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THE HOLIDAY DIARY OF THOMAS LOTT: 12-22 JULY, 1815¹

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Kent is rich in holiday diaries which give interesting glimpses into an early period in the history of the county's seaside resorts. The diaries and journals, which have been published in *Archaeologia Cantiana* over the past sixty years, include a tour made by four Cambridge gentlemen in 1735,² another made by the Mount family in 1759,³ the holiday of Charles Powell in 1823⁴ and a three-week holiday in Ramsgate in 1829.⁵

In 1815, the young Thomas Lott,⁶ with his mother, brother and sister, spent part of a summer holiday in Canterbury, Deal and Dover, keeping a diary covering the dates 12 July to 22 July.

The diary fills a small notebook, approximately 3 × 5 in., which the writer may have made himself as the pages are hand-stitched into a mottled cover (Plate I). The writing is clear and well set out with ornamental squiggles surrounding the headings and underlining in red (faded); the spelling is generally accurate, but the punctuation poor with frequent unnecessary use of capital letters and a lack of fullstops (Plate II). An attempt had been made, in pencil, to remedy such faults on the 16 and 17 July, perhaps by the writer, but more probably by an older person intending to be helpful. The diary is labelled 'Volume II', another diary having been written about the first part of the holiday spent in Margate.⁷ The chapter headings for

¹ Thomas Lott's Diary DA1013 Special Collections, U.K.C.

² V.J.B. Torr, 'A Tour through Kent in 1735', *Arch. Cant.*, xliii (1931), 267-80.

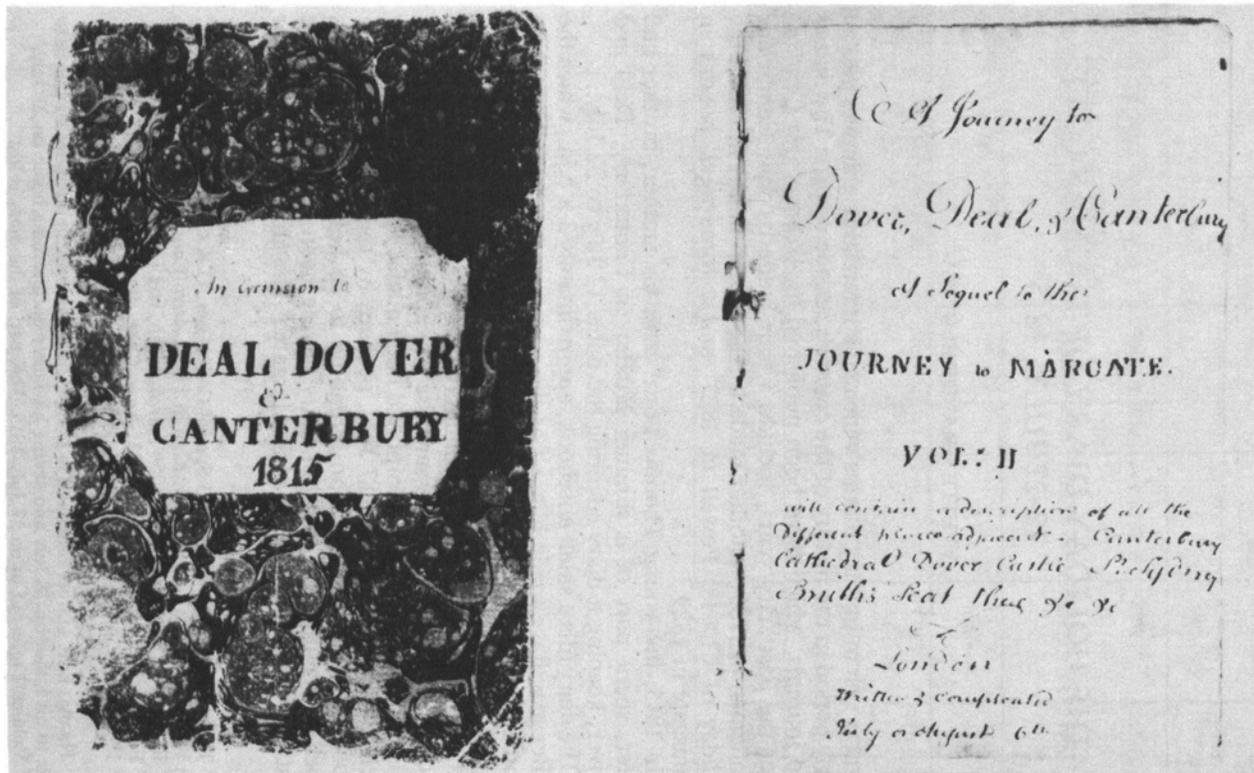
³ F. Hull, 'A Tour into Kent, 1759', *Arch. Cant.*, lxix (1955), 171-8.

⁴ F. Hull, 'A Kentish Holiday, 1823', *Arch. Cant.*, lxxxi (1966), 109-17.

⁵ J. Whyman, 'A Three-Week Holiday in Ramsgate during July and August 1829', *Arch. Cant.*, xcvi (1980), 185-225.

⁶ Thomas Lott's father remained in London. The young man mentions staying in to write to his father on 18 July and seeing his father on returning home on 22 July.

⁷ Volume I referred to on 17 July 1815. This part of the diary is lost.



Thomas Lott's diary: Cover and frontispiece (U.K.C. Special Collections DA1013).

the diary are more promising than the script; very seldom does Lott give more than sketchy descriptions of the places he passed through. There are some errors, possibly caused through writing up the diary a few days later or on his return to London⁸ and some of the information he gives could have been gleaned from contemporary guide books (see footnotes 19 and 26). It is possible that guide books formed part of his luggage.

The indications are that the writer is young, perhaps between 14 and 17 years of age, of good education⁹ with an interest in churches and particularly their bells and organs. He visits or speaks about churches in nine towns and villages, describes bells or bell-ringing on six occasions and organs twice. One may imagine that the diary was written for father and grandmother to read. The account throws some light on the social climate of the time, supplying evidence of the manner in which holidays were spent, the accommodation and meals, the means of travel and the time taken to cover distances by land and water.

The days were full, often starting with a walk or swim before breakfast. Later in the day there were more walks taken on the beach, to the harbour or pier, to gardens, across fields or through town streets. As well as bathing and walking, the range of activities included those which one might expect on an English holiday, both then and now – visiting historical places or buildings of interest, listening to the band on the sea front, attending church and spending an evening at the theatre. Since the Lotts had many friends in the places they visited – Mrs Batger and Mrs Baker in Canterbury, Mrs Kitchingman and the Marshes in Sturry, the Howards, Ralphs and Williams in Deal – time was spent in visits to their homes and in joining them for outings and meals.

There is insight also into the delays and difficulties experienced in travelling by coach and sailing ship. A lame horse caused a wasted day waiting for a chaise in Canterbury; overcrowding of the caravan from Dover to Deal gave scant opportunity for viewing the countryside and discomfort was suffered by outside passengers in heavy rain. Equally significant was the uncertainty of travel by sailing packet; a voyage from Margate to London could have taken anything from eleven to seventy-two hours depending on tide and wind.¹⁰ The Lotts

⁸ For instance 'Word' (or Worth) was probably passed on the way from Deal to Sandwich, rather than on the journey from Canterbury to Dover. At the beginning of the diary it is indicated that the writing was completed on 6 August. See footnote 40.

⁹ On the return journey to London, 21 July, Thomas mentions talking to two passengers in French.

¹⁰ A contemporary writer describes a voyage taking eleven hours, G. Keate, *Sketches from Nature, Taken, and Coloured, in a Journey to Margate* (5th Ed., 1802), 245–6, but see also footnote 81.

spent 27 hours on their voyage and were undoubtedly resigned to passing a night or two on board. Notably it was the year when steam packets were beginning to appear on the scene and henceforward completely revise the voyager's expectations.

It was a period, too, when activity at the East Kent ports was at its zenith. Deal particularly never fully recovered its peak of prosperity once war and threats of invasion ceased and there was no longer a great need to support troops and provision ships anchored off the Downs.¹¹ Lott's mention of Mr Howard's warehouses is a reminder of the need for storage space both for these supplies and for the goods impounded for customs. Mr Williams' mill at Deal was one of several in the town and immediate countryside coping with the heavy demand for flour. The population figures for Deal rose from 5,420 in 1801 to 7,351 in 1811 and then declined to 6,811 in 1821. Two decades later Deal's population stood at 6,688 with almost a tenth of its houses unoccupied.¹²

The transcript which follows uses Thomas Lott's phraseology, spelling and punctuation except that occasionally a full stop has been added to clarify a sentence. Where 'and' has been abbreviated this has been replaced by the word in full. Chapter headings and the repetitive use of dates at the beginning of each page in the diary have been omitted to allow for ease in reading.

An Excursion to DEAL, DOVER and CANTERBURY 1815

Thomas Lott 37 Bow lane

A Journey to Dover, Deal and Canterbury – A Sequel to the

JOURNEY TO MARGATE: Vol: II

will contain a description of all the different places adjacent – Canterbury Cathedral – Dover Castle – Sr Sydney Smith's Seat there, etc, etc. London Written and Completed July or August 6th Wednesday July 11th 1815. We set off¹³ at 8 O'clock in the Canterbury Coach inside, there were no other persons in the coach. We passed through Birchington. The new road¹⁴ running through here is very pleasant a number of Farms and thatched cottages.

¹¹ J. Whyman, 'Rise and Decline: Dover and Deal in the Nineteenth Century', *Arch. Cant.*, lxxxiv (1970), 123 and 126.

¹² VCH (Kent), iii (1932), 358.

¹³ From Margate, where the family had spent the first part of their holiday.

¹⁴ In 1800, a notice in *The Kentish Gazette* asked 'for leave to bring in a Bill for repairing, widening and improving the Road from the City of Canterbury to the Vill of Sarr in the Isle of Thanet, and the Roads thence to the respective Towns of Margate and Ramsgate . . . erecting a Turnpike on the Road . . . demanding, taking and receiving of Tolls,' *The Kentish Gazette*, 14 October, 1800, lb. In 1806, a guidebook

We passed the top of St Nicholas to here and very little farther we had the sea on one side of us. When we passed St Nicholas we lost sight of it and then we had the most beautiful prospects of woods etc. We passed through Sarr a very beautiful village and also Upstreet and Fordwich which Church Steeple is very much like Birchington. We then came through Sturry. Its Church Steeple¹⁵ is a low one [Plates II and III].

From here we saw Canterbury Cathedral. Its steeple is like St Saviours or St Andrews or Westminster – four spires. We then came into the town the streets of which are rather narrow but there are some very Handsome shops. We stopped and got out at the 'George and Dragon'¹⁶ and we had some refreshment. We heard that the Archbishop of Canterbury was confirming at the Cathedral.¹⁷ We accordingly went there. There is a Gateway that you go under and then the Cathedral suddenly presents itself to your view. It is a very handsome one and built somewhat similar to Westminster Abbey. We entered the Church at the West Door opposite which the organ is tho' the chief steeple is on the middle of the Church roof. It has a most beautiful and sweet toned organ.¹⁸ The Inside of the Choir resembles Westminster also. The rope which pulls 'Bell Harry'¹⁹ (a Bell at the top of the Church which they toll for prayers but never ring (save on the death of any of the royal Family) is just close to the Organ. We saw the Service and Confirmation. The Archbishop was there. We then went home and dined for the first time at an Ordinary²⁰ at the Inn. After dinner we went to the Sexton and went all over the Cathedral. Saw the Black princes tomb – Sword Helmet etc. One of the King Henry's. We saw a number of Bishops tombs. The place where Becket's tomb was with the Stone worn out by the Pilgrims Knees. One Bishop's where the Tomb represented him at the top in full health at the

commented on how 'an act has been obtained for making a turnpike road from Canterbury to Ramsgate, which is now completed, to the great convenience of travellers to the island,' R.E. Hunter, *A Short Description of the Isle of Thanet*, Ramsgate, 1806, 71.

¹⁵ Thomas uses the term 'steeple' in the now obsolete meaning of 'a tall tower' irrespective of whether the church had a spire or not. Sturry's church spire fell or was taken down 1812-3 and the tower was rebuilt with battlements as shown in Thomas's thumbnail sketch, (Plate II).

¹⁶ The George and Dragon stood in the High Street, Canterbury, where the City Museum now stands. It was a coaching inn with daily services to Margate in the 1840s; S. Bagshaw, *History, Gazetteer and Directory of the County of Kent*, II, Sheffield, 1848, 133.

¹⁷ Archbishop Sutton, 1805-1828. 'WEDNESDAY, July 11th, Confirmation at the Cathedral, and Visitation for the Deaneries of Bridge and Elham,' *The Kentish Gazette*, 9 June, 1815, lb. Further accounts of the Archiepiscopal Visitations appeared in *The Kentish Gazette*, 11 July, 1815, 4d, and 14 July, 1815, 4d.

¹⁸ 'The next year (1784) the present elegant structure was erected over the fine gothic screen at the entrance [of the choir], in a style perfectly corresponding; which in harmonic power and sweetness, as well as external appearance, has scarcely its equal in any of our cathedrals,' W. Gostling, *A Walk in and about the City of Canterbury*, 5th ed., Canterbury, 1804, 263.

¹⁹ 'Bell-Harry steeple, whose height is 235 feet . . . On its top hangs a small bell called Bell-Harry, which is tolled every day for prayers, but never rung, except on the death of the king, queen, or archbishop,' T. Fisher, *The Kentish Traveller's Companion*, 4th ed., 1794, 236.

²⁰ 'Ordinary' – a public meal regularly provided at a fixed price in an eating house or tavern.



Sturry, 1822 (Margate Public Library STU2).

bottom dead.²¹ We then went into a small place close to the organ in which was the altar where Becket was murdered but now it is removed. There is the Stone from which was taken a Small part with the blood of Becket on it and sent as a relic to some Archbishop. We went into the Dark Cloisters under the Cathedral [and] saw the French Church.²² We went into the cloisters above. Everything here is very nice and clean and in capital repair. We went into the Chapter House etc into 2 or 3 Chapels but did not go up to the top of the Cathedral. We then went to the Kent and Canterbury Hospital²³ and drank tea with Mrs Batger.²⁴ The Hospital is a fine large building. Behind there is a Mill to work water to the top of their House. After tea Mrs Batger took a walk with us to Mrs Baker's.²⁵ She is in a very miserable state [and] will take no comfort. All with her is money. She will hardly give herself any comfort or food but they are obliged to buy it unknown to her and give it her as a present. 'Ah Mrs Lott we're all in a bad way. What will become of us all'. We had not been there long when in came William Marsh who had come down by the Margate packet and not finding us there had come to Canterbury. We all took a Walk to a mount thrown up by the Danes in one night called the Dungill from the word Dean John.²⁶ There are walks all the way

²¹ The tomb of Archbishop Henry Chichele, 'the recumbent figure of the archbishop[is] remarkably fine. The slab on which he reposes is arched beneath, and in the open part is a singular representation of a human being in a winding sheet, appearing as though completely worn by disease previously to the spirit's departure, every bone looking as if ready to protrude through its slight but awful veil,' T. Cromwell, *Excursions in the County of Kent*, 1822, 61.

²² 'The west end of the crypt was for many years appropriated to the religious services of the Walloons, and French refugees, who fled hither, during the reign of Edward VI., from the persecutions of the Inquisitions in the Spanish Netherlands; this part is still generally called the French Church,' *ibid.*, 65.

²³ The first Kent and Canterbury Hospital - 'situated at Longport, an eastern suburb of the city, the site occupying a portion of the ancient cemetery of St Augustines, which was purchased of Sir Edward Hales, Bart. It presents a noble range of building, of brick, stuccoed, the first stone of which was laid in 1791; and in April, 1793, was opened for the reception of patients, and for administering medicine and advice to out-patients,' Bagshaw, *op.cit.*, 95-6 and F. Marcus Hall, R.S. Stevens and J. Whyman, *The Kent and Canterbury Hospital 1790-1987*, Canterbury, 1987, 6-15.

²⁴ Mrs Batger was matron from 1807 to 1816. Her death was reported 'on Monday [3 June 1816] at Kent and Canterbury Hospital, most sincerely lamented by her relatives and friends, Mrs Ann Batger, Matron of the Institution,' *The Kentish Gazette*, 7 June, 1816, 4c. The next issue advertised the post, 'The Office of MATRON having become vacant by the death of Mrs ANN BATGER, a Special Board of Governors will be held at the Hospital on MONDAY the 17th instant, at twelve o'clock precisely, when the vacancy will be filled up by Ballot. Any Single Woman, free from the care of a family, and qualified to undertake the said Office, may apply for particulars to Mr CULLEN, Secretary at the Hospital. The Salary 27 guineas, with board and washing,' *ibid.*, 11 June, 1816, 4c.

²⁵ Mrs Baker, in spite of apparent poor state of health, does not appear to have been a patient in the hospital at this time. Later in the year inpatient Mary Baker was admitted to hospital on 3 November with 'Pain of stomach and great weakness' and discharged as cured on 15 December, 1815, *Kent and Canterbury Hospital Inpatients Record 1814-1817*, entry No. 5505, 55.

²⁶ 'It is commonly called Dungil, or Dane John hill, some suppose from being thrown up by John, a Dane, others from the French word *donjon* or *dungeon*, a high tower in old fortifications,' Gostling, *op.cit.*, 7.



Dane John, Canterbury, c. 1828 (W.H. Ireland, *History of the County of Kent*, I, 1828)

up to the top and at the top there is a small Monument. [Place IV] This was done by some Nobleman.²⁷ We then went home to bed and Slept well.

Thursday 13th July 1815. We took a walk to the Deanery before breakfast and saw Mary Marsh the Sister of Wm who is a nice lively young girl. We saw the Archbishop and Bishop of Exeter get into their Carriage and set off for Dover.²⁸ We went after breakfast to Sturry the Village in which Father was born and had dinner with Mrs Kitchingman²⁹ Wm Marsh's Mother. We went into the House of our Grandfather opposite; Ground my knife there. Visited some of the Neighbours there who remembered Father.³⁰ Went into Sturry Church [Plate III] saw Grandfathers Tomb

²⁷ 'Till 1790 it remained an uneven and rugged piece of pasture; when James Simmons, esq. one of the aldermen of the city, began his great improvements here, solely for the recreation and amusement of the public,' *ibid.*, 8.

²⁸ 'Yesterday morning [Thursday 13 July 1815] his Grace departed from Canterbury for Sandwich, on his route to Dover, Hythe, Romney and Cranbrook,' *The Kentish Gazette*, 14 July, 1815, 4d.

²⁹ Mary Marsh, a widow, aged 50 years, married William Kitchingman (widower) on 30 January, 1806. Mary Kitchingham died 8 March, 1838, aged 82 years, buried 4 April, 1838, gravestone in Sturry churchyard and *Sturry Parish Records*.

³⁰ Thomas's grandparents were Mary and John Lott. Three of their children are recorded – Robert, baptised 6 December, 1761, Stephen, baptised 27 June, 1762 and Elizabeth, baptised 6 December, 1765, *ibid*. If there were no other children Stephen was Thomas's father.

and Mr Marsh's.³¹ Set the Bells ringing.³² We saw also Uncle Robert Lott³³ and his daughter Betsey. We took a walk after dinner to Mr Allan's Farm,³⁴ whom Wm M knew and had tea there at Westbier. Mr Allan treated us very kindly. We went all over the Farm and the Large garden at the End of which there is an arbour of pictures. We had tea of ham, brown and white bread, tongue, etc. William Marsh then took William³⁵ and I to Fordwich a very small village to the left of Westbier and we went to see James' (a little Boy whom Wm. had got a Ship for) Brother to give us a young Bird but he was not at Home. There is a small river³⁶ running through the Village. We saw a young Hawk at his House. We then walked back to Sturry and from there in a chaise to Canterbury. We did not feel very tired on our going back.

Friday 14th July 1815. We staid at Home before breakfast and after Wm. tried to get a return chaise for us. There are a great many Churches in Canterbury and the Market is a nice little place.³⁷ We also went to see [at] the School Wm Marsh's Old Schoolmaster who was very glad to see him. We went also to bid Aunt Baker Adieu. Mary Marsh made us presents before we went away. We at last after much difficulty got a return chaise when one of the horses was taken ill. We went in the meantime to the Shakespeare³⁸ and waited there some time. The Landlady lived at Mrs Seagods sometime. We at last got the chaise and set off at 3 O'clock for Dover. A sailor was with us.

The Country from Canterbury to Dover is very pleasant. We passed through the villages of Breach³⁹ and Word⁴⁰ and saw their churches. The Halfway House⁴¹ is a very nice new House. We came up the Hills which about here are very Steep. We got into Dover about 6 O'clock and Lodged at the Wellington⁴² a very nice House and very

³¹ 'John Lott June 27 1798, 72 years,' on gravestone in Sturry churchyard. William Marsh's gravestone there is weatherworn and the inscription obliterated.

³² Sturry church has five bells, three cast in 1622, R. Button, 'Sturry Bells,' in (Ed.) K.N. McIntosh, *Sturry the Changing Scene*, Ramsgate, 1972, 64-5.

³³ See footnote 30.

³⁴ This may be Walnut Tree Farm. John Allen was buried 17 May, 1820, aged 53, in Westbere churchyard.

³⁵ Thomas's brother, William Lott, sometimes referred to as W.L. in the diary.

³⁶ The River Stour.

³⁷ The Butter Market 'comprehending the sale of poultry, fruits, garden stuff, etc. is nearly opposite to the great gate of the Cathedral, on the site of the ancient Bull-Stake,' Cromwell, *op.cit.*, 86.

³⁸ Shakespeare Inn, 5 Butchery Lane, Canterbury.

³⁹ 'Breach' appears to have been a common place name along country roads - meaning a cutting. The hamlet of Breach and Breach Downs occur near Barham not far from the line of the old Canterbury-Dover road but there is no church there. 'Breach' may be a misspelling for Bridge (the old spelling was 'Bredge').

⁴⁰ 'Word' - apart from Wootton there is no likely place - described by Bonython as being 'nearly opposite the 64th mile stone, on the left a short distance from the road,' W. Bonython, *Dover Guide*, Dover, 1823, 10. 'Word', however, was the old name for Worth, on the Deal-Sandwich road and a mistake may have arisen through writing up the account at a later date.

⁴¹ A coaching inn on the Canterbury-Dover road now named the Old Coach House. With a stop here the journey of 16 miles took the Lotts 3 hours.

⁴² There were two Wellingtons in Dover, one in Biggin Street and the other in Snargate Street. The latter is the more likely since the entrance to the Grand Shaft Barracks, Western Heights, built in 1804 was in this street. The inn was near the beach and harbour and was a coaching inn for vehicles from Deal and Canterbury.

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civil Inhabitants. We had tea and then took a nice walk on the Beach after Tea and heard the Band play. We then went home and having had a very nice lamb chop for Supper we went to Bed in two very nice rooms with comfortable Beds. The Cliff on the top of which the Castle is built is a very grand and Majestic one. It was a [sic] very foggy this evening. Dover lies in a hollow. There is a very great Height on the Left of it. Opposite to us were the Barracks⁴³ on which was a Bell to call the men to work.

Saturday 15th July 1815. I took a walk before breakfast over a Small river⁴⁴ at the back of the House by the Harbour and saw the Ships building and all the different works going forward. After breakfast Mother went to Mr Peter Watts, Aunt Riley's Uncle. We then proceeded to view – Dover Castle. We went up a every step hill with steps. Old Brown was the Guide: The Men confined in the Castle have put a box for charity with two poles on which are fixed Bells which they continually keep pulling on seeing anybody come by.⁴⁵ He shewed us the Barracks their Bake Houses, the Cannons and also Queen Anne's pocket pistol⁴⁶ a Large Brass Cannon 24 feet long with Inscriptions on it in High Dutch. The Barracks for the Soldiers are cut out in the Cliff with Holes at the top for Air.⁴⁷ We then went into one of the rooms and Mr Brown having left us a woman shewed us it. We saw the Horn which called the Men to work on the building of the Castle, a Roman Sword, old Snuffers, etc, etc, etc.⁴⁸ In one of the rooms the Guns are all piled up in Great order.

⁴³ Grand Shaft Barracks, Western Heights.

⁴⁴ River Dour.

⁴⁵ The debtors' prison in Fulbert de Dovre's tower which originally consisted of two rooms only for the confinement of prisoners of both sexes and no exercising yard. By 1815 conditions had improved; the Board of Ordnance had granted £600 for the addition of three rooms and a yard and in 1810 Mr D.F. Watts and James Neild donated money to provide stone paving for the path and yard and contributed towards the comfort of the prisoners in other ways, E. Hasted, *The History and Topographical Survey of the County of Kent*, ix (1800), 490–1 and *A Short Historical Sketch of the Town of Dover and its Neighbourhood*, Dover, 1815, 112.

⁴⁶ This is no doubt Queen Elizabeth's pocket pistol described in many contemporary sources. 'On the summit . . . lies a beautiful piece of brass ordnance, called Queen Elizabeth's Pocket Pistol, twenty-four feet long, cast by James Tolkys, of Utrecht, anno 1544, and adorned with emblematical figures and the arms of England . . . [which] was made a present to the queen from the States of Holland,' Hasted, *op.cit.*, 490.

⁴⁷ Due to the threats of invasion during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars it was thought advisable to strengthen the castle. 'The new works, in consequence formed, consist of different batteries, furnished with a very formidable train of artillery; casemates dug in the solid rock; magazines; covered ways; and various subterranean communications and appartments for soldiery; the latter are sufficiently capacious for the accommodation of about 2000 men . . . light and air are conveyed into them by well-like apertures cut in the chalk, and by other openings carried through to the face of the cliffs,' Cromwell, *op.cit.*, 157–8. and P. Bloomfield, *Kentish Sources X: Kent and the Napoleonic Wars*, Gloucester, 1987, 37.

⁴⁸ 'The porter generally invites travellers to see the ancient keys of the castle . . . They have likewise an old horn, which tradition to enhance its worth, says was used by the Romans, at the building of the castle to give notice to the workmen, by the sounding of it, when to begin or to leave their work.' The writer suggests, however, that it was more likely to have been used by the Feudal lords' sentinels to give the alarm on the approach of strangers, Bonython, *op.cit.*, 50.

The Wind up here is very Strong and boisterous. We then went home and after dinner took a walk to Smith's Folly⁴⁹ [Plate V] one of Six Sydney Smith's Seats the tops of which are built in the Shape of Boats. It has a Small Tower we went into it and the woman shewed us all over it. One room in the round Tower is built exactly like a tent with Cloth round about it. In the Hall are Models of Battle Axes Armour etc to have been sent to France, real Helmets, Shields, etc. We then took a walk on the Beach. The Bathing Machines here are pushed in the water instead of being drawn by horses and the Backs do not let down as the others.⁵⁰ There are only two of them. I then took a walk on the pier which branches out in two forms and forms a very safe Harbour: part of it is built with Stone the other part with wood. There are two Churches only in Dover one a rather Handsome one and the other not so much.⁵¹ Both the Churchyards are inclosed so that you cannot walk through them. We then having had some tea and having ordered Mr Rowland's conveyance we sett off in it at 6 O'clock for Deal.⁵²

Sunday 16th July 1815. In Mr Rowlands Caravan we were not very comfortable as there were too many in it and we could not see much of the country Except that it was very open. We got into Deal by 8 O Clock and Mrs Rowland got us nice lodgings in Farrier Street⁵³ at a very respectable House - Mrs Newby's - a room as large as the dining room and two Bed rooms Being quite comfortable. Mother took a walk to Mr Ralfe's the Butcher and they not knowing her asked for a quarter Lamb to be sent to 37 Bow Lane and then they knew her. I took a walk before breakfast to look about on the Sea. The Downs are opposite Deal. The Beach here spreads a great way into the Sea and is very comfortable for Bathing.

Mr Howard called after breakfast with his son Wm. a nice young lad about 12 years old. We soon got acquainted and quite friendly together. We took a walk to Mr Howard's where we saw Mrs Howard a very nice lively woman, and staid there some time. Wm. H and I then took a walk to look at the chapel.⁵⁴ It resembles Pentonville very much in building, has one bell and will soon have an organ.⁵⁵ We then went back and I went to Chapel with Mrs and Wm. Howard, Mother with the Ralfes. We had no

⁴⁹ 'Smith's Folly' or 'The Caves' was the marine residence of Sir Sydney Smith built on the beach below Dover Castle; 'it is romantically built and situated. The roofs of the buildings have a singular appearance, being constructed in the form of boats reversed,' J. Horn, *Description of Dover*, Dover, 1792, 78.

⁵⁰ Unlike the Margate bathing machines but similar to those at Deal, see footnote 58 and Plate VI.

⁵¹ The two churches were St. Mary's and St. James's; previously the town which was divided into seven parishes had an equal number of churches.

⁵² It took two hours to get to Deal a distance of nine miles, possibly due to frequent stops as the caravan was crowded. Hasted describes the new town or Lower Deal as standing close to the shore with 'a bold open beach . . . [and] three principal streets, parallel with the sea,' Hasted, *op.cit.*, 9.

⁵³ A narrow street running between High Street (then Lower Street) and the sea. There was an inn - the Horse and Farrier - at no. 9, Bagshaw, *op.cit.*, 367.

⁵⁴ St. George's Chapel of Ease. 'The town of Deal became so populous in Queen Anne's reign, that the inhabitants petitioned to have a chapel of ease . . . for which an act was obtained in the 9th year of that reign; it was dedicated to St George the Martyr . . . in 1716,' Hasted, *op.cit.*, 13-4.

⁵⁵ The first organ subscription had been raised in 1815 when the Corporation voted 21 guineas towards providing an instrument. This was installed 14 April, 1816; B. Collins, *A Short History of the Civic Church of St. George-the-Martyr, Deal, Kent*, Deal, 1966, 18.

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sermon at Chapel because of a funeral afterwards, a Mr [name omitted] a Doctor was buried. We then went back to Mr Ralfe's to dinner. Saw there Mr Harrison Ralfe⁵⁶ a nice young man and Miss Anna who seems rather ingengee [sic]. We had dinner of Lamb Beef and nice currant pudding with beautiful cream.

Mother went to Chapel after dinner again and I went to take a walk. The Market place here is under the Town Hall.⁵⁷ The Machines for Bathing here resemble Dover only they have got railings all round the Bath to keep you from being drowned.⁵⁸ [Plate VI] I think the Town of Deal is nearly as Large as Dover.⁵⁹ I then returned and had Tea at Mrs Ralfe's. Wm. L went with Joseph Howard (another son) to try and get a bird's nest. Mr Williams who keeps the Mill⁶⁰ came to tea with Mr John Ralfe, etc.

We all after tea took a walk by the Hospital to the Barracks⁶¹ and heard the Band play. Mary and Eliza Howard are quite old friends as well as W.L. and Joseph Howard.⁶² We then returned to Mrs Ralfe's and had some Syllabub⁶³ which they are very Famous for down here with Ham Tongue, etc. We then went home and to bed. Monday July 17th. Before Breakfast we took a walk to Mr William's Mill over the fields. It is a very nice large one Built like the Margate mills⁶⁴ (see the plate of them Vol: I) The Sweeps not coming near the Ground. We saw Mrs Williams Mrs Ralfe's daughter⁶⁵ Mrs Howard's nephew. Mr Marsh came after breakfast from Sturry. We

⁵⁶ Harrison Ralph by the 1840s was living at 163 Lower Street, Deal. He was councillor for the North Ward of Deal, representative for the Norwich Fire and Life Office and a coal and corn merchant, Bagshaw, *op.cit.*, 365-6.

⁵⁷ The town hall was then a comparatively new building situated in Lower Street, built in 1803. An earlier building stood between Market Street and King Street; B. Collins, *Discovering Deal* Deal, 1969, 89.

⁵⁸ A diarist wrote in 1754 'at DEAL in Kent is the Original NEW-INVENTED MACHINE for Bathing in the Sea. The Machine moves on 4 Wheels, on which is erected a commodious Dressing-Room, furnished in a genteel Manner. This Machine is so contriv'd, that the Persons who bathe descend from out of the above Room into a Bath, which forms itself in the natural Sea 7 feet in Length and 5 feet in Breadth; all inclosed and railed, which rends it both secure and private,' (Ed.) J.J. Cartwright, *The Travels through England of Dr Richard Pococke, during 1754, 1751, and Later Years*, Camden Society, ii (1889), 91.

⁵⁹ In 1811, Dover's population was 9,074, 1,852 houses, and Deal - 7,351 inhabitants, 1,340 houses, Cromwell, *op.cit.*, 142.

⁶⁰ William Williams is listed in directories, as baker, *Holden's Directory* (1811) and miller, corn and flour dealer in *Pigot's Directory* (1823-4).

⁶¹ The barracks, built in 1795 to hold 'a troop of cavalry and 1,000 infantry' and the Royal Naval Hospital covering about five acres, were both situated at the south end of the town in the parish of Walmer; Bagshaw, *op.cit.*, 258.

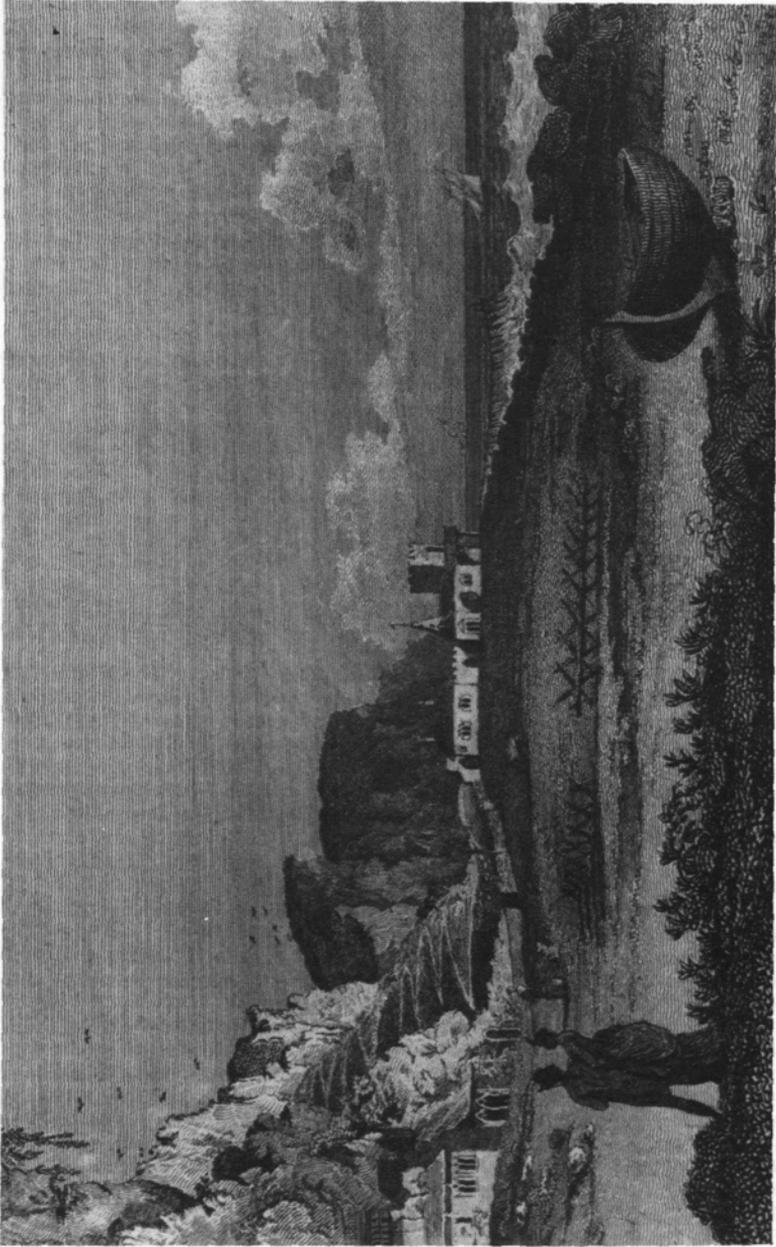
⁶² Mary was Thomas Lott's sister and W.L. his brother. Later in life Joseph Howard was a furniture broker in Middle Street; Pigot, *op.cit.*, 387.

⁶³ A Kentish delicacy made with egg whites, sugar, white wine, lemon and cream.

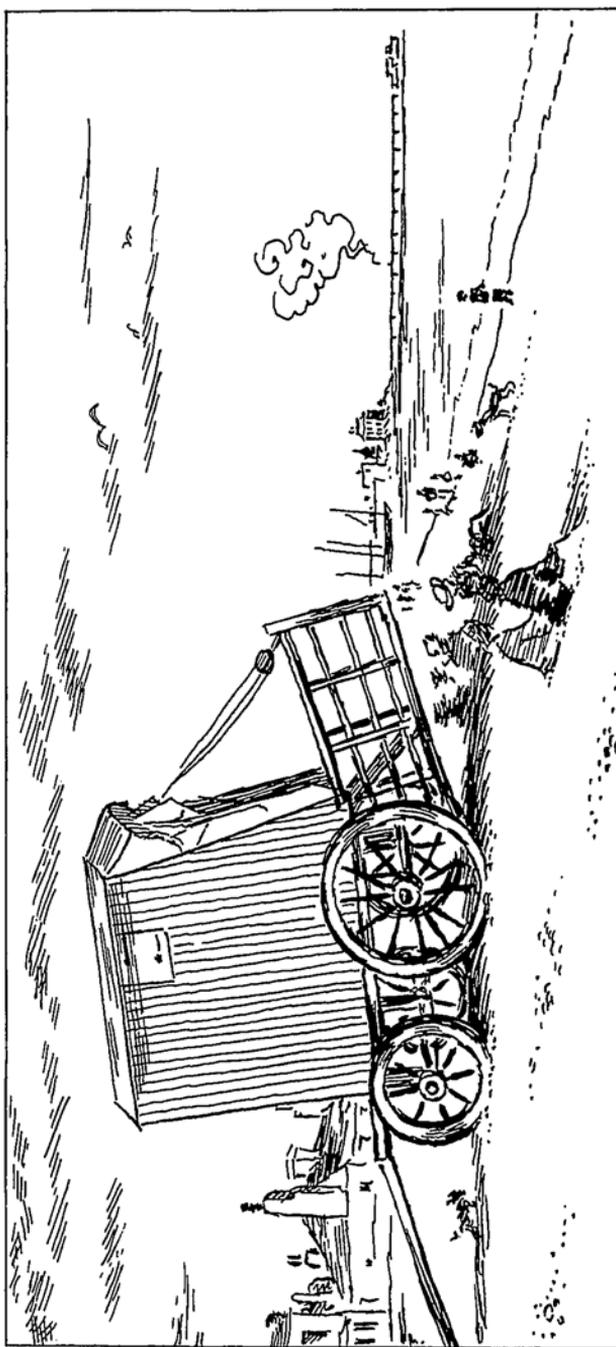
⁶⁴ North End mill or Great Mill, ½ mile SW of Sandown Castle. The mill stood in Golf Road and is said to have been erected in 1767. It was large with two floors under the stage. 'The large Mill House was built so close to the mill that the sweeps nearly touched the chimney pots,' W.C. Finch, *Watermills and Windmills*, Sheerness, new impression 1976, 193. The description of this mill shows a similarity with the Margate Mills, *ibid.*, 213.

⁶⁵ Anna, the 'ingénue,' mentioned on 16 July. 1815.

PLATE V



Smith's Folly, Dover, 1801 (Margate Public Library DOV113).



Bathing machine, Deal (Pen and ink sketch by John Grandfield).

spent the whole day at Mrs Howards. Mr Howard has got 4 or 5 different warehouses⁶⁶ So that we had good fun in them and found plenty of old clocks bells etc, to amuse us. Wm Marsh went with William Howard, W.L. and I and we all had a very nice bathing in the open Sea. Much better than in the machines though it was a rough Sea. Wm Marsh and I then had a pipe and we had tea and afterwards some very good fun at Dancing, Singing etc. All the Family were there. After all was done Syllabub drank [sic] etc etc we all sang God Save the King and between every verse by the way or relaxation from the fatigue had a jig round the table. The Company then dispersing we all went to bed.

Tuesday July 18th 1815. Bathed in the Sea before breakfast. Staid at home writing a Letter to Father afterwards and then went to Dinner at Mr John Ralfe the Butcher's.⁶⁷ Mrs J. Ralfe is a very nice, good tempered young woman. After Dinner Wm Marsh and I took a pipe and walked about and then Had tea there. Their house is exactly opposite the Market and a very nice one it is. After Tea we all assemble[d] xcept M.L. and E. Howard⁶⁸ and went to the play. Deal Theatre⁶⁹ is a very small House built in a Square Manner. Jane Shore⁷⁰ was acted very well. Mr Montgomery and Miss Fitzhenry were the two best actors. Jane Shore was rather overdone. The Bill said 'The Lawyer' was to be acted but 'Gloucester'⁷¹ came forward to say they could get no book and would substitute 'the Purse' or 'Benevolent Tar'⁷² which was acted very well. A pantomime came next but I being Close; saw all the tricks. They had about 6 Scenes to it all. We then went home and very soberly to Bed.

I forgot to mention that before we went to the play we went to Deal Castle⁷³ a very nice Large one with excellent rooms and furniture. I brought a wafer from there and also ground my knife on a Stone there. Pulled the alarm Bell. We went on the Battlements and climbed up the Ladders to the towers etc [Plate VII]. A Woman shewed it us all.

⁶⁶ There were many warehouses and stores in Deal at the time, to provision the military and ships anchored off the Downs. Also there were the bonded warehouses of the Custom House in Lower Street; 'there is a king's naval officer, with store-houses and quantity of stores, for the supply of the navy; and here are agents for the East-India company and Dutch admiralty, constantly resident,' Hasted, *op.cit.*, 11.

⁶⁷ John Ralph is not listed as a butcher in any of the directories consulted. In the 1840s a John Ralph was living at no. 4 Farrier Street; Bagshaw, *op.cit.*, 363.

⁶⁸ Mary Lott and Eliza Howard.

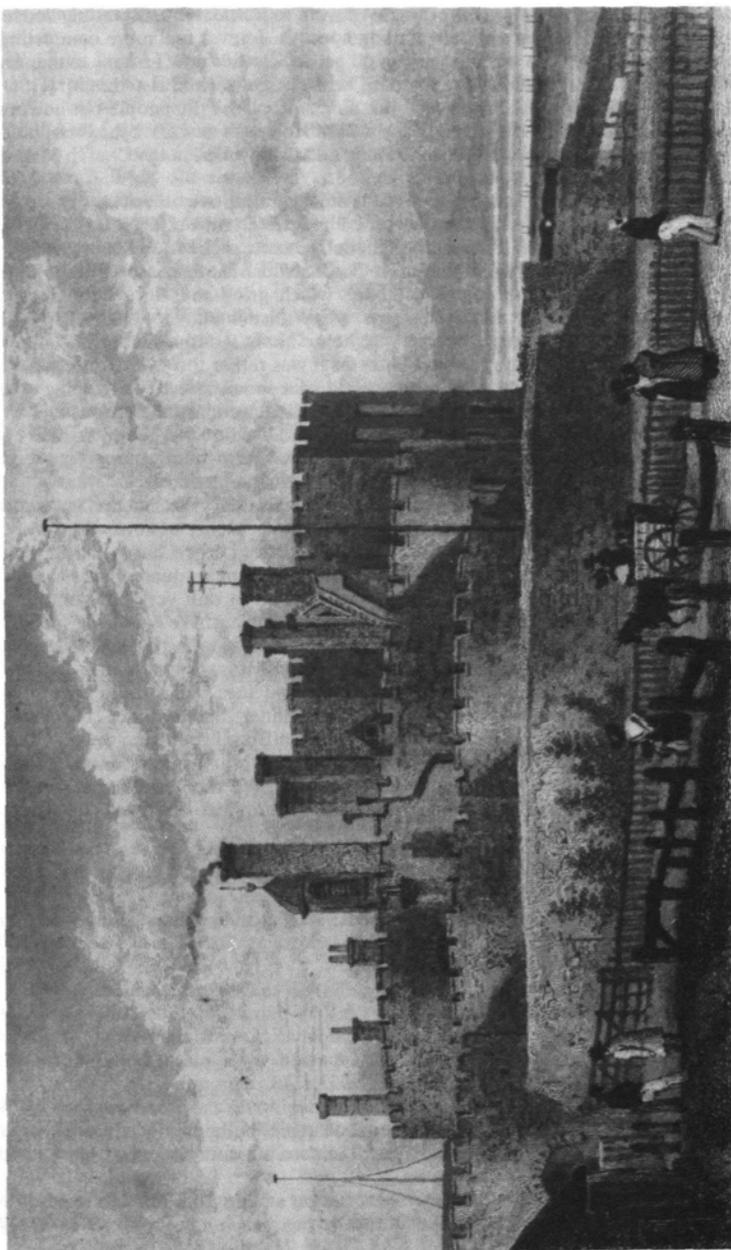
⁶⁹ The Deal theatre established in 1798 had received a face lift in 1806 when it was advertised as the New Theatre – the interior had been redecorated and 'neither pains or [sic] expence have been spared to render the theatre commodious, comfortable and elegant,' *The Kentish Gazette*, 15 April, 1806, 1a.

⁷⁰ A tragedy by Nicholas Rowe written in 1714 with a heroine as the central character, 'wrought as to throw main stress upon pathetic situations and scenes.' This drama was reputed to be among the best serious plays of the time; Allardyce Nicholl, *British Drama*, 5th ed., revised 1962, 172.

⁷¹ Duke of Gloucester – a character in the play.

⁷² James C. Cross's first melodrama written in 1794; with a jack-tar as the hero it was no doubt popular with Deal residents and visitors; M.W. Disher, *Blood and Thunder*, 1949, 56.

⁷³ Deal Castle was inhabited at this time. In 1802, it became the residence of Lord Carrington when he was appointed Captain of the Castle by William Pitt and reappointed by the Duke of Wellington in 1829; E.W. Clark, *Reminiscences of Old Deal*, Deal, undated, 90.



Deal Castle, 1822 (W.H. Ireland, *History of the County of Kent*, 1, 1828).

YVETTE GRANDFIELD

Wednesday July 19th. A very wet morning. We went to Bathe notwithstanding and felt rather funny with a few drops of rain coming upon us. I never feel more comfortable than when I have just come out of the Sea and get my clothes on. (I forgot to mention that one of the Band sang Oh Nancy at Deal Theatre very well and also that Mr Trott⁷⁴ the Bather thought he could sing so well that he could please the people but however he was hissed pretty well). We dined today at Mrs Howard's and afterwards not being able to go out much amused ourselves in raising and fixing a Bell in the Church Manner in Mr Howard's Warehouse. Wm Marsh held on.

We then went to tea at Mrs Williams's. Went again all over the Mill. There are plenty of Grasshoppers here as long as your finger. We had tea. The family of the Ladies all were here. We had Dancing, Syllabub, etc etc etc. Mr Williams has got a very nice little model of his Mill in the Front Garden which blows round with the wind. In his large Mill there are two large Stones which grind the Corn and are very dangerous to go near, as are also the Sweeps. Mr William's is a very fine large House though rather old and wormeaten. We came home about 9 and went to Bed.

Thursday July 20th. Got up but did not bathe as it was rather too wet. Breakfasted at Mrs Howards. She made William and I a present of a pencil case 10/6, Heaping on us cakes eggs baskets etc. We took a place in the Deal Coach and it called for us at 9. We set off Mrs Howard, the Ralfes etc etc coming to bid us good by. We took Leave of them all and also of Deal. Mrs Howard intends to pay us a visit in London very soon.

We got on the outside of the coach and Wm Howard, Joseph and Jack⁷⁵ went with us a Little way. We passed by Deal Church a pretty old church.⁷⁶ We had the Sea mostly on our right hand. The Country about here is very open plenty of corn. We stopped some time at Sandwich a very pretty little place with a nice Large Church.⁷⁷ Just out of the village is a pretty little river and farther on are the Salt pits, square places in which they make Salt.⁷⁸ Just as we got to Ramsgate it began to rain very hard and an ill natured accident I shall forbear to mention quite spoilt my hat. We got inside soon and out of the way of it. We passed through Broadstairs. A Lady in the Caravan was going to Mr Frome's Broadstairs. We had [sic] last beheld Margate again after a week's absence and on going to Mrs Doughty's found her Lodgings well hired. However we left our Lodgings⁷⁹ there and went and had some dinner, Savilaw [sic] etc. William Msh and I took a walk about and got our Luggage on Board the Duke of Kent⁸⁰ and asked to Sleep on board. After dinner I took a walk with Marsh about Margate on the Sands but we could not find a place to Bathe well. We then had Supper at Mrs Doughty's (The Lodgers being gone out) and then went to sleep on Board. The Cabins

⁷⁴ S. Trott, Master of the Bathing Machines; W. Finch, *A Historical Sketch of the County of Kent*, I (1803), 134.

⁷⁵ Joseph Howard and Mrs Howard's nephew.

⁷⁶ St. Leonard's Church, Upper Deal.

⁷⁷ St. Clement's Church, Sandwich.

⁷⁸ The salt pits lay in the marshlands along the River Stour to the north of Sandwich at Stonar. 'Soon after crossing the river, I passed by a place for making salt,' W. Cobbett, *Rural Rides*, I, 1912, reprinted 1953, 246.

⁷⁹ The word intended here is 'luggage'. Thomas made the same mistake in the following fourth line and corrected it. It seems strange that the family left it to chance, in the height of the holiday season, to find their accommodation available without booking when they returned to Margate.

⁸⁰ Advertisements listed the Duke of Kent packet sailing from London to Margate on Tuesdays. A different vessel made the voyage each day from Dice Quay, Billingsgate, returning three days later, *The Times*, 21 July, 1815, 1a.

THE HOLIDAY DIARY OF THOMAS LOTT

were shut but Wm Mrsh found his way down and we all slept comfortably except Mother.

Friday July 21st. After having had a very pleasant and comfortable nights rest and found a place to bathe but there were plenty of Holes to fall in and not near so comfortable as at Deal. We had Breakfast at Mrs Doughty's. We then went on board [where] there were some passengers who came down with us. We bade Wm Marsh Good by. They began to hawl off and We left Margate. We felt rather funny at first but when [we] had got out a little way we were as calm as in the river. I bought a boat which I swam behind the packet. We had two Frenchmen on Board who were very good tempered and pleasant and I talked to them in French.

We set out at about 10 O clock and had plenty of fun.⁸¹ Passed the Noire⁸² at 7 in the Evening. Towards night the Frenchmen being merry we had plenty of singing and dancing so that I who had gone to bed could not sleep. I got up on Deck between 1 and 2 O clock the Moon being out it was beautifully pleasant. I then went down and Slept till about 6 in the morning when I got up. We were then at Anchor. We had passed Gravesend.

Saturday July 22nd. We had a nice breeze up the river and met the Steam Yacht⁸³ which had set off yesterday at 8 on its passage down at Woolwich. We saw at Wapping the Old Gravesend Steam Boat.⁸⁴ We got to Wapping by 1 O clock and soon got safe to Billingsgate⁸⁵ where after a deal of Bother in Landing and getting the Boxes out we at Length got safe to Bow Lane where to our great joy we found Father, Grand Mother and Touch⁸⁶ in Good Health and thus ended and finished our Journey to Margate.

CONCLUSION

One has the impression of an enjoyable holiday spent by an amiable young man amongst friends and relations. The food is good, accommodation comfortable, the people he meets are pleasant and even a disagreeable occurrence is treated with good humour (20 July). His

⁸¹ The journey seems to have taken an especially long time – 27 hours – but, 'the *Sailing Hoys* have been known to be 72 hours in going from *London to Margate*,' *The Thanet Itinerary or Steam Yacht Companion* 1819, 25.

⁸² The Nore, between Sheerness and Shoeberryness at the mouth of the Thames.

⁸³ The steamship 'Thames' built by Brunel in 1814, advertised as providing 'A New, Superior and Certain Passage from MARGATE TO LONDON IN A DAY,' *The Kentish Gazette*, 30 June, 1815, 1a.

⁸⁴ 'Gravesend Steam Packet – THE MARGERY STEAM PACKET starts from the Tower-stairs every Morning at 9 o'clock for Milton, adjoining Gravesend, and returns from there at 3 o'clock in the afternoon of the same day,' *The Times*, 1 November, 1815, 1a.

⁸⁵ Dice Quay, Billingsgate. Landing could be hazardous with passengers often having to clamber over other ships moored at the quayside. In 1830, when new quays had been built at London Bridge and St. Catherine's Dock to accommodate the increasing number of vessels, it was commented that 'the public are now enabled to go on board and land with perfect safety, without the aid of boats,' G.W. Bonner, *The Picturesque Pocket Companion to Margate, Ramsgate, Broadstairs and the Parts Adjacent*, 1831, 4.

⁸⁶ The dog?

youth is evident in his boyish interest in birds and grasshoppers, his detailed descriptions of meals and family parties, his pleasure in grinding his pocket knife and in tying a toy boat to the stern of the sailing packet on his journey home. His bid for maturity is demonstrated by his 'pipes' with William Marsh and his appreciation of the young women amongst his acquaintances.

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