



Herne Bay Historical Records Society

Report of Meeting February 18th 2016

“A Herne Bay Holiday in 1846”

Talk by Peter Watson

The chance finds of a diary written in 1846 amongst the Monro family papers in the London Metropolitan Archives provided member and the Society's secretary Peter Watson with some fascinating and unique material with which to research and illustrate his talk “*A Herne Bay Holiday in 1846*”.

The diary was written by Cecil J Monro aged 12 years and started on 4th July 1846 when he records travelling from London to Herne Bay on the steamboat *'Father Thames'* leaving at 5.30am and arriving at Herne Bay pier at 9 o'clock. He describes the wind propelled trolley on rails which carried the family, his father mother and two brothers with their luggage down the length of the pier and his arrival at their lodgings run by Mrs Southee at 3 Marine Terrace. He finishes the day with the entry saying they had tea at 5pm and were in bed by 9pm. Peter showed members many images of the town and surrounding area mentioned by the young Cecil in his daily accounts as well as giving some background of the Monro family - his father, also named Cecil, being a Physician Registrar based at the Bethlem Hospital St Georges Field Southwark (the last of the Monro family extending back to James Monro 125 years previously to hold a similar post). Walking, playing cricket as well as continuing his studies in history and geography seemed to occupy most of his time during his holiday as well as seeing his father off and meeting him back to and from London on the steam packet at the end of several weekends. The diary ends on 21st July 1846 and through its pages Peter was able to give members a real snapshot of how a middle class Victorian family would have enjoyed their time at the newly established seaside resort of Herne Bay.