



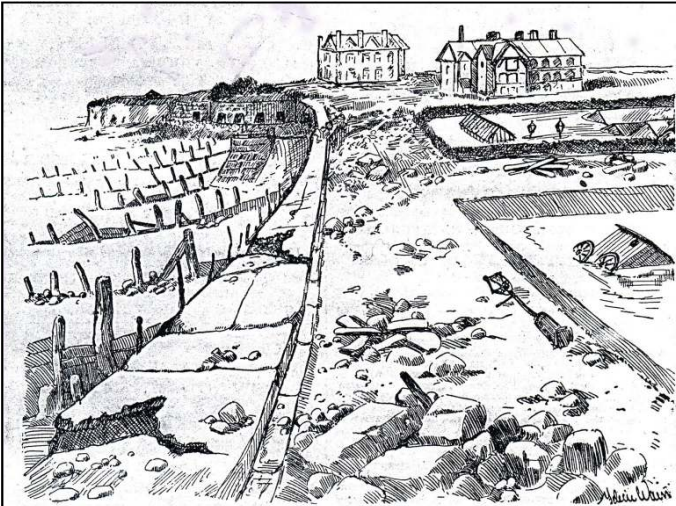
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ISSUE 48

BIRCHINGTON BAY FLOODED

Destruction of the sea wall and Promenade
From *Isle of Thanet Gazette* 29th February 1897



BIRCHINGTON BAY FLOODED.—DESTRUCTIVE EFFECTS OF THE STORM. From a Sketch by Miss FELICIA WAIN

Birchington Bay Flooded Sketch by Miss Felicia Wain c. 1897

The visitation [storm] at Birchington was of a brief but destructive character. "It was all done in twenty minutes" says Mr Alderman Rayden, the owner of the Birchington Bay Estate with its sea wall and promenade. The damage even in this time must be some thousands of pounds in extent. The promenade which commences at a raised point to the east of the Bay and extends for about a mile in the direction of Reculver, has been much damaged, though it does not present anything like the scene of destruction at Westgate. The extraordinary violence of the hurricane, however, tore up the surface in many places and at some points, deep fissures have been cut into the wall, and large portions either carried away with the receding waves, or dashed with other wreckage across the wide drive (*promenade*) which runs along the sea front.

In the valley [*the Dip*] behind the sea wall, and in front of the residences erected in the locality, stands what has always been known as the "Exhibition Building", a large erection of somewhat temporary character [*made of wood*], which Mr Rayden generously put up many years ago [1885] for the purpose of holding an Exhibition on a large scale for a charitable object. This building now stands in the midst of a lake and very little more than the roof is visible.

During the afternoon of the storm, the waves poured over the damaged sea wall into the valley without let or hindrance, changing a pretty spot into a temporary swamp. There are two large conservatories near the building and these were also flooded in eight to ten feet of water.

We regret to hear that much valuable property of a perishable character belonging to Mr Rayden was stored in the Exhibition Building, as well as a number of family relics. It is feared that most of these have been rendered valueless. In a few days, however, the whole of the water will be pumped out and every effort made to speedily repair, as far as possible, the damage done.

While cost of the larger disasters in other places round the coast will, in every case, be distributed over a number of persons, that at Birchington falls entirely on one man, Mr Alderman Rayden. That gentleman has spent a fortune, to say nothing of the most persevering efforts over a number of years in developing the estate and protecting the sea front. He has accomplished this in the face of many difficulties and discouragements and much sympathy is felt for him in the present disaster.



Exhibition Building flooded in the Dip at Minnis Bay - 1897

The sea defences built in the 1990's may be rather unsightly, but they are a small price to pay to help reduce the risk of flooding of properties in this area. This protection would be enhanced further if the flood gates were closed between November and April as was originally recommended, when the sea wall was first built.

editor

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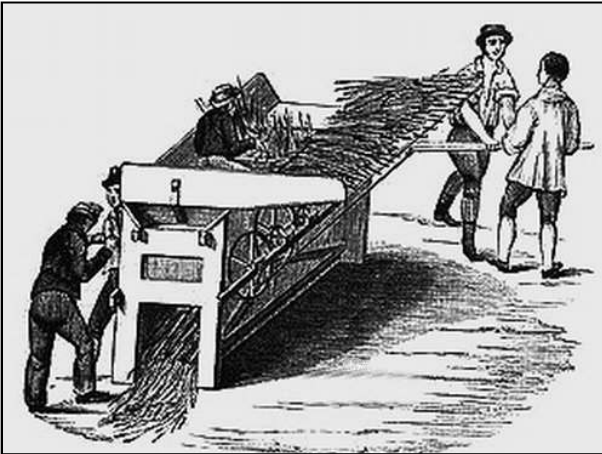
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Prior to the introduction of threshing machines, farmers employed their men to thresh the corn by hand with flails, between October and February. It was the only work the men could be given – and 'no work' meant 'no pay', which in turn meant no food and no heat during very cold, hard winters. The dreaded Workhouse was their only other resort.

Eight men from Birchington were so incensed by the introduction of one of these machines nearby that on November 20th in 1830 they set out to break it up. They were all caught and sent to Dover for trial. They were all convicted and seven of them were sentenced to 7 years transportation to Van Diemens Land (Tasmania). A descendent of Thomas Hepburn, one of the transportees, has sent us copies of many of the documents connected with her ancestor's life, from being sent out to the hulks in Southsea harbour, while waiting for a ship, to what happened to him after his arrival in Hobart.

If you are interested in reading more about this, the Museum now holds more information.



An early threshing machine

Town and Port of Dover in the County of Kent Record of Court proceedings on 21 Dec. 1830

"These are to certify that at the General Session of the Peace and Gaol Delivery holden in and for this Town and Port of Dover in the County of Kent and the Limbs and Precincts of the same at the Guildhall of and in the said Town and Port on Tuesday the twenty first day of December in the year of Our Lord one thousand eight hundred and thirty, Before the Worshipful Henshaw Latham Esquire, Mayor, and George Henry William Knocker, George Pett, John Tether, Joseph Webb Pilcher, John Shipman, Mathew Fennel, Henry Pringle, all Burgesses and John Coleman Esquire, His Majesty's Justice of the Peace aforesaid, to keep the Peace within the said Town and Port and the Limbs and Precincts of the same and also to hear and determine divers Felonies, Trespasses and other misdemeanours within the said Town and Port and the Limbs and Precincts of the same perpetrated by :-

Thomas Golder, William Brown (Acol), Thomas Hepburn, alias Thomas Winterbourn, Richard Oliphant (Birchington), Stephen Bushell, William Bushell (on the prosecution of Hills Rowe of the Parish of St John's) Thomas Avery and William Hughes were

severally convicted of unlawfully maliciously and feloniously breaking a certain threshing machine on the twentieth day of November last (1830) in the parish of St John the Baptist in the Isle of Thanet in the County of Kent and within the Liberty of the Town and Port of Dover in the said county of the value of Ten Pounds, the property of Hills Rowe, Whereupon it was ordered and adjudged by the court that each of them, the said Thomas Golder, William Brown, Thomas Hepburn, alias Thomas Winterbourn, Richard Oliphant, Stephen Bushell, William Bushell, Thomas Avery and William Hughes (Acol) should, for the said offence, be transported for the term of Seven Years to such parts beyond the Seas as His Majesty with the advice of his Privy Council should direct. And these are farther to certify that the said Thomas Golder, William Brown, Thomas Hepburn, alias Thomas Winterbourn, Richard Oliphant, Stephen Bushell, William Bushell, Thomas Avery and William Hughes are now confined under the said sentence in His Majesty's Gaol or Prison in the said Town and Port, that the said Thomas Golder is a married man and is of the age of twenty eight years, was born in the said parish of Wootton (near Denton and the A2) in the said county of Kent and was not brought up to any trade. That the said William Brown is a married man and is the age of thirty three years, was born in the parish of Acol in the said county and was not brought up to any trade. That the said Thomas Hepburn, alias Thomas Winterbourne, is a married man and is the age of thirty years, was born in the parish of St Lawrence (Ramsgate), and was not brought up to any trade. That the said Richard Oliphant is not a married man and is the age of twenty five years, was born in the parish of Birchington in the said county and is by trade a Butcher. That the said Stephen Bushell is not a married man and is the age of twenty eight years, was born in the parish of Monckton in the said county and was not brought up to any trade. That the said William Bushell is not a married man and is the age of seventeen years, was born in the parish of St John the Baptist (Margate) in the said county and was not brought up to any trade. That the said Thomas Avery is not a married man and is the age of twenty two years, was born in the parish of Linstead (Lynsted – just west of Faversham) in the said county and was not brought up to any trade. An the said William Hughes is not a married man and is the age of twenty one years and was born in the parish of Acol in the said County and was not brought up to any trade"

(Written up the day after the Court hearing and sentencing)

Given under my Hand the twenty second day of December 1839

J W Ledger

Town Clerk and clerk of the Peace

:- - - - - :-

Two of the men – William Brown and William Hughes were from Acol, one man, Richard Oliphant came from Birchington and one, Thomas Hepburn, was originally from St Lawrence but at the time of the offence was living in Birchington. It was Hepburn's descendant, Joyce Fuller, who contacted Alfred Walker from Australia with what she'd found out from her end, asking for more information from the Birchington end to fill in the missing pieces of the story, which Alfred did – and kept copies of all his findings alongside Joyce's information.

(The unusual spellings are as seen on the original document)

John Naden, our local policeman, was walking down Minnis Road to patrol the Bay area one evening. As he passed under the railway bridge, a young man came cycling from the Bay without any lights.

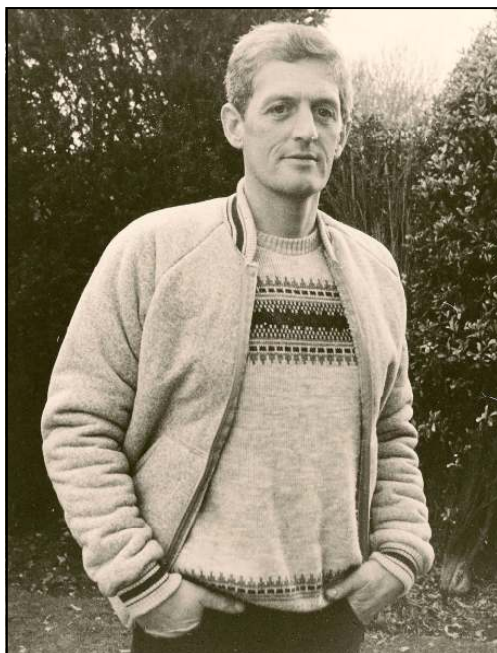


Policeman and a Cyclist

“Get off that bike!” ordered John in his most authoritative voice. The young man hastily dismounted and began pushing his bike up the hill towards the village. John walked on towards the Bay, but turned to check on his delinquent – only to see him remount the bike and carry on slowly up the rise.

Just then, John’s old friend the local taxi driver, Arthur Steed, came under the bridge. John quickly waved to him to stop, jumped into his cab and said urgently, “Turn up St Mildred’s and up Grenham Road to the station – AS FAST AS YOU CAN!” John kept urging him to go faster. Arthur protested “I’m exceeding the speed limit!” “Blow that,” said John, “just get to the Station as fast as you can.”

As soon as he reached the station entrance, John leapt out of the cab and stood in front of the old Police Station (now the Masonic Temple) – waiting for his light-less cyclist. As the young man turned the corner into Sandles Road, he was flabbergasted when he heard a familiar voice yell, “I told you to get OFF that bike! GET OFF NOW!” He did – very quickly – and is probably still puzzling over how that policeman could be in two places at once!!!



John Naden c. 1990

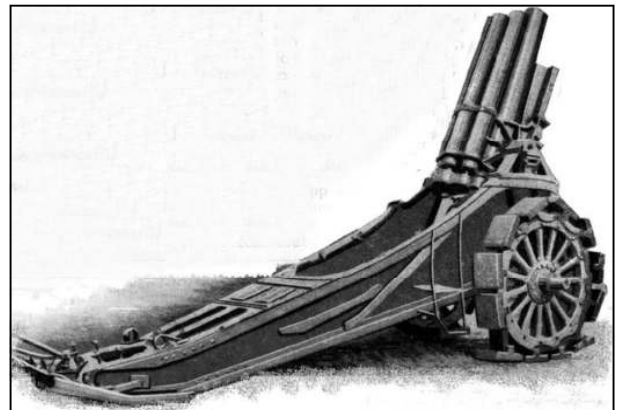
“In March 1920 a German Field Gun was presented to Birchington and placed against the Churchyard wall. What has happened to it?”

This was a note in a box of slides numbers 14 – 125 which Mr. AT Walker left his family. Mr. Walker was a keen local historian, church warden and retired headmaster.

We don’t know what the gun looked like, but the examples below give us an idea of what we might have been given. It would have been interesting to know why we were honoured in this way – and from where in the battlefields of France and Belgium the gun was captured.



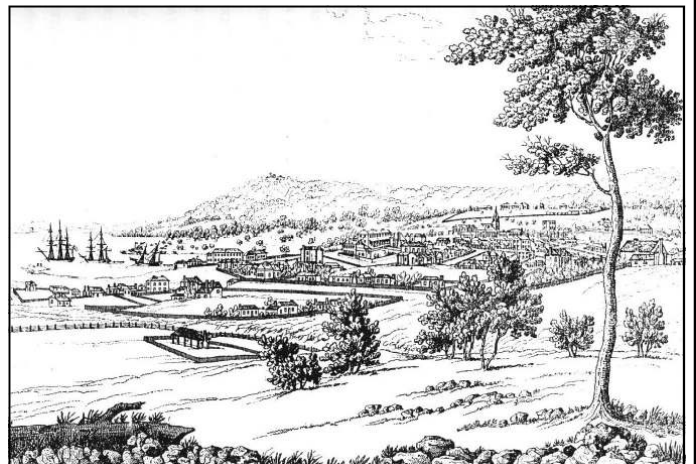
German Field Gun



German Howtzer

AGRICULTURAL RIOTERS from BIRCHINGTON

Continued from page 2



Sketch of Hobart Town, Van Diemens Land (Tasmania) c. 1822

BHT DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Thursday 12th June 2014

Quarterly Meeting

AGM and Talk by Neville Hudson

"The Generosity of Birchington"

Friday 27th June 2014

Fashion Show

Clothes by Edinburgh Woollen Mills

Wanted: Volunteers to model the clothes

4 Ladies & 2 Gentlemen required

Contact Jennie on 842988

Thursday 25th September 2014

Quarterly Meeting and Talk

By James Brazier

"Doing Their Bit in WW1"

Saturday 1st October 2014

The Model Railway Exhibition

BHT will have another display on the stage

See notice boards for details

Thursday 30th October 2014

A Musical Evening

By David Ruddock

Thursday 20th November 2014

Quarterly Meeting and Talk

To be arranged

Quarterly meetings 7.00 for 7.30pm at The Centre, Birchington. The Bar will be available

Time to renew your BHT Subscriptions

As you see from the dates for your dairy, the AGM is on the Thursday 12th June 2014. This could be an appropriate time to renew your membership subscription for the year ahead.

At £7.50 per person and £12 a couple, you get 4 Newsletters, quarterly talks, social events and access to the museum three mornings a week.

Our website www.birchingtonheritage.org.uk is worth a visit also.



TALK BY JOHN ROBINSON

John Robinson, a member of the BHT Committee and long-time resident of Thanet, treated us to a very interesting talk with slides on 20 March 2014, entitled 'Greetings from Margate', which was well attended by our Membership.

We were taken back to an era long since gone when thousands of holidaymakers crowded the beach and enjoyed hot summer days. From the Bathing Belles of the 1900s to the Beauty Queen Contests of the 1950s.



Bathing Belles c. 1900

We saw the ever changing face of Margate from its many buildings to the local tradespeople. The mobile milkman is from Butcher's Dairy in 1929 taken in Wilderness Hill outside the old Princess Mary's Hospital.



Mobile Milkman c. 1929

Janet Denyer

FARM DAIRY MYSTERY



Ann Jordan, who lived at 54, Westfield Road (one of the houses in Victoria Terrace) from 1990-1999, discovered these two trade cards under the floor boards in the property. Unfortunately Kelly's Directories have not been any help in tracking down a date for this dairy. It would have helped if advertisement had given an owner's name, or where the farm was located. Does anyone know anything about the dairy, e.g., its date, its owners and where these "special cows" were kept?

The name Gordon Fields, which only appears in the mid-1880s' editions, was the original name for Gordon Square.

Hughenden Terrace (the short terrace on the north side of Westfield Road) was built in 1883. Victoria Terrace (the long one on the south side of the road) was built in about 1890. At this period, the land to the west of the terraces was open fields.