

# PROLOGUE

## FORGOTTEN FOLK

Off the beaten tourist track and tucked into a sheltered bay on the eastern side of the Rame peninsula in Cornwall lie the twin villages of Kingsand and Cawsand. For three hundred years and more they were the home of the Eddeys, the family of my father's mother.

I began my family history research with the Eddeys because they promised to be the most colourful. So it was to prove and as researches progressed, tales unfolded of heroic rescues, smuggling, floggings, deaths by drowning and cholera, a great battle with the Russians and encounters with Chinese pirates and Arab slavers.

Initially we knew only that the Eddeys lived at Cawsand and that my great-grandfather (whose name I did not know) was a seaman. The only physical historical evidence was a brass telescope, some faded photographs and a picture postcard of Cawsand sent to my grandfather from my grandmother visiting there in 1921, on which she had marked various family homes. She was then, sadly, dying of cancer.

At first, the Eddeys (not to be confused with Eddys) were to prove elusive, and they must have been smiling down on us as we kept going up blind alleys in our searches. Marie and I made a start in June 1998, when we went down to Cornwall with my dear cousin Arthur. We visited Maker church and searched its misty graveyard, frustrated at finding no Eddey graves. On our next visit in October, we were to find them all lying in Rame churchyard five miles away. We drove to Cawsand and wandered its narrow streets, identifying the homes marked on Harriet's postcard and were delighted when Janet Ogden kindly invited us into her cottage, where Thomasin once lived. We chatted to local people and discovered two excellent books about the area, *'The Spirit of Rame'* and Tony Carne's *'Cornwall's Forgotten Corner'*, both of which contained so much local history.

We visited the Cornish Family History Society in Truro, which has extensive genealogical records for the county and found it a great hive of activity. But there was more disappointment and mystification when we failed to locate Harriet anywhere in the 1881 census for Cornwall. We subsequently found that by then, the family had moved north. Neither were they listed in the 1871 census printout of Eddeys/Eddys in Rame which was produced for us. We returned home very frustrated, to start on the deskwork. By the time of our later visits, which with our greater experience were far more productive, Henry and family had appeared on their database for 1871.

From her marriage certificate, I ascertained my grandmother's birth date and was so able to obtain a copy certificate. From that I learned about my great-grandparents. Fortunately, they had both been born shortly after the civil registration of births that had commenced in 1837 so that I then had information about their parents and their jobs. This was an exciting time, for each certificate brought new revelations and provided clues for the next enquiry.

The census returns for their villages, starting in 1841, gave us details of the streets where they lived and the names and ages of children. We could not understand at first why Thomas Eddey did not appear in the 1841 census, but when we found his gravestone, it told us that that he had drowned the year before. Six months later, we were delighted to obtain a copy of the newspaper report of his drowning from the Plymouth Library.

For the years prior to the introduction of civil records, we had to rely on parish registers, which are held at the county record offices in Truro, Exeter and Winchester. Fortunately, most of the family happenings took place in Maker and Rame, although it took time to trace Thomas and Thomasin's marriage.

Details in the parish registers were very sparse, and much depended on how conscientious was the priest concerned. For instance, on the marriage register entry there was usually an opportunity to state the occupation of the groom. So we know that Richard was a 'fisherman' when he married, but Samuel's occupation is left blank while Thomas's entry even gave the name of the Royal Navy cutter on which he was serving.

The sad inscriptions on the family gravestones in Rame churchyard made their own contribution to the story, and as we read them, those long-lost relatives on the official records suddenly became real people.

I had always assumed that the Eddeys in their Rame fastness were of pure Cornish stock, and it came as a surprise to find that one of my great-great-grandfathers in Cawsand was

Irish. That brought about a visit to County Cork, seeking further background. Unfortunately, we could trace no further details about Robert Hurley there.

Any wills would also have been a mine of information, but a check with the Truro record office revealed that of all the Eddeys, only Richard and his brother John had left a will, probably because they were the only ones with any significant wealth. Richard's was fascinating and told a great deal more about his family and those into which they married.

Although there were few Royal Navy records for ordinary seamen before 1850, fortunately Robert Hurley's application for a long service pension from the coastguard had a certificate of service in the navy to support it, listing the ships on which he had served. Henry's 'Application for Continuous Service' gave similar details, plus a personal description of sorts. Once we had the names of the ships in which Henry and Robert had sailed, we were able to read their logs for the periods concerned, over four visits to the Public Record Office in Kew. It was fascinating to enter the world of 150 years ago, turning over the musty pages of journals written in a careful hand by men now so long dead. Subsequently, books on navy life, smugglers, Cornish wrecks, the pilot service and the Russian war provided a graphic background picture of the world in which my ancestors lived and died.

An IT check of telephone subscribers revealed that there were only a dozen Eddeys listed for the whole of the UK. I phoned them all, to discover they comprised just five families and I hit the genealogical jackpot when I called Keith Eddey, a retired solicitor living near Oxford. It transpired he had researched his branch of the Eddey family history when at university some forty years before. I found that we shared the same great x 4 grandfather, Samuel. The results of Keith's meticulous researches and his subsequent information were an enormous help. I then phoned the only four Spriddells listed, to discover yet more distant relatives, for they were all of the one family originating from Cawsand.

I traced another of Samuel's descendants, Margaret Smith in Plymouth, who gave me Eddey and Jope family information gathered by her late father, Commander Ronald Eddey. We met her widowed sister-in-law, also Margaret - the last Eddey living on Rame. When Marie and I visited her at Millbrook, we discovered at the back of her family album a faded transcript telling the tale of the smuggler Henry Chappel. Another lucky find came on a visit to Esquimalt Naval Base in Canada where I obtained its official history containing a rare picture of the 'Flying Squadron', together with some colourful background. And at the Maritime Museum in nearby Victoria, I discovered an enlargement of the same picture, which identified each of the ships by name.

As the *Coromandel* rescue took place in 1824, the year in which the RNLI was founded, I telephoned their Poole HO in the faint hope that they might have further information. They sent a list of Plymouth station medal holders, on which I was delighted to see Richard's name appear, not once but twice. They then provided more detail from their archives, leading to further research on his rescues. Richard Larn's books on Devon and Cornwall shipwrecks proved very helpful in providing further detail of the shipwrecks in which Richard was involved. In turn, I was pleased to be able to provide him with some new data for his records.

Over the centuries my Rame forbears were unknowing witnesses of the preludes to some of the great events in English history. They would have seen the 'pilgrim fathers' sailing down Plymouth Sound on their journey to America, then the ships and troops setting off to fight their descendants 50 years later. They would have witnessed the departures of Sir Francis Drake and Captain Cook on their epic voyages of discovery, and the great fleets sailing out to victory over Spain and France.

When Victoria came to the throne, more than 3500 people lived in Kingsand and Cawsand, the tiny streets full of barefoot children at play, mothers gossiping in the doorways, fishermen working on the beach and the alehouses full of yarning seamen. Today, the population has fallen to 1000, and is ageing. The village centres are little changed, but the narrow streets, which fortunately discourage cars, are quiet and empty apart from tourists. Outside the summer months, only the ghosts of children play.

The boats on the beach are now sailing dinghies, while the fine church at Maker, once the very centre of Kingsand life, lies locked and silent even on some Sundays, for fear of vandals. There are now no Eddeys, Hurleys or Spriddells in the villages except in their churchyards; but at least they are no longer forgotten folk in Cornwall's 'forgotten corner' and for as long as this record survives, they will have a small kind of immortality.

It was a wonderful experience to have discovered them, and it is nice to think that perhaps they know we did.

## 1: SQUIRES and SPIRES

The local landed gentry of Rame were, and still are, the Edgcumbes. Richard Edgcumbe, a yeoman farmer, was knighted on the field of the Battle of Bosworth in 1485 by Henry Tudor, and in 1553 his descendant namesake built a fine mansion in a beautiful location overlooking Plymouth Sound which he named Mount Edgcumbe. Admiral George Edgcumbe was elevated to Viscount in 1799 'for his patriotism', taking the title Mount Edgcumbe.

The family owned the freehold of many properties in Kingsand and Cawsand, but there is little evidence of any beneficence other than the drinking fountain erected in Cawsand Square by Countess Edgcumbe in 1870. Before that, villagers would often drink from contaminated streams, bringing illness and sometimes death, and leading to the terrible outbreak of cholera in 1849.

The Edgcumbe family was patron of Maker church, the parish church of Kingsand, and it is to them that it owes its stained glass and monuments. Maker means 'old ruins', indicating that the church was once the centre of an ancient settlement. It was demolished and rebuilt in 1500, and is situated in a now isolated position on high ground some two miles from the village, its high tower making an excellent look-out point during the French wars. The churchyard contains few identifiable Eddey graves, although most of the family originated there in the 18th century.

The Maker Green Games were held in front of the church until the early 19th century, lasting for three days and attracting huge crowds from miles around, including Plymouth. There were big prizes for bull baiting, wrestling, cudgelling and, for the women, running races. All the local inns set up stalls and there was much gambling and heavy drinking. At the end of the day, the press gang would also be in attendance to pick up incautious befuddled youths.

The people of Cawsand worshipped at Rame church (patron, unsurprisingly, Earl of Mount Edgcumbe) which is dedicated to Saint Germanus, who is said to have landed from Gaul in AD 429. *'The living is a rectory, valued in the King's books at £12. 7s. 6d; net income, £206'* It has an unspoilt, simple charm, still lit by candles to this day and stands on high ground about a mile from the village, with the sea visible on three sides. It was last consecrated in 1259, but a church existed there long before that, although the name of its original Celtic saint is unknown. It is not locked.

Rame churchyard is entered by a lych gate, which is divided by a coffin stone, and contains the graves of the people of Cawsand up to the present day, as the church of St Andrew built in the village in 1878 'to be nearer the people' has no graveyard. In the last century, as only the well-to-do could afford a horse-drawn hearse, the all too frequent funerals involved a long, slow walk up hill to the church, with the coffin being borne by six young men.

It is in the churchyard at Rame that most of the Eddeys are buried, confirming their moves from Kingsand. At least three generations of the family lie there, with Richard and his earlier children occupying what might have been a favoured position close to the gate. There are many Spriddell graves near the Eddeys, friends and relations together in death just as in life. Many of the gravestones reflect the close connection with the sea, with tragic deaths recorded such as those of two drowned Eddey pilots, and three seagoing members of the Spriddell family, including brothers Richard and Thomas who drowned six years apart on Royal Navy ships. There is a memorial to Francis Eddy, a seaman who fell before Sebastopol in 1854 and there are touching epitaphs recording the deaths of young children. The grouping of the coastguard graves, set a little apart from those of the other villagers, perhaps tells its own story.

In those days of erratic spelling, the person who instructed the stonemason came into his own as the final arbiter. Although Richard was 'Eddy' to Trinity House and the minister at his baptism, but 'Eddey' at his marriage; although Thomas and Samuel were 'Eddy' or 'Edy' to various parish priests at different times; although Thomasin was 'Eddy' to the 1861 census taker and even to the registrar of her death, they all ended up as 'Eddey' on their headstones in Rame churchyard. And so it was that the Eddey name became literally set in stone.

We left flowers at their peaceful graves, probably the first for a century and more.

## 2: The MUSTERMEN

Kingsand got its name from Henry VII who came ashore there in 1484, during the Wars of the Roses, when his ship anchored in Cawsand Bay. In those days, there were only a few fishermen's hovels along the sea front.

Much later, in 1602 a chronicler said that Cawsand Bay was a '*refuge of the most noxious kind of sea farer*' who found shelter and fresh water there. Most of the inhabitants of the area lived on the higher ground, as they were much safer up there from the sea-borne raiders from Brittany, Spain and even North Africa, who infested the area before the Royal Navy gained ascendancy in the 18th century. Before that, Cornish fishermen dared not venture too far out to sea for fear of capture and slavery by pirates.

From the reign of Henry VIII, and for the next 300 years, there was fear of invasion from the French, the Spanish and the Dutch and there were few more sensitive locations than the Plymouth area. In order to finance his naval expenditure, Henry levied a 'subsidy' which was the opposite of what it sounds, for it was a kind of poll tax. It is in the Cornwall Subsidies that we find the first references to Eddeys in their various spellings. In 1544, two John Edes are listed in the parish of Maker, one or both of whom could have been the direct predecessors of the Samuel Eddey line, as could those listed in the 1569 Cornwall Muster Rolls below.

To form a first line of defence against invaders and to supplement the regular forces, which were few and far between, a local volunteer force was enlisted. The analogy with the 'Dad's Army of the 1940's, who at first armed themselves with pitchforks, is strengthened by the list of the arms which they had to declare as available for conflict. The Muster Roll of 1569 lists these Eddeys and Spriddells with their fearsome armouries, enough to give pause to any invader:

Parish of Rame	Ric. Edy.	bow, 12 arrows.
	John Spindrell <i>jnr.</i>	bow, 6 arrows.
	John Spradell <i>snr.</i>	bow, 12 arrows, bill
Parish of Maker:	Roger Edy.	bow, sh, arr, bill.
	Edward Edy.	bow, sh, arr, pike.
Parish of Pillaton:	John Edy <i>jnr.</i>	bill.
	James Edy.	bill.

Lying at the mouth of the Tamar, and facing Plymouth across the Sound, Cawsand was a convenient place from which invaders could attack Plymouth, and to guard against this, Sir Philip Grenville installed a battery there in 1580. These fortifications were to be the forerunners of many others to be built on the Rame peninsula over the following 350 years, the majority being redundant or obsolete even before they were completed.

When the Spanish Armada sailed to invade Britain in 1588, its leader, the Duke Medina Sidonia, who had earlier been deeply impressed with the beauty of Mount Edgcumbe, declared that, after his defeat of Britain, it would be '*his and his alone*'. He was counting his Spanish chickens, for as the Armada was sighted off the Lizard, a chain of warning beacons was lit and a section of the English fleet, under the command of Sir Francis Drake, beat out of Plymouth and forced its way to windward of the Spaniards six miles to the west of Eddystone Rocks.

As they were pursued past Rame Head there was a great explosion and a sheet of flame as the San Salvador, a huge 800 ton flagship, had her innards blown out. How the people watching spellbound from Rame Head must have cheered: they were not to know that this was the result of an accident on board. Then, as Drake attacked the Vice-Admiral's ship it sheered-off and caused two other galleons to collide. More cheers, then the fleets disappeared into the gathering mist. The bills, pikes, bows and arrows of Rame were not to be needed this day.

But nine years later, in March 1597, a Spanish ship appeared in Cawsand Bay and landed some men under cover of night, who '*hanged up barrels of matter fit to take fire upon certain doors, by which a train should have burned the houses. But one of the inhabitants espying these unwelcome guests, with the bounce of a caliver, chased them aboard and removed the barrels before the trains came to work their effect.*'

So the Mustermen had proved their worth.

### 3: THE EDDEYS of KINGSAND

Queen Elizabeth was responsible for some of the first large buildings in Kingsand, when she decreed that there should be three meatless days in each week. As planned, this proved a great stimulus to the fishing industry, thereby creating a large reserve of seamen. 'Cellars' were soon built along the beach for the curing of pilchards, in competition with the established cellars in Plymouth, to the fury of their owners. Richard Eddey was to become the owner of one of the cellars, which still remains. Before long, Kingsand pilchards were being exported to Ireland and the continent.

Parish records of baptisms, marriages and burials were made compulsory by Thomas Cromwell in 1538, but implementation was patchy. The registers of Maker and Rame were not started until the seventeenth century, when we find the christening of a William Eddy, the son of William and Martha Eddy in 1668 at St. Germans. The first Rame register records the birth of John Eddy in 1671, but no parents are named, while in Pillaton, the marriages of John Ede in 1565 and James Ede in 1580 are recorded in the parish register. The Exeter Wills Index lists three Eddys in the St. Germans area, which included Maker and Rame: two Johns who died in 1572 and 1589 respectively, and William who died in 1671. Unfortunately, the wills themselves were destroyed in the 1941 blitz on Exeter.

The cliffs of Rame echoed to the roar of cannon in 1642 as Englishman fought Englishman in the Civil War. Parliamentary Plymouth and the heavily fortified Drake's Island were besieged by the Cornish army who were fighting the lost Royalist cause for three long years. In turn, Mount Edgcumbe was under siege by parliamentarians for a year. The war ended in 1645. Following the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, Charles II founded a naval dockyard at Devonport, adjoining Plymouth. Completed by 1692, it grew rapidly as a naval base, perfectly placed as it was to meet threats from the navies of Spain and France. It was during these times that the 'garrets', or defensive crenellations, were built along the line of what is now Garrett Street, shared by both Kingsand and Cawsand as the two villages gradually developed along the cliff face and became joined. This street was to be home for many families of Eddys over the following hundred and fifty years.

Genealogical information improves in the eighteenth century, but it is still difficult to identify the parentage of Samuel Eddy, who founded the family we know. John Edey and Elizabeth Dangur married at Maker in 1737 and had a daughter Elizabeth. At 21, she had a 'base child' baptised Samuel, at Maker in 1759. He was twelve years too young to be the Samuel Edey buried in 1828 aged 81. Samuel was not a common name, and he probably was the Samuel Eddy, '*Mariner, late of the Pegase*' who married Sarah Conner at Stoke Damarel, Devon in November 1783. The *Pegase* (Pegasus) was a French frigate captured in the Bay of Biscay the previous year by HMS *Foudroyant*, and Samuel would have been part of the prize crew which sailed her back to Plymouth. Prize money must have given his marriage a good start.

The origin of the family's founder probably lies in the birth in 1725 of a son, William, to Edward and Joan Eddy of Maker. Edward died the same year and his widow, probably penniless, may have sought shelter with her Aunt Mary Eddy who had married in 1715 at St Mellion and was now living at Pillaton. These were neighbouring villages some 12 miles inland.

In 1743, William Eddy, now aged 18, married Elizabeth Iland in St Mellion. A son William was born to them in 1744, Mary in 1745, John in February 1747 then Samuel arrived, surprisingly, in December of the same year. He was christened at the church of St. Odulphus, Pillaton on January 14 1748. This date fits our Samuel, but why did he end up in Kingsand and then not marry until the late age of 31? No previous marriage of a Samuel has been recorded in any of the likely local parishes.

The most plausible explanation is of course that he went to sea, either willingly in the merchant service in preference to the life of a farm labourer in the hills of Pillaton, or pressed into service with the Royal Navy. On discharge, he would have decided for the life of a fisherman, far better than that of a farm labourer, and settled in Kingsand where his grandparents had lived and where he still had relatives. He would have become well acquainted with the villages when his ships moored in Cawsand Bay.

There ends the conjecture. In October 1778, Samuel Eddy 'of the parish of Maker' rather hurriedly married Catherine Soper, a Cawsand girl ten years his junior, in Rame church. Their first child Elizabeth, was born six weeks later. They went on to have a further eight children including twins, and Samuel was able to afford to have at least some of them taught at a local cottage school. Three of his six sons were to become pilots and his first-born namesake, an innkeeper. Their children were baptised at Maker (three of them as 'Eddey'), indicating that they lived in Kingsand. Their third-born, in 1784 was Richard, to be my great-great-great-grandfather.

Richard Eddey was still living in Kingsand when he married Elizabeth Bond at Maker church, in January 1803. His older brother Samuel had married Jane Jasper there six weeks before. The ceremony was witnessed by his father, who made his distinctive 'E' mark in the register. Both Richard and Elizabeth were able to sign their names, Richard being described as a fisherman. He was just 19, and Elizabeth, 18.

As they were under the age of consent of 21 years, they would have been required to obtain a special licence showing the consent of their parents. There is no record of Elizabeth Bond's baptism, but for a few years between 1783 and 1794 there was a tax of three pence levied on registrations of baptisms. This must have been a deterrent to poorer families, and Elizabeth's parents perhaps decided to save their pennies.

Although there is no record of Samuel's occupation, he must have been a fisherman and he would have passed on to Richard and his other sons his knowledge of the local sea areas that enabled them to qualify as Plymouth pilots. Like other enterprising local fishermen, Richard would also have been engaged in the smuggling industry, probably the reason for his increasing prosperity and the gradual acquisition of properties in the area. It is improbable that he could have earned so much from pilotage fees or from fishing.

Richard Eddey's first child was my great-great-grandfather Thomas, who was christened at Maker church on July 17 1803, some seven months after his parents' marriage. There then seems to be a gap of five years before the arrival of Elizabeth Lamb, who died within the year. There is no evidence to explain the 'Lamb' middle name. The following year, a second son Richard was born, bringing a second tragedy for Richard and Elizabeth, for in the 1841 census he is recorded as being deaf, which would mean he was also dumb.

The 'Great War' with France began after Louis XIV lost his head in 1793. In 1796 Spain, our natural enemies for three centuries, joined in when they thought France was winning. We were to save them from Bonaparte oppression 18 years on. The war resulted in a great increase in naval activity in the strategic area of Plymouth and caused the first ('temporary') introduction of income tax.

Great prosperity came to the villages of Rame, and caused a period of the greatest architectural development with the construction of many three-storied houses, unusual in Cornwall, many of them in Garrett Street. There was plenty of work at the dockyards and their suppliers, and the need and opportunity to cater for the thirst and other pursuits of the local garrisons and the hundreds of sailors on leave from their ships moored in Cawsand Bay or the Hamoaze. This resulted in the opening of many more public houses, some very disreputable. At one time there were 17 such establishments in Kingsand and Cawsand.

In the years leading up to the battle of Trafalgar in 1805, Cawsand Bay often was used as a safe anchorage for Admiral Lord Nelson's fleet blockading the French ships in Brest and La Rochelle, when sheltering from the south-westerly gales which swept up the English Channel. The Old Ship Inn in Garrett Street claims, without proof, that Nelson stayed there when he was rowed ashore for assignments with Lady Hamilton. His fleet needed many replacements, and volunteers for the hard life at sea were understandably few, despite the introduction of inoculations for smallpox and the great novelty of a free issue of soap. So the Press Gang remained regular visitors to the villages, seeking unwary prospects leaving the alehouses.

Until boundaries were changed in 1844, Kingsand was in Devon and Cawsand in Cornwall, and there was great rivalry between the villages. In 1810, the year after Richard was granted his Trinity House licence, he decided to change sides. He and Elizabeth with their young sons Thomas and Richard moved to Cawsand, which provided a more sheltered location and where he was already grounding his boat. And so, to the confusion of his researchers 190 years on, 'Richard **Eddy** of Kingsand' became 'Richard **Eddey** of Cawsand'.

## 4: The PILOTS

Trinity House, which today is responsible for lighthouses and pilotage around the coasts of Britain, grew from the Guild of Mariners, founded in the 13th century *'for the actual suppression of evil disposed persons bringing ships to destruction by showing forth false beacons... to succour from the sea all who are beset on the coasts of England, to feed them when hungered and athirst, to bind up their wounds and to build and light proper beacons for the guidance of mariners'*.

In 1512, the Guild petitioned Henry VIII for a royal charter for *'the pilotage in rivers by young men unwilling to take the labour and advantage of learning the shipman's craft on the high seas, is likely to cause scarcity of mariners; and so this your realm which heretofore hath flourished with a navy to all other lands dreadful, shall be left destitute of cunning masters and mariners'*.

In the early days, Trinity House concerned itself only with the Thames and South East ports, conducting examinations for pilots, who all worked as self-employed, being directly reimbursed by the masters or owners of the ships which they piloted. All other ports ('the outports') had local pilotage arrangements, but in 1808, George III established the Trinity House Outports, bringing Plymouth and others under its control. An annual fee for the pilot's licence was set at £3.3s for the London area and £2.12s.6d elsewhere (an early appearance of 'London weighting?'). The pilots or their relatives had access to a number of charitable trusts in times of need.

Long before Trinity House came on the scene, many fishermen of Kingsand and Cawsand used their unrivalled knowledge of the local coastline and sea conditions to pilot merchant vessels from all around the world safely into Plymouth Sound for an appropriate fee. The size of this was often a jealously guarded secret. Many used those same skills in the lucrative business of smuggling, so adding a third arrow to their bows.

The strategic location of the villages at the entrance to the Sound gave its men a great advantage over the Plymouth fishermen. Some pilots clearly lost little time in applying for the new Trinity House licences, particularly the Eddeys and Spriddells who seemed to dominate the profession locally. Four Spriddells - Thomas, John, William and Henry (who was to become Thomas's father-in-law) were all licensed pilots of the outport of Plymouth.

Henry Spriddell was licensed in 1808 at the age of 31, and his licence tells us that he was *'5 feet 9½ inches high, dark complexion, slight made, black hair'*. His licence was suspended in 1836 and may not have been restored, as the 1841 census shows him at 60 as 'superannuated pilot', living in Garrett Street a few doors from Thomasin.

Richard Eddey, still living in Kingsand, passed his examination and was granted a second class pilot's licence on December 28, 1809, when he was 26 years of age. His Second Class licence, still held in Trinity House records, qualified him to pilot ships *'From Plymouth Sound in and out of Hamoaze, and Plymouth Pool and Catwater in and out of Cawsand Bay, and over the bridge into Hamoaze: For the Court, to the Westward as far as Looe, and Eastward as far as the Start, and in and out of all Ports and Places between those limits'*. The licence also provides us with his description: *'5 feet 7¼ inches high, dark complexion, stout made, dark brown hair'*.

The licence refers to *'over the bridge into Hamoaze'*. There is in fact no bridge, but a geological fault not far below the surface of the sea which links the Cornish coast to Drake's Island, and is still shown as 'The Bridge' on navigational maps to this day.

Three other of Samuel Eddey's sons were also licensed: James before Richard in 1808 as soon as the outport was established, John in 1825 and Joseph in 1837. In turn, two of Richard Eddey's sons became licensed pilots - Thomas in 1826 at the age of 23 and Samuel in 1845. There is no physical description on Thomas's licence, and Samuel's gives only the briefest of descriptions: *'5ft1½ins. Brown hair.'* A short man, even for those times

The piloting business was fiercely competitive, and there was often a furious race to be the first to reach an approaching vessel to offer their services. The gigs they used were all made locally to a similar design, and among the builders were Richard Jope, who married Richard Eddey's daughter Eliza and built his boats on Cawsand Bound, between the beach and the Square. Another was Alfred Burlace of Kingsand who married another daughter, Emma, in 1847.

The pilot gigs were clinker built of elm with keels of oak. They were slim and speedy, with a slightly raised prow and stern, and they were of necessity, extremely seaworthy. They could be rigged for sails and were originally designed for eight rowers. However, the Excise insisted this should be reduced to six, then in 1841 for a time it was made illegal to have more than four, so that they could not so easily outrun the Revenue cruisers which were powered by sail. But they could still escape them when hard pressed by rowing frantically to windward.

It could well have been a Cawsand pilot who brought HMS *Bellerophon* into Plymouth Sound in 1815, carrying Napoleon Bonaparte on his way into exile on St. Helena following his defeat at Waterloo. As can be imagined this visitation attracted great attention, much to the delight of the Cawsand boatmen busily plying for hire. The Royal Cornwall Gazette of August 5, 1814 reported '*The 'Bellerophon' has been surrounded by boats, all swarming with curious folk from all parts of the Country, and anxious to get a glimpse of him*'. It further records, with some disgust that '*a considerable number of people in boats... took off their hats and cheered the tyrant*'. But probably they were cheering his defeat and humiliation.

John Eddey, one of Richard's brothers, provided a dramatic demonstration of the pilot's skills when he saved the Dutch East Indiaman *Yonge Willem* from almost certain destruction in February 1841. The bark was bound from Surinam to Rotterdam with coffee, spices and sugar, when she broke loose from her moorings at the west end of the newly-completed Plymouth breakwater in a hard NE gale and heavy snow. She was in great danger of being dashed to pieces on the rocks of Penlee Point, but John's skills and energy enabled him to ground her safely on Cawsand beach, so saving the ship and the lives of her crew- as well as his own. No doubt there were jokes from his colleagues that he was taking the short way home.

It was a hazardous calling, and lives were inevitably lost. In 1820, Thomas Spriddell died, as his gravestone tells us '*Unfortunately by a fall from the mast of his ship*'. That may have occurred in the course of his piloting duties, or perhaps he was then serving in a merchantman. His grave lies next to that of his niece Thomasin in Rame churchyard. Then in 1840, Thomas Eddey, my great-great grandfather was drowned in the course of his work. His story follows.

Some forty years on, yet another Eddey pilot was to perish in the waters of the Sound. By this time, pilots had begun to use larger boats - Trinity House cutters, which carried their own rowing boats. On midsummer's day 1881, James Eddey, the son of John who saved the *Yonge Willem*, and four other pilots left the Cawsand cutter *Mystery* in its pulling boat and put Samuel Hancock aboard the steamer *Blenheim*, which the Plymouth pilot cutter had missed in fog off the Eddystone.

On their way back to the *Mystery* their small boat was swamped off Penlee Point and capsized. One man disappeared, another drowned after being struck by a hawser thrown with the best of intent from the *Blenheim*, and the third drowned while trying to swim to shore. The sole survivor was a non-swimmer who hung on to the boat's painter.

Tragically, James Eddey's wife Ann, standing at the window of their home with her three-month-old baby in her arms, saw the whole terrible incident and watched helplessly as her husband drowned. Her seven children were thus left without a father. One of them was to become Keith Eddey's grandfather.

Six-oared pilot gigs of the traditional design are still built today, but for a very different purpose. *The Spirit of Rame* and *Minnadhu* can be seen regularly practising in Cawsand Bay for the annual regattas. Now they pit the skills and strength of their crews and the speed of their gigs against other boats, and not those of Her Majesty's Customs and Excise. Or so we believe.



## 5. The EDDEYS of CAWSAND

Henry Spriddell, a fisherman and aspiring pilot of Cawsand, married Thomazin Dann in Rame church in 1799 at the early age of 20. They were both able to sign their names, Thomazin signing phonetically as 'Tamasn'. In less than three years however, Henry was widowed and showing great resilience, he returned to the same church in April of 1802 to marry Mary Sleeman. On March 23 of the following year, a daughter was born to them. Very nobly, Mary called her Thomasin after Henry's first wife.

The people of Rame lived in a very different world from ours. Women would spin wool and weave cloth which was then sent to local mills for dipping and stretching before being made up by journeymen tailors working for a shilling a day and their food. The suits were practically everlasting, and they needed to be. Skilled farmhands were paid 9 shillings (45p) per week, and the earnings of fishermen were precarious as bad weather often prevented them from sailing. They would supplement their diets with potatoes grown in their gardens or on small plots on the cliffs, for the crabs, lobsters and crayfish they caught were considered too good for home consumption. Homes were lit by candles or cruses filled with pilchard oil, and water came from wells or from streams that were often polluted. Home ovens were rare, but for a penny, the local baker would bake the women's pies in his oven.

All heavy goods came to the villages by sea, including beer supplies and coal from Northumberland, the barges being grounded on Cawsand beach for unloading at low tide. Prices were high for any goods brought from a distance, such as sugar at eight pence per pound. Smuggling kept the cost of other items down- such as tea, which could be bought in France for two shillings a pound, while the legal price in England, where it was heavily taxed, was ten shillings and more. Tobacco was bought by smugglers for 3 pence a pound and sold at 15 pence. The duty alone on legal tobacco was two shillings and tenpence. Nothing changes.

The subject of smuggling brings us back to Richard Edey, now settled in Cawsand where Elizabeth bore him four daughters, two sets of twin boys and another son. Thomas, Richard's first son, and Thomasin Spriddell must have played together as children in the small, close community of Cawsand, probably intrigued at the similarity of their names.

Then Thomas went off to join the Royal Navy, which by now was at peace. For her part, Thomasin went to work in Stonehouse. She may have gone into domestic service or found employment at the huge Royal William Victualling Yards facing Cremyll, which prepared the food for the King's ships. They stand to this day.

On July 1, 1823 Thomas and Thomasin married, not at Rame church in their home village as might be expected, but at the church of St Paul at East Stonehouse, probably because it was more convenient for them both, although there may have been a rift between Thomas and his family. Thomas was serving at that time on His Majesty's Cutter "*Swallow*". She was just 45ft long, a 'pulling boat' rowed by twelve seamen, but like most of her kind, she could be rigged with sails. They were normally utilised as ships' tenders for inshore or harbour work and *Swallow* would be working in Hamoaze, off Devonport. She was to sink two years later in the West Indies while gathering information on French strength in Martinique. By this time, the French were our friends, but you can't be too careful.

Samuel, the father of the family, died aged 81 in 1828. In his lifetime, Britain had fought the Prussians, Bavarians, Dutch, Spanish, French, and regrettably, the Americans. Samuel's wife Catherine was to die ten years later at the same great age, and was buried with him in Rame churchyard. The inscription on his grave is still just visible

Thomas Edey's period of navy service was short, for he obtained his Trinity House pilot's licence the year following his marriage. The Royal Navy offered only casual employment and in time of peace needed far fewer men and Thomas may have been discharged. Settled back in Cawsand, Thomas and Thomasin went on to have eight children, starting of course with a Thomas, three years after their marriage. Then followed twin boys, both of whom died in infancy, followed by three girls and two more boys. In 1840, the third year of Queen Victoria's reign, my great-grandfather Henry John was born. He was ten months old when his father was drowned.

## 6. SHIPWRECKS, WRECKERS AND RESCUES

Plymouth Sound, like the rest of the Cornish coast, was the scene of hundreds of shipwrecks over the centuries and the feared Eddystone Rocks, eight miles out from Rame, claimed many lives. There is an unsubstantiated family legend that in 1641, a merchant ship named Eddy was shipwrecked there and from then on the rocks were named the Eddy Stones; but the name is more likely to refer to the tidal rips around the reef. The first lighthouse was built there in 1691, and lasted just five years before being burned down.

The citizens of Cawsand were witnesses to high drama and tragedies in their bay: in 1769, the frigate *Kent* suddenly blew up while at anchor off the village; a careless gunner had knocked his pipe out near the powder magazine. In 1799, in '*the most severe hurricane ever remembered*', the captured French brig *La Victoire*, laden with wine, struck a ledge beneath Mount Edgumbe and sank with her valuable cargo in deep water.

In 1804 '*a whirlwind frequently carried water in sheets over the town of Cawsand, and deluged the fleet in a sluice*'. Among ships lost in that storm, the brig o' war *Fearless* was sunk off Cawsand, but the crew survived.

Ships fighting an on-shore wind would sometimes mistake Whitsand Bay, to the west of Rame, for Plymouth Sound, to the east. Once in the bay in those circumstances they were doomed, and the 'wreckers' would wait eagerly on the beach for cargoes and bodies to be washed ashore. This bounty from the sea, a harvest from the misfortunes of others, was welcomed by the local people who were mostly very poor. By the time the authorities arrived at the scene of many wrecks, most drowned bodies would be found naked, for dead men need no clothes.

In 1788, the first scheme for a breakwater in Plymouth Sound was put forward, but work did not begin until 1812 and was not completed until 1841, at a cost of £11 million. Over 4½ million tons of rock went into its construction. The Sound was thus made much safer, although the rocks of Rame would continue to take their toll.

Plymouth was one of the first places on the coast of Great Britain to have a lifeboat, built by Henry Greathead of South Shields, and stationed there in 1803 as a gift from their local MP. 'The Royal National Institution for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck' was formed in 1824 under the patronage of King George IV, and it was resolved that '*Medallions or Pecuniary Rewards be given to those who rescue Lives in cases of shipwreck*. A new boat was immediately placed at Plymouth, together with 'Captain Manby's Mortar Apparatus', for firing lines to ships in distress. Gold and silver medals were designed, bearing on one side, the head of George IV and on the reverse three sailors in a lifeboat, one drawing a shipwrecked mariner from the waves, with the inscription 'Let not the deep swallow me up'.

On November 23, 1824, an '*awful and calamitous storm*' caused at least 22 vessels to be wrecked off Plymouth. Heavy seas off Eddystone capsized the 110-ton ketch *Coromandel*, bound from Faro to the Downs with a cargo of cork. The lookout and helmsman on deck at that time were swept off and drowned, leaving the captain, two crew and a passenger trapped in complete darkness in the cabin of the overturned ship, which began to fill with water.

The terrified men crept up into the bilge and remained there with water up to their necks as the vessel fortunately drifted into Plymouth rather than out to sea, where she struck the breakwater which was then still under construction. Standing there in the dark, with the roar of the waves smashing against the breakwater in their ears, and the ship breaking up around them, they waited for the end.

Richard Eddey came to the rescue. Observing the terrible plight of the ship, he launched his boat off Cawsand beach with his brother John, his son Thomas, (now obviously out of the navy) Henry Spriddell (Thomas's father-in-law) and two others, '*at the imminent risk of their lives, to render assistance to the vessel in distress*'. Taking great risks in the tempestuous seas, they were able to rescue the four exhausted survivors as the tide fell.

The *Plymouth and Devonport Weekly Journal*, reporting the storm the next day, gave details of a number of the wrecks, including the *Coromandel* and that of the Brig *Female*, from which the only survivor was the captain's wife, whose husband had lashed her to the rigging. It went on:

*'A number of unfeeling wretches were committed to our gaol charged with stealing from the wrecks. We trust they will be severely punished by the Court for their hardened and unnatural conduct. It was consolatory to observe the humane behaviour of our townsmen to alleviate the suffering of the poor sailors thus thrown naked on our shores'.*

John Renton, *Coromandel's* master, wrote to Trinity House on the day of his rescue:

*'These are to certify that Richard Edey and crew of the Pilot Boat No. 24, The Two Brothers of Plymouth, who took me and the remainder of the crew of the Coromandel of London being four in number after being upset off the Eddystone at 4¼ am 23 of November, and drifting at the mercy of the wind and sea until about noon when the vessel struck on the breakwater, where without the assistance of the above mentioned we must have perished on the return of the tide, and at the same time endangering their own lives and property to render up these assistance when there was no other boat at that time could or offered to come near the place'.*

The inhabitants of Stoke Damarel, near Devonport also wrote to Trinity House that they had held a meeting to raise a subscription 'in aid of the sufferers' and continued:

*'Viewing with admiration the conduct of Mr Richard Eddy, branch pilot of Cawsand and his boat's crew in saving the survivors at their imminent peril and at the risk of their lives, do, through their Chairman, address the Trinity House Board in terms of high approbation on their behalf, and respectfully recommend them to its favourable consideration. I have the honour to enclose such particulars as will enable your honourable Board fully to appreciate the service performed by Mr. Rich. Eddy and his companions whose names appear in this margin. We are desirous of recommending for Branches when vacancies may occur, John Eddy his brother and Thomas Eddy is his son'*

The letter, signed by the Rev. T. M. Hitchins, of St. John's Chapel, Devonport, and Admiral Samuarez, Commander in Chief, Plymouth, obviously had its effect, with both John and Thomas being licensed as pilots over the next two years.

Richard was subsequently awarded the silver medal of the Institution for his heroism. He and his crew were also awarded the sum of £14 by the Shipwreck Society, for which they conveyed their '*best thanks for the handsome and liberal manner*' of the award.

But that was not to be the end of Richard's heroism.

On the night of January 13 1834, the Prussian barque *Konigsberg* carrying timber from Memel to Opporto, was driven ashore in a fierce gale near Looe, to the west of Rame. To the rescue once again came Richard Edey, taking out two large boats. As on the previous occasion, this was very much a family affair for he had with him his oldest son and namesake, Richard; his sons Thomas and Samuel and his two sons-in-law Richard Chappel and Richard Jope, together with six other men.

They reached the stricken ship at 1 am in the black of night, then tacked about in violent seas until daybreak when they were able to anchor. The ship's two tiny boats were hoisted out and in six trips each, and despite one of the boats being capsized, the whole crew of master, mate and ten men were safely brought off and transferred to the two rescue boats. Part of the cargo was later saved, but the ship broke up and was lost.

Why should these brave men leave the warmth and safety of their homes and row out into the freezing January darkness, risking their lives in such a terrible storm? To be frank, it must have been for the prospect of reward, for they were poor men, for whom a payment of £50 or more in today's terms would be very welcome. But this does not detract from their heroism, and their natural sympathy for fellow seamen in awful peril would have provided great extra motivation.

The *Lloyd's List* of January 17 told the fury of that storm in a few laconic words:

*Plymouth, 14 Jan.*

*It blew a heavy gale last night from SSW and SW. The Wm and Henry Betts, from Cardiff to Constantinople has put in here leaky and with loss of boats, sails, bulwarks, and decks swept. The Konigsberg, [Captain] Zimmerman, from Memel to Lisbon, was driven upon the rocks near this port yesterday, and is full of water. Crew saved.'*

On March 23, Mr W. Reid of the Navy Pay Office, Plymouth, wrote to Thomas Edwards, secretary to The Shipwreck Society at Austin Friars, as follows:

*My dear Sir*

*I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, with the Draft for £14. 10s awarded by the Shipwreck society, for saving the Captain and Crew of the Prussian ship, Konigsberg, lately wrecked near Looe, and informing me that a 'Second Medal' was voted to Richard Eddey, who was honoured with a Silver Medal' from the Institution a few years ago. The money has been distributed as you directed. I beg you will assure the Committee that these Awards have been received most gratefully, and cannot fail to have a beneficial effect in future cases of shipwreck.*

*I remain, my dear Sir,  
Very faithfully yours*

The record shows that Richard was awarded a 'silver medal and silver boat'; that seven of the men, including all his family, received 30 shillings each and the other four men, twenty shillings each. Richard apparently had to be content with the medals. Two of the seven silver medals awarded by the Plymouth lifeboat station in the first ten years of its existence were presented to Richard Eddey.

I never had any hope of tracing Richard's medals, and in 2000 I submitted *The Eddeys of Rame* to the Millennium Family History competition run by The Institute of Heraldic and Genealogical Studies in Canterbury. I was delighted when it was one of fifteen out of 149 eligible entries to be highly commended. It was 'considered to be of a very high standard', with praise for the illustrations and the 'novel approach of themed chapters'.

But there was a further and quite unexpected, consequence, when following the award ceremony, which unfortunately I had not been able to attend, I received a letter from Peter Helmore, general secretary of the Orders and Medals Research Society in Southam, (Patron, HRH The Prince of Wales, no less).

He had attended the presentations with his wife, whose entry was also a runner-up. His interest is medal research particularly related to Devon. My entry caught his eye, and to quote his letter, "As soon as I saw the name Eddey with reference to life saving, I knew I had my man!" He went on to tell me that the second of Richard's two life-saving medals, that which related to the *Konigsberg* rescue in 1834, was auctioned at Spinks in 1995 and fetched the sum of £1,400, more than twice the estimate. The catalogue described it as follows:

*'...the medal officially fitted within a thin silver frame carrying the naming details and the silver boat pendant below from two short silver chains, the medal with silver ring and loop suspension, good, extremely fine, extremely rare in contemporary fitted red leather case'.*

I wrote immediately to Spinks, hoping that through them, I might be able to contact the buyer but unfortunately, it appears he paid cash and left no address. We had often wondered what had happened to Richard's medals and now the long arm of coincidence has provided some answer. It is good to know that at least one has survived and is in good hands. I am only sorry that those hands are not mine! Now, where is the other medal?

## 7: The IRISH CONNECTION

Situated on Great Island in the huge natural harbour of Cork, on the south coast of the Irish Republic, lies the town of Cobh. Originally given the English name of Cove, it was reported in 1659 as having four English and twelve Irish inhabitants, but it rapidly grew in importance in the Napoleonic Wars when the French fortified the harbour against attack. Its first role as an Atlantic gateway was as an assembly point for the troop convoys crossing the Atlantic in the American War of Independence, but in the terrible famine years of 1846-1848 and afterwards, a million emigrants were to embark from there for a better life in America, Australia or England.

In 1838, the paddle steamer *Sirius* made the first steam-powered Atlantic crossing from Cove and in 1849, Queen Victoria landed at the town on her first visit to Ireland. Her royal paddle-yacht *Fairy* was escorted by HMS Hogue, on which Henry Eddey was to serve five years later. Three sycophantic leading citizens requested that, to mark the occasion, the Queen give her permission to have the town renamed 'Queenstown' in her honour. She did not resist. That name lasted until 1921 when, with the ink scarcely dry on the Treaty providing for the formation of the Irish Free State, the local council reverted to the old name, but spelt in the Irish 'Cobh'. In the great days of the transatlantic liners, it was a regular port of call and it was *Titanic's* last embarkation point on her ill-fated maiden voyage. *Lusitania* was torpedoed a few miles to the south in 1915 and many of her passengers lie in mass graves in Cobh cemetery.

Robert Hurley, destined to be the father-in-law of Henry Eddey, and through his daughter to introduce a new strain of Celtic blood to the family, was born in Cove in 1806. He was a Catholic and so his baptism was never recorded as, outrageously, the Catholic Church was not permitted to keep registers until 1829, when the remaining penal laws against the church in Ireland were repealed. Robert had never gone to school and was probably working at the harbourside at the age of nine when the Napoleonic war ended in 1815, causing great unemployment.

As soon as he was 17, Robert took the packet to England and enlisted in the Royal Navy. His brother Patrick was already serving on HMS *Ramilles* as a seaman when Robert joined him on the same ship on November 29 1823, in the capacity of a 'landsmen', the lowest grade reserved for those without any previous seagoing experience. The following year, their younger brother Michael was to join them.

*Ramilles* was a 38-year-old, 74-gun ship of the line, and a veteran of the battle of 'Glorious 1st of June,' 1794, when the Royal Navy inflicted one of its great defeats on the French fleet. Now the ageing *Ramilles* was stationed in the 'Downs' off the east coast of Kent as part of a blockade aimed at reducing the rampant smuggling menace which was causing great losses to government revenues. Detachments of her crew were sent ashore and quartered in Martello Towers to keep watch along the coast, each under the command of a lieutenant. The ship's log reported much drunkenness and desertion and conniving by the crew with smugglers. Miscreants were returned to their ship for punishment, referred to by her captain as "moral 'suasion'".

The Coastal Blockade was detested by the civil population and unpopular with the navy, and it was difficult to get volunteers. So the role was filled by 'waisters' (the least intelligent of a ship's crew) or more frequently by Irish Landsmen, (who were sometimes the same people) *'whose estrangement from the sentiments, habits and religion of those placed under their surveillance seemed to point them out as peculiarly adapted for a service whose basis consisted in an insidious watchfulness over others, and a hostile segregation from their fellow-men'*.

Following the French defeat at Waterloo in 1815, Britain had a huge fleet, with 604 ships in commission, including 99 battleships. After six years of peace, the navy was reduced to 106 ships, including 14 battleships, but it was still the largest fleet in the world. The design of its ships had changed little during the previous 100 years and the conditions of its seamen were appalling by our standards. They were packed like sardines, up to 170 men to a mess deck, in dark, steaming humid conditions and fed rotten food. Diseases such as tuberculosis and even scurvy, despite its cause being known, were common and brought many more deaths than enemy action.

In 22 years of war with the French, just 1,875 British seamen were killed, while horrifically, 72,000 died of diseases and 13,600 were lost through accident or weather. Men often became physically disabled, as lifting gear was never used to move the heavy guns and huge water casks. At least one man in ten had a rupture. Discipline would vary greatly between ships according to the temperament of the captains, but it was usually very harsh and punishments so severe that men were sometimes driven insane. In the navy of 1815, one man in a thousand was declared insane, and the navy had to build its own asylum. Its name was Bedlam, adding a new word to our language. A lashing with the 'cat o' nine tails' before the assembled crew was still a common punishment, although often giving enhanced status to the recipient.

There were official limits on the punishment which a captain could order, but Captain McCulloch of Robert Hurley's ship *Ramilles* did not believe in sparing the lash for those seamen who broke the rules, very often when in cahoots with smugglers at their blockade stations ashore. The ship's log for January 10, 1825 records that no fewer than 24 seamen were sentenced to the lash for offences such as '*drunkenness in a public house while in charge of the ship's books (24 lashes), absence from his post and insolence to his officer and mutinous conduct (24), corrupt conduct, found sitting down on his post, eating and drinking with a smuggler (36), concealing a tub of spirits he had picked up on the beach and getting drunk on it with two of his watch (24).*' One of the lightest sentences recorded, perhaps because he was only 17, was '18 lashes for Michael Hurley, landsman, for sleeping on his post and repeated neglect of duty'. Was he perhaps Robert's brother?

After six months Robert qualified as a seaman at 25s 6d per month, then on 13 December 1826 he was discharged 'to shore'. This meant he was laid off until he could find another ship, for service in the Royal Navy in those days meant casual employment. He was lucky to find work again six months later, when he joined England's most famous ship, the *Victory*, Nelson's flagship at the battle of Trafalgar. She was now on harbour duties at Portsmouth and, at sixty years of age, was no longer putting to sea. *Victory* had cost £97,400 to build in 1753, but in the 15 years up to Trafalgar in 1805 repairs cost £143,600, such were the effects of rot on the ships of those days. The prevention and spread of wood rot was not understood and timber reused from old ships meant that new ones could be rotten from launch.

Few seamen would have enlisted to see the world, but more for a job that fed and housed them, even to the lowest standards, with a regular supply of grog (rum and water). Clothing could be bought from the purser, and shoes were not worn on board. Port service was regarded as preferable to the hardships of voyaging and often, subject to the rules laid down in the 'Captain's Orders', women, officially classified as 'wives', would be allowed on board. *Victory's* harbour-based role would have made her a popular posting, particularly as she would have had a smaller crew than if in full service and so conditions would be slightly less crowded. But life would have been boring, leading to mischief and '*insolence to superior officers*' fuelled by illegally hoarded rum rations and consequent painful punishment.

Robert joined *Victory* in June 1827, and in August he would have seen George IV aboard his yacht *Royal Sovereign* sail out of harbour to the accompaniment of a 21-gun salute, to review the Russian fleet anchored off Spithead. There was another royal visit, at a much lower level, in the following year when 'HRH Prince Nevers', presumably a survivor of the French revolution, inspected the ship. Two hours before his arrival eight men had been flogged, including two for swimming ashore and another for '*improper conduct during Divine Service*' the day before. Justice was swift as it was harsh. There could have been barely time to scrub the blood from the deck before the prince arrived.

On May 1 1830, Robert left *Victory* to join HMS *St. Vincent*, a 120-gun battleship, for a six month period in port prior to her departure for the Mediterranean.

It was at around this time that Robert met Mary Ann Cause Warder. The daughter of David and Mary Warder, she was born on September 20, 1808 in Portsea, now a suburb of Portsmouth, and christened six months later at St. John's Church. She was now 22 and living in Alverstoke, which lies across the harbour. The Catholic church would not have married them, but there was no objection from the vicar of St. Mary's at Alverstoke and they were married there on Boxing Day, December 26 1830, each making their mark in the register. Mary Ann's sister Harriet was a witness, the first appearance of that name in the family.

In February 1831, after three months of marriage, and seven years' navy service, Robert Hurley at last went to sea. He joined HMS *Asia*, an impressive ship built in 1824 which had found fame as Admiral Codrington's flagship at the battle of Navarino in 1827, when 50 Turkish and Egyptian ships were sunk by a British fleet. This was to be the last-ever battle in history to be fought between sailing ships of the line.

Portugal was at that time ruled by a despotic monarch, Miguel. In February 1831 there had been a revolt in Lisbon, and Britain must have felt her considerable commercial and political interests there threatened. *Asia* was despatched in July and for months she swung at her moorings in the river Tagus off Lisbon, 'showing the flag' as well as her 84 guns. Then calm seemed to return and *Asia* sailed for Portsmouth, arriving back in May 1832. Robert was greeted there with the news that he had become a father of a little girl the previous October, named Mary Ann after her mother. But Robert had little time to enjoy his fatherhood, for civil war had now broken out in Portugal, and *Asia* immediately sailed back with Robert on board. Mary Ann would be nearly three years old when her father next saw her.

King Miguel's brother Pedro, with the tacit support of Britain and France, was after the throne. He had gathered a mercenary force, which landed at Oporto in July 1832. *Asia*, with a watching brief, cruised the 200 miles of coastline from Setubal to Oporto from July to October, no doubt spoiling for a fight, then in November moored once again in the Tagus. Letters were waiting for them from England, but both Robert and Mary Ann would have needed help if they had corresponded.

In 1833 there was a further English-sponsored landing in the Algarve; in July the citizens of Lisbon rose against Miguel, and Pedro seized the throne. During this time, *Asia* lay menacingly in the Tagus, her crew fascinated witnesses to the mayhem taking place ashore. Then things went quiet and *Asia* thankfully sailed home, arriving at Chatham on July 17, 1834. Pedro, who was proving just as useless as his brother, died the following month.

There then followed an unwelcome period of five months unemployment for Robert before he joined HMS *Pique*, a 36-gun frigate, newly built at Devonport Dockyard. This may have been Robert's first close acquaintance with the area. The ship anchored in Hamoaze at the mouth of the Tamar and took on crew, provisions and her 32-pounder long guns with 41 tons of shot. This was over the Christmas period 1834, and the log records a terrible punishment of 40 lashes administered at 11.00 am on December 29 to Marine Chas. Graves '*for being absent without leave, after being refused leave after disorderly conduct at the dockyard*'.

Robert had been taken on at the higher grade of Able Seaman, and on February 2, *Pique* sailed under the command of Captain the Hon. Henry J. Rous for a proving run to Portugal. She lost a main topsail in a gale off Cape Ortega on March 9, but returned safely to England on April 1st but docked at Portsmouth, rather than Plymouth. Then on July 24, she set sail for the long voyage to Canada. Most of the country had remained loyal following the conflict with America, but the newly created province of Quebec was antagonistic.

Perhaps *Pique* was sent to calm their pique, but rebellions were to follow in 1837. The ship made landfall at Bay Point, Newfoundland three weeks later, on August 10, and entered the St. Lawrence the following week. After five weeks at Quebec, they sailed for England, and arrived back in Portsmouth on 15 October, 1835. Robert was discharged on November 5, 1835 with new plans in mind.

The coastguard service still had close connections with the Admiralty and in 1831 became an official reserve for the Royal Navy to provide extra manpower in times of war. It comprised mainly ex-seamen and Robert, prompted by Mary Ann, decided that this would make a better life. He applied for a position and he was recorded as having arrived on 25 November at '55 Tower', a Martello coastguard station in the Rye-Hastings area where he may well have served when with *Ramilles*. His service with the coastguard officially began on 5 December 1835.

Robert spent only six months at 55 Tower as a 'boatman', a status equivalent to a Royal Navy seaman, before he was posted to the station at Cawsand, where he arrived with his wife and five-year-old Mary Ann on June 10, 1836.

He was now thirty years of age; the poor and illiterate Irishman now had a steady job, a home of his own in a quiet and beautiful part of England and a wife and daughter to share it with. Little wonder he was to stay there for the rest of his life.

## 8: EDDEYS in the DRINK

The pilots of Cawsand and Kingsand, like all other seafarers of their times, frequently faced the perils of the deep, but sometimes the water they got into was of the hot variety. Some fourteen years after Richard Eddy was awarded his licence, the Board Minutes of Trinity House, for Tuesday, 18 February 1823, with Captain Wilson and Captain Cresswell present, record the following:

*Read a letter from John Arthur Esq. of Plymouth dated the 7th instant, reporting the result of the sub commissioners enquiry into the outrageous, drunken and offensive conduct of which Richard Eddy, pilot of that district, had been guilty, as represented by John Dorwood, master of the sloop 'Olive Branch'; and submitting that such misconduct be visited by some mark of disapprobation:- the particulars of which being considered by the committee and it appearing that the misconduct of the above pilot merits suspension from his office it was agreed to recommend to the board to order him to be suspended during pleasure.*

It would appear that Richard had been sampling too freely of his clandestine stock-in-trade, which must have been a temptation with brandy available in Roscoff for 5 shillings (25p) per gallon, to be then sold illicitly in England for 25 shillings. But the minutes reported three months later, on 13 May 1823, with the same two captains present:

*Read a petition of Richard Eddy, pilot under suspension at Plymouth, expressing contrition for his offensive conduct, and praying to be restored: and the same being recommended by the sub commissioners, it was agreed to submit to the board, that he be now restored and admonished not to be guilty of the like again.*

The restoration was confirmed, no doubt much to Richard's relief, and he was back in business. Better still, just eighteen months later, on September 29, 1825, he was promoted to First Class, duly noted on Warrant No. 22.

He was to suffer an infinitely greater blow when, in October 1840, his oldest son Thomas was drowned at the age of 37. The death certificate simply states 'Drowned, supposed on the 2 October, 1840'. No inquest records survive, as the professional men who conducted them in those days regarded the papers as their own. But *The Plymouth, Devonport and Stonehouse Herald* of October 17 told the melancholy tale:

*'The bodies of Hatten and Eddy, the pilots belonging to Cawsand, who were drowned on returning from a Russian ship which they had taken out of the harbour, have been picked up, and inquests held on them- verdicts being returned of - Accidentally Drowned. By the untimely death of these men, two widows and thirteen children are left unprovided for- Hatten having left seven and Eddy six children. We understand that it has been reported that Eddy was in a state of intoxication when he left the vessel. We are authorised to state that such was not the case, for at the period of the unfortunate accident, he was perfectly sober.'*

The newspaper was probably employing the time-honoured journalistic device of denying a scandalous fact in order to give it risk-free publicity, and perhaps the unfortunate Thomas had in fact, been indulging the same pleasures as his father.

The second man who drowned with pilot Thomas Eddy was referred to in the newspaper as Hatten. I had been unable to find in the register of deaths, despite also checking Hutton and Hatter. Then a man who read my account of Richard Eddy in the journal of the Cornwall Family History Society wrote suggesting it might be Hawton, as there was a family of that name in Cawsand. Although I drew a blank with St. Germans Register Office, where the death of Thomas had been recorded, I found the death of John Hawton, mariner, age 'about 38 years', was registered with the Plymouth office. Hawton had been found drowned off Rame Head on October 4, two days later than Thomas and was clearly his companion in misfortune.



## 9: THOMASIN SETS UP SHOP

The funeral of Thomas Edey must have been even sadder than most, with a 37 year-old grieving widow and six small children. Thomas was laid to rest in Rame churchyard, joining his twin sons.

Faced with so many hungry mouths to feed, Thomasin lost no time in applying to Trinity House for a widow's pension, and on November 3, 1840 the sub-commissioners of Plymouth agreed '*to recommend to the Court to admit her to the Pilots' Fund Pension List at the customary allowance*'. We do not know what that was, but it probably enabled her to open the shop in Garrett Street, where we find her with her young family in 1841. Sadly, only two years after the death of her husband a second tragedy struck with the death of her first son, now a fisherman, also called Thomas. He died in November 1842 of typhus, a fever transmitted by lice.

Only Thomas among Richard's six sons, was to produce any grandchildren for him. Samuel died of consumption and unwed in 1851 at the age of 33. Richard, handicapped by his deafness, married late in life to a Mary Webb, a widow of 48, and daughter of a 'yeoman', from East Looe. The last we know of him is as a 'waterman' (a kind of water taxi) living at Lower Row, Kingsand in 1861, aged 52. There is no reference to his infirmity in this census. Perhaps his deafness disappeared, but it is more likely that the omission was due to incompetence on the part of the census taker.

Thomasin's family was growing up. In 1851, Francis was an apprentice shipwright at the age of 15, and Eliza is shown in the census as a 'scholar', at the advanced age of 17. Mary Ann, 20, is helping Thomasin in her shop, now described as being in the Square, although it was probably the same location at the foot of Garrett Street. Young Henry John, aged 11 was a scholar. His sister Elizabeth, also a scholar in 1851, was to marry Samuel Hill a seaman and son of a fisherman, at Rame in 1856. Her older sister Eliza served as a witness.

On July 1, 1853, Francis followed the family tradition and joined the Royal Navy, for some reason adding four years to his age. He signed on for ten years, making use of his shipwright skills as part of 'Carpenter's Crew' on HMS *Sybil*, a fifth-rate of 36 guns. His papers give his description: '*Height 5ft 7in. Complexion, fresh; hair, light brown; eyes, hazel*. Exactly the same as shown for his brother Henry when he signed on for further service in 1861.

The last born of the family, Henry would have gone to school on the cliff top just a few yards away from his home on Garrett Street and enjoyed his playtimes on the sands below. Then the time came for him to earn a living, and choices were few, for times were becoming very hard. In a long and unaccustomed period of peace, the navy with its dockyards had been run down. England was in the depression of the 'hungry forties', with crop failures and rising food prices. Mining pollution had damaged inshore fishing both in Cawsand Bay and further out to sea, and even the smuggling trade was suffering from the increasing effectiveness of the coastguards.

Then providentially for some, the clouds of war with Russia loomed. The Royal Navy, realising that it was in a dangerously reduced condition, hurriedly began to install newly-developed engines in its warships and instituted a recruitment and training programme. The days of the Press Gang had long passed, and for the first time service contracts and pensions were introduced to attract recruits.

A recruiting officer may have visited Cawsand, stirring Henry's imagination with tales of impending war and adventure; or perhaps Henry just didn't want to be a pilot or a fisherman. But one day in 1853 he packed his belongings into a small bundle, and kissed his tearful mother goodbye.

He would have paid his sixpence horse-bus fare for the four miles to Cremyll, getting out with the other passengers to help push on the steeper hills. He then took the Cremyll ferry, which for five hundred years had provided the vital link between Rame and Plymouth. He was rowed across the mile-wide stretch of water at the mouth of the Tamar with its treacherous tidal rips, to the naval base at Devonport and the beginning of a new life.

## 10: ROBERT and the SMUGGLERS

The heyday of the smuggler was in the eighteenth and first half of the nineteenth century, when smuggling was not regarded so much as a crime, at least by its customers, but a kind of public service which brought goods to the people at prices which they could afford. In Sussex and Kent, there would often be smuggling gangs of up to sixty men who would fight pitched battles with the authorities. They would not hesitate to torture and murder Excise men, and when caught, would be sent to the gallows where their bodies were hanged in chains as an example. However, as a Victorian writer put it, '*Cornish smugglers never disgraced their manhood by acts of brutal and ruffianly outrage, at least not in this century*'.

Alarmed at the loss of excise revenues, the government formed the Preventive Water Guard in 1809 to patrol coastal waters, equipped with four-oared gigs and six-oared galleys. In 1816 the shore-based guard in which Robert Hurley served when on *Ramilles*, was established by the Admiralty to back them up. In 1822, their title was changed to Coastguards, with pay fixed at three shillings per day.

Cawsand, with its remote location on Plymouth Sound, and a large market for contraband at Plymouth close at hand, was renowned as a major smuggling centre. Many of its fishermen practised this nocturnal art, putting their knowledge of the local coast to good effect. Their boats were extremely seaworthy and were often built with the smuggling trade in mind, but on that fearsome coast, and despite their skills, many boats and their crews were lost. In 1803, one of the big Cawsand smuggling boats was caught deep laden with its illegal imports by a severe gale, and disappeared off Rame Head with all on board.

At one time it was estimated that 52 boats and 81 men on the smuggling run from Roscoff in Brittany had come from Cawsand. Big money could be made, and even soldiers from Maker Barracks would help to move contraband. Plymouth customs estimated that 17,000 kegs of brandy had been landed at Cawsand in 1804. After the French defeat in 1815, hordes of sailors who had been paid off turned to smuggling. Following the action taken by the coastguard, such as banning 'loitering' at night within five miles of the coast, smugglers took to sinking cargoes offshore for recovery later by fishermen. They then landed their catch at a quiet cove or even sometimes at Cawsand beach under the nose of the Customs, where the kegs were hidden under nets then transferred to a tunnel for onward despatch. The tunnel, never found by Customs, had several exits including one in a house at the bottom of Garrett Street. This could have been Richard Eddey's, for there is little doubt of his involvement in smuggling.

There are two accounts of a boat called *The Two Brothers* being chased by a revenue cruiser in March 1834, and being wrecked on the Plymouth breakwater, then under construction. The crew saved themselves, according to one account, by lashing themselves to the cranes, and to the other, by clinging to the rigging before being taken off by a longboat from the nearby lightship '*and soon disappeared ashore*'. The Revenue seized the boat and recovered '101 full tubs'. If the authorities had no use for captured smugglers' boats, their usual fate was to be sawn into three. Richard Eddey's boat, in which he had rescued the crew of the *Coromandel* ten years before, was called *The Two Brothers*. He named his next boat *Betsy*. Another smuggler known as 'French Jack', jailed at Bodmin, was also noted as having sailed with *The Two Brothers*.

In 1833, Richard's daughter Susanna married Richard Chapell, a toll collector on the Cremyll Ferry. His brother Henry, born in 1806, was a renowned smuggler whose story was written down by his grandson more than 120 years ago. It tells how Henry and his band smuggled salt into France and brandy back into England. They would anchor the kegs off the coast, and return for them when the coast was clear. The brandy would then be poured into large bladders for transportation by the Cawsand women under their crinoline dresses, then by cart or donkey to buyers across the country. Henry was eventually caught, and sentenced to two years in Exeter jail. On release, he promptly resumed his trade, but returning to harbour one night, his laden boat was boarded by Customs officers. Henry jumped overboard and swam to Penlee Point.

He made his way to Cawsand where his wife gave him dry clothing and hid him under furniture. But the officers found him there, and he was sent to Exeter assizes, where he was sentenced to a choice between five years transportation to Botany Bay, Australia, or five years in the Navy. He chose the latter, completed his time there and retired as a purser's steward with a pension of £13 a year. He died in 1885 at the good age of 79, and is buried at Maker.

The coastguard station in Cawsand was completed in 1826. It was strongly manned, with five men and a chief officer, based with their considerable families (in 1841, a total of 27 people, mostly Irish-born) in a neat terrace of cottages named Preventive House. It was ideally situated at the top of cliffs overlooking Cawsand Bay and the village, just 500 yards from the village square. There was a regular patrol by boat along the coast during the hours of darkness, and at dusk each day, the men detailed for land based watch would assemble for instructions and be armed with a brace of pistols, a cutlass and a blue light for giving the alarm. To guard against collusion, the men were not allowed to speak to their families once they had been given their orders, and no man would be given the same watch on two nights running. Uniform, which was first introduced in 1839, was often not worn in order to catch smugglers off-guard.

Rewards would be paid for seizures, based on values involved, and could be as high as £90 for a boatman. There was also a reward of £20 for every smuggler taken and convicted. Penalties for smugglers were severe. Resisting arrest would result in transportation for five years (as offered to Henry Chappel); wounding any officer would result in a death sentence, as would carrying prohibited goods while wearing a mask or having a blacked face.

On July 1838, two years after Robert Hurley arrived at the Cawsand station, Mary Ann gave birth to Harriet, who was to be my great-grandmother. She was obviously named after the sister who had witnessed her marriage. The civil registration of births had been introduced the previous year, but Robert, who had never learned to read or write, had to make his mark in the register.

On 23 March of the following year, 1839, Robert Hurley may well have been one of the six crew of the Revenue Cutter *Stork* commanded by Andrew Gillespie, which put out and rescued the crew of three men and a boy of the sloop *Ann* of Plymouth, when she was wrecked on Penlee Point. The crew was awarded £2 (£100 today) between them, and Gillespie a silver medal.

Robert Hurley must have known all the Eddey families quite well, but of course we will never know if their paths ever crossed while on their respective nocturnal activities; or if a blind eye was turned. But thanks to Robert and his coastguard colleagues, the Cawsand smuggling fleet was greatly diminished by 1840, and smugglers were forced to work only on foggy nights or in half-gales. It became an increasingly secretive business and more lives were lost. The Hurley's first daughter Mary Ann married John Hoey, from his name another Irishman and probably also a coastguard. Sadly she died in 1857 at the age of 25, when her sister Harriet was 19. Mary Ann may have died in childbirth, for there is a tiny gravestone immediately in front of hers in Rame churchyard.

Harriet Hurley would have gone to the same school in Garrett Street as Henry Eddey, eighteen months her junior, whose home was within sight of hers across the small bay. In 1861, Harriet, the coastguard's daughter, married Henry, the smuggler's grandson. Henry's first married home was with his in-laws at the coastguard cottages, where their first child Mary Ann was born in 1862.

Two years later, Mary Ann Cause Hurley died at the age of 57, far from her Hampshire birthplace. This was just a year before Robert's retirement on pension, on 28 February 1866, when he was no doubt required to quit his home at Preventive House. The only comment in his 42-year service record was 'Character: V. Good'. Robert Hurley was to enjoy just four years' retirement, before he died in 1870, aged 65. He lies with his wife and at the side of his daughter in Rame churchyard, in a small community of coastguard graves.

By 1880, the smuggling industry which had sustained the 'black economy' of Cawsand for so many years, was almost all over but the station remained in operation until 1920. The cottages still stand, fully occupied but now by holidaymakers.

## 11: RICHARD SLIPS HIS CABLE

Richard Eddey, still pursuing his profession, was living with his wife and four of their surviving children in Town Place, (now the Square) in Cawsand in 1841. His daughter Susanna had married Richard Chapell, a Cremyll ferry toll collector and brother of a notorious smuggler, in 1833 at the age of 19. She was to bear him just one child who they named Richard. Eliza married Richard Jope, who was originally a publican but later became a boat builder. Emma, at the age of 20 married Alfred Burlace, 'a boat builder employing two', in 1847.

But by now Richard, the patriarch of the family, was ill and correctly fearing the worst, in August of 1848 he made his will. He added a codicil in November, following the death from bronchitis of his son John, 'a mariner', at the early age of 22. That would have been a very sad blow for a sick man.

It would have been appropriate to record that Richard Eddey, skilled pilot, hero and smuggler, died in a violent confrontation with the coastguard, or perished in yet another brave attempt to save the lives of terrified souls wrecked on the rocks of Penlee Point. But the reality was much less exciting, for on December 2 1848, he like his son before him, died of bronchitis. Perhaps this was caused by a surfeit of French tobacco, or too many foggy nights on the run from Roscoff. His widowed daughter-in-law, Thomasin, living in Garrett Street, was the informant of his death.

Richard's will, beautifully copied in copperplate script, had been carefully thought out, and his estate, which was declared to be *not exceeding six hundred pounds* (the equivalent of £29,000 in today's money) was to be well distributed around the family in the event of his wife Elizabeth's death. She was to follow him after only a few months.

He left to his sons Richard and Samuel, his pilot boat '*Betsy*' and two other boats with their gear and tackle, and the leasehold cellar in Duck Street. His three freeholds in Kingsand and seven in Cawsand he left to his sons-in-law with rent and profits for Richard and Samuel in some cases and for their wives in others.

Thomasin did not seem to do so well, for she was left no cash, and only a modest rental income for the benefit of her five surviving children. Richard left his leasehold premises, in Millpool, Cawsand, to '*my daughter in law, Tamazon Eddey, to use and occupy free of any rent, two rooms in the said house for and during her natural life.. and to pay and apply the rents and proceeds of the remainder of the said dwelling house for and towards the maintenance and education of her children by my late son*'. Harriet Eddey, who would have been Thomasin's grand-daughter, was to be born at that house in Millpool (now St Andrews Way) 24 years later.

Richard's will instructed that his executors '*shall sell dispose of and convert into money so much thereof as shall be saleable*' of the remainder of his possessions and divide the residue in seven equal parts between the family including one share '*to my grandchildren, the children of my late son Thomas Eddey, equally to be divided between them as soon as the youngest shall attain the age of twenty-one years*'. So Henry, the youngest, would have to wait thirteen years for his small share.

It is surprising that Richard left so little to Thomasin and his only grandchildren, living in the same village. His relationship with their mother must have been close, as she, rather than one of his children, had reported his death.

The three sons-in-law, feeling well pleased with their good fortune, were appointed executors. It would have been quite a funeral up at Rame church, with a hearse and professional pallbearers and attended by the survivors and families of Richard's eight brothers and sisters, six of his own children and Thomasin and her family, as well as his pilot friends and associates.

In the summer of the following year, cholera struck the villages, caused by drinking sewage-contaminated water from the stream in the village from which most obtained their drinking water. It brought a terrible death to 21 in Cawsand, 30 in Millbrook and 93 in Kingsand. Among them was Elizabeth Eddey, Richard's widow, more vulnerable at the age of 65. His wife for 45 years, and mother of his eleven children, she was buried with him close by the lychgate in Rame churchyard. Many other victims were buried in a mass grave at Maker.

Richard's grave, shared also with his son John and surrounded by those of three other sons, bears the proud legend '*A Pilot of the Port of Plymouth for 39 Years*'.

## 12: BOY EDDEY GOES TO WAR

One of Britain's largest battleships, the 120-gun HMS *St. George* lay off Devonport at her moorings in Hamoaze at the mouth of the Tamar. She had been built in 1840, which was the true year of Henry John Eddey's birth, had the navy but known it, for he had added a year to his age in his joining papers. Henry would have had mixed feelings and perhaps a moment's doubt as he looked across at her three great masts towering into the sky. He presented his papers to the marine standing on the quay, then with a handful of other nervous recruits, climbed aboard the ship's gig to be rowed across to begin the first of 22 years in the service of his Queen. It was April 28, 1853, and Henry was just 13 years and three months old.

Henry's service was to coincide with the period of the greatest change in the entire history of the Royal Navy. Conditions had begun to improve for the men, with flogging greatly reduced, the headroom between decks increased and 10-year service engagements replacing the previous system whereby men were thrown on to the streets after a voyage was completed. In 1855, two years after Henry joined, standardised uniforms were introduced throughout the fleet.

After much discussion and prevarication in the Admiralty and arguments over the merits of paddles versus propellers followed by trials and experiments, the first screw-driven warship, *Dauntless*, was ordered in 1844. Prompted by increased French naval activity, a number of ships of the line were converted to screw propulsion in 1850 while still on the stocks, and the first ships specifically designed for screw propulsion were built. When the Russian war began, there were still no iron ships in the navy although exploding shells, invented by the French, were in wide use. The fleet's guns were still loaded from the muzzle, involving great physical effort.

So it was that Henry Eddey enlisted into the last generation of wooden ships, which combined both sail and steam due to the unreliability of the early engines, the lack of coal bunker space aboard and the limited range of the ships until coaling stations could be established around the world. One writer described ships of her kind thus: '*the combination of the screw-propeller and heavy sailing rig was incongruous.., the more so when under steam, as the engines puffed and snorted like locomotives*'.

After six months' service, Henry qualified as a Boy 1st Class, and in December of 1853, he joined *HMS Hogue*, just four months before the outbreak of the Russian War. The *Hogue* had gained fame in the American War by leading an expedition that destroyed 27 American privateers that had been preying on British shipping. With the threat of war, she had been converted hurriedly to screw in 1850, with 14 of her 74 guns removed to accommodate her engines. Captained by William Ramsey, with a crew of 553 officers and men and 47 boys including Henry, not yet 14, *Hogue* was part of the world's first steam battle fleet to go to war.

The British had decided, in conjunction with the French, their allies for the first time in centuries, to attack Russia on two fronts. First, through the Black Sea to the Crimea and second through the Baltic to destroy the Russian Baltic squadron, to encourage the Swedes to join the war and to divert Russian resources from the Crimea. In this latter respect, they were to be highly successful, tying up half of her armies and vast amounts of supplies.

A huge fleet including *Hogue* and Henry's first ship *St George*, still without engines, was assembled for the Baltic operation. Desperately short of trained seamen, Queen Victoria reviewed it from her paddle yacht *Fairy* in March 1854, then sailed immediately after. The objective was to blockade the coasts of Russia and Finland and neutralise the island of Aland, strategically located between Sweden and Finland and close to the access to Helsinki and St Petersburg. Whoever held it could deny access to the northern Baltic.

Arriving in the Baltic, the fleet received a signal from their Commander-in-Chief that was duly entered in *Hogue's log*:

*'Lads! War is declared, with a bold and numerous enemy to meet; should they offer us battle, you know how to dispose of them.. .Lads! Sharpen your cutlasses, and the day's your own!'*

Frantically exercising their '*newly raised men*', the fleet reached Aland.

The island was protected by the huge fortress of Bomarsund, which the Russians believed was inaccessible to large ships, as it could be reached only through a narrow and uncharted channel. The British proved them wrong, and the *Hogue*, with three sister ships and led by the paddle steamer *Lightning*, sailed through the Ango Sound to bombard the fort.

*Hogue's* log tells the story: 'Cleared for action and loaded the main deck guns with grape and the boat guns on the upper deck with spherical case to guard against any attack from field guns and riflemen in the narrow and circuitous passes of the channel. Ajax touched ground and floated off. Lightning ahead warned of shoals...**2.15** Lightening having found a channel, weighed in co. with squadron and steamed into Lumpar Bay and came to off the fortress of Bomarsund... fort opened fire on the squadron...the Admiral shifted them further out without returning fire'. A distinct note of disapproval there, and in fact, the Admiral was sacked when the fleet returned to Britain.

Like Singapore 100 years later, most of the fort's guns faced the sea. So two weeks later, at its rear to the north, the fleet and its transports landed French troops and British marines. *Hogue's* log reports: '7 August: Sent detachment of R. Marines and party of seamen ... for disembarkation on N side of Bomarsund with 3 days' provisions for 87 marines and 24 seamen. 8 August: Sent boats away to assist in disembarking troops. Fire was opened with shell and rifles on the guard boats, which was returned by them. **3.40** the Amphion and a French steamer . . . destroyed a small battery on the main... The boats of the combined squadrons disembarked the troops'. A lighter moment came that afternoon, when the log reported delightedly, 'Bulldog, with the flag of the commander-in-chief, ran aground. Sent a boat with hawser. **6.0** Observed Bulldog afloat. Slaughtered 3 oxen weighing in all, 151 lbs.'

Seamen from the ships then hauled 32-pounder guns on wooden sledges for 5 miles in bare feet (shoes were not worn on board ship and only small numbers were available for issue to landing parties) with teams of 20 men to each sledge, cheered on by the ships' bands. There was nothing covert about this operation. The exhausting work was recognised by orders from the Commander in Chief for extra rum rations 'to 200 men on shore transporting guns'.

The battle continued, leading to a bizarre entry in the log for August 15: 'Dressed ship with mast -head flag in commemoration of the accession of the Emperor Napoleon to the French throne. Mustered at quarters and cleared for action.. fired at times on the forts with long range guns, the battery of ships' guns and strand battery keeping up regular fire. **11.20** West tower blew up. **Noon:** fired a salute of 21 guns in co. with squadron present'. No matter what the battle, the due ceremony had to go on.

The following day, August 16, the log reported further bombardment of the fort by the fleet then, '**12.30** Observed fort flying flag of truce. Ships and batteries ceased firing. Observed a boat from Bulldog proceed to the shore with flag of truce. **1.30** observed French troops march into the forts. **3.30** sent barge and pinnace (per signal) to embark prisoners. **5.30** Leopard sailed with Russian prisoners. Slaughtered 2 Oxen weighing 91 9lbs'.

The islands and the Baltic were secured. The Russian fleet, huge but antiquated and untrained, never left port. After further minor skirmishes along the Estonian, Finnish and Russian coasts, the British fleet sailed home, fearing the ice and fog with the onset of winter. At sea on November 28 Charles Thom, boy on the *Hogue*, was given 24 lashes for theft: a harsh punishment for a child. *Hague* moored at Portsmouth on January 5. On February 27, 1855, Samuel Jewals, AB of the *Hogue*, was committed to 'the treadmills at Winchester' for three months, following court martial on HMS *Victory*. The nature of the offence is not reported.

*Hogue* sailed as part of an even larger fleet in May 1855, with the objective of attacking Sveaborg, the forts protecting Helsinki, and Kronstadt, which guarded the Russian capital, St. Petersburg. In the event, only Sveaborg was attacked, suffering a huge bombardment from the sea on August 7-10, without loss of British life, although two British ships suffered minor damage from the first sea mines ever used in war, referred to indignantly as 'infernal machines'.

The Russian fleet never came out to fight. The ships sailed home as Autumn came, and preparations were made to attack St. Petersburg the following year. But the Czar sued for peace, which was signed in March 1856. To mark the event the victorious fleet was reviewed by Queen Victoria and Prince Albert at Spithead on St. George's Day, April 23, 1856.

## 13: THE CHINA STATION

*Hogue's log solemnly recorded the Royal Review: '11.30 Royal Yacht came out of harbour with Her Majesty on board. Fired a Royal Salute and manned yards. 12.0 opened sugar, 3921bs...4.30 fleet fired a Royal Salute on Her Majesty returning to harbour. 9.0 Fleet illuminated as per order.'* Lighting up the fleet in those pre-electricity days must have been a complex and perhaps somewhat hazardous exercise. Henry, a war veteran at 15, must have felt very thrilled and proud as he gave three hearty cheers with his shipmates manning the yards, as the Royal Yacht, *Victoria and Albert* with his Queen aboard, sailed down the long lines of beflagged warships.

In August of 1856, promoted from Boy to Able Seaman, at the recently improved rate of pay of £2.1s.4d. per month, Henry joined HMS *Camilla*, a tiny sailing sloop of 16 guns, and just 110 ft long. Lightly armed and with a long range, not reliant on coaling, such ships were designed to act independently over long distances.

They sailed for the Far East from Devonport on August 25 1856, with a crew of 130 comprising 17 officers, 20 petty officers, 50 seamen, 23 boys, and 20 marines. Her captain noted in the log that the ship was '*bad in a bad sea, and generally rather crank*'. The Suez Canal had yet to be dug, and the voyage without engines was to be a lengthy one. They crossed the Equator on September 26 and arrived at Simons Bay (now Simonstown, and still a naval base) South Africa, on October 31. They then sailed for six months via Sumatra, Borneo and New Guinea, arriving at Hong Kong, which had been ceded to Britain 15 years earlier, on February 11, 1857. Ten days later *Camilla* sailed for her station off Amoy, 350 miles north on the China mainland.

The second 'Opium War' had broken out in 1856 and there were fierce actions at Canton and in 1858 at the Peiho River, when three ships were sunk and 426 men killed; but with the capture of Peking the following year, peace was signed. *Camilla* was happily a thousand miles south of the mayhem, showing the flag at Amoy and along 550 miles of coast up to the Chusan islands and Shanghai. Amoy, in the Formosa Strait, was one of the five 'Treaty Ports' established after the first war in 1839-42, which were to guarantee access to British trade. *Camilla* was there to ensure free passage to British merchant ships and combat the ubiquitous pirate menace.

One such action is described in the ship's log for 11 April 1857. '*3.0. Boats returned from reconnoitre. Proceeded to the north in quest of Piratical Junks said to be in the neighbourhood. Suspicious sail ahead with a Trading Junk in company. Made sail in chase. Fired at sternmost junk. 6.30 sent gig to Trading Junk, found ditto to be captured by pirates. Fired repeatedly at Piratical Junk using every attempt to escape. Shortened sail, hove to and sent cutter to capture Pirate, and jolly boat to pick up some of her crew who were jumping overboard. Took 10 Pirates out of Trading Junk, releasing her after retaining 3 of her crew as witnesses. Found 1 dead body and 18 Pirates on board Junk. Scuttled ditto and sent the crew on board as prisoners. Up boats. Made sail. Lost overboard, hands pikes. Expended, 32pdr, 10; 12pdr, 4; Cartridges, rifle, 70; Cartridges, elongated pistol, 200; Caps, percussion, pistol 200...*'

Henry spent nearly four years on *Camilla*, during which time the ship patrolled her long stretch of coast, often riding at anchor for a week or more at Pagoda Island or Monkey Island and in the Min River. There were occasional visits to their Hong Kong base, then just a fishing village, although the local people would have ensured appropriate entertainment for the seamen on shore leave. The long days at sea with their constant gun and cutlass drills must have been very tedious, and the conditions for the 130 men on that tiny 110 ft. ship in tropical heat and humidity appalling by modern standards. Anything out of routine was a welcome diversion, and their brush with the 'Piratical Junk' would be a talking point for weeks.

Details of supplies periodically taken on board make interesting reading, and illustrate the life they lived:

*'3361bs candles, 39521bs salt pork, 39521bs salt beef, 421bs mustard, 281bs pepper, 9751bs chocolate, 1581bs suet, 2781bs raisins'*. Raisin duff was a regular feature of Royal Navy meals, and the 'chocolate' would not have been Dairy Milk, but cocoa. A supply of 241 gallons of rum, watered down as 'grog', must have provided some consolation.

## 14: HENRY GETS SPLICED

In May of 1860, his tour of duty ended, Henry left the ship to return to England, no doubt a different person from the 17 year-old who had left England four years before. If he had remained aboard for another year, I would not be here to be writing this, for *Camilla* remained on station, but was lost in a storm in March the following year. Her captain's unfavourable assessment of her sailing qualities had proved sadly, to be only too true. The fate of her crew is not recorded.

Henry had accumulated six months leave which he spent renewing old acquaintances, not least with Harriet Hurley from the Coastguard cottages, and no doubt regaling her and his family with tales of his exploits far into the night. His mother, who had by now given up her shop and was living in Garrett Street, must have been delighted to see him home safe and sound.

When his leave ended, Henry was posted to HMS *Cambridge*, where on July 8, 1861, he signed on for a further period, making a total of twenty years, in order to 'complete time for pension'. This document, which he signs in a neat and confident hand, provides us with a brief description: '*Height 5ft 7ins; Complexion, fair; Hair, light brown; Eyes, grey*'. His rank is stated as Captain, Main Top', which was a kind of petty officer.

The *Cambridge* was an old ship built in 1815 and used for training and transit. She was permanently moored at Devonport, very convenient for reaching Cawsand across the estuary. Henry made the most of this, and married Harriet Hurley at Rame church on September 15, 1861, just two months later. His age is shown as 22, although he was in truth 21, and Harriet 23. One of the witnesses of the wedding was Samuel Hill, who was also a seaman, and who had married Henry's sister Elizabeth Bond Eddey, in the same church five years before.

Mary Ann, their first child, called after Harriet's grandmother and her sister who had died at the age of just 25 four years before, was born the following year. Henry was to have short spells on *Cambridge* on four further occasions, and unsurprisingly, three of those were each followed by the birth of another child - Henry Robert in 1868, Francis Thomas in 1870 and Harriet, my grandmother, in Millpool, Cawsand on February 18 1872.

In July 1862, Henry joined *HMS Severn*, a frigate of 50 guns that had been converted to screw propulsion in 1860, for what was to be a four-year voyage half-way around the world. She sailed from Devonport across the Atlantic to Brazil, then back across to Simons Bay, South Africa for coaling before sailing via the Maldives to Bombay, arriving in January 1863, five months after leaving England. Then followed a series of seemingly uneventful voyages around the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea, revisiting Hong Kong and Amoy.

It was a long absence from Harriet after just one year of marriage, and his pleasure at eventually getting home in June 1866 must have been greatly marred by the news that his mother, Thomasin, had died of 'diarrhoea, 4 days' the previous September. She was probably yet another Cawsand victim of polluted water. She had seen much tragedy in her 62 years, and had been laid to rest, alongside her husband's grave with her first-born son Thomas who had died of typhus 23 years before.

Henry was then given a series of short postings to the *Cambridge*, followed by one to *St George*, now also converted to screw, when he was promoted to Captain Mizzen Mast, a more senior rank of petty officer. He then spent six months aboard the 46-gun frigate *Daedalus*, an RNR drill ship, where he was most probably a gunnery instructor.

In May 1869, Henry was posted to the 39 gun screw frigate *Liverpool*, completed nine years earlier, where he was further promoted to Captain Main Mast, among a large crew of 118 officers and petty officers, 234 seamen, 86 boys and 77 marines- a total of 515 men in a small ship of 2500 tons. In company with the frigates *Liffey*, *Endymion* and *Phoebe*, and corvettes *Scylla* and *Pearl*, 'all with screw engines of 400 to 600 horsepower', *Liverpool* was to sail the voyage of a lifetime, circling the globe and making three crossings of the Atlantic as a member of 'The Detached Squadron for Particular Service'.



'The Flying Squadron of 1870' was how Captain Hopkins of *HMS Liverpool* described in his log the fleet of six modern warships of which his was the lead ship, carrying the flag of Rear Admiral G. T. Phipps-Hornby. This was clearly quite an unusual world cruise, and its objective was stated as being '*To teach officers and men, to elicit smartness, both in appearance and execution, by competitions*'. The 'smartness' referred to the handling of the ships, rather than matters of personal appearance, and detailed orders were issued by the Admiral in this connection. But there was obviously an unspoken political objective of 'showing the flag' at some of the key political or economic locations of the time.

Henry joined the ship from Cambridge at Devonport on May 8 1869, and the fleet sailed on June 19, the captain grumbling in the log that his ship was '*much the slowest under sail of all the vessels in the squadron*'. Ships still relied heavily on sail to supplement their steam engines because of the lack of coaling stations. After calling at Funchal in Madeira, saluting the Portuguese flag with 21 guns, they crossed the Atlantic with pistol practice and cutlass drills regularly recorded in the log, together with '*exercising the young gentlemen at rifle drill*'; the 'young gentlemen' of course being the midshipmen. They arrived in Bahia, Brazil on August 2, some five weeks later where they saluted the Brazilian Commodore with 13 guns, the Brazilian flag with 21 guns and for good measure, the birthday of the Empress with 21 guns. This was to set the scene for the voyage, with thunderous gun salutes being exchanged at every port.

The squadron sailed on to Rio, where the Emperor of Brazil boarded *Liverpool* to meet the Rear Admiral and sail through the squadron on an inspection, with the yards manned on every ship and a Royal Salute fired. On then to Monte Video, the capital of Uruguay, to be the scene of the scuttling of the German battleship *Graf Spee* seventy years later. After a week there, they sailed on 11 September across the South Atlantic for the Cape of Good Hope and Simons Bay for coaling. This was their only call in Africa, indicating its political insignificance in those days. They sailed on October 16 for Melbourne, meeting a force 9 gale on November 9, when the squadron was dispersed. *Liverpool* lost a mainsail and a deadlight was stove in during heavy seas.

The fleet reached Melbourne on 26 November, and sailed for Sydney two weeks later, exactly one hundred years after Captain James Cook took possession of Australia for Great Britain. They coaled ships and spent Christmas there before sailing to Hobart, Tasmania, and after two weeks on to Wellington, New Zealand. They left on the long leg to Yokohama on February 9, arriving eight weeks later. In 1858, only twelve years before, Yokohama was the first Japanese port to be opened to foreign trade, and Japan's first railway line linked it with Tokyo the year following the squadron's visit. Only one hundred years later, the Japanese were to dominate the world's trade.

The squadron then crossed the Pacific to Esquimalt, a British naval base near Victoria in British Columbia, then a separate colony, which was to join the Dominion of Canada the following year. The base had been established in 1848, it being noted with concern that it was the only British base in 7000 miles of Pacific coastline. The visit of the squadron caused a great stir, and an historic photograph was taken which I copied when I visited the naval base 120 years later. The ships stayed for three weeks until 26 May then sailed for Hawaii, discovered and named the Sandwich Isles by Captain Cook in 1778. They were still independent, not being annexed by America until 1898. In Honolulu they were greeted by King Kamehameha, who was to be overthrown in 1893. He visited the ship, receiving his due of a 21-gun royal salute.

Then a call at Valparaiso, the capital of Chile, an important ally. Salutes of 7, 15 and 21 guns were fired. After two weeks of official visits and coaling the fleet sailed south around Cape Horn, where sails were lost in Force 9 gales. The log records that caulker's mate Edward Boddington, '*departed this life*' and was '*consigned to the deep*', but gives no cause of his death.

The squadron then sailed northwards for a second call at Bahia, arriving on October 7. This was not a ceremonial visit and after two days for the filthy job of coaling they sailed for Plymouth, arriving home on 18 November, 1870. A memorable trip, although a little hard on the ears, and involving prodigious expenditure of saluting powder. Every pound used was carefully noted in the log. They had been away for 517 days.

## 15: HENRY STEERS a COURSE NORTH-WEST

The 4000 officers and men of the Flying Squadron were paid off on December 2 1870, when Rear Admiral Homby took leave of his men and later wrote *'It was a parting much felt on all sides.. .a farewell it was also to wooden ships, to sails and yards, to the old navy of Nelson's time. Hence forward came the era of steam and iron, of torpedoes and electricity; of what is called science versus the keen observation which gained every advantage possible to be taken from wind and weather, and which used to be called seamanship'*.

Henry's final posting was to HMS *Briton*, a two-year-old screw corvette, where he was designated as gunner's mate, the term then for a gunnery instructor. She sailed a week before Christmas in 1871, to Gibraltar and Malta and through the Suez canal - opened four years before - to Bombay, arriving in February. Then they spent three years sailing the east African coast on anti-slavery patrols, between Madagascar, Mozambique, Zanzibar, Mombasa and Seychelles. Britain had abolished the slave trade in 1807, but Arab traders had a different view and continued to transport miserable captives up to the Arabian peninsula for sale. Britain, with the world's biggest fleet, took on the responsibility of world policeman just as America was to do in the next century. Zanzibar had been the centre of the trade in earlier years, but now the Sultan was a British appointee, and the island had become the base for Royal Navy patrols.

The slavers' dhows hugged the shallow waters and inlets of the coast to avoid detection, and the *Briton* would send her boats off on detachment under the command of a junior officer to winkle them out, but sometimes at great cost. The log reports on June 16: *'Jolly boat returned from detached service, reported loss of 1st cutter and lives of George Cloak, PM, and Melinde Seedie'*. On June 21 at Zanzibar: *2nd cutter returned, having destroyed one dhow and detained another on suspicion of being engaged in slave trade'*. On January 19: *'Lieut Hole ret'd. with dhow captured by cutter and whaler off Pemba Island with 21 female and 17 male slaves'*.

There were other deaths reported: *'7 July 8.30. Departed this life Mr Henry Bodley, Carpenter. 9.0 Mustered by divisions. Exercised small arms men and marines at drill. 1.15 Landed funeral party to inter the remains of the late Mr Henry Bodley, Carpenter. Destroyed the dhow Ilma Moode. Used at funeral of late Mr Henry Bodley, Carpenter, cartridge, blank, rifle, 72 in No. Obviously a generous six shots each for a twelve-man firing party 'On 29 September: 'Shortened and furled sails. William Perry fell from main yard on to the deck and was killed. Consigned the body to the deep'*. Dead, and buried at sea, all within two hours and no firing party.

It is interesting that Henry was demoted for a one month period on this voyage, to AB. There is no record of this in the captain's log, but one could speculate that behind it lay the family story of a seaman being knocked overboard by the discharge of a bundle of clothing from the mouth of a carronade during horseplay. Perhaps Henry, as a senior gunner, was held partly responsible.

Henry returned to his wife and children in November 1875, no doubt amazed at how they had grown during his four-year absence. Six months later, on May 26, 1876, he retired on pension, leaving a navy vastly different from when he joined. The first warship without sails, Devastation, had just been completed; breech-loading guns were being introduced, and torpedo manufacture had begun. No more wooden warships were being built.

My grandmother Harriet was five years old when Lawrence Charles, Henry's last child, was born in Back Street, Kingsand in March 1877. This may have been one of the three properties in the street that Richard Edey had left to his sons-in-law, but with the rental incomes to his daughter Eliza. She had married Richard Jope, a successful boatbuilder who had died in 1862, and by this time Eliza was living alone in the Square, Cawsand.

Then, for reasons that we may never know for sure, Henry, Harriet and their five children packed their bags. They left Cawsand, their friends and relations, the green hills of Rame and the sparkling waters of Plymouth Sound behind them, took the Cremyll Ferry to Plymouth and then the train north to the industrial grime and hubbub of Liverpool.

## 16: HARRIET MEETS ROGER

There is a family story that Henry Eddey went to Liverpool to set up a ships' chandlers business, which seemed to make sense in view of Liverpool's importance as a port in those days. That may have been his intention, but it never happened and the first record of his employment in the area is in 1882 as a drill instructor on *HMS Indefatigable*, a sea training ship for boys permanently moored in the River Mersey. The job may have lasted for perhaps seven years then in 1885 and 1891 the records show him as a school caretaker at a series of addresses. He kept his love of the sea for the story goes that he lived for a time in 85 New Ferry Road in Bebington, where I was born, from the top attic room of which he could see the ships in the Mersey. He would spend many hours up there with his telescope, the only relic which we have of Henry and which is now treasured by Philip.

The family's first address was in Tranmere, where they were all listed in 1881 with the exception of his first-born, Henry Robert, who although only 13 was either away at sea with the merchant service, or possibly at Greenwich Hospital School. It was from here that his two brothers were to join the Royal Navy, Francis Thomas as a boy in 1885 at the age of 15 then signing on for twelve years in 1888, and Lawrence Charles followed the same pattern, joining as a boy in 1892. Francis was described as 5ft 8ins, dark brown hair, fair complexion and blue eyes. His brother was 5ft 9ins, dark brown hair, 'dark' eyes and sallow complexion.

Mary Ann Eddey, Henry's first-born, married Henry Priestman, a druggist assistant of 30 in Liverpool in October 1887, when she was 25. Her brother Henry Robert was still described as a mariner when he married Edith Routledge in Liverpool in 1889. They had two children, Henry James and Harriet. At Harriet's marriage in 1911, Henry Robert is a 'labourer in shipyard', probably Cammell Laird in Birkenhead. He died in Birkenhead in 1949, aged 81.

Francis had a long career with the navy, with good reports except when he went absent without leave in San Francisco for 42 days in 1889, one year into his service. He retired as a petty officer 1st class on pension in 1909, with 21 years' service on more than 15 different ships. He married Maria Lucy, who died in 1937. Francis became a 'customs watcher' and died in Liverpool in 1946 leaving an estate of £294 to be administered by his brother Henry, who was then 78.

Lawrence had a much shorter naval career. After completing his three years' boy service, he spent 15 months as an ordinary seaman before he 'ran' from *HMS Satellite* in January 1896 when she was stationed at Esquimalt. This was the naval base in British Columbia, which his father had visited with the 'Flying Squadron' in 1870. Lawrence's desertion was at the height of the Klondike 'gold rush' and nearby Seattle was the nearest port for Alaska. He may well have decided to join the 'rush'; there could be little other reason for jumping ship in such a lonely, far-off place. If he did head off to the Yukon he obviously didn't strike it rich, for the next we read of him is when he died aged 78 in Liverpool in 1955 leaving an estate of £2134 to his widow, Frances May Eddey in Walton.

Harriet, Henry's wife of 41 years died of cancer in Fenlon Street, Kirkdale in September 1901 at the age of 63. Henry John followed the long-lived tradition of the male Eddeys and died at eighty in November 1920, at Mill Road, Everton. Francis was present at the death. Henry's hard life in the Victorian Navy had clearly done him no harm.

His daughter Harriet, my grandmother, moved to Liverpool with her parents then obtained work as an assistant in a confectioner's shop in West Derby, Liverpool, where, at 18, she was living with the family of five plus two servants in 1891. She met Roger Williams, a handsome and ambitious young Welshman, then a grocery shop assistant also in West Derby. They married in St Lukes Church, Liverpool on August 11<sup>th</sup> 1895, when Roger was 29 and Harriet 23. They were to have five children. Their firstborn was called Henry Robert after her older brother and the second Frank Lawrence, my father, after her other two brothers. Then came Eric Roger, Muriel Gwendoline and Arthur Irwin.

Roger opened his own business and prospered, but sadly Harriet died a victim of cancer in 1925 at the age of 53, but not without a final visit to her lovely Cawsand as her postcard shows us. Her death completes my story of the Eddeys, a family which lived and died by the sea, but whose later generations were never quite able to live up to the style of Richard, in terms of wealth, valour or enterprise; but it may be the Eddeys I have to thank for that touch of salt in my veins, and the slight feeling of guilt every time I clear Customs.

## ELEGIES IN A COUNTRY CHURCHYARD

### SOME EPITAPHS FROM EDDEY AND SPRIDDELL GRAVES IN RAME CHURCHYARD

Short was the warning that called me away  
My life how soon blasted, my bones now decay  
Let all that survive prepare for the call  
For God only knows when the next may fall

*Grave of Thomas Edey, drowned 2.10.1840, aged 37. Buried with his baby sons, Richard died 9.8.1832 aged 3 years 3 months; and Henry John died 11.12.1831 aged 2 years 6 months.*

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My sufferings were great, yet not to compare  
With those of my saviour, who bought me so dear  
In faith I beheld Him, as bleeding for me  
Now evermore with Him in glory shall be

*Grave of Thomasin Edey, died 4.9.1865. Epitaph probably relates to her son Thomas, buried with her, 17.11.1842, aged 18.*

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Farewell, my dear and loving wife, the darling of my heart  
Who was with me in constancy until death did us part  
Grieve not for me, my dearest dear, nor at your loss complain  
But to the Lord give hearty thanks that I'm released from pain

.....  
Here lies the joy and comfort of my life,  
Who was the best of husbands to a wife  
Submissive then, I'll bear the chastening rod  
Before my Saviour, and put my trust in God

*Grave of Thomas Spriddell 'Died by a fall from the mast of his boat; 30.5.1820, aged 40.*

---

A pale consumption gave me the fatal blow  
The stroke was certain but the effect was slow  
When wasting pain death found me opprest  
Pitied my sighs and kindly brought me rest

*Grave of Susanna Spriddle, Thomasin's great aunt, died 9.12.1778 aged 23. With son William.*

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Death with his dart  
Did pierce my heart  
Tho' I was in my prime  
My tender friends I bid adieu  
'Twas Cod's appointed time.

*Grave of Richard Soper, brother of Catherine Edey, died 6.2.1783, aged 29*

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Only to us a short time lent, was to our sweet child so dear  
God soon recalled the gift He sent, and left us weeping here.

*Grave of William Henry Edey, died 3.4.1883, aged 18 son of William and Susanna Edey*

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