

The Universal British Directory of Trade, Commerce and Manufacture (1793)

C H A T H A M, K E N T .

CHATHAM, separated by the river Medway from Rochester, to which it is a suburb, lies partly in the parish of Gillingham, and was built by king Charles II. after the first Dutch war; but the dock was begun by queen Elizabeth, and has been so improved by her successors, that there is not a more a more complete arsenal in the world. Here are whole streets of warehouses. The houses of the officers are well built, and some of them stately; and the public buildings are surprisingly large, like the ships of the royal navy that are stationed here. That called the Chest at Chatham was instituted in 1558, when the seamen in the service of queen Elizabeth agreed to allow a portion of each man's pay for the relief of their fellow-sailors that had been wounded in the defeat of the Spanish armada, which custom has continued since. In December 1772, as the grave-digger was digging a grave near the communion-table, he found a hand entire, except the fore finger; the flesh, sinews, nails, and veins, like those of a living person, and grasping the handle of a dagger, which, it is thought, preserved it. Here is an hospital for the relief of ten, or more, aged and maimed mariners or shipwrights. By a disagreement with the inhabitants of Rochester when application was made to parliament for paving and improving the road, a new road was made on the South side which conveys the passengers to Canterbury without their passing through this place, which has in a great measure prejudiced the inhabitants.

Betwixt Rochester and Chatham is St. Margaret's Bank, on which is a row of houses, that command the river and are pleasantly situated. The road to Chatham runs under it. At the entrance into Chatham is the king's victualling-office, a place of great neatness and conveniency, from which his majesty's ships at Chatham and Sheerness are supplied with provisions. Not far from hence, on the South side of the street, stood the hospital for leprous persons founded in 1078 by bishop Gundulph, and dedicated to St. Bartholomew. No part of the mansion is standing, houses having been long since erected upon its scite, which may, however, be nearly pointed out by the chapel belonging to it, the East end of which is supposed, upon sufficient grounds, to be of great antiquity. It is circular, having stone walls three feet thick, with a stone roof. There are three narrow windows, in one of which the zig-zag mouldings used in early Norman buildings may be traced, but the mouldings of the other two windows are smooth, being corroded by time and weather. Hugh de Trotesclive, a monk of the priory of Rochester, being registered as the builder of a church for lepers in honour of St. Bartholomew, the constructing of this part of the chapel may be reasonably attributed to him, and its age in consequence nearly ascertained. For Hugh was chaplain to Henry I. and by the procurement of that king elected abbot of St Austin's Canterbury, about the year 1124. A South-east view and plan of this chapel is exhibited in Mr. Thorpe's Antiquities, plate 1. The chapel is in length 74 feet and 6 inches, and its width 20 feet and 6 inches. The original chapel did not extend so far; for in 1743, William Walter, Esq. a respectable magistrate, who

resided not far from it, purchased the unexpired lease of three tenements, upon the scite of which, containing about 24 feet in length, he erected the West end of the present chapel with its steeple. In the South side is an arch, within which was a stone bason for holy water; the bason is still to be seen in the North wall, as you ascend the steps, where it was fixed by Mr. Walter, and marks the spot that was the boundary of the houses purchased by him. This sacred edifice has many years been used as a chapel of ease to Chatham church. The estates of this charitable institution, since the year 1627, have been vested in the dean of Rochester, as governor and patron of the hospital, and of the brethren of the same. Formerly there were only three brethren, one of whom was always a clergyman, and officiated as the chaplain, but at present there are four brethren, and two of them in are in orders. On the opposite side of the street, is an hospital, founded by Sir John Hawkins, for poor decayed mariners and shipwrights; the building appropriated for their reception was finished, as appears from an inscription in the wall, in the year 1592. Queen Elizabeth, at the request of the founder, granted a charter of incorporation by the name of "the governors of the hospital of Sir John Hawkins, Knt. at Chatham." Ten pensioners are maintained in this hospital, who were allowed 3s. 6d. per week each, and a chaldron of coals yearly; their allowance is now increased to 5s. per week each. No person is eligible, who has not been maimed or disabled in the service of the navy, or otherwise brought to poverty. Over the gate, on the outside, is the inscription: "The poor you shall always have with you: to whom ye may do good yf ye wyl." Had this benevolent admonition been duly impressed upon the mind of the founder in an earlier part of life, he must have avoided what will ever be a blemish in his character, being a principal dealer in African slaves; and Captain Hawkins, it is mentioned with regret, was the first Englishman who engaged in this horrid traffic of human flesh. By queen Elizabeth's charter of incorporation of Sir John Hawkins's hospital, dated August 27th, 1594, the community is always to consist of twenty-six governors, of which number only four were to be elective, and the others by virtue of their respective offices. These are, the archbishop of Canterbury, the bishop of Rochester, the lord High Admiral, the lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, the dean of Rochester, the treasurer, comptroller, surveyor, and clerk of the acts, of the navy, six principal masters of mariners, two principal shipwrights, the master and wardens of the Trinity-house, for the time being, and their successors. The commissioners, the two master attendants, and the master shipwright, of Chatham dock-yard, are now always governors of this charity, and the present elected governors are, Charles Proby, Esq. commissioner; Mr. John Nelvin, master-shipwright; Mr. William Nicholson, and Mr John Madgson, master-attendants. This hospital is now entirely taken down and rebuilding on a more commodious plan than before; the principal entrance will now be fronting the street, and the apartments will be rendered light and airy; one of the elected governors having generously given a benefaction of 500l. for this purpose.

But the principal object which deserves the attention of a traveller, in Chatham, is the Dock-yard. The arsenal is very commodious and convenient. It was much improved and enlarged by queen Elizabeth, who viewed it, and built Upnor-castle for its defence. Charles I. erected several considerable shore-houses, and extended the scite of the yard. His son, Charles II. took a view of it in 1660. The dock-yard, including the Ordnance-wharf, is about a mile in length. The commissioner, and other principal officers, have elegant houses to reside in. Here are many spacious storehouses, one of which is 660 feet in length. The sail-loft is 209 feet long. Though an immense quantity of stores of all kinds are deposited in these magazines, yet they are arranged in so regular a manner, that, on any emergency, whatever is wanted may be procured with the greatest dispatch, and without the least confusion. In the

smith's forge are twenty-one fires constantly employed. Here are made the anchors, some of which weigh near five tons. The new rope-house is 1140 feet in length, in which cables are made 120 fathoms long, and 22 inches round. In this yard are four docks for repairing ships, and six slips for building new ones. Here was built the Victory, a first rate, carrying 110 guns, and the largest ship in the navy. The new Royal George, of 100 guns, was built here in the year 1788, and was the first ship of that rate ever launched from a slip; the Royal Charlotte, of the same dimensions, is now ready for launching. The ordnance-wharf is situated to the South of the dock-yard, being only separated from it by a flight of stairs, made for the conveniency of landing from, or embarking in, boats. This was the original dock-yard; and, from the circumference, is now frequently called the Old Dock. The guns belonging to each ship are arranged in tiers, with the name of the ship to which they belong, marked upon them; as also their weight of metal. The armory is deserving the inspection of the curious.

Chatham church is situated on an eminence adjoining to the office of ordnance. It was destroyed by fire about the middle of the fourteenth century; and, in order to enable the inhabitants to rebuild it, the Pope, by a bull dated 1352, granted to all who should contribute their assistance to so pious a work a relaxation from penance for one year and forty days. The East end of the church, lately standing, was nearly all that remained of the building raised by the Pope's briefs; the North and South sides were of a later date. The royal dock-yard having been much enlarged, the inhabitants of this parish were, in consequence, considerably increased. In 1635 the commissioner of his majesty's navy repaired the church, rebuilt and enlarged the West end, and erected the steeple. In 1707, the gallery over the South aisle was built by commissioner St. Loo, of Chatham-yard, for the use of the navy and ordinary. But, notwithstanding these enlargements, the church was too small for the parishioners; and in the year 1788 this church was pulled down, except for the steeple part, and rebuilt with brick on extended dimensions; the galleries are spacious and uniform, and the light happily disposed throughout the fabric, which is now capable of holding the parishioners without inconvenience. The expence of this undertaking is defrayed partly by a brief, partly by contribution, and the rest by an assessment on the parishioners. The perfect fabric was designed by Mr. J. Sutherden, master-carpenter of the dock-yard, and executed, by contract, under his immediate inspection. Several elegant marble monuments are refixed in different parts of the church. The church-yard being too small for the great number of parishioners, the office of ordnance have granted a large piece of land, a little distance from the church, for a burying ground.

The post-office opens at seven o'clock in the morning, when the letters are delivered; the post goes out at nine o'clock at night. Mr. John McLean is the post-master.

Stage-coaches set out from each of the following inns for Gravesend, London, &c.—Horn, Thomas Hall, coaches to and from Gravesend every tide to the Castle.—Dover Castle, George Wilkins, coaches as above to the Queen's Head.—Mitre Tavern, a post-coach, in five hours, to the Bull and Mouth Inn, Bull and Mouth street, London, inside passengers 6s. outside 3s. sets out from the above tavern every morning at six o'clock; arrives at the Bull and Mouth, at eleven, returns from thence every afternoon at three o'clock, and arrives at the Mitre tavern at eight in the evening. Performed by John Willan and Co. London.—A post-coach from the Sun Tavern, every afternoon at two o'clock, to the Cross Keys, Gracechurch-street, and returns from thence every day at one o'clock. This coach travels with a guard.

There is a commodious floating-bath for the accommodation of ladies and gentlemen.

Chatham has two annual fairs, viz. May 15 and September 19. The market-day is on Saturdays.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS, &c. of the VICTUALLING-OFFICE, ORDNANCE-OFFICE, and DOCK-YARD, with their Salaries:

VICTUALLING-OFFICE.

Agent, Thomas Moore, 200l.
1st Clerk, Jos. Mathews, 50l. *2d*, Thomas Simpson, 40l. *3d*, John Stephens, 40l. *4th*, John Knox, 40l.
Storekeeper, Stephen Simpson, 80l.
1st Clerk, John Baker, 50l. *2d*, James Heart, 40l. *3d*, Tho. Church, 30l.
Clerk of the Checque, John Mathews, 60l. Tho. Turner, *his clerk*, 50l.

ORDNANCE-OFFICE.

Storekeeper; Wm. Smith, Esq. 140l.
Clerk of the Survey, Wm. Sumpter, Esq. 150l.
Clerk of the Checque, Nathaniel Cooke, Esq. 110l.
Clerks, Thomas James Rudyard, 60l. Samuel Nicholson, 60l. J. L. Cowell, 50l. J. W. Pennal, 50l.

DOCK-YARD.

Commissioner, Charles Proby, Esq. 500l.
His Clerks, William Sugden *1st*, Gid. Davis *2d*, Thomas West *3d*
Clerk of the Checque, Mr. Geo. Thomas, 200l.
His Clerks, Francis R. Smith *1st*, Thomas Manley *2d*, Thomas Sugden *3d*, George Manger *4th*, Pierce Edgecumbe *5th*, Edward Manclash *6th*, James Smith *7th*

Storekeeper, Mr. John Weatherhall 200l.
His Clerks, John Hodgekin *1st*, Wm. Drawbridge *2d*. Thomas Oben *3d*, Wm. Spencer *4th*, John Weatherall *5th*, James Kiniade *6th*
Master Shipwright, Mr. John Nelvin,
His Clerks, James Kiniade *1st*, William Farmer *2d*
Clerk of the Survey, James Hamilton, 200l.
His Clerks, Richard Murton *1st*, John Townsend *2d*, Benjamin Haite *3d*, George Creasy *4th*
Master Attendants, William Nicholson and John Madgson, 200l. each
Master Attendants Clerk, John Towers
Clerk of the Rope-yard, John Burton, 100l.
His Clerk, George Nash
Master Rope-maker, James White, 100l.
Boatswain, — Mann, 80l.
Porter, John Adamson, 30l.
Master Shipwright's Assistants, Mr. T. Mitchell *1st*, Anthony Manly *2d* 100l. each.
Master Caulker, Charles Kevern, 100l.
Surgeon, Hugh Macklerath, 100l. besides his two-pences.
Purveyor, George Evans, 50l.

The following are the principal inhabitants:

GENTRY.

Best —, Esq. *Justice of the Peace*
Wilderth Jacob, Esq.
Wilson Captain William

CLERGY.

Jones Rev. Mr.

PHYSIC.

Brient William, *Surgeon*

Blackerston Christopher, *Surgeon*
Conquest George, *Surgeon*
Hicks Hartlell, *Surgeon*
Ruffin William, *Surgeon*
Tracey William, *Druggist*

LAW.

Ianson William, *Attorney*

TRADERS, &c.

Austen William, *Baker*
Abbot James, *Grocer*
Allen Thomas, *Linen-draper*
Ashdown Robert, *Linen-draper*
Abingdon Thomas and Co. *Corn-merchants*
Ashenden William, *Carpenter*
Allard John, *Grocer*
Acworth and Mathews, *Tailors and Drapers*
Baker John, *Poulterer*
Benifold Thomas, *Upholsterer and Cabinet-maker*
Bond Francis, *Haberdasher*
Burr William, *Lace-maker*
Bacon Mary, *Baker*
Bland William, *Master of a Coaster*
Beel Francis, *Hair-dresser*
Bonus William, *Coal-merchant*
Beumont James, *Victualler (Trumpet)*
Burr Robert, *Upholsterer*
Boto John, *Ironmonger*
Brook William, *Linen-draper*
Britain Edward, *Grocer*
Boys Edward, *Tallow-chandler*
Beverish Elizabeth, *Victualler (Crown)*
Berren Richard, *Victualler (Ship)*
Bond John, *Pawnbroker*
Bois Thomas, *Wheelwright*
Burgess John, *Miller*
Burton Thomas, *Staymaker*
Binstead J. *Victualler (Ordnance Arms)*
Busbridge Richard, *Hair-dresser*
Barrett Daniel, *Watch-maker*
Best Isaac, *Slopseller*
Best George, *Brewer*
Brett William, *China-man*
Blackmur William, *Linen-draper*
Beedle James, *Blacksmith*
Booth William, *Gunmaker*
Badley John, *Draper*
Cooper William, *Baker*
Cooper Thomas, *Victualler (Ship)*
Crisp Nich. *Victualler (Union Flag)*
Chappel Arthur, *Ropemaker*
Clark William, *Blockmaker*
Clout Joseph, *Victualler (Red Lion)*

Conchman John, *Hair-dresser*
Carter William, *Timber-merchant*
Crump Robert, *Victualler (Wool Pack)*
Chandler William, *Victualler (Cock)*
Condler John, *Butcher*
Colchester Thomas, *Leather-cutter*
Cox William, *Baker*
Crandill Geo. *Victualler (Brewers Arms)*
Camplin John, *Painter*
Creed ———, *Linen-draper*
Chandlie George, *Navy Agent*
Davies George, *Boot and Shoemaker*
Diteman George, *Baker*
Dadd William, *Victualler (Fountain)*
Dadson William, *Shoemaker*
Dawson Darcy, *Draper*
Elliot Moses, *Linen-draper*
Edgigion John, *Leather-seller*
Evee Ann, *Milliner*
Everfield William, *Grocer*
Elliot James, *Tavern-keeper (Mitre)*
Foster ———, *Coal-merchant*
Fry John, *Pawnbroker*
Field Thomas, *Victualler (Britannia)*
Froy John, *Baker*
Fussel Thomas, *Butcher*
Fry James, *Baker*
French Ann, *Victualler (Three Cups)*
Francis John, *Shoemaker*
Ford John, *Plumber and Glazier*
Guardner Alex. *Hosier & Undertaker*
Gurr M. *Victualler (Crown & Anchor)*
Gillman and Co. *Printers & Stationers*
Graham Lawrence, *Grocer*
Gilbert Thomas, *Taylor*
Goodshall Ann, *Hair-dresser*
Gurr John, *Innkeeper (Sun)*
Garner William, *Victualler (George)*
Gurr William, *Butcher*
Hall Tho. *Victualler (Prince of Wales)*
Hall Robert, *Tinman and Brazier*
Hart Stephen, *Baker*
Hodgskins Richard, *Grocer*
Hinkley Tho. *Victualler (White Hart)*
Hooker John, *Carpenter*
Hayler Benjamin, *Pawnbroker*
Holmden William, *Breeches-maker*

Hill Thomas, *Brazier*
Holif Thomas, *Butcher*
Irvin Richard, *Blockmaker*
Irvin John, *Blockmaker*
Iserel Levi, *Silversmith*
Irons John, *Tea-dealer*
Jewell Munn, *Milliner*
Jeffery Edward, *Watch-maker*
Jackson Robert, *Victualler (Swan)*
Jarvis Henry, *Bricklayer*
Jeffery George, *Watch-maker*
Kennett Robert, *Shoe-warehouse*
King Thomas, *Carpenter*
Kemp William, *Linen-drapers*
Knock William, *Grocer*
Knight Francis, *Tallow-chandler*
Lomas Thomas, *Cheesemonger*
Levi Simon, *Salesman*
Lee James, *Cook*
Leith William, *Baker*
Landon Edward, *Victualler*
Low Thomas, *Cooper*
Lamas John, *Butcher*
Lloyd Arthur, *Victualler (Royal Oak)*
Lester James, *Butcher*
Lacey John, *Hairdresser*
Leveridge John, *Hair-dresser*
Millner William, *Grocer*
Moses Abraham, *Silversmith*
Moulton James, *Hair-dresser*
Mitchell David, *Cutler*
Martin Thomas, *Victualler*
Manly John, *Clock and Watchmaker*
Morris Benjamin, *China-man*
Marsh Thomas, *Salesman*
Marriner Francis, *Shoemaker*
Maynard Edward, *Brewer*
Madhurst Robert, *Hair-dresser*
Meshman John, *Hair-dresser*
McLean Alexander, *Grocer*
McLean John, *Innkeeper (Globe)*
Moryls Benj. *Victualler (Old Barn)*
Nokis William, *Butcher*
Nichols John, *Baker*
Nichols John, *Brandy-merchant*
Newman Wm. *Victualler (Red Lion)*
Osborn George & Son, *Linen-drapers*
Patterson Thomas, *Hatter*

Patin Francis, *Stone-mason*
Pearne Nathaniel, *Hatter*
Pope Edward, *Taylor*
Poole William, *Hatter*
Porter William, *Brazier*
Philips James, *Broker*
Philips John, *Grocer*
Prior Thomas, *Victualler (Bull's Head)*
Peters George, *Confectioner*
Pendon Peter, *Baker*
Pankhurst William, *Grocer*
Packham George, *Victualler (Bell)*
Palmer Tho. *Victualler (King's Head)*
Penny Robert, *Hair-dresser*
Pearce James, *Grocer*
Robinson Robert, *Taylor*
Reynolds Robert, *Hosier*
Read Susannah, *Victualler (Shovel)*
Robertson William, *Victualler (3 Tuns)*
Rich Thomas, *Watchmaker*
Routon William, *Riding Excise-officer*
Sharp John, *Shoemaker*
Strutfield William, *Grocer*
Sharp Robert, *Blacksmith*
Spencer Mary, *Milliner*
Street William, *Shoemaker*
Sherwood Samuel, *Baker*
Seaton Jos. *Upholsterer*
Stephens Elizabeth, *Ironmonger*
Shirley George, *Taylor and Draper*
Shirley William, *Leather-cutter*
Stenton William, *Grocer*
Standbridges Nicholas, *Shoe-warehouse*
Skinner John, *Grocer*
Smith John, *Shoemaker*
Summerfield William, *Pastry-cook*
Sparks Joseph, *Salesman*
Stubbs John, *Victualler*
Tone Edward, *China-man*
Troughill Wm. *Plumber and Glazier*
Thompson John, *Baker*
Taylor William, *Taylor*
Turney Charles, *Auctioneer*
Twig Richard, *Brewer*
Troy Cazeneuve Jacob, *Distiller, and Agent to the Sun Fire-office*
Tubb J. *Victualler (Thistle & Crown)*
Taylor Elizabeth, *Baker*

Tanner Thomas, *Victualler (Red Lion)*
Thomas Robert, *Grocer*
Tong James, *Linen-drapeer*
Townsend Charles, *Stationer*
Velter Thoma, *Victualler (Sun)*
Wilhey Tho. *Victualler (Cross Keys)*
Wilheridge William, *Ironmonger*
Wilkinson George, *Hatter*
Whitehead William, *Sadler*
Wilkins Rob. *Innkeeper (Dover Castle)*

Wilson James, *Victualler (Little George)*
Wiliouus John, *Grocer*
Waldron John, *Victualler (Black Boy)*
Webb Thomas, *Victualler (Swan)*
Wilkins Thomas, *Tallow-chandler*
Wilkins John, *Grocer*
Wyatt Samuel, *Haberdasher*
Wills Robert, *Victualler (King's Arms)*
Wilkinson William, *Taylor and Draper*

Leaving Chatham, the traveller ascends a hill of some considerable height, on the summit of which he will be delighted with a landscape truly picturesque and beautiful. The prospect is extensive and variegated, interspersed with a view of hills, dales, orchards, cherry-gardens, hop-grounds, woods, churches, farm-houses, and the windings of the Medway.

Famous as Kent is for its growth of hops, and good as is the barley which the county produces, strangers are apt to complain, not without some cause, that the malt drink is not so palatable as they meet with in other parts of England. That was not the case in the reign of Henry II. for, in an account, by Giraldus Cambrensis, of the luxurious manner of living of the monks of Christ-church, Canterbury, it is related, that they had an excessive abundance of wine, particularly claret, of mulberry wine, of mead, and of other strong liquors, the variety of which was so great in these repasts, that no place could be found for ale, though the best was made in England, and particularly in Kent.

Standgate Creek, where ships perform quarantine, Sheerness, the Nore, and the coast of Essex, are to be clearly seen from hence. On the side of the hill are many curious plants, which will afford much entertainment to the botanist. Harris says, that the hedge on the left hand is on the old Watling-street road of the Romans. Near the 33d mile-stone is a road which leads to the village of Gillingham, for an account of which see the article Brompton, p. 408.

In March, 1792, some men being employed in digging chalk a considerable depth, in a field contiguous to the river Medway, in the parish of Frinsbury, discovered a leaden coffin, the lid of which, on the outside, was marked with many curious devices. Several human bones in the coffin were solid and bright. From the appearance of the situation, as well as the circumstances, it was supposed to have lain there many centuries.

Transcribed by Mervyn King
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All spellings, punctuation and style have been preserved as far as possible. The major concession to the modern reader has been the replacement of the 'long s' or 'ſ' which closely resembles an 'f' and was used for the lower case 's' when it occurred anywhere in a word aside from the final letter.