

KENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER



No. 27

Spring 1994

TUNBRIDGE WELLS IN WARTIME

A boxful of fifty-year old letters, found while clearing out the attic, has produced an interesting contemporary account of the experiences of a young medical student evacuated to Tunbridge Wells in 1941.

Two years into the War of 1939-1945 the Battle of Britain was over, but air-raids on Kent were still a possibility –

"There have been no warnings here for about ten days but we often hear planes at night and the searchlights are up, but no gunfire, so they must be our own going over on raids. There is a lot of daylight activity, however, fighters going on sweeps over France, I suppose."

The battle of the Titans was being fought between the Germans and the Russians for control of Russia –

"We can't put as much reliance on the snow stopping the Nazis as we are led to believe . . ." October 18th. 1941 " . . . these poor Russians seem to be having a bad time at the moment but I think they will hold out all right and if we supply the materials they will be able to start a general offensive". October 26th. "I don't think a large scale invasion of the Continent is practicable at the moment . . . we should make small raids from Norway to Bordeaux and also in Italy. It would give courage to the oppressed people and keep the Germans and Italians guessing".

Three years before the Normandy landings –

"A general meeting was held in the dissecting rooms . . . all those in favour of opening a second front on the continent signed a petition which was sent to Whitehall. Its probably in the Salvage by this time".

At the beginning of December the outlook seemed still grimmer –

"The Germans are sure to start blitzing again now that Japan has attacked America . . . we have lost the battleship Prince of Wales and the battlecruiser Repulse . . . I hope the Japanese aren't able to cut the Burma road . . . add ten years to the end of the war and it'll be about right".

On September 29th, 1941, the homesick seventeen year old arrived at his digs in pouring rain in London Road, Tunbridge Wells, to begin his medical studies at Sherwood Park in Greggswood Road, today the Headquarters of the Tunbridge Wells Health Authority. It belonged in the inter-war years to Sir William Siemens, the industrialist, before Guy's used it for its Medical School. It had been developed as a Spa for the town. (My thanks to Geoffrey Copus for this information). The town was crowded with "Students, civil servants and evacuees". Digs had not been easy to find: his total income was £85 a year for fees and clothes. A bicycle, essential for mobility, cost £2.15.0. secondhand. ("They are so difficult to get now") but its defective brakes and ancient tyres gave constant trouble.

"Returning home from Home Guard duty" he wrote, "it had snowed quite heavily" and, coming down the main street he skidded in the snow and the rifle he was carrying on his back

knocked off the cap of a passing army officer – "He thought I was a soldier and started to curse me, I scooted off as fast as I could".

"We were told all persons over 18 must join the Civil Defence Service or the Home Guard". Although he was not 18 until the following January, he joined Guy's own Company of the Home Guard. –

"We were issued with rifles, bayonets, belts, but no uniforms as yet . . . I don't suppose there will ever be an invasion but they all talked as if there would be". Soon he was one of the Fire Picket all night from 8 pm to 7 am, at one of the houses in Sherwood Park. Later –

"Nothing but H.G. all the week . . . we have now been issued with 20 rounds of ammunition to keep at home now in case a parachutist comes down the chimney . . . On Saturday went to the ranges for shooting, about six miles away . . . the track was camouflaged by snow, my bike was falling to pieces . . . I got three bulls out of five shots. Last night shooting at an indoor miniature range. Another parade this afternoon. This week all the Home Guard have to turn out for field exercises for the whole day. I hope they supply the food."

Food was strictly rationed: "Poor lunch, rotten tea, a very rotten supper". Only two eggs in three months. Later, new digs in Pembury where hens were kept, produced eggs almost every day.

Towards the end of 1941, heavy rain turned to snow – "I don't think I have ever been in a colder place than Tunbridge Wells". In the New Year severe frost made skating possible for some weeks.

His first year medical studies followed the usual pattern of lectures and demonstrations –

"We have a Viva tomorrow on the Abdomen – general Topography of Viscera including surface markings . . . we have dissecting in all our spare time and Viva is taken after the completion of each part. I don't like Anatomy at all, although some fellows wallow in it. I remember the first day we went into the dissecting rooms, it seemed horrible . . . but I soon got over it".

The Organic Chemistry Professor – "Told us he had discovered Mustard Gas during the last war (1914 - 1918) and also T.N.T. the explosive. He's the most harmless old fellow you could meet, with pince-nez".

One great new medical advance was about to begin: the blood transfusion service. He wrote – "They stick a needle in you, squeeze out a drop of blood in a small tube and then you get a card in a few days . . . and when they want you, they send for you".

There were opportunities to get away from Tunbridge Wells – to play rugby at Tonbridge against a local team and against Sevenoaks School, and to cycle to London and back. In Lewisham he noticed "The old cobblestones . . . the trams grinding along . . . no names anywhere . . . I didn't know

whether I had passed Bromley. I saw the church (Bromley Parish Church), or what's left of it. Did it have a direct hit? (It had received a direct hit – one of the most promising prefects of the former Girls' Grammar School was killed fire-watching inside the church) As time passed, the weather improved with the coming of spring, he became less homesick; letters became less frequent and eventually ceased altogether.

He eventually became a Consultant at the now closed Dreadnought Seamen's Hospital at Greenwich. He died in his early fifties – perhaps from the results of excessive smoking. His letters mention virtual chain-smoking all the time.

Joy Saynor

THE ORIGINAL K.A.S.?

Editor's Note: I do not usually approve of a KAS Newsletter Editor filling up space in the Newsletter with material of his or her own but as several interesting articles dealing with the early days of the KAS have been published in past issues I felt that the following notes might also be of interest to readers.

From NOTES & QUERIES 2nd. Series Vol.X p154, August 1860. A letter from Alfred John Dunkin (son of the Dartford historian and author of a History of Dartford) replying to a letter in N & Q. Vol. IX p.101 on 'Horn Books'

'Pocock the printer of Gravesend, (1) was a very clever and industrious man. He was the founder of the first Kent Archaeological and Naturalist Society. He died at Dartford and is buried in Wilmington churchyard. His son, who served in Portugal under General Evans gave me the following information which may serve as a clue to the extinction of the Horn book etc. etc.'

This letter was answered in the next issue (Sept. 1860 p.189) by someone using the initials J.G.N. (2) who wished to know when the Society was founded. J.G.N.'s letter was answered by Dunkin in the N & Q. October 1860 issue, p278.

'... Kent Archaeological and Naturalist Society: The only member, I believe, now alive of the Society is William Crafter Esq. who for many years was Chief Clerk (sic) of Tilbury and Gravesend Forts. He is very aged and infirm. I believe the Society was founded about 1790. I know that its meetings were held at the Leather Bottle, Northfleet, for the founder told me so. One of the publications was the Charter of the Gravesend Corporation, which I have; that is to say the members subscribed together for its printing. The printing of this charter gave great offence to Mr Cruden and the close Corporation of that epoch; and Pocock told me, that the Corporation took all their business from him and ruined him for this heinous offence! The Society embraced geology and particularly turned their attention to the collection of fossils from the chalk in the adjoining chalk pits where there dwelt a peculiar race of men whose trade was knapping flints. ie making gun flints. As Mr Pocock was a contributor to the Gentlemen's Magazine, I think it not improbable that notices of the Society will be found in that periodical. Alfred J. Dunkin'

1. Dunkin's History of Dartford was based on many of Pocock's original notes which John Dunkin acquired after Pocock's death.

2. I have looked through all early volumes of Arch. Cant. to see if 'J.G.N.' eventually joined the present Kent Archaeological Society but cannot find anyone under those initials. I have also looked through many early volumes of the Gentlemen's Magazine to see if I can find any article, note or letter contributed by Pocock. At present have found nothing.

Nesta Caiger,

Hon. Editor KAS Newsletter

SUCCESSFUL KAS CONFERENCE ON 'NAUTICAL ARCHAEOLOGY'

At Strood on 9th. October 1993 the KAS President, Kenneth Gravett, in his introduction spoke about the changes to the coastal maritime trade brought about by the coal railway from Canterbury to Whitstable in 1830, and the more recent changes

to the Kent brickmaking industry since flammable ashes from pre-Clean Air Act London were no longer available to mix with the local brickearths.

He then introduced Paul Bennett, Director of the Canterbury Archaeological Trust, who spoke about the administration and complications arising from the exposure of the Bronze Age Dover Boat under Town Wall Street, Dover, illustrating the theme with pictures of the other 'monuments' destroyed in the construction of the M20 into Dover, viz: World War II coastal batteries which overlay more ancient defences, medieval undercrofts which overlay Roman harbour installations, until 'the boat' was found during work to construct a pump sump to drain water from a pedestrian underpass to the M20. Paul claimed to have little first-hand knowledge of the boat, being more involved with the organisational aspects, but incidentally fully explained the boat's construction, though further research is continuing into the final details of tool technique, etc.

The high quality of the craftsmanship and the design ingenuity were very sophisticated and indicated a considerable prior ship building experience. The main timbers of the bottom were made from two halves of a single split oak tree about 50ft. long, which were butted together with complex joints involving tenoned wedges holding moss caulking in place; locking cleats fastened the two halves together while side planks were sewn in place with twisted yew withies. It was probably propelled by paddlers, with space for twenty, as no evidence for sails was seen. She was large enough to cross the Channel, quite apart from more local coastal trips. The hull was probably deliberately dumped on the early shore line, with stone and bronze artifacts nearby and a squashed salmon underneath. Dover Museum, Town Council, Harbour Board, the contractors, Maritime Museum, etc. were all involved in the extraction of the boat and plans are afoot to establish a Trust and Fund, to ultimately house the restored boat in Dover Museum.

Paul was followed by Valerie Fenwick of the Maritime Museum who described: First the Late Saxon Ferriby Boat and then the Sutton Hoo ship burial – with side trips to Sweden and Denmark to see parallel ancient ship exhibitions, before explaining her involvement with the Graveney boat (which is fully published elsewhere and was well covered by the 'Chronicle' TV programmes of the period). Again her brief was to detail the complications arising from rescue archaeology when unexpected remains are uncovered in industrial activities – which in this case were remote marshland and exposed to adverse weather conditions.

After lunch Gustav Milne of the London Institute of Archaeology detailed his work in recording the derelict barge hulks in the Whitehall Creek on the Medway prior to their destruction by the Western approach to the Medway Tunnel. Over 30 ships were left to rot in Whitehall Creek including World War II concrete barges and a minesweeper and numerous varieties of 'Thames' spritsail barges which were once so common on the SE rivers. All hulks which could be examined within a two week period were measured, photographed and recorded. It is assumed that there are as many layers of ships under the mud as were seen above but which will be largely lost in the excavations to come. A plea was made for information regarding similar derelict ships to be forwarded before they are lost for record purposes.

The final speaker was Brian Ferrari from the Royal Commission on Historic and Ancient Monuments who explained his remit 'To extend the RCHAM records to include sites within the coastal territorial waters which date prior to 1945' and which are regrettably not covered by present PPG16 regulations, although PPG20 does apply to give some limited protection. He explained the range of material sought for record purposes which might be uncovered by the tides or seen by divers and fishermen, including ancient forests, town and harbour sites as well as ship wrecks. What was needed was the 'Wet equivalent of field walking' in these areas which are equal in area to the present land surface of the British Isles. Problems arise from lack of regulation or restriction on extractors such as gravel diggers, sludge dumpers, bottom scraping fishermen, etc. Changes in the Government's

attitudes towards coastal defence to one of *laiser faire* could result in the loss of many coastal features.

Questioners brought out many side issues, particularly the need for proper funding and time for advance archaeological examination of major construction sites such as Chatham Dockyard and Whitehall Creek and the consequent need for local activists to liaise with central bodies when sites are seen to be 'at risk'. All speakers were warmly applauded by the audience who through their rapt attention and pertinent questioning obviously enjoyed the event, for which the organising committee was also thanked. Reported by:

Peter Dawson

The Nautical Archaeology Society

The above society was formed in 1981 to promote the study of all aspects of mankind's links with the sea. It includes ancient wrecks, harbours and submerged settlements. Members can receive training in underwater archaeological techniques, survey historic wrecks etc. and assist in the search for evidence of past maritime activities in seas, rivers, lakes or on land. NAS publishes a quarterly newsletter and a quarterly journal. Membership costs £28 (Students and OAP's £20). For full details contact: Wendy Robertson, Membership Secretary.

Wreck Laws. A Leaflet

The Dept. of National Heritage, in conjunction with the Dept. of Transport, have drafted a *Note on Wreck Laws* which aims to clarify the present laws applying to wrecks. Copies can be obtained from the Dept. of National Heritage, Room 306, 2-4 Cockspur St. London SW1Y 5DH. Tel: 071 211 6369. Price: ?

Council for British Archaeology South East

We held a very successful regional conference on the 23rd. October 1993 on the theme of *Early Romans in the South East*. Over 120 people attended the Angel Centre, Tonbridge and most comments were very favourable. We were treated to five different aspects of this fascinating subject by our speakers who all came from the south-east and liberally illustrated their talks with excellent slides. I am sure that we all went home with an extended knowledge of the subject. One of our speakers reminded us that county boundaries were then non-existent and encouraged us to think on a regional scale - taking into account what is happening in neighbouring areas as well as in our own particular locality. Continuing growth of CBA SE can develop this theme by assisting and co-operating with the existing excellent Groups and Societies in our area. I thoroughly enjoyed meeting so many friends from throughout the region.

Shiela Broomfield,
Vice Chairman. CBA SE

Crossness Engines Trust Progress Report

The Crossness Engines Trust started work in 1985 on the restoration of the 1865 pumping house, engines and pumps at Crossness works (see KAS Newsletters 17 & 22) and made steady progress until 1989. Misunderstandings with Thames Water Utilities led to a lock out and work was not resumed until some two years later. The work since the stoppage has made real progress. Our first priority was the installation of a new and comprehensive electrical system and that was started at the beginning of 1992 and has been proceeding steadily. This permitted the running of pumps to pump out the basement of the two engine houses and work on the steam-barring engine,

where good progress had been made before the stoppage, has gone well ahead. We are hoping to be able to drive it by steam at the next Open Day. Work on the main engine, 'Prince Consort' was quite steady at the beginning of the year and counter-beam linkages were freed and ready to start in the high pressure cylinder's piston (which had been exposed to water). Here we ran into a problem and this involved the fabrication of a seven-inch box spanner and the turning of it on the nut holding the piston. It took nearly eight weeks of all manner of effort to move it but it was eventually done although the team of hammerers said they were too tired to raise a cheer when it finally moved. The mining of sand around the main pumps went ahead as soon as the water had been pumped away and we are now down below the level of the main culvert and are almost ready to cut into this to determine its condition. Eventually the Trust hopes to create a museum of Public Health Engineering and so we are always on the look-out for various items such as pumps which could fit into such a collection. We have been given the opportunity to acquire an Ingersoll-Rand compressor once used in pumping at the old Manor Road Sewage works in Erith. Also we have acquired, from the old Slade Green Sewage works, a pump made by Britimp Engineering, a firm which was in Sidcup. Of course all this work could easily divert us from the main task but so far this has not happened. Our needs continue to be for money and manpower. We have scope for almost any skills and also for those who can simply help. For example great progress has been made on the gardens and much is still to be done there. Anyone who would like to know more about the project and perhaps make a visit if they are interested in work with the Trust, should phone me on 081 303 6723. It is hoped that a list of dates for viewing (by appointment) will be available by next KAS newsletter also a date for the annual 'Open Day'.

Mike Dunmow,
(Trust Secretary).

Books

One of our members, Mr Roger Pout has published a book *The Early Years of English Roller Hockey 1885-1914*. It includes reports on Roller Hockey in Kent and has many illustrations. He has kindly donated a copy to the Society's library. It is soft-back, size 210mm X 148mm. Price £14.50 plus £1.50 for postage and packing. It can be ordered direct from Mr Pout at 68 Bognor Drive, Herne Bay, Kent. CT6 8QR or obtained from The Bookshelf, High Street, Herne Bay, Kent, or the Albion Book Shop, 13 Mercery Lane, Canterbury.

Under Your Feet - The Archaeology of the Dartford District. The Dartford District Archaeological Group's second publication *Under Your Feet* was published in September 1993. An informal gathering at Dartford Borough Museum was held on 28th. Sept. to mark its launch. The Deputy Mayor of Dartford Cllr. B.Smith attended and was presented with a copy of this new publication. Over three hundred copies were subscribed to prior to publication, including several by KAS members. This book, A4 size, 44 pages, soft cover, can be obtained by post from Mr.G.Mitchell. and costs £5 plus 60p post and packing. Cheques should be made out to Dartford District Archaeological Group (or DDAG)

Kent Settlement (Poor Law) Records: A Guide and Catalogue. Part I. East Kent. (Diocese of Canterbury) This book by KAS member Miss G. Rickard. B.A. catalogues parish by parish all known surviving settlement records for the Diocese of Canterbury, comprising the eastern two thirds of the pre-1974 county of Kent. It covers the more well-known types of loose documents commonly found in parish collections and also less well-known sources, including other parish records, Quarter and Petty Sessions records, Poor Law Union records, Justices' Diaries and papers, etc. The whereabouts of all records is noted, along with detailed catalogue references to Archives collections. A select Bibliography points the reader towards background reading on the subject of settlement records in general. As a source book and historical record in itself this work will prove to be indispensable to anyone with an interest

in the history of Kent. Settlement documents involve not only paupers but also tradesmen, craftsmen, seamen, soldiers, labourers etc. etc. and are of importance to historians in recording movements of individuals and families from parish to parish. Paperback, 64 pp. Price £3.95 or by post at £4.45 (including post and packing) from Miss G. Rickard.

Note: Part II, covering West Kent is due for publication early in 1994 and may be ordered now.

The Chronic Inventor. The life and Work of Hiram Stevens Maxim by James E. Hamilton. F.L.A. Hiram Maxim was a national figure in his day, although now largely forgotten. His best known

invention had the most far reaching effects on military tactics and his experiments with flying machines made him locally and nationally famous. Copies of this fully illustrated book may be obtained from Bexley Local Studies Centre, Hall Place, Bourne Road, Bexley. DA5 1PQ. 0322 526574. Ext. 217. Price; £3.50 plus 65p for p&p (Cheque payable to Bexley London Borough).

Encyclopedia of Medieval Church Art. by Edward D. Tasker. Published by B. T. Batsford. Price £45. Orders to PO Box 4, Braintree, Essex..

Deserted Bastions, Historic Naval and Military Architecture. Edited by Marianne Watson-Smyth and published by Save Britain's Heritage, 68 Battersea High Street, London SW11 3HX. Tel: 071 228 3336. Price £7.50 incl. P and P.

Death in Towns. AD 100 - 1600. Edited by Steven Bassett. Published by Leicester University Press, 25 Floral Street, London WC2E 9DS. Tel: 071 240 9233. Hard-back, price £49.50. Includes articles on medieval monumental brasses, urban cemeteries etc. etc.

Principles of Archaeological Stratigraphy 2nd Edition. by Edward C. Harris. This book is the only text devoted entirely to archaeological stratigraphy, a subject of fundamental importance to archaeology. The book is written in a style suitable for the student, the amateur and professional archaeologist alike. 184 pages, price £19.95. (Cheque made payable to Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Ltd). Available from booksellers or Academic Press, Marketing Dept. 24-28 Oval Road, London NW1 7DX. Tel: 071 267 4466.

KENT HISTORIC BUILDINGS INDEX - UPDATE

The latest issue covers the district of Rochester-upon-Medway embracing the following localities: Allhallows, Chatham, Cliff-at-Hoo, Cooling, Cuxton, Frindsbury Extra, Halling, High Halstow, Hoo St. Werburgh, Isle of Grain, Rochester, St. Mary's Hoo, Stoke, Strood. Work is in progress upon all Kent's Districts. It is hoped to issue booklets for the entire County before the imminent local government reorganisation gets under way. During this period of restructuring, the index, as a conservation tool looks set to become even more useful for those prepared to exert themselves to protect our ancient buildings. It provides a handy reference of those buildings which are listed and those which probably should be. Editions issued so far are : Dartford - £2., Gillingham - £1., Gravesham £3., Rochester £3. Available from Michael H. Peters.

METAL DETECTING. A leaflet.

A new leaflet *Metal Detecting on Archaeological Sites: advice for farmers and landowners* has been produced by Norfolk Museums Service, the Norfolk Constabulary and the County Landowners Assoc. Copies can be obtained from Norfolk Landscape Archaeology Field Archaeology Division, Norfolk Museums Service, Union House, Gressenhall, Dereham, Norfolk. NR20 4DR Tel: 0362 861187/860528. Price : ?

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY

THE ALLEN GROVE LOCAL HISTORY FUND GRANTS

The late Allen Grove left a legacy to the Kent Archaeological Society to establish a fund to be used 'for the purposes of research preservation and enjoyment of local history.' The income will be used to make one or more grants every year

and applications are now invited. The trustees will consider applications for grants for any project with one or more of the purposes given above. Such projects may be practical projects such as presentation, publication and education as well as research. Suggestions for projects that might be undertaken by the Kent Archaeological Society or some other body would also be considered. Grants are not restricted to members of the Kent Archaeological Society and may be made to societies, organisations and groups. Awards will not be announced until the autumn of 1994. Applications must be submitted by the 31st. March 1994. Application forms and further information may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary: Mr A. I. Moffat.

TEBBUTT RESEARCH FUND.

WEALDEN IRON RESEARCH GROUP.

This fund was established as a tribute to the life and work of the late C. F. Tebbutt, OBE., FSA., and applications are invited, from individuals and groups, for grants towards research, including associated expenses, into any aspect of the Wealden Iron Industry. It is anticipated that approximately £200 will be available from the fund and any interested person should write a suitable letter of application giving details of themselves together with relevant information concerning the research envisaged. Details can be sent to me not later than 31st March 1994 so that I can pass them to the Panel for consideration. Shiela Broomfield. Hon. Sec. WIRG.

For Sale

Members are reminded that they can obtain KAS 'Tote bags', £6. Tea Cloths, £3. Ties,* (new stock now in, blue, grey, green or maroon) £4.50. Key Fobs,* (blue, black, white, green or red) £1. Pack of four 'notelets' featuring lesser known Kent churches. £1. Prices include p & p. Apply to Mrs J. Saynor. * Please state colour required.

Subscriptions

KAS Members are reminded that their Subscriptions for 1994 are now due. (See separate leaflet)

Fieldwork Grants

Are you planning an excavation or fieldwork within the county of Kent during 1995 ? Grants are available from the KAS to assist with work carried out by Affiliated Societies or individual members. Applications on appropriate form (obtainable from Hon. General Secretary, Andrew Moffat by 1st October 1994.

The Hon. Editor welcomes all letters, articles and communications and would particularly like to receive more from members and others, especially requests for research information, finds, books and related topics. The Editor wishes to draw readers' attention to the fact that neither the Council of the KAS, nor the Editor is answerable for opinions which contributors may express in the course of their signed articles. Each author is alone responsible for the contents and substance of their letters, items or papers. Material for the next Newsletter should be sent by 1st, March 1994 to Hon. Editor, Nesta Caiger.

Published by the Kent Archaeological Society, The Museum, St. Faith's Street, Maidstone, Kent. ME14 1LH.

Printed by Delta Press, Crayford Industrial Estate, Swaisland Drive, Crayford DA1 4HT. Typesetting by Janset 081-301 2856.

Events, Outings, Lectures

K.A.S. LECTURES. Sat. 8th. January 1994. 2.30pm. *Kentish Newspapers* by Dr. Shirley Black at St. Mary' Parish Hall, Ashford. £1.50 members. £2 visitors. Sat. 19th. February 1994. 2.30pm. *Fashion, Fighting and Faith in Medieval England* by Philip Lawrence at Bapchild and Tonge Village hall, near Sittingbourne. £1.50 members. £2 visitors. Sat. 12th. March 1994. 2.30pm. *The Story of Leather* by Roy Thompson at Church Hall Boxley Road, Maidstone. £1.50 members. £2 visitors. Sat. 16th. April, 1994. 2.30pm. *Revising the Buildings of England, Writing the Buildings of Wales.* by John Newman at The Assembly Rooms, Tonbridge Parish church. £1.50 members. £2 visitors. Tickets and/or further information may be obtained from H.G.B. Coast, (Lectures Secretary) 127 Snodhurst Avenue, Chatham, ME5 OTN. or members may pay at the door. KAS publications and sales goods will be featured whenever possible and simple refreshments, without charge, will be served at the end of each meeting. A leaflet giving full details of all lectures, venues, parking, etc. was distributed with the last issue of the Newsletter (No. 26).

K.A.S. Medway and Gillingham Branch Lectures). Tues. 22nd. Feb. 1994. *Experiences in Museum Conservation* lecture by Michael Moad. Tues. 12th. April 1994. *Recent Excavations by the Lower Medway Archaeological Research Group* by Peter Dawson. Meetings are held at Guildhall Museum, High St. Rochester, commencing 7.30 pm. Doors open 7 pm.

FIELD TRIPS (Medway & Gillingham Branch) Sunday. 10th. April 1994 A Field trip to Cobham Hall and Park. Pauline King, Archivist of the Cobham Hall Heritage Trust will give one of her rare three hour guided tours. Cost: £5 per head. Apply to Sec. Alan Ward.

Tues. 21st June 1994. Tour of the City (Rochester) Wall. Meet 7.15 pm outside the museum for a 7.30 start

KAS COUNTRY SOCIAL EVENING AND BARBECUE. See separate leaflet.

KAS EXCURSION TO NORTH WALES. 30th. May - 4th. June 1994. There are still a few places left on this six day coach excursion to North Wales. It is hoped that visits will be made to pre-historic sites, castles, both Edwardian and of Welsh princely construction and the varied remains of industrial archaeology, particularly in Gwynedd. Anyone interested should contact Mrs J. Saynor

as soon as possible. (SAE please). Cost will be about £200 inclusive, B&B, evening meal. (this also includes the buffet lunch at Portmeiron). People already booked on this excursion are reminded that the initial deposit of £50 is now due and should be sent to Mrs Saynor.

Wed. 2nd. March 1994. Lecture *A Town of Mirth and Good Company - Maidstone in the 18th. Century* An analysis of this fascinating period in the history of Kent's county town will be given by Professor Peter Clark, Director of the Centre for Urban History at Leicester University, at Maidstone Town Hall at 7.30 pm. Admission is by ticket, which are free (up to a maximum of four per applicant) and may be obtained from Hon. Curator,

Maidstone Museum and Art Gallery, St. Faith's Street, Maidstone, Kent. ME14 1LH. Tickets will be dispatched approx. two weeks before the lecture. Professor Clark (himself a Maidstonian) has been commissioned by Maidstone Borough Council to write a new history of the Borough - due for publication in late 1994 or early 1995.

Sat. 19th. March 1994 COUNCIL FOR KENTISH ARCHAEOLOGY all-day Conference (11.00am to 4.30 pm) entitled *Thirty years of Archaeology in Kent* to be held at the Angel Leisure Centre, Tonbridge, to celebrate the 30th. anniversary of the C.K.A. There will be illustrated talks by local groups including West Kent, Reculver, Dover, Orpington, Sittingbourne, etc. and a bookstall and displays. Tickets price £5 for all day, £3.50 afternoon only, may be obtained from C.K.A. 5 Harvest Bank Road, West Wickham, BR4 9DL. (SAE please)

KENT HISTORY SEMINARS. A new series of Kent History Seminars will begin on 5th. February 1994, when Kenneth Whitehorn and Shirley Black will speak on *Arts, Crafts and Customs in Anglo-Saxon Kent*.

5th. March 1994, Jayne Semple and Shirley Black will speak on *Old Soar, Plaxtol and Manors in the Eighteenth Century*. Details from Dr S. B. Black where the Seminars are held.

LETTERS

The Place-Name, Alauna.

Mrs Thompson's doubts (see 'Letters' KAS Newsletter No. 26) about my tentative identification of Tonbridge with the place-name *Alauna* in the Ravenna Cosmography (KAS Newsletter No.25.) are understandable. I too had considered Maidstone as being a potential location, but ultimately decided that because the town lay so far north, it should have been included by the cosmographer in his string of place-names, on or close to, the coast of Kent (see map in Newsletter No. 24). It would of

course be possible to argue either that in his first sweep the cosmographer accidentally skipped over the place-name, or that his source map had erroneously placed the town too far south. As I preferred to give him the benefit of the doubt, Tonbridge seemed the best bet. The question of the location of *Alauna* will probably never be firmly resolved. Mrs Thompson's suggestion, that the Romano-Celtic river name of *Alauna* was later transferred from the Medway to the Len, offers an interesting avenue of investigation. The Len rises near Lenham and after some nine miles joins the Medway at Maidstone. The first mention of the river is as the Leno (oblivative case) in 1607 and then as the Len in 1612 while the

village's name of *Leanham* or *Leangham* occurs five times in the 9th. and 10th. centuries. Ekwall regards the river-name as a back-formation from Lenham, but has difficulty with the etymology of the latter. He finally concedes that it *may* be derived from a postulated LG *laun-* (etymology obscure) (1). In the light of Mrs Thompson's suggestion, Ekwall's proposal is a most interesting independent observation. NICHOLAS FUENTES. (1) E. Ekwall, *English River-Names*. (1928) 249.

Dear Editor, I notice in the Autumn edition of the Newsletter, that the KAS offers to seek information on historical and archaeological topics through its pages. I wonder therefore, if

you or your readers have any information at all concerning the *Sound Locators or Detectors* built around the 1920's at both Hythe (on the Roughs) and near Dungeness. These concrete dishes (there are three) and a 150 ft. wall, were built as 'Audio Mirrors' as an attempt to detect low flying aircraft before the invention of radar in the late 30's. I am a mature student writing a paper for my A level History project, I am trying to provide as much information on these objects - which are totally unique both in the UK and the rest of the world. Any information including photos, articles and newspaper references would be much appreciated. R.L.FLETCHER.

ARCHAEOLOGIA CANTIANA, (out of print Volumes required)

I am trying to purchase three old volumes of *Archaeologia Cantiana* to complete the set held in the Archives of the Sandwich Town Council. The Volumes required are LXVII 1953-4., Index 1952., LXXVIII 1963. I have placed this query with a number of bookshops, to date without success and I wondered whether any members might possibly be able to assist? I would, of course, be prepared to pay the market price for any of the volumes. C.A.WANOSTROCT. (Hon Curator, Sandwich Guildhall Museum).

EDWARD HASTED. For the past two years Dr Shirley Black has been working on a biography of Edward Hasted, the historian of Kent, and she is hoping that it will be completed sometime in 1994. The bulk of the material relating to Hasted is now in public collections, but he was a great correspondent and Dr Black would be very happy to learn of any letters or other material, to, from or about Hasted which may be owned or known about by members of the KAS so that this can be incorporated, with suitable acknowledgement, in the biography. Please write to Dr S.B. Black.