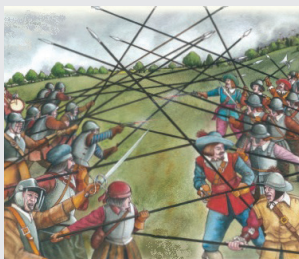


6 Battle of Maidstone (1 June 1648)

The Battle of Maidstone was fought in the English Civil War and was a victory for the attacking parliamentarian troops over the defending Royalist forces.



Described as being one of the most fiercely contested battles of the whole Civil War, the Parliamentary forces, commanded by General Fairfax of Leeds Castle, clashed with Royalist troops.

After hours of fierce hand-to-hand fighting, the Parliamentary forces were victorious. 300 Royalists were killed here in one night and c.1,300 taken prisoner.

Return through Jubilee Square and walk towards the top of Gabriel's Hill. You'll need to look high up on the wall above the bridal shop to see the next plaque.

7 The Old Bell Inn – Samuel Pepys

The celebrated diarist Samuel Pepys visited Maidstone in 1669, staying at The Old Bell Inn at the top of Gabriel's Hill.



Samuel Pepys began his diary on 1 January 1660. It is written in a form of shorthand, with names in longhand. It ranges from private remarks, including revelations of infidelity - to detailed observations of events in 17th century England, such as the plague of 1665, the Great Fire of London and Charles II's coronation, and some of the key figures of the era, including Sir Christopher Wren and Sir Isaac Newton.

Walk down Gabriel's Hill and onto Palace Avenue. Turn right towards the river, cross the road carefully and head towards All Saints Church.

8 William Shipley (1715 – 1803)

William Shipley was born in Maidstone and became an English drawing master, social reformer and inventor.



In 1754, he founded an arts society in London that became The Royal Society of Arts, or Royal Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (RSA).

The Society offered premiums for useful discoveries and inventions, some of which proved essential to Britain's flourishing textile industry. It encouraged planting of native trees to support shipbuilding, and exploration was promoted through special prizes, which led to the creation of new and more accurate maps. Today the RSA is still a force for good with a mission to enrich society through ideas and action.

Shipley died in Maidstone in 1803, aged 89, and is buried in All Saints Churchyard. Whilst there is currently no plaque to William Shipley, his grave can be easily found in the churchyard.

Walk along the river path, passing underneath both road bridges, then take the footpath through the underpass and onto Fairmeadow. Drakes Public House is just to your right and the next plaque can be found on the right of the building.

9 The Marian Martyrs

In June 1577, Walter Appleby (of Maidstone), Edmund and Catherine Allin (of Frittenden), Jean Bradbridge (of Staplehurst), and Elizabeth Lewis (Blind Bess) were all burnt at the stake on Fairmeadow, as part of the persecution of Protestants by Queen Mary.



Maidstone suffered greatly from these Marian Persecutions, with only Canterbury recording more executions in Kent.

Walk along Fairmeadow towards Earl Street. Turn right onto Earl Street then go through the arch into Fremlin Walk. Turn right at the top of the steps (lifts are available here), then turn left beside H&M and take the steps/ramp down into Havoc Square.

10 Battle of Maidstone (Havoc Square)

The word 'havoc' was used in medieval times by military commanders to signal to their soldiers that they could massacre, loot and generally run amok.



Following the Battle of Maidstone in June 1648, defeated Royalist troops, pursued by a Parliamentary force, made for St Faith's churchyard, which is opposite Havoc Square.

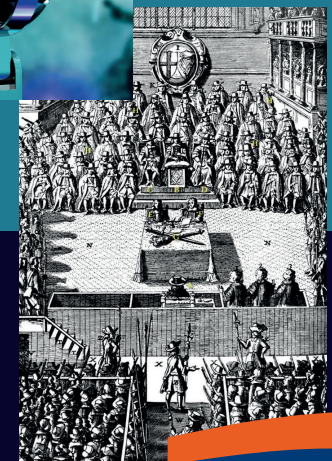
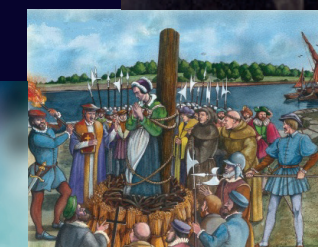
'Havoc Lane' was an historic street name in Maidstone until 2003.

You are now back at the start of the trail, opposite Maidstone Museum. Head inside to learn more about Maidstone's fascinating history and discover many more local characters.



Historic Plaques of Maidstone

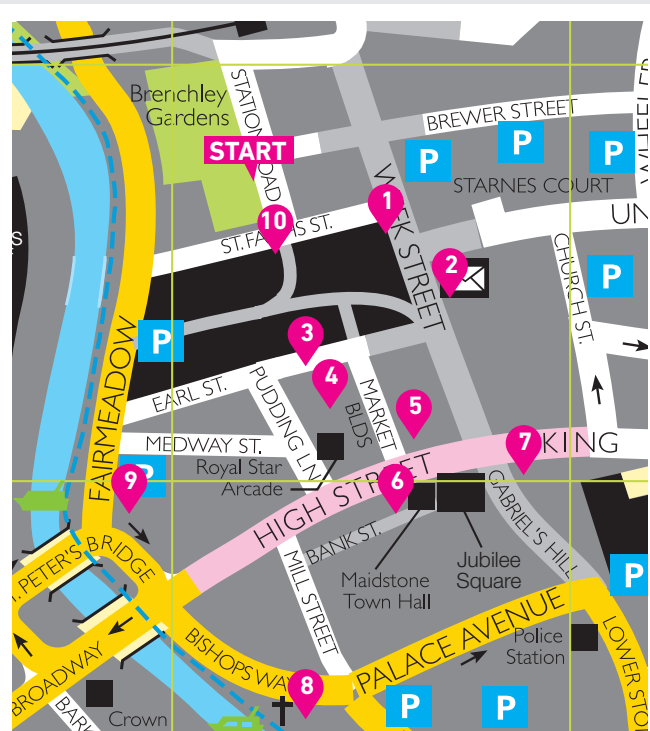
WALKING TRAIL



Maidstone has a fascinating history featuring a host of colourful, creative, and inspirational characters. From the medieval uprisings of the Peasants' Revolt, led by local man Wat Tyler, to the founding of the Royal Society for the Arts by William Shipley, born in the town in 1715, Maidstone has been home to rebels and Royalists, social reformers and industrialists, philanthropists and entrepreneurs, all of whom have left their mark on the town in one way or another.

A few of these characters, some distinguished visitors and certain notable events in the town's history, have been recognised with special plaques. This trail will guide you around their various locations with a short summary on the individual or event concerned. Combined with our historical walking tour, these trails offer a fascinating insight into Maidstone's rich and colourful past.

Map of plaque locations:



Start at Maidstone Museum in St Faith's Street and walk up the hill to Week Street. Turn right and walk a short distance to find the entrance to the United Reformed Church. The first plaque is on the left of the entrance.

1 Edith Cavell (1865 – 1915)

Edith was a British nurse celebrated for saving the lives of soldiers from both sides of the conflict without discrimination during the First World War. She also helped around 200 soldiers escape from German-occupied Belgium, for which she was arrested and later executed.



By the time of her death, Edith was already notable as a pioneer of modern nursing. During the summer of 1897, she had tended typhoid victims in the Maidstone typhoid epidemic. Out of 1,700 who contracted the disease only 132 died. For her service to the community she was awarded the Maidstone typhoid medal.

Edith was executed by German firing squad on October 12, 1915.

Continue a short distance along Week Street then look to your left for the next plaque on the wall between Primark and Superdrug.

2 William Alexander (1767 – 1816)

William Alexander was born in Maidstone and attended Maidstone Grammar School. He moved to London at the age of 15 and was admitted to the Royal Academy Schools in 1784, where he soon excelled, gaining the admiration of Sir Joshua Reynolds.



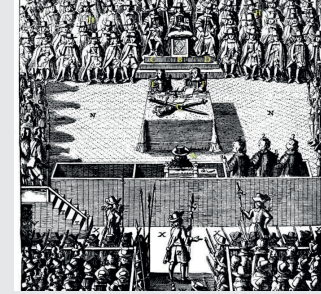
In 1792, he travelled on an embassy to China, when that country was still largely unvisited by Westerners, and came back with scores of drawings and paintings illustrating what he saw there.

He died at his uncle's house in Maidstone in July 1816 and is buried in Boxley churchyard.

Continue along Week Street then turn right into Earl Street. Head down towards the river and the next plaque can be found on the wall of No. 31 (ASK Italian Restaurant) on your left.

3 Andrew Broughton (1603 – 1688)

Andrew Broughton was appointed clerk of the peace for the county of Kent in 1639. From 1643, he was a member of the Kent county committee and acted as attorney on behalf of the corporation of Maidstone during the English Civil War. He was elected Mayor of the town in November 1648.



Two months later, he was appointed Clerk of the Court at the High Court of Justice for the trial of King Charles I. As such, it was Broughton who read out the charge against the King and required him to plead, and, at the end of the trial, declared the court's sentence of death.

At the Restoration of the monarchy, Broughton was exempted from the general pardon and was likely to lose his life, so he fled to the continent. He remained in exile for 25 years, dying peacefully at Vevey in Switzerland.

Head back up Earl Street a short distance then turn right into Market Buildings. The entrance to the Royal Star Arcade is on the right-hand side. The next plaque is located on one of the pillars in the central seating area.



4 David Bowie (1947 – 2017)

Music icon David Bowie performed several times as part of Maidstone band 'The Manish Boys' at the Royal Star Arcade, formerly the Royal Star Hotel Ballroom, in the mid-60s.



The commemorative blue plaque was arranged by Radio Kent as one of 47 unveiled across the country to mark BBC Music Day in 2017, based on listener nominations.

Continue through the Royal Star Arcade and exit onto the High Street. Turn left and head up the hill towards Jubilee Square. Stop at The Muggleton Inn to find the next plaque (on the right of the building).

5 William Hazlitt (1778 – 1830)

Hazlitt was born in Rose Yard in Maidstone on 10 April 1778. He accompanied his father to America in 1783 but returned to England in 1786 to be educated at the Unitarian New College in Hackney, though he left before completing his studies.



Today Hazlitt is renowned as the first major drama critic in English, as well as the first major art critic, and is considered one of the most gifted literary and general essayists in English. He died in 1830 in a rooming-house in Soho and is buried in St. Anne's Churchyard nearby.

The Hazlitt Theatre in the town is named in his honour.

Turn around and carefully cross the road onto Jubilee Square. A short way down Bank Street, on the side of the Town Hall, you'll find the next plaque.