

CHARING & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

www.charinghistory.co.uk

CDLHS In Our Historic Times

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Easy Does It!

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Continuing our series

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Hello again! Here's another mixture of articles for you.

If you'd like to contribute to the newsletter with a suggestion, a comment, a correction, or an article— please do!

Please send any to newsletter@charinghistory.co.uk

'The History Behind Charing Road Names and Places': 'D'

Many thanks to all those who've contributed

Dog Kennel Lane Presumably named as it originally led to Dog Kennel Farm and Dog Kennel cottages (demolished by 1950s). Dog Kennel Farm is marked on an 1896 map of Charing and appears to be where the abattoir is now. (See p9 for wartime account at Dog Kennel cottages.)

Donkey Lane This was the shortest route to the lime kilns, and once upon a time donkeys (packhorses) carrying lime to and from the lime kilns on the Downs, would have been a common sight along it. Now just a trackway, but on the 1896 map it is shown as one of the few roads in Charing and is marked as a continuation of Wickens Lane, which then went up to Burnt House on Pilgrims Way (then marked as Pilgrims Road).

Downs Close and Downs Way mentioned in early 1960s Oral History recordings and possibly built in 1950s. Downs Way was on the route of an old footpath to the Pilgrims Way, originally though open fields that pre-war were used as the village football pitch and playing fields.

If you have more information, or you've noticed any errors or omissions in the above, I'd be grateful if you'd let us know, so that our information can be corrected and updated. Many thanks, Valerie

newsletter@charinghistory.co.uk



Charing C of E Primary School. Extracts from The Headmaster's Log Book Jan 1873 to Oct 1905

School had an uphill struggle to convince parents and local employers of the importance of education.

In the pages of this Log Book it becomes apparent that life was often very hard and that education could not always be prioritised over work. As well as frequent mentions of absence due to weeding, running errands, helping with harvest, hopping, pulling turnips etc, there are entries such as: keeping house for father, taking care of Dr Johnson's cart on his rounds, nursing a sick baby, hop-pole shaving, carrying a flag in front of a traction engine, gathering acorns and making bricks with his father.

Some of the children were only 8 years old.

Prominent figures in the local community were sometimes responsible:

28th November 1902. "No less than 7 boys were absent on Monday beating for a local magistrate."

Dorothy Burdick



Artist's impression on the cover of the New Romney Town Trail leaflet

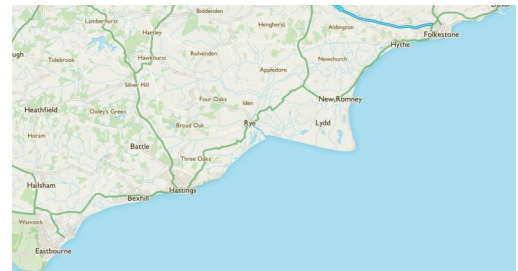
The Impact of the Great Storm of 1287

In 1287, a storm hit the southern coast of England with such ferocity that the coastline between Hastings and New Romney was completely redrawn. Towns that had been thriving ports standing by the sea found themselves landlocked, while Rye now had a new harbour.

Winchelsea The port of Winchelsea was completely destroyed. Old Winchelsea (where Winchelsea Beach is now) had been a substantial town, and in the C12 was apparently the preferred route to France. In the 1260's contained 700 houses, two churches and over fifty inns and taverns. Winchelsea was later rebuilt several miles inland, where it became the first example of town planning in England being built on a grid system.



Map showing coastline before storm of 1287

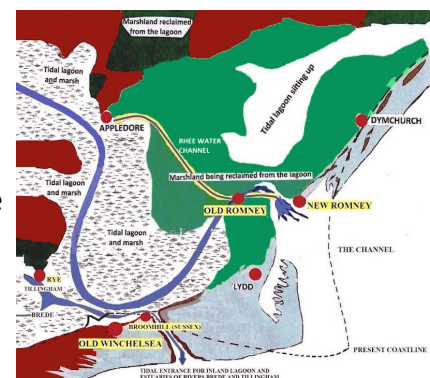


Current OS map showing coastline

In **Hastings**, the storm caused the cliff, and with it, half the Norman castle to crash into the sea, blocking off its harbour forever. Its protected inlet had been totally destroyed, and the town's days as a port had ended. Prior to the great storm Hastings had been able to contribute its full quota of 21 ships to the fleet of the Cinque Ports, but 100 years later could only muster three. By the end of the 15th century it had lost its status and was merely a small fishing village. A shopping centre now stands on the site of the old harbour. Hastings is still

famous for fishing; supporting the largest fleet of beach-launched fishing boats in Britain, and the much renovated Tudor net lofts can still be seen.

New Romney By about 1140 the original port of Romney gradually extended along the River Rother toward the sea, with either end called "Old" and "New" Romney. Old Romney had gradually silted up and so New Romney became the thriving harbour town where the River Rother flowed into the English Channel. In the Great Storm, massive quantities of shingle from Dungeness, along with mud and soil, engulfed the town. The storm silted up the harbour completely and diverted the river away from the town. More or less overnight, New Romney became landlocked a mile from the coast. So much silt was deposited by the flood that the land level in the town rose by 5 inches. (Evidence of this can be seen at St Nicholas' church, now the only building dating from before the flood, where the change in floor level is noticeable and flood water marks can be seen on the pillars.) Ironically, only 39 years before this, a major effort had been completed to clear the silt between Old Romney and New Romney by funnelling the River Rother along the 7.5 mile Rhee Canal, an above-ground channel approximately 50 to 100 yards wide, dug between two level banks. (Now known as the Rhee Wall, partly preserved as a historic monument, it is the route of the B2080 from Appledore to Brenzett, and then the A259 to New Romney.)



Romney Marsh between 1100 and the Great Storm of 1287

<https://theromneymarsh.net/storm1287>

All that work was to no avail, the river Rother, which previously flowed through the town, had found a new outlet to the sea at Rye, 15 miles away, making **Rye** the predominant port.

People of Charing

The Wheler Family part 1

'Wheler Road', and 'Wheler House' in The High Street are visible links to the Wheler family connection with Charing, which continues today through 'The Wheler Foundation' charity.



The earliest connection I've found is through Sir Nicholas Gilbourne, who was a Justice of the Peace for Charing and lessee of the Archbishop's Palace. One of his daughters, Anne Gilbourne married Thomas Wheler of Tottenham; their son Charles born in 1611 was known as '**Charles Wheler of Charing**'.

Charles was a colonel in 'His Majesty's Life Guards'. A loyal Royalist, who, after the beheading of Charles 1, fled with his wife, Anne (nee Hutchin of Egerton) to Breda, in the Netherlands. It was there that their first son, George Wheler, was born in 1651. In 1674 Charles and George together inherited a substantial part of Sir William Wheler's estate in Spitalfields .

George Wheler (1651-1723) was a gifted and devout man. He studied first at Oxford and then



law at Middle Temple, London. In his early adult life he travelled around Greece. A year after returning, in 1677 he married Grace Higsons. He wrote a book 'A Journey into Greece', published in 1682. He earned great respect both as an

amateur botanist and antiquarian, collecting and bringing home rare plants, coins marbles and inscriptions. He was elected a Fellow of The Royal Society in 1677, and was knighted in 1682.



George Wheler & Jacob Spon visit the remains of Ancient Athens

In 1683 he took Holy Orders and was described as '.....a very worthy, learned, ingenious person, a little formal and particular, but exceedingly devout.' With some assistance, but mostly at his own expense, he had a tabernacle built in Spitalfields, as it had troubled him that there was no place nearby for Anglicans to worship. Unfortunately though, he had several disagreements with his curate. This culminated on a Christmas Eve when apparently Sir George 'took over the pulpit, causing the curate and half the congregation to walk out. They then continued to hold services round the corner. He published two more books one on churches, the other on Protestantism. In 1692 he bought the Archbishops Palace, Charing from Robert Honeywood.

He and Grace had eighteen children. For fifteen years he was vicar of Basingstoke, and then in 1706 he was promoted to be Rector, first at Winston and then three years later to Houghton -Le-Spring, County Durham. He is buried in Durham Cathedral. In his will among several considerable charitable causes, was an endowment for 'a perpetual school for thirty poor girls'.

It was said of his life; "Few ever more happily united the dignified manners and sentiments of birth and rank with the venerable simplicity and modesty of the Christian pastor than Sir George Wheler."

I'm grateful to many volumes of 'The Gentleman's Magazine' online

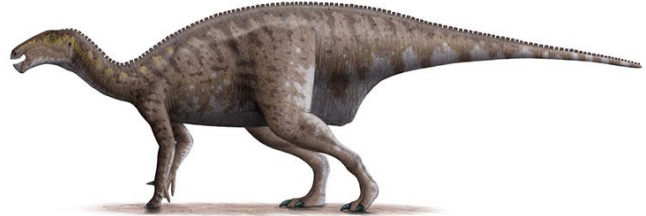
Next issue Part 2 Grenville Wheler

Quiz



1. Which Kent town is associated with Rupert the Bear and why?

2. Which Kent town is associated with a dinosaur and why?



3. Have you seen this before?
Where?

Jokes and Witticisms from the 17th century

Following the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, to call someone 'a wit' was to pay a particular compliment.

When we talk about making a "joke", "ridiculing" someone, or engaging in "banter", we're using words which arrived in English in the late 17th Century that described the latest trends in fashionable wit.

- "Cobblers may be said to be good men, because they set men upright, and are ever employed in mending soles. "
- "A Drunken fellow returning home towards evening, found his wife hard at her spinning; she reprovng him for his ill husbandry, and commending herself for her good huswifery, he told her that she had no great cause to chide, for as she had been spinning, he came home all the way reeling!"

Who was Florence Nightingale?

Her Many Facets



A nurse Florence Nightingale is well known for her caring, hard work to transform the terrible conditions at army hospitals in the Crimean War. Florence believed that, by keeping patients well-fed, warm, comfortable, and above all clean, nursing could solve many problems that 19th century medicine could not. Known as ‘The lady of the lamp’, her diligence and determination brought comfort and hope, to wounded soldiers; very gradually earning the respect of army medical staff, and inspiring many women to follow her lead.

A reformer Her changes went far beyond ‘standard’ nursing care. She was a follower of the ‘new’ thinking on sanitation that believed there was a relationship between disease and dirt. When she went to the Crimea, she relished the opportunity to put theory into practice. She set out to transform not just the cleanliness of the soldiers and the wards, by using more, soap and water regularly. But by making long-term enduring changes to the water that was drunk, the food that was eaten and the air that was breathed. So, a dirty uneven floor was replaced, clogged latrines were unplugged, and new opening windows were fitted.

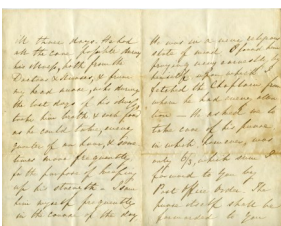
An organiser able to manage logistics. She instigated procedures (not unlike our triage system) that could cope with the numbers of wounded soldiers arriving at one time; something that had previously challenged and overwhelmed the previous management of the hospital. On arrival, the injured were stripped of their blood- and offal-soaked uniforms, and their wounds were bathed. To prevent cross-contamination between soldiers, she



insisted that a fresh, clean cloth be used for each soldier, rather than the same cloth for multiple patients. She set up huge boilers to destroy lice and found honest washerwomen, who would not steal the linens, to set up a laundry. She established a separate ‘invalid’s kitchen’ in Barracks Hospital, which was supported by her own finances, to prepare soups, beef teas, jellies, cereals, and other easily digestible foods to supplement the army's meager rations. She also instituted a classroom and a library for patients’ intellectual stimulation and entertainment.

One of the early “fever casualties” brought to Scutari described her reforms as follows: “Everything changed for the better. The sick were not kept waiting in the passages but went at once to bed, were washed, and had clean linen and were attended as well as in England.”

A methodical and thorough record keeper She was interested to find out the impact of her sanitation interventions and so kept meticulous records. On her return to England she used them to write a thorough 830-page report ‘*Notes on Matters Affecting the Health, Efficiency and Hospital Administration of the British Army*’ analysing her Crimean experiences and making proposals to change poor conditions in other hospitals. This brought about the establishment of a Royal Commission for the Health of the Army in 1857.



continued on next page



Who was Florence Nightingale?

Her Many Facets *contd.*

A Statistician She wanted her findings to have an impact and though she had a natural understanding of mathematics, she recognised many, particularly in government, did not. As she wished to persuade them to agree to make changes, she set about finding a visual way to demonstrate her evidence. She looked for an effective way of making her statistics easily understandable, and bringing them to life.'

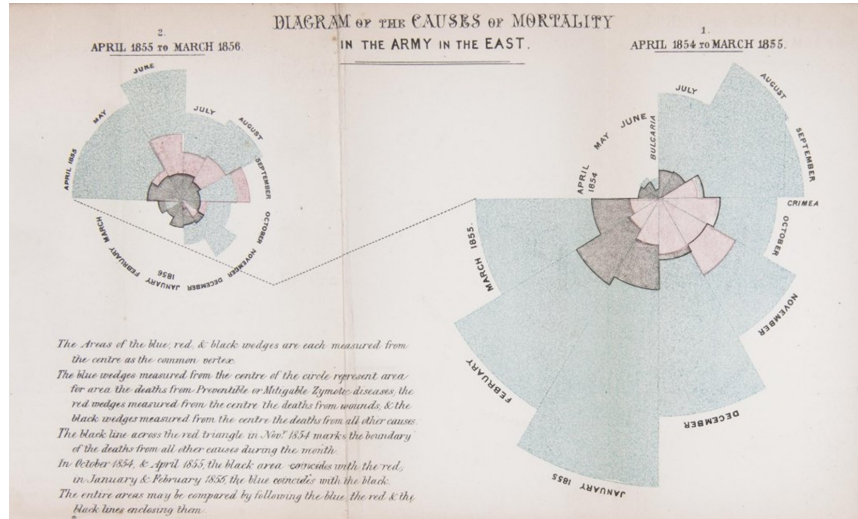
This chart was her solution. A 'Polar Diagram', a type of early pie chart, sometimes called 'Nightingale Rose Diagram'. It is cut into twelve equal angles. Each shows what happened in one month of one year. The outward reach of each slice shows how many deaths occurred in that month.

Each slice has three sections,

one for deaths from wounds in battle, one for "other causes", and one for disease. Except for the bloodiest month in the siege of Sevastopol, battle deaths take up a very small portion of each slice.

The chart clearly showed that in the war, the Russians were actually a minor enemy. The real enemies causing death were cholera, typhus, and dysentery. In 1859 she was the first woman to be elected a Fellow of the (later Royal) Statistical Society.

A 'workaholic' Florence worked all her life to improve health and conditions for patients. She established the Nightingale Training School at St Thomas's Hospital to train nurses who would be sent to hospitals throughout Britain. She wrote two books on nursing and spent her remaining life writing reports and advising on health in the army, as well as field hospitals in India and the American Civil War.



A celebrity Florence's Crimean work was immortalised by Longfellow's poem. She was recognised, and perhaps adored, by the general public and highly regarded and by Queen Victoria, who presented her with a jewelled brooch designed by prince Albert. It was dedicated: 'To Miss Florence Nightingale, as a mark of esteem and gratitude for her devotion towards the Queen's brave soldiers.'

Laughter time or Groan time?

- Q. Who invented King Arthur's round table? A. Sir Circumference!
- Q. When a knight was killed in battle, what sign did they put on his grave? A. Rust in peace!

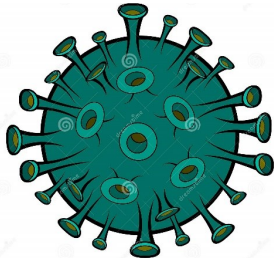
The Previous Pandemic that reached England



In 1666 the great plague, believed to be another of the bubonic plagues spread by black rats, finally declined in England.

In his diary, Samuel Pepys gives a vivid account of the empty streets in London, as all who could had left in an attempt to flee the pestilence.

This illustration shows rich Londoners leaving London, but their way is barred, apparently by those from the countryside.



History in the making, the language of Covid-19

Tony Thorne of King's College London, has been studying 'corona speak' and compiling lists of words and phrases used during the pandemic.



These are a few (mostly from the 'slang' list)

isocosm, meaning the contracted reality we are now living in

smizing – smiling with the eyes, as when wearing a facemask

coronadodge – swerving to avoid passers-by to comply with distance restrictions

upperwear – clothing selected for display above the waist only

miley Cyrus (UK rhyming slang) – coronavirus

covidiot – a person behaving irresponsibly in conditions of containment

morona – a person behaving stupidly because of or during the coronavirus outbreak

coronalusional – suffering from disordered thinking as a result of, or during the COVID-19 crisis

and finally hamsterkaufing – stockpiling and/or hoarding (adapted from German)

An Unhappy Wartime Evacuation Memory of Dog Kennel Cottage

given to Pat Winzar

“.....Lord Beatty, the squire of the village came to see us and tell us a house had been found but it was a bit off the beaten track. We were taken there and to our horror it was an old uninhabited house entirely on its own in the middle of a field, two fields away from the main thoroughfare and it was called **Dog Kennel Cottage**: two bedrooms upstairs and a large kitchen downstairs, stone flagging floors, no carpets or rugs. There was one tap in the huge sink, cold water only, a cooking range all rusty, an outdoor toilet which had to be emptied every week by my brother and I, carrying this large tub of waste over a field to a cesspit.

This was wartime in Kent. At night Mummy and I dragged the large oak table to the back door and wedged it against it to stop any German invader or parachutist from trying to get in. We were given a camp bed each, some grey blankets and pillows with no cases, crockery and enough chairs for us all. There was no electricity so one oil lamp was provided and we had a candle in a saucer to light our way up the stairs to bed.

We had to register in the village shop for our groceries and meat rations. Nobody would come right up to the house so deliveries were left by a railway arch one field away and it was my job to collect. The children were registered at the local school. I had just started at a central school in London but now this school couldn't teach me anything as I was too old so I had to do some sewing during lesson time, but I was at home with Mummy as I worried she might be taken from us.

We had lots of fruit trees in the garden and Mummy would make damson & apple jam. Sheep would wander into our back door, sometimes bringing their new born babies and we adopted one mummy sheep and her baby lamb. Christmas 1939: Aunty sent us a 5 note and I went on the train on my own to Ashford to buy everyone a Christmas present and a little surprise for Mummy from Woolworths at sixpence. We used to sit round the huge table and play cards which we had made from old cardboard and cut them out with shapes of diamonds, hearts, spades and clubs drawn on them. We made our own Christmas cards too.

No-one ever came to visit us except a cousin who was in the ATS and she came occasionally when on leave and I had to walk through two fields in the dark with my little torch to meet her at the Swan Hotel in Charing where the coach stop was. Mummy used to walk into Charing for shopping and go into the Church to say her prayers. Maybe she would buy some things in the draper's shop if we had enough money and coupons.

We eventually left Dog Kennel Cottage and were given a two bedroom house on the Forstal, Little Chart. It was one of six houses all joined together.....”

This is an extract from a longer account given to Pat Winzar, published in a Kent History Federation Journal.

It begins; “This is a story about my mother an ordinary very poor woman and her six children aged from 18 months to 12 years evacuated from South London at the outset of war September 1939. Her husband had left her soon after the birth of her last baby, and she received money from the State called Public Assistance each week which meant a walk to the office of payment with her rent book to show that it had been paid.”

If you know about anything the dog kennel that gave the name , please let me know.

Valerie at newsletter@charinghistory.co.uk



Quiz Answers

1 Rupert Bear is associated with Canterbury. The Caldwell's were a family of artists who worked at Canterbury Cathedral on the restoration of stained-glass windows. Their daughter, Mary, went on to attend Simon Langton Girls' School, then studied at the Sidney Cooper School of Art in Canterbury before going on to marry a man named Herbert Tourtel. Herbert worked for the Daily Express,. The rival papers The Daily Mail and The Mirror both had successful comic strips for children. Knowing Mary Tourtel, Herbert's wife was 'somewhat of an artist', she was asked by the newspaper to invent a new children's character. Her creation, Rupert Bear, was born. Rupert first appeared in the Daily Express on Monday 8 November 1920, in a single frame illustration called the 'Little Lost Bear', and continued to run in the paper every day thereafter. Mary Tourtel illustrated and wrote her Rupert stories until 1935, after which Albert Bestall continued the strip cartoons and became well-known for the Rupert annuals .



2 In 1834 'Iggly', or 'Spike' the a 3.5tonne, 13metre long Iguanodon was discovered in a quarry in Queen's Road, Maidstone. A cast of the 125-million-year-old herbivore is on display at Maidstone Museum. Iggly is part of Maidstone's coat of arms, the first dinosaur to be featured on one.



3 This picture hangs in Charing library on the right of the window behind the librarian's desk.

We'd love to have your personal memories for our archive, either as part of our 'Charing Stories' project for future generations to learn about life in Charing in the 21st century,

or for our 'Experiences of life in WW2' project.

Please contact newsletter@charinghistory.co.uk

Valerie

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or articles
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