

A STANNARD FAMILY OF MARGATE

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This tells the story of Samuel Stannard, who ran the Shakespeare Hotel in Hawley square between 1802 and 1811; his son William, who was landlord of the Foy Boat on the waterfront between 1804 and 1816; and William's son William, who was a carpenter and also provided lodgings.

SAMUEL STANNARD

A large part of Samuel Stannard's life was spent as an exciseman, moving from Northants via Oxford and Wantage to Kent. He was appointed Supervisor of Excise in Deal (subsequently Sandwich) in November 1788. With his team of seven excise officers, working together with other local excise teams and assisted by the dragoons stationed in the area, Samuel had much to do to combat the smuggling rife around the Kent coast, and there were many violent incidents. He was also responsible for the routine collection of excise duties on a wide range of products, including alcoholic drinks.

In March 1801, Samuel was dismissed from the excise service for several misdemeanours, including asking a trader to let him have a case of wine in return for recommending a repayment of duty to the trader. By January 1802, the poor rates show that Samuel Stannard had taken over as the licensee of the Shakespeare Hotel in Hawley Square, Margate. No doubt it was so named because it was opposite the Theatre Royal, opened in June 1787; Hamlet was a popular play performed in the theatre as early as 1796. By the time Samuel came to the hotel, it was owned by Cobb's, the local brewers who owned many of the town's licensed premises. Later correspondence refers to two square tables in the tap room and other unspecified items which belonged to Cobb's. Samuel paid an annual rent of £40, due at Michaelmas. Samuel knew Cobb's from his time as an excise official, and probably used those contacts to obtain the lease.

The Shakespeare occupied what is now 19 Hawley Square, at its eastern corner. The building is four storeys high, and the side facing the square has a central door with two windows each side on the ground floor, and three windows on each of the other floors. A two storey extension at the side (towards the west) may also have been part of the hotel. The building extends back from the square by a similar amount. At the back, fronting on to Addington Street (formerly Princes Street), Everybody's Inn occupies what is said to be a former coach house built about 1780. This would presumably have been also a part of the Shakespeare's premises; in 1840, the hotel was advertised as offering livery stables. In 1786 the hotel was said to have 11 bedrooms. A 1797 guide to Margate wrote about the Shakespeare Tavern that "during the season, it is a resort for many genteel people, being in a very polite part of town". Hawley Square was developed in the late eighteenth century to meet the growing demands of visitors to Margate, and it housed a library/bookshop and a Methodist chapel among other businesses. The centre of the square was laid out as gardens.

Early in 1805, Samuel Stannard also purchased a house a short distance away, at 4 Princes Crescent. This was (and remains) a three storey brick terraced house with a basement, two windows wide. A short flight of steps with railings each side lead up from the pavement to the front door, and at the back was a yard. This house was perhaps intended to provide accommodation for Samuel's family (he had a wife and daughter, as well as his son William). It is not known if they ever lived in it, as the poor rates show Samuel as the occupier even after the house was known to have been rented out. However, in 1812, during the time when the house was let to a tenant, Samuel listed items of his which were still in the house, suggesting that he had occupied it. The rent assumed for the rateable value was £6 a year.

By February 1811 Samuel Stannard had been succeeded at the Shakespeare by Charles Boncey, who renamed it the London Hotel, and by April the house in Princes Crescent was rented to Mr Mummery for 20 guineas a year. Samuel was in London by October 1811, where he appears to have been in business as either a licensed victualler or a wine and spirits trader. Letters written by Samuel to Cobbs in their capacity as bankers show that he had a mortgage of £100 borrowed from Richard Collins, a watchmaker and clockmaker in Margate between 1780 and 1827. He also had a loan from the bank, for perhaps £150; the correspondence indicates that the bank was pressing for repayment of this. Samuel could only achieve this fully by selling the house in Princes Crescent, which he was reluctant to do. In the end, however, he was obliged to do so, and on 12 January 1813 4 Princes Crescent was sold to Mr Richard Wiles, who had rented the property since Michaelmas 1812.

The six letters written by Samuel to his bank between 1811 and 1813 provide valuable insights into his character. As would be expected, he wrote clearly and fluently, although grammar and spelling could be eccentric, and some of the letters seem to have been written in haste. He does not seem to have been prudent with money. In August 1812 he spoke of "*disappointments*" which meant he could not repay any more of the bank's loan, and in January 1813 he rushed to buy "*a greater quantity of spirits for ready money than usual*" in expectation of receiving the residue of cash from the sale of his house immediately, only to become increasingly anxious when a month later he was still waiting for the money. His choice of tenant may not have been ideal; he said of Mr Mummery that "*he took possession of it on the 23rd of April last and has never yet paid one farthing rent*", some nine months later. Samuel would have known the Cobbs well from his previous position in the excise, and he draws on this: "*surely Sir you have known me long enough to be well convinced that I mean nothing but honesty and uprightness*" and "*I mean nothing but what is honest and just*". The tone of his letters was humble, grateful and pleading. He even offered to vote for Francis Cobb as an MP in any future election, if he was allowed to keep the house in Princes Crescent: "*This house make me a Freeholder for the County therefore at any general Election you may command me with pleasure*". It may not be typical, but he also had a misunderstanding with Charles Boncey over the ownership of items left at the Shakespeare.

It is not known where Samuel lived or traded in London; he does not appear in any London directory between 1811 and 1816. It is possible that during this period he was joined for a time by his son William, who is absent from the rate books in Margate between May 1813 and March 1814. However Samuel later returned to Margate, as he paid rates on a property in Flint Row between October 1815 and November 1816. He would by this time have been about seventy years old. He may have died around the end of 1816, as the occupier in January 1817 appears to have been Mrs Stannard. A second rate levied in January 1817 shows the occupier as William Stannard (ie Samuel's son).

WILLIAM STANNARD of the Foy Boat

On 25 June 1804, William Stannard, licensed vitualler of the Foy Boat public house, married Kezia May, daughter of Anthony May, the miller of Chislet, at Margate St John. Kezia was two and a half months pregnant. Their first child, Kezia, was born on 4 January 1805, and baptised at St John's a month later. Over the next six years, children were born at regular intervals – Ann in 1806, William in 1807, Eliza in 1808, Mary in 1809 and Sophia in 1811. All were baptised within a couple of months of their birth at St John's, with the exception of Eliza, who was baptised at Kezia's home village of Chislet; possibly this was due to earlier storm damage to their home in Margate. After 1814 something changed. Sophia died in June, aged three, and thereafter, although children continued to be regularly born to the couple, they were not so regularly baptised. Sophia Ann, Jane, Caroline and Charles were all born between 1814 and 1827, when they were baptised together at St John's on 2

September. Josiah was baptised on 8 August 1825 and buried on 31 May 1826. Frank was baptised on 29 August 1827, probably as a sickly baby as this was only 4 days before the mass baptism of his 4 siblings. Finally, Edwin was born on 13 October 1830, but was not baptised until he was nearly 15. The Foy Boat had previously been held by James May from early in 1798 until early 1801, when his name was replaced in the poor rates by his heirs, and subsequently by Mrs/widow May. Apart from the period spring 1813 to spring 1814 (when James and then John May were recorded at the Foy Boat), William Stannard remained there until the spring of 1816, when William Hudson took over. It is highly likely that the May licensees of the inn were relatives of Kezia. Administration of the estate of James May of Margate, victualler, was granted to his widow Elizabeth on 3 December 1800. It is possible that Elizabeth was the elder sister of Kezia, who had married a James May, then a mariner, from Reculver, in 1794.

The Foy Boat was on the waterfront, in a prime position facing the pier. It was one of the best known inns in Margate, later replaced by the Pier Hotel under the Hudsons. It is believed the Hudsons owned the inn throughout. Certainly it was one of relatively few inns in Margate not owned by the Cobb brewery, unlike its near neighbours on the waterfront, the Duke's Head and the Ship. A picture of the inn based on a painting from 1810 shows a substantial 3 storey building, built of brick with a steep tiled roof and a forest of chimneys. Large windows with small panes allow guests access to fresh air and a view of the lively scene outside. Some people sit on a bench against the inn wall, while others are dancing in the street. Several barrels can be seen in a store on one side, and painted across the front of the building is the sign "*Foy Boat Superior London Porter*".

The inn was badly affected by the storm in January 1808, as reported in the Times:

The cellars of the Foy-boat public house, kept by Mr Stannard, were filled with water, in consequence of which seven butts of porter burst, which blew up the whole of the flooring of the tap-room, bar and parlour, besides considerably damaging the house.

An almost identical report of this incident in "The Atheneum" magazine additionally refers to him as "*a very worthy young man*". A note in East Kent Archives Centre from 1815, addressed to Cobb the Margate brewers, reads as follows:

Wm Stannard's compliments to Messrs Cobbs wishes to know whether it is their intention to supply him with Beer the ensuing winter and if it is to send him this day 2 of Mild & 1 Butt of Stale but if it is not to signify (if they please) the same in writing.

*Margate
Monday Morning*

The inn was mentioned twice in a book called "Margate! Or sketches...descriptive of that...place of resort" by Mary Pilkington, written and published in 1813. Intended as a guide book for children, this is an account of a stay in Margate by a number of adults and children. Although fictional, it is no doubt based on what the author saw when she stayed in Margate for two months in the summer of 1812. In the first extract, the group had been for a walk along the pier:

As the party were returning towards the entrance of the Pier...Fitzmaurice's eyes were directed towards an opposite inn, or public-house, and at length he audibly pronounced the term "foy-boat"; - "What an odd name that is!" said he, turning to Louisa, "do you know the meaning of it?" "No"; replied his young companion, "I never even heard of it". - "The house you allude to", said Mrs P "is a place of resort for what are termed foymen; or in other words, I must inform you there are a certain number of sea-faring men, who support themselves and families by what is termed foying - that is,

carrying provisions out to ships at anchor, and assisting those, which are in distress...when not occupied in the business they have been trained to, they employ themselves in making nets”.

On the second occasion, the party were speaking to a soldier at the fort, who had rescued from the sea a child from one of the houses below the fort, who had fallen in over the cliff:

At that moment the master of the Foy-boat tapped the humane centinel upon the shoulder, exclaiming, “Come, my hearty fellow, drink to your own health; take my advice and come and dry yourself by a good fire, for if you keep them there wet clothes on, you may get cold in your limbs”; so saying he presented him with a glass of gin. “Here’s a glass of thanks then to you, my honey”, said the soldier. “No thanks to me”, rejoined the publican; “and if all the Westmeath regiment are as humane fellows as yourself, they shall never want a glass of gin at the Foy-boat, whether they pay, or do not pay for it; but come, my tight lad, come and dry your clothes I tell ye, for the King must not have his brave soldiers on a sick bed”. Another soldier coming up whilst the publican was speaking, offered to take his post; and he immediately followed his friendly conductor to the Foy-boat.

Although this incident may be entirely fictional, it has a ring of truth about it, and may represent a real incident; in which case, the friendly landlord would have been William Stannard.

Life for the Stannards was interrupted in 1816 when William spent some months in prison as an insolvent debtor. No doubt the supplies to his public house were provided on credit. At the beginning of 1816, one of his creditors lost patience, and legal proceedings were set in train when a writ was issued on 27 January summoning William to appear in court. William was unable to pay the amount due of over £40, but bail was put up by two friends/neighbours (one of whom, Samuel Pointon, had lived next door to William’s father Samuel when he first bought the house in Princes’ Crescent), so initially William remained at liberty. On 15 March, William surrendered himself to discharge the bail; this was presumably the point at which the case came to trial at the Court of the Common Pleas in Westminster. There, as he was still unable to pay the debt, the Chief Justice committed him as an insolvent debtor to the Fleet Prison in London.

Under the law at this time, certain types of small businessmen – including innkeepers – were not permitted to use bankruptcy procedures as a means to discharge their debts. Instead, if they were unable to pay their debts when they were called in, they became insolvent debtors. They remained permanently responsible for their debts, and could, if their creditors chose, spend years in prison. Even after release, they could be liable to repay creditors from future assets. Many people, from all levels of society, found themselves imprisoned for debt; some died there.

While William adjusted to life in the Fleet, further creditors were gathering. At the beginning of May, five more claims were made for the repayment of debts totalling over £180. Three creditors have been identified – two distillers in London, and a brewer operating in London and Kent. William was taken from the Fleet to appear in front of another judge, and this time was committed to the King’s Bench Prison in Southwark, on 7 May.

The Fleet and the King’s Bench – together with the Marshalsea – were specialist debtors’ prisons. Insolvent debtors were not criminals, and the regime was therefore rather different from a normal prison. Accommodation varied according to what the prisoner could afford, including the possibility of renting lodgings immediately outside the prisons. Some debtors brought their families to live with them. Within the prisons, goods and services were bought and sold, and social life continued. Under the Insolvent Debtors Act of 1813, debtors could declare themselves insolvent and request release after 14 days in jail by taking an oath that their assets did not exceed £20; but if any of their creditors objected, they had to stay inside. William submitted a petition to the Court for Relief of

Insolvent Debtors towards the end of June, and a notice was placed in the London Gazette to advise creditors. The Court considered his petition on 9 August and agreed that he could be released; he was discharged from the King's Bench on 15 August.

On his return to Margate, William and his family may have lived with his parents at their house in Flint Row. William's father Samuel disappears from the poor rate records at the end of 1816, to be replaced briefly by Mrs Stannard in January 1817, and then, at a second rate assessment that month, by William. The rateable value of the house was £6.

His next move took William to a different part of town. By January 1820 he was in a house in Church Street, in the south west corner of Margate; the street led south from St John's church and vicarage. The house was initially valued at £12, swiftly dropping to £8½. William stayed here until after July 1822. By October 1822 he had moved to a house valued at £12 in Duke Street, in the heart of the town. Duke Street led inland from Marine Parade which faced the harbour and where two of the best hotels (the York and the White Hart) were situated, towards the market. William remained there until late in 1824, when he moved to a house in New Cross Street valued at £7. By April 1826 he had moved on again, to a house in Love Lane, with a rent estimated initially at £2, then variously at £8 or £6. Both New Cross Street and Love Lane were also in the area of the market.

Around the end of 1831, William moved on to Booths Place, a row of houses between King St and The Dane (now Dane Road), towards the southern edge of the town. A year later, another move took him to Brookes Place (now Addington St), at the back of Addington Square. Both these houses were valued at a rent of £7 a year.

We do not know what work William was doing at this time. He may have worked in inns or hotels. Although in 1825 he was described as a coffee house keeper, and in 1827 and 1838 as a book keeper, two of his daughters when they married in 1840 and 1843 gave his occupation as (licensed) victualler, so this was probably his main occupation.

Finally, between July 1834 and January 1836 (when the rate books ended), William was living in a house at 9 Cliff Terrace, valued initially at £7½ and then at £10. Cliff Terrace was a terrace of mainly three storey houses in the far east of the town, high up with views over open ground to the sea.

William remained in Flint Row until sometime after August 1817. By November 1817 he was occupying a house on Hoopers Hill, where he remained until July 1818. Then from December 1818 until the end of 1819 he occupied a house in Paradise Place, a terrace a little further along the road to Northdown. All of these 3 houses were in the same area of Margate, at the south east corner of the then built-up area, and all were valued at £6.

William Stannard died in Margate on 3 October 1838, of a diseased liver; perhaps his occupation had led to his early death!

William's widow Kezia moved from Margate to London, as did most of her children; she later remarried.

WILLIAM STANNARD junior, carpenter

William, born and baptised in 1807 in Margate, was the eldest son and third child of William and Kezia Stannard, and the only one of his siblings known to have remained living in the town. William became a carpenter. In 1834 he married Mary Robinson, and they had three children – Mary Ann baptised in 1835, William born in 1837 who died aged less than a month, and William

Robinson born on 1 January 1839. In June 1835 and January 1836, the rate books show William living in New Street, a street leading inland from the High Street from a point near to the Kings Head Inn. Early in 1841, Mary died, and at the time of the Census, William's younger sister Caroline was living with William and his two young children, at Bridge Terrace in Margate.

The following year, William (living at 3 Bridge Terrace) remarried, to Sarah Wales, widow of Stephen Wales who had died in 1840. Sarah was living by herself in lodgings in 1841, working as a dressmaker; no surviving children have been found of her first marriage. Before his death, Stephen Wales had become involved in controversy surrounding the origins of the Shell Grotto in Margate, which had been discovered in 1835 and opened to the public in 1837. Stephen, who was a bricklayer and plasterer, claimed to have worked on the grotto, setting the shells in patterns in cement. Although debate continues to this day, it seems most likely that the grotto is of ancient date, possibly medieval, and certain that Stephen, who was not an educated man, could not himself have created the intricate designs with their symbolic meanings. Most probably, he enlarged the entrance passage and perhaps made some other alterations prior to public access. His widow Sarah used to talk about Stephen's work on the grotto to her children.

William and Sarah had seven children:

Charles Riley	b 1843
Eliza Jane	b 1845
Sarah Ann	b 1847
Frank William	b 1850
Elizabeth S	b 1852/3
Frederick George	b 1855/6
George J	b 1858

In an 1849 directory for Margate, William was recorded as a carpenter and lodging house at 3 and 4 Bankside. At the time of the 1851 Census, William and Sarah were living at no 3, The Parade in Margate, with their first four children and the two surviving children from his first marriage, Mary Ann and William. An 1855 directory shows William Stannard with a lodging house at 8 Marine Parade. Both Bankside and Marine Parade were on the seafront, overlooking the harbour. No doubt Sarah took the main responsibility for running the lodgings, which – unlike a boarding house – would have involved renting out rooms without providing meals.

By 1861, the Stannard family in Margate was living in a house described as no 1, Stannards Cottages, with no 2 next door uninhabited. These cottages lay between Zion Place and Pleasant Place – just behind Fort Crescent on the cliff top. It seems likely that they were built by or for William Stannard, and they appear on a map of 1857 (the plot is also outlined on a map of 1821). The cottages are not obviously identifiable on the 1851 Census; there were various cottages in the area of Zion Place, including one unnamed cottage at the back of Zion Place. Although the Stannard family does not seem to have lived in the cottages for long, the name Stannards Cottages was attached to the row of buildings for much longer. They were used latterly as workshops and stores, and the last remnants were demolished in the Zion Place clearance scheme of the 1960s. In the 1861 census, the eldest two boys, William and Charles, were away from home, but the other children were all there. While William was still a carpenter, Sarah was described as a lodging house keeper – perhaps guests stayed in the vacant property next door? – while Mary Ann was a domestic servant, perhaps helping in her stepmother's enterprise.

There was more change over the next decade. Sarah Ann married carpenter Henry John Barber in 1868; their first two children, twins, were born in Margate, where they lived in Milton Road, but then they moved to South London. Charles married in 1869, and he too moved to South London, where he worked as a bricklayer. William junior appears to have died in 1870, at the age of 31. In the 1871 Census, William senior was living at home – now no 8 Oxford St – with his three youngest sons; Frank had become a carpenter, while Frederick was working as a costermonger. Sarah was staying in Ramsgate, as a nurse with a young couple who had just had a baby. Elizabeth was staying with her married sister Sarah Ann. A directory for 1878 shows William with a lodging house at 18 Vicarage Place, while Frank was a greengrocer at 1 Charlotte Place.

By 1881, only William and Sarah and their son Frank were still living in Margate – William and Sarah at no 115, High Street, and Frank, who had married Isabella Parker in 1875, at no 1 Charlotte Place, with their four small children and a young maidservant. Most of the rest of the family had migrated to South London. Eliza had married Edwin Taylor, a builder's foreman, in 1872, and they were living in Southwark. Frederick married Alice Munns in 1876, and they were in Bermondsey, where he was working as a painter. Charles was in Camberwell and Sarah Ann in Lambeth. This generation remained largely settled in London, and in 1891 the elderly William and Sarah were staying with their daughter Eliza. Sarah appears to have died in Camberwell in 1892 and William in Margate in 1898. Frank Stannard was interviewed in 1893 by Algernon Goddard, who was researching the origins of the Shell Grotto. The interview was at Frank's home, by candlelight, and Frank was described as a "tall well-made man of about forty". Frank told Mr Goddard that his mother had died in London a year earlier.

Frank Stannard remained in Margate. Directories show that in 1891 he had apartments to let (no doubt holiday accommodation) at 64 Trinity Square. In 1901 and 1903 his address was 25 Trinity Square; he was a carpenter and joiner in the 1901 Census. Frank died in Margate in 1928.