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OBITUARIES

ALAN EVERITT

Alan Everitt, who died in December 2008 at the age of 82, was a distinguished historian who helped forge a new identity for local history that places it nowadays among the favoured branches of historical study. He was brought up in Sevenoaks, educated at Sevenoaks School and roamed freely in his childhood through the local woods overlooking the Weald. He read history at St Andrews University and returned to Kent to work for a PH.D. at London University, studying Kentish gentry in the Civil War. This was political history, focusing on a socially distinctive County in which kinship and the rule of partible inheritance shaped local loyalties and significantly affected the course of events. The ensuing book *The Community of Kent and the Great Rebellion* (1966) prompted a lively debate for its unexpected angle on provincial strategies at a time when academic historians were giving much attention to the causes of the war and its outcome.

When H.P.R. Finberg took over from W.G. Hoskins as head of the English Local History Department at Leicester University, he launched the Agrarian History of England and Wales project (in 1956). Everitt became my research assistant and for three years we shared the excitement of working in complete harmony on this neglected aspect of local history. Local history and agricultural history expanded together and shifted Everitt's interests away from politics to an absorbing examination of economic and social structures on provincial landscapes. With Hoskins returning to Leicester in 1963 Everitt relished learning still more of landscape history. They were both tuned in to the same unique kind of topographical study as was shown later by Everitt's own original and deeply researched book on Kent, *Continuity and Colonisation: the Evolution of Kentish Settlement* (1986). Everitt succeeded Hoskins in the Hatton chair of English Local History in 1968 from which post he retired in 1982. He was elected a Fellow of the British Academy in 1989.

In retirement, despite failing health, he found a new subject of consuming interest, the extent of common lands still existing in England in the nineteenth century. He sought them out in every county and developed a great admiration for the ingenuity of poor working people exploiting

these free resources to get a living in multiple ways, making everyday items like brooms, brushes, clothes pegs and baskets.

Alan Everitt was a fluent, friendly writer who was prominent in making landscape history a popular subject which has made everyone sensitive to the fine detail of our natural and man-made environment. We now see on all sides efforts to identify, appreciate and protect its distinctive character and for that we owe a huge debt to local historians such as Hoskins and Everitt for opening our eyes.

JOAN THIRSK

HAROLD GOUGH

Harold Gough died in June 2008 at the age of 87. He was a life-long resident of Herne Bay and the one person who had a comprehensive knowledge of the history and archaeology of the district. He was born in 1921 and attended the Simon Langton school in Canterbury. He joined Herne Bay Library in 1938 and remained there all his working life (apart from service in the Second World War) until retirement in 1983. He was fortunate in his friendship with Dr Tom Bowes, an experienced antiquarian, who greatly encouraged Harold's interest in all aspects of the past.

For over 50 years Harold was Curator of the Herne Bay Historical Records Society. The Society has published a number of books and he had a hand in all of them. *Herne Bay's Piers*, published in 2002, was authored by Harold and has long been sold out. An expanded second edition has been published in his memory.

Harold was a member of the KAS for 60 years and contributed several fine articles to *Archaeologia Cantiana*, fruits of his careful researches, including the study of the Archbishop's Palace at Ford, Hoath, in the Detsicas/Gravett memorial volume (2001). He readily provided useful local knowledge of Reculver manor to inform the Society's website publications on The Kentish Hundred Rolls and the Kilwardby Survey.

He and his wife, Anne, participated in Brian Philp's Reculver Excavation Group from 1957-90. Harold was also active in the Kent Family History Society and the Friends of Herne windmill.

Harold's knowledge of Herne and Herne Bay's past was second to none and this delightfully modest man will be greatly missed. His career is a fine example of the value of local historians with an intimate understanding of a particular area. Without such founts of local knowledge so much that is written and published about the past would be superficial indeed.

TGL