

SOUTH STREET AND ELIZABETH CARTER

South Street

South Street has been connected with the town's transport for many years. The turnpike came to Deal from Dover in 1797 and finished opposite Deal Castle. Before then, the state of the roads had made it difficult to travel between towns.

Until the coming of the railway in the mid-19th century, South Street was the terminus for horse-drawn coaches which linked to services across the country, via Dover. It has also been home to the Deal bus station since 1931.

The Walmer Castle was originally a much older inn on the opposite side of the road, on the corner of the High Street. It was the waiting place for the Deal to Dover stagecoach and later the horse-drawn omnibus. Named after a ship, rather than the castle at Walmer, the inn was partially destroyed by fire in 1867. It went through a series of liquidations and bankruptcies and its owners, Hills Brewery, leased and then sold the building to Lloyds Bank in the 1890s.

The land on the opposite side of the road, which had been the site of the Superintendent of the



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The house of the Superintendent of the Naval Yard, which stood just behind South Street. The Walmer Castle pub is now on this site.

Naval Yard's house, became available after the Naval Yard was sold. During the late 19th century, Hills Brewery opened a roller-skating rink next to the Timeball Tower. In 1876 the rink was granted a licence to sell wine which, considering the nature of the venue, must have led to a few injuries!

Later, magistrates allowed Hills Brewery to build a new hotel on land next to the skating rink. It had a garden, coach house and stabling, and opened in 1897. It is now the existing Walmer Castle pub.

The Deal and Walmer Skating Rink on the south side of South Street, next to the Walmer Castle pub. This officially opened on 15th May 1876.



Credit: Colin Varrall

Elizabeth Carter

At the southern end of Middle Street, at the junction with South Street, is Carter House. A large black plaque indicates it was the home of a famous daughter of Deal, Elizabeth Carter. The building was originally four 17th century cottages until Elizabeth took on the leasehold from the Archbishop of Canterbury in 1762. She made it her seasonal home from then until her death in 1806. During the winters, she preferred to stay in London or visit friends in their country houses. Elizabeth shared the house with her father, although they had separate libraries.

Elizabeth was born in Deal in 1717. She was the daughter of Rev. Dr Nicolas Carter, reverend of St George's Church for 56 years. Her father taught her Greek, Latin and Hebrew, and while she was apparently a slow learner, she showed great determination and perseverance. She also learnt French, and later applied herself to Italian, Spanish, German, Portuguese and Arabic.

Elizabeth was a poet, classicist, writer and translator. Her translation of All the Works of Epictetus was the first translation of the Greek philosopher. It made her name and brought her a clear profit of £1000, a huge fortune in today's money, which she used to buy Carter House.



A portrait of Elizabeth Carter by Joseph Highmore, that hangs in Deal town hall.

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The Deal Coach, picking up passengers from South Street. The original Walmer Castle pub is on the right of the image.

Friends in high places

Elizabeth was a member of the 'Bluestocking Circle' – an informal 18th-century social and education movement. The Blue Stockings were led by the hostess and critic Elizabeth Montagu (1718-1800), the 'Queen of the Blues'. They focused on conversation, literature and learning rather than gossip. Until the late 18th century, the term referred to learned people of both sexes but it was later applied primarily to intellectual women and the French equivalent *bas bleu* had a similar connotation.

Elizabeth was repeatedly honoured at Deal with visits from various members of the royal family. Queen Charlotte (wife of George III), in 1791, commanded her attendance at Cremorne House in Chelsea. A copy of her translation of Epictetus was presented to Catherine the Great of Russia. Elizabeth also wrote poetry which was published in the Gentleman's Magazine, where she became a close friend of Dr Samuel Johnson, creator of the first English Dictionary.

Social reform

Elizabeth had great sympathy for the infamous Deal smugglers. She thought they were being exploited by the rich who she saw leaving Deal laden with all sorts of contraband. She supported the Deal Charity School in Middle Street and belonged to the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade, also known as the Anti-Slavery Society.

After becoming ill in 1796, Elizabeth never fully recovered and she died in London in 1806, aged 88. Her house became Carter House School in 1881. It was later a boarding house, a nursing home, a hotel and was requisitioned by the War Office during the Second World War. It is now a private residence.



The bus station on South Street, in the mid-20th century. The large arched building was originally the Pavilion Theatre, which opened in 1928. It later became a cinema. The Timeball Tower can be seen next to this building.

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