katie Cresswell, \*Stuart Cresswell, \*Gillian O'Keeffe, \*Susan Cresswell, Gerry O'Keeffe,  
Front row: Marion Cresswell, Alice McIntosh, \*Alice O'Keeffe, \*Daniel O'Keeffe.*

## *The Other Rochester and the Other Pocahontas*

Ruth Rosenberg-Naparsteck

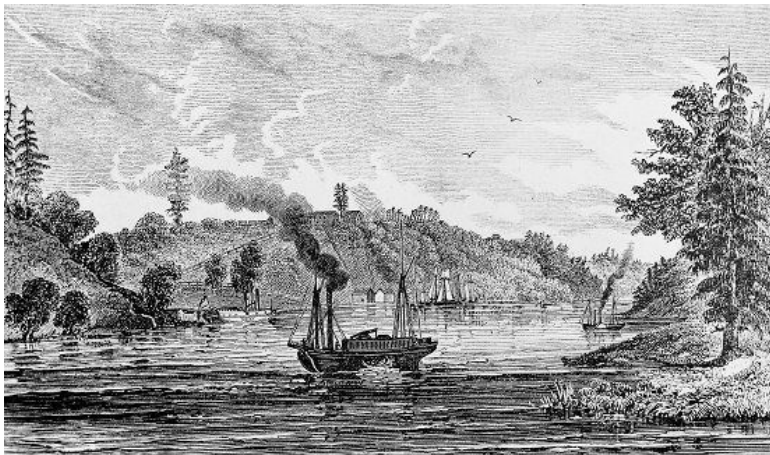
*Ruth Rosenberg-Naparsteck is the City Historian for Rochester, New York, in the United States; she is also Editor of the quarterly publication Rochester History. Rochester is situated on the western side of the state of New York and on the southern shore of Lake Ontario.*

In 1838 Henry O'REILLY, the city's first unofficial historian and newspaperman remarked that there should be more contact and interaction between Rochester, New York and Rochester, England. Periodically there has been, and between myself and my friends David and Sue TESTER, there has been a desire to form an International Sister City relationship, a desired shared by Stephen Dixon of the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre. As a point of interest, Sue Tester's father served as a Grand Marshal in the Centennial Parade in Rochester New York in 1934.

Every school age child knows the story of Pocahontas. Her story has acquired an almost mythical status, and not just because The Walt Disney Company made her life into a full-length animated film.

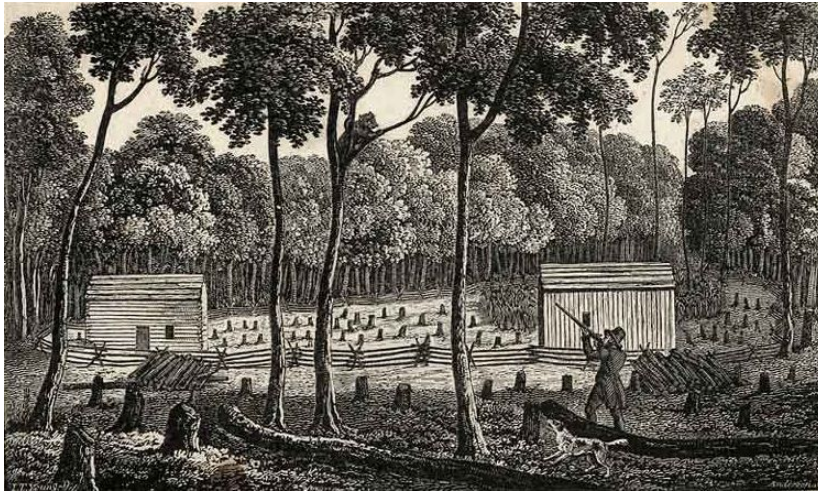
The pioneers who settled Rochester, New York, certainly knew the story and carried with them a curiosity about Native Americans and their culture. Throughout the 1600s, and just as they had done in the first colony established at Jamestown, the English took root in America and spread across New England. The American Rochester was settled a good couple of hundred years after Jamestown, with visionary migrants from the New England states of Connecticut, Vermont and Massachusetts, and in the late 1700s title to the Native American lands was extinguished through peaceful, but tense negotiations, as the chiefs remembered the battles of earlier years.

The land on which Rochester stands was purchased in 1803 as a One Hundred Acre Tract by Colonel Nathaniel ROCHESTER and his two partners Charles Carroll and William Fitzhugh, all from Hagerstown Maryland; Nathaniel Rochester was a descendant of Nicholas Rochester, who had come to Virginia from Kent in 1689. In 1811 Colonel Rochester laid out the One Hundred Acres of wilderness and rattlesnake infested swampland, but The War of 1812 made initial migration to the area slow.



*'View of the Genesee in Rochester. The Port of Rochester, five miles south of Lake Ontario at the north line of the city.' Early 1800s, depicted are small steamers and schooners typical of the period. Printed in the Rochester Herald, 15<sup>th</sup> September 1912, photograph of an engraving, 4 x 5 inches, Albert R Stone Negative Collection, Rochester Museum and Science Center, from Ruth Rosenberg-Naparsteck, Rochester: a pictorial history, Norfolk: The Donning Company, c. 1989; ref. sct 00078.*

Once the war had ended, growth was so rapid that by 1817, the bordering two hundred acre Frankfort and its raceways had also been annexed. What had started as a small township built around a flour mill, rapidly became a major centre for the trading of grain in the United States thanks to Rochester's position on the Genesee River - and the later building of the Erie Canal. By 1821, Rochester had become the seat of Monroe County and in 1834 was given city status.



*'Enos Stone Hunting a Bear', Rochester Public Library Local History Division picture file, depicting the wilderness area in which the early Rochester pioneers settled in the 1800s, including the cabin of Enos Stone and Stone himself hunting a bear, 1838, engraving, 8 x 14 cm; ref. rpf 00661*

The early occupants of Rochester were helped by their interaction with the Native Americans, and more than a few pioneers recalled how they would have starved had it not been for the Seneca tribe of the Iroquois Nation. The tribe shared their food, pointed out orchards, fields of wild berries and nuts, and showed the settlers where to hunt and fish. Some Senecas offered to hunt and fish in trade for tools and Seneca women went door to door selling wild fruits and nuts as well as hand woven baskets. Seneca dress, festivals and customs held a curious interest among the settlers. Newspapers carried articles about burial sites or points and arrows found. Some settlers began to marry Senecas as the Native Americans also adopted the dress and culture of the settlers.

The story of Mary JEMISON (1743-1833) illustrates how such interaction with the Native Americans took place and her story is well known today to school children in the United States. Mary was born in Ireland, the daughter of Thomas and Jane Jemison. The family emigrated to America in 1743 settling in an area which is now known as central Pennsylvania. In 1758, during the Seven Years War between the French, English, and Native Americans, 15 year old Mary and her family – apart from two brothers - were captured near the Pennsylvania border by a group of Shawnee Indians and French soldiers. Mary's parents and siblings were killed and scalped, but she was spared and traded to the Seneca tribe. The Senecas adopted her and renamed her Dehgewanus, as was the custom by many Native Americans to replace a lost member of their family. Mary integrated well into the community (see illustration) and found the Native American way of life preferable. She married a young brave Sheninjee and they had a son whom she named Thomas, after her father. When the war ended, Sheninjee was concerned Mary would be sent back to her settlement and decided they should go to the Sehghunda Valley along the Genesee River. The journey was over 700 miles and before its end, Sheninjee became ill and the young brave died. Mary completed her journey and settled in Little Beard's Town, now called Cuylerville, in the beautiful riverside land south of Rochester. She remarried another Seneca

named Hiakatoo and with him had six more children. In 1797 the Seneca began to sell off their lands around Rochester to the white settlers, with the exception of a two acre plot reserved for Mary Jemison. Mary lived there until 1831 when she sold the land and moved to the Buffalo Creek Reservation; she died on 19<sup>th</sup> September 1833.



*Mary Jemison, 'White Woman of the Genesee', Rochester Public Library Local History Division picture file, c. 1860 – 1900, mounted on cardboard, 17 x 11 cm; image ref. rpf02275*

The story of Mary Jemison and her love for the Seneca Nation captured the imagination of the early settlers in Rochester. In 1874 her remains were removed to the Letchworth State Park and in 1910 a bronze statue was erected over the grave in her memory.

Archaeological findings on the site of Jamestown, the study of the colonists' diaries and the comparative stories told by early settlers point to a less than romantic story of Native Americans whose country was lost to colonists. Nevertheless, the stories of Mary Jemison and Pocahontas are examples of genuine interaction in the early American colonies, and the effect and influence of their romantic tales on those early English settlers is deeply rooted in America folklore.

*Further information about Rochester and Mary Jemison can be obtained on the Monroe County Library System website at [www.libraryweb.org](http://www.libraryweb.org) and by clicking on the 'Quick Links' Rochester History and Rochester Images.*

## *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.*



Putting together this special Pocahontas edition of *The Clock Tower* has been a fascinating experience. Like most people, I knew very little about the woman herself, and the more I found out about her the more intrigued I became. Talking to Stuart Cresswell (*A Descendant of Pocahontas*) was extraordinary and when I received the copy of the portrait of his ancestor which is featured on our front cover, I felt immensely privileged and moved.

As usual, Stephen Dixon, Borough Archivist at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre had a treasure trove of contacts for me, but I decided to cast the net a little wider and posted a plea on the message boards of the Kent Family History Society (KFHS) and North West Kent Family History Society (NWKFHS).

For those who use the boards on a regular basis, it is fabulous how conversations fly back and forth on these boards, new lines of research open and friendships form. Therefore I was not surprised when, within a few minutes, Elizabeth HOWARD (NWKFHS) came back to me with: "I actually live just south of Heacham [birthplace of John Rolfe] do you want me to nip up and photograph the village sign?"

This wonderful photograph followed shortly thereafter:



Sandra TONGEMAN (KFHS) of South Cheshire recommended the website of St George's church in Gravesend, which was extremely useful and informative (<http://www.stgeorgesgravesend.org.uk>).

Sandra also recommended the website of PortCities London (<http://www.portcities.org.uk/london/server/show/ConFactFile.27/Pocahontas.ht>) which features

an engraving of ‘*English Captain Argall [taking] Pocahontas the daughter of King Powhatan on board his ship, dated 1619* by Johannus Theodorus de Bry and held at the National Maritime Museum. The website features other such interesting illustrations and information.

According to Penny HOLT in Canada (KFHS), “Ancestors in the Attic, a genealogy TV program aired on History Television over here did a program on Pocahontas...part of it was shot in Gravesend at St. George's Church and in the Three Daws pub. They made Queen Street look picturesque. The show was hugely entertaining as well as educational. . Check out the show's website at <http://www.history.ca/ancestorsintheattic/> Click Episodes and choose Episode Two.

Finally, I received this marvellous piece from Evelyn VIGEON (KFHS):

”A rather obscure and tenuous connection to Pocahontas which may be of passing interest to you...A few years ago I put together some information about Agecroft Hall which formerly stood in Pendlebury which is now a district in Salford, Greater Manchester. Agecroft Hall was a 15th century and later timber-framed hall and was purchased by Mr and Mrs T.C. Williams, junior, of Richmond, Virginia in 1926. The hall was taken down and shipped to Windsor Farms on the banks of the James River, two miles from Richmond. When the hall was shipped to Richmond, it was not rebuilt as it had been. As a contemporary report put it:

‘Hundreds of photographs of the original house were taken and, in rebuilding, the photographs were followed in detail. No effort was made to put each stone, each slab of the roof, in exactly its original position...Agecroft Manor was not rebuilt in America exactly as it stood in England. The art of the architecture was in recomposing the material at hand into the imposing building which today graces Windsor Farms. Mr MORSE [the architect] worked for weeks to find the best compositions in the new arrangement, using the pictures of the old house entirely, instead of measurements....’

It took two years from demolition to the final completion of the new house in March, 1928, but it was sufficiently complete for a local theatre company to present Ben JOHNSON’s Christmas Masque as a welcome to the Hall at Christmas 1927. This was a suitable choice because the first production in 1617 at the Court of King James had been seen by Princess Pocahontas, the Indian princess who saved the life of John Smith, Virginia’s founder, near this very site, and who became a Christian and married an Englishman named Rolfe. Agecroft Hall is now a museum and open to visitors.”

In her article *The Other Rochester and the Other Pocahontas*, Ruth Rosenberg-Naparsteck urges us all to follow the words of Rochester New York’s Henry O’Reilly and to promote more contact and interaction between Britain and America. I agree, and hopefully this issue of The Clock Tower will achieve just that.

*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](mailto:lisa.birch@medway.gov.uk).*



*Famous Medway People...*



*The Waghorn statue in Railway Street Chatham, erected 1888. Waghorn is depicted pointing to the overland route*



*The statue of Pocahontas at St George's church, Gravesend*