

Isaac Newell: More than a Name

On the evening of 7 November 2022, FOMA Chairman, Elaine Gardner and *Clock Tower* Editor, Amanda Thomas attended the opening of a fantastic new exhibition at Rochester's Guildhall Museum entitled, *Isaac Newell: More than a Name*. Strood's Isaac Newell emigrated to Argentina in the nineteenth century where he and his son Claudio started a football club (Newell's Old Boys Athletic Club) which would become famous for its role in shaping modern football. See more on page 10.



FOMA Chairman, Elaine Gardner with ex-professional footballer, Fabian Costello, a Newell's Old Boys' player from 1975 to 1985.

A very Happy Christmas and all good wishes for 2023!

If undelivered, please return to:
Medway Archives Centre,
32 Bryant Road, Strood, Rochester, ME2 3EP.



Issue Number 68: November 2022
£2.00; free to members

The Friends of Medway Archives
Excepted Charity registration number XR92894

Farewell, Elspeth!



A sad farewell to Medway Archives Centre Archivist, Elspeth Millar. See page 7

ALSO INSIDE!

World Cup fever starts at Rochester's Guildhall Museum with the opening of a fantastic new exhibition - *Isaac Newell: More than a Name*. See page 10.

PLUS

The campaign to save Charles Dickens' Swiss Chalet at Eastgate House. See page 13.

Medway History Showcase

The first *Medway History Showcase* was held on 15 October 2022 at the Royal Engineers Museum, Gillingham. Organised by FOMA's Peter Joyce, it proved to be an exciting event, as reported by FOMA Chairman, Elaine Gardner on page 3. FOMA had a stand at the showcase, as pictured.



Photograph by Elaine Gardner.

The Wreck SS Richard Montgomery

On the evening of Friday 11 November, FOMA hosted *The Wreck SS Richard Montgomery*, a series of three films by Colin Harvey entitled, *The Doomsday Ship*, *Liberty Ships* and *A Disaster Waiting to Happen*. Strood's St Nicholas' Church Hall was absolutely packed, which was a wonderful boost to the FOMA committee's morale – and to our funds! We shall be asking Colin back again soon, and hopefully for a viewing of his new film, *Wings over Rochester*, the story of Short Brothers in Rochester (see also the inside back cover for an unexpected discovery about Shorts). Colin Harvey is well-known for his history documentary films and *The Wreck* did not disappoint. The American Liberty Ship, *SS Richard Montgomery* has remained sunken some 200 yards off the north coast of Sheppey since the end of World War Two and on board are more than 1,400 tons of bombs and munitions, earning it the popular name, *The Doomsday Ship*. Colin's three films were absolutely fascinating, as were his interjections and commentary.



Photograph by Amanda Thomas.

Shorts in Italy!

1920s

The first scheduled flights

On 7 April 1926 the first scheduled flight between Genova, Rome, Naples and Palermo took off. It's the era of seaplanes, and the S.A.N.A. airline of the Genovese Rinaldo Piaggio chooses the 12-seater Dornier "Wal". The Genova - Palermo flight takes 12 hours, compared to 48 hours for the train. The ticket includes bus transport from Piazza De Ferrari to the harbor. At the end of the decade, the Genova - Tobruk line by the British company Imperial Airways was inaugurated. The idea of an airport with a land runway was already born in the 1930s, but seaplanes regular flights lasted until the 1950s.



Anni '30 - Il nuovo idroscalo sorge a ponente della Lanterna - Si notano le banchine dedicate agli idrovolanti e gli hangar.
1930s - The new seaplane base rises to the west of the Lanterna - Note the docks dedicated to seaplanes and the hangars.



Anni '20 - Il primo idroscalo trova spazio in porto, a Calata Bettolo.
1920s - The first seaplane base is located in the port, in Calata Bettolo.



Fine anni '20
Un idrovolante trimotore Short S.8 Calcutta della Imperial Airways.
Late 1920s
An Imperial Airways Short S.8 Calcutta three-engined seaplane.

Photographs by David Thomas;
with thanks to Genova City Airport.

Part of the history of Genova Airport display at Genova Airport, Italy, with the bottom right image and text magnified. See page 37.

The Committee

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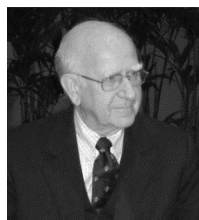
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Chairman's Letter

Elaine Gardner



The official launch of Medway Archives took place at the Medway Archives and Local Studies Centre, Strood, on 14th December 2005.

Cutting the ribbon (from left to right) by Julia Latta, Publicist of the Thomas Lottery Fund, Catherine South, Eric, Trevor, Frances, Frances, Vice Chairmen, Patrick Sibley, Frances, Vice President, Roy Marston, Frances, Chairman, Cllr Sue Haydock, Medway Council, Stephen Litton, Borough Archivist, and Brian Alexander-Smith, Executive Vice President.

Medway Archives is Medway Council's project to publish images of the original parish registers in its custody on the Medway Archives website. Charitable support was made possible by a grant of £10,000 to the Heritage Lottery Fund under the *The Heritage Lottery Fund* scheme. The registers are held on deposit from the local parish churches and cover the Rochester Archdeaconry area, extending from Dartford and Gravesend in the west to Rainham in the east, and including the Medway Towns. Medway Archives is already opening to be a large success with almost 11,000 researchers worldwide visiting the site between 14th December 2005 and 28th February 2006.

It's hard to believe that FOMA has now been in existence for over 16 years! It was established in April 2006 – as evidenced by the very first issue of *The Clock Tower* (pictured) - with individual membership at £10 per year. FOMA's aim was to support the Medway Archives Centre (MAC) in a variety of ways, including the purchase of items their funding does not enable.

All these years on, with the membership fee still at £10 and expenses rising, fees no longer even cover the cost of production and postage for *The Clock Tower*. The committee has therefore, and reluctantly, been discussing an increase in membership fees for 2023. Many of you will recall that this was also mentioned at the AGM in April.

At our last meeting we debated raising membership to £15, but in the current financial climate were concerned we might lose members. Perhaps an increase to £12 would be more acceptable? At least this would just cover our costs, but it would leave little spare to support MAC - which is after all one of our key aims. We also considered introducing a *two-tier* membership to give members the option of a printed *Clock Tower* or just an online version. Some societies have found this reduces the production and postage costs, but they have print runs of perhaps 500 or more. Ours is much smaller, with approximately 130 members, so even reducing the print run by a quarter would only make limited savings. In addition, we also discussed inviting non-members browsing the FOMA website, researchers searching the FOMA De Caville Index, for example, or back copies of *The Clock Tower*, to make a donation if they had found the information helpful or, even better, to become members.

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This latter suggestion will probably go ahead in the form of a *Please Donate* button on the website, but our constitution and rules require us to put any membership fee increase to a General Meeting for approval. Since it was rather short notice to do this before Christmas, we have decided that we will postpone the increase, leaving fees at their current level for 2023, and putting the increase to member vote at the AGM in April 2023 for a rise from January 2024. In the meantime, we would please urge you to come along and support our talks and other events to enable an increase to our funds. We would also welcome your views on increasing the fees; my email address is listed in the committee details on page 46.



Elaine Gardner promotes the FOMA website at the Medway History Day – an image of the FOMA De Caville Index is visible in the background.

Photograph by Peter Joyce.

In other news, recently, the first Medway History Day was held on 15 October 2022, organised by Peter Joyce and hosted by the Royal Engineers Museum in Gillingham. I went along to promote FOMA and hopefully find new members (see the inside front cover), but I also sat in on most of the 30-minute talks held during the day and was pleasantly surprised by how much I learnt about Kent and Medway. For

example, did you know that the first RoRo (roll-on/roll-off) ferries were developed in 1917 at a secret port at Richborough to allow loaded rail trucks to drive on there, then off again at Dunkirk to speed up deliveries of war supplies? They were imaginatively named Train 1, Train 2 and Train 3! Rather unexpectedly – and due to the illness of another speaker - I found myself giving the last talk of the day! This gave me a wonderful opportunity to promote the FOMA De Caville Index to a huge number of people who otherwise may not have heard of this fantastic online resource of ours. The hope is to hold another such history day next year, so do look out for it!

At our last committee meeting, we were saddened to hear that Elspeth Millar, Medway's Archivist is leaving MAC at the end of November and will be moving to a new post with BT Archives in London. Elspeth arrived at MAC just a few months before lockdown, a period which, as we know, presented a unique set of challenges. However, her greatest achievement must be the awarding to MAC of Archive Service Accreditation in November 2021 (see *The Clock Tower*, Issue 65, February 2022). We are all very sorry to see her go, but wish her well in her new post - and hope that her replacement is promptly appointed.

This is the last *Clock Tower* of 2022 so may I wish you a very Happy Christmas and all good wishes for 2023.

About The Clock Tower

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

Editorial deadlines

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

The copy deadline for Issue 69 of *The Clock Tower* is Monday 30 January 2023, with publication on Wednesday 22 February 2023.

Publication date

The fourth Wednesday following the editorial deadline.

The Clock Tower is printed by Barkers Litho, Unit 18 Castle View Business Centre, Gas House Road, Rochester, Kent, ME1 1PB; telephone: 01634 829048, email: info@barkerslitho.co.uk

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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 Dr Alexander Thomas.

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

The Clock Tower Index (<http://foma-lsc.org/journal.html>) is updated by Nic Nicholas.

Further Information

Further information on the Medway Archives Centre can be obtained on the MAC website <https://cityark.medway.gov.uk/> or by writing to Medway Archives Centre, 32 Bryant Road, Strood, Rochester, Kent, ME2 3EP. 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 FOMA Chairman: Elaine Gardner, 102 Valley View Road, Rochester, ME1 3NX, Kent; emgardner@virginmedia.com; 01634 408595. All correspondence should be directed to the FOMA Secretary: Christopher de Coulon Berthoud, 4 Albert Road, Rochester, ME1 3DG, Kent; berthoud@blueyonder.co.uk

Membership enquiries should be directed to the Membership Secretary, Jean Skilling, 15 Port Close, Lordswood, Chatham, ME5 8DU, Kent; membership@foma-lsc.org

Friends of Broomhill



The Friends of Broomhill, Strood, Task Days are the first **Sunday** of every month (except January), from September to April inclusive, 10 am to noon. **Thursday** Task Days are every Thursday morning (all year) concentrating on the Old Orchard woodland, 10 am to noon. Meet in car park at end of King Arthurs Drive, Strood, ME2 3NB. All welcome, no experience necessary, tools provided or bring your own. It's fun, free and healthy!

For further details see our car park notice boards or visit our website: www.friendsofbroomhill.org.uk . You can also find us on social media (Facebook, Instagram and Twitter) or contact David Park, Secretary on 07968-380588 or email: secretary@friendsofbroomhill.org.uk

Medway Geographical and Local History Society

Friday 25 November 2022: *London's Royal Parks* - Andrew Mayfield.

Friday 27 January: *History of The Royal Engineers* - Rebecca Blackburn.

Friday 24 February: *The Falkland Islands* - Tony Mitchell.

Friday 24 March: *Crossings of The Lower Thames and Medway* - Rob Poole.

Friday 25 April: *Burma/Myanmar* - Jane Scotchmer.

Friday 26 May: AGM.

Meetings at 2.00/3.30pm; doors open 1.30pm.

Holy Trinity Church, Twydall Lane, Gillingham, Kent, ME8 6JU.

Visitors £3.50 per meeting; annual subscription £18.

For further information please contact Vanda Woollett, tel. 01634 389916, mob 07948 277 131, email vwoollett@hotmail.co.uk

Chatham Historical Society

Wednesday 14th December 2022, 7.30-9.30 pm

Christmas Social

Wednesday 11th January 2023

Society Evening. *Discover Chatham's Worthies.*

Meeting time 7.30-9.00pm.

St Stephen's Church, Maidstone Road, Chatham, ME4 6JE.

All are welcome. Please pay on the door (visitors £3)

New Members

A warm welcome to new FOMA members Ms Emma Ovenden, Mr Jeremy and Mrs Helen Gates, Mrs Linda Brignall, and Mr and Mrs John Harriott.

Obituary

We were saddened to hear the news in the summer of the death of FOMA member, Mr RW Baker of Gillingham. The FOMA committee sent condolences to Mr Baker's family.

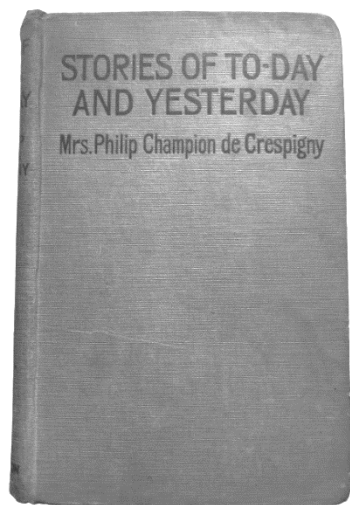
Secretary's Report

Chris de Coulon Berthoud



In the last issue of *The Clock Tower* (Issue 67, August 2022), in his article, *Compare and Contrast*, Brian Joyce wrote about Tommy Steele and Marty Wilde and how performers in the 1950s and 60s changed the face of entertainment, particularly in live venues like Chatham's Ritz Cinema. I have been compiling an ever-expanding database of gigs (that is to say, musical performances, rather than rowing boats) that took place in Medway from second half of the twentieth century to the present. The post-war consumer boom saw the rise of the teenager with money to spend on music, both recorded and live, and Medway's young population had a wealth of opportunities to see many of the most famous names in the business at a wide range of venues.

As I reach some 2,500 listings of performances and venues, I am beginning to get an overview of quite how fertile the music scene in the Medway Towns has always been. Some places are harder to find information about than others, the Green Shack on Dock Road and the 12 Club at Chattenden Barracks are two places I would love to hear more about along with other venues, and the local bands that played at them. If you went to the Go-Go Club at the Labour Hall, Belmont Road, Gillingham in 1967, or saw Howlin' Wolf at the Village of the Damned Blues Club at the Aurora Hotel in 1969, or John Martyn at the Medway Folk Centre at the Old Ash Tree, Chatham in 1973, or The Pop Rivets at the Tam O'Shanter on Chatham Hill in 1978, well, do please drop me a line and tell me more about your rock'n'roll Medway past. Even better if you were a Moldy Fig, a skiffle enthusiast – or member of a beat combo!



I recently purchased this book written by Mrs Philip Champion de Crespigny (illustrated), published by Mills and Boon in 1917. Inside was an inscription from the original owner. The address, 2 London Road in Strood was the Bulls Head public house, also known as the Mid Kent Hotel, and is now a takeaway pizza shop. I had a quick look to see if I could find out who H. Giles was. The 1939 Register lists the licensee and owner of the public house as one Harold Giles, born on 30 November 1895. Harold had been working as a chauffeur until 3 June 1915, when he volunteered at Kingston and joined the Army Service Corps. He came from a family of publicans, both his father, Stephen Ward Giles, and brother Frank Giles, had previously held the licence of the Bull's Head before he did.

His father Stephen Ward Giles (b. 1864) was listed as working as an Engine Fitter on the 1891 Census, then took over as publican at The Morden Arms, Troy Town, Rochester, demolished in 1963. Stephen was then at The Clarendon, 76 Luton Road between 1901 and 1913, also now closed down and now a motorcycle shop, before taking over at the Bull's Head some time around 1922. It's always nice to see how close our past is to us, even when it is also seemingly receding faster than ever.

Keep warm ...



and a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our members and readers!

- You can also search or browse for original archive material on the Medway Council Heritage Services catalogue.
- You can find books and periodicals by searching the Medway Libraries online catalogue.
- If you cannot find what you are looking for, please contact us.

Medway Archives Centre Annual Closure

Please note that Medway Archives Centre will be closed for the annual collections care fortnight from **2 January to 14 January 2023**. MAC will reopen at 9am on Monday 16 January 2023.

Guildhall Museum, Rochester



Isaac Newell: More than a Name

8 November – 4 December 2022
 Guildhall Museum, High Street, Rochester, ME1 1PY.
 Guildhall.museum@medway.gov / 01634 332900
 Free entry during the museum's normal opening hours
 Tuesday to Saturday (open Sundays on 3 and 4 December)
 10am – 5 pm; last admission 4.15 pm.

For more details, see our report on the opening of the exhibition on page 10.



The latest version (Update 60) of the Chatham Traction newsletter can be read at:

https://www.chathamtraction.org.uk/updates/221108_Update_60.pdf

For more information see the website at www.chathamtraction.org.uk or contact Richard Bourne (Chairman); 31 Usher Park Road, Haxby, York YO32 3RX; 01904 766375, or 07771 831653. Email Richard@thebournes.me.uk.

Medway Archives Centre

32 Bryant Rd, Rochester ME2 3EP; 01634 332714; malsc@medway.gov.uk.

Events and Exhibitions

December drop-in session:

Focus on ... Posters

Saturday 3 December 2022, 10am to midday.

FREE event; booking not required, just drop in.

Our wide-ranging poster collection offers a glimpse into Medway's past. Not just informative, but often works of art too, some of these posters are unique and rarely seen. From politics and war to theatre and local businesses, and from the 19th century to the modern day, a selection of this important collection will be available to view at Medway Archives Centre. Enjoy browsing the posters, chat to staff and volunteers, and plan a return visit to view more of the fascinating posters in our collection.

Gallery Foyer Display

Twydall: from Stone Age to Modern Housing Estate

7 November 2022 – 21 January 2023

This display focuses on Twydall from the Stone Age period until its development as a housing estate in the 1950s. Available during our normal opening hours.

Opening Hours and Visiting

Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm, Saturday 9am to 12.30pm, Wednesday and Sunday closed.

Opening hours have returned to normal. Our reopening has been planned in a cautious way to ensure that we can review all of the practical issues involved in running the service safely. We will keep these opening arrangements under review.

We are now accepting drop-in visits for published materials and photographs if there is space in the search room. An appointment must be made to view original archive material and use microfilm or fiche readers

How to Make an Appointment

Email us at malsc@medway.gov.uk to make an appointment and to discuss which items you wish to consult. For original archive material you must give at least 3 working days' notice of your intention to visit. For all other material (such as books, maps, photographs) we just require 1 working day's notice. When you book we will ask for your name and contact details so that we can keep in touch with you about your appointment.

Farewell, Elspeth!

On 17 November 2022, the FOMA Committee gathered at the Medway Archives Centre (MAC) for our last meeting before Christmas. Usually at committee meetings, MAC Archivist Elspeth Millar joins us towards the end to give an update. This meeting was no exception, but Elspeth's report included the sad news that she will be leaving just before Christmas. Elspeth's departure has saddened us all, not least because she has become a very good friend and has been such a pleasure to work with. She has worked tirelessly to put the Medway Archives Centre on the map, particularly with the awarding in November 2021 of Archive Service Accreditation. This was a huge achievement and demonstrates MAC's – and indeed, FOMA's – continued commitment to the development and preservation of Medway's important heritage collections.



We were delighted to present Elspeth with some flowers and a card and also FOMA Honorary Life Membership. This, of course, also guarantees that we will see Elspeth again very soon, as we know she will continue to support us in our work.

Betty Cole



We are also delighted to announce that Betty Cole is to be presented with FOMA Honorary Life Membership. Betty retired from the FOMA Committee at the AGM in April this year, though she continues to do a marvellous job proof-reading *The Clock Tower*. Readers will be pleased to know that this piece was added at the last moment in order to maintain the surprise! Betty was appointed Membership Secretary in 2008 and has also contributed regularly to *The Clock Tower*. She instigated the series *Betty's Postcards* and the very popular *What and Why?*

The FOMA Committee is delighted to recognize Betty's contribution by presenting her with this special honour.

Medway Archives Centre News

Elspeth Millar



Hello *Clock Tower* readers!

Events and Exhibitions

Since the last *Clock Tower* update we have had a number of great exhibitions and events. In August we hosted an exhibition from the Thames Sailing Barge Trust, entitled *Red Sails Over the Medway*, and were lucky to have John Rayment visit twice to deliver two talks about this history of the Thames Sailing Barge and the sailing barge *Pudge*, which was built at Strood and celebrated her 100th birthday this summer.

In September and October we hosted Wendy Cottam's *Gaia, Mother Nature* sculpture. Wendy is a Kent based artist, originating from Gravesend. '*Gaia*' *Mother Nature*, was inspired by local Strood born Victorian illustrator Anne Pratt*, Strood and Medway local wanderings, and panoramic views across the Thames Estuary. She is created from a variety of materials including wire, hemp string, plaster, oil paint and Bio resin. A wonderful thing about this exhibition was that it grew whilst it was here! Wendy left out paper and drawing materials, and a post box, and asked people to draw their response to the sculpture. By the end of October we had a wonderful colourful display on the walls in the gallery foyer.

We currently have a MAC display in the gallery foyer entitled *Twydall: From Stone Age to modern housing estate*, curated by Alison Thomas and Catharina Clement. Parts of this display were at Twydall Community Hub this summer. The display provides a history of Twydall from the Stone Age period until its development as a housing estate in the 1950s. Maps and plans are used to document the development of Twydall over the centuries.

In September we took part in the Heritage Open Day weekends and gave two behind-the-scenes tours, and have also held two drop-in events on maps, and cinemas, theatres and amateur dramatics. Our next drop-in event is in December (Saturday 3 December), and will focus on posters in the collections.

Please keep an eye out via our newsletter and social media for news of forthcoming events in December, January, February, and March, and how to book if necessary.

Staffing

We were sad to see our temporary members of the team, Kirsty and Jamie, leave us in September. They joined us for six months under the Government's Kickstart Scheme. I am so pleased that we took part in this scheme, with two Kickstart cohorts, over 2021 and 2022. It was wonderful to provide different job opportunities for four people through this scheme and give them new experiences of the workplace and the

News and Events

Calendar of Forthcoming Events and Exhibitions

FOMA Talks and Events

Please note that the halls at St Nicholas Church, Strood are due to be refurbished in early 2023 and we may have to temporarily switch to an alternative venue.

Medway Archives Centre Lecture Series

As part of the forthcoming new lecture series at the Medway Archives Centre in the first half of 2023, FOMA will be hosting the following:

Tuesday 28th February 2023, 2pm;

Islands of the Medway

A talk by Adam Taylor

Medway Archives Centre, 32 Bryant Rd, Rochester ME2 3EP

Friday 14 April 2023

FOMA AGM

Please make a note in your diaries!

Booking for FOMA events is not necessary and unless specified are held at St Nicholas Church Lower Hall, Strood, Rochester, Kent. ME2 4TR; car park entrance is off Gun Lane, ME2 4UG, almost opposite the Health Centre. **Please note that the church halls are due to be refurbished in early 2023 and we may have to temporarily switch to an alternative venue.**

Please check our website (www.foma-lsc.org) and Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/fomalsc>) for further information and for other forthcoming events. Talks are £3 for members, £5 non-members. Booking for Quiz Nights and enquiries through the FOMA Chairman: Elaine Gardner, 102 Valley View Road, Rochester, ME1 3NX, Kent; emgardner@virginmedia.com; 01634 408595.

FOMA members might also be interested to know that Betty Cole wrote an article for the What and Why series entitled, 'Chatham Town Hall Gardens' in The Clock Tower, Issue 51, August 2018

Twydall: from Stone Age to Modern Housing Estate

Amanda,

Hello again!

I was chatting to Sandra Fowler recently who told me about the exhibition on Twydall that MAC are putting on. I grew up in Twydall, attending both Twydall Infant and Junior Schools before going on to the Grammar School. It started me thinking about my own history (yet again) and thinking back to the 1960s. My mother took me to school on my first day when I was five years old and, thereafter, I found my own way from Hawthorn Avenue where we lived. That's what is great about family history - or social history - everything is so ordinary - until it's not!

Best wishes,

Peter Bursey.

Twydall: from Stone Age to Modern Housing Estate

Free to view in the gallery foyer,
7 November 2022 - 21 January 2023
Available during our normal opening hours.
Medway Archives Centre,
32 Bryant Road,
Strood ME2 3EP
01634 332714 / archives@medway.gov.uk
medway.gov.uk/archives

For further details see page 42.

opportunity to learn new skills. It also provided Medway Archives Centre with the opportunity to undertake work not previously possible, particularly focusing on managing our digitised records and digitisation of audio recordings. We wish Kirsty and Jamie luck for the future!

Recent Material Donated to Medway Archives Centre

We have had some wonderful material donated to Medway Archives Centre recently. I think it shows the breadth of the collecting we do, that in the last few months we have collected material relating to local politics and governance (contemporary and historic!), material created by local historians, and archives relating to the Medway creative and artistic scene.

Archives

- DE1323, Councillor Geoffrey Fagg Personal Papers
- DE1328, Court Manor book for the Manors of Cobham, East Chalk, West Chalk, Gravesend, West Cliffe (1782-1783)
- DE1329, 'Scrapbook - Writings and references to Edwin Harris'. *Scrapbook thought to have been collated by Edwin Harris. Includes business cards, invitations, correspondence with Edwin Harris, plus newspaper cuttings written by, or about, Edwin Harris (1899-1938).*
- DE1330, Chris Broderick Archive. *Chris Broderick's (of The Singing Loins) creative works, finished and unfinished, including albums, songs, scripts, novel drafts, poetry, and press cuttings.*

Published Works

- *The Medway and The Military* by Mel Swain. A brief, accessible history with chapters on Napoleon and Wellington, Charles Pasley, Charles Gordon, Herbert Kitchener, James McCudden, Louis Brennan and Charles Dickens.
- *Pudge ... A Survivor: The story of the Thames Sailing Barge Pudge 1922-2022* by The Thames Sailing Barge Trust
- *Black Victorians: hidden in history* by Keshia N. Abraham and John Woolf. Includes entries on Sarah Forbes Bonetta and William Cuffay.

Some of this material is not yet fully catalogued, but do contact us (via archives@medway.gov.uk) if you would like to visit to consult any of these collections.

This is my last update as I am moving on to a new role. I have really enjoyed the last three years at Medway Archives Centre and I want to give a special thanks to the whole MAC team and Duncan Mead (Head of Library Services), who were so welcoming and supportive! And thank you to the FOMA Committee and members for everything they have done to support me in the post of Manager/Archivist.

*Further information on Anne Pratt can be found in Barbara Marchant's *Clock Tower* articles which include, *Strood's Famous Botanist - Anne Pratt* (Issue 5, February 2007), *My Little Dormouse*, Part One (Issue Number 31: August 2013), *My Little Dormouse*, Part Two (Issue Number 32: November 2013).

Isaac Newell: More than a Name

Amanda Thomas



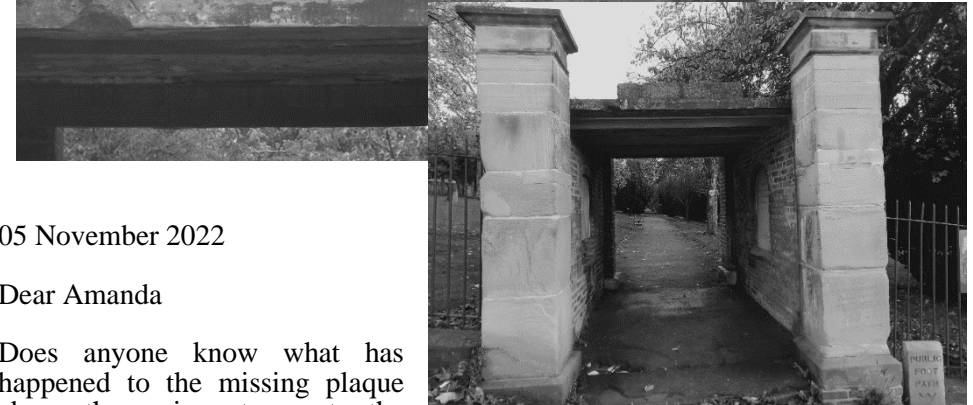
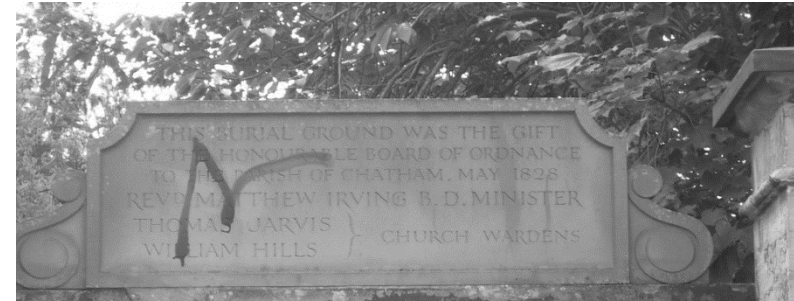
On the evening of 7 November 2022, Elaine Gardner and I attended the opening of a fantastic new exhibition at Rochester's Guildhall Museum entitled, *Isaac Newell: More than a Name*. Curated by Medway Sport, the idea was the brainchild (some ten years ago) of Adrian Pope, a Cranbrook resident and *massive* football fan: "I'm a lifelong Gillingham supporter!" Adrian discovered the Newell story on a trip to South America and narrowly missed watching the famous Rosario team play thanks to an unfortunate mix up with dates. It's an experience he has regretted ever since but one which makes the grey football shirt he purchased during his trip even more precious.



Margarita Bitetti, Isaac Newell's great great granddaughter with Adrian Pope and the precious football shirt.

Clock Tower readers will recall that Elaine and I researched the Newell story earlier this year following an email from Mauro Emiliozzi in Rosario, Argentina. Mauro leads a research group on the history of football and wanted more information about Isaac Newell who was born in Strood on 24 April 1853. In 1869 Newell emigrated to Argentina and there he and his son Claudio started a football club. Newell's Old Boys Athletic Club is now world famous for the role it has played in shaping modern football. In Argentina, the story is legendary and Strood is fast becoming a place for pilgrimage – a fact discussed at length during the course of the exhibition opening. Surely a statue of Isaac Newell should be erected in Strood? It is an idea fast gaining some serious traction!

Missing Plaque – Chatham Town Hall Gardens



05 November 2022

Dear Amanda

Does anyone know what has happened to the missing plaque above the main entrance to the Town Hall Gardens?

A picture taken by Bryan [Fowler] in 2010 is attached and shows the inscribed stone clearly in place. The Kent Gardens Trust produced a report of The Town Hall Gardens in 2014 which states:

"Above the entrance gateway a memorial stone commemorating the opening of the burial ground contains an inscription marking its opening in May 1828 and recording the names of the Clergy of St Mary's: the incumbent, the Reverend Mathew Irving B D Minister and the churchwardens Thomas Jarvis and William Hills."

This stone was removed some time in or after 2014 (as photographed recently, above). Do any FOMA members know where the memorial stone is, when was it removed and why?

Kind regards,

Sandra Fowler.

Readers' Letters

We welcome letters and emails from readers with their comments. If you have anything you would like to say please email the Editor, Amanda Thomas, Editor, at editor@foma-lsc.org, the FOMA Secretary, Chris de Coulon Berthoud at berthoud@blueyonder.co.uk, or visit the FOMA website, www.foma-lsc.org/index.htm or our Facebook page, <https://www.facebook.com/fomalsc>

The Herbert Baker Society

Readers will recall that in the last issue of *The Clock Tower*, Issue 67, August 2022, we published an advertisement:

The Baker Society

Are you passionate about Medway history?
Are you interested in historic buildings and architecture?

We need members AND someone to lead a new society to celebrate the life and work of Cobham's Sir Herbert Baker!

We are delighted to report that the dream is becoming a reality, as follows.

10 November 2022

Dear Amanda,

We had a useful meeting last night to discuss the establishment of a Herbert Baker Society. We had at least one grandchild from each of his children, plus a few others and a lovely and lively archivist and curator called Anna Dewsnapp who gave us lots to think about.

We discussed the need for there to be a website as a starting point, which friends and family may be willing to put in contributions for. We also intend to get larger scale funding for starting up, perhaps from the Rochester Bridge Society.

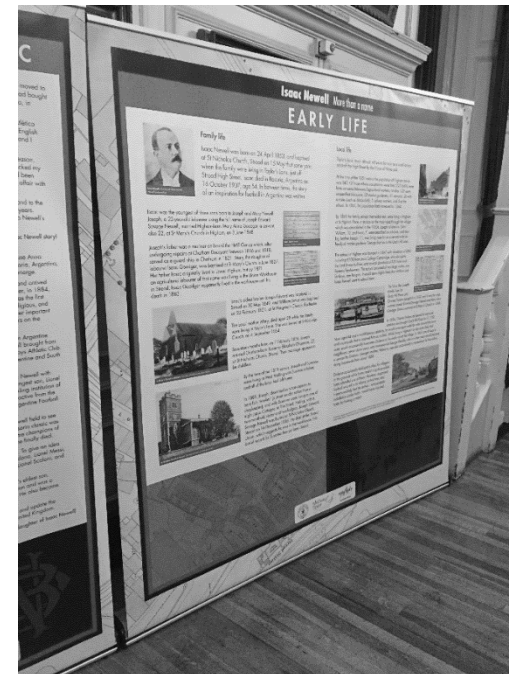
We have the family's 'blessing' and now going forward we need some nuts and bolts support to create a structure, setup bank account etc. **We are always on the lookout for others with skills and energy to support what we hope to do.**

Thanks for all your support with all this exciting project,

Camilla Baker.



Isaac Newell circa 1900;
Wikimedia Commons.



Display boards for Isaac Newell:
More than a Name with work by
Elaine Gardner and Amanda Thomas.

Isaac Newell: More than a Name charts Newell's life in Medway and Argentina, and the 119-year history of Club Atlético Newell's Old Boys. We were thrilled to see that our work included in the *Clock Tower* article was the main source for this part of the exhibition. Other displays include information on the club itself, the rivalry between England and Argentina on the international pitch, and some of the famous faces who have played for Newell's. Most notable of these are probably Diego Maradona and Lionel Messi, but imagine the excitement when Bob Dimond, Medway's Head of Sport, Leisure, Tourism and Heritage introduced Fabian Costello (see also the back page), a Newell's player from 1975 to 1985. Costello later played for the Uruguayan team, Penarol in the squad which won the 1987 Copa Libertadores, the South American Champions League. Costello now lives in Ireland, the first of his family to return since their 1845 emigration to Argentina fleeing the Irish famine. With Fabian was Jamie Ralph, also from Dublin, the founder of Newell's Carajo (newellscarajo.com). Many Newell's players have had an association with Tottenham Hotspurs, and Jamie is a passionate Spurs fan. It was in this way that he first discovered the story of Isaac Newell and realised that there was no online focus for the club in the UK. His Twitter feed now has 27,000 followers, and as well as all the latest news, the website hosts an extremely popular online shop.



Adrian Pope (left), whose name badge read, 'Isaac Newell Story Discoverer' and Jamie Ralph, founder of Newell's Carajo, the popular UK website (newellscarajo.com).



Claudio Lorenzo Newell, 1920, Wikimedia Commons.

The exhibition was opened by Isaac Newell's great great granddaughter, Margarita Bitetti, a musician who now lives in Italy. Margarita was overwhelmed by the reception for her famous ancestor and delighted that his work might soon receive greater recognition. My thanks to Margarita for providing us with the words from her opening speech:

'The family is grateful that Isaac Newell, his name and his legacy are finally returning to his homeland. The name Newell is recognized throughout the world for football, and thanks to this exhibition the pioneer Isaac Newell has finally begun to be recognized in the UK.

We hope that this exhibition will be the first of many collaborations between our family and the English institutions to keep the exchange on the figure of Isaac Newell active.

Football was meant to be part of a more comprehensive educational project that Isaac and his wife Ann Margaret (born in London of a German family) carried out for decades. The Anglo-Argentine school was the first bilingual educational institution in Argentina where sports, finance, arts and music were taught together. Such tradition continues to this day in the family.

I would like to thank everybody of you for giving me to opportunity to talk about Isaac Newell here in Rochester.'

Isaac Newell: More than a Name

8 November – 4 December 2022
Guildhall Museum, High Street, Rochester, ME1 1PY.
Guildhall.museum@medway.gov / 01634 332900
Free entry during the museum's normal opening hours
Tuesday to Saturday (open Sundays on 3 and 4 December)
10am – 5 pm; last admission 4.15 pm.

Editor's Footnotes

Shorts in Italy!

Amanda Thomas



Back in September I was travelling home via Genoa Airport in Italy and – just as I was about to go through security - noticed there was a display on the history of the airport. The permanent display is a fascinating account of how this important Mediterranean port developed in the twentieth century, reclaiming land and building a larger runway to accommodate air travellers, in addition to those arriving and departing by sea. Imagine my surprise when I saw an image of an Imperial Airways Short S.8 Calcutta!

This biplane flying boat was – of course - manufactured by Short Brothers at Rochester. The Calcutta made its maiden flight on 14 February 1928 with Chief Test Pilot, John Lankester Parker, OBE at the controls; Parker worked for Shorts from 1918 to 1945, when he retired. The Calcutta was developed 'from the Short Singapore military flying boat, ... [and] was noteworthy for being the first British stressed skin, metal-hulled flying boat but was preceded by the German Zeppelin-Lindau Rs.IV. It was equipped with three Bristol Jupiter engines mounted between the wings. ... two pilots flew the plane from an open cockpit while the radio operator shared the main cabin with 15 passengers (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Short_S.8_Calcutta). One of seven originally built, at Genoa the Calcutta flew the Mediterranean leg of the Imperial Airways' service to and from Karachi in India (see also <https://airpages.ru/eng/uk/s8.shtml>).

The Short brothers moved their successful business to Rochester in 1913 due to their interest in developing seaplanes and the River Medway was an ideal place for testing. The business relocated to Belfast in 1948. In the gallery foyer of the Medway Archives Centre there is now a model of the Short Mayo Composite (1937) on permanent display, as illustrated in the photograph opposite on page 36. There is also a considerable collection of plans, drawings, photographs and ephemera pertaining to Short Brothers which can be viewed by appointment. For additional information, see also *The Clock Tower* Issues 12, November 2008, Issue 31, August 2013, Issue 44, November 2016, and Issue 54, May 2019.

An image of the display at Genoa Airport can be seen on the inside back cover

Bread and pull it
Scranny
Shufty scope

Thick glass

Thick in the clear
That's me and me barrow's out the back.

Just bread to eat.
Food.
Magnifying glass, telescope
or binoculars.
Someone blocking the view of the
television.
Nasal passages bunged up
That's final.
*(I think the barrow refers to a coffin
bier)*



A very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to all our members and readers!

Shorts in Italy!

The model of the Short Mayo Composite (1937) on permanent display in the Gallery Foyer at the Medway Archives Centre. See Amanda Thomas' article opposite.



The Restoration of Dickens' Swiss Chalet

Sue Haydock

The latest from our roving reporter, Medway Heritage Champion and FOMA Vice President



On Friday 9 September, 2022, Geoff Ettridge gave a talk to FOMA Members entitled, Richard Watts - A man of his time; a charity of its time. Geoff donated his fee for the talk to the Dickens' Swiss Chalet Restoration Fund. Here Sue Haydock explains what is being done to restore and save the chalet, an iconic Grade I listed building, situated in the gardens of Rochester's Eastgate House.

In the gardens of Eastgate House you can see the wonderful Swiss Chalet, a Grade I listed building where the great author Charles Dickens worked on some of his best known novels. It was given to Dickens as a present from an actor friend called Charles Fechter and arrived at Higham Railway Station on Christmas Eve 1864, packed in 58 boxes!



Dickens' chalet; Dickens Fellowship, The Dickens Chalet Appeal.

The chalet stood at Dickens' home in Gad's Hill, Higham, in a part of his garden known as The Wilderness, on the other side of the Gravesend Road, next to the Falstaff pub. To avoid the busy and muddy road he had to cross to reach it, Dickens constructed a tunnel – which still exists today - to go underneath the road. He arranged the chalet so that the second floor gave him a view of the River Thames. Dickens used the chalet as a place to write and also to rehearse for his many public appearances, by installing mirrors inside. He was writing *The Mystery of Edwin Drood* in the chalet on the day he died, 9 June 1870.

Later, the chalet was moved to Crystal Palace in London and then to Cobham Hall. Then, in the early 1960s, it was moved to the gardens of Eastgate House which then housed Rochester Museum. From that time, the chalet has had running repairs to ensure that it is wind and watertight, and it also has internal bracing to keep it fairly upright. However, plans are now under way to make more in-depth, and essential repairs to the chalet. Surveys have been commissioned to identify the types of wood used, the paint finish and research done to identify the original appearance of the chalet. Over the years many repairs have taken place and the current regime is seriously concerned with keeping to the traditional as far as possible. This work will go hand-in-hand with proposals for the chalet's future use, thereby building-in extra strength where possible and desirable.

Funding for the work is also a current item for discussion with Medway Council, and various stakeholder/funders who are actively on board with the work currently envisaged. A restoration fund has also been established, which can be found at dickensfellowship.org and <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/Chalet>

The timescale is a little uncertain, as with winter approaching, any major work is likely to take place in the spring - it is a matter of *watch this space!*

We will be publishing updates on the progress of the fund and restoration in future issues of The Clock Tower.

Gone off
White and spiteful
Looking pastey
Are you in Meredith?

Are you feeling pecky?
Be a bit jonick/joint
That put the kybosh on it
Face like tripe
Don't be milky

All done up and nowhere to go
Looks like you would if you could,
but you can't
Look like a donkey looking

Rare as rocking horse droppings
Can't see for looking

Clear as mud
Creepy Samuel

Dog's dinner

He's a dismal Jimmy
Like a pea on a drum
He's a rare one for...

Do you think I'm on a rest cure?

Well ... bucket

Py-ackers
Ban yan day (Kent dialect word?)

Painter's lament
Job jabbered
Strong as sparrow's kneecaps

Has your anxiety come back?
Pale and wan looking
White and spiteful!
Have you got into your car seat?
Also said if someone burst into the room, or failed to close the door, or slammed it.
Does anyone know who or what Meredith was?
Are you hungry?
Can you show some enthusiasm?
That finished it off
Looking miserable
Don't be disinterested by not joining in
Dressed and made up but no date
Trying to be what you're not (posh) and not cutting it
Straight fringe over a pale face over a white-washed wall, or just white and spiteful
As rare as hens' teeth
Not seeing the obvious for want of trying
Not very clear at all
Sly, shifty
(don't know who Samuel was)
Making a mess of something
(probably my sewing!)
Harbinger of doom
A small hat on a big head.
Someone repeatedly doing or saying a particular thing
Sarcastic remark from overworked mother.
I think *rest cure* was really enforced rest if mentally ill
Bucket was the reply if anyone said *well*.
Fed up.
The day of the week when you ate whatever was left in the cupboard.
Very weak tea
That's got that job done
Puny muscles

Mother's Sayings

Janet King



I was born in the workhouse ! (All Saints Hospital) on Elizabeth Ward, and spent the first twenty years of my life living and working in Chatham. I became familiar with the high street as I worked at the west end and lived at the east end. I still live in Medway and am interested in its history, an interest kindled by one particular teacher at school.



My mother would have been over a hundred years old now if she had lived, and it seems a shame to lose a generation's worth of how we used to talk. Mum was born in Rochester, and I wonder if some of the sayings originated from the mix of people in the dockyard? None of her direct family worked there, though. The only other thing I can think is that some might have come from Australia, where Dad was during the war. She more than likely made some up because once she came up with *parsimonious*, referring to Dad, as he moaned a lot. Then he looked it up and found it was a *real word* (!) meaning mean, which he wasn't. Of course, some of the sayings may also have come from popular old music hall stars, or celebrities on the wireless and television such as Hylda Baker and Arthur Askey.

Left: Arthur Askey in The Ghost Train (1941); Wikimedia Commons.

As a bit of Christmas fun, I've put together some of these sayings with an explanation of what they mean – and what my mother actually meant!

Fussy old fuss budget
Cooking them and eating them

You look snatched
Arzitarisical

Yuckem- yuckems

Over particular about something
Overdoing something nice,
and spoiling it
You look very cold
All over the place in your
physical or mental health.
Fed up

Behind the Scenes at MAC

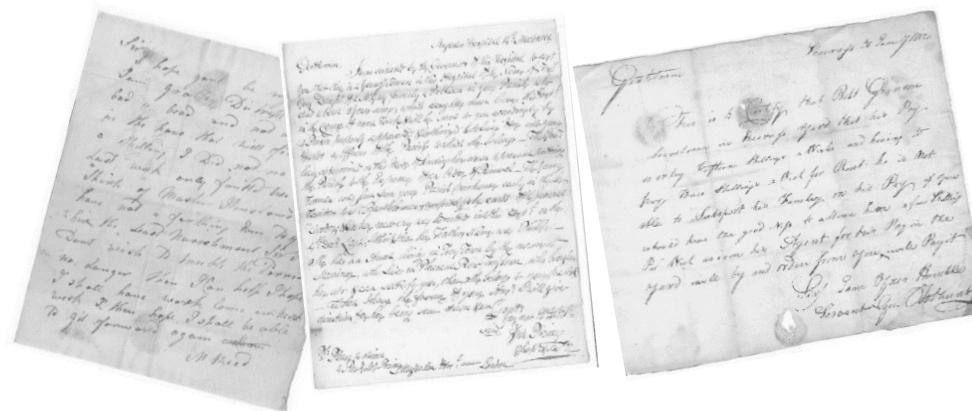
Helen Worthy



Helen is an Archives and Local Studies Assistant at MAC, working mainly on the desk. After completing her degree in Classical Civilisation, she worked at the British Museum for eleven years. She then studied for her Postgraduate Certificate in Education and taught at North-West Kent College and Medway Adult and Community Learning Service, before leaving to teach school groups at Chatham's Historic Dockyard and work as a teaching assistant.

If you have ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes at Medway Archives Centre, then read on as the following will spotlight some of the collections our teams of staff and volunteers are currently working on!

Many family historians have taken advantage of our digitised parish records, but did you know that we have a wealth of parish material which is only available to view at Medway Archives Centre? When you have exhausted the baptism, marriage and burial records on *Cityark*, why not book an appointment to search the rest of the parish collections? In this edition of *The Clock Tower*, we look at a fascinating project which aims to improve our understanding of, and access to, a collection of about 1,000 letters (illustrated below) received by the overseers of the parish of St Margaret's, Rochester.



Some of the letters received by the overseers of the parish of St Margaret's, Rochester.

Nikki Pratt, Archives and Local Studies Assistant, is currently listing each letter in the collection (P305/18/14), sorting them, checking their condition and allocating each a unique number. She is also making a note of any names which appear in the letters with the aim of improving access to these letters as users will be able to search for specific names. At the same time, volunteer and FOMA member, Steve Cross has been working remotely on a part of this collection of correspondence dating from the end of the eighteenth century and the first decades of the nineteenth century. Steve has been recording transcriptions of a selection of twenty letters from scanned images of the originals, and these now form part of a file of transcripts along with his research into the named individuals, institutions and locations mentioned in the correspondence. This selection gives a flavour of the letters sent to the overseer, and Steve has found that many of the people mentioned do not appear in the parish baptism, marriage or burial registers. It is evident that for family historians frustrated by 'missing' ancestors who had connections to Rochester, these letters might provide invaluable details of their lives.

The letters relate mainly to the problems of relief and settlement and offer details of the poverty endured by some of the parishioners as well as giving fascinating biographical details. 'My mother, Martha Holden, who formerly kept the sign of RoeBuck St. Margaret Rochester but some that time has resided near London, having had the misfortune to be Afflicted with a Paralytic Stroke ...' writes one correspondent in 1802. Another writes, '... this month I have had not a farthing to get such a breakfast for my children ...'. There are letters, too, from officials from the Magdalen Hospital in London, which aimed to rehabilitate 'fallen women', and in 1801 the Chaplain and Secretary, the Rev John Prince sought to return Freda (?) Guy to the parish of St Margaret's in Rochester following a spell in a hospital in London.

If you would like to view documents from this collection, or any other items in our parish collections, check our catalogue at <https://cityark.medway.gov.uk/> for references and contact us to book an archive table. If you would like any help identifying references, please just drop us an email. If you would like to see the file of Steve's transcripts, together with his research, please just pay us a visit here at Medway Archives Centre – no appointment necessary.

Aunt Liza (Mary Elizabeth Sharp 1871-1955?) back row second from left, was born 6 January 1871, exactly fifty years before my father Jack Bursey in 1921. In 1898 she married Ernest Morgan and they lived in Luton just behind Chatham Hill; he too was a royal marine. When Jack's mother Daisy died in 1941 of cancer, he was sent down to Luton to inform Aunt Liza of her death.

Uncle Bert (Herbert J C Brownrigg RM 1872-1961) and Aunt Ada (Eleanor Ada Sharp 1879-1959) are on the left in the photo. Around 1910 they moved to 50 Chaucer Road Gillingham and lived there for the rest of their lives. Bert served in the marines for 31 years and served on four ships. Mention should be made of his three years on the steam gunboat, HMS *Rattler*, out on the China station in the 1890s, and the river gunboat HMS *Humber* between 1914 and 1918. This latter was sent out to the Mediterranean in 1915 and was actually towed there due to her only being a coastal vessel. In August 1917 she was sent from Alexandria to be the guardship at the Red Sea port of Aqaba in Jordan. This is noteworthy as, in July 1917, T E Lawrence and his Arab army defeated the Turks there in a raid immortalised in the film *Lawrence of Arabia*. It meant the British could now send supplies through this port to British forces and their Arab allies to help defeat the Ottoman Empire who were allies of the Germans.

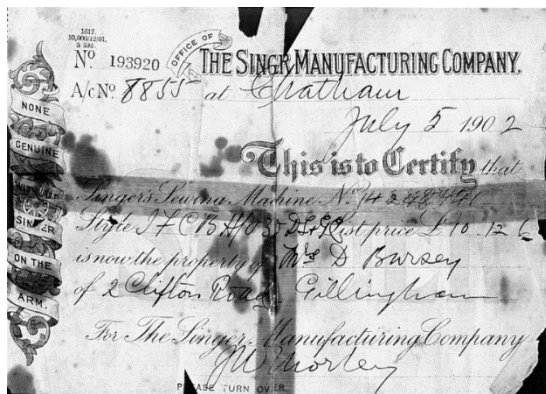


Daisy Bursey, Erne Brownrigg, Ada Brownrigg and Susie Sharp, c1902

I have deposited my full notes on the Brownrigg family at Medway Archives.
All photos are from the author's own collection.

Below is Daisy's 1902 receipt for her sewing machine. The cost of £10 12s 6d seems rather expensive so it may have been a wedding gift from her parents or in-laws.

At the back of the Sharp family photograph on the right are Uncle Jim and Aunt Carrie (Henry James Sharp 1872-1931 and Caroline Sharp née Bull 1876-1949). They married in 1893 and ran a newsagents and barbers in Military Road for many years (no.38 next to Wade's). They had three daughters and a son, Eddie. Eddie became a chiropodist in the Medway Towns.



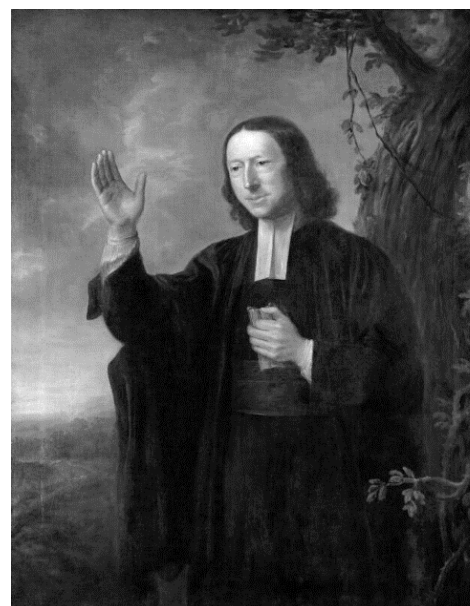
In this view of Military Road from a card posted in 1912, Jim and Carrie Sharp's tobacconist and barbers can be seen in between Wade's Outfitters. The occasion was a military parade which has just passed and the crowd are breaking up. When this photo was taken, Jim was at work cutting hair and Carrie was at the counter selling cigarettes!

Wesley's Chapel

Catharina Clement



In 2005, Catharina completed a BA in history at Canterbury Christchurch University, and in 2013 a PhD in local history entitled Political and Religious Reactions in the Medway Towns of Rochester and Chatham during the English Revolution, 1640-1660. She has been involved in various local history groups and projects such as FOMA, CDHS, and the Victoria County History EPE projects. She won the 2009 Friends Historical Society Award resulting in a paper on Medway Quakerism 1655-1918 delivered at the Institute for Historical Research and in 2016 at the Friends Library in London. Since 2014 Catharina has worked on a project for the Trustees of Plume Library. Currently Catharina works for the Medway Archives Centre.



Many of us remember Bethel Methodist Chapel that was in Chatham Intra, but few people realise that this was not the original chapel.

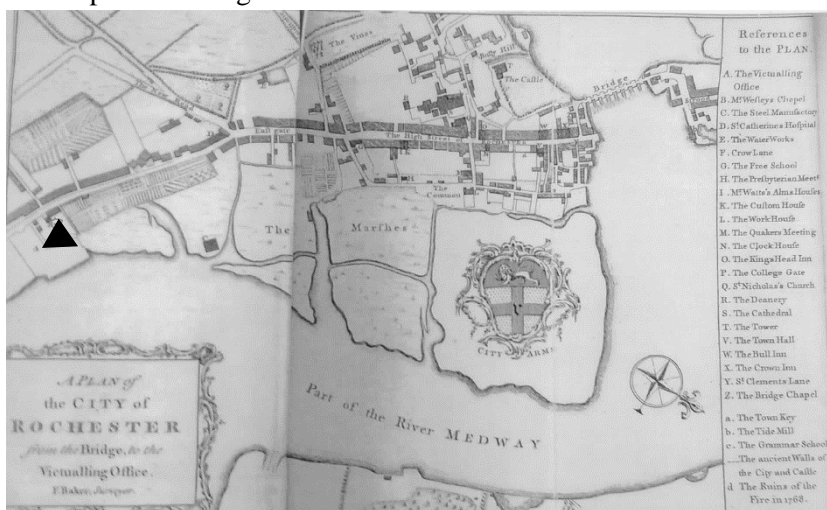
Wesleyan Methodism, as distinct from Calvinist Methodism, came to the Medway Towns in the 1750s. George Whitefield and John Wesley (pictured) were both active in Chatham at this time, but by then had widely diverged in their notion of redemption and salvation.¹ John Newton referred to the Whitefieldite Great Meeting (later Ebenezer) in Chatham as the Methodist meeting place and, to distinguish the Rochester Wesleyan chapel, in his later correspondence, as Mr Wesley's chapel.²

John Wesley by Nathaniel Hone, oil on canvas, circa 1766. With thanks to the National Portrait Gallery (reproduced under the creative commons licence agreement).³

John Wesley first visited the Medway Towns in 1753 when preaching at the home of Thomas Millain, a shipwright in the dockyard, in Brompton. In 1760 Millian's home in the High Street became the first licensed Methodist meeting place in the local area.⁴ Wesley's successive visits in the 1750s and 1760s led to a gradual increase in the number of followers. Occasionally they were permitted use of the Great Meeting, but when Wesley was denied this, he either took to the hill above where the Town Hall now stands or had use of a room in the barracks.

At some point during 1758, a man called Abraham Brames arrived in the Medway Towns from Canterbury, having secured a post as shipwright in the dockyard. He had encountered Methodism in Canterbury as a child and was again to encounter the sect on the Great Lines that year. Drummer Derby of the Loudon Regiment was often to be found preaching in the open air and Brames came across him on a long walk back from Rainham. It was this meeting that later inspired Brames to seek out the Methodists. In addition, and with increasing local interest, Sergeant Cole at the local barracks made a room available for the use of the Methodist preachers.⁵

Abraham Brames has left us his memoir and it is from this that we can understand a lot about the early Methodist congregation. Initially just a handful of members attended at Chatham barracks, including his brother Peter. However, by 1768 a group of about 20 to 30 people regularly attended services conducted fortnightly by London preachers. The small flock realised the need for their own chapel, but Abraham Brames viewed it as 'like building castles in the air' as members had little money. In October 1768 it was agreed by six male members, including Abraham and Peter Brames, that a chapel should be built'; their brother, Daniel, offered the group a loan of £300 despite not being a member.



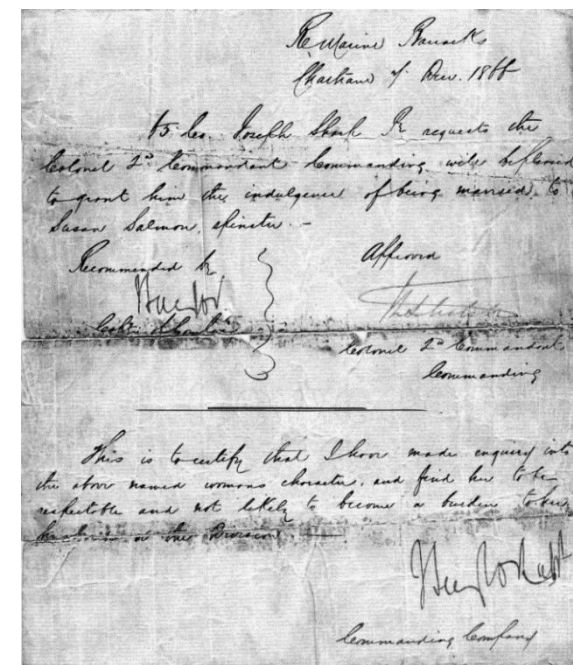
A map of Rochester showing (with a triangle) the position of the Methodist chapel; Medway Archives Centre.



13 Fox Terrace, Gillingham, which became known as 13 Church Path. It is now part of Saunders Street just off Mill Road; photograph c1990.

We have in our possession this original letter (pictured), dated 7 December 1866 in which Joseph seeks permission to marry Susan Salmon. The Commander of his Company wrote to the Colonel saying that he had looked into the character of Susan Salmon and found that she was respectable and not likely to become a burden on her husband or the Division!

Returning to the main photograph, our grandmother, Martha Daisy Bursey née Sharp (1883-1941) is sitting alongside her father. She was always called Daisy and here she is aged 14 years and looking slightly worried!



They are sitting proudly with a grandchild, four of their children, and two spouses.

The reason the photo was taken is unknown, but possibly to welcome Bert Brownrigg into the family in 1897 or the birth of a grandchild. All the females are wearing fashionable tops with the 'leg-of-mutton' sleeve, a fashion that began in the late 1880s with the tight bodice and pinched epaulettes but turned again into the more voluminous dresses by the turn of the century. Both Bert Brownrigg on the left and Jim Sharp on the right are wearing their Royal Marine uniforms.

Joseph was born in Fenny Stratford, Buckinghamshire and joined the Bedfordshire Militia in October 1858. After a (perhaps less than thrilling) winter guarding Dover Castle he decided to move on and join the Royal Marines at Aldershot in June 1859. He served on three ships: HMS *Princess Royal* (1860-61), HMS *Revenge* (1861-65), and HMS *Monarch* (1869-71). After that he remained in Pembroke Barracks which, at the time, were hulks moored on the River Medway. At some point he became a valet to an officer, possibly while on the *Monarch*, and learned how to cut hair. He became a barber on the old HMS *Northumberland* moored on the river and, in 1867, married Susan Salmon from Rochester at St Paul's church Chatham. By the early 1870s, they had rooms in a house at Alma Terrace but shortly afterwards moved to New Brompton. After retiring from the marines,

Joseph opened a barber's shop in his front room in Church Path just off Mill Road. In 1913 his wife Susie died of shellfish poisoning and Joseph, at the age of 69, went to live with his daughter Daisy Bursey at 27 Pretoria Road Gillingham. He couldn't read but he bought a newspaper every day and asked his two granddaughters, Rene and Eva Bursey, to read to him. He loved fishing and used to go off for two or three days with a friend to indulge his pastime. Sometimes he brought back seaweed so that he could have a bath and rub the seaweed over himself. Eventually, probably after my father Jack was born in 1921, Daisy found it too difficult to look after Joseph and she took the decision to put him in the workhouse at 42 Magpie Hall Road, Chatham where he died on 31 May 1923.

HMS *Revenge* at Queenstown Harbour, Cork, in 1888. Joseph Sharp served on her between 1861 and 1865 as a Royal Marine. In 1891 she became the Training Ship *Empress* at Helensburgh on the Clyde.

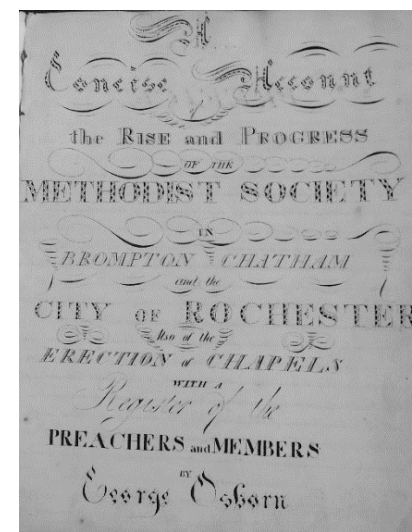


This was agreed by John Wesley with the proviso that the loan was to be repaid by raising a subscription. By 7 December 1769 the collection had raised £3 9s 3¾d; and at this rate it would take a long time to repay the debt.⁶

In 1824 George Osborn wrote his early history of Medway's Methodism.⁷ Much of the detailed account of the building, costs and subscriptions come from his narrative. The society tried to find land in Chatham where most of the congregation lived but were unsuccessful. Eventually they found a piece of land in Rochester High Street opposite the Five Bells pub (next to the victualling office) which they purchased from a Mr Cotterell. In the meantime, a new Presbyterian commander had taken over at Chatham Barracks and stopped the Methodists using the room there. This meant the congregation had no place of worship and so they resorted to outdoor services; sometimes in the chapel garden while the building work carried on around them, and at other times at Mars Hill where the lime kilns were situated, behind the Golden Lion on The Brook.⁸

Mr Edwards was both the builder and one of the Methodist preachers. The chapel was to measure 40 by 29 feet with a front gallery. On Saturday 20 June 1770, Mr Edwards preached at the new chapel for the first time. *The Poor have the Gospel* was the text he preached to them before the building 'was either floored or ceiled or had any windows in it, laying loose Boards on Piles of Bricks after working as a bricklayer all day he would change his Cloathes [sic] and Preach to the People at night.' On Monday evening, 3 December 1770 John Wesley officially dedicated the new chapel.⁹

George Osborn's frontispiece from his manuscript book; Medway Archives Centre (see note 8).



The total cost of the building and purchase of the land amounted to £481 3s 4½d. Abraham Brames and other leaders went to friends and society members, raising a further £48 2s 4d and Wesley agreed a collection could be made in the North Kent circuit – this amounted to £19 10s 9d.¹⁰ The congregation would struggle over the years to raise the balance to pay off the debt. In August 1790 John Wesley wrote to the local minister William Mearns in connection with the outstanding debt. 'Why do you not set a foot a weekly subscription in order to lessen your debt? Have neither the Preachers nor the people any spirit in them? Who begins? I will give half-a-crown a week (for a year) if all of you make it up to twenty shillings.'¹¹ Sadly, the amount was not to be forthcoming as Wesley died six weeks later.

John Wesley had visited Chatham often before the time of his death and Mary Newton (née Catlett) attended one of his visits to the Rochester Methodist chapel on 12 December 1775. Writing home to her husband John Newton she reported, 'Last night we heard Mr Wesley from John 5:8&9. He spoke pretty enough from the former part of the chapter, and he repeated several verses of different hymns.

He spoke 40 minutes and there was nothing exceptionable in what he said. There rather seemed to want something. When he had done preaching he spoke a considerable time about his illness in Ireland and recovery ... Then he began about his book, Taxation no tyranny, his reason for abridging Dr Johnson, his reason for printing (and the warm Mr Evans book) and the additions and alterations he had made, and of his being invited to preach at Bethnal Green for the benefit of the widows whose husbands were killed in America. In short the book and sermon were sold at the door. He spoke a long time and vastly well. I love to hear him though I know him. He is clever and a very surprising man of his years.¹²

The chapel was replaced by Bethel Chapel in 1810.

Notes

1. The Wesleys and Whitefield were members of the Oxford Movement in the 1730s and believed in a charismatic style of grassroots preaching. Whitefield later adopted a Calvinist notion of salvation for the elect only, whilst the Wesleys maintained redemption was available to all.
2. Princeton University Library, CO 199 Vol 1, John Newton Diary 1751-1756.
3. The John Wesley portrait can be found in the National Portrait Gallery online collection at: <https://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/portrait/mw06699/John-Wesley?LinkID=mp04764&search=sas&sText=john+wesley&role=sit&rNo=0>
4. Brames' memoir is no longer believed to have survived but was published in the Wesleyan *Methodist Magazine* in 1816.
5. Abraham Brames, 'The Grace of God Manifested: A Memoir of the Life of Abraham Brames', *Methodist Magazine*, 1816.
6. Ibid.
7. The original is preserved at Medway Archives Centre. The account was published in the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* in 1880. The *Methodist Magazine* was founded by John Wesley and originally called the *Arminian Magazine*. It changed its name to the *Methodist Magazine* in 1798 and then to the *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* in 1822.
8. Medway Archives Centre (MAC), M5/1/B/6/2, George Osborn's 'Concise account of the rise and progress of the Methodist society of Brompton, Chatham and city of Rochester' (written 1824-1869); 'Methodism in Kent: Rochester Circuit', *Wesleyan Methodist Magazine* 1880
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. MAC, M5/1/A/2/1, Letter John Wesley to William Mearns, 15/8/1790.
12. Church Missionary Society (CMS) Collection, Letter Mary Newton to John Newton, 13/12/1775.

The Sharp family of Gillingham, c1897

Peter Bursey



Peter grew up in Gillingham and attended Twydall Infant and Junior Schools, followed by the Grammar School when John Hicks was headmaster. Various jobs eventually led him to the Civil Service in Whitehall until he retired in 2007. In 1988 Peter spent five months at Chatham Dockyard on the Gannet project going up to the Public Record Office and the National Maritime Museum archives at Woolwich Arsenal where he discovered the original plans of the Gannet's masts and spars plus an assortment of other useful papers. He now lives in Shaftesbury, Dorset.

Part One: A Family Photograph



One of the pleasures of investigating the history of your own family is coming across a real gem of a photo that not only shows you what they looked like but actually captures the feel of the times. This family photograph (right) dates to 1897 and is of my great grandparents, Joseph Sharp (1844-1923), and his wife Susie Sharp née Salmon (1845-1913).

in Devon. This was where Winch's wife, Mary Clarke Bluett had lived as a child and Holcombe Manor was modelled to resemble the Bluett family home, Holcombe Court. The grounds surrounding the house in Rochester had a sunken Italian garden and a lake, which can clearly be seen on the maps of the time. However, the OS map of the area dating to 1863-5 shows Churchland Wood prior to the building of the Manor; there does not appear to have been any previous buildings on the site, or indeed a lake. On this map Kennel Farm is clearly marked to the southwest of Pattens Lane with its buildings bordering Great Chatham Grove, another large area of woodland and part of the Kennel Farm estate at the time, as explained by Brian Butler above. Holcombe Manor was sold at auction in 1909 and the lots comprised the house, the local football ground, (Chatham Town F.C) and the woodland previously known as Churchland Wood. In 1920 the house was taken over by Chatham Junior Technical School which was established to train boys aged 13 to 16 for careers as artificers (i.e. working on artillery devices) in the Royal Navy and at the Royal Dockyard School as engineers. Following World War Two, the school was re-named Chatham Technical School for Boys, and in 1982 became Chatham Grammar School for Boys. The school decided to change its name to Holcombe Grammar School in 2016 when it became co-educational. Sadly, the sunken garden and lake have all been filled in and built over.

4. New Market House.

It is not fully understood whether New Market House was actually removed to Pattens Lane. The public house was situated at 47 Corporation Street, Rochester until at least 1930 when the resident was Walter Joseph Greensted (see <https://pubwiki.co.uk/KentPubs/Rochester/NewMarketHouse.shtml>). A photograph of the building can be found at <http://www.dover-kent.com/2014-project-a/New-Market-Hiouse-Rochester.html> [sic] which resembles the single storey building in the illustration above. It would appear from the 1935 plans (see figures 5, 6 and 7) that the current public house, The Huntsman was built at that time. This may indicate that the New Market House was not moved to the site but rather a new pub was built in its place.

Style and Winch pertains to the same George Winch who lived at Holcombe Manor, as explained on the Biggleswade History Society website: 'The brewery [at Biggleswade] and 109 pubs were sold to George Winch of Chatham in 1898. His family brewery had just merged into a new much larger company Style & Winch Ltd at Maidstone. George Winch set up a public company Wells and Winch Ltd in 1899 with himself as Chairman and son Edward Bluett Winch managing director.' Breweryhistory.com adds more detail to the story: Style & Winch Ltd, *Medway Brewery, St Peter's Street, Maidstone, Kent*. The Medway Brewery was built by William Baldwin in 1799. It became A F Style & Co. Registered in March 1899 to merge A F Style & Co, and Edward Winch & Sons Ltd of Chatham with a total of 356 public houses. The Chatham Brewery was closed in 1899.'

The Editor has been unable to check, but more information may be gleaned from A Glossary of Past & Present Pubs: Chatham from 1746-2000 (A to M) by Roy Murrant.

Kennel Farm

Brian Butler.



Brian is the last of the Butler Family to be born on the Brook. The Butlers moved to Chatham from Lenham in around 1835 and occupied the notorious King's Head public house on the Brook from 1835 to 1901. Brian has traced his family tree back to Lenham/ Harrietsham c.1600; his interests are local history, history in general, genealogy and reading.

Recently, I was contacted by Helen Worthy at the Medway Archives Centre (MAC) when they were promoting *Investigate your Home*. This was as part of the Saturday 5 March 2022 drop-in session for help with house history research. Two separate individuals had approached MAC to ask if they had any details on their homes; they were also enquiring about a connection to Kennel Farm. Cindy O'Halloran advised Helen that I had been doing some research the previous year on Kennel Farm and she should contact me.

I began with the information I knew and had heard from local residents. A Mr Caleb Baker had once lived at the farm, I had old archive photos of Pattens Lane and, I also knew of the rumour that The Huntsman public house is believed to have been built on the site of the farmhouse. A further two farm cottages were situated at the end of what is now the pub garden. These were for farm workers and are now at the end of Blaker Avenue. It was these two properties we were being asked to investigate. 'Simple,' I thought, 'we're halfway there, so I'll start.' Famous last words!



Looking into the estate it quickly to turn into a quandary and a few of the facts talked about and known were not quite correct. I still had the following questions:

- 1) Do I research the farm buildings only?
- 2) Do I research the whole farm and who built the cottages and when?
- 3) Do I research Mr Caleb Baker? And when did he buy and sell the land?

One question lead into the other and they all needed clarifying.

Figure 1. 1842 tithe map; Medway Archives Centre.

Kennel Farm itself was part of 250 plus acres of land previously known as Kennel Park Estate. The name is believed to be from the word *Kennel* itself an old Saxon word from *Coyne* for *Kings Land* and appears on the hand-drawn maps attached to indentures of the land being bought and sold.

Confusingly, *Ken* first appears on one map, on the west side of Maidstone Road, and then on a later map on the east side where the modern St. Stephens church is now (shown by a triangle on the 1901 map below, figure 2). However, the name may also have come from the local hunt dog kennels which are also shown on some maps. These were moved to Huntsman's Corner (the name of the area where St Stephen's is situated) when the new roads were made up. Maidstone Road follows a similar route to Chatham, as it does today, but even as late as 1842, Pattens Lane did not exist. Kennel is clearly shown on the 1868 and 1901 tithe maps, as illustrated.

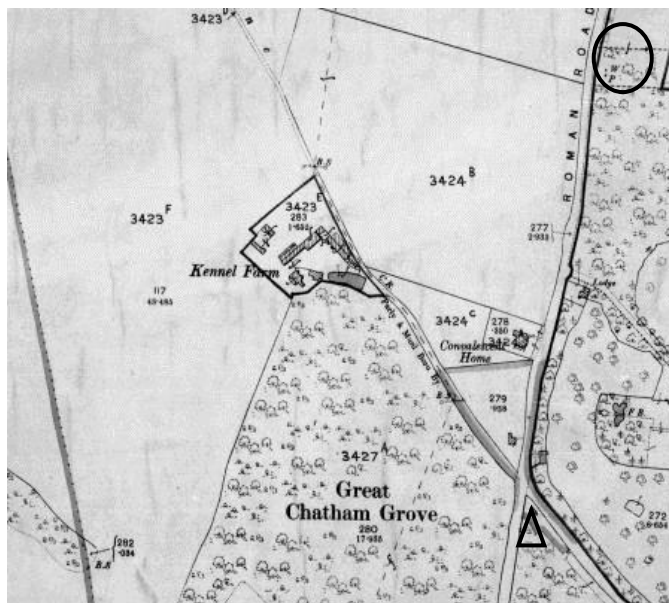


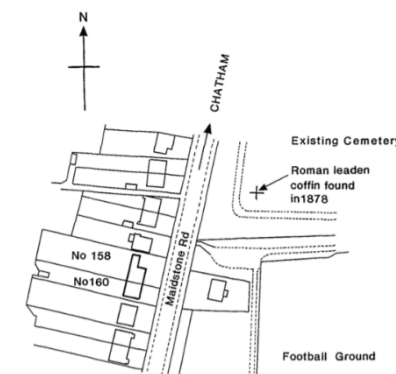
Figure 2. 1901 tithe map; the Roman burial site (see below in Notes) is circled. Medway Archives Centre.

In 1868 and 1901, Pattens Lane was still shown as a track leading to Kennel Farm, and a rather hazy photograph held at MAC (see below, page 24, figure 4), confirms this. As can be seen in the map above, just to the south of Kennel Farm, at Great Chatham Grove, Pattens Lane crossed the old Roman Road (today's Maidstone Road), though at this point it seems to have been a more substantial road. Heading north towards the river, Pattens Lane track joined another track (today's City Way) which led from Dark Lane to the east of the old St William's Hospital¹, to the edge of today's Fort Pitt Military cemetery, and more or less at the point where today's Old Pattens Lane spurs off City Way. Today, Old Pattens Lane – which becomes Pattens Gardens - rejoins Pattens Lane further south just before Beresford Avenue, following the original course. From south to north, Dark Lane track² later became today's St Williams Way and then Delce Road, ending at Star Hill.

probably the remains of other burials. The site of the present discovery is the S.W. corner of the graveyard, within a few yards of the road leading from Chatham to Maidstone.'

<https://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/Research/Pub/ArchCant/Vol.013%20-%201880/013-12.pdf>

The map identifying the position of the Roman coffin (scale 1:1250) in *Archaeologia Cantiana* Vol 108 (1990) pp 183-4, accompanied an article by D Bacchus entitled, 'Discovery of Roman Remains at Maidstone Road, Chatham'. That article discussed the discovery of Roman pottery and animal bones in the basements of numbers 158 and 160 Maidstone Road.



<https://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/arch-cant/vol/108/discovery-roman-remains-maidstone-road-chatham>

FOMA Webmaster and archaeologist, Dr Alex Thomas discovered more on the Heritage Gateway website about how Chatham Cemetery had been used in the Roman period:

'A 4th century Roman lead coffin burial encased in a wooden coffin was found in 1878 in a modern cemetery at Chatham. Two glass vessels were found inside the coffin and two vessels outside. A number of urns are said to have been found in the cemetery previously as well as a Bronze brooch and a coin of Trajan. The whereabouts of the finds are now unknown.'

The site of the burial can be found quite easily as following Jean Skilling's questions on the matter, Andrew Callan, Cemeteries Manager, identified the location of the grave and uncovered the memorial stone. It is not surprising that Chatham cemetery should contain Roman burials as the site is bordered by Maidstone Road, a known Roman thoroughfare. However, what is perhaps more curious is the location of the grave with regard to Kennel Farm. As the crow flies, the two are around 400 metres apart, roughly a quarter of a mile. Studies on local Roman roads seem to show that Dark Lane (now St William's Way and Delce Road) follows the route of the Roman Rochester to Hastings road, as identified by Ivan D Margary's *Roman Roads in Britain* (1955). Perhaps, therefore, Kennel Farm has much earlier origins?

3. Holcombe Manor.

Built in 1887 for the brewer George Winch (1842-1914), the first mayor of Chatham (see also below), Holcombe Manor was named after the village of Holcombe Rogus

My thanks go to a very patient Helen Worthy and all the staff at the Medway Archives Centre (MAC) for the tithe maps and photos from their various collections. Further photos of Pattens Lane prior to 1935 are held at MAC.

Editor's Notes

1. St William's Hospital.

The hospital has now been demolished and is the site of the Wisdom Hospice and housing on High Bank, St William's Way <https://historic-hospitals.com/english-hospitals-rchme-survey/kent/> :

'St William's Hospital, St William's Way (Chatham and Rochester Joint Infectious Diseases Hospital). TQ 748 666 BF101367 This small infectious diseases hospital was designed by GJ Skipper, of Norwich, and was erected on a site on the outskirts of town in 1882-3. It originally comprised a three-storey administration block connected by a covered way to two single-storey ward pavilions, with a smaller, detached ward block, laundry and mortuary, all of plain white brick. A large, two storey convalescent block, designed by George E. Bond was built in c.1900, and a gate lodge and cubicle block were added to the site c.1927.'

2. The Roman Burial.

Keen *Clock Tower* readers will recall that this part of Medway has been in the spotlight before, and quite recently. In Issue 65, February 2022, Editor, Amanda Thomas brought together the wealth of information which had begun to stack up regarding the roman burial at Chatham which had been discovered in 1878. The discussion began when FOMA's Jean Skilling, who also volunteers at Medway Crematorium indexing burial registers, had been asked whether she knew anyone who could help with the location of the Roman remains discovered in Chatham Cemetery at the end of the nineteenth century. Brian Joyce contributed to the discussion with an article published by the Kent Archaeological Society in their *Archaeologia Cantiana*. In Volume 13, published in 1880, the Roman burial discovery had been noted by George Payne (Junior):

On the 16th. May, 1878, the grave-digger employed at the New Cemetery, Chatham, came upon the remains of a leaden coffin, at a depth of seven feet, containing a human skeleton and a pale green glass vessel. Two other glass vases were found, outside the coffin, at the head; and two earthen vessels at the feet. The latter are both, of hard brownish coloured pottery, and measure in height five inches and five and three-quarter inches respectively. The glass was unfortunately all broken into fragments. The coffin, which was six feet in length, was made in the usual way, from a sheet of lead cut at the corners and folded up to form the sides and ends. ... Information was obtained that many portions of urns have been found from time to time in this cemetery,

From the south, the Kennel Farm estate stretched from the area where Rochester Airport is now situated, incorporating (for us old timers) Rochester Greyhound stadium; a 1946 aerial photograph is available in the Kennel Farm folder at MAC. The estate stretched from the east side of Dark Lane to the northwest side of today's Horsted Way and Maidstone Road (leading to Chatham) and included Pattens Lane. At Pattens Lane, the estate stretched east incorporating the land now occupied by Holcombe Grammar School (formerly Chatham Grammar School for Boys), the old Holcombe Manor,³ the site and house which the school currently occupies, and Chatham Football and Cricket grounds. The estate appears to have stopped at the east west boundary for Chatham Cemetery. To the south of Kennel Farm, a small square of land was purchased later by a Mr Thomas Scott. This is today the southeast corner on the junction of Pattens Lane and Wilson Avenue, and to the north Horsted Avenue. Now there is a small row of shops, including an electrical suppliers, newsagent's and fish shop, and the first Wilson Avenue houses. I hope the maps clarify things as these descriptions are complicated.

In The Chatham Historical Society's *History of Holcombe Manor*, FOMA's Len Feist wrote, 'The manor house at Holcombe was built in 1887 by Mr George Winch, solicitor and brewer. It contained Entrance and Lounge halls, 4 reception rooms, 14 bed and dressing rooms, 2 bathrooms and ample offices ...'. Built in 28 acres, there was stabling for 5 horses, a farmer, garage, coachman's cottage and a large carriage entrance.

In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth, did any of the landowners live at Kennel Farm? The answer is, not quite! The land was owned by three parties: Mr Wallace Aldridge Watson 5/12ths, Mr Ernest Smith Randall 5/12ths and Mr Caleb Baker 2/12ths. They purchased the land from local brewers the Best family. I cannot find Kennel Farm in the censuses prior to 1881. Censuses after that time show Kennel or *Kimmel* Farm listed on the Chatham, Maidstone Road at Waggoners cottage.

The censuses read as follows:

1881 Caleb Baker, aged 2 months, living at The Hook and Hatchet Public House. Father Listed as licensed victualler and farmer 151 acres?

1891 Caleb Baker, aged 10, living at The Hook and Hatchet public house.

1901 Caleb Baker, aged 20, Living at Settrington Farm, with mother who is listed as a widow. Caleb listed as a farmer.

1911 Caleb Baker, aged 28, living at The New White Hart public house, Chatham, licensed victualler.

1921 Caleb Baker, aged 41, living at Kennel Farm, Maidstone Road, Chatham, farmer.
1939 (England and Wales register) Caleb Baker, aged 59, butcher/shopkeeper, Joyce House, Pattens Lane, Rochester.

Caleb Baker died 4 September 1953 Aged 72, Joyce House, Pattens Lane, Rochester.

These are also a few other names of workers who lived at Maidstone Road and Pattens Lane which may be of interest:

1888 Cornelius Glover, farm bailiff, died 29 December aged 58, Waggoners Cottage, Maidstone Road, Chatham.

1908 Mary Ann Woolley, wife of farm bailiff, died 20 May, aged 57. Waggoners Cottage, Maidstone Road, Chatham.

1921 Census Henry Wanstall, waggoner, Waggoners Cottage, Maidstone Road, Chatham.

1934 Emma Wilmshurst, wife of farm bailiff, died 28 April aged 66, Kennel Farm, Maidstone Road, Chatham.

1939 (England and Wales register) Sidney Mason aged 82 licensed victualler, The Huntsman public house, Pattens Lane.

Back to the cottages in Blaker Avenue! There is some confusion as to the chronology of buildings erected on or proposed for the site. Unfortunately, having searched the planning records twice, I was unable to find an original planning application. Chatham records start around 1850 and Rochester's in the early 1900s. I was, however, able to find an application for building alterations for the two cottages in the City of Rochester records for 23 April 1947, planning number 5577. It appears the cottages were one cottage altered to two. I have not included the layout for obvious security reasons, but copies of the plans are now kept in a Kennel Farm folder at MAC for future reference.

Figure 3. A recent photograph of the Huntsman Public House, 106 Pattens Lane, Chatham. David Anstiss Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 The Huntsman Public House, Chatham - geograph.org.uk - 1043609.jpg



Figure 4. Kennel Farm. To the right a disused cart shed, in the background Joyce House, Caleb Baker's farm, Pattens Lane; photograph pre-1935. Medway Archives Centre.

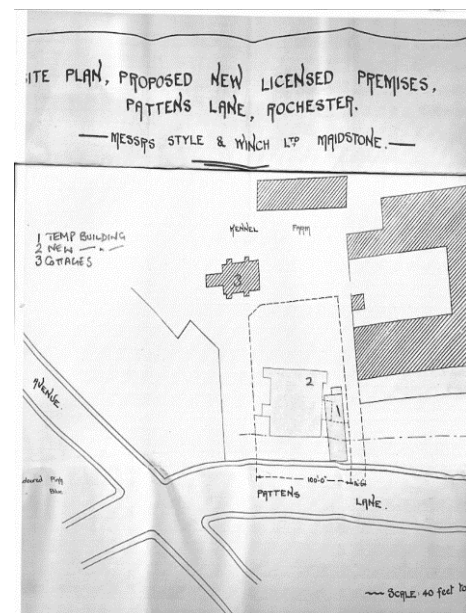


Figure 6 (above). The position of the farm buildings in this plan seem to correlate with those on the 1931-2 OS map (not illustrated). RCA /BP/ 4092 December 1935; Medway Archives Centre.

Figure 5 (below). Temporary pub floor layout and elevation.⁴ RCA/BP/4076 year 1935; Medway Archives Centre.

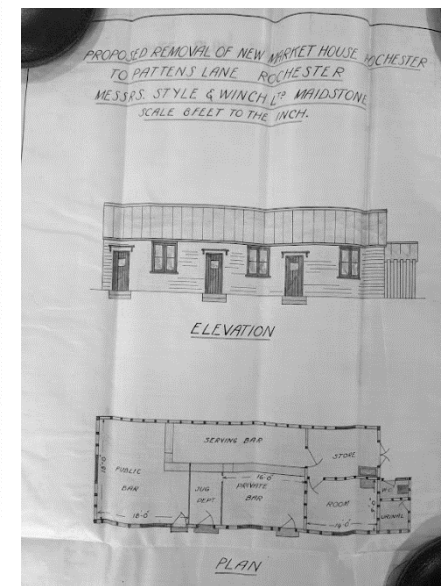
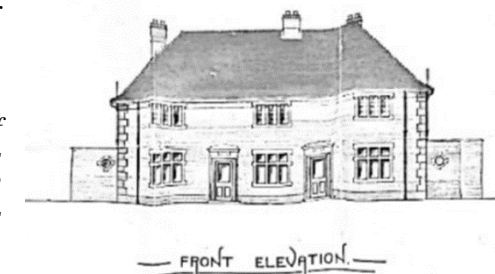


Figure 7 (right). The front elevation of the Huntsman pub, from the same plans (1935) as Figure 6. RCA /BP/ 4092 December 1935; Medway Archives Centre.



It does not seem a lot, but the above took nearly three months of searching and I have tried to answer all the questions and clarify the facts verbally given to me, and I hope these have been answered. To conclude, the public house we see today – and as photographed opposite – was not built on the site of the original farmhouse but partially on the disused cart shed which can also be seen opposite (figure 4). Moreover, the pub is clearly not the original farmhouse, as the plans from 1935 illustrate. I also discovered that the Kennel Farm estate shown on the corner in plot 3425/6 in fig 1 at the time was owned by Mr James Best (The brewing family) and is occupied by William Richardson.