

Hockaday Minter

The following documents were kindly provided by Simon Kidner in August 2011:

Customs report of the smuggling incident of 1832.
Report from the Kentish Gazette, Tuesday 3rd July 1832.
Report from the Kentish Gazette, Wednesday 4th July.
The 1833 Will of Hockaday Minter

1. Customs Report Newgate 3rd July 1832

PRO Reference Cust 52/1 67784

This firstly refers to the seizure of tea, in an open lugger, its owner and three smugglers (Minter, Piper and Lawrence -) they are named in the margin of the report.

Next, there is a graphic description of the capture of the Smugglers and the skirmish that preceded it. After that, however, the customs Officers boarded a French lugger, but did not find any contraband there. (Typed as transcribed)

Gent. Newgate 3rd July 1832

I beg leave to report seizure of 12 bales of tea, the open lugger Kent of Deal, Mr Austin, owner and the capture of the 3 smugglers named in the margin by the crew of this station with the following circumstances.

On my return from visiting, the Eastern part of this station about 1am, I heard when between the mills and the watch ho (accompd by my orderly) the report of a musket or pistol, which appeared not far from the Eastward and shortly afterwards I distinctly heard the sound of several voices; the firing being frequently repeated I hastened to the spot, but the lookout man Samuel GRIGGS, Comiss Boatman, being under the cliff I passed the spot without seeing and proceeding further along eastward when I heard a report of a pistol in the road near the Mills which took my utmost attention, for arriving at the spot I found John HAWKINS, Boatman, in possession of a bale of tea, he having fallen in with a party of about 15 men, one of whom was carrying the said bale and being surrounded by them and seeing the man with the bale, whom he attempted to seize; they used many threats and one on parlar having made a blow at him with a large stick, but missing his aim, HAWKINS, fired his pistol over his head when they called out 'drop it, drop it' and ran off.

I then proceed with several of the crew, who had by this time collected on the spot to retrace the smugglers' tracks to the seaside, with the hope of finding more goods, when I arrived at the cliffs edge I found Samuel GRIGGS, Comd. Boatman, had seized two more bales of tea, he stated that a few minutes before 1am, had observed a Boat pulling from the Eastward, he followed and kept sight of her and found she closed in to the shore; as soon as he had got within 20 yards of the boat, he saw three of her crew on the sand and two in the boat, they no sooner observed him, after pulling off his white coat, that they called out 'shove off' – he heard some of the cliff fall firing the alarm; they instantly sprang into the boat and pushed off, saying 'O you bloody -----, we know you; we pay you for this' Griggs then said if you do not come in I will fire into you, finding that they did

Having minutely examined every part of the cliffs and fields near the spot where the boat had come in, felt satisfied that no more had been landed than the 3 bales which had been seized, and seeing a French lugger off the Station, immediately launched into my galley to examine her thinking the remr. of the goods might be put on board her. I however found nothing.

The three Smugglers were Hockaday Minter aged 52, Jesse Piper aged 32 and John Lawrence aged 26. John "Carver" Lawrence was transported.

2. Kentish Gazette, Tuesday 3rd July 1832

Yesterday morning about 2 o'clock, some men employed on the Coastguard Service for the prevention of smuggling discovered several persons engaged in hauling bales up the cliff near the Clifton Baths. They succeeded in seizing twelve of them which were found to contain tea, the rest (of which it is said was a very large quantity and imported by a lugger), were got clear off. Three of the smugglers named Jesse PIPER, John LAWRENCE and Hocketty MINTER, were taken into custody and have on this day been examined before the Magistrate at Margate, by whom they stand remanded until Friday next.

But the melancholy part of our task is to relate the fate of the two men who it appears were engaged in the landing of the goods from a boat upon the rocks below, three men were shot by the Coastguard and one of them named CHURCHMAN died a few hours later at Broadstairs, the other man whose name is CROUCH and a son of a Boat Builder there, is not expected to recover.

How far these preventative men are justified in taking away the lives of their fellow creatures in cases of smuggling, where they are not opposed by armed men, remains to be proved.

A Coroners inquest on the body of the man CHURCHMAN has been held this day at Broadstairs and stands adjourned till 5 o'clock this evening. We hear that the preventative man (an Irishman) who shot CHURCHMAN has absconded.

3. Kentish Gazette, Wednesday 4th July

Smuggling at Margate

H MINTER, Jesse PIPER and John LAWRENCE were brought before William Nethersole in the custody of Lieut. Brokenshaw, and men on the charge of running a quantity of Contraband goods on the morning of Sunday last.

There men were, after a preliminary examination, remanded till Friday, in order that the case may be laid before the Honorable Commissions of Customs in the usual way.

An inquest was held on Monday last at the Rose inn in Broadstairs before Matthew Kennett Esq, and a respectable Jury in that place, on Daniel CHURCHMAN, who it supposed was willfully shot by Samuel

GRIGGS of the Coastguard service, whilst running a quantity of contraband goods. The case excited considerable interest and a great consternation at Broadstairs and places adjacent. The investigation was most impartial and occupied upwards of seven hours. The Jury, after hearing evidence of two surgeons and three men who were concerned with the deceased in running the goods who positively swore that there was not the slightest resistance on their part or the part of the deceased. Also, the evidence of Lt Brokenshaw and several men under his command returned a verdict of "Willful Murder" against GRIGGS. Another man is also seriously wounded was shot by GRIGGS at the same time.

4. Hockaday Minter's Will

This is the last will and Testament of me Hockaday Minter of Calais in the Kingdom of France Victualler which I make publish and declare in manner and form following that is to say I give and bequeath unto my dear wife Hannah Minter all and singular my household furniture stock in trade

plate linen woollen and all other my effects of what nature or kind the same may consist of at Calais aforesaid or else where for her own sole use and benefit. And I also give and bequeath unto my said dear wife all and every the property that or may become infilled whether in possession expectancy reversion remainder or otherwise for her sole use and benefit she paying thereout my just debts and I hereby declare my said wife to be my residuary legatee and I appoint her sole Executrix of this my will revoking all former wills by me at any time heretofore made. In Witness whereof I have hereto set my hand and seal this fourteenth day of October one thousand eight hundred and thirty three.

Hackaday Minter /LP/

signed sealed published and declared by the said testator as and for his last will and Testament in the presence of us who in the presence of the said testator at his request and in the presence of each other have subscribed our names as witnesses

C Martin Rue Citidelle Calais Gent.

John N Estitt Lace Manufacturer Calais

Proved at London 29th November 1833 before the Judge by the Oath of Hannah Minter widow the Relict the sole Executrix to whom adm[inistrati]on was granted having first sworn by common duty to administer.