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For HIB: Editor: Ted Martin, 2A The Leys, Langford, Beds SG18 9RS

Telephone: 01462 701096. E-mail: ed.martin39@btinternet.com

For BLHA: Secretary: Clive Makin, 32 Grange Road, Barton Le Clay,
Bedford MK45 4RE

Telephone: 01582 655785

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BLHA AGM & ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2019

SYMPOSIUM: THE DESIGNED LANDSCAPES OF BEDFORDSHIRE

Saturday, 22 June 2019 at 10am

Annual General Meeting at 9.30am prompt

Hosted by Bedfordshire Gardens Trust at Poplars Garden Centre
(Education Learning Zone), Toddington, LU5 6HE



The programme of talks and presentations will include:

The Orchard as Part of the Designed Landscape

The Designed Landscape and the Agas Map – what can we find from this resource?

An Update on Flitwick Manor

From Medieval to Modern: the Evolution of Designed Landscapes in Bedfordshire

Gertrude Jekyll – Her Influence in the Bedfordshire Landscape

The Current Designed Landscape of Bedfordshire – Sharing Issues and Thoughts to Ensure the Legacy

Final details of each talk will be available by Easter 2019.

See the following booking forms to book *your* place at the Symposium or to book a display table for your society's materials on the day – space will be limited: *first-come, first served.*

BLHA AGM & CONFERENCE 2019
SYMPOSIUM: THE DESIGNED
LANDSCAPES OF BEDFORDSHIRE

BOOKING FORM

Enquiries to: treasurer@bedsgardenstrust.org.uk, or telephone 01582 840495, with whom you should discuss disability access. Bookings **MUST** be made no later than 1 June 2019 for catering requirements.

Name(s):.....

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Society/Organisation:.....

Address:.....

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.....Post code.....

Tel No.....Email.....

No. of places:at £25 **per person** (including buffet lunch), pay by cheque made out to **Bedfordshire Gardens Trust** or pay by Online Banking: Sort Code 600116, Account Number 45020272 with reference as your surname. Please post applications to BLHA AGM and Symposium 2019, c/o The Treasurer, Bedfordshire Gardens Trust, River View, Old Watling Street, Flamstead, Herts. AL3 8HN or electronically via email **to:** treasurer@bedsgardenstrust.org.uk

Catering: Please indicate any specific dietary requirements:

.....

BLHA AGM & CONFERENCE 2019

SYMPOSIUM: THE DESIGNED LANDSCAPES OF BEDFORDSHIRE

DISPLAY STANDS BOOKING FORM

This displays and stands booking form should be completed by the Chair of the responding organisation, the designated deputy or by any retail outlet manager wishing to take a stand at the event. Enquiries to:

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Please discuss access with the organiser, noted above. Please note that space for displays and stands is limited and will be on a first come, first served basis. Bookings **MUST** be made no later than 1 June 2019 to accommodate the various needs of the stand holders. No charge to attendees.

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Society/ Organisation:.....

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River View, Old Watling Street,

Flamstead, Herts. AL3 8HN

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Bedfordshire's other Admiral: Hugh Evan-Thomas, who carried the can for Jutland

Most of us have heard of Admiral John Byng who was shot by his own side 'to encourage the others', but there is another, more recent, Bedfordshire admiral whose career was cut short by being unfairly blamed for the indecisive Battle of Jutland in 1916.

Left: Admiral Sir Hugh Evan-Thomas by John Buchan, public domain

Hugh Evan-Thomas was Welsh, his family had owned the Llwynmadoc estate near Beulah, Powys, for 200 years and Pencerrig at Bulth Wells, but it is said that he was born at another of their properties, The Gnoll¹ at Neath in Glamorgan, in 1862.

His father, Charles Evan-Thomas,² was short of money to support seven children and so Evan-Thomas just had his naval salary for support.

Aged 15 in September 1877, Hugh Thomas (as he then was) was a cadet



on HMS *Britannia*, a training ship, when Prince George Frederick (later King George V) and his elder brother, Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence (known as Prince Edward), joined for their naval education. Thomas was approved by John Neale Dalton, their tutor, who sailed with them, to become a friend to the princes. Thomas left *Britannia* in December 1877 having a close friendship with Prince George and Dalton asked him to remain in contact.

Left; Prince George in 1893

In February 1878, Thomas was posted to HMS *Swiftsure*, a barque-rigged battery ship in the Mediterranean fleet. Thomas's father, Charles Evan Thomas, then changed the family name from Thomas to Evan-Thomas. Midshipman Evan-Thomas had a good report from Captain Salmon that

he had 'conducted himself with sobriety zeal & attention & to my satisfaction'. Evan-Thomas and another officer went ashore in the Gulf of Saros off Gallipoli in July 1878, but were arrested by Russian soldiers. They were quickly released, but there was tension in the area after the signing of the Treaty of Berlin.³

Evan-Thomas transferred to the barque-rigged turret ship, HMS *Monarch* in August 1878 and Captain Algernon Lyons, his first cousin once removed, reported that Evan-Thomas 'conducted himself with sobriety and entirely to my satisfaction' (a usual form of words), but the next captain of *Monarch*, George Tryon, varied it to: 'a very promising young officer in every respect'.

Next year, 1879, Evan-Thomas joined HMS *Bacchante*, to be part of a crew hand-picked to be good influences on the two princes who continued their naval careers on that ship. *Bacchante* made three cruises: (1) the Mediterranean and West Indies, (2) Spain and Ireland, and (3) round-the world. This last cruise left in September 1880 with three other corvettes and a frigate HMS *Inconstant*.

Their journey was interrupted by the first Boer War and Queen



Victoria was worried that her grandsons were in a war zone, but they did not see action and royal duties were just visits to a Zulu chief and other social functions. In a storm off Western Australia, the rudder was damaged – it could only be brought back under control by sending men aloft using their bodies as makeshift sails to turn the ship.

Left: HMS *Bacchante*

Evan-Thomas socialised with the princes and in June 1881 became senior midshipman, accompanying them on trips ashore. In spring 1882, *Bacchante* returned to the Mediterranean via the Suez Canal and the princes visited their uncle, King George I of Greece.⁴ Evan-Thomas left the ship and returned home on 6 June 1882 on promotion to sub-lieutenant and then spent seven months at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, on a lieutenants' training course, where he became friendly with Lieutenant John Jellicoe⁵ (later First Sea Lord and commander of the British Grand Fleet during the First World War). Then there was a gunnery course at HMS *Excellent*, commanded by John Fisher.⁶ Evan-Thomas continued to write to the princes during 1883,

Also in 1883 he was promoted to lieutenant and Prince George wrote congratulating him, saying that King Edward VII had been pressing the Admiralty for the promotion. Evan-Thomas was posted to HMS *Sultan*, serving for 31 months until illness forced him to return to England on half-pay for six months. His last captain, Richard King, described him as 'a thorough seaman and most efficient officer in every way. Active and zealous.'

He went next to HMS *Bellerophon* as flag-lieutenant to his cousin, Rear-Admiral Sir Algernon Lyons. He wrote to Prince George saying he was still not fully recovered and hoping the Bermudan climate would be good for him. He was on *Bellerophon* for nine months, then returning to England for 10 months, on half-pay for health reasons. In August 1888, he went to the sail-training ship HMS *St Vincent* and in spring 1889, again to *Excellent* for a gunnery course and then HMS *Vernon* for torpedo training; Prince George was also there.

Later in 1889, after a short time on HMS *Camperdown*, he was permanently posted to her in December. She sailed to the Mediterranean as flagship to Vice-Admiral Sir Anthony Hiley Hoskins. In May 1890, *Camperdown* was exchanged for HMS *Victoria*, which was intended as the flagship, but delayed in construction. Vice-Admiral Hoskins put Evan-Thomas in charge of refloating *Victoria* after she ran aground in the Gulf of Corinth in February 1891.

A message received on board *Victoria* on 14 January 1892 informed them that Prince Edward had died. Evan-Thomas was responsible for ordering flags to half-mast.

A few weeks later, he transferred to the royal yacht HMY *Osborne* at Prince George's request but it was unable to go to sea because of boiler trouble so Evan-Thomas did not have much to do. Prince George then received command of HMS *Melampus*. He had received rapid promotion and was now commander of a ship with less experience than was normal. In these cases an older officer was chosen as first lieutenant, but Evan-Thomas was appointed. Other officers were also friends of the Prince. *Melampus* commissioned in June 1892, went to trials off Ireland and then took part in the Cowes Week naval review. The ship received good reports and Evan-Thomas was commended in the Admiralty formal report for his part in preparing the ship. The ship's company then disbanded, and Evan-Thomas returned to duties on *Osborne*.

Osborne was out of service throughout 1892, so Evan-Thomas had plenty of shore leave. In February 1893, the yacht sailed to Genoa to meet Prince George, his mother and sisters, for a royal tour of the

Mediterranean. He accompanied the royal party ashore and had to ensure royal life ran smoothly. The ship returned to England on 3 June. His captain reported that he was 'a zealous and hardworking officer and in every way to my satisfaction'.

On 22 June 1893 the flagship of the Mediterranean fleet, HMS *Victoria*, collided with HMS *Camperdown* resulting in serious damage to *Camperdown*, but *Victoria* sank with the loss of 358 lives. Vice-Admiral George Tryon, the commander of the fleet, had ordered the manoeuvre resulting in the collision and he was drowned.

Admiral Sir Michael Culme-Seymour was appointed commander in Tryon's place and asked Evan-Thomas to be his flag-lieutenant. This posting was less than a lieutenant of his seniority would expect, but Admiral Lord Clanwilliam and the First Sea Lord, Sir Anthony Hoskins, wanted it. Both admirals assured him that the best possible man was needed.

Exercises were held to ensure ships' captains could work effectively together without further mishaps. Evan-Thomas gained great experience and a comprehensive knowledge of the signal book. The navy was moving to a simpler signalling system before the *Victoria* collision, which occurred under the traditional system. But, the simpler system got the blame and the navy reverted to the old system. Evan-Thomas was at the centre of this reversion in the Mediterranean and expected accurate and detailed flag commands. This added to difficulties at the Battle of Jutland – signal failures contributing to the loss of British ships.

Evan-Thomas was ill while in the Mediterranean and in 1894 took sick leave back to England where he proposed to and married Hilda Florence Audrey Barnard on 18 July 1894 at St Saviour's Church, Walton Place, Knightsbridge. Hilda Barnard came from a long-established Bedfordshire family who lived in the Manor House at Cople. In November, the couple moved to Valletta on Malta with the fleet.

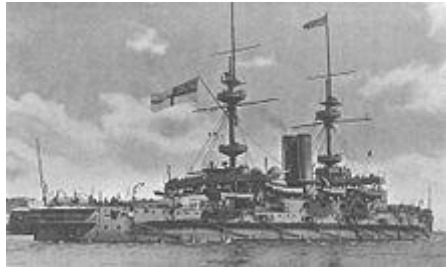
Evan-Thomas's Mediterranean posting ended in December 1896. Culme-Seymour (whose new flagship was HMS *Ramillies* from October 1896) wrote: 'he has great tact and judgement – a thorough knowledge of his duties (signal and otherwise) and both with the fleet in the summer at sea and on shore in Malta has been all that I could wish.' On 1 January 1897, Evan-Thomas was promoted to commander.

He then became secretary to an Admiralty committee to revise the signal book. With a number of senior officers in May 1898 he witnessed an experimental wireless transmission from a clifftop wooden hut on the Isle of Wight. Guglielmo Marconi set up a wireless transmitter there and

similar station at Bournemouth, 14 miles away. Evan-Thomas wrote to Vice-Admiral Sir Compton Domville, chairman of the signals committee, to report the success of the experiment, recommending a trial on board two warships. The battleship HMS *Alexandra* and cruisers HMS *Europa* and HMS *Juno* were equipped with radios for the 1899 manoeuvres, and transmitted messages for up to 60 miles.

The new signal book was published in 1898. In November, Evan-Thomas became commander of the Portsmouth Signal School. Then, at age 38, in November 1900, he was appointed to his first command, the cruiser HMS *Pioneer*, part of the Mediterranean Fleet, commanded by Admiral John Fisher. Evan-Thomas was promoted to captain on 26 June 1902 and transferred to HMS *Victory* for service at the Admiralty.

In 1903 he was chosen as flag captain for Vice-Admiral Lord Charles Beresford in the Channel Squadron, commanding HMS *Majestic* (right) in 1903–1904 and HMS *Caesar*, 1904–1905.



When Beresford left the Channel Fleet he commented: ‘I

heartily give you all the credit you so richly deserve for making *Caesar* the most brilliantly smart ship on the water’, and ‘you are certain of a most brilliant career in the service and are sure to become one of Britain’s most efficient admirals’. A note from Lord Knollys to Beresford commended Evan-Thomas’s good results in gunnery trials.

In 1905 Evan-Thomas became captain of the yacht HMS *Enchantress*, reserved for the First Lord of the Admiralty, and shortly afterwards became Naval Secretary to the First Lord and continued in that post under later First Lords. John Fisher was First Sea Lord, and many changes were taking place in the the navy. Although on good terms with his former commander, Beresford, he also maintained a good working relationship with Fisher, despite the growing public feud between the two admirals. In 1908 he returned to sea to command the new dreadnought class battleship⁷ HMS *Bellerophon*, the second of the new class of ships being created by Fisher. *Bellerophon* joined the Home Fleet commanded by Admiral Sir William May, who had once been Evan-Thomas’s commander on HMS *Ramillies*.

Bellerophon trialled a new ‘director firing system’ in April 1910. It controlled all the main guns on the ship from a high viewpoint from which

you could see the enemy. Firing simultaneously meant that shells fell at the same time, the position of the splashes, enabling correction of the aim for the next shot. Evan Thomas was not impressed but it was essential that the range at which effective attacks could be made be extended. 8,000 yards was then considered reasonable, but successful actions in the First World War, used more than twice this range, with the advantage going to the side first firing accurately.

In 1909, the post of captain of the fleet was offered which was a promotion, but in July 1910 Evan-Thomas took command of the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth (then known as HMS *Britannia*). The two princes, Edward and Albert (sons of King George V), went there, as had their father. Fisher thought that Evan-Thomas at the College would benefit the navy, it would be a favour to the King, but would not help his career. During a measles outbreak there in February 1911, the princes, who both had the illness, were moved to Evan-Thomas's home until it was over. Edward, now Prince of Wales, left in March to go to sea.

When Evan-Thomas was promoted Rear-Admiral in July 1912 it was because he was the next most senior officer. Committee service and a training course followed, then he awaited a new posting on half-pay. He was appointed second in command of the first battle squadron of the Home Fleet in December 1913 and this promotion might have been helped by the King.

In October 1915 Evan-Thomas was appointed commander of the 5th Battle Squadron, consisting of five newly completed *Queen Elizabeth*-class fast battleships, arguably the most powerful ships in the world. HMS *Barham* (*below*) was his flagship. These ships, with 15-inch guns, could



steam at 24 knots and formed a fast division attached to the Grand Fleet. They complemented the fast battlecruiser squadron which normally served in a detached scouting role.

It was a prestigious posting and it is likely that he got it due to the influence of his friend, Admiral Jellicoe, commander of

the Grand Fleet. But Jellicoe was not likely to appoint an independent minded officer to the post.

Evan-Thomas was also likely also to be acceptable to Admiral Beatty,⁸ who commanded the battlecruisers. He was senior to Evan-Thomas and would command any joint operation. The *Queen Elizabeth* class ships were slightly slower than the battlecruisers, but Beatty campaigned that they should be permanently attached to him – the fleet's fast division.

On 12 May 1916, a meeting at Rosyth, between Jellicoe, Beatty and First Sea Lord Jackson, discussed the future of the battlecruiser fleet. Beatty got his way and the 5th Battle Squadron would be temporarily attached to the battlecruisers to make up their numbers. Different standing orders were used by the battlecruisers to those used by the Grand Fleet, but Beatty did not meet Evan-Thomas, nor send him copies of those orders. When the ships sailed as one unit in the Battle of Jutland, this became a problem.

Intercepted radio signals by the Admiralty told that the German High Seas Fleet intended to sail on the morning of 30 May. Jellicoe was ordered to raise steam at 5 pm and passed on the command to Beatty. About 10 pm the battlecruisers left Rosyth to meet the Grand Fleet (which came from Scapa Flow) in the North Sea about 100 miles from Denmark at 2pm on 31 May. They did not think it likely that a major fleet action would take place so the battlecruisers were ordered to sail south of the meeting point and then turn north. Beatty had his 1st Battlecruiser Squadron in the most southerly position (sailing mainly east), the 2nd Battlecruiser Squadron was on a parallel course two miles north; Evan-Thomas's 5th Battle Squadron was five miles astern.

When the ships reached the scouting position, south of the meeting point, Beatty ordered them to turn north, with Evan-Thomas's 5th Battle Squadron leading the ships in a northerly direction, so that they would arrive positioned correctly for their meeting with the Grand Fleet. Outlying cruisers, screening the bigger ships, then made contact with a German force to the south-east, meaning that the just-turned British ships were heading away from the enemy. Beatty made a flag signal for his ships to turn on to a new south-south-east course, and both battlecruiser squadrons did so. But the 5th Battle Squadron could see there had been a signal but could not read it because they were too far away, and so continued north.

Before the first northerly turn HMS *Tiger*, the last ship in Beatty's squadron, was relaying messages to the 5th Battle Squadron by searchlight, but *Tiger* was now furthest away from Evan-Thomas and no other ship took over. It was eventually apparent that the main squadron had turned south and so the 5th Battle Squadron followed, but they were now 10 miles apart.

Beatty engaged the German ships, a squadron of five battlecruisers commanded by Admiral Franz von Hipper. The Germans opened fire first at about 3.45 pm, more accurately than the six British battlecruisers. HMS *Lion*, Beatty's flagship, was hit by a shell on Q turret, which caused a serious explosion, but the magazines were flooded, which saved the ship. *Indefatigable* was struck at about 4.02 pm and completely exploded. There were only two survivors from 1,019 officers and men.

Evan-Thomas's squadron closed the gap to the battle and opened fire at 4.08 pm at extreme range. The firing continued as the British ships chased Hipper's squadron which was running south towards the German High Seas Fleet, which was heading north. At approximately 4.26 pm HMS *Queen Mary*, another of Beatty's battlecruisers, exploded and sank with only nine survivors from 1,275 men. This gave rise to Beatty's famous comment: 'There seems to be something wrong with our bloody ships today.'

The four remaining British battlecruisers were ahead of Evan-Thomas's 5th Battle Squadron when first contact was made with the German High Seas Fleet. Beatty ordered a course reversal, attempting to lead the German fleet north towards the British Grand Fleet. A second signalling error occurred when flag signals were sent to Evan-Thomas's 5th Battle Squadron ordering it also to turn about. The signal was raised by *Lion* and seen by *Barham* as it steamed past the retreating *Lion* in the opposite direction. But, the signal was not lowered (indicating the point at which the course change was to be carried out) until the battleships were dangerously close to the German fleet and under heavy fire, and then the order was to 'turn in succession' (each ship to turn as it reached exactly the same spot in the ocean), which was a perfect target for the German fleet to aim at as each British ship passed. The last ship, HMS *Malaya*, seeing the fire ahead, turned early.

The next phase ('the run to the north') saw Beatty run ahead in his faster battlecruisers, with Evan-Thomas's better armoured 5th Battle Squadron two miles behind. Beatty lost touch with the enemy, but Evan-Thomas's ships continued to fire. The battle continued until they reached the British Grand Fleet, which was heading south. Jellicoe had difficulty deploying his fleet to meet the German ships, because he had inadequate information about their position, but he succeeded in forming a battle line across their path.

Evan-Thomas's 5th Battle Squadron acquitted itself well during the run, but some ships suffered considerable damage. *Warspite* suffered damage to her steering gear, her helm jammed as the ships turned to take

up station at the rear of the British battle line, so she steamed in circles in the 'killing zone' between the two fleets before steering could be restored. This helped the cruiser *Warrior*, which had been severely damaged at this position by German fire, to limp away covered by the circling *Warspite* which eventually got back to port, but *Warrior* was abandoned. When it realised it was up against the British Grand Fleet, the German fleet turned away and although firing continued, it avoided contact until it could get to Horn's Reef and then to Germany.

In November 1916 John Jellicoe was replaced as commander of the Grand Fleet by Beatty, because the public felt the navy had not performed well at Jutland. But Jellicoe became First Sea Lord.

In June 1917, King George V visited the fleet and an investiture ceremony was held on board *Queen Elizabeth* for sailors who had won awards at Jutland. Beatty interrupted the ceremony as Evan-Thomas was to receive his knighthood from the King, offering his own sword to be used in the ceremony.

On 1 October 1918, Evan-Thomas was replaced as commander of the 5th Battle Squadron and in March 1921 he became Commander-in-Chief, The Nore (based at Chatham). He received decorations from five countries, including the Croix de Guerre with palms, and an honorary doctorate from Prifysgol Cymru at Bangor in 1920. In 1922 he became High Sheriff of Glamorgan.

After the battle and by the end of the war the public wanted to know who was to blame for the perceived failure at Jutland. It was decided that an official history of the battle should be published and Captain John Harper was appointed to review all available documentation and write a report. When Beatty became First Sea Lord the book as proof copies was awaiting approval on his desk.

Beatty objected to the account, requesting Harper make alterations which Harper refused to do unless Beatty gave him written orders to do so. Harper refused to put his name to an account with which he could not agree. Instead, Beatty appointed two brothers, Captains Alfred Dewar and Kenneth Dewar to write a 'Staff Appreciation' of the battle, which would be circulated to naval officers only.

The Harper report was passed to Sir Julian Corbett, who was writing an official history of the whole naval war on behalf of the Committee of Imperial Defence. Corbett was shown the 'Staff Appreciation', and said he 'read it with increasing wonder till at last I felt it my duty to convey to the Admiralty that such a grotesque account of the battle certainly ought not to go out as their considered verdict'. The account was classified as 'secret'

and yet another version was commissioned: the 'Admiralty Narrative'. This was shown to Jellicoe, and he objected to much of it. Jellicoe objected to the claim that Evan-Thomas was responsible for the distance between his ships and Beatty's, resulting in Beatty going into battle without his four most powerful ships.

Evan-Thomas was never consulted but he obtained a copy and arranged to speak to the First Lord of the Admiralty, Leo Amery, in July 1923, but the meeting and following letters with the Admiralty did not reach a satisfactory conclusion. The issue also included the time when a flag signal from *Lion* was hoisted and then lowered (which was the point at which the ship receiving the order was supposed to act upon it), the failure of this signal caused Evan-Thomas to continue steaming towards the enemy when he should have turned away with Beatty's other ships.

When Evan-Thomas arranged another interview in December 1923, Beatty interrupted the meeting before Evan-Thomas could explain his business and 'pushed' him out of the room. Evan-Thomas returned to Chatham, but by 2.30 pm that day he was taken ill and suffered a stroke. In March 1924, he had to retire, and was not well enough to attend a formal interview with the King, which was normal for retiring admirals. He was awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath for his services to the Royal Navy.

In June 1924, the 'Admiralty Narrative' was published, without Jellicoe's corrections. Jellicoe's objections were included as an appendix, together with refutations by the Admiralty which Jellicoe had not seen. In May 1925 Evan-Thomas was able to see the King to discuss the matter. The King gave him an audience of half an hour and allegedly heard his 'account of his ordeal at Beatty's hands'. But King George had formally to support the Admiralty: he understood Evan-Thomas's legitimate grievances, but felt that Beatty was an effective First Sea Lord at a time when the navy was under considerable threat from spending cuts and changes in public opinion; he felt it 'better for the nation that there should be no more controversy'.

German published accounts of the battle went some way to credit Evan-Thomas's ships with most of the success against Hipper during the battle-cruiser action. In 1927, Winston Churchill published his own account of the war, and came down heavily on Beatty's side. Evan-Thomas, nearly recovered from illness, wrote to *The Times*, stating his case. Many newspapers had articles criticising Beatty's connection with the official report and its contents.

In March, a staged question about Evan-Thomas's failure to close up his ships with Beatty's was asked in the House of Commons and answered with a statement that signal logs from *Barham* indicated signals to change course had indeed been received, at least as far as her accompanying destroyers were concerned. Harper had now retired from the Navy, and published a new version of his account (*The Truth about Jutland*).

Beatty was coming to the end of his appointment as First Sea Lord and his last few months were a time of considerable criticism. The original *Harper Record* was now also published. A further rebuttal against Harper, *The Truth about Harper*, also appeared, and many other books have been published since.

Evan-Thomas was very shabbily treated by Beatty after Jutland, to prop up Beatty's reputation. Evan-Thomas was blamed for errors which were Beatty's responsibility, ensuring that Evan-Thomas was unreasonably held responsible for some of the mistakes and failures.

In retirement, Evan-Thomas travelled staying with in-laws in Bedfordshire and relatives. His despicable treatment by Beatty and lack of support from the King undoubtedly made his last years at Cople unhappy. Evan-Thomas died on Thursday, 30 August 1928, at Cople House,¹⁰ of a diabetic coma aged 65. His funeral took place on Sunday, 2 September at Cople. A memorial service was held at Eglwys Oen Duw parish church (Church of the Lamb of God) at Beulah. In the church he is commemorated by a brass plaque inscribed with the words of Psalm 121. Mount Evan-Thomas, the highest mountain in the Opal range in Alberta, Canada, is named in his honour. His wife, Hilda, died on 21 February 1938 at 47 Morpeth Mansions, London SW1,

Evan-Thomas was described by Roskill as 'not a particularly imaginative leader who would sense his senior officer's [Beatty's] needs and intentions intuitively'. But he also demonstrates the absurdity of some of Beatty's needs and intentions. Beatty later said that it would be relatively difficult for an outsider to follow his ideas. Richard Hough wrote of Evan-Thomas and Jutland, that while he 'demonstrated a certain lack of imagination, he did not deserve the vilification he received from some quarters.'⁹

It seems that Bedfordshire's Admirals have been singularly unlucky!

References

Andrew Gordon: *The Rules of the Game: Jutland and British Naval Command* (London: John Murray, 1996. ISBN 0-7195-5076-9), considered to be the best source of information on Evan Thomas.
www.dreadnoughtproject.org/tfs/index.php/Hugh_Evan-Thomas

Notes

1. In 1929 Neath corporation bought the Evan-Thomas estate at Gnull as a public park, war memorial and tribute to Hugh Evan-Thomas.

2. Another source says Evan-Thomas was born on 25 October 1862 at Cranmers, Mitcham, Surrey. He was the fifth son of Charles Evan Thomas, JP, DL, and Cara Pearson. Charles Thomas (1817–1902) was a barrister and local politician who assumed the additional surname Evan in 1880. Cara (who died aged 81 in 1909) was the eldest daughter of Henry Shepherd Pearson. Her grandfather Sir Richard Pearson commanded the frigate *Serapis* in the battle against John Paul Jones and the US Continental Navy ship *Bonhomme Richard*. Evan-Thomas was one of eight (another source says seven) children and although they owned three estates in Wales it 'may have not have been accompanied by commensurate wealth'.

3. The Treaty of Berlin (a treaty between Austria-Hungary, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Russia, and the Ottoman Empire to settle affairs in the East), signed on 13 July 1878. After the Russian victory against the Ottoman Empire, the major powers restructured the map of the Balkan region.

4. King George I of Greece, born Prince William of Schleswig-Holstein-Sonderburg-Glücksburg on 24 December 1845, King from 1863 until assassinated on 18 March 1913.

5. Admiral of the Fleet John Rushworth Jellicoe, 1st Earl Jellicoe, GCB, OM, GCVO, SGM, DL (5 December 1859–20 November 1935) fought in the Anglo-Egyptian War and the Boxer Rebellion and commanded the Grand Fleet at the Battle of Jutland in May 1916. His handling of the fleet was controversial but he made no serious mistakes and the German High Seas Fleet did retreat to port at a time when defeat would have been catastrophic for Britain. The public was disappointed that the navy did not win a dramatic victory. Jellicoe later served as First Sea Lord, overseeing the expansion of the Naval Staff at the Admiralty and the introduction of convoys, but was relieved at the end of 1917. He was the Governor-General of New Zealand in the early 1920s.

6. John Arbuthnot Fisher, 1st Baron Fisher, GCB, OM, GCVO (25 January 1841–10 July 1920), known as Jacky or Jackie Fisher, was an admiral known for his efforts at naval reform. He had a huge influence on the Royal Navy in a career of more than 60 years, from wooden sailing ships armed with cannon to steel-hulled battlecruisers, submarines and the first aircraft carriers. Argumentative, energetic and reform-minded Fisher is often considered the second most important figure in British naval history, after Lord Nelson.

7. The dreadnought was the main type of battleship of the early 20th century. The first, the Royal Navy's *Dreadnought*, made such a strong impression on launch in 1906, that similar battleships were also called 'dreadnoughts'. They were a revolutionary design because of more heavy-calibre guns than previous ships and steam turbine engines and were a symbol of national power and a crucial catalyst in the naval arms race between the UK and Germany. The *Dreadnought* reset the balance of naval power overnight.

8. Admiral of the Fleet David Richard Beatty, 1st Earl Beatty GCB, OM, GCVO, DSO, PC (17 January 1871–11 March 1936) served in the Mahdist War and then the response to the Boxer Rebellion; he commanded the 1st Battlecruiser Squadron at the Battle of Jutland in 1916, after which his aggressive approach was contrasted with the caution of his commander Admiral Sir John Jellicoe. He succeeded Jellicoe as Commander in Chief of the Grand Fleet and received the surrender of the German High Seas Fleet at the end of the war. He then became First Sea Lord, a position he held for 7 years, 9 months, longer than any other First Sea Lord in history. He was involved in negotiating the Washington Naval Treaty of 1922.

9. www.dreadnoughtproject.org/tfs/index.php/Hugh_Evan-Thomas: quoting Roskill, *Admiral of the Fleet Earl Beatty*, p 155, and Hough, *The Great War at Sea*, p 294. Another title, *The Jutland Scandal*, by Admiral Reginald Bacon, dating from about 1921, castigates Beatty, exposing his mistakes and dishonourable inclination to blame others.

10. Cople House no longer exists: it was destroyed by fire in 1971. Only the stable block, now three dwellings, remains. The rest of the site is now occupied by Woodlands Close. Its early history is obscure: the Barnard family, Bedford bankers, occupied it for nearly a century, between 1855 and 1947. Thomas Barnard & Co (1799–1915), was established in 1799 as Barnard & Co by Joseph Barnard (1745–1825), a Bedford coal merchant. It was also known as Bedford Bank. The bank's partnership capital at foundation was about £10,000, rising to £30,000 in 1813 and £80,000 in 1873. There was a run on the bank in 1809–1810 and in 1811 a cashier at the Bank of England embezzled over £15,600 of the firm's investment funds, almost causing the bank to fail. Joseph Barnard died in 1825. His son Thomas was admitted to the partnership by 1826. Thomas's sons, Talbot and Thomas, joined the partnership in 1848 and 1851, and by 1850 the family's parallel coal business had been given up. In 1915, when the bank was known as Thomas Barnard & Co, it was acquired by Parr's Bank which amalgamated with London County and Westminster Bank in 1918 and subsequently became NatWest.

In the early 20th century one of the Barnard family members tried to write a history of Cople, including Cople House. His notes are in Bedfordshire Archives and one of them states that the date on the bell of Cople House was 1678 [BD1288/5] giving a possible date for the construction of an older house on the site, demolished in the early 19th century when the new one was built – the Barnard notes place this building as possibly about 1822 [BD1288/7]. The Barnard family bought the House together with the Cople Estate from the Dukes of Bedford who bought it from the Duke of Marlborough in 1774. In 1927 it was owned by the trustees of Thomas Barnard and inhabited by Mrs Barnard. A previous tenant in the Dukes of Bedford's time (1842–1853) was George Stevens Byng, Viscount Enfield, from 1847 to 1860 and later 7th Earl of Strafford, a great-grandson of the Admiral George Byng, 1st Viscount Torrington of Southill Park who was the father of the unfortunate Admiral John Byng!

Orchards East

A topic for a talk at our 2019 Conference will be 'The Orchard as part of a Designed Landscape' and it will include updates on the Orchards East project which is an exciting new environmental and cultural project which covers six counties in the east of England: Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Essex, Hertfordshire, Norfolk and Suffolk. Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and based in the School of History at the University of East Anglia, it is devoted to discovering and understanding the past, present and future of orchards in Eastern England, and will last for three years.

Extending initiatives already developed by the Suffolk Traditional Orchards Group and other partners, including the East of England Apples and Orchards Project, it will be a collaborative project, working with existing county orchard groups, other interested organisations and orchard owners. It hopes to stimulate interest and engage a wide new audience and aims to work with hundreds of volunteers to survey and record old orchard sites across the East of England, as well as research the social, cultural and economic history of fruit growing in the region. The

results of these investigations will be shared through education and publication.

Visit www.orchardseast.org.uk.

Book Review

Colmworth and Neighbouring Villages: Then and Now, by Colmworth and Neighbours History Society, 2018. 48pp including cover, wire-stitched A4 format. Obtainable from the Society at 3 Collingwood Road, Eaton Socon, Cambs PE19 8JQ (email secretary@colmworthhistory.org.uk) approx 116 illustrations: £5 + £2 p&p.

Colmworth and Neighbours History Society have produced an interesting guide to the 'then and now' of Colmworth and the surrounding area, including Keysoe, Little Staughton and Bushmead, Bolnhurst, Thurleigh, Wilden and Ravensden.

The booklet is well produced on art paper with many good photos in monochrome and colour and reproduction of even the oldest images is good. There are maps to locate the sites of the photos, extensive captions and an index.

It must always be a consideration when contemplating a publication such as this whether to produce it in an A4 format, which enables more than two images to a page or as an A5 paperback book which will make more pages but will probably be considered less ephemeral. That aside, this is a very interesting publication which gives considerable historical detail to accompany the images of buildings and streets reproduced and can be recommended.

Ted Martin

Publication Received

Bedford Local History Magazine, No 102, October 2018. 44pp + cover. Price £3.50, obtainable from the Eagle Bookshop, 103 Castle Road, Bedford MK40 3QP. **Special Putnoe History Edition:** 'A Thousand Years of Putnoe' by Bob Ricketts. **Book Reviews** by Bob Ricketts: Richard Morgan, *Henry John Sylvester Stannard with Notes on his Daughter Theresa Sylvester Stannard*; Gordon Vowles, *The Life and Times of Sir John Gostwick: Tudor Entrepreneur and Bureaucrat*.