

## A Brief Literary History

### William Lambarde 1536-1601

In his *'Perambulation of Kent'* he mentions the fire at Cliffe which almost completely destroyed the village in the 1520's.

### William Shakespeare 1564-1616

Sir John Oldcastle married Joan de la Pole and lived in Cooling Castle and appeared in Shakespeares *'King Henry IV'* and *'The Merry Wives of Windsor'* as the rotund roistering character of Falstaff. Oldcastles relatives were so outraged at the depiction that they made Shakespeare print an apology in early versions of the play Sir John led a rebellion against the Crown and was sentenced to hang.

### Charles Dickens 1812-1870

Charles Dickens loved to walk on the marshes from his nearby home at Gads Hill, Higham. In *'Great Expectations'* he used the atmosphere of the scantily populated marshland with its isolated churches and remote villages to set the opening scene where Pip meets Magwich in St James churchyard at Cooling (nearby Egypt Bay is where the prison hulks were anchored), it is to the damp mound of Cliffe Battery that Pip takes Magwich his provisions and to the lime kilns at Cliffe where Pip meets Orlick at the sluice gate by the canal. He was also familiar with the chaotic emotional scenes of departure for new lives in the colonies which were a feature of nearby Gravesend and he writes about this in *'David Copperfield'*. He would have seen the ships sailing down the Thames and also the old cottage with an upturned boat for a roof on the banks of the nearby Thames and Medway Canal which was believed to be the model for Mr Peggoty's Great Yarmouth home.

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### Rudyard Kipling 1865-1936

Kipling had a fascination with the sea and ships and wrote a letter to his friend James Conland telling of three hours spent during a sea trial aboard a new destroyer (probably HMS *Illustrious* built in Chatham and launched in 1896) from the Medway to Lower Hope Reach at Cliffe. As it picks up speed he writes... *"It was more like Hell, on a ten foot scale, than anything you ever dreamed..."*

### Lena Kennedy 1913-1986

Lena Kennedy was an eastender who didn't start writing until she was 56 but became a best selling author at the age of 65 She had lived as a 'Shack dweller' in Cliffe Woods and loved the area and used much of the local history and locations in many of her romantic novels, most notably *'The Inn on the Marsh'* and *'Kate of Clyve Shore'*

#### For more information

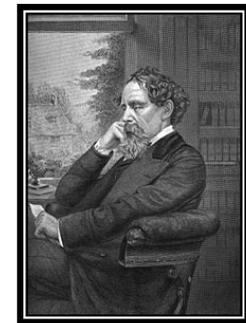
*'The Hoo Peninsula'* by Philip MacDougall  
*'Kent Churches'* by John E Vigar  
*Cement, Mud and 'Muddies'* by Frank G. Willmott  
*'Birds of the North Kent Marshes'* by Eric Gilham and R.C.Homes  
*'Cooling a Dickens of a Village'* by Margaret Smith  
*'Cliffe in Old Photographs'* by Allan Cherry  
*'A Pictorial History of Cooling and Cliffe'* by Allan Cherry



Bill Oddie, whose best loved book is *'Birds of the North Kent Marshes'* by Eric Gilham and R.C.Homes with Chris Packham at RSPB Cliffe Pools

# North Kent Marshes Self Guided Trails Cliffe Literary Heritage along the Saxon Shore Way

Distance approximately 4 miles



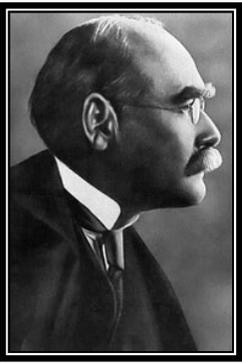
Charles Dickens 1812-1870

A linear walk along the Saxon Shore Way from Cliffe Fort to Cooling. Please take care on the on the road sections

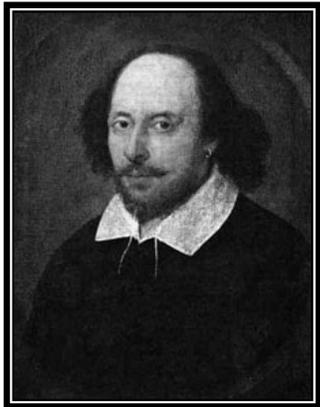
Other trails in this series;

Wildlife Heritage Trail  
Farming Heritage Trail  
Military Heritage Trail  
Heritage Buildings Trail  
Industrial Heritage Trail





Rudyard Kipling 1865-1936 wrote about new ship trials he attended with the Channel Fleet at Lower Hope Reach in 1897



William Shakespeare 1564-1616



HMS Illustrious built in Chatham Dockyard launched in 1896



St James Churchyard Cooling the setting for the opening scene in 'Great Expectations' by Charles Dickens 1861



'The Inn on the Marsh' by Lena Kennedy courtesy Melvyn Warren-Smith



'Kate of Clyve Shore' by Lena Kennedy courtesy Melvyn Warren-Smith

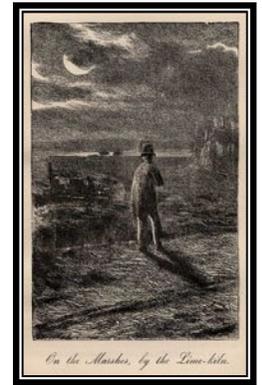
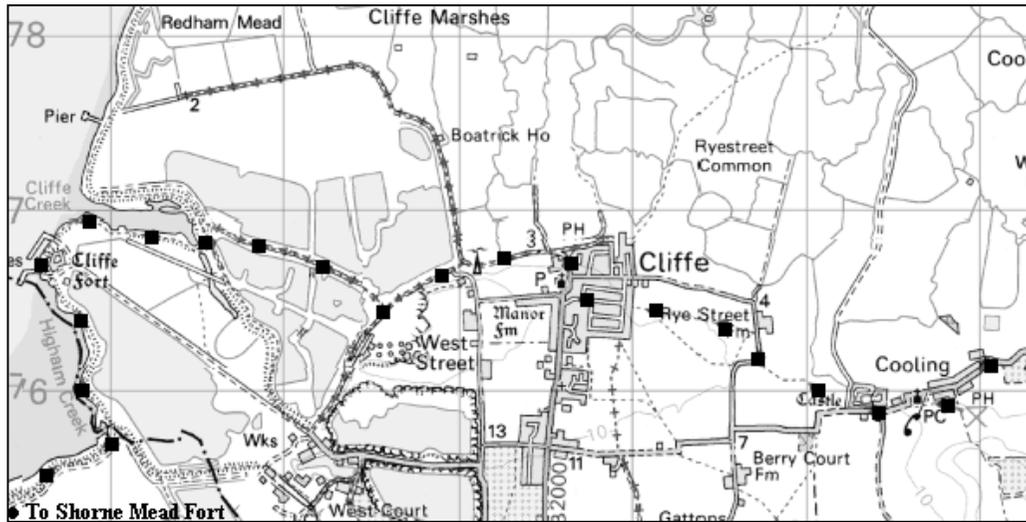


Sir John Falstaff appears in Henry IV parts 1 and 2 'Merry Wives of Windsor' by William Shakespeare

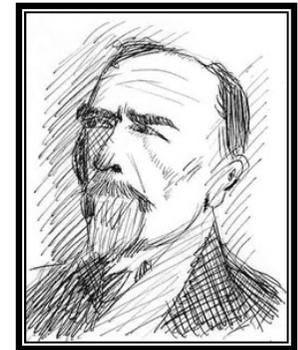
# Cliffe Literary Heritage along the Saxon Shore Way

A linear trail which can be started at Cliffe Fort or Cooling Church or alternatively can commence at Cliffe and be walked in two parts

*Ours was the marsh country, down by the river, within as the river wound, twenty miles of the sea..... that dark flat wilderness..... intersected with dykes and mounds..... with scattered cattle feeding on it..... was the marshes - 'Great Expectations' by Charles Dickens 1861*



On the Marshes by the lime kiln. Illustration by Marcus Stone 1862



Joseph Conrad 1857-1924 set the opening to his novel 'Heart of Darkness' aboard a yawl anchored off Gravesend looking towards the marshes

