

CHARING & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

www.charinghistory.co.uk



CDLHS In Our Historic Times edition 16, April /May 2021 Every Vaccination Brings Us Hope!



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Welcome to the last issue of In Historic Times! Many, many thanks to our contributors who have provided interest, variety and depth over the year, (please see list on p 9)

We have endured an historic time. With increasing numbers being vaccinated, things seem to be looking up, and greater normality appears to be within reach for the U.K. Already, lives are becoming more sociable and busier, with dates filling on previously empty calendars etc. It's felt that IHT newsletter's original aim, of offering a regular way to keep connected, and to provide interest and distraction, is no longer necessary.

Our recent Zoom talks have been successful; thanks to Celia Jennings for arranging and Kevin Yeeles for enabling, and thanks to members and friends for joining us. (See p8 for info on our last CDLHS talk until the Autumn, when hopefully we'll be able to have a programme of monthly talks again.) In the meantime our new-style website (see p11) will become the 'go-to place' for articles and historical information.

Enjoy the summer ahead! Valerie

Service of Commemoration for Jennie Burgess

We have been informed by Janet McIntyre that because of the continuing situation, the Service to celebrate Jennie's life, has now been postponed until May 2022.

As many of you will know, Jennie had a very significant input to the running of CDLHS for many years, & who quietly, but firmly, 'got things done'.

She was widely respected & admired by all who worked with her.

More details will follow when Janet hears from Jennie's daughter nearer the time.

Keith Oram

Answers to March Quiz



Image from KentOnline, 2016 (debate on new town sign)

1 What is the meaning of the name Faversham?

It comes from the Old English 'fæfer' meaning a 'smith' together with 'hām' as a 'village, homestead'; therefore, a 'homestead/village of the smith'.

The [Domesday Book](#) records **Faversham** as Favreshant, and as Fefresham in 811AD.

2. Who did Julius Caesar refer to as the most civilised of the British tribes?

Julius Caesar recorded of the Cantii:- "Of all these (British **tribes**), by far the **most civilised** are they who dwell in Kent, which is entirely a maritime region, and who differ but little from the Gauls in their customs".



3. What are they doing?

Bat and trap It's thought the original form of Bat and Trap originated in the C14. an ancestor to cricket.

"Bat and Trap is a team game with eight players on each side. The team captains should toss a coin to decide which team bats first. An "innings" consists of each player on the team having one chance to bat, each player batting until he is "out". Each team plays an innings and the team with the most points wins the game. "

<https://www.mastersofgames.com/rules/bat-trap-rules.htm>

Where was this first thought to have been played?

It's thought to be a Kentish tradition, and Ye Olde Beverlie Inn St Stephen's Green, Canterbury is the site on which it's believed to have first been played. Apparently, there are records of the game being played at there, in the 1740's. (The building itself, was built in 1570 as part of almshouses.)

4. Where, and in which century, did hail, described as 'the size of oysters,' fall ?

On August 19, 1763, this hailstorm fell on **Maidstone**. It damaged trees and buildings, killed birds, destroyed crops. Incredibly, it was said that the 'circumference' of one piece of hail measured nine inches, and some that were picked up ten days after the storm, measured four inches and a half inches.

Sources: Kent Online and Bunyard's Pride

Looking Back

Our Covid Year

The 'strap lines / government directives, or catch phrases of the IHT issues reflect all those months of ups and downs, fears, hopes and disappointments during this last Covid year.



Sign by Kremer

April began with '**Stay at Home**' and '**Not Going Out**'. In **May** we had the '**VE Day Memorial**,' main and supplement, and '**Cloistered Chronicle**,' the FOCG 500 year anniversary. Social distancing was key, and planned public celebrations were cancelled. Perceptions of government mixed messaging; "Go to work" / "Don't go to work" hit the headlines. In **June** we had '**Stay Alert!**' and '**Easy Does It!**' as some schoolchildren were allowed back to school, and the "rule of 6" applied to meeting

in private gardens, and the concept of 'support bubbles' introduced. In **July** we were urged to show restraint with '**Don't Overdo It!**' as our lockdown was eased, but a second wave was emerging in Europe, and face masks were required to be worn in shops and supermarkets. In **August** 'Test and Trace' had improved and we were encouraged to support business. The popularity of 'staycations and the 'Eat Out To Help Out' scheme combined with hot weather, meant holiday areas thrived. In fact so much that we were also warned we had to '**Squeeze the Brake**,' and face mask use was extended to more indoor spaces.



In **September** as schools returned, we were reminded of the importance of the '**Hands Face Space**' rule, and the 'rule of 6' became law. By **October** we were '**Running into A Headwind**,' as cases continued to rise. As a result, in **November** we were told to '**Stay at Home. Again!**' and we had to



endure another 4 weeks of national lockdown. In **December**, the '**Christmas Pot Pourri**' tried to remind us of happier times, but in Kent with a fast-spreading new variant, even the planned Christmas bubble reunions weren't allowed, and we actually had a '**Tier 4 Christmas**.' Restrictions meant mixing alone with just 1 other person was allowed, -and that had to be with social distancing in a public outdoor space.

As **January** arrived it was apparent that infections had risen dramatically, but the early stages of vaccination meant that we were '**Between Fear and Hope**.' In **February** we were encouraged; vaccines were a 'game changer', but as it would be very cautious progress, a 4-stage road map to lead the way forward, was announced. We were told to '**Be Optimistic, but Be Patient**,' as each stage would need to be reviewed before moving to the next.

In **March** things were in the balance again as children returned to school and more new variants appeared, so the message; '**Now Is Not the Time to Waver**,' was crucial, the "rule of 6" was re-introduced, but right at the very end. Now, in **April**, hairdressers and outdoor eating are allowed again and we look forward to **May** when announcements on social distancing and hugging are due. In England now, Covid has now been described as an endemic disease: we are advised to "Hold the line a teeny bit more," as optimism in the UK increases further, and the message is "**Every Vaccination Brings Us Hope!**" It is still extremely bleak though, for so much of the world.

Valerie



Working Charing

Throughout the year some businesses and key workers have continued.

Thank you to all at

Charing Court, Garage, Charing Stores, GM & M John's Butchers,
Pym House, The Pharmacy, The Post Office, The Surgery, Wady & Brett
The Parish Council
The Bookmaker's Arms, Jasmine House, Elizabeth at '44,' Fixings
and Spice of Bengal, when allowed.

Covid in Charing: Thanks to Francesca Oram for copy of her mind map and thanks to Harold Trill, Kevin Giles, Steve Beck for CDLHS archive photos, and posters from CPC Facebook page for photos.

Laugh or Groan?

- Q. Why did Columbus cross the ocean?
A. *To get to the other tide.*
- Q. What kind of tea did the American colonists want?
A. *Liberty.*
- Q. What happened after the wheel was invented?
A. *It caused a total revolution.*

It is said that two wrongs don't make a right.

However, two Wrights did make an airplane and three lefts make a right.

from jokes4us.com

A Glimpse of Charing in the Pandemic

from posters on the Charing Parish Council Facebook page.

2020

Follow all the latest news on our coronavirus live blog

The coronavirus outbreak has sent the UK into lockdown.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson has said you will only be able to leave your house for one of four reasons:

- 1 Shopping for necessities
- 2 Once a day for exercise
- 3 Medical need or providing care
- 4 Travelling to or from work (if you can't work from home)

All non-essential shops are closing, excluded are food shops, pharmacies, corner shops, hardware stores, petrol stations, pet shops, post offices, banks, newsagents and shops inside hospitals.

Parks will stay open, but gyms including outdoor gyms, play-parks, kiosks, all places of worship except for funerals will close.

All gatherings of more than two people are going to be banned except for members of your own family.

And these measures are in place for three weeks starting immediately.

Police will have power to issue on-the-spot fines of £90 for

March

Lots of small business will go out of business due to this viral outbreak. They will not survive weeks of little or zero cashflow. If you can do just one thing today, shop local and buy something from a small business. Make that effort 👍

March

Home > Environment > Environmental Health > Air Quality > Bonfires

Bonfires

Please note due to the current coronavirus pandemic we are advising residents to stop using bonfires as a way to dispose of their garden waste. The smoke created by the bonfire could affect your neighbours' breathing, especially if they are suffering with coronavirus symptoms. Please visit our [coronavirus updates page](#) for the latest updates on council services.

March



April



May



August



August



September



November



November

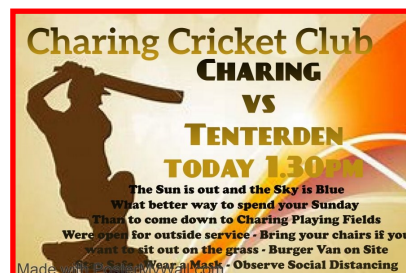


January

2021



April



April

Mulberry's
Mulberry's, Charing's only place to sit down, have a cuppa, and eat some tasty food whilst being sociable, sadly didn't survive.



**First, in March:
 'Isolation Lunches'
 Then,
 'Take Away Lunches'**



They tried

Then twice weekly 'Take Away Suppers'



But, though delicious, it wasn't enough

Thank you and farewell

Hello valerie. It is with a heavy heart that I have to tell you that Mulberry's Tea Room will close its doors for the last time on **Saturday 8th August 2020**.

The impact of the coronavirus has taken its toll and has put me in an untenable situation. From a financial viewpoint I simply cannot continue to operate.

I very much appreciate all the support, help and care you have given me and the team and I wish I could keep the tea room open, but unfortunately that is just not possible.

I have thoroughly enjoyed being a part of Charing Village life, meeting its lovely residents and being a small part of your lives. I'm sure we will run into each other in the future.

Thank you all again, and take care.

Very best wishes,

Sarah-Jane Hawkins
 - Owner, Mulberry's Tea Room -

Mulberry's closed in August.

Looking back to our April CDLHS Zoom

Medway Meanderings

by Jonathan Fenner



This talk was very informative and well received. He began with the idea that the side of the River Medway on which one lives, is the basis for being described as either a 'Man of Kent,' or a 'Kentish Man.'

The talk continued to be packed with information about navigation of the river, and the industries that grew up along its route, from the source at Turners Hill, in East Sussex, through to Sheerness, where it joins the Thames estuary. Pausing along the route to also appreciate the architecture of and history of well-known places like Penshurst Place, as well as lesser known, for example The Friars, and Upnor Castle.

Looking forward to our May Zoom

Our next meeting will be held on

Thursday May 20th

at **7.30 p.m. for the A.G.M.**

followed by

a **lecture at 8.00 p.m.** by

Imogen Corrigan on

The Lindisfarne Gospels

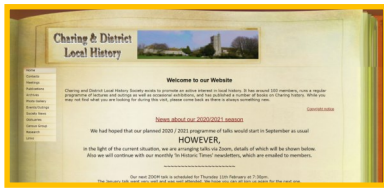


This lecture looks at the extraordinary artistic ability of Bishop Eadfrith who is thought to have made the Gospels single-handedly around the year 700 and discusses why the Gospels were made.

The book is much more than a copy of the sacred text and a thing of great beauty: it was made for distinctly political reasons.

Things to look forward to

We have a new-style website!

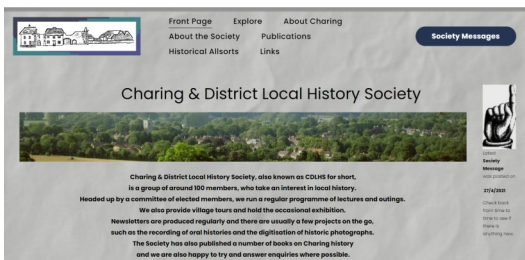


Our original website has served us well for almost 10 years, with many people visiting it. However, with the ever-increasing use of the internet, together with a growing dependency on it and greater expectations from it, the Covid19 lockdowns provided a good opportunity to see how we might move with the times.

A decade of steadily advancing technology has significantly increased the availability of improved tools and methods for website design and maintenance. So, having taken care of the old website for the past 6 years, Kevin Yeeles put his 'techy hat' on, did some research, and came up with a proposal. The committee liked it and so gave Kevin the go-ahead to build the new website. It replaced the old site on 8th March 2021.

All the relevant content of the original site has been incorporated into the new structure and format, which enables more versatile use of graphics, It also makes it much easier to keep up-to-date and to add more new content, as well as becoming more Mobile / Tablet friendly.

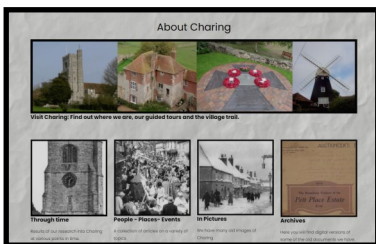
Please take time to have a look, we will continue to build it further with new information and research. We'll experiment with the colour options and layout, as we go along too –but hopefully that that will make it more interesting!



Look out for the 'Society Messages' button, this will be the place where we will post messages with the newest information about talks and additions to the website etc.

You'll see there are 5 main categories on the menu, which is always at the top of each page.

About Charing : About the Society : Historical Allsorts : Publications : Links (newly updated)



We've used a lot of images as navigation links. The idea is that you click on the images to open the links.

The view of the website adapts to the device, so the content remains the same, but the screen image viewed on a laptop, or tablet will be slightly different to that on a mobile.

We hope the website will play its part in keeping Charing history 'alive', as we add new articles, research and information, when it's available.

Please let us know what you think: contact website@charinghistory.co.uk

List of contributors to

'In Historic Times' newsletters during the year;

Alan Witt, Celia Jennings, Dorothy Burdick, Francesca Oram, Harold Trill, Hazel Le May, Hilary White, Kate McIver, Keith Oram, Kirsten Moon, Lucy Simmons, Mike Sharpe, Peter Kent, Sarah Pearson, Sylvia Beck, Stephen Beck, Valerie Yeeles

'The History Behind Charing Road Names and Places': 'R' 'S'

Many thanks to all those who have contributed.

Rope Walk This no longer visible, but was marked on the 1876 OS map of Charing, (see article on p8) Rope Walk ran opposite the entrance to Pett Lane up to an opening just before New Houses on The Hill.

Ruglys Way is on the Charing Green development built in 2004 built by Abbey Homes. Named by C.P.C. after a well-respected teacher who taught from 1945 for many years at Charing School. She was a keen member of the Guild of Players (the local amateur dramatic society).

Sayer Road is thought to have mostly been built in the 1950s. It is named after the Sayer family, a prominent gentry family in Charing. Sir George Sayer b.1655 moved from Essex when he inherited Pett Place through his wife, Frances Honeywood. Their descendants lived in Charing until C20 living at Clearmount (a mansion now demolished).

School Road was originally a continuation of Maidstone Road, and part of the main route between Ashford and Maidstone. Presumably re-named when the roundabout and A20 was built, splitting the village. The lime trees were planted in 1874.

Station Road This was another name change caused by building of A20. Originally the southern part of the High Street, until it was severed from it by the A20 in the 1920s. The station opened in July 1884, later a goods yard, coal yard and gas holder were added. The Police house was also in Station Road (The lane leading to Burleigh House was known as Station Road in 1890, but its name was changed to Burleigh Road by the 1911 census.

Stockers Head is where Faversham Road and Canterbury Road diverge. In 1769 it was called Stackwood Head after a Mr Stackwood of Stocker, but by 1871 it was known as Stocker's Head, and has since remained so.

Surgery Close is named after Charing Surgery, which was built in 1953.

If you have more information, or ideas, or you've noticed any errors or omissions in the above, I'd be grateful if you'd let us know, then we can keep our information updated, and correct.

Many thanks,

Valerie

newsletter@charinghistory.co.uk

*** Roads T to Z will be added and put on the website at a later date.**

Rope Walk, Charing and Rope Making

Extract from Harry Ward's book

'My Early Recollections of Charing Since 1886'

"At the age of eight years I was in the Rope Walk (that I will speak of later) 2 1/2 days and my brother John 2 1/2 days in each week for 2 years. My brother died in April 1875, from then till June 19th 1875, I was fully employed in said Rope Walk."

"At the Pett lane entrance stood the Toll gate lodge



Section from 1871 map showing position of Rope Walk

County Series 1871 1:10,560 1:10,560

"Reproduced under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International (CC-BY-NC-SA) licence with the permission of the National Library of Scotland."

p17

".... on the opposite side, stood cottage of Rope Walk, that narrow strip of garden now not up to the opening before you get to New Houses. A spinner and boy always engaged to make string, tarred string and cord, also ropes, bell ropes and well ropes. Deep well ropes were made down the Pett Lane, I have known them at starting point from the Palace gate to the gate leading to Vicarage field gate.

The spinner was able to make sail clothes, dress and cord them ready for use, sacks, hop pockets, whip chords etc. Dress his own hemp and everything necessary for the work from the imported state. After all these years I could give the work through all processes, from the hemp in the imported state to the finished article. I went to Challock before I was 10 years of age and spliced a well rope at Colonel Cheeseman's farm. It was very interesting work through all its branches now done by machinery. I may say this was owned by Cheeseman the Sadler and rope maker, now Grays. One could read a paper on rope making and a very interesting subject as done in the days past."

Our Move to Charing - 1986

The company I worked for decided to relocate its Corporate Headquarters from Acton (West London) to Gillingham, where they already had a large manufacturing & engineering facility. Looking back, our move to Charing was obviously 'meant to be'.

The announcement to relocate was made in October 1985, & I was already spending a lot of time at Gillingham. We'd originally thought of living 'somewhere around the Maidstone area', so we could return to see our parents easily - who lived within a short distance of us.

Having 'decided' where we were going to live, we thought we should look around the Ashford area, so we could 'logically' cross it off our list. I set about contacting estate agents, & the bump started to arrive in bundles.

Just after Christmas 1985, we left the children with my parents for a day & decided to start at Charing. We left Surrey in the snow! Our parents thought we were mad venturing to deepest Kent in such weather. Little did we know how events would unfold.....

We journeyed along the A20 alongside the North Downs - no snow - but plenty of snow fences! We arrived at Charing, but where do we park? Ah - here's a space in the High Street. Now, where are the agents (Dardry-Smith)? We'd parked right outside!

We went in armed with details of one particular house, met Alison, and said 'You sent us this about 2 months ago, it's the type of place we like the look of, presumably it's sold by now - do you have anything similar?'. Alison replied 'Actually it's still on the market, would you like to view it? It's an executor's sale & is empty'. We were given the keys & details of how to find the house. 'I'll see you there in 15 minutes', she said.

We weren't disappointed, & our short drive down the High Street gave us a very good impression of Charing as a working village. We literally decided on the spot that the property was 'for us'. It was the outside space that did it. We spent the rest of the day looking at the outside of other properties, but nothing came close to what was then called 'Purlands Villa'. We agreed a price within a couple of days.

We returned to Surrey to collect our 3 children. A week or so later we decided to bring them (then 10, 8 & 5) to Charing to 'see what they thought about this house we'd looked at'. Our eldest, Kathryn, replied 'I don't know why you're bothering, because I expect there'll be a sold flag outside it when we get there!' There was.

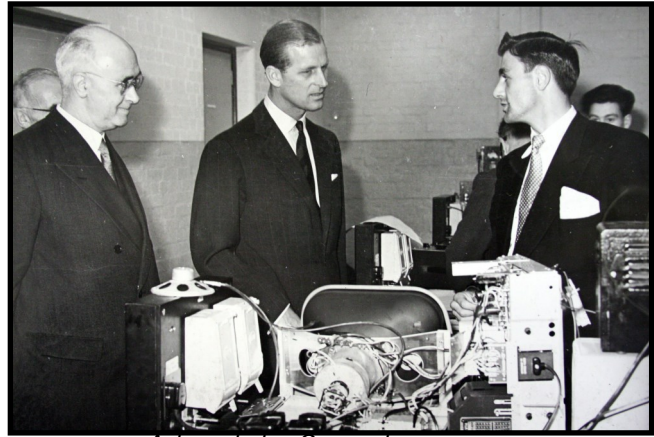
The purchase was completed in May 1986, & we finally moved in August, after having spent a number of weekends 'camping' in our new house.

We've never looked back since. Our children effectively grew up here & enjoyed village & country life, & in turn their children now always enjoy coming here (when the situation allows them to...).

Keith & Francesca Oram

A Duke of Edinburgh Story

The death of the Duke of Edinburgh reminded me of a story that my late father used to love to tell us of how he won a bet with the Duke of Edinburgh. Dad was a lecturer in motor vehicle engineering and in his later years wrote his memoirs so I quote:



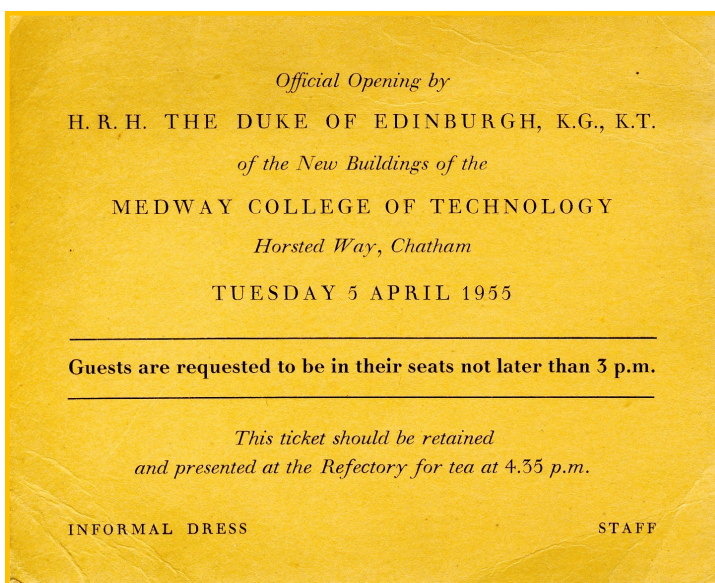
Acknowledge Open.edu

“In September 1954 I started at Medway College at Horsted. The Duke of Edinburgh officially opened the college and was scheduled to walk past the Motor Vehicle workshop, but not to call in.

My boss, George Goodyear said “We’ll leave the doors open and start up an engine on the test-bed as he goes past and that might attract him”. Sure enough, it did!

As he came in the door the engine stalled and the Duke remarked, “I bet it won’t start again”. So, George replied, “Try it Peter”, and it did.

And that is how I won a bet with the Duke of Edinburgh!”



He saved the tickets that he and mum had to the official opening of the New Buildings of the Medway College of Technology on Tuesday April 5th 1955, their third wedding anniversary and a newspaper photograph of the Duke in another workshop.

I never met the Duke of Edinburgh or won a bet with him but I knew a man that did!

Sylvia Beck

Our Air Raid Shelter



Our air raid shelter

At the back of our garden in Lion Field, Station Road lies a large air raid shelter. I have not been able to find out very much about it and if anyone has any information I would be delighted to hear it. It is an Anderson style shelter with corrugated steel/iron panels covered with earth and partially sunk into the ground so you go down four or five steps into it. It has a door at each end. The entrances are built of brick and there is a brick floor.

But it is much bigger than the standard Anderson shelter. It is assumed, because of its size, that it was a communal shelter serving people living in Station Road as it seems too big for one family. Or possibly several houses worked together to build one shelter for them all. The owner of our house from October 1939 to 1954 was a lady called Jessie Millicent Howell. (Does anyone remember her?) The 1939 Register was taken before she bought the house and shows the previous owners so we cannot see if she was living on her own or with anyone else but the size of the house then would not have been big enough for a family large enough to fill the shelter. Also, it lies behind nos 33 and 35 Station Road. In the 1930s there was an alleyway between those houses which would have ended just by the shelter so it was in a logical position for a community shelter.



From inside air raid shelter

If you go inside it, there is a small compartment on one side at each end separated off by breeze blocks (which were invented in the 1930s). There is a rail at the top of the entrance to each of these two compartments so the guess is that these housed the necessary buckets and a curtain would have been suspended from the rail to provide some privacy.

Our Air Raid Shelter *continued*

There is a mystery about the design of the entrances as these have a flat platform surrounded with a small wall or parapet on three sides (see last photo). It seems a rather elaborate detail for what was a utilitarian building.



entrance

The air raid shelter is not the only relic from WW2. In addition to the old well, underneath where we park our cars, there is what Gerry Clarkson, who previously owned our house, believes was an emergency water supply for firefighters.



With mystery structure over the door

Jill Leyland

April Quiz

1. Which 'activity' is thought to have been the origin of these words: "roam," "tawdry" and "canter"?
2. Where is this? What was it once?
3. What was abolished in the Administration of Estates Act 1925?
What was the story behind its history?



April Quiz Answers

1. They are all words which are thought to have been derived from the popular Medieval 'pilgrimages'.

'**Tawdry**' is now associated with something cheap and of poor quality. It is believed it was first used in connection with 'St Audrey's lace,' one of many pilgrimage mementoes on sale at fairs outside the gates of shrines.

'**Roam**' means to travel freely, often over a wide area. The word is thought to be used from when Rome was a popular pilgrimage destination. Today however, 'to roam' implies freedom and rather aimless movement, whereas of course pilgrimage to shrines around the country and abroad, were definite destinations.

'**Canter**' describes a comfortable speed on horseback between a trot and a gallop. Canterbury, another particularly popular pilgrimage site, is thought to have been this word's origin.

2. It is Sandgate Castle, a scheduled monument, near Folkestone.



pic by Francis Grose/
Wikipedia

Fearing a possible invasion from Catholic Europe, Henry VIII ordered Sandgate Castle to be built in 1539/40. It was one of 36 castles, forts and small blockhouses, that made a defence chain, known as 'Device Forts. Originally, it had 3 large towers and a gatehouse.

Though invading armies never caused it any damage, 2 centuries of invading seas reduced its perimeter. Between 1805 and 1808 it was redesigned to become a Martello tower, one of many providing defence against the threatened Napoleonic invasion. Between 1975 and 1979, it was bought and re-designed to become a private home.

(<https://www.kentonline.co.uk/kent/news/fortress-kent-an-ever-changing-history-245868/>)

3. 'Gavelkind' was abolished in 1925, the Kentish inheritance system which gave equal inheritance rights to all heirs, (male and female).

From 1066 onwards, the Norman system of inheritance through primogeniture became law in most of England, but not in Kent. A legend gives the reason for this.

The Men of Kent (those East of the Medway), challenged William, on his progress through Kent. Blocking his route, they "*offered peace if he would grant their ancient rights and liberties otherwise war, and that most deadly.*" William agreed that they could keep their own laws, in return for accepting him as king. 'Gavelkind', was one of the laws: it endured as the default inheritance law in Kent until its abolition in 1925.

<https://www.kfhs.org.uk/kent-history>

New CDLHS Website

New Design and Structure

though same address:

charinghistory.co.uk

Take a look!

**and come back again and again
to keep up to date!**

Noticeboard

By chance, I came across a very interesting website; Public House Archive of all Kent
<http://www.dover-kent.com/2014-villages/1Pubs-Alphabetical-List.html>

It has interesting info for Charing. <http://www.dover-kent.com/2014-villages/Charing.html>

There are old photos, newspaper articles and pub signs among other historical info on the Kings Head, Red Lion, Olive Branch, the Bowl, the Queen's Head, the Swan, the Old Swan.

Not the easiest site to navigate, and I think some of the information may need double checking, but I think worth a look.

Valerie

Thank you for reading.

Feedback, comments, corrections and ideas always appreciated.

newsletter@charinghistory.co.uk



We hold contact information of members, and interested people, to send them society news and information on local history. We do not share the information with third parties.

If you would rather not receive emails from us in future, please email

Hon.Secretary@charinghistory.co.uk