

Reader Offer!

Colchester - The Way We Were Available for £16.80

This new DVD combines unique cine film of Colchester, old photos, stories from the Gazette archives, and the recollections of former residents to paint a fascinating picture of life in bygone Colchester. It also reveals the hidden stories behind some of the town's well known institutions; for example, military occasions are now an accepted part of Colchester tradition, but, for our Victorian forebears, coming to terms with the impact of becoming a garrison town was difficult to say the least, as the pages of the Gazette reveal.

Gazette, 15th May, 1855. A worthy magistrate has described Colchester garrison as more like a rabble than a regiment. The men leave their billets at all hours and the houses of the inhabitants are secretly entered at all hours of the night; female character is destroyed and the town is burdened with illegitimate children. In the early 1880's, the council embarked on the provision of a piped water supply which proved more controversial than they could have imagined.

Gazette, 27th September, 1883. No public building of modern times has been more roundly abused than the water tower, which has been nicknamed 'Jumbo'. It has been regarded on all hands as having been most improperly placed, disfiguring the magnificent High Street.

In time though, the people of Colchester grew fond of their tower. Jumbo was decommissioned as a water supplier in 1987 but efforts to redevelop it met fierce local resistance, including a 'Save Jumbo' campaign. What a difference a century makes. Among the many other events from Colchester's past recalled in the DVD are the 1884 earthquake; the grand opening of Castle Park; the introduction of the electric tramway; the bombing of the town by Zeppelin airships in World War 1; and the unveiling of the War Memorial in Cowdray Crescent. In a special feature on the Second World War, the DVD draws on the recollections of Eric John Rudsdale. Rudsdale spent the duration of the war here and kept a diary of his experiences, which now provides a fascinating and intimate account of life in wartime Colchester.

His entry on the 4th of September, 1939, sets the scene. I was dozing when every siren in the town leapt into life at half past three. I jumped up and pulled back the curtains. The moon shone beautifully and I thought, 'how incredible that people we didn't know were coming from the east to kill us'. I thought, 'God, they said 7 minutes warning at the most. Am I really going to be dead 7 minutes from now? Are we to be scared like this every night for years to come?'

This engaging journey through time is produced exclusively for the Gazette and is narrated by award winning actor, Howard Ellison. The running time is approximately 50 minutes and the price is £16.80.

To purchase the DVD simply send in coupon and payment to the address or alternatively you can purchase the DVD at <http://adbooker.gazette-news.co.uk/store>

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Colchester The Way We Were

