

MUDEFORD 1958

YO, ho, ho, and a bottle of rum (or brandy), this is Mundeford by the sea!

Not a very impressive name for such a delightful spot, but what's in a name? Behind it lies a wonderful history, full of intrigue and adventure.

It has developed rapidly during the past few years, but still retains its old world charm. That is, I believe, the secret behind Mundeford's popularity. People come and go, new houses are built and modern ideas are introduced, but the soul of old Mundeford remains. It is a treasure to be treasured.

Dignified Victorian and Georgian houses indicate the rich past while the quaint fishermen's cottages, almost unchanged over the centuries, capture your imagination. The fishermen will tell you many a yarn of the shadowy past when smuggling appears to have been a very remunerative occupation. Brandy, scents, tea and silks all came to those who plied this trade.

They will tell you stories handed down to them by their fathers and grandfathers. Of dark nights and the beat of muffled hooves through the sleeping village and "the gentlemen" going to their rendezvous at the Dutchman's Inn, now The Moorings private hotel.

This was Mundeford of about 200 years ago, when all human activity in the village centred around the quay and harbour mouth.

£40,000 PER ANNUM.

A reformed smuggler stated at an inquiry in 1745 that he alone, over a period of years, had smuggled in brandy and wines to the value of £40,000 per annum! And was only one of thousands. In their attempts to control this vast trade in contraband, the governments of the time rushed from one remedy to another. One was the provision of warships to patrol the English Channel, and one of these ships was the "H.M.S. Orestes", sloop of war, of 70 guns.

"TIPPED OFF"

The story is told that on August 14, 1784, her master, Cmdr. Ellis, was "tipped off" that two smuggling vessels, laden with tea and brandy from Jersey and Guernsey, were due to arrive off Mundeford in the late afternoon of that day.

He set sail at once from Cowes, but the smugglers, under the command of the tough and wily 'Slippery Rogers' were too quick for the Royal Navy. They sailed triumphantly into the "Run" and to the quay.

Having no idea how to navigate the tricky waters of the harbour entrance, the Revenue cutter could only lie off shore, and from there they proceeded to bombard the smugglers who returned the fire.

Shot and shell flew in all directions and one well aimed salvo from the warship severely damaged the smugglers' vessel, whilst a brace of chain shot hit the roof of the Haven House Inn.

This chain shot is now one of the many treasures of the present landlord of the inn, Mr Bert Lloyd. Last of the famous smugglers of Mundeford was old Captain Coakes. He is reputed to have been a strong swimmer and when the kegs of rum or brandy were thrown overboard just off shore; he would swim up the harbour at the floodtide and guide the "loot" to Mother Sellars' channel.

Mother Sellars was no fictional character however much her name would suggest it. She kept the public house "The Ship in Distress" and was the protecting angel of the local smugglers.

But during the daytime the villagers turned their hands to the more respectable occupation of fishing and this is an industry which has been handed down from generation to generation.

At Mundeford, the fishermen net the famous Christchurch salmon. The season starts at the beginning of February and continues to the end of July.

The salmon run on the ebb tide and the fishermen go out in punts which are specially built. At each stern is a platform on which is stowed the long net. The boats are rowed in wide sweeps for the nets to be "shot" into the water and the ends are held and hauled laboriously in.

There is a wide variation in each season's harvest and the annual "take" can be as many as 800 or as few as 55 and another marked variation is in the weight. The record weight of 52 lb. was set up a few years ago by Mr. Gilbert (Bob) Derham.

WELL-KNOWN FAMILIES.



Haul away there . . . and let's hope there is a salmon at the end of it. For these fishermen can "shoot" their nets for hours, days and even weeks without even the sight of a salmon. The men are on the sandbank, opposite Mundeford Quay.

C.T. Photos

Mention fishing in Mundeford and you will soon hear the names of Derham and Stride. These are two well-known families who are still plying the occupation of their ancestors.

About 1911, Mr. George Derham lived on a houseboat on the sandbank. In those days very few people walked round the headland but those who did called at the houseboat and asked Mrs. Derham if she would make some tea.

Visitors gradually increased and Mrs. Derham was eventually persuaded to open up a catering business. At the same time, her husband operated a passenger boat service to and from Christchurch.

In 1934, the family took over the Avon beach where Mr. Derham's son, Ken., is now managing director of the Avon Beach Cafe Ltd.

Mundeford has had its village characters—names that will live on and never fail to raise a smile at their mention.

There was "Cakey" Coakes, who was "king of kings" after he had a "wee drop" from the barrel. He was nicknamed "Cakey" when a small boy because of his liking for cake. On one occasion he buckled into a cake until he could eat no more, He then scrambled under the table and cried because he couldn't eat any more!

But he was "quite a good man", in his day. "Razer" Derham, too, was a good fisherman, but he lived rough in a shed on the sandbank.

One very stormy night when the tide was so high the harbour and sea met at one point on the sandbank, "Razer" had a hectic experience.

Mr. Ken. Derham remembers going along the beach in the early hours of the morning to see how "Razer" was getting along in the storm. But "Razer's" roof had disappeared and all the old character could say was: "I held on to it until 4 o'clock and I couldn't hold on any longer"!

"Winey" Pride, the old water bailiff, was quite a character in his time. He was always about when the salmon fishing started, just to make sure everything was "above board" and that no one used a wrong net.

FLOUNDER NET.

Mr. Derham tells of the occasion when one of the fishermen netted a salmon with a flounder net. "Winey" was about, but a clove-hitch was tied to the salmon's tail and it was put back into the water. When the bailiff was looking the other way the fish was pulled through the water to a spot where it could be safely retrieved! There is another story about "Razer" Derham, who was reputed to have never cared very much for parsons. He was known to keep out of their way as much as possible.

It happened one day when Mr. Ken. Derham's father was ferrying a young parson and his parents across the "Run". When they reached the quay, the parson, instead of waiting until the boat was secured, leapt to the quayside, but as he grabbed the wall his feet pushed the boat out and he was left suspended over the water. "Razer" was on the quay at the time, but instead of coming to the rescue, he shouted to the boatman to "poke 'im down with the oar"!

Mr. Alan Stride, of Stanpit, has been a fisherman all his life. His father, also called Alan, was a fisherman and operated the ferry at Wick. Grandfather also fished at Mudeford.

And carrying on the business today with their father are the two Stride brothers, Roy and Kenneth.

Other members of the Stride family earning their living from the sea are Mr. B. C. Stride, and the brothers Robin and Tony Stride, sons of Mr. Edward Stride.

Related to the Derham family are Mr. and Mrs. Gerald Scragg, of Stanpit Post Office.

Mr. Scragg, a bellringer at the Priory Church for 34 years, took over the Post Office at Christmas 1942. His mother, Mrs. P. Derham, operated the first telephone exchange in the village. This was in the boathouse at Fishermen's Bank, Stanpit, and there were 12 lines.

His grandfather, Mr. Jim Derham, known as "Capt'n Jim", brought coal from Portsmouth to Mudeford in a barge called "The Diver". He later built the Nelson Inn, which he kept for a number of years.

The original post office was opened in Mudeford about 100 years ago in the building that is now the Moorings Hotel. It then moved to Stanpit, next to where it is now, about 1894 to the home of Mr. Alfred Edgell, who still lives there and was telegraph boy in those days.

SUB-POSTMISTRESS.

His sister, Miss E. Edgell, was sub-postmistress, and after marrying Mr. W. Laidlaw, she carried on the post office in the house that is now the fish shop, owned by Mr. A. Baker, from 1902 until Christmas 1942, when it moved back next door to where it originally opened in Stanpit. In 1803 King George call at Mudeford in his yacht and sampled the place on his way to Weymouth, with the Scots Greys, the Yeomanry, and the Christchurch Volunteers firing salutes on the beach. After that Mudeford brightened and increased the number of its bathing machines! The little church of All Saints', Mudeford, was founded in 1871 by Mr. Mortimer Ricardo, as a Chapel of Ease for the local fishermen, but it was not until 1931 that it was dedicated to All Saints by the then Bishop of Winchester, Dr. Woods.

CEREMONY.

In recent years it was the custom at Mudeford to hold a Spring service for the fishermen and their families, followed by a simple ceremony of Blessing the Waters, when the Vicar and the choir went out in boats to offer prayers of thanksgiving and dedication for the harvest of the sea. In autumn, when the church is decorated with fruit and flowers, an appropriate background is provided by the fishermen's nets.

Verger of the church is 72 year-old Mr. Albert Charles Bursey, who is helped by his wife Mrs. Elizabeth Kate Bursey. He has held the position for 30 years and his father, Mr. Robert Bursey, and grandfather, Mr. Charlie Bursey, were vergers at the church before him. His mother and grandmother also helped with the cleaning. The present priest-in-charge, Rev. A. J. Noott, leaves the district after Easter for work in the diocese of Trinidad.

Many local people felt the village lost part of its old character when early last year Bure Homage was demolished. With its impressive pillared frontage, it was a historical landmark. But prior to its demolition it was considered to be in a bad state of repair and beyond economical use.

The mansion was built on the site of an old farmhouse by Sophie Dawes, reputed to be the daughter of a fisherman and boat owner who later became the Baroness de Feucheres.

Gundimore, one of Mudeford's stately homes, was built in the late 18th century by the Hon. George Rose, friend of Pitt and brother of Sir George Henry Rose.

The house contains a round room, and it was in 1807 that Sir Walter Scott visited the then owner, William Stewart Rose, at the time he was writing "Marmion".

Gundimore is the last house in the village where the road turns down to the beach and the room in which Scott wrote is recessed in a passage way and has a lovely view across the lawn to the Isle of Wight. It was the view of Hengistbury from here which inspired him.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge, the poet, used to come for rest and change and here also came the Italian poet, Hugo Foscoli.

The Moorings now run by Mr. and Mrs. R. Dashwood, was formerly known as the Sandford Hotel. It was built about 1700 by the small Dutch colony which was at one time in the Christchurch area. The original Dutch glass windows that frame up the the view of the harbour, bear the date 1732 and the names of Van Doel, Van Tellir and J. Verheuil are scratched on one of the panes.

CHANGES.



The Moorings private hotel, one of the village's historical buildings. This was the rendezvous for the shadowy "gentlemen" of 200 years ago. In the foreground is the old Victorian pillar box, one of the few now remaining in the country.

Mudeford has another post office at Bure Lane, taken over and modernised three years ago by Mr. H. Lines. This part of the village has seen many changes. It was originally a farm but now houses the Bure Club, run by Mr. S. Clark and Mr. and Mrs. J. Smith's caravan site. Mr. Bruce Stokes is a villager who has seen these changes, for he worked in this area for 30 years. Nearby is the Mudeford Gravel Company Ltd. This site was opened during the war to supply concreting ballast for the aerodromes at Hurn and Holmesley, but was later carried on privately by Mr. W. Bolton. When he relinquished his interest in 1948, it was taken over by the existing directors, Mr. H. G. Macklin, Mr. J. J. Macklin and Mr. G. E. Stebbing.

So as not to adversely affect the amenities of the neighbourhood, excavations do not go below road level and as a result it has been possible over the past few years to develop

the excavated land as a building site. This has been done by the associated company of Macklin & Co. Development Ltd.

A further Macklin concern is the Friars Cliff Motors Ltd., opened in 1956.

The Haven Corner Stores, as well as other property in this vicinity, can claim one of the most magnificent views in the south of England. Run by Mr. P. R. W. Steele, who moved in last Whitsuntide from Bournemouth, it can also claim to be one of the smallest stores in the country. Standing near the shop is a Victorian pillar box, one of the few now remaining in the country.

TUTTON'S WELL.

Tutton's Well needs no introducing! Neither do the Mudeford Guides, who have a neat little headquarters—rightly or wrongly—placed on the ground of the well. In the last century Tutton's Well was noted for the uncommon purity and transparency of its water, and was mentioned in ancient documents as a mineral well supposed to have properties especially beneficial to those with weak eyes.

One of the purest in the South of Hampshire, this spring was in constant use until it became contaminated early in this century, and there is scarcely any trace of the well.

The Stanpit Village Room, used by most of the organisations in Mudeford, was built in 1887 by Mrs. Maberley to commemorate the Jubilee, and was administered by her during her lifetime at her own cost. Secretary and treasurer of the room is Mrs. S. Seed, of Harbour Side.

Keenly interested in the history of her village, Mrs. Seed compiled a short history of Mudeford for the local Townswomen's Guild.

The recreation ground was laid out in 1888 on the piece of ground opposite the Coastguard Station, known as Sand Waste. A century ago the ground was part of a large common dividing the hamlet of Stanpit from the "fashionable watering place" of Mudeford. The old recreation ground was at the corner of Argyle Road, where shops are now built.

LIGHT INDUSTRY.

Another light industry at Mudeford is the Vaccar Milking Machine Company. It was founded in London in 1907, came to Staple Cross Farm about 1926, and moved to Stanpit about 1930, and is owned by Mr. H. W. Burry, of New Milton.

An impressive building opposite the church is the Avonmouth Hotel, managed by Mr. and Mrs. W. K. Dickenson, newcomers to the village. Further along the road is the Nelson Inn, a popular "local," run by Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Wood, who came from New Milton seven years ago. Mr. and Mrs. Wood have used the Lord Nelson motive to good effect, and you can enjoy your leisure in the Victory Bar or the Trafalgar Bar. But the only battles fought there now are between the darts and shove ha'penny teams!

Landlord of the Stanpit "local," the Ship in Distress, is Mr. Leslie Bevis, who came 19 years ago.

In Queens Road lives a former Mudeford school mistress, 76-year-old Mrs. Kate Burbidge.

The local "lads" who remember Mrs. Burbidge at the old Church of England School can give a sigh of relief for they were all: "Good lads."

Mrs. Burbidge, whose husband Fred, aged 77, has been a gardener for 65 years and intends to carry on work as long as he can, remembers the "strawberry teas" which were given annually to the school children by the "Man of the Forest."

Headmistress at the time Mrs. Burbidge taught at Mudeford as was Miss Tidmarsh, who was there for many years.

The Harrisons are another well-known Mudeford family who have been in business as builders in Christchurch and Mudeford for 50 years. Head of the firm is Mr. P. C. Harrison, of Stanpit Shore, uncle of Leo Harrison, the cricketer.

CRICKET CLUB.

Mudeford Cricket Club has been in existence since the beginning of the century, and the Working Men's Club was built in 1928, when the local men, including the curate-in-charge of Mudeford, the Rev. Wynne Hall, "clubbed" together to provide a fund. Mr. George Clark has been steward since it was opened.

Mr. and Mrs. O. G. Farmer, who run the florist and fruit shop at Stanpit, came to the village three years ago. In 1951 they spent a caravan holiday at Mudeford and decided this was the place for them.

Sir Stuart M. Fraser decided to come to Mudeford over 30 years ago after a distinguished career with the Indian Civil Service. He is a former County Alderman and Justice of the Peace, and at 93 still takes an active interest in local affairs.

Latchmoor, at Stanpit, which commands a beautiful view of Hengistbury Head, is the home of Major J. A. Friend, prospective Conservative candidate for Bournemouth East and Christchurch.

Also at Mudeford are two old people's homes, Sunnyholm and Tutton Lodge and Capesthorne Children's Convalescent Home, all situated in healthy and beautiful surroundings.

CHILDREN'S HOME.

Capesthorne is run by the London Regional Hospital Board and administered by the Red Cross. It was opened as a home in 1948 for children up to ten and these come mainly from London and Birmingham. In summer the children go down to the beach where a hut has been provided by Christchurch Rotary Club. The children stay at the home not less than a month and, said the matron, Miss D. Suggett, they all look much better when they return home.

Sunnyholm was opened in 1946 and there were extensions to the building in 1943 for the patients, and 1952 for the nursing staff.

There are ten residents between 90 and 97, and only five under 80. Some have been at the home for nine or ten years. All are extremely well looked after and during their leisure hours they can watch television or listen to the radio. Children's television seems to be one of their favourite programmes, and when I visited the lounge at least twelve residents were thoroughly enjoying a real good cowboy film!

Miss Rose Buckland has been Matron at Sunnyholm for the past nine years.

The other old people's home is at Stanpit, where Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Tonkin are in charge. This is Tutton Lodge, previously the home of the local doctor, and before that home of a publican who had a brewery on adjoining land.

Mudeford Beach, which attracts thousands of holiday-makers during the summer months, has a long history. In the latter part of 1600 Lord Clarendon had the Long Rocks or Clarendon Rocks laid down in a straight line on the east side of the outlet of the harbour.

The idea was to keep the river running out between the rocks and Hengistbury Head and also to form a quay. Old Trinity House surveys show the river running out here in 1690. But unfortunately this long groyne had the reverse effect

EROSION.

It caused erosion on the east side and the sea broke through near where the Black House now stands. The old outlet to the west of Long Rocks silted up and has remained closed ever since. The Long Rocks are stated to be iron stone boulders from Hengistbury Head.

High sand hills formed to the east of the Head and 60 years ago several of these dunes were 40ft high and ran all the way from the Head to the Black House. There was about 400 yards of sandy beach between the harbour and the sea.

BOATYARD.

It is believed that at one time there was a boatyard on the sandbank, for records show that in 1849 a brig of 253 tons and 94ft long was launched from the sandbar at the place now occupied by the Black House. It was built by Mr. George Holloway and called "The Enterprise."

Mudeford has indeed a long and interesting history and the interest is still here for all to enjoy.